

Strategic Plan FAQ

What is the Board of Education voting on at the December 19, 2016, Board meeting?

- **Adopt** the Strategic Direction, including the Mission Statement
- **Accept** the Action Plans, and acknowledge the tremendous work of the volunteer action planning team members.
- **Authorize** Administration to carry out the next steps of the Strategic Planning Process.

If the Board votes yes now, what happens next?

In the next phase, Administration will:

- **Prioritize Plans**, incorporating input from Board and community.
- **Create an Implementation Schedule for Year 1**, align it to the 2017-2018 budget, and incorporate the first year initiatives into the budget. Both the 2017-2018 budget and the Year 1 Implementation Plan will be adopted by the Board of Education in March 2016.
- **Create a 3 Year Implementation Schedule**, which will be incorporated into annual district goals, along with other priorities, and adopted by the Board of Education as part of the district goal setting process.

If the Board votes yes now, does that commit the district to anything financially?

No. The vote authorizes Administration to prioritize the plans and create an implementation schedule. Specific costs for strategic plan initiatives will be clearly explained during the budget process, and the Board of Education will vote on the full budget, including the proposed first year initiatives, at its March 2017 meeting. Implementation plans for succeeding years will be incorporated in both the District Goals and the budget for those years, both of which require Board approval before action can be taken or resources committed.

How much will the Strategic Plan cost?

There is no specific cost associated with the Strategic Plan. The initiatives proposed by the Action Planning teams will be prioritized and incorporated into the budget for 2017-2018 and future years as part of our Implementation Schedule. Many of the initiatives proposed fall within existing budget lines, so would not require additional funding. For example, we have a budget for professional development, so implementing the action plans that require professional development would simply require us to focus our use of the budget on training that aligns to the Strategic Plan. Many other initiatives are low cost, or even no cost in terms of dollars. Those initiatives which do require new expenditures would be incorporated into the budget and require approval by the Board of Education. We are also actively seeking new sources of revenue to fund innovation in our district.

Will any teacher positions be cut to fund the Strategic Plan?

No. The Strategic Plan will not divert funds away from classrooms or our core business of educating students. Instead, it is a framework to guide decisions about how to use our resources more wisely and strategically so that we can better meet the needs of our students. This includes providing teachers with the professional development, tools, and support they need to create and maintain learner-centered environments. Of course, other considerations, such as the 2% cap and rising health care costs, may impact the programs we are able to offer or our staffing, but this is true every year and is not connected to the Strategic Plan.

If the Board votes yes, will all of the action plans be implemented exactly as written?

Not necessarily. There is synergy between many of the plans, so it is possible that some may result in hybrid initiatives incorporating components of two or more action plans, others may be tweaked due to changed circumstances, or financial considerations. These decisions will be made during the creation of the Implementation Schedule. In addition, we will engage with SOMEA and ASCA, in accordance with the law, on any issues that impact bargaining rights or obligations.

If the Board votes yes, will all of the action plans be implemented immediately?

No. There are 47 different action plans, and there is no way we could implement all of them simultaneously, even if we did not have other priorities to address in the Execution Plan. This is why Administration will create a 3-Year Implementation Schedule, so that we can plan thoughtfully and implement carefully. It is also why we have invited community feedback on which plans our stakeholders hope to see implemented early in the process, so that Administration can take this into consideration as we create the Implementation Schedule.

Is the Strategic Plan the only thing the district will focus on in the next few years?

No. The District has two processes running in parallel to each other:

- **Strategic Plan** which focuses on innovation and how to adapt our school district so that we can educate students for a world we have yet to imagine.
- **Execution Plan** which focuses on doing our core business more effectively.

In addition, we have state and federal mandates which we must fulfill, emergent issues which we must respond to, and long-range facilities plans which we must address.

What is the Execution Plan?

The Board included in its District Goals that Administration must create and follow an Execution Plan that assures effective implementation of Board of Education policies and monitoring. The plan addresses issue such as zero based budgeting, building utilization, capital planning, implementation of the Access & Equity Policy and other Board Policies, and initiatives to improve the culture and climate in our school community.

Why is there no mention in the action plans of some key issues facing our district, such as our 3 focus schools, the achievement gap, class size, and facilities issues like the pool and portables?

The Action Planning Teams were charged with developing initiatives that move us towards the realization of the specific strategies in the Strategic Direction document. The context was to create the system we want to see in the future. This of course must take into consideration current issues, but rather than trying to “fix” current problems, our hope is that we will build a system which creates a new “normal” which does not include some of the problems from the past. Current issues will still be addressed directly, through the Execution Plan, while the Strategic Plan focuses more on innovation.

Will there be an opportunity for teachers, parents, and other stakeholders to give feedback on the effectiveness of the implementation of the various action plans?

The Administration is committed to building assessment opportunities for all stakeholders into the implementation phase. Regular updates to the community about the progress of the implementation phase are included in the communications plan.

How can community members provide feedback on the plans or the process?

- To help us prioritize the Action Plans as we determine the Implementation Schedule:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PriorityActionPlans>

- For general feedback: <http://tinyurl.com/SOMSDStrategic>

Note: Feedback specific to the Action Plans and the Strategic Planning Process will be shared with members of the Board of Education and the Administration’s Strategic Leadership Team.