

The Seven Components of a Portfolio Strategy

The portfolio strategy gives families the freedom to attend their neighborhood schools or choose one that is the best fit for their child. It supports principals and teachers—those who work most closely with students—and frees them to use their best ideas to ignite student learning. And it relies on district leadership to support and expand successful schools until every child in the district is in a great school.

Good Options and Choices for All Families

- School choice for all families
- Equity and access to all schools for special education students and English language learners
- Coordination of enrollment and school information for families across sectors
- New schools opened based on family/student/neighborhood need
- Schools replaced based on performance outcomes
- Intentional development and opening of new schools

School Autonomy

- All schools control staff selection and dismissal, budget, pay, curriculum choice
- Autonomies are defined through MOUs, performance contracts, or charters
- Schools free to seek contractual waivers or exemptions

Pupil-Based Funding for All Schools

- District funds are allocated based on number of students and student type
- High proportion of district funds being sent to and managed at the school level
- Common prices set for facilities and central services across sectors
- Plan in place to identify and address schools with low productivity (low achievement, low enrollment, or high costs)

Talent-Seeking Strategy

- Policies in place for using alternative pipelines to find/develop talent
- Recruitment of new principals from proven pipelines
- Recruitment of new teachers from proven pipelines
- Intensive development of teachers and leaders, and district staff
- Performance-based evaluation system in place to recognize or remove teachers and leaders
- Innovative ways to increase the number of students taught by strong teachers and leaders

Sources of Support for Schools

- Schools free to choose support from an array of independent providers
- Procurement policies enable schools to work with vendors, regardless of established district contracts
- Strategies to engage independent providers (educational technologies, professional development, interim assessments)

Performance-Based Accountability for Schools

- Schools have rich and timely information on student and school performance
- Common school performance framework in place
- Performance framework uses multiple measures: student performance, student progress, school climate, student engagement, equity and access, long-term student outcomes
- Performance framework used as a significant factor in: school expansion, intervention, replacement/closure decisions
- Publication of a school report card based on common performance framework

Extensive Public Engagement

- Solicit ideas, values, and concerns from families and communities about school and district decisions
- Partnerships and coalitions with all key stakeholders
- Communication plan to convey information about reform strategy (including strategic plan, implementation schedule, annual updates, and external progress review)
- Plan for helping district and school staff understand and support the strategy
- Empower principals to be lead communicators about school and district strategy
- Public criteria and schedule for school closings and openings; clear and better options for families affected by closure