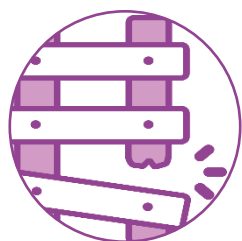


Highline Public

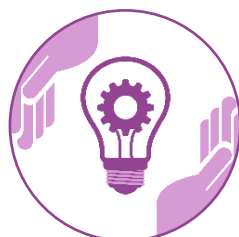
Schools:

Leveraging Strategic Planning for School Improvement



Common Challenge

In 2013, student performance in Highline Public Schools (located outside of Seattle, Washington) was improving, but achievement gaps persisted among low-income students and students of color. The district brought stakeholders together around an ambitious strategic plan that included bold goals to counter the low expectations often placed on students in high-poverty districts.



Highline's Approach

The district cultivated a culture that revolved around the strategic plan by enabling everyone in the system—from central office staff, to principals, teachers, and support staff—to see their work as integral for achieving the goals for students. This shift in culture enabled the transformation of central office structures, staffing, and school planning.



Highline's Results

Since 2013, the graduation rate across all student groups has increased 18 percentage points, including 28 percentage points among black students and 23 points among Latinx* students.¹ The district has also supported goals for students by hiring teaching staff who share students' racial identities: In 2018-19, 45 percent of the district's new hires were people of color.²

*"Latinx" is the gender-neutral alternative to "Latino" or "Latina," meaning a person of Latin American origin or descent. Common pronunciation is "lah-TEEN-ex" or "lah-teen-EX."

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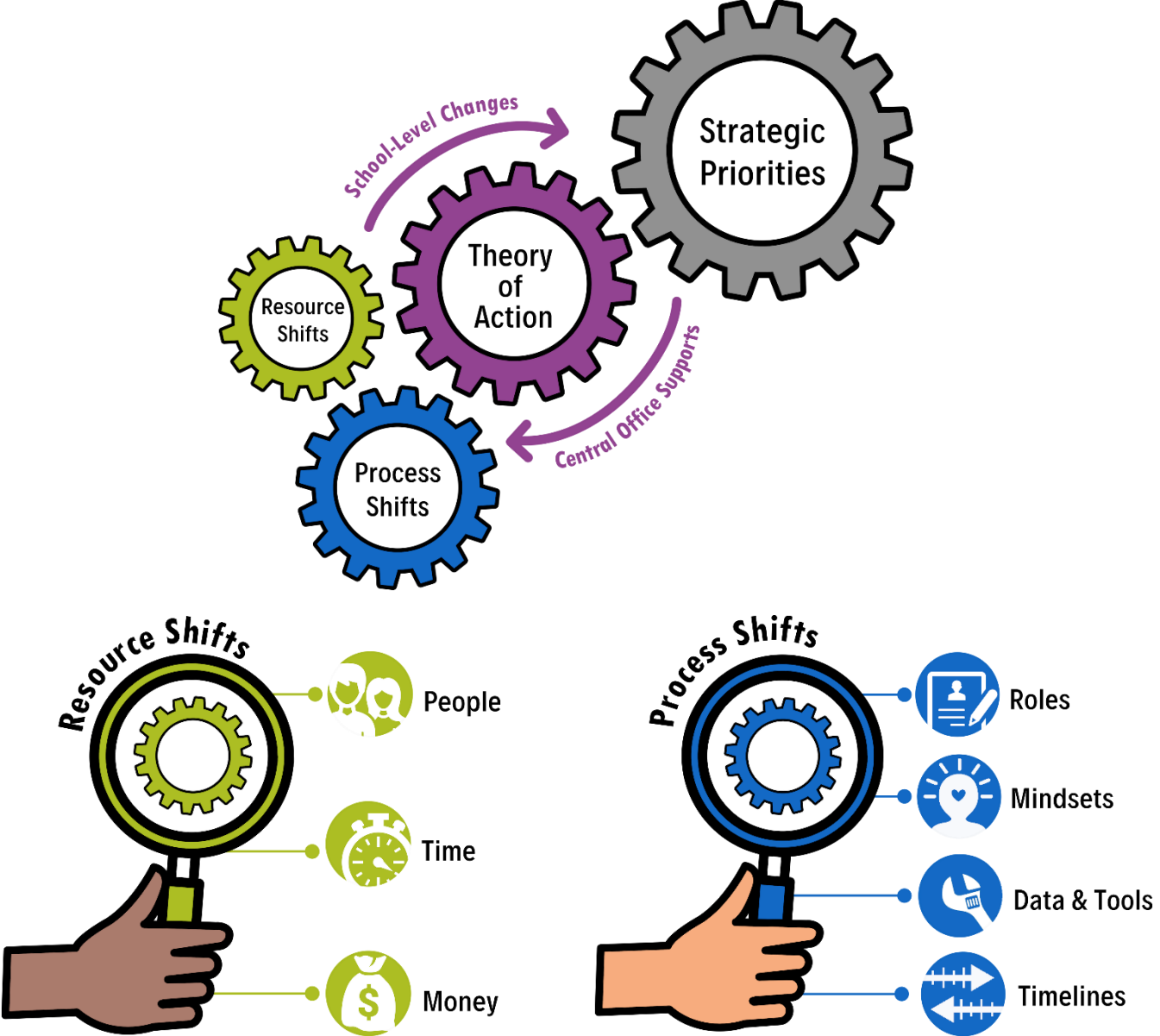
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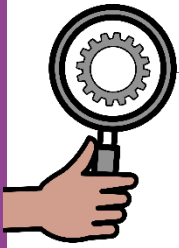
ERS Districts at Work Framework

We studied eight school districts that struggled with the same challenges as many urban systems around the country—and like many others, the eight districts we studied set **strategic priorities** that they hoped would address their challenges. **What sets these eight districts apart is that they didn't stop there.**

Think of these **strategic priorities** as a gear—without focusing on what is needed to power it, the gear stays stationary. Just setting the right strategic priorities is not enough to produce or sustain the results district and school leaders hope for.

Leaders from Highline Public Schools (HPS) and the other districts we studied rolled up their sleeves to carefully and collaboratively construct three other gears that effectively powered their strategic priorities. They developed a clear **theory of action** by identifying: (A) the big changes that schools needed to make to power progress toward the strategic priorities, *and* (B) how the central office needed to support schools to successfully implement those changes. To power their theory of action, these districts made tough trade-offs in a series of **resource shifts**, and they made **process shifts** to ensure central office management structures enabled schools to efficiently, effectively, and sustainably implement the changes.





Highline Public Schools: Strategic Priorities

HPS anchored its ambitious, equity-driven strategic plan in the “**Highline Promise**” that *every student is known by name, strength, and need* and that *all graduates are prepared for the future they choose*. HPS school, district, and community leaders committed to **four foundational principles** to help the district pursue **five bold goals** for students that would counter the low expectations often placed on students in diverse, high-poverty school systems.

Four Foundational Principles

- 1 **Equity:** We will disrupt institutional biases and inequitable practices so all students have an equal chance at success.
- 2 **Instruction:** We will reduce achievement and opportunity gaps by using culturally responsive, inclusive, standards-based instruction.
- 3 **Relationships:** We will know our students by name, strength, and need and have open, two-way communication with students, families, and community partners.
- 4 **Support:** We will increase student success by supporting their social-emotional and academic needs.



Five Bold Goals

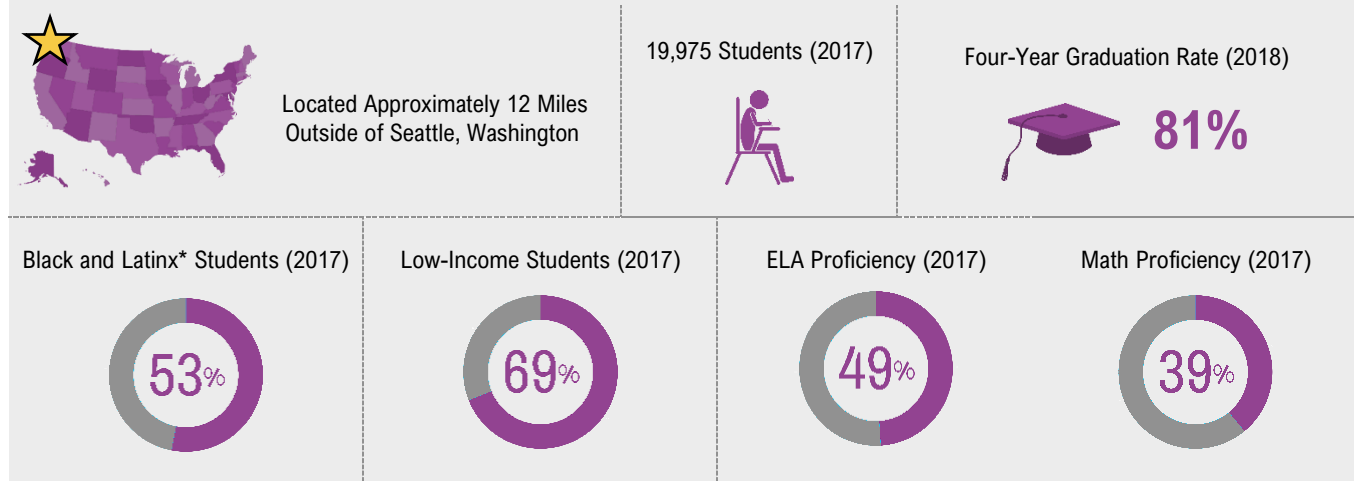
- 1 **School Culture:** Our schools are welcome and safe places where students and staff are respected and supported to succeed.
- 2 **Growth and Mastery:** Students will make a minimum of one year of growth annually, meeting or exceeding standards in all grade levels.
- 3 **Digital Media and Literacy:** Students will graduate with the problem-solving and critical thinking skills necessary to live and work responsibly in a digital world.
- 4 **Bilingual and Biliterate:** Students will graduate bilingual and biliterate.
- 5 **High School Graduation:** Students will graduate from high school prepared for the future they choose.

In many districts, strategic plans sit on a shelf and do not inform daily practices. Based on a core belief that everyone in the district has a crucial role in pursuing the five bold goals, HPS leaders set the following **strategic priority**:

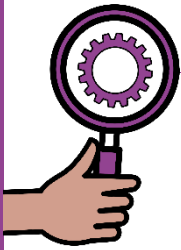
Enable everyone in the system—central office staff, principals, teachers, and support staff—to see their work as an important contribution toward achieving the five bold goals outlined in the strategic plan.

HPS transformed the culture in the central office to focus on excellence and equity for students and on service for schools. District leaders redesigned structures and reallocated resources to support schools—always with the strategic plan’s goals for students in mind.

Highline Public Schools: District at a Glance³



³ERS chose to study districts with high populations of black, Latinx, and low-income students to highlight school systems that are actively addressing longstanding inequities.



Highline Public Schools: Theory of Action

HPS leaders didn't stop after setting the district's strategic priority: First, they identified big changes that schools needed to make to power progress toward the strategic priority (and therefore, the goals for students outlined in the strategic plan). Then, they identified how the central office needed to support schools to successfully implement those changes. Together, these school-level changes and central office supports formed the district's **theory of action**. To power their theory of action, HPS made a series of resource shifts and process shifts. **Going beyond an initial strategic priority by developing and powering this theory of action is what sets HPS apart.**

HPS's theory of action was composed of three major parts:

#1

Transform the central office culture by better aligning activities to districtwide goals.

Why?

The superintendent and cabinet recognized that committing the central office to both **fostering a culture of service to schools** and **disrupting institutional biases** would propel the system toward meeting its strategic priority.

Resource Shifts

- People
- Time
- Money

Process Shifts

- Roles
- Mindsets
- Data & Tools
- Timelines

#2

Give principals coordinated support for implementing the strategies needed to meet districtwide goals.

Why?

For principals to meaningfully contribute to the goals outlined in the district's strategic plan, they needed to receive coordinated support during the school planning process. HPS leaders built upon principal supervisors' instructional leadership strengths, including expanding their role to include more school planning and design support. This ensured that school resources (people, time, and money) were used strategically to support students.

Resource Shifts

- People
- Time
- Money

Process Shifts

- Roles
- Mindsets
- Data & Tools
- Timelines

#3

Hire a high-quality and diverse cohort of teachers to support students.

Why?

Research shows that having teachers who share a racial identity with their students can strengthen students' performance.⁴ The human resources (HR) department wanted to ensure that students were staffed with diverse groups of high-quality teachers. To do this, team members learned more about schools' hiring needs and changed how they recruited candidates.

Resource Shifts

- People
- Time
- Money

Process Shifts

- Roles
- Mindsets
- Data & Tools
- Timelines

#1

Transform the central office culture by better aligning activities to districtwide goals.

To ensure that all HPS staff understood how their work connected to the district's goals for students, school and system leaders consistently reflected and communicated about how their work could advance the goals outlined in the strategic plan. Then, they transformed the ways they worked together to achieve those goals.



Process Shifts



Mindsets

When HPS leaders asked educators and community stakeholders to reflect on the district's previous strategic plan (developed in 2013), they shared that they wanted to keep the district's bold commitment to equity that was included in the original goals—such as “every student masters all core subjects by the end of third grade”—however, the tight framing of these goals made it difficult for everyone to see how their work contributed. For example, how could music teachers or fourth-grade teachers help students master core subjects by third grade?

HPS leaders incorporated this feedback into the new strategic plan: they kept the district's bold commitments but **broadened each goal to encompass more students and staff**. To do this reframing, they **connected the work of all staff members to the goals laid out in the strategic plan**. For example:

2013 Strategic Plan

Every student reads by third grade.

became



2018 Strategic Plan

Students will make a minimum of one year of growth annually, meeting or exceeding standards in all grade levels.



Knowing every student by name, strength, and need is now baked into the culture of our system. One of the lessons I've learned over the last several years is you can have the most awesome strategies, the most awesome systems, the most awesome structures and people—but if you don't attend to shifting the *culture* to enable those systems, strategies, structures, and people to flourish, you will get nowhere.

-Susan Enfield, superintendent

In the central office, operational departments were encouraged to see the strategic plan as essential to their day-to-day work. For example, Chief Financial Officer (at the time of this study) Janea Marking described the Business and Finance department as “the cement foundation at the bottom of the strategic plan” that *enabled* the work of other teams that worked more directly with students—rather than operating as a separate unit with finance-specific goals. HPS staff everywhere—from school cafeterias to the central office—were encouraged to reflect on the promise of “every student known by name, strength, and need” as a way to keep the experience they wanted for students at the front of their minds each day.



Roles

To better support school-level work in pursuit of districtwide goals, central office departments formally **reorganized roles and responsibilities**. With leadership from Superintendent Susan Enfield and support from Meredith Honig of the University of Washington’s District Leadership Design Lab, the central office “established that our work is to get to ‘yes’ for principals, while principals are doing that for teachers and kids,” explained Deborah Rumbaugh, an instructional leadership executive director.

Each department **made changes to reinforce the attitude that central office work was in service of schools and their goals**. For example, Chief Academic Officer Susanne Jerde reorganized the responsibilities of the Teaching, Learning, and Leadership executive directors so they could coordinate more efficiently with each other and with the Instructional Leadership executive directors, who supported principals. She assigned one of the Teaching, Learning, and Leadership executive directors to elementary schools and English-learners, and another to secondary schools and students with disabilities. This visibility over multiple strands allowed for more seamless collaboration within the department and for more consistent messaging to principals.



Resource Shifts



People

Multiple departments in the central office changed priorities and rearranged responsibilities to help schools reach the strategic plan’s goals for students. For example, when HR staff explored what they could do to better support principals’ strategic planning and implementation, they concluded that the technical support they historically provided to schools—such as processing applications for open positions and supporting payroll—was not enough for principals to build the cohesive, diverse teams needed to reduce achievement gaps, as described in the strategic plan. To address this, HR staff **created a new HR partner role to work closely with small groups of schools in support of multi-year strategic staffing decisions** that took into account current teachers’ strengths and schools’ changing demographics and enrollment numbers. The HR team streamlined and automated transactional tasks to increase staff capacity, including repurposing approximately \$300,000 to create a Workforce Planning team, which included three newly hired HR partners.⁵

#2

Give principals coordinated support for implementing the strategies needed to meet districtwide goals.

In many districts, school planning can feel like a compliance obstacle course to principals: writing their schools' plans in one place, filling out budgets later in another place, and finding little alignment in what they're being asked to do across the various documents. HPS leaders did not want principals to have this type of experience. Instead, they wanted school planning to be the linchpin for organizing all school-level resource decisions and improvement efforts. Therefore, principal supervisors, called instructional leadership executive directors (ILEDs), led efforts to reimagine schools' strategic planning processes. As part of these efforts, the finance team coordinated review and decision-making processes across all central office departments to ensure that principals received targeted support and timely feedback about their strategic plans.



Process Shifts



Timelines

HPS revamped school planning timelines to allow strategic planning to drive budgeting, scheduling, and staffing decisions. To avoid a common pattern of school plans jumping to different goals each year without focusing on any goals long enough to make progress, HPS structured schools' Annual Action Plans (AAPs) to be included within schools' multi-year School Improvement Plans (SIPs). Principals planned each year of their AAPs as the first year within a rolling three-year SIP so that the goals for their schools remained consistent long enough for improvement to take place. ILED Ben Gauyan explained, "If I laid out the last 10 years of school improvement plans, there should be a thread that shows how you got to where you are today."

In addition, multiple central office departments worked together to enable a more coordinated approach toward school planning:

1

ILEDs and principals **began planning before receiving enrollment projections**. The multi-year flow of AAPs and SIPs helped principals set goals and create action plans earlier than their peers in other districts:

- In October, principals completed their AAPs for the following school year.
- HPS principals began making master schedules for their schools in November, with the understanding that if enrollment fluctuated, they might need to edit their schedules.

2

The finance team **moved quickly from enrollment projections to school staffing and budget allocations**. The central office received enrollment projections in December. In January, the finance team used the enrollment projections to calculate allocations for staffing and discretionary funds for schools. This coordination enabled principals to begin making budget decisions in February and complete their budgets in March—a time when their peers in many other districts are just beginning to receive budget and staffing information from the central office.⁶

3

HR partners **conducted a staffing needs assessment early in the year to allow principals to get a head start on recruiting the best teachers from the candidate pool.** In contrast to typical urban districts that still have one-third of positions open three months before the school year begins, HPS leaders begin hiring in December and January by hiring from the candidate pool based on projections, rather than waiting for site-specific vacancies.⁷

4

In the spring, each principal **shared his or her Annual Action Plan and budget with a cross-functional central office team.** This allowed district leaders to know which challenges schools would work on during the upcoming school year.

5

The final evolution to schools' plans took place at the beginning of the next school year, when the same cross-functional central office team **met to make adjustments to schools' staffing** based on final enrollment counts. The team **used what they learned in the spring about each school's plans to recommend the least-disruptive options for staffing changes** that matched new enrollment and school needs.

 **Artifact #1: 2019-20 Budget Timeline**



Data & Tools

The Department of Teaching, Learning, and Leadership **developed new, multi-year planning protocols to elevate the planning process from basic compliance to a strategic and engaging thought exercise** for principals. First, HPS set an objective to create tools that encouraged each principal to think about how his or her school's goals could support the goals outlined in the district's strategic plan. However, after the first year using this revised school planning protocol, system leaders received feedback from principals that promoting alignment wasn't enough—principals wanted protocols that helped them think about the key questions they should consider as they developed their plans, such as: In what ways are students doing well? Where do we want to go? What is our process for engaging stakeholders in conversation about our plan? What rationale and research support our strategy?

Based on this feedback, the Teaching, Learning, and Leadership Department developed a more sophisticated AAP tool that incorporated guidance to support principals' thought processes. Now, principals work through 25 pages of probing questions that inform their final three-page AAPs.

Because this new guidance included such a detailed set of questions, HPS leaders **worked to make sure the protocol did not eclipse attention on the student-level challenges it was meant to address**; Superintendent Susan Enfield explained, "We're learning what the tipping point is for a protocol to become useful. We want to avoid creating protocols that become the work themselves." To continuously improve the planning protocol, leaders began collecting feedback from principals each year and then acted on the feedback by adjusting the planning process accordingly.

 **Artifact #2: Sample Annual Action Plan**

#2 Give principals coordinated support for implementing the strategies needed to meet districtwide goals.

>> continued



Roles

Multiple central office departments worked together to ensure that resources aligned with the goals principals set for their schools in their AAPs:

ILED Support

To equip principals at each school to implement their strategic plans, HPS capitalized on previous work that **defined ILEDs as supports for principals' school improvement work and sources for principals to build their skills**. Rather than ensuring that principals checked every box in a rote process, ILEDs **used the revised annual school planning process to help principals learn and grow, including guiding their thinking about how to align their schools' resources with their goals**. ILED Ben Gauyan described how resource use can demonstrate a school's work toward the districtwide commitment to equity: "School master schedules can show students taking Spanish in eighth grade and not getting into it in ninth grade. That limits their ability to get through all their graduation requirements, which can be life changing."

Cross-Functional Budget Meetings

Multiple central office departments also **coordinated during the district's budget review process to ensure central resources served students and schools as well as possible**. After ILEDs and principals prepared their plans, cross-functional central office teams reviewed budget and staffing decisions with attention to cross-school equity and financial sustainability. Budget meetings held during the fall and spring relied on a cross-functional team that included ILEDs, representatives from the HR and finance teams, and representatives in charge of special education, English language learners, and the Highline Education Association (the teachers union)—all of whom brought valuable additional perspectives to the table. Prior to these meetings, all participants gathered data and relevant feedback documents so meeting time could be spent discussing solutions, rather than completing calculations.



During the fall budget meetings, HR partners prepared a list of each of their assigned school's class sizes and their first-choice recommendations to adjust staffing and class sizes in ways that: (A) lowered teaching loads, (B) balanced budget constraints, and (C) preserved students' access to rigorous instruction. The HR partners' detailed knowledge of their assigned schools helped the whole cross-functional team use accurate numbers (instead of assumptions) to make decisions about which adjustments were feasible.

During years with tight budgets, the cross-functional team did not always have the funds to help principals make every aspect of their plans work—so they proactively worked together to find *non-budgetary* ways to support principals, including aligning district-provided professional development with the themes principals wanted to work on in their schools.

Resource Shifts



People

Because ILEDs played such a key role in supporting principals' planning, HPS **prioritized its substantial investment in ILEDs, even during budget cuts due to declining enrollment.** The district's elementary ILEDs supported approximately nine principals each; secondary ILEDs supported approximately seven principals each, compared with 16 or more in typical districts.^{8,9} ILEDs in HPS spent approximately 70 percent of their time in schools, which gave them enough one-on-one time to become deeply involved with each principal's school improvement efforts.



Time

Central office leaders **committed substantial amounts of time to meeting twice per year for each of the district's 43 school budget meetings.** When HPS began running collaborative budget meetings, the cross-functional team ran three schools' meetings in parallel, with principals moving from department to department with questions. Principals said this process was chaotic, so in 2017, the finance team asked participants to commit even more time so the meetings could run in sequence. Now, 16 central office staff members commit about two weeks each year to budget meetings—an investment of more than 250 hours of their time.¹⁰ One central office staff member told Budget Director Jackie Bryan, "When you blocked out this much time on my calendar, I didn't know how I was going to do it. But now that we've done it, I can't imagine doing it any other way."



“Every district that I’ve visited for the past 30 years has done school planning. But sometimes it’s done by the principal on the weekend, or it’s done in a small group. It’s submitted, and it’s on the shelf—it’s kind of like the box for strategic plans, right? [In partnership with Meredith Honig] **We really went in to create a process and a planning approach—not just a plan.**”

-Susanne Jerde, chief academic officer

#3

Hire a high-quality and diverse cohort of teachers to support students.

The district's HR department considered what schools needed to do to make progress toward the strategic plan's goals. Then, they concluded that they could best support schools' progress in two ways: (1) improving hiring to help schools build teams of diverse, high-quality teachers, and (2) becoming better strategic partners as principals designed, developed, and built those teams. To do this, the HR department needed to redesign their work around workforce planning and development.



Process Shifts



Timelines

Early Interviewing

To have the best chance at hiring a diverse cohort of high-quality candidates, the district's Workforce Development team realized that it needed to begin the hiring timeline earlier. In September, recruiters and HR partners **began cultivating applicants at universities, at hiring fairs, and through other connections**. In addition to ongoing hiring fairs and recruitment efforts, the Workforce Development team used the month of December to schedule interviews with qualified applicants for January through June. Each week, a panel that included HR staff, a principal(s), and administrators interviewed candidates. The panel **hired candidates from these interviews into a cadre of early-hire teachers** by confirming to candidates that they had a job in HPS but waited to pair them with a particular school's vacancy. By broadening the hiring pool and beginning the interviewing process earlier, the Workforce Development team substantially increased the number of people of color in the candidate pipeline. Now, more teachers of color become part of the early-hire cadre available to principals.

Early Hiring

Early preparation by principals and early recruiting by HR meant that as soon as a principal had a vacancy at their school, he or she could hire a qualified candidate from the cadre. The district's HR department **expected principals to interview at least one candidate from the cadre for each open position**. HR partners **recommended candidates who best suited each school's unique staffing needs and culture**. However, after interviewing a cadre candidate, principals retained the ability to continue their own recruiting and interviewing efforts.

Staff Planning

In parallel to this hiring process, HR partners worked with principals to ensure they were ready to hire as soon as a great candidate came along. Principals **assessed their staffing needs in September and worked with HR partners to consider how these staffing needs would change over the three-year period covered in their strategic staffing plans**. In November, principals, ILEDs, and HR partners reviewed the plans together. In December, HR partners tailored the

district's November demographic projections to schools to give principals information about changes that were likely to occur to their schools in January. As a result, principals had time to complete their AAPs and budget planning before cross-functional budget meetings were held in March.

Artifact #3: Hiring Timeline



Roles

To offer strategic support, HR partners **spent more of their time in schools, growing their knowledge of schools' needs and building relationships with principals.** HR partners couldn't be schools' sole source for immediate transactional support, so the district's smaller Employee Services team took on this work and made it possible for HPS to use strategic staffing investments as a lever for school improvement.

"The HR partner is intended to be primarily a partner to the school principal around **the goals of their school improvement plan.**"

-Steve Grubb,
chief talent officer



Jesse Johnson is one of three HR partners in HPS. He spends three full days each week visiting the schools he supports. He sees each of his nine elementary school and three middle school principals once or twice per month to talk about staffing and budgeting. Occasionally, he does classroom walk-throughs to understand principals' plans for teaching and to handle any labor issues. For example, when principals begin developing their three-year strategic staffing plans each November, Mr. Johnson holds conversations with each principal about which teachers plan to stay or leave. Principals then use these conversations to inform their strategic staffing plans so that in the spring, they are prepared to retain or hire the diverse, high-quality staff they need.



Data & Tools

To measure how well their work provided the district with teams of diverse, high-quality teachers, the Workforce Development team **tracked metrics about hiring teachers of color as they expanded their hiring searches.** The team systematically monitored their progress by measuring how many new hires were teachers of color and by comparing retention rates among teachers of color and white teachers. The team sought data to answer additional questions, such as: Are professional learning opportunities in HPS equitably assigned to early-career leaders? What details can we measure about a candidate during the hiring process that will help predict his or her success in HPS classrooms?

Gathering data to answer these questions was challenging, but the HR department and the Workforce Development team did not let data siloes stop them from pursuing answers. They collected professional learning data by using the finance team's records of travel reimbursements and pulling physical files from cabinets to identify which teacher preparation programs the district's best teachers had completed.

Artifact #4: Hiring Equity Study

Results: Changes to the Student Experience

As a result of the district’s efforts over the last few years—including its work to transform culture and provide more coordinated central office support to schools—HPS has moved closer to meeting its goals for students. HPS makes their [full annual report](#) of progress toward the strategic plan’s goals available online.

Five Bold Goals	Progress and Outcomes ¹¹
<p>1 School Culture Our schools are welcome and safe places where students and staff are respected and supported to succeed.</p>	<p>Between the 2012 school year and the 2017-18 school year, out-of-school suspensions and expulsions decreased from 1,547 to 722—a 53 percent reduction.</p> <p>➔ During the 2017-18 school year, elementary school students attended school 95 percent of the days that they were enrolled; middle school students attended 93 percent; and high school students attended 89 percent.</p>
<p>2 Growth and Mastery Students will make a minimum of one year of growth annually, meeting or exceeding standards in all grade levels.</p>	<p>➔ In 2018, 42 percent of third-graders and 52 percent of eighth-graders met standards in ELA. 46 percent of third-graders and 34 percent of eighth-graders met standards in math.¹²</p>
<p>3 Digital Media and Literacy Students will graduate with the problem-solving and critical thinking skills necessary to live and work responsibly in a digital world.</p>	<p>➔ During the 2017-18 school year, 3,525 HPS students in grades 7-12 (41 percent of students) participated in a Career and Technical Education program.</p>
<p>4 Bilingual and Biliterate Students will graduate bilingual and biliterate.</p>	<p>➔ During the 2017-18 school year, 10 percent of HPS students were enrolled in the district’s growing dual-language program.</p> <p>In 2018, 19.5 percent of HPS graduates earned the Washington State Seal of Biliteracy.</p>
<p>5 High School Graduation Students will graduate from high school prepared for the future they choose.</p>	<p>Between 2014 and 2018, graduation rates increased from 62.3 percent to 81.1 percent overall.</p> <p>➔ Among black students, the graduation rate increased from 54.6 percent to 82.9 percent during this time. Among Latinx students, it increased from 50 percent to 73.2 percent.</p>

Results: Changes to the School Leader Experience

HPS principals have benefited from the additional central office support. Most principals meet with their ILEDs weekly or biweekly at their schools and meet with their ILEDs and a group of other principals once per month. Hiring teachers earlier helped HPS make progress toward its foundational principle of disrupting institutional biases and supporting equity-driven, student-level goals: In 2014, only 12 percent of the district's new hires were teachers of color.¹³ Since making it a priority to hire a more diverse teaching staff, the district has hired 203 more teachers of color.¹⁴ During the 2018-19 school year, 45 percent of new hires were teachers of color.¹⁵

“Principals figure out the easiest path for the highest-impact result. I had to **build a system that gave them a better outcome with less effort.**”

-Steve Grubb,
chief talent officer

What's Next for Highline Public Schools?

Teachers and leaders continue to make progress toward the strategic plan's goals for students—but would likely be the first to say that they haven't yet done all the work they want to. The district's long-term efforts toward the same set of goals is a source of success, so leaders are not looking to change those goals, but they *are* excited to expand this work into new dimensions. For example, during the past seven years, HPS leaders worked to turn district-level strategic plans and school-level action plans from compliance documents created for people outside of schools into vehicles for thoughtful planning that benefit the people *inside* of schools. Furthermore, because the length and jargon included in school plans can often be difficult to understand for people who are not school or district leaders, two schools are currently experimenting with differentiating their plans for parents by creating one- or two-page summaries that list who in the school is doing what work. Leaders hope that simplifying school plans will make it easier for parents and community members to understand how their schools are working to improve.



Sources

¹ “2017-18 Annual Report.” Highline Public Schools. www.highlineschools.org/about/district-information/annual-report.

² Email from Evan Mirolla, research specialist at Edunomics Lab.

³ *Washington State Report Card*. Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). 2018 data. <https://washingtonstatereportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us>.

⁴ For details on the benefits of pairing students with teachers who match their racial identities, see:

Gershenson, S., Hart, C., Lindsay, C., and Papageorge, N. (2017). “The Long-Run Impacts of Same-Race Teachers.” The Institute of Labor Economics. <http://ftp.iza.org/dp10630.pdfplus>.

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⁵ Email from Evan Mirolla, research specialist at Edunomics Lab.

⁶ Based on Highline Public Schools’ new school planning timeline, as laid out in the June school planning process report.

⁷ The average is 33 percent, across 14 districts, hired before the 90-day cutoff. Education Resource Strategies’ Strategic System Snapshot Database, metric 6.

⁸ Email from Chief Communications Officer Catherine Carbone Rogers.

⁹ The typical district average comes from Education Resource Strategies’ Strategic System Snapshot Database, which includes 22 urban districts that ERS has worked with.

¹⁰ Interview with Budget Director Jackie Bryan.

¹¹ “2017-18 Annual Report.” Highline Public Schools. www.highlineschools.org/about/district-information/annual-report.

¹² *Washington State Report Card*. Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). 2018 data. <https://washingtonstatereportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us>.

¹³ Email from Catherine Carbone Rogers: Grubb, Steve; Rumbaugh, Deborah; Greene, Trevor; Jazvin, Amela; and Mirolla, Evan. “Recruiting staff of color: A practitioner’s perspective on Human Resources redesign in an urban district.” Highline Public Schools.

¹⁴ Email from Evan Mirolla, research specialist at Edunomics Lab.

¹⁵ Ibid.

Note: Most of the content featured in this case study comes from interviews and email correspondence with HPS district and school leaders. Unless otherwise noted, all facts and data points are drawn from this qualitative data set.

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