

YOUNGSTOWN CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT ACADEMIC DISTRESS COMMISSION

Members:

Brian Benyo, Chair
Dr. Barbara Brothers
Dr. John Richard
Jennifer Roller
Vincent Shivers
James Miller, Office of the Attorney General

MEETING MINUTES THURSDAY, APRIL 20, 2017 2:00 P.M.

I. Call to Order 2:00 p.m.

II. Roll Call	<i>Present</i>	<i>Absent</i>
Brian Benyo, Chair	— x —	_____
Dr. Barbara Brothers	— x —	_____
Dr. John Richard	— n/a —	_____
Jennifer Roller	— x —	_____
Vincent Shivers	— x —	_____

- Note of Record and Correction: Dr. John Richard resigned from the commission due to conflict of position he holds.

III. Approval of April 20, 2017 Agenda

Motion by: Vincent Shivers *Seconded by:* Dr. Barbara Brothers

Roll Call Vote:

Brian Benyo, Chair	Yes — x —	No _____
Dr. Barbara Brothers	Yes — x —	No _____
Dr. John Richard	Yes — n/a —	No _____
Jennifer Roller	Yes — x —	No _____
Vincent Shivers	Yes — x —	No _____

IV. Approval of December 5, 2016 Minutes

Motion by: Dr. Barbara Brothers *Seconded by:* Jennifer Roller

Roll Call Vote:

Brian Benyo, Chair	Yes — x —	No _____
Dr. Barbara Brothers	Yes — x —	No _____
Dr. John Richard	Yes — n/a —	No _____
Jennifer Roller	Yes — x —	No _____
Vincent Shivers	Yes — x —	No _____

V. Overview presentation of progress on the goals of the Strategic Plan for the Youngstown City School District from CEO Krish Mohip.

A. Overall District update – Krish Mohip, CEO

Chairman Brian Benyo gave the floor to Mr. Mohip and the senior leadership team for the presentation and progress made to date of the District. Mr. Mohip began by thanking Academic Distress Commission for allowing the opportunity to present the work the team has been doing since June 29, 2016. The presentation was led by the senior leadership team, carrying out the work that is based on Strategic Plan.

Presentation Highlights by Mr. Mohip:

- Parental Involvement – Tremendous strides with working and collaborating with parents to partner with the district. Community update meetings now have participation of 50 – 200 parents providing feedback and listening to officials.
- Development of Senior Leadership/Management Team – The team now includes some of the best individuals in the area. Developing sustainability to carry out the message and mission of the Strategic Plan
- Decision making with Data – Making grounded decisions in data.
- Update of Student Code of Conduct
- Weekly instructional feedback for teachers
- Comprehensive Assessment System – the system will be able to find the challenges we have for our children and put interventions in place. This did not exist when Mr. Mohip began with the district and the foundational gaps were not known of students' education. This will allow the creation of personalized learning plans and set yearly targets for each child, to make sure that they are reaching their potential every single year.
- Preschool Expansion – Success in preschool expansion. Expanded over 30% in preschool enrollment. 761 hours were added to the instructional year during this year.
- Afterschool Program – Increase from nearly 300 students to nearly 1500 students. Students receive snack, dinner and 2 ½ hours of instruction and tutoring.
- Mandatory Summer School Program – Rolled out mandatory summer school program which goes along with enrichment program. All students in the mandatory summer school program will still have the opportunity to attend the enrichment program.
- P.R.I.D.E. program – New program that will be reflective in Goal 3 of Strategic Plan. Developing parents as leaders within our district to go and support other parents. There are over 100 members in the P.R.I.D.E. community and significant time building their capacity.
- Transportation Department – There are many steps we are taking and we are on our way in providing high quality transportation above anyone else in the area. We have made sure buses are safe, buses and drivers are certified and using proper safety protocols everyday in busing our students.

Mr. Mohip presented challenges that were faced, that may have slowed some of the district's growth. Mr. Mohip's arrival to the district in June was a major factor in not being able to see schools in action and leadership function. He had to take more time to view these areas but reassured to move forward in the future.

Overall, he reported that there may be distractions but we are committed to Strategic Plan with a focus on teaching and learning. He stressed the importance to move beyond the challenges and stay on track through PERSEVERANCE district wide 2.) FOCUS on kids "student-centered" 3.) STRONG central leadership 4.) TEACHERS have responded well, in spite of challenges with attending professional development. Teachers as a whole will move the district forward, not just one single administrator.

B. Greg Slemons, Chief Financial Officer update

Provided an overview of the budget update and process. The goal is to make sure everyone in the district can do what they need to do in fiscally responsible manner. The focus of Mr. Slemons presentation was Strategic Plan Goal V - Item D: Operate with fiscal responsibility and sound management. 1.) Align the district budget and school budgets and all purchases to the goals, objectives and strategies of this strategic plan. 2.) Create a five-year general fund financial forecast that includes all known revenue and expenditures, assumptions made in cases where information is not known, and explanations for trends and changes.

Mr. Slemons reported that with the assistance from Sherry Tyson, Treasurer he identified where the district was going, developed a spending plan from the first 9 months of the fiscal year and forward to the next 3 months. Various plans have been implemented which include efficiencies in payroll banking process, consolidation to one bank institution, staff professional development through Ohio Association of School Business Officials (OASBO). Mr. Slemons reported that there will be a roll-out of a condensed 2018 Budget process (reference to document to ADC members). Principals will manage their building's budget by developing and appropriating their budget according to their building needs. There will be a strict timeline and alignment to federal programs.

Mr. Slemons addressed that Public Financial Resources will assist the District in providing a District-wide financial forecast. A 5 year forecast update must be prepared by May 30. RedTree Investment group will provide an active manager of district investment portfolio of over \$22 million. This will increase investment income. World Risk Management, is developing a RFP process for property and casualty policy. The district will also contract with Independent Energy Consultants to review natural gas and electric accounts and consumptions. Their recommendation is to do online reverse option for all gas and electric accounts.

Mr. Slemons referenced a budget spreadsheet to ADC members that in looking at the past 9 months actual in this fiscal year, at this point we will operate and end the year in the black. The revenue will exceed our expenditures. Real estate settlement from the county auditor should come in April/May.

Questions/Comments:

Mr. Benyo questioned how did Mr. Slemons envision budgeting for curriculum and technology to be handled? Mr. Slemons responded that those respective departments will meet with principals to determine the needs with strategies that are being rolled out, so that each budget has input from the building principal.

Mr. Benyo further questioned if Building Leadership Teams are involved in that process? Mr. Slemons responded everyone will be involved, communication and bringing everyone into the conversation to insure that the Strategic Plan is successful. In order to do so we have to manage funds properly. Budgets should be used within the fiscal year that they are budget for. Money should be spent throughout the year for the classroom and students for educational program.

Public Questions/Comments:

Marla Mitchell: Will there be solar energy in the district? Mr. Slemons responded that we have not looked into solar energy.

Rochelle Robinson: Will a copy of the budget be made available? Mr. Slemons responded yes, that it will be available, once it is developed, it is in the development process along with the 5 year forecast.

C. Strategic Plan: Goal 1 – Timothy Filipovich, Chief of Academic Accountability & Assessment and Deputy Chiefs of Transformation Update

Mr. Filipovich reported on an overview of goals of the strategic plan and some of the work that has been done along with challenges and next steps. He stressed that we are working for the interest of the STUDENT! Mr. Filipovich introduced the Deputy Chiefs of Transformation that assist in rolling out key initiatives.

1. Connie Coburn – Taft/Harding
2. Stephanie Rider – Kirkmere/Martin Luther King
3. Roshay Huff – East/Chaney
4. Greg Kibler – Wilson/Choffin/District Data
5. Kelly Weeks – Paul C. Bunn/Volney
6. Amanda McGinnis – Williamson/McGuffey
7. Michelle McCaughtry – REC/YEC

Kelly Weeks, Deputy Chief of Transformation reported on Goal I – Item D of the Strategic Plan: Ensure every child in every classroom receives high-quality instruction every day. This is being done through going back to the basics of content standards through purpose statements, exit slip and observation tracker. Two computer based programs, DIEBELS and STARS are also used to monitor student's academic growth. The BAG report (Behavior, Attendance, Grades), provides a weekly update to all teachers and administrators. Attendance was a focus this year in either providing interventions or incentives to help keep kids coming to school regularly, DATA is being used to drive instructional decisions.

Roshay Huff, Deputy Chief of Transformation reported on Goal I – Item B of the Strategic Plan: Provide the necessary support to all district employees so that they have the skills needed to deliver the highest-quality education to students. She reported that over 275 teachers are currently receiving professional development through Discover Education. 99.2% of all requested school supplies are met by teachers to our students, to ensure that students are succeeding. The new 5-week review process is chartering progress and monitoring teacher's requests and student's needs to learn. Professional coaching at building level through literacy and math coaches along with Deputy Chiefs of Transformation focusing on district initiatives.

She further presented the work being done through the Strategic Plan Goal I – Item C: Prepare all children to succeed in post-secondary opportunities. She spoke of the alignment of the new district initiatives of insuring that students stay on track and the high percentage of high school seniors filling out their FAFSA forms.

Joe Meranto, Chief of Career & Technical Education presented initiatives of National Career Tech Honor's Society and building career pathway trees.

Michelle McCaughtry, reported on Strategic Plan Goal I – Item D: Eliminate the achievement gap. She explained various methods of achieving the goal through the expansion of preschool, out of school learning activities (afterschool), credit recovery program and monitoring student progress.

Mr. Filipovich continued the discussion on the next steps of the Strategic Plan by:

1. Set and document goals for each student
2. Providing coaching and mentoring for senior leadership
3. Development of 9th Grade Academies
4. Increase assessments
5. Help our families, expand their opportunities to apply for grants to help student's progress
6. Night School
7. 24 preschool sites - expand assessment at a young age.

Pat Lowry, Director of Strategic Initiatives update

Reported the next steps of Goal I with projects that will focus on school gardens with the support of the school community. He further explained enhancing the relationship with the YMCA/CAMP Fitch.

Questions/Comments:

Dr. Brothers asked what does the acroymns of P.S.S.T., R.T.I. and T.B.T. stand for? Mr. Filipovich responded that R.T.I. stands for response to intervention and T.B.T. – teacher based team.

Mr. Benyo questioned the use of data in grade levels/building and the levels of participation by teaching staff and feedback on how successful that has been? Mr. Filipovich responded that with the observation tracker, purpose statement and/or exit slips that are being reviewed. He was unsure about the quantitative number in the 5-week review. For the most part we are seeing excellent implementation which needs to tweaked based upon what and how good the purpose statements are. That feedback that the teachers are getting, is in relationship to that. So we constantly continue to monitor that. If a principal, deputy chief of transformation goes into that classroom, they are putting that information into the tracker, so we can identify and have conversation about the 5 week review. Mr. Benyo further commented that he wanted more specifically towards accountability as we roll out the strategic plan.

Dr. Brothers further mentioned that there were was a report that was submitted to the ADC members in the past regard this information. She recommended showing the difference from that report to where we are now. Mr. Filipovich, said this can be done.

Further discussion and comments were discussed with Mr. Filipovich with input from Mr. Mohip regarding feedback, purpose statements and exit slips. Mr. Mohip made referenced to the ADC – State of the Schools 2016-2017 binder that shows the guidance tools that are used to give feedback to teachers. Mr. Mohip mentioned that at the next ADC meeting we will be able to show how well the teachers are performing in relation to the guidance tools.

Mr. Benyo asked that the team to provide data on the performance of students and the impact on the implementation of the purpose statement. Mr. Filipovich and Mr. Mohip provided more insight to the observation tracker.

Vincent Shivers asked are you able to provide quality data from the exit slips. Mr. Filipovich responded that quality of the purpose statement and the quality of the exit slip is on whether it is targeted, and where it needs to be for the student.

Mr. Benyo had the same question, it seems that we have the infrastructure in place to get a good sense of the impact of this program. Though this is year one he would hate to miss the opportunity to sort out some of the data we have, to see how we are impacting education. Providing positive feedback for the teaching staff to coach them along. Mr. Filipovich expressed having assessment structure to measure growth, the only other measure would be grades which can also be an indicator.

Public Questions/Comments

Rochelle Robinson, how do exit slips relate to accountability? Her grandson's elementary school does very good job with purpose statements. As you move up in grade levels, it seems to slack off. She furthered expressed her district concerns and expressed her support of Mr. Mohip's vision but when will hear anything about accountability?

Mr. Filipovich responded that there are different levels of implementation, sometimes people do not see the value of the vision. Through the evaluation process the principals are doing, we can align the feedback so there is accountability. Mr. Mohip mentioned that he met with Principals and teachers and had conversations about their attendance, grading and evaluations. In looking at school data and evaluations they did not match. He didn't understand how we were rating our teachers. 95% of the teachers were rated as skilled or accomplished and very few teachers on improvement plans. The purpose of the improvement plan is to improve them, not remove them. We are holding teachers accountable through the observation policies that we have.

D. Strategic Plan: Goal 2 – Lori Kopp, Chief of Student Services Update

Ms. Kopp presented Goal II of the Strategic Plan: Supporting the Whole Child

She presented that as of last spring the special education department was placed on a corrective action plan. There is compliance training being held. She explained that there needs to be more targeted professional development that is purposeful with a focus on delivery of instruction. Special education teachers are now receiving professional development with general education teachers. With the new reconfiguration plan, all programs will be offered to every child. She discussed the next steps for her department which include, the response to intervention/PSST process and aligning to the corrective action plan, finding ways to support and coach teachers. Professional development is being offered for trauma based education and restorative justice across district-wide. Counseling program is being provided for pregnant and parenting teens. She is currently evaluating current strategies and reorganizing the department.

Pat Lowry, Chief of Strategic initiatives

Discussed the next steps for Goal II of the Strategic plan: Supporting the Whole Child. He reported on two upcoming projects promoting student health and wellness. Kids must be healthy in order to learn. Partnerships are being created to provide screenings for students' district wide. Through the garden program initiative, we can educate our children with proper nutrition education. An upcoming project is to update the district health and wellness policy. He further discussed the implementation of social emotional learning during summer school. He shared the five competencies needed for children and adults. There are also many benefits to social emotion learning, specifically in the classroom and beyond. There will be staff professional development for this new initiative.

Questions/Comments:

Ms. Roller, made the statement that it seemed in this section that there was a lot of reviewing and developing. There was a lot of words and narrative and she didn't feel the intentionality of what is actually happening. She wondered if it was the amount information given today limits the ability to absorb and reflect. Is staff/leadership able to respond to the commission meaningfully? She feels somewhat overwhelmed, sheer volume of information shared today verbally and in print, that she doesn't feel she can respond and contribute in a manner that is helpful.

Mr. Shivers asked about health and wellness initiative, will this be community based, where the professionals will come into the schools? Mr. Lowry responded, yes. The partners are excited to provide services.

Ms. Roller asked about the grade levels of the social emotional learning program? Mr. Lowry answered that the program will start in the summer school with grades K-8 and eventually district wide.

Ms. Kopp made the clarification that there is a lot of reviewing and researching within her department because special education is under a corrective action plan. Dr. Davis from OEC is coming next week to go over policies and procedures and to make sure the department is moving in the right direction. Next year will be different.

Ms. Roller, as you go through this process, will you start to attribute goals? That type of information would be helpful. Ms. Kopp said yes we will look into that.

Mr. Benyo mentioned that with special needs/special education, districts that get it and get it right, it is cultural. Everybody buys in to it, everyone takes a part. Where are we with that? Ms. Kopp stated that ODE came in three years ago and said there were too many self-contained classrooms. Last year through the I.E.P. process, we moved children out to inclusion classrooms, into resource rooms. There are self-contained classrooms for children that need it. She commented that it is cultural and we are all learning together. It is a process, when speaking of reorganization to get supports into the buildings every day for the special education and general education teachers to help them think differently when working with our special needs children. Mr. Benyo further discussed professional development and provided a cultural recommendation.

Public Questions/Comments

Rochelle Robinson complimented the staff in matters regarding her grandson. Though she had a lot of questions, she was a satisfied customer.

E. Strategic Plan: Goal 3 – Dominique Howse, Deputy Chief of School Culture & Community Innovation Update

Ms. Howse reported on Goal 3 of the Strategic Plan – Engage parents, families and the community in meaningful experiences that impact students. She highlighted efforts in generating stronger parent, family and community ties. Parent Pathways lead by Linda Hoey and parent advocates have been instrumental in parent engagement. Through researching various school districts, the Youngstown Model is competitive to other schools in the nation. She reported the launching of several initiatives such as Parent University, P.R.I.D.E., YOU Workshops throughout the community. Efforts to improve customer service, social media presence, and branding of the district were shared. Also, identifying and connecting key influencers, partnerships and collaborators throughout the city and surrounding communities. She recognized partners that have supported the district tremendously. She explained and identified challenges and shared the next steps to overcome challenges.

Joe Meranto, Chief of Career & Technical Education

Mr. Meranto highlighted the Community Connections grant. Choffin is the first in the state of Ohio to receive the grant. 150 high school seniors participate in the grant with 75 mentors. There is 100% job placement. He explained the benefits of the collaboration with Eastern Gateway from new classroom welding and machining labs, to high schools students being able to receive college credit through Eastern Gateway. Overall, Choffin is in a good position to help our students get jobs and quality training and to keep them moving forward.

Questions/Comments:

Mr. Benyo there is a lot on your plate with the amount of engagement and participates willing to support the school system. From the work he has done through the Mahoning Valley Manufacturers Coalition, the right partners with the identification of right needs. The things mentioned in the presentation definitely are important steps, especially with going to neighborhood schools is going to add a totally different nature to the school system. A lot of good work. Thank you.

F. Strategic Plan: Goal 4 – Tyrone Olverson, Chief Academic Officer & Cheryl McArthur, Deputy Director of Human Resources update

Mr. Olverson reported on Goal 4: Creating a world-class workforce on continuous improvement. He emphasized that as a district we need to provide a support system and tools to help individuals get better at their craft. He reported that 48% of Youngstown City School District staff are within their first three years of being at the district. Mr. Olverson provided statistics on the importance of district support and professional development to retain and sustain teachers. Ongoing, recruitment through job and career fairs both locally and nationally, specifically Historical Black Colleges and Universities. There is an ongoing collaboration with Ohio Department of Education, Battelle for Kids and Youngstown State University. Mr. Olverson, emphasized the need of the creation of the future teacher educator program, to provide additional support for individuals that come into the district. Challenges were presented, such as basic human resource needs for evaluations, job descriptions, licensure, etc. to make sure the district complaint. The need for an automated HR system. The Mahoning Valley Regional Council of Government will manage the substitute database for the district. The next steps are to implement the automated human resource software system. The system will provide a host of benefits which will ultimately provide accurate data to make decisions in staffing and payroll.

Questions/Comments:

Mr. Benyo thanked Mr. Olverson and Mrs. McArthur for their presentation.

G. Strategic Plan: Goal 5 – Joseph Nohra, Chief Operations Officer Update

Mr. Nohra presented on Goal V of the Strategic Plan: Operate an effective and fiscally responsible school system. The main goals of the Operations Department is objective - Item B of the district strategic plan: Ensure all facilities are warm, safe and dry. He shared additional goals: 1.) providing systems of efficiency to operate the school system with an umbrella of shared responsibilities and providing an environment that promotes teaching and learning 2.) develop modern and automated systems. Operations department seeks to establish systems that are efficient and technology based in all the school buildings. The utilization and implementation of Public School Works and I.O. Education/Operations will make the operations of our schools easy and quick with functional data for evaluations and recommendations. Mr. Nohra provided updates on video surveillance cameras in all school buildings, upgrading and digitalizing school building floor plans. He explained the major savings in repairs at East High school and McGuffey elementary. Challenges mentioned were 1.) Maintain the preventative maintenance program 2.) Moving teachers to respective building classrooms to implement the reconfiguration plan with ease and efficiency. The next steps mentioned were overall security plans and the implementation of the RAPTOR security system in all school buildings in the upcoming school year.

Colleen Murphy-Penk, Chief of Transportation update

Mrs. Penk spoke on Objective V – Item D of the Strategic Plan: Provide safe, efficient and reliable transportation for students to and from school. The transportation departments serves 22 public, private and public schools. Recently all buses were updated with GPS units. The recruitment of bus drivers and aides, allowed a major reduction of department costs. The department is constantly maintaining the certifications and licenses daily. Several challenges mentioned were regarding the lack of preventative maintenance plans, records, in-service opportunities for mechanics, diagnostic tools. The next steps are the implementation of various technology driven applications in Transportation Department:

FleetVision, bus maintenance software

Tyler Drive, technology and device for bus driver to have updated information on the bus

TripTracker, software that provides bus route scheduling and assignment for field trips, etc.

Elink – Online app that allow parents access to their child’s bus information

MyStop – Free smartphone app, which provides parents estimated arrival times of a bus

Questions & Comments:

Ms. Roller commented that she liked everything.

Mr. Benyo stated this is a lot of good work getting started. Technology is being implemented, efficiencies and services to parents and students that will be provided is awesome.

Mr. Mohip ended the presentation and thanked the ADC. He expressed that everything is being done towards the goal of district transformation. He also shared how important teachers are to the success of the Strategic plan and we need to make sure we listen to them.

VI. Brief Discussion & Comments of the ADC.

Ms. Roller: expressed to Mr. Mohip that he has certainly had and will continue to have tall mountains to climb. Incredibly great work and she still remains enthusiastic. Both with her work with the commission and foundation, people ask about the district and she still remains optimistic. For some this was her first time meeting you tonight, her encounters have always been positive. That is appreciated as well. When she has asked for information and request people follow-thru, so that is a great indication that is what you do for everyone. She appreciated the transparency, by giving us not only what you are doing well but challenges you are facing. This is very helpful. Thank you and keep up the good work.

Dr. Brothers, ditto to everything Jennifer Roller mentioned. She was glad to see the efforts to get information out to the public not only about meetings but also the press. She hears a lot of positive feedback from the community and their support is really necessary and with the progress that is being made. They appreciate knowing what is going on.

Mr. Benyo echoes Ms. Roller's & Dr. Brother's comments, there is a lot of great work being done. The number of people we heard from today is a great testament to the building capacity in district leadership all the way down to the classroom. As we move forward and complete the school year, looking ahead to the next meeting Mr. Benyo encouraged to draw on firm data, look at where we can measure. Simply surveying teachers and students and understanding the cultural shifts taking place to reinforce where we are making progress and evaluate where we are.

VII. Public Comment Period.

Paula Valentini, Teacher's union – Thanked the ADC for the opportunity to speak and shared her excitement about the great professional development (Discovery Education) that she attended. She wanted to share concerns about the misconception that Mr. Mohip and/or the ADC members may have from the teachers. The misconception that teachers are resistant to change. She wanted to state clearly, that the teachers of Youngstown City School district are not resistant to change. Teachers throughout the years have been terrific with rolling with the changes. She also shared the misconception that teachers are speaking out against what is being rolled out. The teachers desire to be a part of the change and would like to provide insight to Mr. Mohip on initiatives that are being rolled out moving forward with continued discussion.

Mr. Benyo responded that it is not the commission's role to micro-manage the district. Teachers are fundamental to the success of this district. We address that message to Mr. Mohip this past fall in the development of the Strategic Plan. We are also sincere in recognizing the fact that there needs to be dialogue and engagement on the behalf of the administration. Teachers working together to develop programs and buy into programs. We also believe that there needs to be integrity in the action statement, not only face to face, but once people leave the room. Some of the concerns he has are centered in that area. Closing thought, there is desire to address the retention of teaching staff. To be able to do that, we need to address compensation within the district. That has been brought from YEA. If there is real integrity about seeing the district succeed and reach its potential, lets start working together. Thank you.

VIII. Adjournment

Motion by: Brian Benyo Secoded by: Dr. Brothers

Voice Vote Yes all No _____

