Town Hall: New Three Year Strategic Plan (2021-2024)

Dr. Leslie Torres-Rodriguez
May 12, 2021
Your Questions

Question and Answer Session at the End of the Presentation:

1. **Zoom Webinar Attendees:** Please use the *Raise Your Hand* feature to be called on to ask your question or submit your question in the chat.

2. **Youtube Livestream Viewers:** Please submit your question in the chat box and the moderator will ask the question.

3. **Question Submitted in Advance:** Moderator will ask questions submitted by families in advance through our google form.
Phase I
Stakeholder Engagement + Initial Planning (Strategic Operating Plan Draft, Must Wins, ESSER II application)

Phase II
Update 3 Year Strategic Operating Plan + Design for Strategy Execution

Phase III
Implementation Setup + Begin Execution
Our Mission
To provide all our students with the learning and supports they need to succeed in school and in life.

Our Vision
All students will graduate prepared to transform our world.

Our Major Priorities
1. High Quality Teaching and Learning
2. Welcoming Culture & Nurturing Climate
3. Engaging Family & Community Partnerships
4. Skillful Staff and Effective Operations
The HPS community places an emphasis on improving attendance and early literacy.

By 2024, we anticipate achieving four major goals for the district. Which goal is most important to you?

"Reading leads to the success of the other 3 goals. The more proficient a reader is, the more likely they are to use reading strategies in all content areas. If they feel more successful in schools, they are more likely to attend."

- HPS family member

"I chose [attendance] because none of the other goals are possible if students are not attending school."

- HPS Principal
The HPS community overwhelmingly prioritizes academic and social/emotional systems of support for students.

**Most Important High Quality Teaching and Learning Strategy**

- System of support: 69%
- High school and post-secondary transition supports: 12%
- Portrait of a Graduate: 9%
- Instructional Vision: 10%

**Most Important Welcoming Culture and Nurturing Climate Strategy**

- System of support, including interventions and enrichments: 84%
- Access and use of technology: 16%
Stakeholder Feedback

Stakeholders place roughly equal weight on family engagement and real world learning.

### Most Important Engaging Family and Community Partnership Strategy

- **Expand and improve family & community engagement**: 55%
- **Develop real world, authentic learning opportunities**: 45%
Stakeholders value employee recruitment/retention and continuous improvement.

Most Important Skillful Staff and Effective Operations Strategy

- Employee recruitment & retention: 32%
- Collaboration & continuous improvement: 34%
- Performance management system: 3%
- Safe, secure, well-maintained facilities: 17%
- School construction supports teaching & learning: 7%
- Financial practices in alignment with strategic plan: 8%
Families shared what would need to be true for their child to be successful over the next three years:

“Ensuring our schools have high-quality teachers and staff to provide effective instruction in a safe and positive learning environment.”

“Resources to continue academic growth and extra-curricular activities to spark interest and engagement in learning.”

“Supportive environment as he learns and grows. Challenging him by meeting him at his level.”

“The students need access to arts and extra curriculars. Parents need to be included so we know how to support learning at home.”
Major Priority and Strategy Overview
Strategic Operating Plan 2021-2024

1. High Quality Teaching and Learning
   - Prepare students academically, leading to life, college, career, and success by taking bold action to understand and meet student needs in academic recovery and acceleration.
   - Implement and monitor Instructional Vision in service of the Portrait of a Graduate
   - Provide an academic system of support to ensure instruction, interventions, and enrichments meet the needs of all students (MTSS)
   - Increase high school and post-secondary transition supports.

2. Welcoming Culture and Nurturing Climate
   - Cultivate a learning environment that is inclusive, innovative, collaborative, and engaging by ensuring buildings are safe, engaging learning environments.
   - Provide a social/emotional system of support, including interventions and enrichments, to meet the social, emotional, and physical needs of all students.
   - Increase the accessibility to, and effective use of, technology to enhance both teaching and learning.

3. Engaging Family and Community Partnerships
   - Extend student learning opportunities through partnerships between school, home, and the community through engaged family and community partnerships.
   - Expand and Improve ways to engage, communicate, and partner with families and the community
   - Develop real-world, authentic opportunities to extend learning.

4. Skillful Staff and Effective Operations
   - Maintain a high level of operational effectiveness with skilled staff, modern facilities, financial integrity, and accountability systems.
   - Improve employee recruitment, onboarding, development, leadership, and recognition
   - Enhance collaboration and teamwork to support innovation, collective inquiry, and continuous improvement
   - Ensure facilities are equitably safe, secure, well-maintained, and appealing to students, families and staff
   - Financial practices compliment and fortify the strategic initiatives in alignment with the strategic plan
Our Major Goals

1. At least 48% of Grade 3 students meeting Reading Proficiency as measured by SBAC
2. At least 27% of Grade 8 students meeting Mathematics Proficiency as measured by SBAC
3. Increase Average 4 year Cohort Graduation Rate to 83% or higher
4. Reduce chronic absenteeism to 12% or lower
HPS is seeking to maximize spending on academic and SEL recovery, while also funding needed health and safety and infrastructure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>SY21-22 Investment ($M)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic &amp; SEL recovery</td>
<td>$38</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>“Must-Win” investment areas (see next slide)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lingering health and safety considerations</td>
<td>$5.4</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>PPE, additional nursing and custodial services, HVAC upgrades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology infrastructure</td>
<td>$0.6</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>Educational technology, tech capacity support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuous Improvement &amp; Capacity Building</td>
<td>$0.8</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>Central office capacity to implement initiatives and engage in continuous improvement cycles on planned investments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect costs</td>
<td>$0.8</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>District’s Federally-approved indirect cost rate to cover general administrative costs of conducting grant activities (ie. utilities, accounting)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$45.7</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### ESSER Academic & SEL Recovery

#### “Must Win” Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Expand learning time and targeted support opportunities in and outside of the school day ($15M)</td>
<td>- <strong>Extend learning time</strong> through expanded summer school, intersession/Saturday opportunities, and evening school for high school&lt;br&gt;- <strong>Deepen MTSS supports</strong> through targeted group-size reductions and improved data systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Increase support for teachers and school leaders ($10M)</td>
<td>- <strong>Adopt high-quality curriculum</strong> and materials&lt;br&gt;- Expand time and training for <strong>teacher collaboration and professional learning</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Expand coaching and supports for <strong>teachers and school leaders</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Connect every student to an adult advocate and expand wellness supports ($7M)</td>
<td>- <strong>Support student re-engagement</strong> through a centralized re-engagement team and flexible school-based grants&lt;br&gt;- Fund capacity-building for <strong>family &amp; community partnerships</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Expand the <strong>Community School Model</strong> to 11 total schools next year&lt;br&gt;- Increase access to <strong>mental health services and spaces</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Cultivate a sustainable teacher pipeline ($5M)</td>
<td>- <strong>Create hiring and retention incentives</strong> to work in high-need schools and assignments&lt;br&gt;- Partner with higher ed and third party organizations to expand the <strong>teacher pipeline</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Increase capacity of <strong>Office of Talent Management</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Equity Innovation Grants: Flexible funding for schools to expand/deepen successful practices at their schools (prioritizing neighborhood schools) ($0.5M)
### Talent Needs

The investments represent both third-party support and new FTE for the next 2-3 years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position Types</th>
<th>FTE Needed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselors &amp; Social Workers</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Coaches</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDLs and school leader supports</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central admin</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>173</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are a few different exit plan options for investments leveraging new FTE (over the course of the 2-3 years of expected stimulus funding):

1. Reduce FTE to prior levels through natural attrition
2. Define jobs as temporary positions
3. Using short-term contracts or external partners to provide staffing

A smaller subset of these investments could be sustained long-term with reallocations of resources from elsewhere.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>Feedback Themes</th>
<th>How this shows up in our Strategic Operating Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Students             | ● High school students want **flexibility in how/when they learn** (especially with time to manage work/home responsibilities)  
                         ● Need for **Mental health supports**                                           | ● **Evening school** for high schoolers (evenings and weekends)  
                         ● Investment in **mental health supports** - e.g. clinical staff/partnerships, wellness spaces, teacher PL on trauma-sensitive practices |
| Families             | ● Focus on **individual needs and tutoring**  
                         ● **Social-emotional and other non-academic** supports and enrichment  
                         ● Prioritize **school-based spending**                                       | ● Targeted **group size reductions** for high-needs students (including high-dosage tutoring)  
                         ● Additional supports via the **Community Schools Model** and increased mental health services |
| Principals           | ● Target investments based on student need  
                         ● Need strategies to **re-integrate students**, connect with kids  
                         ● Prioritize to deepen/expand **MTSS structures** and implementation  
                         ● **Hiring effective teachers** is a key barrier, esp. in hard-to-staff areas | ● Investments to **re-engage students**  
                         ● **School-based Equity & Innovation Grants** with focus on enrichment, wellness, and relationships  
                         ● **Recruitment & retention bonuses** in high-need and hard-to-staff areas |
| Board Members        | ● Prioritize **teacher pipeline and recruitment** (particularly POC)  
                         ● Invest in **family supports, education, partnerships** (eg. Parent & Caregiver Academy, financial management training, grant writing) | ● Partnership to expand the **teacher pipeline**  
                         ● **Parent Academy** and **expanded CBO partnerships** |
| Community Partners   | ● Expand ways to engage, communicate, and partner with families  
                         ● Develop real world, authentic opportunities to extend learning               | ● **New Communications platform** and tools, updated websites  
                         ● Family, student and staff perspectives through **surveys and focus groups**  
                         ● **Career readiness learning opportunities**, such as internships, job shadowing and youth leadership programs |
Student Experience Examples

What students might expect to experience in the next three years

- More individualized social/emotional learning supports
- More individualized academic supports like tutoring
- Real world and career readiness learning experiences like internships
- Before-school, after-school, and intersession (vacation) opportunities
- More robust athletic offerings

Examples of student voices that will inform our design

“I see myself being prepared to take on the ‘real’ world. Being prepared to make a lasting impact through social change.”

“I feel like there should be more job shadowing.”

“I need [adults’] support and feedback in order to prepare myself for my future. They need to be understanding when it comes to mental health and personal issues in our personal lives that may affect our learning.”

“I think there should be classes on how to manage money.”
Family and Community Experience Examples

What families & the community might expect to experience in the next three years

- More Community Schools and wraparound student/family support
- New engagement and communications tools like updated school websites
- Parent & Caregiver Academy for family learning opportunities

Examples of voices that will inform our design

- "Some families and students have many pressing issues that go beyond academics. We should focus more on leveling the playing field between families of color and white families."
- "Include extension care/afterschool programming opportunities."
- "Schools should provide enrichment, life-skills, choice, and social-emotional lessons."
- "The students need access to arts and extracurriculars. Parents need to be included so we know how to support learning at home."
Staff Experience Examples

What staff might expect to experience in the next three years

- Additional professional learning and staff development for all staff
- More collaboration, planning, and training time for teachers and school staff
- Updated recruitment, hiring and retention approach for all roles
- Revamped teacher pipeline development, including recruitment and retention bonuses for highest needs roles/schools

Examples of staff voices that will inform our design

“It would be great to have a three-year plan on building the skills our teachers need to teach reading at the younger grades.” - HPS staff member

“We must recruit more BIPOC teachers to Hartford. Our students need to see themselves in their teachers. You cannot be it if you cannot see it. We all need continued development as social-emotional, anti-racist, culturally responsive and equitable leaders.” - HPS staff member

“Structured, intentional deliberate time for teachers across schools and grade levels to collaborate, model, and share best practices, effective strategies and methodologies for students engagement, behavior management, and instructional deliveries.” - HPS staff member
**Phase II**

Update 3 Year Strategic Operating Plan + Design for Strategy Execution

- May 12 Staff Town Hall
- May 13 Family & Community Town Hall

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**Phase III**

Implementation Setup + Begin Execution
Appendix
Federal Stimulus Overview

Through ESSER II and ARP stimulus funding, HPS will receive $144M to spend over the next 3 years.

**ESSER II ($45.7M)**
- 9/30/2023 deadline

**American Rescue Plan ($43M of $98M)**
- 9/30/2024 deadline

**American Rescue Plan ($43M of $98M)**
- 9/30/2024 deadline

- 20% of American Rescue Plan funds must be reserved for learning recovery programs

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20% of American Rescue Plan funds must be reserved for learning recovery programs

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ESSER II: How are investments distributed across the system?

The majority of resources will live at schools, or shared across schools, even as they are budgeted at central department locations.

**School-based resources**

*Examples:* Targeted group size reductions, Equity Innovation grants, school-based coaches, Community School services, recruitment & retention bonuses

**Shared resources**

*Examples:* Summer school, Evening school, MTSS data systems/training, re-engagement supports, school leader coaching/supports

**Centralized resources**

*Examples:* Central office capacity to implement initiatives (particularly in OTM and Finance) and to engage in continuous improvement cycles on planned investments.
Revised District Strategic Operating Plan

Priority 1: High Quality Teaching and Learning
Prepare students academically, leading to life, college, career, and success by taking bold actions to understand and meet student needs in academic recovery and acceleration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Example actions</th>
<th>Example student, family, and staff experiences</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Implement and monitor Instructional Vision in service of the Portrait of a Graduate</td>
<td>● Align curriculum, instruction, assessments</td>
<td>● Updated curriculum and other instructional materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Provide an academic system of support to ensure instruction, interventions, and enrichments meet the needs of all students (MTSS: Multi-tiered System of Supports)</td>
<td>● Implement MTSS identification process ● Extended day/year calendar design ● Standardized Special education support model ● Standardized English learner support model</td>
<td>● More small group and customized academic supports like tutoring ● Before-school, after-school, and intersession learning and enrichment opportunities ● More collaborative planning time and professional learning time for teachers ● Fewer out of district special education placements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Increase high school and post-secondary transition supports</td>
<td>● Bridge Program in Freshman Academy ● Career readiness experiences in middle and high school ● Academic and career advising</td>
<td>● Support in the transition to high school ● Real world and career readiness learning and support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“As a teacher, I know high quality teaching learning will help the students be successful in college or their careers.”
- HPS Teacher
**Priority 2: Welcoming Culture and Nurturing Climate**
Cultivate a learning environment that is inclusive, innovative, collaborative, and engaging by ensuring buildings are safe, engaging learning environments.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Example actions</th>
<th>Example student, family, and staff experiences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Provide a **social/emotional system of support**, including interventions and enrichments, to meet the social, emotional, and physical needs of all students (MTSS: Multi-tiered System of Supports) | ● Implement social/emotional components of MTSS  
● School-wide attendance support  
● Continuum of athletic programs | ● Social/emotional support in all schools such as mentoring, trauma-informed practices  
● Consistent school-wide attendance team practices and supports  
● More robust athletic offerings |
| 2. Increase the accessibility to, and effective use of, technology to enhance both teaching and learning | ● Equitable education technology practices | ● Technology-enhanced instruction  
● Timely, equitable tech support for students and teachers |

“Student achievement is directly tied to the relationship between SEL and academics.”
- HPS teacher
### Priority 3. Engaging Family & Community Partnerships

Extend student learning opportunities through partnerships between school, home, and the community through engaged family and community partnerships.

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<tr>
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<th>Example Actions</th>
<th>Example student, family, and staff experiences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Expand and improve ways to engage, communicate, and partner with families and the community | ● Expand Community Schools model  
● External communications plans and structures  
● Gather family, student, and staff perspectives on connectedness | ● More Community Schools and wraparound student/family support  
● New communications tools like updated school websites  
● Family, student, and staff surveys and focus groups |
| 2. Develop real-world, authentic opportunities to extend learning | ● Internships, job shadowing, and youth leadership programs  
● Family and community learning opportunities | ● Real world and career readiness learning experiences for students (eg. internships)  
● Parent & Caregiver Academy for family learning opportunities |

“I believe reaching the families and meeting them individually where they are will help ensure better participation and will help the connection between parent, student, teacher, admin, and community come together.”

- HPS family member
## Revised District Strategic Operating Plan

### Priority 4. Skillful Staff and Effective Operations

Maintain a high level of operational effectiveness with skilled staff, modern facilities, financial integrity, and accountability systems.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Example Actions</th>
<th>Example student, family, and staff experiences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Improve **employee recruitment**, onboarding, **development**, leadership, and recognition | ● Grow capacity in Talent Management functions  
● Staff recruitment, retention, wellness initiatives  
● Comprehensive professional learning plans for all roles | ● Teacher pipeline development, incl. recruitment/retention bonuses for high need roles  
● Add’l staff development (anti-racism, MTSS…) |
| 2. Enhance **collaboration** and teamwork to support innovation, collective inquiry, and **continuous improvement** | ● Continuous improvement teams and practices district-wide  
● Data and Performance management system  
● Observational data collection tools and processes | ● Data Wise practices and regular meetings in every school and department  
● Data infrastructure such as DecisionEd dashboards |
| 3. Ensure **facilities are equitably safe**, secure, well-maintained, and appealing to students, families and staff | ● Facilities safety, maintenance, equity monitoring  
● Shared vision for school choice  
● Equity in school construction and design | ● School facilities designed for 21st century teaching & learning  
● HPS specialized staff consult on school construction design |
| 4. Financial **practices** compliment and fortify the strategic initiatives in alignment with the strategic plan | ● Strengthen finance organization skills and processes  
● Maintain equitable, sustainable budgeting | ● Strengthen financial skills and processes  
● Continued equity-based school budgets and budgeting process using Allovue |

“Staff need to feel supported in order to be effective, and taking care of their well-being/needs makes them more equipped to serve students.”

- School Staff Member
We’ve leveraged feedback from the full HPS community to inform our plan.

We hosted 50+ hours of feedback conversations and received more than 2,000 survey responses.
What students might expect to experience in the next three years

- More customized social/emotional learning supports
- More customized academic supports like tutoring
- Real world and career readiness learning experiences like internships
- Before-school, after-school, and intersession (vacation) opportunities
- More robust athletic offerings
- School facilities designed for 21st century teaching & learning

Examples of student voices that will inform our design

- “I see myself being prepared to take on the ‘real’ world. Being prepared to make a lasting impact through social change.”
- “I can see myself going off into college after high school, with plenty of credits, to figure out my path.”
- “I think there should be classes on how to manage money.”
- “I feel like there should be more job shadowing.”
- “I need extra help in school to catch up so I can graduate on time.”
- “I need [adults’] support and feedback in order to prepare myself for my future. They need to be understanding when it comes to mental health and personal issues in our personal lives that may affect our learning.”
**Family and community experience examples**

What families & the community might expect to experience in the next three years

- More Community Schools and wraparound student/family support
- Additional learning and enrichment time for students before- and after school, during vacation weeks (“intersession”)
- New engagement and communications tools like updated school websites
- Parent & Caregiver Academy for family learning opportunities

Examples of voices that will inform our design

- “Some families and students have many pressing issues that go beyond academics. We should focus more on leveling the playing field between families of color and white families.”
- “Schools should provide enrichment, life-skills, choice, and social-emotional lessons.”
- “School should be a place that fosters creativity, ingenuity, responsibility, and physical and mental health, along with academics.”
- “Include extension care/afterschool programming opportunities.”
- "The students need access to arts and extracurriculars. Parents need to be included so we know how to support learning at home."
What staff might expect to experience in the next three years

- Additional professional learning and staff development for all staff
- More collaboration, planning, and training time for teachers and school staff
- Updated recruitment, hiring and retention approach for all roles
- Revamped teacher pipeline development, including recruitment and retention bonuses for highest needs roles/schools
- Continued equity-based school budgets and budgeting process

Examples of staff voices that will inform our design

- “It would be great to have a three-year plan on building the skills our teachers need to teach reading at the younger grades.” - HPS staff member
- “We need to support and invest in a comprehensive strategy not only to recruit the best educators but to keep the best educators.” - HPS staff member
- “We must recruit more BIPOC teachers to Hartford. Our students need to see themselves in their teachers. You cannot be it if you cannot see it. We all need continued development as social-emotional, anti-racist, culturally responsive and equitable leaders.” - HPS staff member
- “Structured, intentional deliberate time for teachers across schools and grade levels to collaborate, model, and share best practices, effective strategies and methodologies for students engagement, behavior management, and instructional deliveries.” - HPS staff member