

## **Strategic Planning Process**

**2014**

### **Overview**

**The Three Forks Public Schools (“the District”)** has created a new direction for the school district to strategically focus its resources on identified wants, preferences, and needs of its community. As part of this process, the District has begun a strategic planning and thinking process that will lead to a stronger and more vital school district. This process will be ongoing as the District moves into the future. This strategic plan is intended to help the District in focusing its resources in a manner that will best benefit the children enrolled in the District.

The Three Forks Board of Trustees and Staff Leadership Team began the strategic planning and thinking process necessary to fit with its commitment to children, to community engagement and to knowledge-based decision making processes.

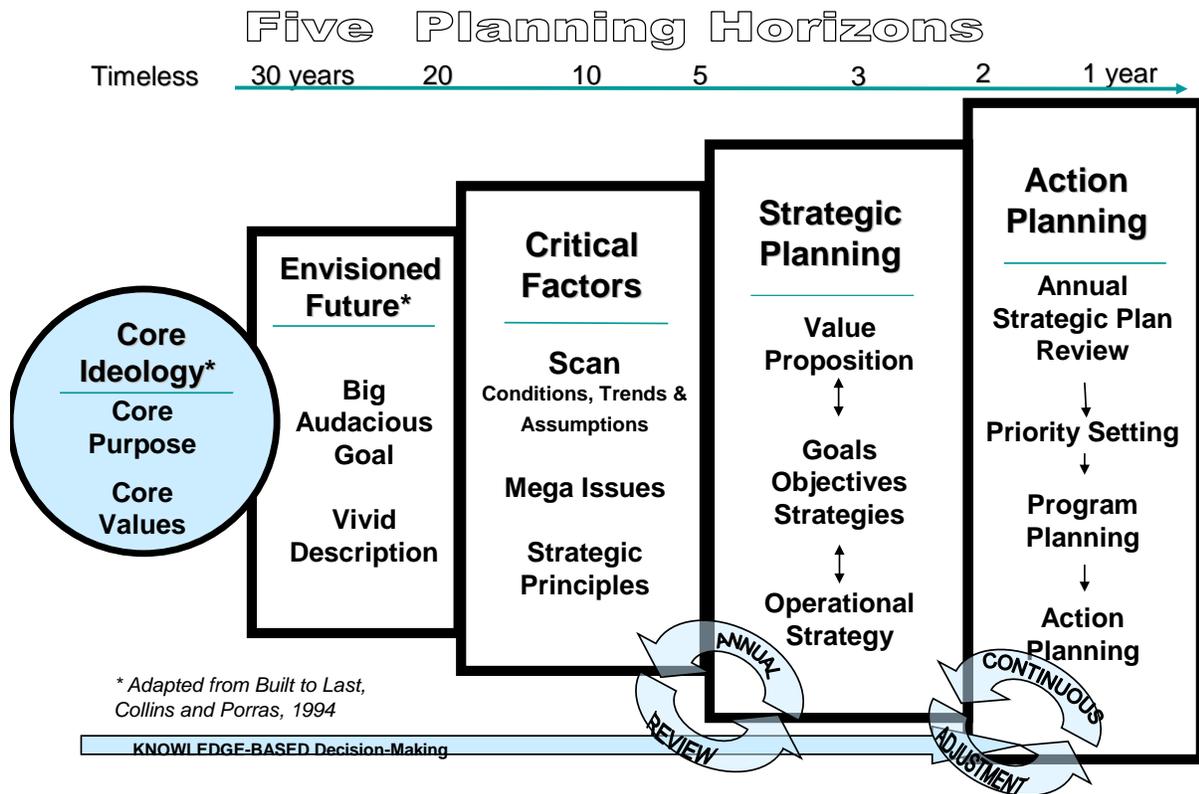
As part of its preparation for strategic planning, Three Forks Public Schools brought in Debra Silk of the Montana School Boards Association to help facilitate the strategic planning process.

On February 10, 2015, the Three Forks Public Schools Board of Trustees formally adopted its new strategic plan.

The District views the process of strategic planning as an ongoing process within the school system. This is not a "strategic planning project" that is completed. Adoption of a plan is an affirmation of the general intent and direction articulated by the Core Ideology, Envisioned Future and Goals and Strategic Objectives. It is understood that progress toward achieving plan strategic objectives will be assessed at least annually, and the plan will be updated based on achievement and changes in the needs of the children served by the District.

# Strategic Planning Framework

The framework used by the District for its strategic planning process was adapted from a model developed by Jim Collins, author of “Built to Last” and “Good to Great.” The Board focused on five different planning horizons, starting with the long term issues first to provide focus to shorter term efforts.



# Core Ideology of the Three Forks Public School District

**Core ideology** describes a school district's consistent identity that transcends all changes related to its relevant environment. It consists of two elements - **core purpose** - the school district's reason for being - and **core values** - essential and enduring principles that guide a school district. **Envisioned future** conveys a concrete yet unrealized vision for the school district. It consists of a **big audacious goal** - a clear and compelling catalyst that serves as a focal point for effort - and a **vivid description** - vibrant and engaging descriptions of what it will be like to achieve the big audacious goal.

**In collaboration with our community, the core purpose of the Three Forks Public School District is to be the model of excellence in education by using best practices, meeting the needs of every student, and instilling a love of lifelong learning.**

## Core Values of the Three Forks Public School District:

***Student Centered*** – Our students come first. We are dedicated to setting high standards for our students and our staff. We believe in equality and opportunities for every student to succeed. We know that every student can reach his/her maximum potential if given the tools, environment and opportunities to succeed.

***Safety and Support*** – We believe that our students have the greatest chance of success when they are in an environment that is safe, supporting and nurturing, when our staff work as a team, and when we benefit from the strong positive relationship we have with parents and community members.

***Trust and Transparency*** – We value and are committed to a culture of trust and transparency in our interactions and relationships with others. We believe that honesty is truly the best policy and keeping open lines of communication both internally and externally will enhance the programs and services available to our students

***Responsible, Respectful & Resilient*** – We hold ourselves accountable for our actions. We are all role models for the youth in our community. Although we may not always agree with one another, we are committed to a culture of respect. We believe that if we operate in a responsible and respectful manner we will be able to withstand and prosper through even the toughest of challenging times.

***Innovating and Inviting*** – We value a culture of learning that promotes innovation and creativity and an environment that is inviting to our students, staff, parents and community members.

## 20 Year Planning Horizon

### Envisioned Future of the Three Forks Public Schools

#### Big Audacious Goal:

We have successfully fostered an environment that promotes creativity, innovation, problem-solving, resiliency and trust that will ultimately prepare our students to be life ready in a world that is constantly changing and globally expanding.

#### A Vivid Description of the Desired Future:

- Students:
  - Our students have enhanced opportunities for both co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.
  - Our students have the social skills to be successful in life.
  - Our students are college and/or career ready when they exit our system.
  - We have partnered with others to provide needed health and human services to our youth.
  - Our students understand the value of education and hard-work.
  - We have a successful outreach program that allows non-traditional public school students to benefit from our programs and services.
  - We have successfully implemented teaching and learning techniques that enhance student achievement through project-based learning, outdoor programs, global awareness projects, critical thinking and other experiential opportunities for students.
  - Through technology, we have bridged the gap between home and school. Students have access to the school 24/7.
  - We provide a safe and secure environment where students can grow academically, physically and emotionally into productive citizens.
  - Due to the culture that we have created, our students fully understand the importance of community service and giving back to the community. We have implemented a community service component into our graduation requirements.
- Staff:
  - Our staff are facilitators of knowledge and easily adapt to changing best practices.
  - Because our staff are so enthused with our programming, the attitude and engagement of our students emanates from their enthusiasm.
  - Our staff are progressive and innovative in their approach to educating and supporting every student.
  - Our curriculum is driven by data using both quantitative and qualitative measures.
- District
  - Our educational programming evolves as standards and best practices change.
  - We have full buy-in from the Board and staff in our vision, our goals and in holding ourselves accountable for our failures and our successes. Our Strategic Planning Process drives everything we do as a school system.

- We have undergone a facilities study and implemented the necessary changes, modifications to provide an ongoing school environment that fosters enhanced student achievement.
- Our school calendar and scheduling is established around the needs of students and what is best for our students.
- Our curriculum is adaptive, innovative and inspiring to students. We have systems in place to ensure that we are continually evolving our curriculum to implement the latest standards and best practices.
- Our staff leadership team works effectively and in concert with the Board, staff, parents and our community to support and provide enriching programs and services for our students.
- We adopt and implement policies that are progressive and that enhance student achievement.
- We recruit and retain the best and the brightest employees. All of our employees have the best interests of students at the forefront of everything they do.
- We have structures (including small class sizes) that give instructors the ability to work one-on-one with our students.
- Community
  - The community fully supports the vision and goals of the District. We have collaborated and partnered with the community in a manner that has positively impacted our community at-large and our school system.
  - Because of our welcoming environment and inclusive nature of our facilities, our school is the hub of the community. The community and the school are viewed as one in the same.
  - We have an adult education program unlike any in the state.
  - Because of our culture of trust, transparency and accountability across the board, the community is informed about our budget and our needs and fully supports our short-term and long-term initiatives.
  - We have implemented a program whereby parents are regularly and routinely invited to the school for educational and engagement opportunities and can also access these opportunities through technological means.
  - Because of our strong partnership with the community and local businesses, our students are provided with work-based/internship opportunities to get hands-on experience to help them in their college and/or career paths.

## 5-10 Year Planning Horizon

### **Assumptions Regarding the Relevant Future for the Three Forks Public School District**

In order to make progress against the 20 year Envisioned Future, Three Forks Public Schools must constantly anticipate the strategic factors likely to affect its ability to succeed, and to assess the implications of those factors. This process of building foresight about the future will help Three Forks Public Schools to constantly recalibrate its view of the relevant future, a basis upon which to update the strategic plan on an annual basis. As the outcome-oriented goals that will

form the basis of the long-range strategic plan will be based on this foresight, annual review of these statements will be an appropriate method of determining and ensuring the ongoing relevance of the strategic plan.

Creating the Assumptions - during the Strategic Planning meetings, the Three Forks School Board, Staff Leadership Team, faculty and community made many assumptions about the future. While many different assumptions were made, what follows are those assumptions that are likely to have the greatest influence on the development of Three Forks Public Schools' Strategic Plan.

## **Assumptions about the future**

### Demographics

- We anticipate that the floodplain will continue to cap the growth of our community in those areas impacted. However, we also anticipate growth in areas that are not impacted by the floodplain.
- We anticipate that as Bozeman continues to expand, that growth will have an impact on our community.
- We anticipate that we will continue to have a segment of our population that is transient.
- Although the oil boom in eastern Montana has not directly impacted our community, it has impacted the families of our students with some parents leaving our community to work in the oil fields.
- We anticipate that, given technological advancements, students and parents will continue to have access to educational opportunities outside of our school system.
- We anticipate that for those students with mental health issues, we will continue to see parents opting for home schooling.
- We anticipate that as our demographics change, our curriculum and offerings will also need to change.
- We anticipate that we will continue to have a steady population of retired individuals on set incomes.
- Our community values have been impacted due to the fact that housing is less expensive in Three Forks than in some of our surrounding areas. We anticipate this trend to continue.

### Legislation and Regulation

- We anticipate that the movement for privatization of education, e.g., private schools, charter schools, vouchers, etc., will increase. We do not yet know how this will impact our District.
- We anticipate that the Governor's Early Edge Initiative, if signed into law, will have an impact on our local private daycare facilities. We will need to collaborate with these businesses should this initiative pass.

## Politics and Social Values

- Our local community is fairly conservative. However, we anticipate that as our demographics and economic conditions change, so too will the political climate and social values.
- We anticipate that Common Core will continue to be met with opposition by a certain faction of our society with the focus of this faction, in large part, being on the uncertainty in values. We need to do a better job of educating parents and others about what Common Core is and what it is not.
- We anticipate that in order to be successful as a school system, we need to take greater measures to ensure that we are transparent in our operations, that we are communicating effectively, and engaging with parents and the community.

## Business and Economic Climate

- We anticipate a continued lack of affordable housing. Many of our staff commute from areas outside our community.
- We anticipate that our 2 largest industries will continue to be viable and continue strong support for our school. However, we should have a contingency plan in place should either of these industries be impacted by economic hardships.
- The viability of local businesses in our downtown area can be volatile and uncertain. We anticipate this trend to continue.
- We anticipate that getting fiber-optic capabilities in our community would greatly benefit the school and the viability of our community and local businesses.
- We have a lot of land that is available for industrial-type businesses. However, it is uncertain whether we will have any new industrial-type businesses.
- In many instances, the success and reputation of our school has an impact on the viability of our community. We anticipate that we will need to better promote the positive attributes of our school which may, in turn, positively impact and drive local business development.

## Technology and Science

- We anticipate that having fiber-optic capabilities will significantly change how we teach students and how students will learn.
- With technological advancements, we anticipate that in order for our students to be successful, we will need to stay ahead of the curve.
- We have had ongoing challenges in our science programs. In order to ensure that our students have access to the best science programs we can offer, we will need to devote focus on our recruitment and retention of high quality science instructors and keep up with trends in science curriculum.

## 5-10 Year Planning Horizon

### Mega Issues facing the Three Forks Public School District

**Mega issues** are issues of strategic importance, which represent choices the school district will need to make in defining the ultimate direction of its long-range plan. These issues represent potential impediments to achievement of the Envisioned Future, and form a basis for dialogue about the choices facing the school district. These questions can serve as an ongoing "menu" of strategic issues that, using a knowledge-based approach in gathering insights relative to Three Forks Public Schools' strategic position and directional choices for each of the issues, can be used by the Board to create regular opportunities for strategic dialogue about the future issues facing the school district.

Note: The questions are not necessarily arranged in priority order.

#### Mega Issues for Consideration

- How do we ensure that non-traditional public school students and parents are aware of the great attributes of our school, know what we have to offer and understand that we are open to serving these individuals?
- How do we embark on a course of ensuring that we are adequately and effectively promoting Three Forks Public Schools and all that we have to offer?
- How do we engage the community, local businesses and others to form a long-standing partnership for the mutual benefit of the community, the school, the parents, our staff and our students?
- How do we ensure that our infrastructure and initiatives are in place to utilize technology in a manner that supports our district-wide systems and enhances programs, services and opportunities?

## Five Year Planning Horizon

### Outcome-Oriented Goals and Strategic Objectives

The following thinking represents goals for the next five years. They are areas in which Three Forks Public Schools will explicitly state the conditions or attributes it wants to achieve. These outcome statements will define, "what will constitute future success." The achievement of each goal will move the school district toward realization of its Envisioned Future.

Strategic Objectives provide direction and actions on how the school district will accomplish its articulated goals. All strategies included in the strategic plan should be considered accomplishable at some point in the future. Strategic Objectives are reviewed annually by the Three Forks School Board, Staff Leadership Team, and faculty.

# Goals of the Three Forks Public School District

## Goal Area 1: Student Centered

**Statement of Intended Outcome, Five years:** Everything we do is centered around our students, what is best for our students and enhancing the opportunities, program and services we offer to students. Because of our efforts, our students are excited about school, have the necessary supports in place to enhance their educational experience and achievements.

### Strategic Objectives:

- ~~1. In coordination with Gallatin Valley Mental Health Department, we will make available both family based and student based counseling for those families and/or student in need of such services in order to address health, safety and well being issues. (Completed 2016)~~
2. We will take measures to begin the implementation of a process of both formative and summative evaluations to assess our academic performance progress. (Ongoing 2016)
3. We will make enhancements to our healthy nutrition program.
4. We will enhance the opportunities for students in extra-curricular and co-curricular activities.
5. We will make advancements in providing flexibility in our scheduling and in offerings to ensure that we are meeting the needs of our students.
6. We will develop a schedule/plan of updating our curriculum to ensure that it meets the ongoing needs of our students.
7. We will enhance our technological use/capabilities to ensure that we are using technology in a manner that positively impacts students.
8. We will continue to migrate to an individualized approach to educating our students.
9. We will place an emphasis on the importance of student involvement in community service and government and will provide enhanced opportunities for students to voice their opinions about their education and how we can improve their experiences while in our schools.
10. We will continue to place emphasis on teaching students social skills so that they are equipped to engage in conversation when they find themselves in situations that require them to use such skills to actively diffuse situations that may otherwise escalate.
11. We will continue to highlight the importance of maintaining a focus on anti-bullying with all students; while teaching replacement behaviors to discourage bullying. The replacement behaviors will be an overall part of the RtI, and MBI process within the school.

## Goal Area 2: Community Engagement/Relations

**Statement of Intended Outcome, Five years:** We have successfully enhanced the relationship and collaboration with our community. The community is informed about our budgeting process, our priorities, what we are doing and where we are going. As a result the community fully supports the school and through enhanced partnerships, we have expanded the opportunities for our students.

### **Strategic Objectives:**

1. We will take proactive steps to inform the Board, parents and the community of our budgeting process, our operations, our curriculum, our vision for the future, our short-term and our long-term strategic initiatives.
2. We will make enhancements to our Adult Education Program and communicate the programs and services that are available to community members.
3. In collaboration with our local businesses and using the Graduation Matters initiative, we will establish a mentorship program that will provide enhanced opportunities for our students.
4. We will provide increased opportunities for parents to engage with their own children and with teachers and other school employees.
5. We will develop a program whereby businesses, professionals, skilled individuals and our own students provide enhanced learning opportunities for students, staff, parents and the community.
6. We will enhance our relationship with the local media by engaging in regular and periodic communications, including the preparation of media releases, informing parents, community members and others of the great attributes of our school and the initiatives/programs that we have in place that provide enhanced opportunities for our students and staff.

### **Goal Area 3: Operations and Capacity Building**

**Statement of Intended Outcome, Five Years:** We know how important our operations and our capacity building are to our success and the success of our students. We have adequate initiatives and processes in place to ensure that we are operating at all times with the interests of students at the forefront.

### **Strategic Objectives:**

1. We will embark on an initiative to recruit and retain quality staff through both monetary incentives and other non-monetary enticements.
2. We will systematically adopt and implement proactive and progressive board policies and procedures that embrace best governance, operations and educational practices.
3. We will make professional development a priority for the Board to enhance its governance and impact on student achievement and for the staff that will improve our delivery of curriculum, programs and services to students.
4. ~~We will improve our evaluation instruments, starting at the administrative level, to ensure that evaluation formatting and systems are aligned with the District's Strategic Plan.~~ (Completed 2016)
5. We will seek the opinions, input and ideas of students, parents, staff and the community through periodic climate surveys.
6. We will study the student/teacher ratio and make appropriate adjustments as necessary and as we are able, given our resources, so that our structures meet the individual needs of students.

7. We will enhance the efficiency and collaboration between grades and buildings to so that the needs of students are met and the transition of students from grade to grade and building to building is supportive of our students and not disruptive to their education.
8. We will collaborate with other schools, organizations, etc., in order to maximize the opportunities for students and staff and to implement best, proven practices.

#### **Goal Area 4: Technology Integration**

**Statement of Intended Outcome, Five Years:** We know that technology is and will continue to have an impact on the lives of our students, staff and community as well as on the delivery of education and how students learn. We have successfully used technological advancements to our advantage to ensure the greatest impact on our students while at the same time continuing to embrace the value of face-to-face human interaction.

#### **Strategic Objectives:**

- ~~1. We will investigate options for partnering with business and others to make fiber optic capabilities a reality for our school and our community. (Completed 2016)~~
2. In our professional development opportunities for our staff, we will ensure that we are provided the necessary technology training to enhance the knowledge-base of our staff on technology and to ensure that our use of technology is positively impacting our students.
3. We will provide enhanced educational opportunities for our students and parents to understand the impact that technology has and will continue to have on education as well as the appropriate and effective use of technology.
- ~~4. We will develop a life cycle technology plan for the replacement and upgrading of our hardware and software. (Completed 2016)~~
- ~~5. We will take measures to protect our network and systems from security breaches. (Completed 2016)~~
6. Although technology is essential to advancing student achievement, we will need to ensure that we are balancing our integration of technology with the necessity of face-to-face interaction.
7. We will examine our framework for providing information to students and parents and move toward a management system that is universally used within our school system and that is user-friendly.
- ~~8. We will explore technological options available for enhancing the efficiency and safety of our students and staff while using district provided transportation. (Completed 2016)~~

## **Goal Area 5: Facility Maintenance and Enhancement**

**Statement of Intended Outcome, Five Years:** Through our systematic and methodical approach to enhancing our facilities, our students are reaping the benefits from a school climate that is welcoming, safe, secure, healthy and one which promotes educational advancements and other programs and services that support students.

### **Strategic Objectives:**

1. We will explore and implement a Facilities Program Plan that supports our programs and services and supports our technological advancements, including the following:
  - a. Performing electrical upgrades at the high school;
  - b. Addressing the aging heating system at the middle/high school;
  - c. Addressing storage issues;
  - d. Addressing issues of growth at the elementary level;
  - e. ~~Performing maintenance on the sprinkler system.~~ (Completed 2016)