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World's Best Workforce and Strategic Action Plan

2019-2020

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Rush City Schools, ISD #139

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Background

The “Striving for the World’s Best Workforce” bill was passed in 2013 to ensure every school district in the state is making strides to increase student performance. Each district must develop a plan that addresses the following five goals:

1. All children are ready to start kindergarten.
2. All third-graders can read at grade level.
3. All achievement gaps between students are closed.
4. All students are ready for career and/or postsecondary education.
5. All students graduate from high school.

Why is Minnesota focused on this idea? For Minnesota to be competitive, we must have students who are career and college ready, poised to lead the state’s workforce. This is important for a number of reasons:

- ✓ Our population is aging.
- ✓ Seventy percent (70%) of jobs will require more than a high school diploma by 2018.
- ✓ We do not have an adequate number of qualified candidate to fill many good-paying jobs.
- ✓ The fastest growing segment of our future workforce is students of color, and they currently have the state’s lowest graduation rate.

How will we measure progress? Each district will create their own plan to align a standards-based curriculum with classroom instruction, so that students are career and college ready at graduation. The success of each plan will be measured by:

- ✓ NAEP scores
- ✓ Closing gaps by student group
- ✓ MCA proficiency
- ✓ College entrance exams

What do Minnesota school boards need to do?

School boards in each district across the state must establish an advisory committee that will:

- ✓ Involve the community during plan development.
- ✓ Include members that reflect the diversity of the district and its schools.
- ✓ Make recommendations to the school board on rigorous academic standards and student achievement goals and measures.

District leaders will post an annual report on their progress, hold annual public meetings, and are required to submit an annual summary report to the Minnesota Department of Education.

All Students Ready for Kindergarten

	Goal	Strategies	Results (forthcoming)
	The percentage of three-year-old students who complete Early Childhood Screening will increase from 59-61%.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ECE staff will make additional phone calls and/or mailings to increase the number of students being screened. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goal not met. 21% of three-year-old students completed Early Childhood Screening. Screenings were canceled due to COVID-19.

Early Childhood programming at Rush City Schools is offered to children birth to Kindergarten entrance. Program options include Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE), School Readiness Preschool (SR), Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) and Early Childhood Screening Program (ECS). ECS dates are offered at least five times during the school year and are required for all students prior to Kindergarten entrance.

ECFE classes meet one time per week. Parents and children attend class together to participate in activities with their children as well as separate, to receive parent education. SR preschool class offerings vary by age and include full day or half-day options. Full day classes meet 2 days per week. Half-day classes meet either 2 or 3 days per week. All early childhood classrooms are inclusion classrooms that collaborate with the ECSE program. Home visiting options exist for children under the age of three demonstrating a need for extra support through ECSE services.

SR preschool classrooms use the Big Day for PreK curriculum. Assessment is done using the Scholastic Early Childhood Inventory (SECI) in conjunction with the Preschool Early Literacy Indicators (PELI). Preschool letter and letter sound fluency is assessed using easyCBM probes.

We are using a Daily 5 structure in kindergarten to help students build their individual stamina when working independently. This structure is scaffolded with many intentional lessons to teach expectations and set students up for success. Using the Daily 5, structure allows teachers time to differentiate and meet with small student groups as well as individual conferencing and

assessing. We are focusing on the foundational skills in math and literacy. Examples in math would be counting, number recognition, and one-to-one correlation. In literacy, we start with phonemic awareness and phonics skills and work toward decoding and fluency. We use EasyCBMs and MAPS for assessments and follow up with PRESS diagnostics for students that show areas of concern. A large part of Kindergarten is also dedicated to helping students develop personal and social skills to become successful at school and in life.

[All Students in Third Grade Achieving Grade Level Literacy](#)
 Rush City Schools has a well-developed [Read Well Literacy Plan](#)

	Goal	Strategies	Results (forthcoming)
	<p>Students in 3rd grade will increase their proficiency on their MCAIII reading exam from 66% in 2019 to 68% in 2020.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Extra time has been added to cover additional literacy skills ● Grade-Level created assessments to drive instruction ● Grade-Level data discussions to determine what students should be learning and check progress ● Title and ADSIS interventions for the most at risk learners ● Focused instruction on vocabulary and word decoding strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Unable to report ● No MCA due to COVID-19

Learning to read well is the primary focus at C.E. Jacobson Elementary in the Rush City School District. As we strive to prepare our students for the 21st century, we desire to have each child reading at his/her best ability by the time they complete 6th grade. Our goal is for all students to meet standards of proficiency based on Minnesota Academic Standards in English Language Arts. The best academic focus we can provide for students is providing that foundation as well as learning to love the world of books.

In order for us to meet this objective for our students, we use the research based balanced literacy curriculum Benchmark Literacy. Scientific research has demonstrated that high quality reading instruction focuses on the five essential domains of reading. These five domains are Phonological / Phonemic Awareness, Phonics / Word Study, Vocabulary, Fluency, and Comprehension. In addition, Benchmark Literacy embeds oral language activities and a strong writer's workshop / grammar model to reinforce the natural connections between reading and writing. The framework for instruction is developed around the Daily 5 (Read to Self, Read with Someone, Word Work, Writing, and Listening to Reading) at student's instructional level.

To define reading proficiency, we use General Outcome Measures (EasyCBM) of early literacy and reading skills, as well as the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP Test) which help us to identify students who may be at risk of not meeting grade level standards in reading. The Saint Croix River Education District (SCRED) provides us with target scores for each of these measures. These target scores are set to predict a high likelihood of success on the upcoming Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) tests. Parents are informed on a regular basis of the results of these ongoing screening measures.

[Closing the Achievement Gap](#)

Elementary School Achievement Gap Issue. The only quantifiable achievement gap identified at C.E. Jacobson involves students who receive free or reduced lunch (socio-economic). There are small areas of categorized groups in our school but those populations are not large enough to be recognized by the state. Due to data privacy, the identity of students on free/reduced lunch is not shared with teachers or administrators so our improvement continues to focus on improvement for all learners.

High School Achievement Gap Issue. At the High School, we use MCA, MAP, and GOM assessments to gauge student achievement. In recent years, we have focused on continuous growth for all grade levels by establishing building assessment goals. In general, the goal is to improve in each MCA tested area/grade levels by 4% if they are under the state average or to improve by 2% if they are above the state average. The only achievement gap identified at the high school is regarding students who receive free or reduced price lunches (socio-economic), no other group in our school has had a large enough population to be recognized by the state. Due to data privacy concerns the identity of students on free/reduced lunch is no longer shared with teachers, therefore, the best solution has been continuous improvement for all learners.

However, we have identified our students with disabilities in some areas underperforming their peers. Therefore, we are adding SMART goals for our students with disabilities.

Achievement Gap Goals

	Goals	Strategies	Results
	<p>Special Education students in Rush City Schools in grades 3-6 will increase their proficiency scores on the MCA III reading test from 37% to 40% in 2020.</p> <p>Special Education students in Rush City Schools in grades 7-8 will increase their proficiency scores on the MCA III reading test from 17% to 20% in 2020.</p> <p>Students who qualify for free/reduced lunch achievement scores will decrease in the area of DNM (Does Not Meet) in the following areas:</p> <p>The percentage of students in Grades 3-8, 11 who did not meet expectations on the MCA III test in math will decrease from 26% (2019) to 24% (2020).</p> <p>The percentage of students in Grades 3-8, 11 who did not meet expectations on the MCA III test in reading will decrease from 18% (2019) to 16% (2020).</p> <p>The percentage of 5, 8, and high school students' proficiency in Science will increase to 51% from 48% on their MCA III accountability results.</p>	<p>Teachers, interventionists, and paraprofessionals will provide timely, specific, and evidence-based interventions and instruction toward meeting each individual education plan goal as outlined in each student's unique learning plan.</p> <p>Testing will be completed in small-group settings allowing for breaks, extra time, and a quiet environment free of distractions with guidance as specified and allowed to meet each student's needs as outlined in their individual education plan.</p> <p>Individual student's progress will be monitored throughout the year, shared with parents, reviewed monthly at building special services meetings, and as necessary plans and services will be adjusted.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Unable to report ● No MCA due to COVID-19

Rush City Schools utilizes multiple performance measures to assess student learning and in particular, the achievement gap in the school district.

College and Career Ready SMART Goal

100% of students in grade eight will develop and implement a personalized learning plan.

Personal Learning Plans (PLP's) document their planning. These start in 8th grade Futures Prep and are reviewed and expanded upon each subsequent year through their Social Studies teachers and others until the student graduates. This year students in 8th grade will begin using Minnesota Career Information System (MCIS) as their PLP platform.

Rush City High School is on-track to meet this goal. Shifting learning models resulted in different classes completing their PLPs in different formats. All student will review their PLPs in Social Studies and transition them to MCIS if this has not already been done.

All Students Graduating from High School SMART Goal: 100% of enrolled Rush City High School seniors will graduate on time.

For the 2018-2019 school year, 100% of our seniors graduated from our high school who were enrolled within our district. Official high school graduation rates from MDE will not be released until spring of 2020.

Minnesota students are required to complete these requirements by the time they graduate. Students must:

Complete the state course credit requirements under MN Statute 120B.024

Complete all state academic standards (or local standards where state do not apply)

Rush City Public Schools has a guidance program that walks students through graduation requirements, and assists them with plans for post-secondary success whether that be college, technical school, or the workforce.

The guidance counselor goes through graduation requirements every year during registration along with the "typical" 4-year college requirements. Students will also start going through them every year on their PLP's on the MCIS system. Varieties of speakers come in throughout College Knowledge Month in October to talk with the students about requirements, as well as individual interviews with the counselor. Juniors and seniors can sign up to meet with college reps about criteria throughout the school year and speak with them at the two college fairs we attend.

Attendance interventions are another way RCHS works to ensure students graduate. A shared document is used to keep track of student attendance. Our attendance clerk pulls attendance on a weekly basis. When a student hits seven excused absences a letter (date documented) is sent home letting them know when they get to 10, they need a doctor's note excusing them the whole day. Once they get to 10 another note is sent home (and documented) that absences will now be unexcused unless there is a doctor's note. After three unexcused absences, another

letter is sent home (and documented) explaining an county Attendance Intervention Meeting (AIM), if they get to five unexcused. The school intervenes at this time through the guidance counselor's office by calling or meeting with the student and parent. After five unexcused they have to attend the county AIM and their information is shared at the MTSS Behavior Meeting. If attendance does not improve after this meeting, a truancy petition is sent to the county.

All behavior data is pulled during the monthly PBIS meeting and information is brought back to the teachers (high areas of concern, things we can do to improve this behavior, etc.) at a monthly PLC meeting. Students with concerning numbers of behavior referrals are brought to the MTSS behavior meeting for consideration and planning of interventions.

The ABC's (Attendance, Behavior, and Classroom Performance) are all reviewed weekly with grade checks from the guidance office. In addition, MCA and MAP test results are used in conjunction with teacher recommendations regarding student performance to catch students who are struggling or excelling at any tier of our MTSS system. Domestic and emotional issues are usually brought to light through strong relationships between students and staff. They are usually addressed or monitored through our counselor, the TSA Therapist, ADSIS Behavior Coordinator, SPED teachers, and/or the Principal.

Specific academic concerns are addressed through a robust Multi-Tiered System of Services and Supports (MTSS) Process. In addition to this, the counselor does credit checks each semester and students can view their credits on StudentVue. Students will also be looking at their credits on MCIS. If students fail a core class, the counselor will email parents with the information and credit recovery options. If email is not available then a letter is sent home. The counselor also meets with at-risk students a minimum of two times to go over course of action and credit recovery options.

Our expectation is for all students to meet or exceed standards. The St. Croix River Education District (SCRED) prepares targets so we are able to formatively assess student performance prior to taking the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA). These data points are a significant consideration when placing students in MTSS tiers of support. The MCA result becomes an indicator that may help identify the need for different supports the following year.

All students are monitored in the Guidance Office. Checking in with their teachers, reviewing the failure list weekly, utilize the MTSS process, communicate with parents, leverage resources such as night school or alternative plans to ensure students meet standards and have the opportunity to be successful.

In addition to the formal guidance and PLP programs, informal strategies that assist in ensuring success and graduating on time include school connectedness activities, relationships, advisory programming, and staff-student mentoring.

Results: 100% of student who were enrolled did graduate, however, one student unenrolled in during the school year.

Strategies/Programs to meet all Goal Areas

Strategies that are employed to address multiple goal areas are:

- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support Processes (MTSS)
- Title I Plan and Procedures
- Rush City Teacher Development Program
- Quality Compensation Annual Plan and Report
- District Staff Development
- Entrance to Kindergarten
- Professional Learning Communities
- Principal and Leader Evaluation Plan
- Peer Mentoring Program

Surveys

Surveys were conducted during the months of April and May 2019. The following summarizes the data collection.

- ✓ 330 4th - 6th grade students completed surveys on their classroom teachers
- ✓ 276 middle and high school students completed surveys on their school experiences
- ✓ 147 parents (80 elementary and 67 high school) completed surveys on their school experiences

Qualitative surveys were also conducted with teachers by Educational Consultant, Chris Hagedorn on May 20th and May 21st. The purpose of the meetings were to gather perception data on school improvement efforts with teams by grade level and/or department. Chris visited every classroom in each building, along with administrators, during the two-day visit.

After careful consideration, data analysis, and reflection, here are the areas of further development for the 2019-2020 school year.

- ✓ Strengthen our Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
- ✓ Focus on standards alignment
- ✓ Clear criteria, growth is goal
- ✓ Scope and Sequence to lesson plans
- ✓ Data driven instructional planning
- ✓ Relationship Building
 - Student to Student
 - Student to Teacher
 - Administrator to Teacher
 - Community relations
 - Classroom management
 - Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

- PBIS o RTI (PST in our buildings)
- Social Emotional Learning
- Tiered Support (I, II, III)

Advisory Committee

The School Board Advisory Committee works together to review school practices, mission statement, curriculum, student achievement goals, and district assessment practices.

Committee members meet annually in the fall to review the data from the previous year and update the new plan with action steps to increase progress toward the five World’s Best Workforce Goals.

Committee members represent the following areas:

Superintendent, Elementary Principal, High School Principal, Teaching Staff, School Board Members, Parents of Rush City High School Students, Parents from C.E. Jacobson Parents, Student Representatives, Community Members

World’s Best Workforce Budget

To implement and sustain the World’s Best Workforce a budget has been establish with funds from the general fund. For this current school year, our district has invested an additional \$25,000 towards professional development to implement the World’s Best Workforce Plan. The budget will help support the following Big Rocks of Focus for the 2019-2020 school year.

- Kindergarten Readiness
- Reading Well by Third Grade
- Closing the Achievement Gap
- Graduation Support
- College and Career Readiness including Post-Secondary Planning
- Periodic Community Survey
- District Advisory Committee meetings and planning

Strategic Action Plan 2019-2020

Priority Area 1: Achieve Academic Excellence

What we want to accomplish:

- 1) Improve student achievement
- 2) Infuse technology into learning experiences
- 3) Expand electives, career exploration, and college credit opportunities
- 4) Increase participation in electives, co-curricular, and enrichment offerings
- 5) Help students identify and pursue their true passion

Action Step	Assigned to	Starting/Ending	Resources Needed
Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment will be more closely aligned through the process of professional learning communities, curriculum mapping, ongoing professional development, and collaboration.	Building Administrators, Instructional Coach and Building Leadership Teams	September 2019-May 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Time to plan ✓ Consultant to support the work ✓ Professional Learning
Cultivate and support the new electives offered at the high school to provide our students with additional opportunities for career exploration, electives, and college credit opportunities.	High School Administration and Staff	September 2019-May 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Resources to support the new teachers in these positions
Research the purpose, direction, and practices of homework expectations and make a recommendation to the schools regarding homework expectations.	School Board Advisory	October 2019-May 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Research articles and actions for recommendations
Create a process, plan, and procedures for Rush City's Curriculum Review Process	School Board Advisory, Select Staff, and Principals	October 2019-May 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Time and people to create the process.

Priority Area 2: Foster a Positive and Safe Environment

What we want to accomplish:

- 1) Ensure that students and staff are engaged, enthusiastic, and productive
- 2) Attract and retain high quality staff
- 3) Ensure that students and staff feel valued
- 4) Review and practice emergency procedures

Action Step	Assigned to	Starting/Ending	Resources Needed
As a district, we will work towards building relationships with all stakeholders across our campus utilizing the professional development from the Culture Piece (Chris Hagedorn). Teachers and administration will focus on scheduling activities and opportunities to develop and build relationships with one another.	All Staff		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Frequent and agreed upon lessons per the Culture Piece ✓ Time to do the lessons ✓ Time to schedule the lessons
Continue support and clarify district wide consistent expectations through our Positive School Interventions and Supports processes throughout our campus and programs.	All Staff	September 2019-May 2020	

Priority Area 3: Financial Stability to Support the District Mission SMART Goal

(Maintain fund balance in accordance with Board Policy #714)

What we want to accomplish:

- 1) Maintain financial health of the district without compromising the mission
- 2) Maintain unreserved general fund balance consistent with board policy
- 3) Provide financial resources that support attractive educational programming

4) Impact legislation that supports equitable education funding

Our School district will strive to maintain a minimum unrestricted general fund balance of fifteen percent (15%) of the general fund expenditures for each fiscal year. If, because of budget planning, administration projects that the unrestricted general fund balance will decrease below 15%, the administration shall apprise the Board of this prior to budget adoption. If administration projects that the unrestricted general fund balance will decrease below 10%, then the Board will initiate measures for the budget year in question.

Priority Area 4: Strengthen Community Relationships

What we want to accomplish:

- 1) Increase community partnerships
- 2) Utilize technology to enhance communication with all stakeholders (staff, students, parents, community)
- 3) Increase community trust and pride in the schools

SMART Goal: Create a *Why Not Rush Committee* by May 2020, to promote our Rush City pride and increase our community's trust in our school.