

Strategic plan puts focus on Dunlap Schools

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By Sruthi Yeju
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Dunlap, Ill. -

The upcoming community forum for the Dunlap School District strategic plan is described as an important event for the District 323 schools by Dr. Jay Marino, superintendent of schools. Marino said the strategic plan is designed to create the kind of school district they want to develop in the next three to five years.

The strategic planning team is comprised of stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers and community members from all walks of life.

According to Marino, all the concerned parties have previously shared what they believe is most important for the school district.

The main emphasis is on preparing students to compete and succeed globally and to set them up with 21st century skills.

Marino said that the key components of the five-year strategic plan are mission, vision, core values/collective beliefs, goals and strategies.

These are draft statements that will be further evaluated based on the feedback from the public at the community forum.

Once the strategic plan is finalized, it will be sent for approval by the board of education. Schools will then develop and implement their plan in alignment with the strategic plan.

Each school will have teams of teachers working on achieving the goals stated in the plan. Students will also be involved in the implementation process with the help of a program called Classroom Learning Community. The implementation of the plan is expected to start in the fall.

When asked about weaknesses in the plan that they are trying to overcome, Marino said he does not see "weaknesses," just "opportunities for improvement."

After reviewing the data, the planning team identified "opportunities" and is working toward improving those areas.

Some issues that they want to address are ensuring that every student's needs are met and providing support to everyone from slow learners to gifted students.

The team is also looking at better integration of technology in the classrooms for enhanced education, expanding foreign languages and enabling more collaboration time for the teachers.

Although, the financial implications of the strategic plan are yet to be determined, Marino said, once the strategies are finalized, they will align the budget and resources accordingly.

The committee members will present a brief overview of the draft plan and the planning process at the community forum.

The public can provide feedback at the forum, which will then be reviewed by the planning committee before finalizing the strategic plan.

A draft of the strategic plan is available for public review and input on the district's Web site at www.dunlapcusd.net.

The Dunlap district is partnering with the Consortium for Educational Change, which will assist in the facilitation of the planning process.

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Dunlap Schools Strategic Plan Community Forum

DATE: March 2

TIME: 7 p.m.

PLACE: Dunlap Valley Middle School

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