

Kettle Moraine School District: Scenario Framework Status Report

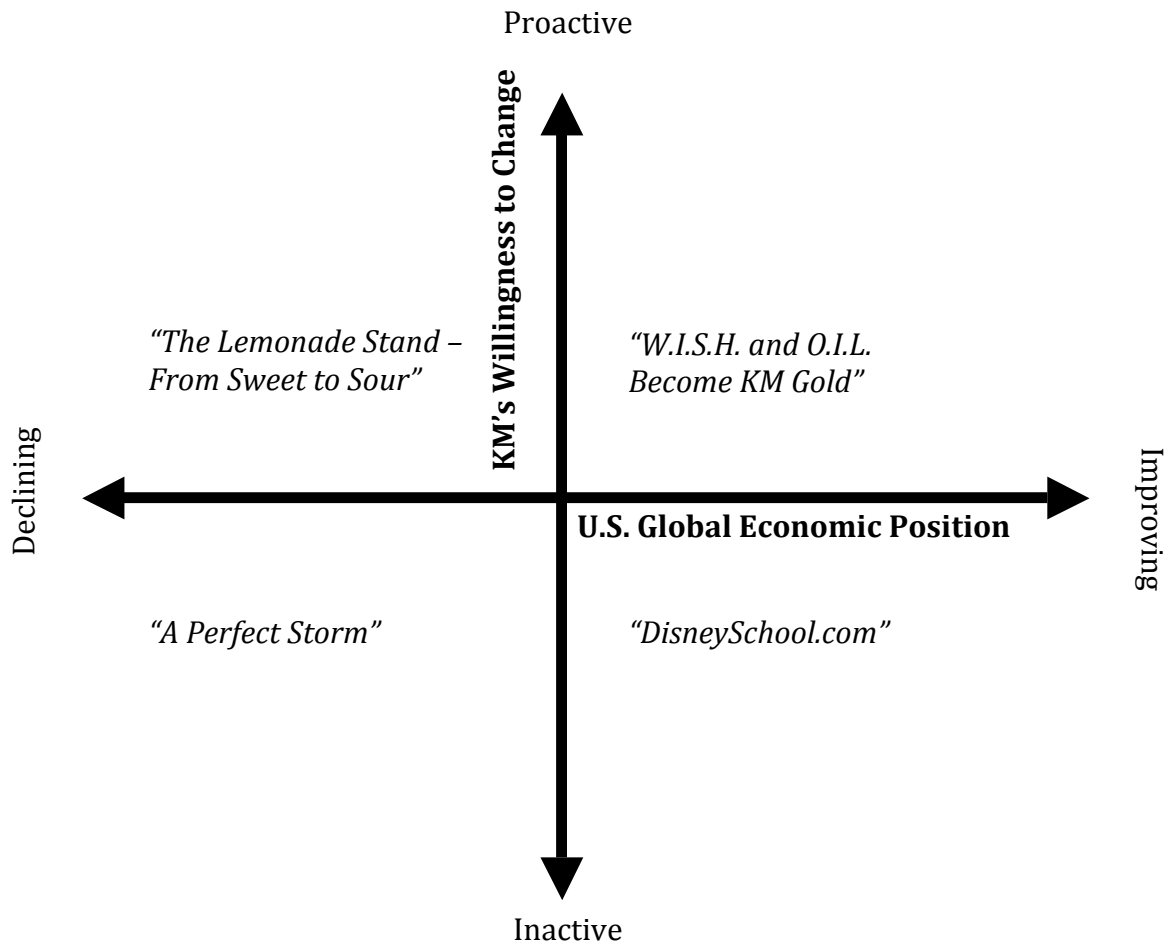
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Introduction

In 2006, the Kettle Moraine School District (KMSD) undertook a strategic planning process focused on the future. Addressing the question, *how will KMSD transform the educational delivery system to better and more efficiently meet the needs of all students in 2016*, a team of stakeholders from the school district and community, known as the Transformation Task Force (TTF), developed four distinct scenarios outlining different possible futures as shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. KMSD Scenario Framework



After the scenarios were fully developed, the team identified various trends that could indicate movement toward each particular scenario and articulated the

implications and strategic options for action within each hypothesized world. In the report, *“Transforming Education in Kettle Moraine: Recommendations for meeting the needs of all learners,”* dated May 15, 2007, the TTF presented to the Board of Education four recommendations deemed essential to the transformation of the district: 1) develop leadership; 2) create partnerships; 3) access 21st century communication; and 4) foster research and development.

Purpose of this Report

This report provides current information on the two critical uncertainties forming the KMSD scenario framework (the U.S. global economic position and Kettle Moraine’s willingness to change); an update on progress made toward implementing the four recommendations; and implications for consideration. In order to maximize the strategic effectiveness of the scenario planning process, the TTF will reconvene on October 23, 2010 to review and discuss this report and to make a collective decision about the next steps in the KMSD transformation effort.

Overview of Critical Uncertainties

Critical Uncertainty 1: The U.S. Global Economic Position

In 2006, when the scenarios were written, signs of distress in the U.S. global economic position were becoming evident. Since that time, the American economy has suffered a recession rivaling any experienced since the Great Depression. In 2010, significant uncertainty remains regarding the future health of the U.S. economy.¹

¹ The Economist. (September 16, 2010). “Are we there yet?” Retrieved September 22, 2010 from <http://www.economist.com/node/17039121/print>

Current Status

The 2010 World Economic Forum (WEF) report on global economic competitiveness² paints a picture of growth and improved competitiveness among emerging economies while more advanced economies languish amid persistent unemployment and increasing debt. Using a comprehensive set of metrics, including data on debt rates, income, GDP, etc., as well as results from surveys of over 13,000 corporate executives across the globe, the report offers a ranking of the relative competitiveness of 139 of the world's emerging, developing, and advanced economies. The WEF defines competitiveness as “the set of institutions, policies, and factors that determine the level of productivity of a country.”³ A country's competitiveness signals its ability to ensure high levels of income for its citizens as well as high levels of return on investments, thus enhancing the growth potential of the economy.

The WEF considers 12 “pillars of competitiveness” to determine its rankings: 1) institutions; 2) infrastructure; 3) macroeconomic environment; 4) health and primary education; 5) higher education and training; 6) goods market efficiency; 7) labor market efficiency; 8) financial market development; 9) technological readiness; 10) market size; 11) business sophistication; and 12) innovation. The report provides country rankings on each pillar but emphasizes that the pillars are interrelated, noting that performance on one often affects performance on another. “For example, innovation (pillar 12) will be very difficult without a well-educated

² World Economic Forum. (2010). *The Global Competitiveness Report 2010-2011*. Geneva, Switzerland: Author.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 4

and trained workforce (pillars 4 and 5) that are adept at absorbing new technologies (pillar 9), and without sufficient financing (pillar 8) for R&D or an efficient goods market that makes it possible to take new innovations to market (pillar 6).”⁴

This year, the United States fell in the overall competitiveness rankings from 2nd to 4th place after first losing its number one position in 2008. Switzerland maintained its 1st place position, followed by Sweden in 2nd place and Singapore in 3rd. Others in the top ten include Germany, Japan, Finland, the Netherlands, Denmark, and Canada in 5th through 10th places respectively. All of the top ten countries other than the United States and Canada improved their standing.

Moving down the list, China rose in its ranking from 29th to 27th. Improvements in financial institutions, availability of credit, and increases in access to technology have contributed to China’s progress. Over half of China’s population own cell phones and a quarter are regular users of the Internet. India fell from the 49th position to 51st while actually showing a slight improvement in its overall score. The report credits the country’s large market size and success with innovation for its relative stability during turbulent times but cautions that its low ranking on health and primary education (104th) as well as high public debt and inflation present challenges for the future.⁵

The WEF divides the 12 pillars of competitiveness into three categories: basic requirements (institutions, infrastructure, macroeconomic environment, health and primary education); efficiency enhancers (higher education and training, goods

⁴ Ibid., p. 8

⁵ Ibid., p. 29

market efficiency, labor market efficiency, financial market development, technological readiness, market size); and innovation and sophistication factors (business sophistication, innovation). In terms of efficiency enhancers and innovation and sophistication factors, the United States ranks 3rd and 4th respectively, coming in at number one in innovation. However, the ranking for basic requirements falls to 32nd in large part due to the country's dismal macroeconomic environment. High levels of public debt, persistent fiscal deficits, and recent stimulus spending contributed to a ranking of 87th on this indicator. Another disturbing data point related to basic requirements is the U.S. ranking for health and primary education at only 42nd. Results from surveys of corporate executives suggest some factors that might account for the overall decline in the U.S. ranking including less confidence in public institutions and politicians, frustrations with government interference in the private sector, and concerns about wasteful government spending. The report warns that countries unable to control their spending "will compromise their future ability to make pro-growth investments in areas such as infrastructure, health, and education . . ."6

Although only 27th in the overall rankings, China beats the U.S. in rankings on both macroeconomic environment and health and primary education at 4th and 37th respectively. First-place Switzerland ranks 5th in macro-economic environment and 7th on health and primary education.

⁶ Ibid., p. 3

Forecast for the Future

Economists recently declared the Great Recession over,⁷ but forecasters differ on the prognosis for the U.S. economy, with some worrying that the economy is headed for a “double dip” recession in the next 12 months.⁸ A major cause of concern among experts is the current high rate of unemployment and limited prospects for new job creation. The U.S. has not been able to replace jobs lost during the recession to meet the demand for employment. High government and personal debt mean that, although the recession is over, the pain has not gone away. It could take until 2014 for the debt burden to be eased and employment to rebound.⁹

According to Robert Reich, former secretary of labor under President Bill Clinton, the country is about 11 million jobs behind where it needs to be to keep those who want to work employed.¹⁰ Even if the recovery is robust, it could take five to eight years to regain all those lost jobs. Reich asserts that the recession has caused a structural change in the economy, citing the move by industries to permanently reduce their costs through automation, elimination, or outsourcing of many jobs. He notes, “Companies have discovered that new software and computer technologies have made many workers in Asia and Latin America almost as

⁷ The Economist. (September 20, 2010). *It's over*. Retrieved September 22, 2010 from http://www.economist.com/blogs/freeexchange/2010/09/americas_recession

⁸ Feldstein, M. (July 27, 2010). *The Hidden Future of the U.S. Economy*. Retrieved September 14, 2010 from <http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/feldstein25/English>

⁹ The Economist. (September 20, 2010). *It's over*. Retrieved September 22, 2010 from http://www.economist.com/blogs/freeexchange/2010/09/americas_recession

¹⁰ Reich, R. (April 12, 2010). *The Future of American Jobs*. Retrieved September 14, 2010 from http://www.salon.com/print.html?URL=/politics/2010/04/12/american_jobs

productive as Americans, and that the Internet allows far more work to be efficiently moved to another country without loss of control.”¹¹

Reich notes that college-educated workers suffer far less in today’s economy than those with less education. The unemployment rate for those with college degrees is five percent compared to 10.5 percent for those with only a high school diploma and 15.6 percent for those who have completed even less formal schooling.¹²

Outlook for Wisconsin

The Wisconsin Department of Revenue’s economic outlook report from August 2010 indicates that employment in the state has reached its low point and, with the addition of 24,500 jobs since last December, has started to recover. However, the report warns that the recovery will be slow, with a return to pre-recession employment not expected until 2013.¹³ Personal income began to grow again in 2010 and is expected to increase 2.5 percent this year but still lag behind expectations for the nation as a whole for the next several years.¹⁴

Since 2007, Wisconsin’s per capita personal income has fallen to 6.1 percent below the U.S. norm and has remained near that level since then. The below-average income is driven by state wages that average nearly 14 percent below the rest of the nation. By 2013 the state is expected to have only slightly more jobs than it had in 2007. Wisconsin’s economic difficulties are explained in part by the fact

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Wisconsin Department of Revenue. (August 2010). *Wisconsin Economic Outlook*. p.1. Retrieved September 22, 2010 from <http://www.revenue.wi.gov/ra/econ/2010/q2/execsumm.pdf>

¹⁴ Ibid., p.2

that its top ten industries, all manufacturing-based, have experienced employment declines from 2000-2008 ranging from 5.6 percent in fabricated metal manufacturing to 29.8 percent in paper manufacturing. Since 2004, Wisconsin's share of the nation's Gross Domestic Product has been in continuous decline. The stagnated economy is exacerbated by the fiscal problems facing state government. The incoming state legislature will face a 2010-11 budgetary structural imbalance of \$1.2 billion, the largest since 2003-04. While state revenue collections appear to be on target, the majority of the revenue is coming from businesses, with sales and personal property revenues lagging projections.¹⁵

According to Superintendent Patricia Deklotz,¹⁶ the School District of Kettle Moraine has been facing many of the problems that appear on the state level. Student enrollments began to decline in 2006-07 and have continued that trend every year since, resulting in a 3.5 percent decrease in enrollment over the five years. The district added programming for 4-year-old kindergarten in 2010-11, resulting in 199 additional students, who are counted at .6 in the state enrollment calculations. Providing programming to this additional population has slowed the decline but has not reversed the trend. Including the 4-year-old kindergarten students in the calculation, there are 156 less students in the district's membership count than there were in 2006-07.

The decline in enrollment has resulted in a reduction of personnel outpacing the reduction in students, Deklotz says. While student enrollments declined by 153

¹⁵Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance. (2010). *The Wisconsin Taxpayer*, 78(6/7).

¹⁶ Deklotz, P. (October 6, 2010). Much of the information in this report related to the economy in Wyoming and the status of KMSD's budget and enrollment came from a Personal Communication with Superintendent Deklotz. Opinions expressed by Deklotz are additionally cited.

since 2006-07, staffing has been reduced by 52 positions over the same period of time, including 34 certified classroom teachers and guidance counselors. This has led to larger class sizes, especially at the high school level. The recent addition of federal education jobs funding has allowed the high school to keep class sizes at 35 or lower.

In addition, Deklotz reports, although student enrollments have declined, since 2005-06 the equalized property value of the district has increased by 16.5 percent. The increase in property value causes the district to receive less equalization aid each year from the state, shifting a greater portion of the tax burden onto the local property owner.

Critical Uncertainty 2: Kettle Moraine's Willingness to Change

Support from the Board of Education

The budget challenges facing the district are serious and there has been no community discussion in support of a referendum for programs. The board of education sought external funds from philanthropy and the federal government to support the necessary research and development for transformation but without success. Nevertheless, in 2009-10 the board designated \$427,428 of fund balance to support the change process. This action continued the long history of board support for transformation beginning with its formation and significant support of the Transformation Task Force in 2005 as it undertook its charge to “transform KMSD to better and more efficiently serve all students.”

Other indicators of a willingness to change at the highest levels include the stated purpose of the district (“to cultivate academic excellence, citizenship, and

personal development”) and the vision (“learning without boundaries”). These statements provide strong signals of the board’s willingness to examine policies and procedures in light of the demands of the 21st century highlighted by the TTF. In 2008, the board aligned its policies with its new mantra of “Governing for Student Achievement,” remanding all other procedures, rules and regulations to the purview of the superintendent. Board agendas now dedicate a significant portion of time to student achievement and transformation efforts.

Results of Feasibility Studies

To ensure that implementation of the transformation effort stayed on track, district administration developed a framework for ensuring a common means of evaluating various innovative initiatives. This “feasibility study framework” helps to determine the probability of success of a proposed initiative, identify alternative actions that could be explored, and determine possible risks and rewards associated with implementation. By the end of 2009, four feasibility studies were underway related to: 1) an on-line learning academy; 2) a fine arts academy at the high school; 3) a talent development magnet for elementary and middle schools; and 4) kindergarten for 4 year-olds. Three of the feasibility studies resulted in support from the board for moving the programs forward. The 4 year-old kindergarten program was implemented in the 2010-11 school year. The online learning academy and the academy for fine arts submitted charter school planning grant applications to the state for the 2010-11 school year. Pilot efforts investigating both of these academy models are currently in progress.

The application supporting the online learning school, the Global Academy of Learning (GOAL), received funding from the state and staff is engaged in developing the charter school model for implementation in the 2011-12 school year. This choice opportunity for high school students is focused on the future and designed to ensure that its graduates have the skills required for success in the 21st century global economy. As noted on the school's web site, through a rigorous curriculum, "students are challenged to understand the changing economic and political landscape that will shape the next generation of Americans."¹⁷ Enrollment in GOAL for the 2010-11 is small, but an indication of future interest is the fact that over 150 students are enrolled in "blended" course work offered through the high school, allowing them to take both online and face-to-face courses.

The fine arts academy, for 9th and 10th graders, is designed to help students link their high school education to their future career aspirations. Through an infusion of the arts into the core curriculum as well as the use of the project-based learning instructional method, students have access to a relevant, career-focused academic experience. Although the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction did not provide a planning grant for this program, they strongly encouraged the district to reapply after revisions to the application were made. There are currently 60 students enrolled in the pilot and the state has provided support from a charter school consultant to help with the development of the program. With the help of federal education jobs funding, KMSD is supporting continued planning of the

¹⁷ Retrieved on September 22, 2010 from <http://www.goalvirtual.com/index.php>

academy with the goal of applying for implementation funds for the 2011-2012 school year.

Changes in Assessment Practices

Superintendent Deklotz believes that one of the greatest indicators of the district's willingness to change is the ongoing work in the area of balanced assessment and reporting. The district's teaching staff is involved in defining common learning targets aligned to a continuum of learning and developing common benchmark assessments. This work has led to an examination of the grading and reporting of achievement, further resulting in the district beginning a move to a standards-based grading and reporting system that reports proficiency. Although Deklotz reports that eliminating homework and extra credit in the evaluation of performance has produced significant community conversation, there appears to be good support for the initiative as it will clearly align learning to assessment, provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery, and raise the expectation of achievement to be a reflection of actual understanding. "It is through the work of providing a learning continuum, teaching to the targets, measuring achievement based upon a demonstration of mastery, and allowing students to progress according to their pacing and abilities that provides the foundation for transforming educational delivery," Deklotz notes.¹⁸

Progress Toward Implementation of Recommendations

Superintendent Deklotz reported to the board and community on September 16, 2010, regarding the status of implementation of the TTF's four key

¹⁸ Deklotz, P. (October 6, 2010). Personal communication.

recommendations. While the work of transformation is by no means complete, several important structural processes have been implemented in order to accomplish the work that is described in each recommendation.

Recommendation 1: Develop Leadership

The district has implemented a number of new support structures in order to provide all stakeholders, especially teachers, with significant leadership opportunities. The organization has been “flattened” and staff at all levels work collaboratively toward meeting the district goals.

Board Leadership

In order to move from a command-and-control model of leadership toward a living systems model, the district needed to initiate a change in culture. Leading this cultural change was the board of education. Rather than hold fast to the leadership authority granted to them by their position in the district, the board embarked upon a year-long investigation of their purpose and the governance models that would support that purpose. Using the Carver model of policy governance, the Kettle Moraine board has adopted “Governing for Student Achievement,” relegating the 3-inch binder of previous policy to the administration. With their new focus on student achievement, they have also redefined their meeting format, focusing on reports from teacher leaders on the work of their teams, buildings, and district.

District Leadership Team

The District Leadership Team is a group of approximately 25 teachers, administrators, and general support staff, including every building principal, who meet quarterly to advise the superintendent regarding the goals, action plans,

resource allocations, and operating rules needed to sustain the work of the district. Over the years, this group has matured and taken on greater leadership responsibility such that in 2009-10 they determined the district's goals, professional development and action plan for the coming years.

School Leadership Teams

The School Leadership teams direct the work within each building in support of the district's goals, analyzing data, determining next steps, and providing regular updates to both the building staff and the board. Within these teams, the principal participates on an equal level with teacher leaders, giving the teachers the leadership responsibility within their buildings. These teams direct the professional development of in-service time often leading their colleagues during these afternoons of learning.

Program Improvement/Innovation (PII) Teams

The Program Improvement/Innovation (PII) Teams address content concerns and curricular improvements/innovations. Teacher leaders serve as conduits between the team and their content or grade-level colleagues and often conduct action research. For example, PII team members have conducted action research of grading and assessment that has provided a basis for the transformative work in that area.

Teacher Leadership in Assessment Practices

In 2001, KMSD began investigating the work of Rick Stiggins and the Assessment Institute and considering how to apply it to the district's assessment practices. During the 2003-2005 school years, the district designated a teacher

team, representing all buildings, to participate in the Southeast Wisconsin Assessment Consortium. In 2005-06, teams of 5-10 teachers from each building were trained in formative assessment practices in support of a balanced assessment system. Beginning in the 2008-09 school year, as reported above, the district began investigating its grading and reporting practices by bringing 90 staff together on Saturdays to establish a vision for a balanced assessment system and to develop a plan of work that would bring the vision to reality. A team of teacher leaders, trained as assessment coaches in the summer of 2009, have modeled expectations and provided professional development courses in support of all teacher-learning targets. This year, the high school has a full-time assessment coach and the middle school's current part-time assessment coach will become full-time by second semester of 2010-11. These assessment coaches demonstrate and foster teacher leadership as they work with their colleagues to examine current practice and support the vision of balanced assessment.

The role of assessment coaches has paved the way for teacher leaders to take on coaching roles in the areas of literacy at the K-8 level and Promethean technology district-wide. These building-level coaches provide modeling, trouble-shooting, peer observation and reflective feedback to their colleagues within the school day. In addition, they provide professional development opportunities, outside of the school day, for salary advancement.

Other Teacher-Led Initiatives

The district currently has three teams of teachers across two buildings that are collaborating in teamed teaching environments based on ability rather than on

age or grade. These nonlinear models of learning are providing experience and direction for the district staff as student achievement is reported and teachers build their understanding of this new dynamic.

Teachers are regularly involved in action research, often not associated with a graduate program or course requirement. They have introduced technology pilots (one-to-one responders, iPads, and netbooks) and interdisciplinary teaching (9th grade English and Social Studies). They have provided recommendations for the redefinition of house teams. One building's staff organized so that they team vertically as they engage in their common planning time.

Of particular significance have been the feasibility studies supporting the Global Academy of Learning and the Fine Arts Academy. These initiatives were first defined through teacher interest and then further supported by the work of a particular core group of teacher leaders.

Administrative Initiatives

School administrative hiring practices reflect the interests and needs of the building's staff and parents who are given opportunities to build a profile of the individual(s) they believe would be best suited to lead their school. They are also given the opportunity to participate in the listening sessions with candidates as the administration screens for the right leadership team member. According to Superintendent Deklotz, the rubric that staff and parents use to provide feedback on candidates has influenced decisions and the hiring process, assuring the best candidate is selected.¹⁹

¹⁹ Deklotz, P. (October 6, 2010). Personal communication.

At the central administrative level, every administrator carries district leadership responsibility, working with teams that transcend a particular building, collaborating with parents at all grade levels, and bringing the team to decisions that support the shared vision of Learning without Boundaries.

Recommendation 2: Create Partnerships

The district has been actively engaged in creating partnerships in the community, region, state, and nation. Partnerships such as Mortensen Construction's relationship with an elementary school, the numerous companies engaged in Project Lead the Way and FIRST Robotics, and the many business relationships that have formed through the district's engagement with the Dousman and Delafield Chambers of Commerce and the Wales Business group, are representative of the district's efforts to reach out to the broader community.

Higher Education

Superintendent Deklotz notes that more significant than the increased number of partnerships is the change in how partnerships are understood and developed. Partnerships are not simply about seeking in-kind or financial support for schools but rather are opportunities for offering mutual benefit to the district and the partner. For example, KMSD students and teachers participate with Marquette University, the Milwaukee School of Engineering and the Medical College of Wisconsin in research partnerships. Cardinal Stritch University and KMSD work together on teacher and principal mentoring programs. KMSD is involved in the Columbia University, NY Teachers College Reading and Writing project, and the Math in the City project at City College, NY. KMSD is also working with UW-Stout

and George Williams University to offer online teacher certification programs for staff and to define a new teacher development program with a KMSD residency.

Local School and Community Partnerships

Collaboration with the Waukesha County Sheriff's Department as well as the police and fire departments of Delafield, Dousman, and Wales/Genesee, has improved crisis response planning and drills, simulations, and provided a full-time School Resource Officer through cost-sharing. Local nursery schools provide four-year-old kindergarten for KMSD students on their sites and work collaboratively with the district to define curriculum, assessment and professional development for early childhood education. KMSD is engaged in collaborative relationships with Waukesha County schools and the Cooperative Educational Service Agency #1 (CESA1) and shares professional development opportunities with districts in Waukesha County as well as surrounding private schools. .

Local Philanthropic Partnerships

The Kettle Moraine Education Foundation has provided over \$500,000 in donations and in-kind contributions in support of books for every kindergarten through 8th grade reading classroom, Promethean technology in a majority of the district classrooms, a state-of-the art synthetic athletic field, and lighting and concession improvements to the soccer field. The foundation has also begun raising funds to support fine arts education.

In response to the district's financial challenges, community members formed an advocacy group called, "Champions for Excellence." With the purpose of providing relevant information to the community regarding the funding of schools

in order to generate their support, Champions for Excellence hosts workshops and provides updates on other opportunities to advocate for public schools and equitable funding. The district supports the group with information, speakers, and site accommodations.

National Relationships

KMSD's efforts to reach out to local and national philanthropies has resulted in a partnership with the Kern Family Foundation of Waukesha. In conjunction with the Denver-based school improvement organization, Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL), the Kern Foundation is hosting a "Best in the World Exploratory Event" in Denver at the end of October. Kettle Moraine has accepted the invitation to participate. The purpose of the meeting is to establish a consortium of school districts who seek to provide "best in the world" educational experiences and who are interested in pursuing standards and measures of student performance that would merit that rating. KMSD has been meeting regularly with the Kern Foundation leadership for the past four years in an attempt to establish this type of partnership. The invitation to participate in this initial meeting is an indicator of the confidence the foundation has in the district.

Finally, the district is actively engaged at the national level in the CESA 1 partnership with the Stupski Foundation and the Council of Chief State School Officers on Next Generation Learning (NxGL). The district has been invited to meet with five other states involved in the project in October in order to define the areas of research that KMSD will undertake to support the effort.

Recommendation 3: Access 21st Century Communications

In spring 2010, the district hired an outside agency to evaluate the effectiveness of the district's communications through both parent surveys and focus groups. The recommendations from this evaluation are being implemented in the current year. The district is establishing a common protocol for the buildings in the use of school newsletters as well as their weekly eMessenger. The district has also provided an Opt-In service, allowing the public to sign up for electronic notification of activities in any area of interest such as grading and reporting, athletic schedules, daily announcements or community education events.

Using Technology

One of the first changes the district implemented as a result of the TTF recommendations was the implementation of a rapid calling system. SchoolMessenger is a rapid call service that allows immediate communication with parents and staff in the event of an emergency. While most commonly used at the district level to inform individuals of a "snow day," principals have developed a protocol to use when communicating special events to their community. This service also allows for the district or building to send email communications that are not of an emergency nature.

The district has redesigned its web site and continues to evaluate the effectiveness of this web tool. The site provides a wealth of information about the district including a weekly update of key events and a series of video and/or audio recordings of all public meetings, including regular board meetings. For people who

do not have the time to listen to a full recording, the district posts bullets that summarize the discussion and action of each meeting.

To facilitate communication between teachers, students, and staff, the high school and middle school have implemented Standard Score (formerly Web grader) to allow access to student grades and web note communications between staff and student or parent. The High School, Dousman Elementary and Cushing Elementary all have active Facebook pages. Some schools piloted the use of Twitter in 2009-10, although interest in that tool was limited.

For staff, the district experimented with using Wikis as an internal communication tool. This led the district to the use of a searchable site called Ning. The Ning provides greater opportunities for collaboration in addition to housing meeting notes from the District Leadership Team, the School Leadership Teams, the Program Improvement/Innovation teams, and Common Planning Time teams.

Face-to-Face Communication

Opportunities for face-to-face communication and community feedback occur at regularly-scheduled superintendent- and principal-hosted community meetings. At the start of this school year, the parent organizations of each school organized a board-to-board (B2B) event at a local coffee shop during the first week of school focused on supporting each school's transformation efforts. Also beginning this year, the district implemented a series of "Best Practice" and "Defining our Future" meetings. These evening presentations (also videotaped and posted to the web) are opportunities for district staff to listen to community concerns while also sharing information about the transformation process.

Feedback Loops

As the district works to establish a culture of risk-taking and teacher leadership, the feasibility study process supports stakeholders challenging the *status quo* in a formal manner. More informal opportunities for input occur at superintendent and principal gatherings, randomly selected student panels that meet with the board, brown bag student lunches with the superintendent, monthly open-attendance Student Voice Matters with the high school principal, and weekly classroom walk-throughs by administration.

Recommendation 4: Foster Research and Development

Establishment of Baseline Practices

This recommendation focused first on the need to identify a baseline of accepted practice to guide decision-making and supervision/evaluation. District-wide, the focus on balanced assessment has led the effort to provide a consistent foundation for teaching and learning across the district. All staff learning targets clearly communicate expectations, and multiple professional development opportunities and the availability of in-house coaches support teachers' efforts to improve.

Individual content areas also have established baseline practices in part with the support of the partnerships with Teachers College Reading and Writing Project and the Math in the City project. As content teams work together during common planning time, they are developing learning targets and assessments to ensure a baseline of common practice across individual teachers.

Structural Support for Research and Development

In support of ongoing research and development, the district has implemented several structures. For example, the high school principal has been charged with overseeing the 6-12 research and development efforts. In addition, while the district has had a long practice of early release of students on a monthly basis to provide staff with time for professional development, as of the 2010-11 school year, all teachers have weekly common planning time to work collaboratively on the goals of the district. Piloted at the high school in the previous two years, this common time supports the work of defining learning targets, developing common assessments, examining student work and collectively defining action steps to improve student achievement.

The district is also actively pursuing opportunities to engage in research and development at the state and national levels provided through the Stupski Foundation and the Kern Family Foundation.

Focus on Rigor and Relevance

Ongoing work with The Assessment Training Institute and the College Board has led to increased understanding of the importance found in research of both rigor and relevance in instruction. As teachers have gained in skills, student outcomes have also improved. Both the number and the success rate of students in Advanced Placement have increased dramatically. This resulted in the 2009 *Newsweek* ranking of Kettle Moraine High School in the top 6 percent of schools in the nation and, in 2010, an even higher ranking in the top 3 percent of schools nationwide.

Implications

This report provides an assessment of the status of the two critical uncertainties forming the KMSD scenario framework (the U.S. global economic position and Kettle Moraine’s willingness to change) and, thus, points to the location of current reality on the KMSD scenario framework. According to data cited, it appears that the U.S. is in the “declining” position on the scenario framework, having lost its number one ranking of competitiveness among other countries while China and India have gained strength. Regarding the factor of Kettle Moraine’s willingness to change, the district appears to be in a “proactive” position, with significant evidence of transformation having already begun. Returning to the scenarios themselves, then, “The Lemonade Stand: From Sweet to Sour” would appear to align most closely with current reality (declining U.S. economic position; proactive community response). However, a review of all four scenarios will be undertaken when the TTF meets in October because there is evidence of current reality in each scenario and the uncertainties remain just that – uncertain.

In choosing the U.S. global economic position as one of two critical uncertainties, the TTF acknowledged the importance of preparing students for a changing economic landscape in which the U.S. vies for dominance over ever-stronger global competitors. In choosing Kettle Moraine’s ability to change as the second critical uncertainty, the TTF acknowledged that, even in negative economic conditions, the school district *can* thrive by capitalizing on pro-transformation attitudes among stakeholders. The significant progress already made in the

implementation of TTF recommendations, in spite of budget cutbacks, demonstrates the commitment to transformation is strong.

The nation's ability to maintain or increase funding for education over the long-term is in doubt. At the same time, most experts agree that the educational requirements for success in America are becoming more challenging and complex. There is little doubt that students need knowledge and skills in second and third languages, sophisticated technology, and multiple different cultures in order to make their way in the global economy. As automation and outsourcing increase, rote work decreases. To be successful in college or career, high school graduates must demonstrate higher-order thinking skills, creativity, and an innovative approach to solving problems.²⁰ As Kettle Moraine continues to tackle this reality, its culture of shared leadership, willingness to confront difficult issues, and implementation of innovative solutions provides a foundation for successful transformation.

Conclusion

This report provides an overview of conditions in the KMSD relating to the report, "*Transforming Education in Kettle Moraine: Recommendations for meeting the needs of all learner.*" Discussion by the TTF of this report and its implications will serve as a starting point for planning next steps in the transformation process.

²⁰ See for example publications by the Council of Chief State School Officers at http://www.ccsso.org/News_and_Events/Current_News/CCSSO_Response_to_the_Creativity_Crisis.html