A Sneak Peek at Hopkins Public School District’s Innovation Vision 2031

Hopkins is moving from Great to World Class. World Class does not mean elite or exclusive. It means the best and each of our students deserves the best education we can offer. The future of employment in our volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) world demands we prepare a different kind of K-12 graduate. Students are waiting for us to reject status quo and antiquated classroom instructional practices and engage in transformational change that includes their voice and reflects their choice. We are grateful to look like the world -- being nearly 50% non-white in our student body, representing more than 71 world languages. Our quest is to permanently disrupt racial, socioeconomic, and gender disparities in our achievement and staffing. Our strategic WHY is every student deserves a brilliant future.

Key tenets of Vision 2031. Our six Pillars of Innovation included building courageous teams that are not afraid to fail, establishing a list of digital tools to help students and educators learn, reimagining schools, crowdsourcing new ideas and feedback, establishing partnerships, and operating with an open mindset. We used feedback to identify Hopkins Core Values and they include Authentic Inclusivity, Vigilant Equity, Intentionally Adventurous, Humility of Heart, Optimistic Innovation, and Love. Our six Cornerstone Beliefs include educating learners 0-21, facilitating self-directed learning, evolving educators’ roles, teaching holistically, creating explicit job market connections, and cultivating students of the world. This is all so that we can develop graduates with the following Key Characteristics: confidence, having their own voice, thinking critically and holistically, being globally-minded and well-traveled, and valuing as well as cultivating empathy. Below, please find a graphic organizer that depicts the key elements of our Great to World Class Vision 2031.

How we developed Vision 2031. There were thousands of sources used to inform our vision (307 staff survey responses, 300+ student-conducted stakeholder interviews, 1500+ ideas generated at a two-day, 60-person Strategic Visioning event).

Developments post-vision launch. We developed and hosted nine Strategic Focus Teams comprised of more than 200 stakeholders that met for six weeks (October through
Thanksgiving 2018) to articulate what success will look like across nine distinct focus areas. These teams also identified short- and long-term recommendations to help Hopkins begin to frame and build their strategic plan. These groups/topics were:

- Reimagining School Day and Year Structures (start times, learning beyond school walls)
- Creating Students of the World: Language Immersion, Intercultural Competence & World Travel
- *Creating Innovation Lab Spaces, Mindset, and Behaviors*
- Cultivating Career and College Connections & Readiness
- Reimagining Early Learning (cultivating world scholars from birth)
- *Reimagining Student Success Metrics*
- Reimagining Marketing, Communications & Public Relations
- Redefining Educators’ Evolving Roles
- Cultivating Vigilant Equity Through Excellence

We then used a strategic decision-making matrix to determine which recommendations were fully aligned and foundational to Vision 2031. Our current work is around building an operational roadmap that tells the organization what success looks like at specific timebound horizons. This roadmap will inform our strategic action plan.

**Strategic Focus Areas.** There are two strategic focus areas identified by an asterisk above. We have determined that building out these two distinct strategic focus areas is paramount to Hopkins achieving Vision 2031. First, we are working on constructing a Lab Operating System (LOS), based on a recommendation that came from the Creating Innovation Lab Spaces team. Our LOS will build a platform as well as a process that educators and leaders in Hopkins will use to test new, bold ideas before bringing them to scale. If we’re going to reinvent the way education is done, we need a clear process for allowing people to test new ideas so that it doesn’t happen in chaotic, random, and unsupported ways.

Second, we are redefining Student Success Metrics in Hopkins, beginning with building a Learning Framework that will cohere all ten schools and the district office around a set of specific system principles and instructional practices. These instructional practices will be informed by the Key Characteristics of the Hopkins graduate, and will inform new methods we use to gauge whether students are on the right path or need additional support. Because the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) is not the best measure to determine whether students are being effectively prepared for a VUCA world, we believe it is our responsibility to develop and/or identify a set of measures that will help us make those determinations. We also need measures that are holistic and do not contribute to racial disparities.

Hopkins Public Schools is motivated to help close the opportunity gap in Minnesota, and demonstrate to Minnesotans and American citizens that all students are capable of high-levels of learning, and capable of contributing productively to solve community and world problems.