

I. Description of the Planning Process

Beginning in December of 2004, the CSIP Strategy Committee began the task of writing a new Comprehensive School Improvement Plan for the Diamond R-IV School District. This new CSIP would replace the one written for the years 2000 – 2005. The new plan will recommend activities for the 2005-2006 school year and will anticipate activities through the 2009-2010 school year. The composition of the committee is listed in the pages following this summary.

The committee held nine meetings from December, 2004 through May of 2005. The committee reviewed documents listed in the *Analysis of Internal and External Factors* section of this plan, identified district strengths and weaknesses, and formulated the critical issues as well as outlines of strategies and action items. All building principals served on the committee and frequently obtained staff input on the critical issues, strategies, and action items as they were being developed. Members of district committees also served on the committee and included CSIP development in their committee meetings. Time during released days was provided to review the CSIP progress with staff and obtain their input.

After developing a list of five critical issues with accompanying rationale and objectives, the work of the strategy committee was reviewed by the CSIP Planning Committee composed of district patrons and students. Following lengthy discussion of the proposed critical issues and other issues presented by the members of the planning committee, a final draft of the critical issues and objectives were developed and approved by the Board of Education.

The strategy committee continued its work of developing strategies and action items to achieve the objectives. A final review of the full document by the CSIP Planning Committee was completed in July of 2005. A draft of the full CSIP was presented to the Board of Education in August of 2005.

2004-2005 Board of Education and CSIP Committees

Board of Education

Mr. Paul Holland, President
Mr. Mike Harp
Mrs. Trish Greenwood
Mrs. Janice Stirewalt
Mr. Bill Buening
Mrs. Lisa Matthews
Mrs. Beth Nickolaisen

CSIP Planning Committee Members

Mrs. Janet Dodson
Mrs. Julie Prewitt
Mrs. Trish Harrington
Mr. Bob Hockman
Mrs. Mary Jean Hockman
Mr. Chris Lane
Mrs. Beth Palmer
Mr. Chris Hoyer
Mr. Doug Bradley
Mr. Larry Hicks
Mrs. Lisa Matthews
Mrs. Beth Nickolaisen
Member
Miss Whitney Booyer
Mr. Jake Edge
Dr. Mark Mayo
Mrs. Deanna Yokley
Ms. Merri Brummett
Mr. Preston Wright

CSIP Strategy Committee Members

Dr. Mark Mayo, Superintendent of Schools
Mrs. Deanna Yokley, Elementary Principal
Mr. Danny DeWitt, Middle School Principal
Mr. Jim Cummins, High School Principal
Mrs. Rita Coburn, Special Services Director
Mrs. Becky Johnson, Library Director
Mr. Preston Wright, Technology Director
Mr. Jerry Skinner, Counselor and Testing Dir.
Mr. Bob Roszell, Teacher and PDC member
Mrs. Karin Miller, Teacher
Ms. Merri Brummett, Teacher and Career
Ladder Committee

Larry Doennig
CSIP Facilitator
Curriculum Director

II. Beliefs/Mission/Vision Statement

Our Beliefs: We believe that in public schools:

- each student is a valued individual with unique physical, social, emotional and intellectual needs which should be met by the district.
- a safe and physically comfortable environment promotes student learning.
- a student's self-esteem is enhanced by positive relationships and mutual respect among and between students and staff.
- students learn best when they are actively engaged in the learning process.
- students need to not only demonstrate their understanding of essential knowledge and skills, but also need to be actively involved in solving problems and producing quality work.
- education should help the student realize his or her worth as an individual and should prepare him or her to become a productive member of society.

Our Mission: The mission of the Diamond R-IV Schools is to prepare each student to become a productive member of society.

Our Vision: The Diamond R-IV School District envisions schools in which teachers, administrators, parents, students, and the community share the responsibility for advancing the school's mission. Parents and guardians will cooperate with the schools and encourage the student to give his or her best effort in daily school responsibilities and extra-curricular activities. Students will come to school ready to fulfill their responsibilities in the learning process. Educators will provide opportunities for each individual student to achieve at the maximum level of his or her capacity and will create a learning environment which will provide an opportunity for the maximum development of each individual. The environment will promote democratic values and positive relationships which will help each student realize his or her worth as an individual. The school facilities will provide a safe environment and be adequate for achieving the goals of the district. All high school graduates will leave school prepared for post-secondary education, continued training, or the workplace. Graduates will be equipped with the skills and knowledge which will enable them to be a productive member of society, lead a satisfying personal and social life, be a life-long learner, and be a responsible citizen.

III. Analysis of Internal and External Factors (2004-2005)

In developing the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan, the instructional staff, administration, parents, and students reviewed information and data relative to a number of internal and external factors which affect the school district.

Analysis of Internal Factors

1. Evaluation of Programs

The district annually evaluates the various programs operating to support the school district's overall educational mission. These programs include: curriculum and instruction; special education services; technology; media centers; counseling and guidance; professional development; transportation; food service; health services; and maintenance of facilities. These program evaluations include assessment of the program's strengths and weaknesses. The following concerns were noted:

- areas of low achievement in the Missouri Assessment Program;
- low achievement among students qualifying for free and reduced lunch;
- weaknesses in the availability of technology for use by students and staff;
- inadequate facilities, especially in the elementary building, and concerns over building security;
- inadequate library resources in some areas;
- lack of a focused program for gifted students;
- a need for a focused and intensive professional development program which more adequately meets the unique needs of each building.

2. MSIP Response to Standards

The district also reviewed the Missouri School Improvement Program's (MSIP) Standards and Indicators as proposed for the fourth cycle of the MSIP program. From this review the following concerns were identified:

- areas of low achievement in the Missouri Assessment Program;
- low achievement among students qualifying for free and reduced lunch;
- concerns with availability of technology resources for use by students and staff;
- inadequate facilities, especially for the elementary library;
- inadequate library resources in some areas;
- concerns with class sizes in grades K-2 and access to some educational programs including elementary music; middle school art; and vocational courses;
- concerns with sufficient counseling and guidance staff.

3. Annual Performance Reports

Every year, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education provides the district with an Annual Performance Report which measures the district's success in achieving the MSIP performance standards. Review of these reports over the past five years reveal the following concerns:

- that the district continues to struggle in the area of student achievement on some portions of the Missouri Assessment Program;
- that students at the 3rd grade and 7th grade levels do not read to the standards required by the Missouri Assessment Program;
- that the district continues to place a lower than average percent of its students in two and four year colleges and places a higher percentage than average in the workforce;
- that the district does not have sufficient enrollment in vocational courses;

4. Report of Annual Yearly Progress

With the addition of the No Child Left Behind legislation, the district has received for the past two years a report of Annual Yearly Progress in respect to the legislation's goals for student achievement. Review of these reports show that the subgroup of students who qualify for free and reduced lunch under federal guidelines is scoring below the desired achievement levels. Failure to redress this issue will result in the district having to file school improvement plans under the guidelines related to the federal legislation.

5. Assessment Results

The district has reviewed the results of the Missouri Assessment Program and has analyzed student performance both in respect to the tested benchmarks and in the type of question used to assess the benchmarks. Longitudinal analysis of the scores reveals the following concerns:

- the performance of both elementary and middle school students in both Communication Arts and Math needs to improve;
- the performance of high school students in Communication Arts needs to improve;
- the performance of both elementary and middle school students in reading needs to improve;
- students need to develop better skills in crafting answers to constructed response type questions.

In addition, the district began assessing reading using a group reading assessment in grades 2,3,5,6, and 7. Analysis of these results shows that reading ability is improving, but that the district still has a large number of students with no identified learning disability reading below grade level. The district needs to take steps to assist these students with their reading deficiencies.

6. District Report Card Data

The district publishes a report card containing a great deal of data related to school programs. Much of the information described above is also found on the district's report card. In addition, the report card shows that the district has a high number of teachers who are new to the district and that a trend of high teacher turnover has been established. This teacher turnover puts additional strain on district initiatives in the areas of professional development and in maintaining consistent, high quality teaching to the curriculum's learner outcomes.

Analysis of External Factors

1. MSIP Final Report from the year 2002 MSIP Review

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education conducted its third cycle Missouri School Improvement Program review of the Diamond R-4 School District in April of 2002. The final report of the MSIP review process cited several areas of concern most of which were addressed within a year of the review. Cited concerns which have not been fully addressed include:

- inadequate size of the elementary library;
- MAP achievement in Communication Arts and Math is low;
- Reading achievement at grades 3 and 7 is low.

2. Population Studies

The district's student enrollment in the past five years has increased by almost six percent, with most of this increase coming in the past year. This increase has taxed some district facilities and increased class sizes. This increase follows a similar growth in the preceding five year period. The district believes that growth rates in this range can be expected to continue placing the district at a total enrollment of around 950 students by 2010. The district needs to prepare for this continued growth in enrollment.

3. Demographic Studies

The district has recorded a significant drop in the percent of students from homes below the federal poverty line. This percent has dropped from a 16.5 percent to 10.9 percent. However, at the same time the district has seen the percent of students qualifying for free and reduced lunch increase from 36 percent in grades K-12 to over 45 percent. The district realizes that the federal poverty guidelines are much lower than those used to qualify for the free and reduced lunch program, but feels that it must attend to the special needs of its students from lower income families.

In addition, the district has been insulated in the past, by lack of available housing, from the impact of a large number of students qualifying under English as Second Language (ESL) guidelines. The district is beginning to see a shift in these numbers as more ESL students enroll, but feels that it has adequate resources to deal with this issue at its present level.

4. Local Financial Support

District patrons passed a \$ 5 million bond issue to construct a new high school in April, 2000. The district has also seen its assessed valuation increase by 30 percent over the past five years and, due to new construction in the northwest part of the district, would expect to see the valuation continue to increase. Bonding capacity will become more flexible in the near future and will allow the district to have options to consider when addressing needed facility upgrades. While some of the financial picture looks positive for the district, the increased enrollment continues to put pressure on financial reserves as the district works to hire additional teachers to maintain low class sizes and to offer the pay and fringe benefits which will reduce teacher turnover. The district is also challenged financially when it looks to increase the availability of technology, replace instructional materials, and address other concerns cited in this report.

5. State and Federal Requirements

State and federal requirements pertaining to student achievement has impacted the district. The district is focused on improving the performance of all students to the desired levels. District initiatives are reviewed in light of this goal. In addition, state guidelines require the district to institute programs to serve special populations of students, to maintain persistence to graduation and to maintain course offerings which will either prepare students for further education after graduation or for the workforce. An analysis of these requirements finds that the district is meeting this challenge, but does need to develop specific programs to meet the needs of gifted students as well as students who are at risk of dropping out of school.

**CRITICAL ISSUES AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE
DIAMOND R-IV SCHOOL DISTRICT
COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

Critical Issue 1. Student Achievement

Rationale: The state of Missouri has developed the Show-Me Standards to guide learning in Missouri schools and, feeling that these standards reflect positive goals for the education of our students, the Diamond R-4 School District has aligned its curriculum with these standards. Student progress in these standards is measured by the Missouri Assessment of Performance (MAP). The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education uses student performance on the MAP as the major determinant in judging the health of a school district. The state of Missouri also uses the district's MAP scores to determine if the district is meeting the annual yearly progress required by the federal No Child Left Behind legislation. Scores on this measurement of achievement have not shown consistent improvement for the students of the Diamond district. Improvement in student achievement on this assessment is, therefore, critical to the district.

Objectives:

- 1.1 Over the next five years, students of the Diamond R-IV School District will show consistent increases in the composite index score for each grade level and in each subject tested by the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) until the score meets the "performing at a high level of achievement" indicator set by the Missouri Assessment Program.
- 1.2 Over the next five years, the average percentage of raw score points earned by students on the Reading strands of the Communication Arts assessments of the Missouri Assessment Program will improve to be at or above the state average.

Critical Issue 2. Adequacy of facilities in regard to size, safety, and function.

Rationale: Input from patrons, teachers, administrators and board of education members reveal concerns with the district's facilities. Of specific concern is the adequacy of the elementary school building in regard to climate, size, safety and function. In addition, the district's growing enrollment has created the need for additional classroom space both in the elementary school and in the middle school. If the current growth rate were to continue, the district would add over 200 students over the next five years requiring the district to add additional sections of classes. In addition, the physical arrangement of each of the attendance centers, and the manner in which the district must utilize the various buildings to accommodate class enrollments, present unique security concerns which must be addressed through administrative procedures and policies.

Objectives:

- 2.1 The Diamond R-IV School District will develop and implement plans to improve its facilities to accommodate increasing student enrollment, address present and future program needs, improve educational climate, maintain a safe and secure environment, and to allow for educational initiatives to further improve student achievement.

- 2.2 The Diamond R-IV School District will amend its policies and procedures as needed to address the unique security concerns presented by the district's facilities and to improve student achievement by providing an educational climate in which students and staff feel safe and secure.

Critical Issue 3. Technology resources and their effective use in the classroom.

Rationale: Surveys of teachers and students, as well as input from patrons strongly indicate that, although the district has made some progress in providing technology and using it effectively in the educational process, the district can still make substantial improvement in the area of technology resources. The district desires to reduce the ratio of computers to students; increase the software available for teacher and administrator use in monitoring student progress and managing student records; improve the availability of other technology resources; make the district's web-site into a more advanced learning tool; and provide means for parents to assist in and monitor student learning.

Objectives:

- 3.1 The Diamond R-IV Schools will develop and implement strategies designed to increase the technological resources available to students, teachers, administrators and parents, and to facilitate the utilization of those resources.

Critical Issue 4. Education of special student populations including gifted students, students at-risk of not graduating from high school, and students with low socio-economic backgrounds.

Rationale: The Diamond R-IV School District is committed to helping all of its students reach their full potential. The district wishes to better serve its population of gifted and talented students at all grade levels. At the same time, it is the district's goal to maintain a high graduation rate and to pursue more programs designed to keep students in school who are otherwise likely to drop out and not graduate. In addition, disaggregated data from the Missouri Assessment Program reveals that students whose economic status qualifies them for free and reduced lunch benefits do not score as well on the assessment in some subjects and at some grade levels as the rest of the students assessed. The learning gap between these groups of students must be closed. The district is challenged to meet the needs of each individual student wherever that student falls on the learning continuum.

Objectives:

- 4.1 The Diamond R-IV School District will design and implement a focused gifted program for gifted students in grades 2-12.
- 4.2 The Diamond R-IV School District will implement strategies designed to maintain a graduation rate of at least 85 percent.
- 4.3 The Diamond R-IV School District will implement instructional strategies which will raise the percentage scoring proficient and above on the Missouri Assessment Program among those students identified as qualifying for free and reduced lunch to the levels desired by federal and state regulations.

Critical Issue 5. Retaining highly qualified teachers.

Rationale: The Diamond R-IV School District believes that effective teaching is among the most important factors in the educational process. Over the past few years, the district has seen a larger turnover of teachers. The average years of experience in the Diamond School District has declined. The district desires to make the improvements necessary to enable the district to attract and retain highly qualified teachers. It also desires to maintain a quality professional development program designed to improve the teaching abilities of each instructor.

Objectives:

- 5.1 The Diamond R-IV School District will develop and implement programs which will result in an increase among the teaching staff in the average years of experience and the average years of experience in the district.
- 5.2 The Diamond R-IV School District will develop and implement strategies designed to maintain a high quality professional development program the focus of which will be student achievement.