

Task Force on the Future of Education in the City of Lynchburg: PreK-12 and Beyond

CHARTER

Mission

The Task Force shall gather information, engage the public in conversation, conduct thorough analysis, and forward actionable recommendations to the School Board with the goal of aligning future educational programming, operational strategies, and capital improvement decisions of the Lynchburg City Schools with the long-term success of the City and community. This will be accomplished through thoughtful consideration of the community's changing educational environment, national leading practices in urban education, and a focus on leveraging all available resources of the City and community as we prepare the next generations to be contributing and thriving members of our community. The work of this Task Force will be informed by the Lynchburg City Schools new strategic plan. Ultimately, the Task Force's final product will inform the development of future strategic plans for both City and Schools functions.

Values

The final work product of the Task Force should have the following characteristics:

1. Final recommendations are visionary, inclusive, focused on building a strong community, and represent a holistic and strategic reset towards the long-term strength of our community.
2. Analyses of present conditions are rigorously data-driven, considering both qualitative and quantitative information. The Task Force is charged with proactively engaging with the diverse members of the community to ensure that a wide variety of perspectives are considered as analyses are conducted and recommendations are drafted.
3. Recommended interventions are evidence-based, designed to address concerns identified during present conditions analyses, and inclusive of established City and School System strategic plans; recommendations represent steps along a clear path to where the City and Schools system are headed together.
4. Includes a purposeful discussion of how all City functions contribute to public education in Lynchburg and how public education substantively and strategically contributes to the long-term strength of the family, the neighborhood, the community, and the economy.
5. Final recommendations consciously address the financial realities of the City and the community's ability to pay; interventions are feasible and actionable; recommendations include an analysis of costs and benefits to the community.

Scope of Activity and Responsibility

The Task Force will study a variety of issues facing the educational environment in the City. In doing so, it will create subcommittees that will carry out the effort of gathering information and analyzing data balanced with practical day to day experiences of educators and students in the classroom to create recommendations for future directions. Subcommittee work will be synthesized into a final report for consideration by the School Board and, ultimately, City Council.

The Task Force has no final authority to make final decisions, but rather is designed to facilitate the effort of identifying options, clarifying implications of various options, and analyzing the impact of possible future courses of action. The Lynchburg City School Board maintains the sole authority to make strategic, programmatic, and financial decisions for the school system. The Lynchburg City Council serves as the sole authority to make funding decisions based on the School Board's recommendations.

Both City of Lynchburg and Lynchburg City Schools staff will be responsive and transparent in responding to requests of the Task Force. In the event the Task Force does not receive information requested of staff in a timely manner, the Task Force Chair should be notified and will discuss any concerns with either the Superintendent or City Manager.

Task Force leadership will make periodic reports to joint City Council and School Board meetings to keep those bodies apprised of its progress. The Task Force and its subcommittees may engage content experts on specific issues and engage in community dialogue as it deems appropriate to this effort.

Composition and Membership

Organization and Leadership

The Task Force Steering Committee will consist of a chairperson and vice chairperson with community leadership experience, appointed by City Council, two members of City Council chosen by City Council, and two members of the School Board chosen by the School Board. Once the Task Force is formed, the Steering Committee members will continue as members of the Task Force. Additionally, the Steering Committee chairperson and vice chairperson, as appointed by City Council and the School Board, will continue in those positions with the Task Force. All members of the Task Force have equal input into the conclusions and recommendations of the Task Force. The chairperson and vice chairperson will have organizational duties, but will have no additional authority on the Task Force.

Task Force

The Task Force will be composed of sixteen total members including the Steering Committee. In addition to the six Steering Committee members, ten members will be selected by the Steering Committee with input from the City Council and the School Board. The Steering Committee will appoint the subcommittee chairs and alternates. Attention will be given to ensuring the Task Force is inclusive and reflective of the City's demographic.

Subcommittee Objectives and Deliverables

The five initial subcommittees will include and have the following initial study objectives and deliverables:

1. **Enrollment Trends and Demographics** – will study trends related to socioeconomic characteristics, educational and support needs, and other school, home, and community factors that affect the school system’s strategic and programmatic decisions. Additionally, this subcommittee will evaluate reasons for declining enrollment in Lynchburg City Schools.

Deliverable: This subcommittee is tasked with providing empirical information to other subcommittees to inform their recommendations.

2. **Operations, Facilities, and Consolidation** – will study the present conditions, capacity, and longevity of school buildings, evaluate opportunities to streamline support functions, evaluate the opportunity to consolidate existing facilities where appropriate, and explore options to build new school facilities that support educational programs.

Deliverable: This subcommittee will provide a report evaluating opportunities for re-engineering of operations and consolidation of existing facilities between the City and Schools.

3. **Leading Practices in Education** – will study emerging trends in a diverse educational environment and identify opportunities for Lynchburg to expand and enhance current practice and to take advantage of successes of other school systems. This subcommittee will also conduct research on best and leading practices in preparing educators and families on how to achieve positive outcomes for students in a diverse educational environment.

Deliverable: This subcommittee will create a report outlining strategies that may assist with specific challenges identified by the Task Force that address the City’s diverse educational environment.

4. **Programming and Collaboration Opportunities** – will study strengths and opportunities in the school and community’s programmatic structure in the areas of academic opportunities, athletics, arts, vocational training, and other areas. Additionally, this subcommittee will identify opportunities for collaboration with City departments and outside partners to enhance the programmatic offerings and, ultimately, outcomes for children who attend Lynchburg City Schools.

Deliverable: This subcommittee will make recommendations regarding future programmatic opportunities and eliminating practices that may not yield impactful results.

5. **Finance** – will study the School System’s financial structure and long-range financial sustainability. Additionally, this subcommittee will be responsible for studying opportunities for the alignment and complementary nature of the School System’s and the City’s budget process and exploring opportunities for continued and future financial investment in the Lynchburg City Schools.

Deliverable: This subcommittee will evaluate the financial feasibility of various initiatives proposed by those subcommittees and create a fifteen-year operating and capital improvement program forecast.

The Task Force has the authority to expand its subcommittee structure, objectives, and deliverables as necessary.

Each subcommittee will be responsible for analyzing issues presented to it by the Task Force from its particular lens. Subcommittees are free to share information and engage in dialogue as their work progresses. The Steering Committee will recruit subcommittee chairpersons and assist the chairpersons in the recruitment of subcommittee members. The ten members of the Task Force chosen by the Steering Committee will be inclusive and reflective of the City’s demographic. Subcommittee chairpersons may organize their subcommittees as they see fit, convene meetings at their own discretion, and work with content experts as necessary. Any funding request from the Task Force must be forwarded to the appropriate staff member(s) for School Board consideration.

Final Work Product

The final Task Force work product will be a report which includes all of the deliverables noted above as well as any additional information the Task Force deems appropriate in creating a road map for the future of public education in the City of Lynchburg. The final report will include a proposed time frame for implementation of Task Force recommendations

Proposed Schedule

This is only a proposed schedule; departure from the delineated timeline may be necessary if the scope of work is more complex or other circumstances intervene.

Task	Completion Date
Steering Committee and Task Force Appointments	July 15, 2019
Subcommittee Member Recruitment	August 15, 2019
Subcommittees Initial Meeting	No later than September 15, 2019
Task Force/Subcommittee Work	September 15, 2019 – August 30, 2020
Interim Report to a Joint Meeting of School Board and City Council	No later than April 15, 2020

Revised June 13, 2019

Report Writing

October 15, 2020

Delivery of Recommendations to a Joint Meeting of the
School Board and City Council

November 15, 2020

The Task Force results will be used to inform the development of future strategic plans, operating budgets and capital improvement plans, beginning with Fiscal Year 2022.

Staff Support

The Task Force will rely upon appropriate staff support from both the City Manager's Office and Lynchburg City Schools.