

2014-15 YEAR-IN-REVIEW

On August 1, 2011, I had the honor of becoming part of something that is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity — working with a community of internal and external stakeholders to move a District forward with the goal of becoming the best urban district in the country. How do WE do that? — By FOCUSing every effort on the achievement of every student.

It began with taking a hard look at where we were starting. The auditors said that we had "drifted" as an organization. Twenty-six auditors came armed with standards of a high-performing organization and then read our documents, observed our classrooms, and interviewed us. They gave us 10 recommendations in order of importance that would move us to be a high-performing organization seeing a "probability" of success in our future. First — Put an organizational structure in place to focus on and to support student achievement. Second — Put policies in place to set expectations and to guide our work, and, third — Align planning from the district level to the school level. The middle four of the 10 recommendations were about improving systems within schools to support achievement. The final two recommendations were to focus on equality of access and equity of resources to eliminate the gap, and to align dollars and resources with strategic priorities.

It began with an understanding that there is a research base of "what works" — a focus on what students are expected to learn, the use of data to inform practice, collaboration of teachers led by a strong principal, high expectations for every student, and intentional increased learning time matched to the needs of the individual.

THEORY OF ACTION

A coherent set of actions and disciplined effort over time will lead to results. Intentional aligned actions WILL break the correlation between poverty and low achievement. If schools are getting results, less support is needed. If schools are failing to get results, capacity must be built within the staff, and support must be in place to verify that the structures are in place to ensure student success.

YEAR 1 (2011-12) included the Curriculum Management Audit, the Organizational Review, Internal/External Team Visits to progressing schools to see "what works", the implementation of more rigorous standards and the development of, and Board approval, of our *Strategic Plan Vision 2015*.

RESULTS: 2011-12 provided us with a baseline.

45.2 % CCR 67.8 % Graduation Rate (AFGR) 23rd Percentile

Note: In 2010-11, we were at the 9th Percentile

YEAR 2 (2012-13) began the work under a new structure — a Six-Member Cabinet, Six Achievement Area Superintendents, Elementary Assistant Principals, Goal Clarity Coaches, Student Response Teams, and Professional Learning Communities.

RESULTS: In 2012-13, met our Kentucky target. All groups improved.

51.3 % CCR 76.5% Graduation Rate (Four-Year Cohort) 35th Percentile

YEAR 3 (2013-14) We continued implementing the plan. We launched an Equity Scorecard and the State Auditor, at our invitation began reviewing our spending and practices with the goal of identifying areas that we could improve in.

RESULTS: In 2013-14, met our Kentucky target, College and Career Ready (CCR) target, and Graduation Rate target. All groups improved even more.

60.6 % CCR 79% Graduation Rate (Four-Year Cohort) 51st Percentile

Overall achievement has improved and the trend is positive — in fact, if 649 additional elementary school students had scored proficient or higher, we would have met our Kentucky 2014 target of being on track to reach 100 percent proficiency.

YEAR 4 (2014-15) We added a Director of Strategic Execution/Implementation at the Cabinet team level and a Director of Human Resources and initiated a Compensation Study to ensure internal and external equity. Mental health counselors were added at the school-level and transition centers were instituted in every secondary school. We began working on the Compassionate Schools Project (to intentionally build the capacity of our students to self-regulate) and the Bellarmine Literacy Project (with the goal of all third graders being proficient in reading).

RESULTS: For 2014-15 — results are expected in the fall 2015.

2014-15 YEAR-IN-REVIEW

1. STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

Results demonstrate that we have been focused on the right strategies. A leaner, more focused *Vision 2015* (utilizing stakeholder feedback) was approved by the Board on October 27, 2014. The 16 strategies were the guide to our work for 2014-15. Success Measures and Leading Indicators set measurable targets to work toward. The Comprehensive District Improvement Plan details the implementation of those 16 strategies. A Cabinet member is responsible for the implementation of action steps. The Board Meeting Planning Calendar has provided a focus on strategic priorities in our Board agenda. Each school has an aligned Comprehensive School Improvement Plan informed by their school-specific data.

The JCPS plan is part of a larger effort and plan — the Cradle to College/Career/Life Continuum. Our efforts align with the community's efforts to increase support for early childhood and Kindergarten Readiness and to the goal of having our students be ready for college and career and moving toward the community's 55K Degrees and Workforce Development goals.

We are in the process of engaging the Community in thinking beyond *Vision 2015*. A Board Planning Session and Stakeholder Meetings are providing the "thinking" to create a new strategic plan — *Vision 2020* — that will move achievement for every student forward. The timeline is to have a plan for Board approval in September 2015. The strategic priorities of *Vision 2020* will be in place to drive the 2016-17 budget process.

2. INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Research-based "What Works" strategies guide our work

- a. Focus on Standards (or what students are expected to learn)
- b. Increased Time on Learning
- c. Use of Data
- d. Teachers Working in Collaboration/Strong Principal Leadership
- e. A Culture of High Expectations for All Students

Teachers have continued to work collaboratively in Professional Learning Communities with the support of principal leadership. That work begins with an understanding of what students are expected to learn (the standards) and an expectation that all students can learn what is expected. Teachers let the data regarding what individual students know or don't know inform their teaching practice. Teachers provide extra time and different strategies for students who don't know what is expected and enrichment for those who do know what is expected.

JCPS was recognized as a Professional Learning District. Over 800 JCPS employees are registered to attend the National PLC @ Work Institute, July 14-16, 2015.

School-based structure and systemwide structures are in place to provide the needed extra time — the Summer Bridge Program, Extended Learning/ATTain, Extended School Service, Kindergarten and First-Grade Summer Programs, Out of School Time Learning Places.

We are also proactively working to address barriers that impede a student's ability to focus on learning and to keep students in school. Those include: Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS), Restorative Practices, Student Response Teams (SRTs), Mental Health Counselors, Bullying Prevention, Compassionate Schools Project, Louisville Linked, and Crisis Teams.

We are proactively working to improve our Early Childhood Services impacting Kindergarten Readiness. One of our goals this year is to enroll 3,500 students in Early Childhood Education by Day 1. We currently already have 2,656 enrolled. Overall spending (all funds) for Early Childhood in this budget is \$40.7 million, an increase of \$176,000. 3.3 million additional local dollars has been added to Early Childhood funding due to decreases in state and federal grants and to cover transportation costs. The goal is to increase the number of students from 4,018 served this year to over 4,100 next year and, MOST importantly, to increase the QUALITY of the service.

We are proactively working to create Success Pathways for students to create opportunities for academic success. This is aligned with statutorily raising the dropout age to 18. Transition Centers (now at every middle and high school) provide opportunities for differentiation based on student needs. Five-Star School themes are designed to make learning relevant and to answer the age-old question — 'Why do I need to know this?'

We are launching two District of Innovation School K-8 Models for 2015-16 (Waldorf-Inspired Maupin and Reach at Atkinson Academy).

The principals of schools that did not meet their target are part of a School Improvement Academy. Seventeen Principals are participating this year. The number of schools meeting their target increased to 95 (in 2013-14) from 75 (in 2012-13).

3. CULTURAL LEADERSHIP

The cornerstone of our culture needs to be our vision of 'all students graduating prepared' and our mission of 'instruction (or a teaching/learning process) that inspires students to learn'. We have this incredible opportunity, by educating 101,000 citizens to a high level, to create a better Louisville.

Culturally, we are moving a district from an adult-centered to a student-centered organization and to a culture where there are high expectations for every employee and accountability for every employee. The student is the center of the universe for the school. The school is the center of the universe for the central offices. Dr. Doug Reeves, states that 'No adult in the district should be held less accountable than every student in the district.' Just as students are learning to work together, so are the adults of the district. We are all interdependent and have important roles in the support of our schools to achieve our vision. Continuing to collaborate internally and with external partners is a key to our continued success.

The Superintendent, Cabinet members, and three Principals attended the Harvard Public Education Leadership Project (PELP) in July 2014. Our problem of practice was to work on a protocol to create teams to work to solve problems that are responsive to schools. Professional Learning Communities are the venue for doing that on the school level.

This summer, the Superintendent and the Area Assistant Superintendents will attend PELP, July 6-11, 2015, to continue the work of how to create a more responsive Central Office. Area Assistant Superintendents organizationally will move to the main Central Office building and will have a closer connection to the Superintendent and to the rest of the Cabinet.

An Ombudsman position was added in 2012-13 as recommended by the organizational review to provide a confidential resource for adults in the District.

Teamwork and Communication are "big rocks" and are essential to creating the desired culture. David Novak, former CEO of KFC Yum! Brands and author of [Taking People with You](#), was our

keynote speaker at our administrative kickoff on July 22, 2014. During a districtwide webcast for all employees on August 12, 2015, the Superintendent recounted the "moments" in her life and recognized those adults that had made a difference to her. Everyone has a "story". We started the 2014-15 year knowing that our students are counting on us, and that school-based employees have an incredible opportunity to be a "moment" for a child and to propel him/her forward.

In August 2014, as a part of *JCPS Connect*—our initiative to strengthen internal communications—we launched a new info-graphic web page. It details the progress of the district in several key areas — <http://www.jefferson.kyschools.us/JCPSConnect/> Developing the capacity of senior leadership to be a high-performing team was an expectation. We issued an RFP for Executing Coaching. Valley alum and renowned executive coach Marshall Goldsmith responded to offer to coach the Cabinet at no cost. The Superintendent and each member of the Cabinet received 360 feedback and then set an improvement goal. Strategic Consulting Partners provided additional executive coaching services for the Superintendent. The Strategic Consulting Partners Executive Coach observed two Cabinet meetings to provide feedback. We set protocols for meetings — a 90-minute meeting on Monday morning, two check-ins via phone on Wednesday and Friday, and quarterly 2-3 hour meetings focused on a specific problem, and with the goal of two full-day planning sessions annually. Marshall Goldsmith spent a half-day with the team on February 5, 2015, and will be finishing with a half-day on June 19, 2015. Our Cabinet meets quarterly with the Mayor's leadership team to align our efforts.

TELL Survey results show that 84.4 percent of our teachers believe that their school is a good place to work, consistent with 89 percent satisfaction on the comprehensive survey for school-based certified staff.

Golden Oar Awards continue to be presented to employees at all levels of the organization who model a value(s) of the strategic plan. Hilliard Lyons presented 31 Excellence Awards (individuals and PLCs/teams) to 54 employees.

4. HUMAN RESOURCE LEADERSHIP

We are a people-powered business — 88.98 percent, or \$87,034,349, of our general fund budget, and 72.26%, or \$1,010,825,935, of the total budget, is spent on people. Our best return-on-that-investment is building the capacity within each individual. Adoption of the Educator Growth System for each employee group (superintendent, principals, teachers, and others) makes it clear what "effective" is across Kentucky. It creates a consistent lens through which to view performance with the goal of providing growth opportunities for employees.

The TPEGS (Teacher Professional Educator Growth System) is based on effectiveness standards. The Kentucky Framework for Teaching, which contains four domains: 1. Planning and Preparation; 2. Classroom Environment; 3. Instruction; and 4. Professional Responsibilities.

The newly-created position of Chief Business Officer will oversee Human Resources (as our biggest expense) and will work with Human Resources to forecast needs and to create strategies to increase the engagement of our employees. The Chief Business Officer will have the responsibility to hire a Director of Human Resources and a Human Resources Recruiter. A strategic priority is to have our workforce more closely mirror our student population.

The JCPS Human Capital Diagnostic Project is examining human capital management in the areas of teacher recruitment, placement, development, evaluation, and retention for the last five years in JCPS. This is part of the Harvard University Strategic Data Project (SDP). Bo Yan, Specialist II, is the SDP Data Fellow. Marco Munoz and Dena Dossett are the SDP Agency Fellows.

Going digital is part of the Human Resources improvement initiative. The application and review process will be moving online this fall and will provide easy access to applicant profile data. Electronic copies of records will make information more accessible. Evaluation data will be entered electronically so that it is accessible in a database.

Our salaries are intended to be competitive to attract the best talent to JCPS. The Compensation Study will provide recommendations to ensure internal equity and to benchmark our salaries against other districts and comparable positions in industry.

We are working on our leadership pipeline through the National Institute for School Leadership (NISL) — a nationally-recognized research-based model. In 2013-14, seven administrators were trained as facilitators. In 2014-15, 25 administrators received training. In 2015-16, there are currently 30 participants scheduled for training. Additional participants may be added.

5. MANAGERIAL LEADERSHIP

The State Auditor's Review, delivered to us in May 21, 2014, was the catalyst for several big improvements. Within 30 days, the State Auditor received a response, and a year later, we documented completion or progress in 44/45 areas.

The District engaged the services of an independent, external firm (Dean Dorton) to conduct the internal audit function of the district and to functionally report to the Board.

CFO Cordelia Hardin improved revenue and expenditure transparency through the launch of the Citizen Financial Transparency Website. Improvements were made to the Budget Process. The 2015-2016 Tentative Budget Document made improvements to be responsive to the Board and public — continued reduction in non-school-based spending and increase in school-based spending. Our school-based funding has increased by 2.16 percent from this year. Non-school-based funding has decreased by 2.16 percent from this year. That continues our trajectory of increasing \$\$ where it directly impacts students. Over four years, school-based spending has increased by \$245.9 million. Over four years, non-school-based spending has decreased by \$92.8 million.

Strategic Budget priorities were: supporting the K-8 Waldorf-Inspired Maupin, K-8 Reach Design at Atkinson Academy, opening Kennedy as an elementary school, redesigning a Success Pathways School on Bashford Manor Lane, the Presbyterian Community Center early childhood/meeting space, and continuing construction for the 2016-17 opening of an elementary school at Norton Commons.

The District engaged the services of MAG (Management Advisory Group) to conduct a comprehensive compensation study to ensure internal and external equity.

The Management Information Systems (MIS) reorganization will continue to fuel improved customer service. Bandwidth was improved.

Transportation efficiency improved reducing elementary depots from 20 to 13, with savings accrued from reduced ride times and fuel savings.

An RFP (Request for Proposal) was issued to outsource legal services beginning July 1, 2015.

Working with the Jefferson County Public Education Foundation led to the establishment of an Executive Director position to focus on fundraising efforts that support the Strategic Plan. We have a Coordinator of Business Partnerships that works to establish partnerships that support the Strategic Plan.

Establish the position of Chief Business Officer to continue to drive efficiencies, transparency, and forecasting future financial risks/opportunities and to oversee the Human Resources Department and employee investigations. This position will allow the Superintendent to focus on creating internal relationships and to help to build an internal culture that supports employees, focuses them on improving achievement for every student, and recognizes employees for their efforts.

6. COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP

This year has continued to demonstrate the importance and value of strong community partnerships. We have worked collaboratively with Louisville Metro Government (including 55K and KentuckianaWorks), Metro United Way, and Higher Education to establish a cradle to college/career/life pipeline.

Partnerships with higher education (Bellarmine Literacy Project and University of Louisville Early Literacy Project) keep the focus on getting every third grader to reading proficiency.

We have collaborated internally and with external partners to increase college-going rate and improve the secondary to postsecondary transition (e.g., College Signing Day at the KFC Yum! Center, 'Summer Melt' strategies, College Transition Action Centers, FAFSA completion, UPS School to Work, student and parent counseling, Close the Deal, etc.).

Parents are powerful partners. The 15th District PTA, as well as the Governor's Commonwealth Institute for Parent Leadership (GCIPL) continues to support parental engagement. *One Call Now* is a tool that allows for parent/guardian communication with unlimited voice, text, and email messages. Parent newsletters focused on reading and math standards. The K-Readiness website provides parents with activities to focus on the dimensions of readiness.

A new website will be launched in January 2016. This is along with a series of initiatives to improve communication with the community including the Superintendent's Email Blast, JCPS At-a-Glance, off-site Board of Education meetings, JCPS Connect and increased use of social media.

Louisville Linked continues to connect student needs to community partners and resources. At the end of the seventh month, there were 57,945 links (47 percent basic needs, 34 percent academic interventions, 19 percent social/emotional/mental health and 11 percent physical health) made benefitting 26,536 students.

The Ford Next Generation Community engages business partner involvement that benefits both students and teachers (work-based learning, enrichment camps, internships and externships).

The following volunteer opportunities promote educational equity: Every1Reads, Watch DOGS, Clothing Assistance Programs, mentors.

Continuing learning opportunities beyond the school day/year include: K-Readiness Camps, Coding at the Beech, Literacy and Chess, *EveryOne Learns* Places, Street Academy, Summer Bridge, Mayor's Cultural Passes, etc.

7. INFLUENTIAL LEADERSHIP

The work of a District happens in a larger context. JCPS is one of 173 districts in Kentucky. We have worked to establish positive working relationships with the Kentucky Department of Education, locally elected officials in Louisville, and the Jefferson County Legislative Delegation. We all benefit from the improvement of public education in Louisville. The Superintendent serves on KDE Local Superintendents Advisory Council (LSAC) and the Superintendents' Advisory Council (SAC).

A waiver was approved by the State Board of Education for our District of Innovation School, Waldorf-Inspired Maupin. Due to federal regulations, our English Language Learner (ELL) waiver could not be approved at the state level.

Work has been done on the board agenda planning calendar to focus our Board on the strategic priorities of the District.

Important was the approval of a Joint Commitment between JCPS and Louisville Metro Government to improve educational outcomes in Louisville. We have also collaborated around our Males of Color Commitment which further enhances the work of Men of Quality. Our Strategic Plan is part of a Cradle to College/Career/Life pipeline. We have engaged with GLI (Greater Louisville Inc.), KentuckianaWorks, and the Jefferson County Public Education Foundation to ensure alignment between our 5-Star Career Theme high schools, the Ford Next Generation Learning Master Plan, and the workforce needs of Louisville.

A joint partnership between Metro United Way, Louisville Metro Government, and JCPS is centered around improving the quality of out-of-school time programming provided by our community partners.

A contract with McCarthy Strategic Solutions has assisted in deepening our relationships with the legislative and executive branch leadership to expand the influence of the Board and Superintendent in policy development. The Superintendent testified before the Senate Education Committee during the 2015 session in support of Senate Bill 132, which would have given the Superintendent authority to select a principal for a low-performing school.

The Superintendent continues to be visible in the community serving on the following boards and committees: Fund for the Arts, Kentucky Science Center, Muhammed Ali Center, University of Louisville Board of Overseers, University of Louisville College of Education Dean's Advisory Board, 55K Degrees Board, WDRB Editorial Advisory Board, Rotary Club, Mayor's Safe and Healthy Neighborhood Advisory Committee. Cabinet members also serve on community boards and committees.

AREAS OF FOCUS

For 2014-15, the areas of focus included developing the team and communication to the team, proactive communication — externally and internally, forging internal partnerships, development of internal culture, human resources, clear objective processes, early childhood programs, and school-based authority vs. district-level authority.

“We do not learn from experience. We learn from reflecting on the experience.” John Dewey

Reflecting on the 2014-15 school year, we have continued momentum in three areas. We are making progress in three other areas. Changes in those areas will allow for increased attention in 2015-16 to the remaining area.

We have continued momentum in the areas of (2) Instructional Leadership, (1) Strategic Leadership, and in (6) Collaborative Leadership, better aligning our work and the work of our community partners.

We are making progress in (5) Managerial Leadership by implementing changes that will improve our operations and will further impact improvements in (4) Human Resource

Leadership. We are also making progress in (7) Influential Leadership, allowing us to work to remove barriers in policy and statute.

In 2015-16, we need to focus efforts on (3) Cultural Leadership. There have been many changes in a relatively short period of time. Many of the changes were prompted by candid employee feedback provided in the external reviews. Our employees have been resilient and should be commended for their "tolerance for truth". The Lead Auditor of the 2011-12 Phi Delta Kappa International Management Audit, John Murdoch, described the necessary process of "unfreezing" the existing culture, establishing a new culture or 'way of behaving', and then "freezing" that new culture. That needs to be the priority for 2015-16.

Much has been done, but there is definitely much work ahead of us. We are beginning a new chapter of work that will be guided by a Strategic Plan that looks to 2020.

Paul Reville, a professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, challenges districts to "design a new engine with enough power and versatility to meet the challenge of educating all students to a high level." According to Reville, the 21st century school system must:

- Differentiate to provide specific educational opportunities — meeting each child where he/she is
- Close gaps in students' well-being so that they can attend to learning
- Greatly increase access to out-of-school learning opportunities

It is an exciting time. Lead Auditor John Murdoch provided the charge — "the board, administration, teachers, and community...to unite together to accomplish these very doable tasks."