

# School district's strategic plan goals approved

By Thomas Franz 

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(Photo by Thomas Franz)

CLINTON TOWNSHIP — After 18 months of work, the Chippewa Valley Schools Board of Education approved the goals of the district's strategic plan through the 2019 school year.

The process began in January 2015, when district officials invited all members of the community to a forum to discuss what they would like to see improved in the district in the years ahead.

After more than a year of creating and revising goals for the strategic plan, the board approved the plan's goals during a July 18 meeting.

"I really think the most important part of this process was engaging our community because we're always strategically planning," Superintendent Ron Roberts said. "This is the first time that in quite some time, that we engaged our community, brought people in and really had meaningful discussions on what they thought was important."

Roberts said he believed that the last comprehensive strategic plan approved in the district was in the mid-'90s.

"We needed to get it through certain steps in order that we were happy with it, and it's something we'd want to work from going forward," Roberts said. "It did take us longer than we'd expected, but we just implemented a few extra steps and took some time. In the end I think it was worth it."

The goals of the plan were broken into three main areas, with professional development influencing each category.

In the area of technology, the plan set out to allow each student to have and use an internet-enabled device to facilitate learning.

"That kind of leaves the door open as to how we would accomplish that," Roberts said. "We're just trying to consider what we can do with the funds we have available to achieve as much technology in the hands of our kids as possible."

Presently, Roberts said the district has an approximately 1-to-3 ratio for pieces of technology per student. Beyond obtaining devices for students, implementing a tech-savvy curriculum will also be a part of the district's strategic plan.

A new middle school Lego robotics class that was approved by the board July 18 was one example of that curriculum.

"It's not only about putting devices in the hands of kids, it's then about the curriculum in which they would use them. It's also about maintaining the support that's necessary so the kids have those tools available to them," Roberts said.

In the area of culture, the district aims to create a “welcoming atmosphere” for all community members, and develop programs to enhance connections among parents, community members and service groups.

A steering committee will help create and implement those programs for culture goals and the other goals of the plan.

“How we’re going to do this, I really can’t say because that committee will determine the specifics of it,” Roberts said. “Our community has changed, we continue to grow with new housing, but we also have many new families moving into our school district in existing housing that is not new, so it’s important to us that they feel a part of our school system.”

In the area of curriculum and instruction, the district’s focus lately has been on middle schools, but Roberts hopes the district will be able to provide a broad range of course options for all students.

“This is really what we’re about, it’s a matter of giving kids options,” Roberts said. “We just want to make sure we represent a broad spectrum (so that) regardless of what a student’s interests are, we have something for them.”

A 75-person committee worked on the strategic plan over the last 18 months while reaching out to community leaders and family members for added input.

“I feel strongly that the people who were involved in the process left with a better understanding of how complex of an organization our school district is, how and why decisions are made, what are the things we believe we do well and what are the things that we can do better,” Roberts said.

#### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

*Staff Writer Thomas Franz covers Macomb Township, Chippewa Valley Schools and the Macomb County Board of Commissioners for the Macomb Township Chronicle. He also covers sports primarily for the Shelby-Utica News. He has worked for C & G Newspapers since 2013 and attended Michigan State University.*

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