

Academic Pathway Plan Clayton County Public Schools 2011-2012

District Teaching and Learning Roadmap



Dr. Edmond T. Heatley, Superintendent
Dr. Stefanie Phillips, Deputy Superintendent
Dr. Diana Dumetz Carry, Chief Academic Officer

The Academic Pathway is the roadmap guided by questions:

What is it we expect students to learn, know, understand, and be able to do?

How will we know when students have learned?

How do we teach so all students learn?

How will we respond when students have already learned?

How will we respond when students don't learn?



Dr. Edmond T. Heatley
Superintendent

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Clayton County Public Schools
Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan tells where we are, where we want to go, how we will get there, the time line involved, and how it will be monitored – Balanced Scorecard

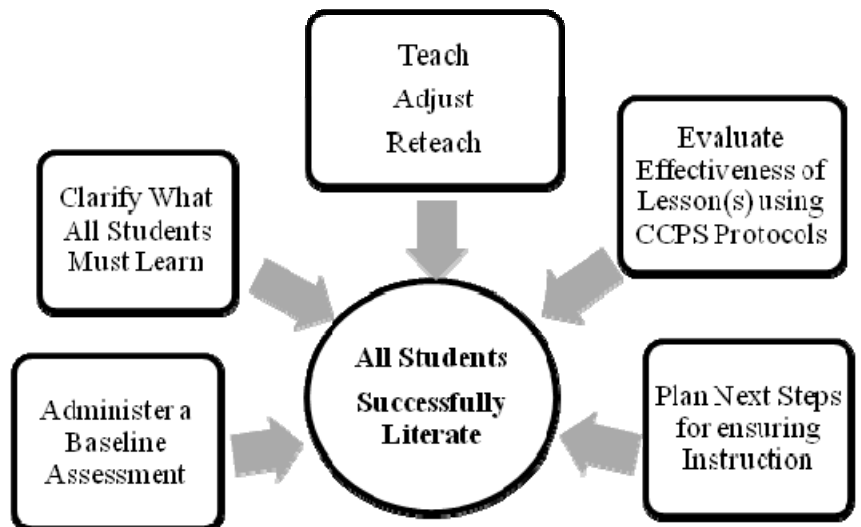
The Mission of Clayton County Public Schools is to be accountable for providing a globally competitive education that empowers students to achieve academic and personal goals and to become productive, responsible citizens.

The Vision of Clayton County Public Schools is to be a district of excellence preparing ALL students to successfully compete in a global economy.

Message from Superintendent

Dr. Edmond T. Heatley

Our students today face a challenging and increasingly uncertain world. They face a world that demands high levels of literacy and critical thinking skills to be successful economically and to fully participate as citizens in a democracy. They face a world in which constant technological change shapes the skills they will need to be successful in a global community. As such, it sets forth critical areas of focus and priority goals for schools and the district; an agenda for improvement; and specific initiatives the administration will pursue over the next several years to support the goals of this academic plan.



Literacy Across the Curriculum + Critical Thinking + Integrated Technology

This Academic Plan represents a year of planning and program development in specific areas—human capital, professional development, the key academic initiatives, the redesign of areas, and accountability—as well as a broad planning effort designed to identify overarching themes and challenges. This broad planning effort included a careful data analysis of trends in student and school performance, a review of research on effective schools and school reform both locally and nationally, and an agenda setting process that brought together diverse groups of participants to discuss the central issues facing elementary, middle, and high schools.

In numerous discussion groups, key stakeholders at multiple levels gave input on the Academic Pathway. Administrators, principals, teachers, school council members, parents, students, members of community groups, and members of the Chamber, Archway, education and civic communities, were brought into the dialog. Discussion targeted the central issues that the school system should focus on – what works in our successful schools and what works for teachers, school communities, and families.

The intent is to coordinate efforts and provide a common focus for school reform in one document. Thus, a critical goal is to provide a common language and framework to build broad strategies of improvement. We hope that this document will inform the work of all stakeholders in Clayton County Public Schools’ academics, accountability, and achievement.

This Academic Pathway, which is aligned with the District Strategic Plan, is the initial roadmap for the journey to academic excellence. With few exceptions, we expect the initiatives identified herein to be realized in the next three to five years. At the same time, implementation of this plan will be a continuing process, and the pace at which we progress will depend upon a number of circumstances, including the availability of financial resources.

Edmond T. Heatley
Superintendent

Overview from Chief Academic Officer

As our schools align their work with the Strategic Plan, the district's academic goals, and transition to the Common Core State Standards and the next generation of assessments, it is important they meet program standards that assure consistency across the district. The standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world to prepare students for college and careers.

A team represented by principals, district curriculum staff, and district administrators has collaboratively developed a set of non-negotiable expectations for the 2011-2012 school year. To ensure knowledge and skills needed for success, we have structured our Academic Pathway with a laser like focus on three instructional priorities: **Critical Thinking, Literacy Across the Curriculum, and Integrated Technology.** The intent is to ensure a common focus throughout the school system in order to achieve our expected outcomes with a full appreciation of what is currently in place and working well.

The use of this document requires collecting and analyzing student and teacher performance data, setting priorities for program improvements, the rigorous use of effective solution strategies, and ongoing monitoring of implementation and results. To support this work, our superintendent has charged us to "inspect what we expect." New this year, we have established **Strategic Audit Teams** -- a quality review initiative that seeks to improve outcomes through systematic audits of Instruction, Leadership and Compliance records against explicit criteria and the full implementation of programs and strategies. Performance is reviewed (or audited) to ensure what *should* be done, is *being* done; and if not – it provides a framework to enable improvements to be made to get the system, school, or classroom back in alignment.

The Academic Pathway is the roadmap to guide the performance objectives from Goal 1 of our **Strategic Plan**. Principals and teachers determine "the how" based on root cause analysis of data that include student achievement data, perception survey data, etc. To achieve our goals, we commit to three non-negotiable behaviors:

High Expectations where all staff members are dedicated to helping every student achieve

Courageous Supervision where all students are engaged in an ambitious and rigorous learning environment; all teachers and administrators are held accountable to ensure powerful teaching and learning; and each is committed to improving their practice with ongoing professional development

Family and Community Partnerships where meaningful, strategic relationships are built to support and sustain student achievement, and mentors guide students to develop a post-high school plan.

This school year, there are higher targets for Math, Reading, and English Language Arts, new rules for calculating graduation, and changes in AYP measures. Furthermore, Common Core State Standards will demand our students construct and demonstrate knowledge using technology and performance tasks. Therefore, we can no longer attempt to make students learn the way we were taught, instead, we must teach them where they are.

With Race To The Top funds, our *Great and Effective Lead Teachers Initiative* – GELTs, a core team of one hundred thirty-two mathematics and science area classroom teachers, will provide laboratory-based professional development experiences for teachers at their school.

Dr. Diana Dumetz Carry
Chief Academic Officer



**Improvement
is
Not
a
Random
Act!**