

Rocky River City School District
Rocky River, Ohio

**PLANNING FOR EXCELLENCE:
2008 – 2009**



... Caring Schools Where Learners Excel

Submitted by

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Superintendent of Schools

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**ROCKY RIVER CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
ROCKY RIVER, OHIO**

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INTRODUCTION

THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY PARENTS AND STAFF IN PLANNING

Community support for our public schools reflects the value we place on our children and their future. In recognizing the critical role that the community plays in defining the educational programs that are available for our children, the Rocky River School District embarks each year on a process that helps determine how financial resources are allocated. This lengthy and in-depth process includes the following steps:

- Beginning in early January, the administrative leadership team meets with members of their department or staff to determine projected needs for the future.
- Building administrators and department heads involve parent and student advisory teams in making suggestions for expenditure patterns.
- Appropriations for school operations are developed based on the needs of each building or department, relying strongly on staff feedback and direction.
- These appropriations become the legal basis on which the Board can account to taxpayers for expenditures during each school year.

This process has been relied on by the school district for many years to engage the community in discussions regarding the best use of their tax dollars. Today, this process is more critical than ever because, like many districts in Cuyahoga County, losses in revenue are impacting programs and services. For example, our district collects over \$300,000 less each year than just three years ago because of changes in Ohio tax laws. In addition, revenue reductions caused by decisions of the Board of Revisions and Appeals have resulted in lowered property taxes for residential and commercial taxpayers. This has, in part, been due to the deterioration of commercial property surrounding Westgate prior to redevelopment.

To respond to this loss of revenue, our district has undertaken several aggressive steps:

- An operating levy was placed on the ballot and approved by voters in March of 2008. The next scheduled request for revenue would come in 2011.
- Where possible, retiring and resigning staff members were not replaced.
- Staffing increases were limited to accommodate grade level enrollment increases.
- Whenever possible, the district purchases goods and services through purchasing consortiums.
- The impact of Westgate Mall's redevelopment and its long-range economic impact on the district continues to be examined.

Faced with continued financial challenges, the spending plan included in this document incorporates only modest increases in spending. In addition to "staying the course" in expenditure reductions outlined here, decisions regarding revenue enhancements will also be crucial to "staying on course."

The Rocky River Schools continue to benefit from the continued support of our residents and a lower reliance on state funding. These two facts have enabled the district to provide programming on an ongoing basis and has subjected the students of the district to fewer variances in funding from year to year as a result of changes at the state level.

In addition, the low reliance on state funds means that the residents of Rocky River continue to have the ability to affect programs in the district to a greater extent than is the case in many Ohio school districts. Our challenge in the future will be to maintain funding continuity and our academic achievement. We invite your participation in meeting these challenges.



MISSION STATEMENT

Schools, working together with the community, will make prudent use of human, financial, and cultural resources to provide a caring, personalized environment where learners excel. Students of all ages will master a challenging curriculum, acquire a desire for lifelong learning, and develop the values necessary to live in a global society.

Guiding the implementation of this mission statement is the principle that our students are our first priority in decision making. On a yearly basis, the Board establishes district priorities based on this principle and the input of community members, staff and students.

STRATEGIC GOALS

Rocky River Schools will:

- ensure students demonstrate mastery of a challenging academic curriculum
- ensure that students demonstrate the values and behaviors necessary for lifelong learning in a global society
- provide a caring, personalized learning environment
- make prudent use of the school district's staff, financial resources and facilities
- work together with the community to enhance use of its human, financial and cultural resources



2008-2009 DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

Schools working together with the community:

- Provide a comprehensive and challenging educational experience for all students attending the Rocky River City School District.
- Work cooperatively with students, parents, residents, and city officials to pursue goals and projects of mutual interest.
- Provide information to residents regarding school funding in the state of Ohio and any new or proposed legislation that would affect the district's funding.
- Engage community in discussion regarding district facilities.

Will make prudent use of human resources:

- Actively recruit a highly qualified faculty and staff to meet the educational needs of our students.
- Collaboratively work with employees to assess healthcare programs in a competitive market.
- Work to make personnel practices efficient (i.e. electronic communication, fingerprinting, on-line applications, etc.).

Financial and cultural resources:

- Continuously monitor and periodically update the District's financial projections and communicate steps the District takes to limit expenditures and assure the most efficient and effective use of available financial resources, especially in light of the recent passage of a 5.9 mill operating levy.
- Work with construction management firm, bond counsel and other finance professionals with regards to the update of the District's Master Plan for facilities to determine the most prudent course of action to address the District's current and future facility needs.
- Communicate the Board's position and educate the public in regards to school funding in the State of Ohio and any new or proposed legislation that would affect the District's funding.

To provide a caring, personalized environment:

- Through positive opportunities, represent the school district in the community.
- Work with the Board of Education to identify a professional facilities planner.

Where learners excel:

- Assist new Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction to assure for successful transition.
- Continue to analyze group and individual student data; make instructional decisions for preparation for the Ohio achievement Tests and the Ohio Graduation Test preparation.
- Review and revise, as appropriate, the Science Course of Study K-12, ensuring that 2014 mandates are addressed.
- Review the new and/or revise gifted education mandates and determine appropriate identification and services design K-12 for district students.
- Continue to review instructional interventions used against formal and informal assessments; identify or develop new assessments and/or revise current assessments in OAT tested content areas in order to formalize a data driven intervention learning system.
- Finalize the appropriate placement and design the study for the state mandated Personal Finance Study required of 2014 graduates.
- Determine the feasibility of providing a non-traditional language option; if reasonable design a plan for 2009-2010 implementation.



2008-2009 SCHOOL PRIORITIES

High School

- Implement a *Professional Learning Community* at Rocky River High School.
- Assess, Develop and Integrate *21st Century Skills*.
- Study/Review *Response To Intervention* Model
 - Enhance Technology
 - Replace teacher computers
 - Smart board teacher training
 - Continue DASL/SUCCESS training for staff
 - Assist Library Team in setting up new computer lab.
- Establish programming for at-risk and non-college bound students (to include a credit redemption program).
- Review daily schedule with focus on effective use of seminar.
- Transition to on-line Principal's newsletter (except for July).
- Implement Mathematics (PreCalculus)/college partnership course(s).
- Establish a parent advisory committee.

Middle School

- Continue to provide professional development to all staff as needed to support the goals.
- Continue to develop, refine and consistently follow curriculum maps at all grade levels in all courses.
- Provide appropriate in-service training regarding AYP/Value-Added Analysis and the proper use and interpretation of student testing data.
- Develop, refine, and implement short cycle assessments in all courses. Meet to evaluate the data generated from the assessments and modify instruction accordingly.
- Continue efforts to evaluate instructional delivery models designed to team-teach special and regular education teachers.
- Provide an opportunity for a double block of academic instruction within the school day for selected students.



Kensington Intermediate

- Assist new principal for successful transition
- Continue to develop the daily/weekly small group instruction time period to meet the needs of the students.
- Continue to generate data on student learning that is shared with parents and used to make instructional decisions.
- Develop the effective use of formative assessments with the staff.
- Pilot the use of student led conferences in each grade level.
- Together with Goldwood, develop a "Response to Intervention" Model.
- Develop a school/community event that celebrates 10 years of student-made murals at Kensington.

Goldwood Primary

- Continue to research and apply best literacy practices to provide Goldwood students with a strong foundation in reading.
- Evaluate the results of the third grade Ohio Achievement Tests and implement instructional interventions as needed.
- Research the Response to Intervention model and participate in developing a plan for possible district implementation.
- Continue to investigate/implement technological opportunities for teachers and students.
- Refine the intervention assistance team process at Goldwood.
- Continue to work with guidance counselors and other support groups to provide assistance for at-risk students and their families.