



Lexington Public Schools

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Our Schools

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Today's learners are tomorrow's leaders. To serve student needs we must continuously improve all Lexington Public School programs. As a system, we have made the greatest growth when looking at all nine schools as one district. Prior to my arrival in 2005, each school had great strengths, particularly in the form of dedicated staff. What was missing was a central structure and plan for the overall system. For example, it was clear to me that we could do more to improve the consistency of our curriculum across the six elementary schools and the progression between grade levels as children move from elementary to middle to high school. To that end, I have been pleased with our progress thus far, and in my upcoming columns I will share five major initiatives that will form our district plan for success moving forward.

Recently I have been asked: How do we keep to our mission in a period of serious economic uncertainty? Every newspaper has carried headlines warning of stormy seas ahead. Fortunately, our district's five major initiatives draw on our internal strengths, and can be accomplished even with tight budgets. Even in these difficult times, thanks to our strong foundation and collaborative culture, Lexington has a bright future.

The five major initiatives in our district plan will focus on: improving the district's programs and curriculum, using data to improve instruction, providing robust instructional interventions when they are needed, and supporting outstanding teachers and leaders. In the next few months, Lexington school leaders will publish in *Our Schools* some of the current initiatives that will strengthen the quality of teaching and learning for all students. These future *Our Schools* articles will focus on:

1. The recent high school accreditation report – How will the accreditation report be used to further strengthen Lexington High School?
2. Community partnerships – How do parents and community organizations support teaching and learning?
3. Tiered instructional intervention – What does this mean and how will this strategy improve learning?
4. Curriculum and program reviews – Why are they important?
5. Data and data teams – How will the district use data and data teams to improve learning for ALL students?

As I enter my fourth year as Lexington's Superintendent of Schools, I am proud to be part of a great school system that is committed to academic excellence, caring and respectful relationships, and continuous improvement. By almost any measure, peers and competitive colleges consider the Lexington Public Schools to be a very high performing school district.

Certainly, it would be very easy for us to become complacent, given how well our students perform Kindergarten through grade 12. However, is that good enough? Can we say that we are really meeting the needs of all students in all of our schools? And can we also say that we cannot improve the quality of education even for our highest performing students?

As educators in Lexington, we are not willing to sit back and count our achievements. We all know that improvement is possible and necessary given the demands of the global economy. Over the next few months it will be my pleasure to begin to show you some of the ways we have taken on this challenge.