

# **Eastside Elementary School Improvement Plan – Executive Summary Update**

Submitted to Eugene School District  
4J Board of Directors

Presented by:

Scott Marsh- Eastside Elementary School Principal  
Carmen X. Urbina- Parent, Family and Community Coordinator

February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2007

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The board on August 17, 2005 adopted a School Choice policy that established a process for the review of alternative schools. In September 2005, the superintendent appointed an alternative schools review team. In the 2005-06 school year, Eastside Elementary School was chosen for review. In February 2006, the board adopted recommendations related to the first group of elementary alternative schools reviewed under board policy IGBH.

As a result of the Alternative School Review process conducted in 2005/2006, Eastside Elementary has been asked to develop a plan addressing the key findings of the report which were related to attracting and addressing the instructional needs of a more diverse student population, including low SES, special education, English language learners and students of color. The Eastside community took this directive seriously and began work in the spring of 2006 and engaged the support of the Parent, Family and Community Coordinator, Carmen X. Urbina.

As part of the strategic planning process Eastside Staff, Administration, Parents, Site-Council and the Parent, Family and Community Coordinator had several (8) meetings from February-2006 and January-2007.

Data was collected and analyzed from our school and our neighborhood. Also the schools mission, vision program design was revisited and critical questions were asked in order to frame our work.

### **Some of the critical questions that helped guide our work were the following:**

- **Critical questions about our mission, vision, values**
  1. What is our mission statement- Does our goal mirror our mission statement?
  2. Are our definitions based on a certain economic reality?
  3. How do we make our value system honor parents where they are?
    - a. How do we talk about and recognize privilege?
    - b. What messages are we sending in our publications?
- **How do we start this process - What do we do to start the change?**
  1. Needs assessment- blueprint of our school and what is needed.
  2. Design a three year plan.
  3. How do we articulate (parent involvement) recognizing privileged? How do we change the perceptions and honor the good parts of our program?

**The following strategies resulted out of the initial conversations which helped us frame the design or our process.**

- I. Strategic Planning Process was necessary to define Eastside Success, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Challenges.
- II. A three year plan- that identified needs, response to need, specific activities to accomplish the goals, desired outcome based on best-practices, evaluation outcomes, resources needed to accomplish
- III. As we developed our Improvement Plan we needed multi-phase strategies that addressed short term, and long term strategies. And as we thought of the future - these strategies needed to be parallel to each other.
- IV. What ever decisions we made needed to be transparent to all Eastside Stakeholders. Communication was essential.
- V. District support was a key element of success.

### **The Plan**

A strategic planning retreat for the School staff was held on April of 2006. The purposed of the one day retreat was to (1) review the School's mission; (2) discuss the School's culture; (3) discuss the School's vision; (4) discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the School; and (5) create strategies and action plans to accomplish the three year plan.

All the above was analyzed from the perspectives/lenses of a teacher, a parent and a member of the wider community. The results of this process have been collated, organized and brought back to the staff for review and comment. It was clear to the staff the next steps had to involve parents and community. A six-phase plan for doing so was proposed, presented to the parent group, and agreed on by the site council. (Attachment No. I)

#### **Phase I**

Teachers conduct the Success, Weakness, Opportunity and Threats (SWOT) process. As stated above, this phase has been completed.

#### **Phase II**

Parent group will also go through the SWOT process. This process has been scheduled at the end of January (Attachment No. I). We chose to put together a group of 17 parents for this: our two Site Council parent representatives and three representatives for each grade level grades 1-5. Two grade level representatives will be chosen by lottery from those parents interested in participating (parents with more than one student can not be chosen for more than one position.) Staff and administration will be responsible for inviting the third parent to participate in an effort to ensure a diverse representation of stake holders.

### Phase III

In this phase composed of parents, staff and administrators will combine SWOTs and a draft report will be created.

### Phase IV

The draft report will be presented to the wider school community to solicit input for improvement.

### Phase V

The Final report will be presented to the School Board.

### Phase VI

A committee of staff, parents and interested community members will come together to incorporate our key learning from the SWOT process into Eastside's core beliefs, curriculum, policies and procedures.

### **On-going Work**

As we move forward and implement our plan, 'Eastside staff will continue to take advantage of training opportunities to help understand the issues and improve their skills when working with a diverse population. The Eastside staff has taken advantage of a number of training opportunities that include: the EEA Diversity training, in-services given by Carmen Urbina and seminars on Understanding Poverty by Ruby Payne.

The school will also continue to build new relationships and strengthen existing relationships with our stakeholders.

Also, Eastside Elementary School is continually assessing the climate and identifying challenges and assuring that as we move forward transparency in communication and inclusion of all our stakeholders are always at the forefront of our work as essential guiding principals.

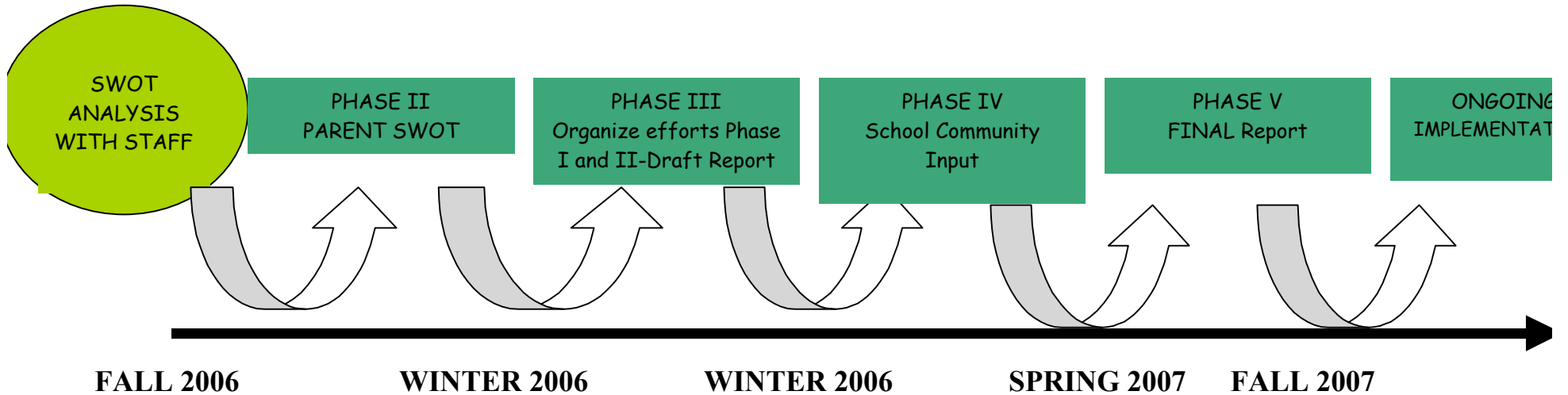
### **Conclusion**

All the stakeholders of the School are committed to achieving and finalizing the goals as we complete this Strategic Plan. We have completed three of the six phases and we believe that our strategic process is inclusive, holistic, innovative and transparent to all its stakeholders. Our commitment is to continue our tradition of teaching and excellence. Our goal is to have our process finalized and a three year plan ready for implementation by the end of the school year June 2007.

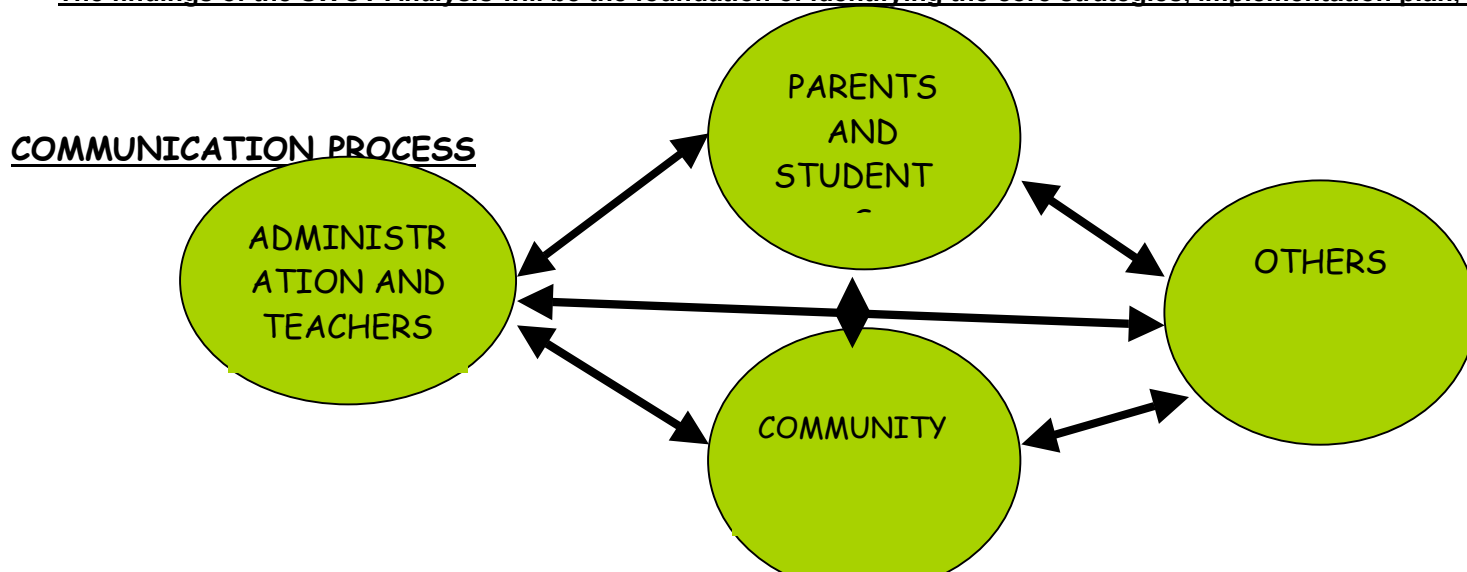
## ATTACHMENT NO. I- ARTICULATION OF PHASE PROCESS

### **I. Project Process**

The diagram below illustrates the process and purpose of the SWOT Analysis in relation to our proposed project and timeline.



The findings of the SWOT Analysis will be the foundation of identifying the core strategies, implementation plan, and measurement



**EASTSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
PARENT INVOLVEMENT PROPOSED STRATEGIES**

**MAIN GOAL:**

To improve Eastside Elementary School capacity to welcome, support, and effectively serve diverse learners and their families – and then to do so – in order to meet the Board’s requirements for retaining alternative school designation.

**Outcome of process:**

To develop a: Recruitment and Retention Plan to increase equity and diversity.

PHASE I-STAFF SWOT –INTERNAL ANALYSIS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiated Strategic Planning Process with staff utilizing the SWOT Analysis Tool: Success, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.</li> <li>• Reviewed core messages through different lenses:</li> </ul>	
LENSES	REVIEWED FOLLOWING CORE MESSAGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family / Community</li> <li>• Social</li> <li>• Academic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mission</li> <li>• Program Description</li> <li>• Program Highlights</li> <li>• School Improvement Goals</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SWOT:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are our successes</li> <li>• What are our opportunities</li> <li>• What are our weaknesses</li> <li>• What are our challenges</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	} In improving the capacity to welcome, support and effectively serve diverse learners and their families.
PHASE II- PARENT SWOT- INTERNAL ANALYSIS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Propose same process as above detailed.</li> <li>• Selection Criteria- Scott Marsh, Teachers, Random Lottery</li> </ul>	
PHASE III- BRING TOGETHER PHASE I AND II- DRAFT REPORT AND INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS- THREE YEAR PLAN	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff and Parent Committee with the support of the Parent, Family and Community Coordinator.</li> </ul>	
PHASE IV- SCHOOL COMMUNITY INPUT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent Involvement Plan-What would facilitate involvement               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey parent- Availability of time and best ways to obtain input                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What time is best for a focus group- Morning, Mid-day, Saturdays</li> <li>○ Would you need- Childcare, transportation, others</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
PHASE V- PRESENT FINAL REPORT- THREE YEAR PLAN	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Decision made by all stakeholders.</li> </ul>	
COMMUNICATION PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT OVERARCHING GUIDELINES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All our parents MUST have the opportunity to provide input in the plan:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus Groups</li> <li>• E-mails</li> <li>• Feedback-Box</li> <li>• Newsletter</li> <li>• Phone calls</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

**ATTACHMENT NO. II.**

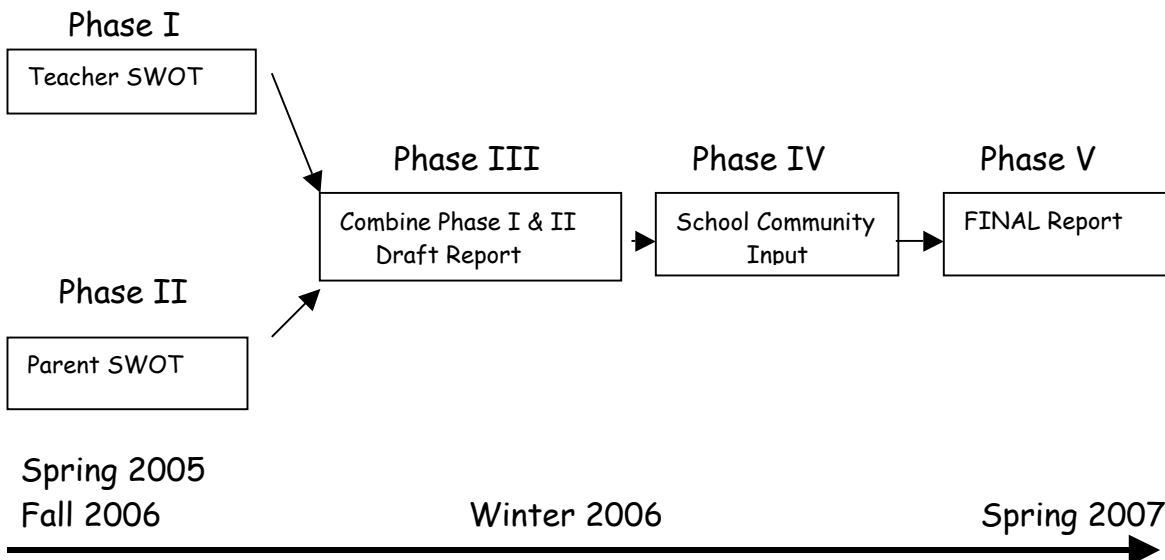
**Warm, Welcoming Supportive**

# Three-Year Goals for Eastside: Year #1

As many of you know and for those of you who have not yet heard, Eastside Elementary School went through a review process last year. The District Review Committee, comprised of a superintendent intern, retired administrators and teachers and district administrators, looked at district data, information provided by the alternative schools and co-located neighborhood schools, and data collected during site visits to establish whether schools met the eight school board criteria for alternative designation. Below is an excerpt from the review committee's findings (full report can be found at <http://www.4j.lane.edu/about4j/A&O/A&O.html>):

*"Direct district staff to work with Eastside to develop a plan for improvement to address the key findings of the report related to assisting Eastside to attract and address the instructional needs of a more diverse student population, including low SES, special education, ELL and students of color."*

Last year, the Eastside teachers began a process to work towards addressing these concerns. They met with Carmen Urbina, Parent/Family & Community Coordinator, and took part in an activity called a SWOT. This activity asks participants to take an honest view, from several different perspectives (teacher, parent and community), of the schools Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. I am impressed with the heart and soul the teachers put forth. This fall, we met with Carmen, again, to look at the results of the SWOT and to map out the next steps. The outcome of this planning session was a five-phase plan.



We have completed Phase I and now it is the parents turn. With the support of our parent group and the Site Council we are moving forward with Phase II. A group of 17 parents is being invited to work with Carmen to do their own SWOT. Teachers will not be involved in this phase in any way. The group of parents will consist of both Site Council representatives and three representatives for each grade level. Two parents, at each grade level, will be chosen randomly from volunteers and the teachers and administration will invite a third representative, for each grade level. Our goal is to work towards gathering a diverse and representative group of parents for this important work.

We want all voices to be heard. In Phase IV we will be asking for input from everybody that would like to offer it. We envision several Town Hall style meetings where the draft of our work can be shared and input given. We will be surveying you regarding the best dates and times to have these. In addition, we will have multiple avenues for you to communicate with us regarding any input or concerns. We do ask, however, that you not contact teachers directly. We will have an input box in the office, an email address and of course you can always speak to me directly.

The SWOT meeting will be held \_\_\_\_\_. Childcare will be provided. If you are interested and can make yourself available, please fill out the half-sheet below and return it to the office no later than \_\_\_\_\_.

Sincerely,  
Principal Scott Marsh

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I would like to volunteer for the Eastside Parent SWOT group. I understand my name will be placed in a random drawing for available positions.

My child is \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

My name is \_\_\_\_\_

I can be reached at \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_