



2019-2024

# Lombard District #44 Strategic Plan

"We're All In This Together"

**DRAFT:**  
**February 13, 2019**



# WE ARE MORE THAN A MISSION STATEMENT.

When we began this strategic planning process, we knew we had an important question to answer -- what does student success really look like? Every single member of the Connect 44 Strategic Planning Team fully committed themselves to answering this question, and we did so by an incredible amount of listening.

Over the course of five months, we listened to each other, we listened to what the data was telling us, we listened to our stakeholders, we listened to educational leaders, and, most importantly, we listened to the children. This powerful collection of voices, ideas, needs and thoughts provided us our guiding light to determine not only what student success looks like, but how a successful school system truly functions.

The following document captures that work and outlines our focus moving forward. It does not contain every single answer in achievement of our future vision. It does not contain a mission and vision statement constructed to be "buzz words" rather than real purpose. It does not contain the work of just one person, one idea or one voice.

Instead, it contains our commitment to continuing the conversation in constant pursuit of:

## Connection, Community & Collaboration.

Sincerely,

Ted Stec  
Superintendent  
Lombard District 44

### 2019-2024 STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS



Student  
Wellness and  
Growth



Family and  
Community  
Engagement



Professional  
Growth and  
Commitment



Financial  
Stewardship,  
Facilities &  
Technology

# Connect 44 Team

## Five Months, Four Goals

- Courtney Long, President of the Board of Education
- Gayln Piper, Member of the Board of Education
- Ted Stec, Superintendent
- Jenn Nimke, Director of Communications & Strategic Planning
- Brett Sharkey, Chief Academic Officer
- Tod Altenburg, Director of Employee & Labor Relations
- Neil Perry, Chief Operations Officer
- Jon Dathe, Maintenance
- Maria Martin, EL/Bilingual Coordinator
- James Soderstrom, Community Member
- Kirsten Hickman, Community Member
- Rita Shafer, Community Member
- Cathy Angelos, John Schroder Early Childhood Center Principal
- Katie Bernas, John Schroder Early Childhood Teacher
- Donna Moyer, John Schroder Instructional Assistant
- Jamie Dunford, John Schroder Speech Language Pathologist
- Kris Walsh, Butterfield Elementary Principal
- Katie Granados, Butterfield Elementary Third Grade Teacher
- Patti Kring, Butterfield Elementary Instructional Assistant
- Stephanie Ganakos, Butterfield Elementary Title Teacher
- Dave Danielski, Hammerschmidt Elementary Principal
- Becky Modrowski, Hammerschmidt Second Grade Teacher
- Karen McNamara, Hammerschmidt Instructional Assistant
- Morgan Dowell, Hammerschmidt Instructional Facilitator
- Yesenia Vazquez, Madison Principal
- Lisa Bala, Madison First Grade Teacher
- Jennifer Guerrero, Madison Instructional Assistant
- Frank Ferrara, Madison Instructional Facilitator
- Eric Haren, Manor Hill Principal
- Sandi Fischer, Manor Hill Kindergarten Teacher
- Laurie Polanski, Manor Hill Title Teacher
- Roberta Wallerstedt, Park View Principal
- Anna Malcolm, Park View Second Grade Teacher
- Jennifer Buescher, Park View EL Teacher
- Mia Shea-Michiels, Park View Psychologist
- Stephanie Loth, Pleasant Lane Principal
- Elaine Burnell, Pleasant Lane Infinity Teacher
- Jeanne Hostetler, Pleasant Lane Resource Teacher
- Wendy Underwood, Pleasant Lane Instructional Assistant
- Mike Fumagalli, Glenn Westlake Principal
- Molly Rawleigh, Glenn Westlake Seventh Grade Teacher
- Cathy Spears, Glenn Westlake Instructional Assistant
- Mike Salek, Glenn Westlake Maintenance
- Kim Caligiuri and Rita Woods Co-Presidents, Union – Instructional Assistants
- Bob Davis Lombard Education Association Union Chief Negotiator and Grievance Chair



# Connect 44 Strategic Planning: Timeline & Process

## Where Are We Now? (September-October)

PARENT &  
STAFF SURVEY

IDEAL GRADUATE

STUDENT FOCUS  
GROUPS



## What is Our Future? (October-November)

MISSION

VISION

ORGANIZATIONAL  
VALUES



## How Do We Get There? (November-January)

GOALS

CURRENT  
INITIATIVES

FUTURE STRATEGIES



## What Will the Outcome Be? (January-February)

DEFINING OUR SUCCESS  
STORY

DETERMINING  
MEANINGFUL  
MEASUREMENT TOOLS

STEP

1



**THE NOW**

**Ideal  
Graduate**

# Lombard District 44

## Graduate

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### WE BEGAN WITH THE END IN MIND....

So what exactly can we expect if we are successful at all of this? What will this really look like for our students of Lombard District 44?

At the start of the strategic planning process, we asked members of the Connect 44 Team, our students and various PTA focus groups to share with us what their image is of an "ideal graduate." While their feedback was used throughout the creation of our new strategic plan, it also very much represents our end goal.

The following narrative outlines what our parents said they want to see in their children. It is what our students said they want to see in themselves. It is what our teachers, staff and administrators said they want for every learner.

**"We need to learn how to be disappointed because the world is full of stress so we need to be more prepared."**

-Lombard 44 Student

### THE LOMBARD DISTRICT 44 GRADUATE

When a student departs Lombard District 44, they will be a problem solver who can carefully balance a variety of tasks and advocate for his or her self when support is needed. They are resourceful, passionate, curious, open-minded about the world and have a true love for learning. They listen and are empathetic, and, because of this, are able to be powerful collaborators with genuine leadership abilities.

The Lombard District 44 graduate has been challenged and gained great clarity from these challenges regarding their strengths. They are happy, optimistic children with a global perspective about their world. They have had great exposure to a variety of vocational skills, different community and civic opportunities as well as the arts and physical education. They are true humanitarians who understand the value of all people and their community.

The ideal Lombard District 44 graduate also embodies a high degree of independence, has strong communication skills, is technologically savvy and is skilled in stress management. They have acquired a strong base of academic skills and knowledge and are physically healthy as well as emotionally secure. They leave our district knowing they have value and with an appreciation for the connections they have developed with a variety of adults, as these connections provide them with the safety and security to feel confident taking risks and being truly engaged in their learning.

**"I would like to know that I am accepted and that I belong."**

-Lombard 44 Student

STEP

1



**THE NOW**

**Staff &  
Parent  
Feedback**

# Parent and Staff Feedback: Current State vs. Future Needs

In an effort to understand the needs and priorities of all stakeholders, Lombard District 44 launched a community-wide survey. Parents, community members and staff had an opportunity to complete the survey during a two-week window in early September. A full analysis of the results was reviewed by members of the Connect 44 Team. The following outlines what parents and staff members feel our current strengths are as well as what they consider to be high priorities for the future. The Strategic Planning Team utilized this information to understand what must be maintained as we move forward as well as what we must focus on providing in the future.

## Current State



### TALENTED, DEDICATED EMPLOYEES

Nearly **100% of survey respondents** reported that teachers and faculty throughout District 44 are our greatest strength



### HIGH QUALITY TEACHING & LEARNING

**88% of parents** are satisfied or extremely satisfied with the overall quality of education in District 44



### SAFE & SECURE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

**91% of parents** said their children feel safe in their school. **94% of staff** report the same feeling of security.

## Future Focus



### ADDRESSING STUDENTS' SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

**50% of parents** and **68% of staff** feel this should be a priority.



### DIFFERENTIATED LEARNING EXPERIENCES FOR STUDENTS THAT MATCH THEIR NEEDS

**45% of parents** and **57% of staff** rank differentiation as a future focus area.



### PREPARING STUDENTS TO BE SOCIALLY-RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS

**47% of parents** and **52% of staff** said this should be an area of focus in the next 3-5 years



STEP

1



**THE NOW**

**Student  
Feedback**



### **Leadership Opportunities and Student Choice**

Students need to have opportunities for choice, or ownership, in their learning.



### **Recognition and Reward**

Being recognized helps students build confidence in themselves and develop clear understanding of their strengths.



### **Safety and Security**

Students need the physical safety of their classrooms and schools to be intact. They must also have the same level of emotional security present.

## **STUDENT FEEDBACK:**

# **The Future Focus of Learning**

An additional and critical element of feedback during the strategic planning process was hearing from our students. Over the course of a two-month period, nearly 100 students in grades 3-8 participated in focus group sessions where they could offer feedback about their experiences in Lombard District 44. The following graphic outlines the most commonly cited needs by students in those grade levels.



### **Connection and Caring**

Students need to know their teachers are truly invested in their success. They also want to be engaged in their learning "with" their teacher, not "because" of their teacher.



### **Active Learning**

When students can move, they can concentrate better. They also rely on activities that encourage collaboration because it allows them to foster important connections with their peers.

①



STEP

②



THE FUTURE



**Philosophy  
Statement**

LOMBARD DISTRICT 44  
PHILOSOPHY

**"WE'RE ALL  
IN THIS  
TOGETHER"**



①



STEP

②



THE FUTURE



**Core  
Values**

# Lombard District 44 Core Values

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In Lombard District 44, we believe:

- **Family is at the root of everything we do.** We must support each other like a family, establish connections with the families of our students, and care for our students as though they are our own. When we do, this place becomes our home.
- **Meaningful connection is at the heart of the learning experience.** Connection provides our students with the necessary emotional and physical safety to thrive as well as develop a true love for their learning.
- **Students are so much more than test scores,** and their performance should not solely rely upon this one measurement that so often fails to reflect the whole picture of their achievements. Finding success is a personal journey for every child and it deserves to be seen as such.
- **Accountability is essential to developing lasting trust and trust is essential to allowing for innovation.** We must all hold each other accountable for meeting our intended goals and provide necessary support when they feel seemingly out of reach. It is only when these feelings of safety and support are fully at play that we can begin to feel inspired and comfortable to innovate.
- **Empathy is one of the most powerful human emotions** we have the ability to feel. Therefore, we must provide our students with the right tools and experiences so they **can truly change the world.**



**THE HOW**

**Strategic Goals**



# Lombard District 44 Strategic Plan Goals



## STUDENT WELLNESS & GROWTH

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Our students will be emotionally secure, academically prepared thought-leaders who are invested, engaged and connected to their learning experience.



## FAMILY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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Our families and community members will be knowledgeable and supportive of the district's mission and vision. They will also be actively engaged and involved in the success of our students as well as the district as a whole.



## PROFESSIONAL GROWTH & COMMITMENT

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All teachers and staff members will be provided with the appropriate resources and support in order to establish meaningful connections with students as well as execute effective teaching and learning practices that meet the unique needs and strengths of each child.



## FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP, FACILITIES & TECHNOLOGY

Our facilities will support an environment that inspires student learning while also adequately addressing the changing needs of our students. The allocation of our financial resources will be driven by student-centered decision-making that ensures equity and excellence.



**THE HOW**

**Initiatives  
&  
Strategies**





# Goal 1: Student Wellness & Growth

Our students will be emotionally secure, academically prepared thought-leaders who are invested, engaged, and connected to their learning experience.

## GOAL NARRATIVE

In Lombard District 44, we seek to foster creativity, encourage innovation and promote individual excellence. Our students must be leaders, not just learners, and that is accomplished by providing opportunities for choice and voice in their school experience. We must involve students in our decision-making as a district as well as actively seek their opinions and feedback.

Equally, it is critical that we reach the head and heart of every child, giving them tools to navigate the world around them as well as the academic skills that will serve as a strong foundation for their ongoing learning. We want our students to be physically and emotionally healthy individuals who have great awareness of their strengths and keen understanding of how to overcome various challenges.

Through initiatives such as whole school social-emotional lessons, increased Tier 1 social-emotional opportunities and greater utilization of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), our students will be able to develop emotional security and a true sense of empathy. Expanding our Dual Language Program will also provide more students with opportunities to broaden their cultural understanding.

In addition, we must offer additional activities rooted in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math to give our students opportunities to problem-solve and build upon their unique wonderings. Our students must also be technologically savvy, understanding the ever-evolving world of technology and how to be responsible users.

Finally, we also must explore various curriculum adoptions to ensure consistency and equity in their implementation across the district. This must occur in tandem with proper and strategic support to our teachers.

## Initiatives

- **Expand the Dual Language Program**
- **Develop Principal-led Student Advisory Group**
- **Develop Student-led Goal Setting Process**
- **Implement Student Engagement Survey**
- **Continue Deconstruction of Learning Standards**
- **Revise Report Card to Reflect New Learning Standards**
- **Review Curricular Resources to Ensure Alignment & Refine Curriculum Adoption Process**
- **Continue Development & Implementation of Accelerated Placement Program**
- **Create "One School, One Book" Program Across District**



# Goal 2: Family & Community Engagement

Our families and community members will be knowledgeable and supportive of the district's mission and vision. They will also be actively engaged and involved in the success of our students as well as the district as a whole.

## GOAL NARRATIVE

We understand that parents are a child's first teacher, and we must work in close collaboration with our families in order for students to excel in their academic achievement. Our families should feel welcome, included and connected to their child's school and, because of this, actively involved in the growth of their child as well as the overall success of their school.

At the heart of all of this must be proactive and strategic communications. We need to explore how we can improve upon our communication efforts in order to build community support, awareness and connection to our work as a school system.

Parent outreach and education is also a critical element to this work. Parents must be provided with the skills, resources and support so they can teach their child alongside us. Social-emotional lessons for parents as well as the development of a speaker series that touches on current issues relevant for Pre-K-8 parents would offer great support as well as build upon that critical sense of community.

Similarly, we want those without children in the district to feel equally welcomed and engaged with the district. Our community residents, programs, civic organizations and government agencies should be considered resources to support student learning, and we must explore how we can build upon these various partnerships. The development of a district foundation could also serve as a great platform for community involvement, sponsorship and support.

## Initiatives

- **Develop Comprehensive Communications Strategy for District, Schools, Classrooms & Community**
- **Develop Communications & Social Media Procedure with Aligned Professional Development for Staff**
- **Implement Communications Survey to Understand Stakeholder Needs**
- **Develop Outreach & Engagement Plan for Older Adults**
- **Redesign District & School Websites**
- **Establish District 44 Foundation**
- **Engage Students in Re-Branding of District**
- **Increase Connections and Recognition of District 44 Alumni**
- **Increase Efforts to Share Stories and Celebrations Across District**



# Goal 3: Professional Growth & Commitment

All teachers and staff members will be provided with the appropriate resources and support in order to establish meaningful connections with students as well as execute effective teaching and learning practices that meet the unique needs and strengths of each child.

## GOAL NARRATIVE

Our greatest strength in Lombard District 44 is our talented group of teachers, administrators and support staff members. We are fortunate to be a district where staff often stay throughout the entirety of their career, and this loyalty and dedication must not ever be lost.

Just as we seek to involve our students in our decision-making, we must also involve our staff. Collaborative decision-making is key to our success, so we must actively explore opportunities in which staff members from throughout the organization can have a voice and be a part of future initiatives, policies or programming changes. This could be through developing a new committee structure, utilizing surveys to gather input or conducting focus groups on specific initiatives. In tandem with this must also be providing employees with various leadership opportunities. The program that is about to begin at Madison Elementary that allows teachers to serve as an administrator is a great example of this, and it might be worth exploring its expansion to other schools.

As we explore various curriculum adoptions, it is important that we carefully consider what strategic supports our educators need to thoughtfully and successfully implement any changes in their classrooms. The same is applicable to our use of various social-emotional programs, tools and resources. We know we have a wealth of professional development offerings, but they are not always in alignment or directly connected to the needs of our employees.

## Initiatives

- **Identify Opportunities to Enhance PLC & other Collaboration Times for Staff**
- **Implement an Employee Satisfaction Survey**
- **Continue Development of Staff Leadership Program**
- **Implement District 44 University for Teachers to Lead Professional Development for Staff & Community Members**
- **Develop Communications & Training Program for New Staff & Subs on District 44 Approved Curriculum, Resources & Technology**



# Goal 4: Financial Stewardship, Facilities & Technology

Our facilities will support an environment that inspires student learning while also adequately addressing the changing needs of our students. The allocation of our financial resources will be driven by student-centered decision-making that ensures equity and excellence.

## GOAL NARRATIVE

Whether it is through administrative oversight or board governance, we must continue to carefully monitor and prioritize our spending. We know that political changes are always on the horizon, and this coupled with our growing student population as well as a dramatic increase in student need requires us to thoughtfully plan ahead. Lombard District 44 has a long history of financial excellence, and we would like this to continue as we navigate these challenges.

With space at a premium in several of our schools, we know the expansion of Glenn Westlake Middle School will allow us to address both the need for additional square footage as well as opportunity to re-design some of our learning spaces. We must begin to conceptualize other solutions for our next largest school, Madison Elementary School. We know student enrollment will only continue to increase, and that is occurring alongside our rapidly expanding Dual Language Program.

Looking much more broadly, we must also carefully consider the overall use, design and maintenance of our facilities. Our classrooms and LRCs must function in a way that supports and encourages student learning. The adaptability of our spaces must be examined not only to better support our students but to also accommodate new technologies such as interactive teaching displays in a greater way.

## Initiatives

- **Improve District Performance Through Implementation of Business Process Management**
- **Control Costs by Implementing Procurement Process**
- **Develop Strategic Maintenance Plan**
- **Modernize & Maintain Building Infrastructure**
- **Build Capacity into Learning Environments, Starting with Glenn Westlake Expansion**
- **Develop Technology Plan that Focuses on Student Learning & Engagement**
- **Increase Student Engagement Through Renovations to LRCs**
- **Increase Focus on Safety Through Implementation of New Systems & Maintenance of Facilities**

**THE OUTCOME**

# Defining & Measuring Success



# The Outcome: A New Way to Define Success



**Increased Home/  
School Connection  
& Parent  
Involvement**



**Strengthened  
Community  
Partnerships & Civic  
Opportunities**



**Improved  
Communications**



**Increased  
Employee &  
Student  
Satisfaction**



**Improved  
Resources &  
Support to  
Students and Staff**



**Increased  
Employee &  
Student  
Engagement**



**Prioritized  
Spending**



**Enhanced  
Opportunities for  
Collaborative  
Decision-Making**



**Increased  
Leadership  
Opportunities**



**Increased  
Alignment with  
ESSA (Every  
Student Succeeds  
Act)**

## MEASUREMENT TOOLS

In order to gauge our success, we will be utilizing the following tools or data sets to measure our yearly progress and growth.

- 5 Essentials Survey
- Parent Satisfaction Survey
- Student Engagement Survey
- Annual Budget
- Student & Staff Attendance
- Community, Parent & Staff Volunteers at School Events
- Development of Community Partnerships
- Student Participation in Co-Curriculars
- Student & Staff Leadership Opportunities
- Behavioral & Discipline Referrals
- Home Visits

