PLANO ISD:
VISIONING

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Academy Visioning Committee was created by the Plano ISD Board of Trustees to study and advise the feasibility of creating an option for 9-12th grade students that offers choices for programs not currently available in the comprehensive high schools and senior high schools. The Visioning Committee was expected to consider and utilize the District vision, mission and Portrait of a Graduate.

The 67 member committee included parents, students, central office and campus staff members, higher education representatives, business and community members. The committee met from May to December for approximately 30 hours to research best practice, consider current Plano ISD offerings, hear from current students and recent graduates, and to engage in discussions to explore the best way to create future focused choices that will prepare students for college and careers. The Visioning Committee also conducted a Community Meeting to get input from community members concerning an Academy.

The recommendations of the Visioning Committee were captured in the following document of *Findings and Directions*. *Findings* are philosophical statements that describe how the committee believes instruction should be facilitated and supported in an Academy, and *Directions* are statements that describe how the Findings will be accomplished. *Findings and Directions* were defined in the following areas:

- Mission and Focus
- Teaching, Learning and Expectations
- Organization of Instructional Spaces
- Time
- School Size
- College and Work Force Connections
- Counseling and Advisories

- Technology
- Career and Technical Education
- Performing and Visual Arts
- Physical Education and Athletics
- Clubs and Student Activities
- School and Community

THE VISIONING COMMITTEE

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RECOMMENDATION

The Visioning Committee is recommending the following *Findings and Directions* as a plan to create Academies for 9-12th grade students that offers future focused choices for programs not currently available in the comprehensive high schools and senior high schools.

MISSION

The mission of Plano ISD Academies is to engage students in a rigorous, distinct project-based curriculum, inspiring creativity and empowering them to collaborate and compete globally.

PARAMETERS

- Initial program that serves grades 9 – 12
- Program that provides for college and career-ready students

1 General Finding

FINDINGS

1.1   Academies related to the career interests of students provide engaging, motivating connections between students' interests and their learning.

DIRECTIONS

1.1.1   Project-based learning (PBL) will be the instructional delivery model.

1.1.2   Students will be encouraged to continuously collaborate with others within and outside the school to make learning more meaningful.

1.1.3   Instruction will be rigorous and will encourage innovation and creativity.

1.1.4   The first Academy in Plano ISD will focus on science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics. (STEAM)

2 Teaching, Learning and Expectations

FINDINGS

2.1   PBL engages students in real world learning that is relevant, interesting, collaborative and motivating.

2.2   Self-awareness and personal accountability develops self-efficacy.

DIRECTIONS

2.1.1   PBL will be incorporated in all Academies to promote collaboration and teamwork with facilitation from teachers.

2.1.2   Effective implementation of PBL will require significant and on-going professional development and training for staff members.

2.1.3   Community involvement and partnerships will be developed in order to provide real world experiences for students.

2.2.1   All students will maintain a digital portfolio to demonstrate progress and competency of learning for all four years as a requirement of graduation.

2.2.2   Students will be involved in mentoring, internships and service learning as requirements of graduation.

2.2.3   Students will become active participants in choosing how they learn.

3 Organization of Instructional Spaces

FINDINGS

3.1 Supporting the creation of a community of learners is the goal for how student, teacher and administrative zones are arranged in the Academies.

3.2 The atmosphere created by the Academies must foster learning, as well as social and emotional growth.

DIRECTIONS

3.1.1 Create programmatic adjacencies that support and nurture interdisciplinary collaboration and inquiry.

3.1.2 Avoid departmental arrangements.

3.1.3 Ensure that teacher and administrative areas are highly integrated into the student learning spaces. Faculty areas are to be accessible to students during and after learning time.

3.1.4 Ensure that student collaboration areas are distributed throughout the primary learning zone(s).

3.1.5 Provide varying room sizes that allow for multi-disciplinary study.

3.2.1 Provide an inviting and welcoming entry into the Academies creating the first opportunity to engage students in the learning process and include visitors in the mission of the school through demonstrations and exhibitions of student work.

3.2.2 Create a way finding system throughout the Academies that supports clear navigation for students, staff and visitors. Seek ways for the way finding system to be interactive with students.

3.2.3 Seek opportunities for natural lighting and higher quality artificial lighting to enhance the visual environment.

3.2.4 Create a welcoming atmosphere throughout the Academies through the thoughtful use of color and texture.

3.2.5 The use of glass in the Academies will create visual connections that allow for student to student and student to teacher learning.

3.2.6 Explore the creative use of finishes, accessories, and equipment within all learning spaces.

4 Time

FINDINGS

4.1   Instructional goals should define the management of time.

4.2   A thoughtful arrangement of time maximizes learning.

DIRECTIONS

4.1.1   Each individual project will drive the timeline and the schedule.

4.1.2   Within each project there will be time blocked out for independent research, group collaboration and facilitator interaction.

4.1.3   Job shadowing and internships will take place during the school day.

4.2.1   Time will be divided into flexible modules that can be grouped together to support learning objectives.

4.2.2   More relevant learning experiences will be created through interdisciplinary projects.

4.2.3   Integrated curriculum will allow students to earn multiple credits within courses.

5 School Size

FINDINGS

5.1   Smaller school size creates a sense of community and provides diverse opportunities for students.

DIRECTIONS

5.1.1   The ideal range per grade level (9-12) will be 100-150 for a maximum of 600 students.

5.1.2   Small school size will allow students to have opportunities to work in flexible collaborative teams and cohorts.

6 College and Work Force Connections

6.1   All students should experience learning that connects to post-secondary opportunities in order to give them choices available to any graduate.

6.1.1   Course offerings will include AP, dual credit and distance learning courses.

6.1.2   Students will complete either off-campus internships or on-campus capstone projects.

6.1.3   Learning experiences should include partnerships with colleges and universities.

6.1.4   Field trips to universities and local businesses along with guest speakers on campus will be provided for all students.

7   Counseling and Advisories

FINDINGS

7.1   Counselors should be advocates who pro-vide guidance and direction for students.

7.2   Counseling should be a shared responsibil-ity of all adults on the campus.

DIRECTIONS

7.1.1   Priority will be placed on college and career guidance for all students.

7.1.2   Guidance lessons will be provided to model interpersonal collaboration skills for students.

7.1.3   Student groups will be organized to teach, model and practice traits needed for the 21st century including, but not limited to:
-Cooperation
-Collaboration
-Diplomacy
-Responsibility

7.2.1   Work place culture and etiquette will be integrated into instruction in the classroom.

7.2.2   Connections to the community will provide opportunities for service learning, job shadowing, mentorships and internships.

7.2.3   Coaching will be provided for establishing good study skills.

7.2.4   Guidance will be provided to assure student success.

7.2.5   Peer mentoring will be provided for support as well as leadership opportunities.

8 Technology

FINDINGS

8.1   Technology should be seamlessly integrated into the curriculum.

8.2   Technology is essential for all aspects of creative learning and should be universally accessible.

DIRECTIONS

8.1.1   A combination of personally owned and district-provided equipment will make technology available 24x7.

8.2.1   Technology will allow students to access digital resources at all times.

8.2.2   The system will allow students to use their own technology devices.

8.2.3   Equipment will be provided for those who do not have their own devices.

8.2.4   Ample charging solutions and flexible room and furniture arrangement will provide collaborative work areas for the use of technology.

8.2.5   The library will become a resource media center to support the use of technology.

8.2.6   Technology will be used to maximize the space available in the school.

8.2.7   Students will learn digital responsibility.

9   Career and Technical Education (CTE)

FINDINGS

9.1   CTE courses prepare students to be career ready and offer opportunities for students to learn varied methods of demonstrating their learning using technology.

DIRECTIONS

9.1.1   CTE offerings at the Academies will be tailored to support each Academy's focus and PBL, including, but not limited to:

-Technology
-Engineering
-Arts
-Mathematics
-Science

10   Performing and Visual Arts

10.1   Inclusion in performing and visual arts in a student's school experience promotes a well rounded education.

10.1.1   Performing and visual arts offerings at the Academies will be tailored to support each Academy's focus and PBL.

10.1.2   Include humanities aspects (e.g. art, music, theater, history) in the scope of projects within the PBL curriculum to create and enhance interdisciplinary focus.

10.1.3   Courses will be offered to enhance students' presentation skills.

11 Physical Education and Athletics

FINDINGS

11.1   A physical education program should be provided that promotes healthy living, citizenship and sportsmanship.

DIRECTIONS

11.1.1   Alternative physical education courses will be offered that are related to each Academy's focus.

11.1.2   Physical education TEKS will be combined with other subjects to create new innovative courses that will be engaging for students.

11.1.3   Intramurals driven by student interest will be offered to provide opportunities for students to participate in competitive activities.

12 Clubs and Student Activities

12.1   Clubs and school activities build a school culture and allow students to have a sense of belonging.

12.1.1   Student-led decisions will be key to the selection and implementation of school activities.

12.1.2   Activities that enrich and complement the curriculum will be offered.

12.1.3   Activities that develop leadership and foster service learning will be provided.

13 School and Community

FINDINGS

13.1   The Academies should collaborate with parents to enhance student success.

13.2   The Academies should collaborate with the business community to enhance the learning experience for students.

DIRECTIONS

13.1.1   Parents will be encouraged to utilize services provided by the Academy focus.

13.1.2   Parents will be invited to attend presentations of projects.

13.1.3   Parents will be invited to share their professions with students as a resource for projects.

13.2.1   Collaboration between the Academies and the business community will include:

-Internships and mentorships
-Guest lectures
-Input for curriculum design
-Professional assessment of projects
-Avenues for service learning