LONG RANGE STRATEGIC PLAN

SPRINGFIELD LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
Mahoning County, Ohio

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Updated:

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Springfield Local School District, dedicated to education, is to guarantee that all students reach their maximum potential in academic, social, emotional, and physical development, by providing dynamic programs in a safe environment, delivered by dedicated staff, in partnership with caring families and an involved community leading us into our future.

PURPOSE OF STRATEGIC PLAN

The purpose of this Strategic Plan is to provide a roadmap for the District's operations on both a short and long term basis with the desire to reinvigorate the community in its involvement with, and relationship to, the District. Implementation of this Strategic Plan will ensure resources are allocated in a manner consistent with the desires of the community, applicable law and with fiscal responsibility. The Strategic Plan encompasses the stated desires of the community, District staff, and statutory requirements of both Federal and State governments as they currently exist and funding realities facing the District.

This Strategic Plan is intended to be flexible to provide this and future Boards with the ability to adapt to changing situations. Additionally, it is anticipated that future Boards will undertake a similar process to ensure the Strategic Plan as set forth in this document continues to reflect the desired goals of this community and to modify this Strategic Plan as may be required or desired.

HISTORY OF SPRINGFIELD LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Petersburg had the first school; a log cabin built in 1802 and converted to a school in 1805. The school was started by local citizens who supported the school privately. By 1825, the state legislature passed a new school code and the education system in the township progressed, as it did throughout Ohio. Log cabin schools were replaced by typical one-room schoolhouses. Eventually, 10 such schools were erected in the township including one to replace the log school in Petersburg. Many of those structures remain in use today as private homes and businesses.

In 1854, a frame school was built in Petersburg. The two rooms on the first floor were first through eighth grade classes with a 3-year high school on the top floor. In 1917, the district was awarded a full 4-year high school charter and became known as Springfield Township High School.

Eventually, there were school buildings in each village of the township. A new high school in Petersburg was built in 1923, the New Middletown Elementary in 1923, and the New Springfield Elementary in 1927. Additions were built at each school in the early to mid 1950's to accommodate the increase in students due to the post World War II baby boom. Also in the mid 1950's the state changed school designations, eliminating "Township" schools. Our district became Springfield Local Schools. In the late 1960's a new intermediate school building was constructed to accommodate growth in the community. It was built just south of New Middletown on State Route 170 and housed grades five through eight. Student population in the District peaked in the mid seventies at about 1,850.

Construction of a new intermediate school was completed in 1991. The former intermediate building became the "new" high school. The elementary school in New Middletown was renovated, expanded and renamed Springfield Elementary. The school accommodates grades K through 4 for the entire district. The Springfield High School building in Petersburg was closed, as was the New Springfield Elementary building, creating our current facilities configuration.

Evolving state requirements over the years have changed the face of education in Ohio's schools. Teachers and administrators must meet more stringent requirements to be employed in our schools. Students must pass rigorous State tests to qualify for graduation. Schools now receive their own report cards from the State to determine if the education they are providing students is sufficient. Springfield Schools proudly scored the highest possible rating in 2009, "Excellent with Distinction."

Special thanks to Nancy Genco and the Springfield Township Historical Society for their compilation of this information.

PERFORMANCE, FACILITIES, STAFF AND ENROLLMENT

Over the last ten years, the District has maintained an "Excellent" or "Excellent With Distinction" rating from the State of Ohio 3 times; each "Excellent" rating occurring within the last 5 years. Only once was the District rated below "Effective" which occurred 10 years ago. Over the last ten years, the Elementary School has been rated "Excellent" or "Excellent With Distinction" 8 years, the Intermediate School has been rated "Excellent" 2 years and the High School has been rated "Excellent" 8 years.

Numerous teachers within the District have received special honors in receiving Master Teacher Status, Outstanding Educator awards, Advisor awards, Outstanding Student Teacher awards, National Board Certified Teacher, the Martha Holden Jennings Scholar award, Junior Achievement awards, as well as other awards and acclamations.

Athletically, over the last 10 years the District has generated a state tournament qualifier in football, conference champions for 6 years, sectional champions for 4 years and district champions for 2 years in girls volleyball, conference champions for 3 years in boys golf, implemented a girls soccer program, conference and sectional champions for 4 years in boys basketball, conference champions for 3 years in girls basketball, conference champions for 3 years in girls softball, conference champions for 5 years, sectional, regional and district champions for 2 years and the state runner-up for 1 year in boys baseball. Additionally, over the last 10 years, individual athletes have achieved state placements 10 times in boys track and 1 time in girls track including 4 state champions.

In non-athletic extracurricular activities, the District has produced numerous spelling bee champions, one of which competed at the National Spelling Bee competition, numerous state qualifier speech team participants, Destination Imagination participants, including a Global competition qualifier, Relay For Life Teams, numerous recipients of awards in county and other art show contests. In addition to outstanding football game halftime shows and numerous other community event appearances, the High School Concert Band has competed in "Contest" competitions, repeatedly being awarded excellent grades and in 2010, a Superior rating (the highest rating). In 2010 the Concert Band competed at the State competition receiving a Superior rating. Over 20 individual band members have received Superior ratings in individual and ensemble competitions

The District maintains one Elementary, one Intermediate and one High School. As shown below, the age of these facilities varies.

Elementary School:	First built in 1923
	Second floor addition in 1957
	New additions in 1988 and 1989
Intermediate School:	Constructed in 1990
High School:	Constructed as an Intermediate School in 1967
	Converted to a High School in 1990
Stadium/Track	Constructed in 2002

As with most school districts within Northeast Ohio, enrollment has been generally declining for years. The following chart identifies enrollment within the district by class grouping.

	10-11	09-10	08-09	05-06	00-01	95-96	90-91
K-4	403	426	445	427	436	514	
5-8	376	349	349	384	408	431	
9-12	373	377	386	415	411	422	
Total	1152	1152	1180	1226	1255	1367	1386

The number of District employees has varied. The following chart identifies staffing within the District over numerous years.

	10-11	09-10	08-09	04-05	99-00
Teachers	72	73	74	74	83
Education Assistants	3	3	2	2	2
Bus Drivers	11	11	11	11	12
Cooks	8	8	8	8	9
Custodians	8	8	8	8	8
Secretaries	6	6	6	6	6
Certified Administrators	6	6	6	5.5	5
Classified Administrators	4	4	4	4	4
Total	119	120	120	119.5	130

Expenditures per student have remained generally consistent, although generally below other districts, as compared to other districts, as reflected in the following:

	Springfield	South Range	Lowell	Poland	West Branch	Ohio
2010	$8,584	9,140	7,660	8,874	7,774	10,512
2009	8,203	8,955	7,108	8,304	7,466	10,184
2005	7,396	7,601	6,705	7,322	7,537	9,051
2000	5,925	5,956	5,876	6,165	5,779	7,054
1995	4,961	NR	NR	4,573	5,025	5,311

In 2010, the District received revenues through a series of sources as set forth below. In 2010, the property tax levy of 2.4 mils expired (for the construction of the Intermediate School), Federal grant money has been discontinued and State of Ohio funding is subject to reduction primarily as a result of the state's budget crisis.

General Property Tax	2,679,969
Tangible Personal Property Tax	31,503
Local Income Tax (1%)	1,569,136
Unrestricted Grants in aid	4,336,195
Restricted Grants in aid	209,651
Restricted Federal Grants	308,732
Property Tax Allocation	801,020
Other	51,640
Total	9,987,846

STRATEGIC PLAN PROCESS

The creation and implementation of a strategic plan was considered by the Board beginning in early 2010. The Board reviewed prior plans, both written and non-written, of the District and plans prepared by other school districts. The Board determined that an attempt to complete a strategic plan could not be limited by the input of the Board members alone and therefore, chose to actively solicit input from the local community and District staff, without limiting the input received. The Board concluded that a written strategic plan was an essential tool in ensuring the future viability of the District, encompassing the needs and desires of the community and ensuring fiscal responsibility to the District taxpayers while providing the best education experience to District students.

The Board began the process by inviting members of the community to public meetings. As with all public meeting throughout this process, there was no agenda provided and community members were encouraged to provide the Board with any comments about the operation of the District, whether regarding academics, extracurricular, facilities or otherwise. Over the course of these public meetings, each of which was well attended, a pattern of comments began to emerge from the community. After conclusion of three public meetings, the Board began to access the public input and input received from the District staff. Over the course of numerous work sessions, the Board prepared a draft strategic plan, the content of which is contained in this document.

The Draft Strategic Plan was then presented to the District administration, teacher's union and staff for comment and additional input. All of their comments were considered by the Board and modifications made to the Plan as appropriate. The Draft Strategic Plan was then posted on the District Web Site. An additional public meeting was conducted to allow district residents to comment further. As required, additional changes were made to the Strategic Plan before it is adopted by the Board at a regularly scheduled meeting.

Through the maze of comments received, the Board identified numerous items that did not fit into a Strategic Plan as such comments were more immediate and could be examined or implemented without allocation of additional resources. The Board chose to present these comments to the District administration in the form of either directives for the District to immediately implement or ideas for the District to examine and later present to the Board prior to implementation. The Board will ensure these non-strategic items are accessed, considered and implemented where appropriate.

IDENTIFIED COMMENTS FOR DISTRICT GOALS

Many comments received from the community, administration and staff were clearly strategic in nature. For ease of understanding, the Board categorized these comments within 5 general categories for each building including: academic, athletic, facilities, extracurricular or other. The following comprises a listing of the items for each category.

Academic:

Maintain "Excellent" rating at all buildings
Expand language alternatives in both the Elementary and Intermediate Schools
Provide all day kindergarten
Expand art programs in all buildings
Increase/expand use of current technology in all buildings
Strengthen science programs at the Intermediate and High Schools
Provide on line course study at all levels
Provide additional flexibility in course scheduling
Increase amount of shared resources with other districts

Extracurricular:

Expand drama program at Intermediate and High Schools
Expand fine arts programs, including choir, band and art, at Elementary School

Athletic:

Expand gym at Elementary School
Implement intramural programs at Intermediate and High Schools
Expand High School girl's locker room
Improve soccer field facilities

Facilities:

Replace Elementary School
Address maintenance items identified in the 2006 Ohio School Facilities Report
Increase kitchen food preparation and storage areas in all buildings
Increase size of Band Room in Intermediate and High Schools
Increase size of Choir Room in Intermediate and High Schools
Provide storage for Drama program materials and supplies
Provide additional storage for Band materials and supplies
Increase amount of general storage at all buildings
Revise general administrative offices and provide meeting room
Maintain all buildings to ensure maximum longevity

Other:

Devise way to provide lunch at Intermediate and High Schools at more appropriate times
Generate an annual "State of the Schools" report

SHORT TERM GOALS

Fiscal Stability, Academic Excellence and Facility Improvement are the three main goals of the Springfield Local School Strategic Plan. To achieve these goals the Board will establish objectives and timelines for each.

I. FISCAL STABILITY:

- As a primary objective, the Board intends to maintain the **financial stability** of the District.

  - Consistent with this primary objective is the continuation of the 1% income tax and conservative fiscal policies.
  - External funding sources such as Title funds will be used to fund programs and staff development whenever possible.
  - Staffing levels will be reviewed annually in all departments to reflect funding as well as enrollment trends.
  - Included with this objective is the plan to maintain and increase enrollment whenever possible with enhanced programming and coursework to prepare students with 21st century skills through an interdisciplinary, integrated, multi-faceted curriculum.

- Opportunities to continue to **share services** with other school districts in an effort to reduce costs will be investigated.
  - Whenever possible, the Mahoning County Educational Service Center and the State Support Team resources will be utilized for cost effective program delivery especially for specialized services for special needs programming.
  - Advanced level programs with low enrollment may be offered if teachers can be shared between districts using on-line or distance learning courses.

II. ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE:

- A second objective is to maintain the **Excellent Rating** on the Ohio Local Report Card by providing an environment for students to achieve their maximum educational potential with a challenging, standards based curriculum.

  - Excellence will continue with a research based, collaborative multidisciplinary approach to education provided by a highly qualified professional staff in a safe environment.
  - Curriculum changes will be made to meet the state standards and whenever possible additional courses will be added to augment the academic rigor of the **science** department at the intermediate and high school levels.
  - Opportunities to further collaborate with the universities and to offer on-line coursework will be explored each year.
  - Additional individual student support will be provided as finances permit to help students who need one on one instruction during the school day and after school.

- **Fine arts education** is associated with gains in math, reading, cognitive ability, critical thinking, and verbal skills. The Springfield Board of Education is committed to maintaining and improving offerings in **music** and **art** at all grade levels.

    - Administrators will look for opportunities to enhance art programs by offering after-school art programs at the elementary and, as finances and space permit, to add additional art instruction.
    - Planned facilities improvements will also serve to encourage increased participation of students in choir, drama and band and will not restrict the number of students who can safely be assembled in the band room.

- **Foreign language** instruction at the elementary level and continuing through the intermediate grades will be instituted when finances permit.

    - Foreign language instruction has been proven to increase listening ability, memory, creativity and critical thinking in students, all of which are thinking processes that increase learning in general.
    - Young children tend to absorb foreign languages more easily than older students and therefore beginning the program at kindergarten is ideal.
    - The uninterrupted sequence of foreign language study in grades K-12 is needed to gain the level of proficiency needed to communicate with people around the world in other languages.

- **Technology** improvements will be made in each building.

    - Technology is ever changing and the District will work to keep current with innovations that enhance curriculum and instruction as finances permit.
    - Currently almost every classroom in each of the three buildings has a “Smart Board” and a teacher trained to use the technology in delivering instruction to students.
    - Technology for instructional as well as student use will be improved.
    - On-line coursework opportunities will be developed for students at the high school and curriculum sharing with other school districts will be explored.
    - Parent access to grades, both mid course and end of course, will be provided with the implementation of the new student information system during the 2011-2012 school year.
    - Teachers will receive staff development to provide real time information to families so that parents may be kept informed of successes as well as deficiencies in a timely manner.
    - Parent emergency notification systems will be explored as well as a transportation routing program to update and streamline bus routes.

- An **all day every day kindergarten program** will be explored.

    - If enough parents are interested, an off site (or housed in temporary facilities) program may be made available for those parents willing to pay a fee for participation.
    - In the future when funding and appropriate facilities are available, the Board of Education looks forward to offering a full day kindergarten program on the school campus.

III. FACILITIES

- The Board intends to solicit support from the community to complete a small building addition and renovation project for the intermediate and high schools.

- **The plan is proposed to include**:
  - new band room
  - new choir room
  - secure public entrances
  - expanded drama storage
  - expanded general storage
  - expanded high school girls' locker room
  - relocated administrative offices and conference room
  - renovated classroom space made available due to renovations of existing administrative offices, band and choir rooms
  - renovated high school kitchen preparation area -adding an outdoor freezer
  - replace freezer at the elementary school.
  - replacement of the high school gym bleachers, painting gym, sanding and refinishing floor
  - a review and prioritizing of all maintenance items identified in the 2006 Ohio School Facilities Report

- **Additional projects as funds permit:**
  - soccer field seating
  - soccer field restrooms
  - electric to soccer field for scoreboard

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- **Cost**
  - The total cost of this project is expected to be approximately Three Million Dollars ($3,000,000), however; the formal cost estimates shall be obtained prior to any final decision on the project.
  - The Board intends to completely fund this project by moving up to 2 mills of property tax from inside mills to outside mills intended for capital improvements.
  - Well publicized public hearings will be scheduled to provide information before Board action

IV. STATE OF THE SCHOOLS REPORT

- Annually, the Board and District administration will publish and circulate to all households in the community an **annual report** providing, at a minimum, the following items:
  - district rating
  - building rating
  - financial report
  - significant facility improvements
  - significant curriculum changes
  - programs available at each facility
  - special recognition awarded to District, staff and/or individual students

LONG TERM GOALS

Fiscal Stability, Academic Excellence and Facility Improvement are also the long term goals of the Springfield Local School Strategic Plan. Long term goals will be implemented after intensive investigation and in-depth meetings with the community.

I. FACILITIES

- **Construction of a new Elementary School building.**
  - Currently it is unknown whether any funding will be available from the State of Ohio or through other sources for construction of new facilities.
  - Given the age of the elementary building, significant costs will continue to be incurred to maintain the building as a safe environment for students and staff.

RECOMMENDATIONS NOT ADOPTED

Numerous comments from the community provided additional insight into the needs of the District that, unfortunately, the Board cannot implement at this time due to the limitation of resources or other competing demands. These specific comments include an immediate expansion of the Elementary School Gym and implementation of an intramural athletic program at the intermediate and high Schools. The Board intends to explore these recommendations further and may readdress implementation of these ideas as resources and priorities change.