## ACTIVITY FIVE: RIVER FOREST SCHOOL DISTRICT 90 SWOT ANALYSIS

### STRENGTHS: What do we consider to be our strengths? What advantages do we have? What do others say our strengths are?

- High quality staff – (effective, skilled, collaborative) (4)
- Dedicated, educated, passionate, committed teachers, staff & administration (3)
- Extremely high expectations for teachers and students (3)
- Teacher leadership – TLC, SLC, curriculum committees
- Supportive administrative leadership
- Professional development
- Consistent student achievement (4)
- Small school district – each child is known; GPS that can include an individual focus (2)
- Meeting needs of all students – general education and special education
- Extensive special education services
- Additional support services in schools - social workers, PTs, nurses, teaching specialists, custodial department
- Value commitment to whole child
- Specialized response facility
- Curricular variety
- Positive relationships and willingness to interact with other community agencies
- Strong community foundation supports
- Involved families (3)
- PTO support (2)
- Unity within the adult school community (parents + teachers)
- Willingness to solicit input from parents and respond accordingly
- School board support
- Culture of continuous improvement
- Top notch resources (technology, books, materials, PTO, etc)
- Technology infrastructure (including instructional/classroom) (3)
- Technology plan – forward looking (2)
- Data analysis reporting

### WEAKNESSES: What do we consider to be our weaknesses? What are we most criticized for or receive the most complaints about? What do we seem to have a hard time doing well?

- Staff/teacher morale (4)
- Culture of overloading teachers’ workload
- Work life balance
- Professional time
- Staff development opportunities – art, music, physical education
- Maintain the art of teaching and the heart of teaching
- Differentiation - challenging all kids academically at the varying levels they come to us - “all means all” (4)
- Longitudinal tracking of students in academics (2)
- Common Core (CCSS) transition – resources and pedagogical approaches to address CCSS (2)
- Strong integration of curriculum across content areas
- Expanded enrichment opportunities
- Science curriculum
- Integrating science into STEM
- Time spent/appropriate amount of assessing versus outcomes (2)
- Achievement gaps - better understand differences in achievement across student groups
- Student engagement – create more opportunities for more hands on critical thinking/unique learning
- Homework-extra-curricular balance
- Project-based learning
- Deep commitment to social emotional learning – for students, staff, and families (3)
- Vertical articulation / longitudinal tracking of SEL needs
- Measuring the success of civil behavior vs. being kind among students in our schools.
- Executive function
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial strength &amp; stability (5)</th>
<th>Awareness and education resources – regarding the LGBT community</th>
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<tr>
<td>Fiscal responsibility – stewardship of money &amp; future planning (2)</td>
<td>Inclusivity (race, religion, and family needs)</td>
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<td>Communication with parents/families/community – increase understanding of student programs (3)</td>
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<td>Parents ignoring school policies</td>
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<td>Increasing the support of the wider community</td>
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<td>Need a new report card</td>
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<td>Update report cards – Gateway for Reporting Student Programs (GRASP)</td>
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<td>Better communication on report card</td>
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<td>Inconsistency in implementing technology tools.</td>
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<td>Re-evaluate use of technology in classrooms</td>
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<td>Technology integration – SAMR</td>
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<td>Technology PD for staff and parents</td>
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<td>May need more technology staff to support initiatives</td>
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<td>Aging/outdated facilities; updating building environment (heating / air-conditioning, space) (4)</td>
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<td>Facility upkeep – deep cleaning needed</td>
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<td>Roosevelt School renovation – polarization of the community</td>
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<td>Traffic safety around all schools</td>
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<td>Improved building safety procedures</td>
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<td>Look at the initiatives we have already and evaluate their effectiveness</td>
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<td>Short school day and short school year</td>
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### OPPORTUNITIES:

What opportunities for improvement do we know about, but have not addressed? Where with a little work could we change a weakness into a strength?

- Full-day kindergarten (4)
- Use of (instructional) time – investigate productive ways to rearrange/extend school day/year (e.g. Australia) (3)
- Next Generation Science Standards
- Opportunities for movement during the school day (early bird gross motor habits)
- More time for professional development
- Professional development for teaching assistants in all areas
- Blended learning
- Training for supporting stressed students
- Strengthen / foster a culture of inclusiveness & equity throughout the district
- We have the opportunity to close the gap between gender and race
- Outcomes and work of the D90 Inclusivity Board
- Diversity hiring
- SEL professional development
- Graduate education practice from Concordia and Dominican as interns
- Effective parent university programs
- Change management (formalized)
- Educate broader community about D90 goals/mission and why change is needed
- Conversation based on data that will initiate change
- Sharing student and parent feedback about experiences with classrooms
- Social services contact with all students
- Successful technology implementation transitioning to high school
- Getting unplugged
- River Forest is a walking town. Active lifestyle connect kids to school culture
- Look at best practices in safety and how we can continue to improve it.
- Climate control (2)
- Capital analysis of future capital needs
- Multi-use spaces
- No space for specialized SPED services
- OT/PT room
- STEM lab
- Science lab(s) @ elementary level
- Adult education and/or utilization of school facilities to improve community-wide offerings

### THREATS:

Who or what threatens us the most? What challenges are coming that we must respond to? What might block our progress?

- Complacency that “status quo” is good enough, change is not necessary (2)
- Illinois state financial crisis (3)
- Potential pension cost shift to district (2)
- Reduction of state funding to district (2)
- Federal and state mandates – changes costs (2)
- Continually changing standards (e.g. Next Gen Science Standards)
- Reliance on residential real estate taxes for 86% of revenue
- Local retiree taxpayer animosity toward D90
- Decreasing support for public education across the country
- Challenge of living within financial means and meeting taxpayer expectations
- Rising cost of healthcare benefits
- Standardized testing (too much?) (2)
- Parents or community members lobbying a single issue
- Weather extremes stress facilities and staff
- Increasing individualization of services
- Data overload
- Partnership changes with other community agencies
- Continuity of leadership
- Roosevelt school renovation/polarization of community
- Next teacher contract when current one expires
- Continual commitment to technology
- What are the consequences of virtual learning?