

Tulsa Public Schools Strategic Plan Update October, 2009

Results from the community focus group sessions held during the Spring semester of 2009 have been reviewed and tabulated. The process included several area meetings in each of the quadrants of the city as well as input from surveys that were distributed during these sessions and on the District website. From the careful review of the comments and questionnaires five priorities were identified as issues that should be incorporated into the next 5 year cycle of the District Strategic Plan.

The five top priorities include the following

- Safety and Security
- Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
- Finances
- Teacher Effectiveness
- Leadership and Sustainability

Many survey respondents and participants in the focus groups further communicated information that was reviewed and from which several key areas emerged as a subset of within each of the five priority areas. These key areas are listed below.

Safety and Security

- Discipline/Behavior Issues
- Drugs
- Gangs
- Suspensions
- Lack of creative discipline options

Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

- Class size—student teacher ratio
- Variety and rigor in curriculum
- College readiness
- Addressing diversity
- Textbooks and other instructional resources
- Alternative education choices
- Grades and test scores
- Motivation to take challenging courses
- Requirements for state testing

Finance

- Reductions in state funding that impact the classroom
- Passing a bond issue
- Salaries for attracting and retaining quality teachers
- Facilities—improvement and repair
- Continued support of athletic programs
- Transportation availability

Teacher Effectiveness

- Creative teaching that motivates and challenges students
- Instruction that is not based on the learning needs of students
- Teaching strategies that motivate and engage students to perform at higher levels
- Lack of focus on improving student self esteem
- Teacher content knowledge
- Use of varied instructional strategies
- Ensuring that high quality teachers are in all areas of the District
- Avoiding sarcasm and negative criticism (“teacher put-downs”)
- Poor interpersonal skills and relationships with students
- Teachers who are disengaged from teaching

Leadership and Sustainability

- A vision that everyone supports
- Training and professional development opportunities
- Stability
- Future planning
- Lack of trust
- Leveraging all resources to ensure the greatest positive impact

Next Steps

The superintendent will review the vision, mission, and beliefs with the Board of Education. The Performance Excellence Steering Committee (PESC) will begin its work to identify and recommend the core goals, short-term goals, and strategic objectives will be included in this year’s strategic plan. These recommendations will be forwarded to the superintendent. Action plans and performance measures will be developed following the superintendent’s approval.