



NOVEMBER 1, 2018

The following information has been collected from CSD administrative departments and reflects updates on key programs, priorities and initiatives. Items specifically related to the progress of Cheltenham's strategic plan, Five Pathways, One Destination, are noted along with specific plan pathways. To access the plan and a description of each pathway, [click here](#).

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Community Conversation on Climate, Culture and Equity

The Cheltenham School District hosted the first of this school year's four Community Conversations on Climate, Culture and Equity in October at Wyncote Elementary. With community members, District parents and CSD board members, administrators and teachers in attendance, Superintendent Dr. Wagner Marseille presented opening thoughts about the District's ongoing work in this area. CSD principals presented qualitative and quantitative data speaking to the climate and culture in their buildings during the first 30 days of school. All the data show significant gains, a direct result of the District's commitment to the numerous programs put into place as part of the strategic plan. [View the Presentation](#)>

Cheltenham alumna Dr. Heather Bennett '04, the Pennsylvania School Board Association's (PSBA) Director of Equity Services, spoke about the work she is doing with PSBA around equity and how Cheltenham is ahead of the curve in addressing such issues. Director of Penn's Leadership for Excellence & Equity Initiatives Dr. Robert L. Jarvis framed the group's conversation surrounding equity and what that means to Districts and communities, and introduced the School Board's draft equity statement for feedback. [View Dr. Jarvis' presentation](#)>

Three more Climate, Culture and Equity meetings are on the books for this school year: Thursday, Jan. 3; Wednesday, April 3; and Wednesday, May 29. These meetings are open to all Cheltenham Township residents, and are held at Wyncote Elementary from 5:30 – 8 p.m. Boxed meals are served. Please mark your calendars for these important meetings. **[Strategic Plan Pathway 1: Curriculum and Instruction; Strategic Plan Pathway 2: Student Achievement; Strategic Plan Pathway 4: Holistic Experiences; Strategic Plan Pathway 5: Communication and Engagement]**

Cultural Proficiency Action Planning Meeting

Administrators and community members discussed and compiled information to begin the formation of the District's five-year cultural proficiency action plan. The ability to teach students who come from cultures other than our own, cultural competence entails developing personal and interpersonal awareness and sensitivities and understanding certain bodies of cultural knowledge. The plan will call for CSD educators to master cross-cultural and culturally responsive teaching. [Click to review literature the committee reviewed](#). The next meeting is Thursday, Nov. 15 at the Administration Building at 4 p.m.

[Strategic Plan Pathway 5: Communications and Engagement]

Homework Committee Meeting

The Homework Committee convened in October to finalize the guiding questions/statements which will drive the committee's work. The committee also developed questions for the parent survey. The committee consists of teachers, students, parents and administrators, and will examine the following: Is homework necessary? What is the purpose of homework? What are the expectations for each grade level? What is the connection between classwork and homework? How much time is developmentally appropriate for students to spend on homework? What is the impact of homework on the home? The next meeting is Monday, Dec. 10 at the Administration Building at 10 a.m. **[Strategic Plan Pathway 1: Curriculum and Instruction]**

World Language Committee Meeting

Director of Elementary Education Dr. Renato Lajara facilitated the World Language Committee meeting in early October. Committee members set goals for the World Language program they would like to see in the elementary schools. Topics included benefits of world language; types of language programs; cautions in planning a program; initiating a planning process; and designing the program. [View the presentation](#)
The next meeting is Tuesday, November 27 at the Administration Building at 11 a.m.

[Strategic Plan Pathway 1: Curriculum and Instruction]

ACADEMICS

Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development (CIPD) Council

The Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development Council convened for the first of this school year's six meetings. Comprised of teachers and administrators, the CIPD Council works to ensure curriculum continuity across the district in alignment with current strategic plan and professional development offerings. The meeting agenda included curriculum writing; [Linkit!](#) review and ongoing professional learning opportunities; October Districtwide PD; extra duty extra pay request template; homework committee update; world language committee update; trauma-informed guide for teachers; and social emotional learning curriculum K-6.

[Strategic Plan Pathway 1: Curriculum and Instruction; Strategic Plan Pathway 2: Student Achievement; Strategic Plan Pathway 3: Professional Learning; Strategic Plan Pathway 4: Holistic Experiences; Strategic Plan Pathway 5: Communication and Engagement]

Kindergarten English Language Arts (ELA)

Kindergarten teachers are utilizing [Foundations](#) by Wilson Reading, which makes learning to read fun while laying the groundwork for life-long literacy. Students receive a systematic program in critical foundational skills, emphasizing phonemic awareness; phonics/word study; high-frequency word study; reading fluency; vocabulary; comprehension strategies; handwriting; and spelling. The instruction aligns with the state's college- and career-ready standards. **[Strategic Plan Pathway 2: Student Achievement]**

Multi-Tier System of Support

Branching Minds will be used as a primary tool to support the District's [Multi-Tier System of Support \(MTSS\) process](#). CSD purchased the program last year with the intention of implementing a pilot this school year. This year's focus is ensuring reading and math specialists and special education teachers utilize this tool for students identified as requiring interventions and supports outside the general education curriculum. Branching Minds helps identify the root causes of students' inability to master skills or content, and assists in prescribing appropriate student supports. The key features of Branching Minds include identifying struggling students; collecting teacher observations; finding learning supports; and planning and monitoring progress.

[Strategic Plan Pathway 2: Student Achievement]

Data Collection and Analysis

First through eighth graders have completed the first benchmark assessment in mathematics, and Supervisor of STEM Dr. Brian Reilly has begun reviewing the data to correlate students' needs with the curriculum and enVision program. Dr. Reilly met with members of the seventh-grade math team to discuss giving the [LinkIt!](#) benchmark. The team discussed the protocol and resulting data, and seeks clarification on the correlation between the PSSA and LinkIt!. High school algebra and geometry classes completed an algebra diagnostic administered through LinkIt!. The data offers specific topics that allow teachers to group students by personalized needs. The data also helps inform the curriculum design. **[Strategic Plan Pathway 2: Student Achievement]**

SAT Prep Bootcamp Program

SAT Prep Bootcamp commenced in September at Cheltenham High School. Sixteen students who joined last school year's afterschool SAT tutoring program were afforded an opportunity to participate in a mini-SAT Prep course with TEACH, LLC to prepare for the October 6 SAT. **[Strategic Plan Pathway 2: Student Achievement]**

Pennsylvania Department of Education Standards Aligned System (SAS) Institute

Supervisor of STEM Dr. Brian Reilly and Supervisor of Gifted and Professional Development Matt Pimental and a panel of teachers will present [the project-based learning program](#) being implemented at Cedarbrook Middle School and Cheltenham High School at the SAS Institute Future Ready PA: Transforming Student Pathways, December 9 – 12, 2018, in Hershey, Pennsylvania.

[Strategic Plan Pathway 5: Communications and Engagement]

STUDENT SUPPORTS

Mental Health Services Meeting

In September, Director of Student Services Dr. Cheryl Horsey and Mental Health and Wellness Counselor Ambrosia Martin attended the Mental Health and Your Community meeting, coordinated through the Montgomery County Emergency Service (MCES) and Montgomery County Office of Mental Health (OMH). Topics included how municipalities can be impacted by mental health; suicide prevention tips for municipalities; and what municipalities can do about mental health. The agencies hosted the meeting as part of their outreach in connection with September's Suicide Prevention Month. With regard to suicide prevention awareness, the District's Home and School Visitors Jen Mosher and Jess Keene, and Social Work Intern Briana Stinson created bulletin boards with age-appropriate messages for students. **[Strategic Plan Pathway 4: Holistic Experiences]**

Holy Family University Nursing Students

Eight Holy Family University nursing students are gaining practicum experience, and supporting certified school nurses and rendering healthcare to students at Cheltenham and Myers Elementary Schools, Elkins Park School and Cheltenham High School. School Nurse Coordinator Alex Knab and Director of Student Services Dr. Cheryl Horsey meet periodically with the students and their nursing field instructor.

[Strategic Plan Pathway 4: Holistic Experiences]

Third Annual College and Career Fair

Tenth through 12th graders had the opportunity to meet with representatives from more than 50 two- and four-year colleges, trade schools and gap year, military and work ready programs at the third annual CHS College and Career Fair on Thursday, Oct. 11. Representatives from Millersville's Integrated Studies and the ASPIRE program from Saint Joe's Kinney Center were in attendance, marking the first time Life Skills students had the opportunity to connect with college representatives about their futures. **[Strategic Plan Pathway 2: Student Achievement]**

School-Based Outpatient Counseling Services

Director of Student Services Dr. Cheryl Horsey met with representatives from Child and Family Focus in September to discuss the District's plan for providing school-based outpatient counseling services at Cedarbrook Middle School. The program will provide on-site counseling to students who school personnel and/or parents/guardians have identified as needing more specialized behavioral health services to function in school. A representative from Child and Family Focus joined Dr. Horsey at Cedarbrook Middle School's Back to School Night to provide information to parents/guardians about the program.

[Strategic Plan Pathway 4: Holistic Experiences]

Regional Adolescent Sleep Needs Coalition

At the most recent meeting of the Regional Adolescent Sleep Needs Coalition, members received examples of promotional materials and a sleepiness assessment tools from the book *Snooze or Lose! 10 "No-War Ways" to Improve Your Teen's Sleep Habits* by Dr. Helene Emsellem. The coalition comprises various parents, community/school board members and school district representatives from Chester, Delaware and Montgomery Counties, and focus on the need to consider later school start times for secondary students.

[Strategic Plan Pathway 4: Holistic Experiences]

Girls, Inc. Mentoring Program

The District has partnered again with Girls, Inc. of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey to provide mentoring and specialized programming for a small cohort of young female scholars in the high school's Freshman Seminar. Their first workshop focused on media literacy, and students explored different media messages, the power of social media and media campaigns. The culminating project will be an action plan pertaining to creating positive media messages for young women.

[Strategic Plan Pathway 4: Holistic Experiences]

SAFETY

Pennsylvania Department of Education Safety Grant

In early October, the District received word announcing it has been awarded a \$20K grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Education for safety programming. Working with Director of Student Services Dr. Cheryl Horsey and District Safety and Security Manager Jon White, Director of Communications Kevin Kaufman submitted the grant during the summer with the intention of it covering the cost of the District's behavioral threat training with [Sigma Threat Management Associates](#) in November.

PTO Safety Presentations

District Safety and Security Officer Jonathan White made safety presentations to PTOs on the following dates: Wyncote (9/6), Glenside (9/17), Elkins Park (9/27), CHS (10/10), Cedarbrook (10/22), Myers (10/23). Cheltenham Elementary is scheduled for Monday, Nov. 26). [View the presentation>](#)

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

"Pretty in Pig" Partnership with Komen Philadelphia

The District partnered with the Susan G. Komen Foundation to stage the "Pretty in Pig" fundraising campaign in October. Each participating classroom received a small pig to collect donations. In addition, the high school received a large pig – Faith – to collect donations. The 10 classrooms with the most donations will be treated to a hot dog party courtesy of Dietz & Watson at a date yet to be determined. Komen Philadelphia had an information table at the October 12 football game where Myers second grade teacher (and survivor) Erika Wimms distributed information and prizes. Director of Communications Kevin Kaufman worked with Student Council Advisor and Football Coach Ryan Nase and Art Teacher Jennifer Hall to develop a design for t-shirts that were sold to students and staff and worn to the "Pink Out" game for free admission.

[Strategic Plan Pathway 5: Communications and Engagement]

Community That Care

In September, Director of Student Services Dr. Cheryl Horsey attended the executive board committee meeting for Communities That Care (CTC). CTC comprises community stakeholders who work together to address and implement evidence-based programming in Cheltenham to reduce the risk factors that cause problematic youth behaviors like underage drinking, truancy, tobacco use, substance abuse and violence. CTC sponsored and supported programming includes "Sticker Shock," a partnership with local alcohol distributors to raise community awareness of the penalties associated with purchasing or providing alcohol for and to teens; "Responsible Alcohol Management Program," a training for alcohol-serving establishments on how to identify underage individuals and prevent dangerous drinking; and "Aggression Replacement Training," a research-based approach for helping youth understand and control anger. **[Strategic Plan Pathway 4: Holistic Experiences]**