North Newton School Corporation

Strategic Plan

2020-2025

Dr. Cathy Rowe, Superintendent

Superintendent's Message

The North Newton School Corporation has a long and proud history of achievements, but given the many changes that are occurring at the state and federal levels, we must plot a path forward toward higher performance, system alignment, best practices, greater collaboration, and increased efficiency. To these ends, we have adopted the operating philosophy of **continuous quality improvement**, defined as: "Ensuring the continuous improvement of processes and outcomes through evidence-based strategies and empowered staff and learners in order to exceed stakeholder expectations." We believe that the CQI philosophy, related tools, and processes represent proven methods for creating a High Performance Culture (Figure 1).

As an important first step, we have developed a corporation strategic plan that includes:

- Leadership Core Values
- Mission
- Vision
- Pathway to Success
- Dashboard and Scorecard
- High Expectation Performance Targets, Evidence-Based Strategies, and Action Plan Monitoring
- System-to-System Talks

Implementation of these processes and tools helps us begin our journey toward higher performance. Jerry Weast, Superintendent of the Montgomery County Maryland Public Schools, the 2010 Baldrige in Education recipient, wrote:
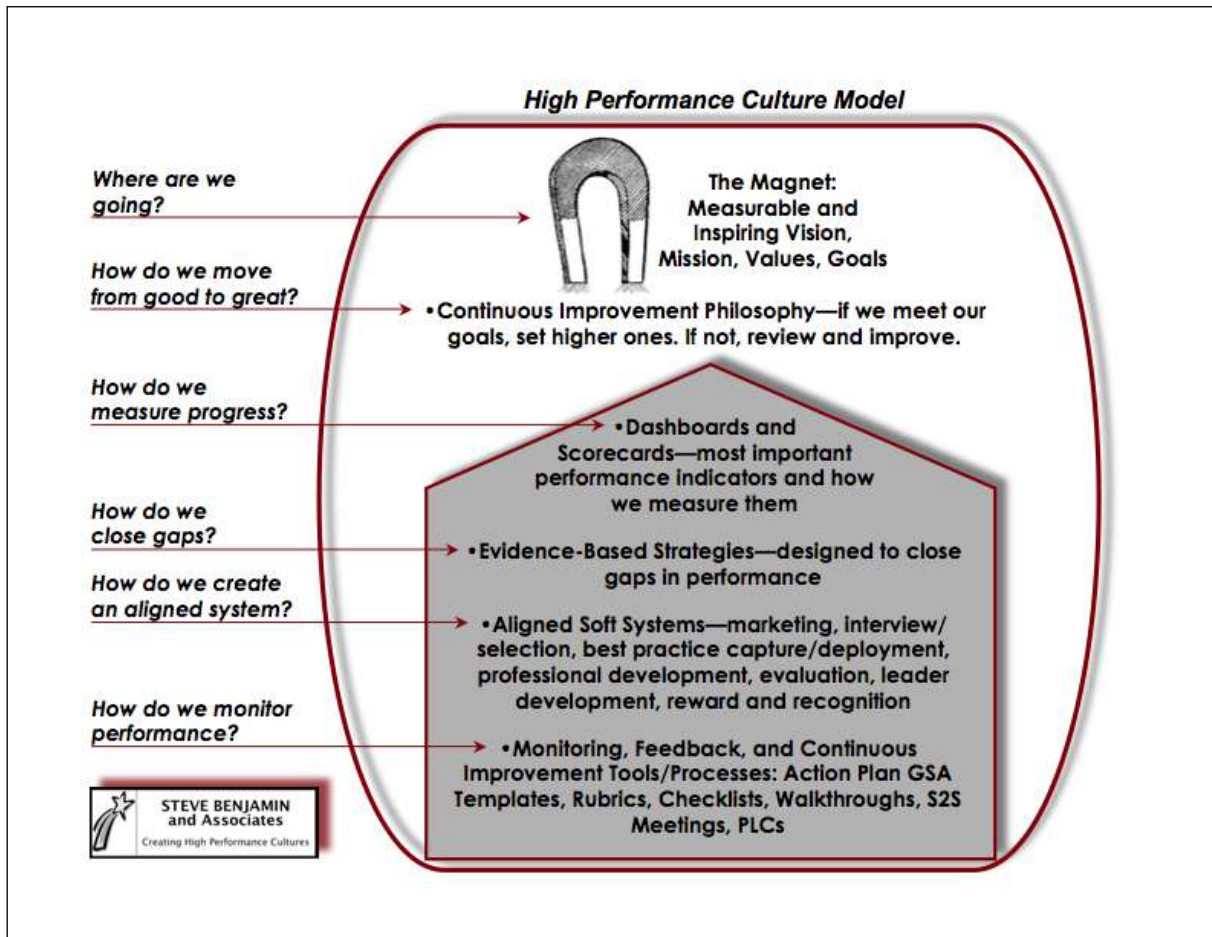
"I thought I would enter the change process through the culture door and then engage everyone in creating systems and structures that would support the culture. But I couldn't get traction, so we started to build the systems anyway, and it seemed that the culture started to shift as people saw that the changes worked" (quoted in Childress, 2009, p. 17).

We began to develop our 2020-2025 strategic plan in Februrary 2020 when the North Newton School Corporation Board of Trustees provided guidance regarding leadership values, vision, mission, and focus area targets.

Thank You,

Dr. Cathy Rowe, Superintendent

Figure 1. High Performance Culture Model

High Performance Culture Model

Where are we going?

How do we move from good to great?

How do we measure progress?

How do we close gaps?

How do we create an aligned system?

How do we monitor performance?

The Magnet: Measurable and Inspiring Vision, Mission, Values, Goals

• Continuous Improvement Philosophy—if we meet our goals, set higher ones. If not, review and improve.

• Dashboards and Scorecards—most important performance indicators and how we measure them

• Evidence-Based Strategies—designed to close gaps in performance

• Aligned Soft Systems—marketing, interview/selection, best practice capture/deployment, professional development, evaluation, leader development, reward and recognition

• Monitoring, Feedback, and Continuous Improvement Tools/Processes: Action Plan GSA Templates, Rubrics, Checklists, Walkthroughs, S2S Meetings, PLCs

STEVE BENJAMIN and Associates
Creating High Performance Cultures

The Core Drivers: Values, Vision, and Mission

Rosenthal and Masarech (2003) write that, "to gain competitive advantage and to achieve high performance, it is essential to understand the elements of high-performance cultures—in particular, the core drivers: organizational values, vision, and mission." High-performing leadership and management systems recognize that values, vision, and mission represent the "magnet" that can pull the various individuals, departments, processes, and systems into alignment.

Leadership Core Values. The North Newton Board of School Trustees reviewed leadership values drawn from several research-based lists (Effective Schools Research, Indiana Coalition of Quality Schools, national award-winning school corporations) to identify five **core values** that will guide the ongoing improvement of the NNSC learning system: Student Focus, Continuous Improvement, High Expectations, Evidence-Based Decision Making, and Accountability and Responsibility. We expect everyone in our learning organization to embrace these values. Table 1 provides a brief explanation of each as well as one or two examples that show how we intend to create a culture of practice around these values.

Table 1. Examples of Living and Embedding the NNSC Core Values

Value	Living and Embedding Examples
Student Focus: Truly putting students' interests first and making every decision based on what is best for our students, both now and in the future.	• Creating our long-term strategic plan to help us plan effectively for student needs • Implementing RTI, mastery teaching, mentors, and other structures that help all students succeed • Student councils • Implementing best instructional practices designed to engage students in the learning process
Continuous Improvement: As good as we are, we know that we can always achieve better results. We constantly try to find better ways of doing our work, and when we achieve our goals, we set higher targets.	• SIP professional development that is data-driven • Collaboration, communication, reflection, shared leadership • Every teacher is expected to use data to teach and reteach standards and achieve higher levels of mastery. • Our redesigned evaluation system emphasizes growth and improvement in implementation of best practices.
High Expectations: Our learning organization requires that we maintain high expectations for one another and for self.	• We have established 90+% goals in reading, state/national testing, and graduation rate. • High levels of student interaction and involvement
Evidence-Based Decision Making: We make decisions after careful consideration of the most compelling research and data analysis.	• We have developed our dashboard and scorecard—these list the most important district performance indicators. • Course scheduling, data analysis meetings, strengths-based leadership, school improvement plans • We have begun a Pathway To Success that lists research-based milestones/targets for students. • Teachers are using data to drive instruction, and support staff members use data to improve operations.
Accountability: Each person affiliated with the NNSC system, including students, employees, parents/family members, and community stakeholders share accountability for our performance results and for providing personal best effort in support of our goals.	• We continue to refine a district dashboard and will initiate school/classroom/department dashboards of key performance indicators and System-to-System talks that require all employees to discuss performance results at least three times yearly. S2S meetings are held with principals throughout the school year. • The teacher and administrator evaluation processes will lead to improved performance. • Data meeting and collaboration (data walls)

Vision. Reflecting our core values of high expectations, accountability, continuous improvement, and shared leadership, the vision of NNSC is:

North Newton School Corporation engages, eduates, and empower students for an ever-changing world.

We will become one of the highest performing corporations in Indiana by achieving exemplary results in each of our dashboard and scorecard performance indicators, and by

focusing attention on our Pathway to Success. We must ensure that all students learn to read and write at high levels, master the essential state and national standards, demonstrate good behavior and attendance, graduate, and transition successfully to productive post-secondary learning and work environments. Thus, our mission statements are:

Engage/Relevance: Engage with all stakeholders in relevance for preparing students for their future world.

Educate/Rigor: Educate with rigor through creating curiosity, challenging thiking, and high expectations to provide rewarding learning for all.

Empower/Relationships: Foster positive relationships in order to empower students to become self-directed learners and contributing, responsible citizens.

We have identified the following Measures of Success around each core value by establishing rigrous measures of performance and success. We have also identified a few targets within each area.

EDUCATE/RIGOR

High Expectations
- 90+% reading on or above grade level
- 90+% of students demonstrating success on state/national testing
- 100% graduation rate
- 90+% of students choose career paths and related academies at NNSC
- 100% highly effective staff
- Maintain cash balance

Student Focus
- Increase percentage of observations that demonstrate differentiated instruction
- Increase growth opportunities for learning

Accountability and Responsibility
- Increase K-12 aligned curriculum mapping
- Increase fiscal responsibility
- Increase use of data dashboards K-12
- All schools 'meet expectations' on state accountability system

Evidence-Based Decision Making
- Utilize and use of data dashboard as led by the superintendent

Continuous Improvement
- Increase student acheivement in state/national assessments

ENGAGE/RELEVANCE

High Expectations
- Increase graduation rate
- Improve scores on ILEARN, ISTEP+, IREAD, NWEA
- 100% of technology in classrooms
- 90% students on graduation/career path

Student Focus
- Increase opportunities for students to set learning goals
- Increase number/participation of students in college and career pathways

Accountability and Responsibility
- Increase use of data to chart student progress
- Increase effective use of all resources
- Increase use of student led data folders
- Develop list of communication strategies

Evidence-Based Decision Making
- Increase number of student led conferences
- Increase number of teacher led data discussions

Continuous Improvement
- Increase percentage of students in out-of-classroom activities

EMPOWER/RELATIONSHIPS

High Expectations
- Increase student/staff relationships to provide connections for career goals and future plans
- 100% engagement of all parents

Student Focus
- Increase counselor connections with students throughout K-12
- Include student service hours as a graduation requirement
- Utilize stakeholder surveys and observe an increase in participation over time

Accountability and Responsibility
- Decrease in discipline referrals
- Increase communication numbers with staff and community
- Utilize stakeholder surveys and observe an increase in participation over time

Evidence-Based Decision Making
- Plan a work session with board and community to discuss data
- Increase attendance at PTO meetings
- Allow adult students to participate in Graduation ceremony

Continuous Improvement
- Increase percentage of parent involvement through chartering PTO, meeting attendance
- Increase number of students volunteering

NNSC Dashboard and Scorecard

NNSC has created a district dashboard and scorecard. Both tools are intended to help the various levels of the system, as well as all employee and student groups, focus on the most important performance indicators—those results that we will strive to continuously improve until we reach our goal of becoming the highest performing school corporation in Indiana.

The NNSC **dashboard** (Table 2) includes performance indicators that have been judged to be the most important leading indicators of student learning success. The NNSC dashboard indicates which best practice measures have been selected to give us "continuous" information about our performance. We have selected assessments and measurement tools that provide data to the system on a daily, weekly, monthly, or quarterly basis.

We have begun the process of each school, classroom, and support department creating aligned dashboards, and we have begun to link the development of teacher and employee dashboards to our ongoing evaluation systems.

> *"After the leadership team has developed its dashboard, it is presented to the next level of the organization with this message: 'This is what we are watching. Design a dashboard that is appropriate for your work and that is aligned with and supports our dashboard.' This process continues until each level and department in the organization has designed its own dashboard. All dashboards are linked and aligned both vertically and horizontally and support the organization's strategy" (Huggett 1999).*

The NNSC **scorecard** (Table 3) contains several additional performance indicators that are also important to monitor, but which are "once a year" or "once a career" in nature (e.g., graduation rate, dropout rate, ISTEP+ and end-of-course assessment results). In addition, the scorecard includes non-student learning indicators such as satisfaction levels of employees, students, and stakeholders; financial results; and facility adequacy data.

Table 2. NNSC Dashboard

Key Performance Indicators	Leading Measures	Frequency
KPIs 1-5 represent our most important indicators for student learning. We will spend the bulk of our efforts on improving performance in these areas.		
1. Percent of K-12 students reading at or above grade level and/or showing progress by "growth" groups	K-8 NWEA (Screening)	
	Need to select diagnostic and progress monitoring tools for grades K-12. The following list reflects one district's selections: STAR, DIBELS, Running Records, Foutas and Pinnell	
	Oral Reading Fluency Assessment (Screening)	Quarterly
	Grades K-9: Oral Reading Fluency Assessment (Diagnostic)	As needed to diagnose status and track progress for students determined to require more intensive reading interventions
	Grades 1-12: IRI Burns/Roe (Diagnostic) (Logansport)	As needed to diagnose status and track progress for students determined to require more intensive reading interventions Quarterly write to common prompts, plus additional use of 6 Traits Rubric in content area classrooms
	Grades K-12: 6 Simple Rubric plus "argument" rubrics	As needed to diagnose status and track progress for students determined to require more intensive reading interventions Quarterly write to common prompts, plus additional use of 6 Traits Rubric in content area classrooms Quarterly
	K-8 NWEA (Screening)	
2. Percent of K-12 students mastering state/common core academic standards in writing/language arts and/or showing progress by "growth" groups	Grades K-12: NNSC Language Arts Essential Words Mastery Checks	Quarterly
	Grades K-12: Language Arts Standards-Aligned Common Assessments	Monthly
	Grades K-12: Mastery Reteaching Assessments	Weekly, biweekly as determined by teacher/data

	Grades K-12: Math Essential Words Mastery Checks	Quarterly
3. Percent of K-12 students mastering state academic standards in math and/or showing progress by "growth" groups	Grades K-8: Math Facts Assessments	Daily, weekly as determined by teacher/data
	Grades K-12: Math Standards-Aligned Common Assessments	Monthly
	Grades K-12: Mastery Reteaching Assessments	Weekly, biweekly as determined by teacher/data
	K-12 NWEA(screening)	Three times a year
	Science and Social Studies Essential Words Mastery Checks	Quarterly
4. Percent of K-12 students mastering state academic standards in science and social studies and/or showing progress by "growth" groups	Content and Fine Arts Standards-Aligned Common Assessments	Monthly
	Mastery Reteaching Assessments	Weekly, biweekly as determined by teacher/data
	Science and Social Studies Standards-Aligned Common Assessments	Monthly
	Mastery Reteaching Assessments	Weekly, biweekly as determined by teacher/data
	Mastery Reteaching Assessments	Weekly, biweekly as determined by teacher/data
5. Percent of K-12 students mastering state academic standards in all other subject areas and/or showing progress by "growth" groups	Content and Fine Arts Essential Words Mastery Checks	Quarterly
		Weekly
KPIs 6-8 represent additional indicators in support of student learning.		
6. Percent attendance	Tardies	Daily, Weekly
	Expulsion Report	Weekly Quarterly
7. Percent of students with appropriate/inappropriate behavior	Extra/Co-curricular Activities Report	Weekly
	Service Learning Report	Quarterly
	Office Referrals Report	Quarterly
	Suspension Report	
	Track participation through sign-ups and rosters	Semester

8. Percent of students involved in extra-/co-curricular and service activities	Rosters of students engaged in activities	Semester

Performance results linked to the NNSC Dashboard are reviewed multiple times each year during System-to-System (S2S) Talks that occur between the Superintendent and building leaders; building leaders and faculty and staff; and teachers with students. We expect that students will lead their own S2S talks with parents and family members during student-led conferences. Annually, the district reviews (with appropriate directors and building leaders) additional data contained in the scorecard (Table 3). We believe that excellent results in our **dashboard performance indicators** will result in improved **scorecard results**.

The following display (Table 3) provides information about the current NNSC scorecard. We refer to these performance indicators as "lagging data" because they are only available for review once each year. NNSC reviews our results in these areas to ensure that our strategies and continuous improvement efforts are resulting in higher performance.

Table 3. NNSC Scorecard

Student Learning Outcomes	Frequency	Who Uses Data for Improvement
ILEARN Pass/Pass Plus Rates and Growth Data	Annual	Superintendent, Principals, Teachers, Counselors
ECA Results (by AYP groups)	Annual	
IREAD Pass Rate	Annual	
AP Scores	Annual	
SAT Scores	Annual	
Percent of Students on Target to Graduate with Cohort	Semester	
Number of Credits Recovered	Semester	
Graduation Rate	Annual	
Dropout Rate	Annual	
Number of Dual Credits Received	Annual	
Number of Certifications Received	Annual	
Percent of Graduates Enrolling/ Graduating from Post-Secondary Institutions, Percent Employed	Annual	
Student and Stakeholder-Focused Results		
End-of-year Attendance Rate	Annual	Superintendent, Principals, Teachers, Counselors, Directors
Student/Parent Satisfaction Results	Annual	
Overall Student Enrollment	Annual	
Behavior Data (Expulsions, Suspensions, Referrals)	Annual	
Volunteer Hours	Annual	
Number of Community Partners	Annual	
Budgetary, Financial, and Market Results		
Audit Findings	Annual	Superintendent, Director of Business, Principals
Percent of Budget Allocated to Instruction	Annual	
Energy Savings	Annual	
Grant Dollars Received	Annual	
Transfers In	Annual	
Workforce Engagement, Satisfaction, and Development		
Teacher Turnover Rate	Annual	Superintendent, Director of Business, Director of Technology, Principals
Employee Attendance Rate	Annual	
Percentage Highly Effective, Effective Staff	Annual	
Employee Satisfaction Results	Annual	
Number of Professional Development Hours per Employee	Annual	
Leadership Outcomes		
Ethical Violations	Annual	Board of Trustees, Superintendent, Principals, Directors, Teachers, All Employees
Compliance Results (drills, reports)	Annual	
Satisfaction with Leadership	Annual	
Percent Strategies and Action Plans Deployed According to Plan	Annual	

North Newton Schools Pathway To Success

We have reviewed the research on "predictors" of success in keeping with our core value of "evidence-based decision making." As a result, we have identified a number of key milestone performance indicators that students, parents and family members, teachers, and administrators must monitor if each student is to progress smoothly through the NNSC learning system. This Pathway To Success is continually being updated based on new research and learning.

Table 4. NNSC Pathway To Success

Key Indicator	Age/Grade	Evidence Base
Phonemic Awareness levels are the number 1 indicator of future success in reading	Kindergarten or Grade 1	International Reading Association; Phonological awareness. Based on a massive body of research (Burgess, 2006; Lonigan, 2006), phonological awareness is a critical precursor, correlate, and predictor of children's reading achievement. Discriminating units of language (i.e., words, segments, phonemes) is strongly linked to successful reading (National Reading Panel Report, 2000). It is, however, as described above, both a cause and a consequence of vocabulary development and learning to read (Ehri & Roberts, 2006) Captured at http://www.everychildreadytoread.org/project-history%09/literature-review-2010 On October 23, 2012
Word Identification Fluency (WIF), Phonological Awareness, and Letter Knowledge. Of these, WIF has been demonstrated to be one of the strongest predictors of reading ability	Grade 1	Compton, Fuchs, Fuchs & Bryant, 2006; Fuchs, Fuchs, & Compton, 2004; Jenkins, Hudson, and Johnson, 2007;
An early understanding of math concepts is most powerful predictor of later school success. Other predictors included language, reading and attention skills.	Pre-school (Primary grades?)	Duncan, G.J, et. Al. (2007). School Readiness and Later Achievement. Developmental Psychology, Vol. 43, No. 6
Oral Reading Fluency, Word Identification Fluency, and Word Knowledge (vocabulary) appear to be moderately/strongly correlated with success in reading achievement	Grades 2-3	Verbal abilities are consistently the best predictors of later reading achievement (Scarborough, 2001). What Works Clearinghouse, *Improving Adolescent Literacy* (2008) identifies vocabulary (word knowledge) as one of the most important factors contributing to literacy. Oral language comprehension is a good predictor of reading comprehension. *Carroll*, 1977; *Ladd*, 1970; *Stanovich*,

		Cunningham & Freeman, 1984. Extent of oral language is highly correlated with later reading proficiency. *Bishop & Adams*, 1990; *Butler, Marsh, Sheppard & Sheppard*, 1985; *Pikulski & Tobin*, 1989; *Scarborough*, 1989; *Share, Jorm, MacLean & Mathews*, 1984. At 2nd grade, WIF remains a strong predictor (Foorman, Francis, Fletcher, SchaFSChneider, & Mehta, 1998). Captured at http://www.rtinetwork.org/essential/assessment/screening/screening-for-reading-problems-in-grades-1-through-3 on October 23, 2012.
Passing IREAD	Grade 3	Indiana Department of Education
Math computation fluency (ultimately fluency seems to be defined as 1-1.5 seconds per problem)	Grade K-9 with appropriate benchmarks identified along the way	Crawford (2009); "By the end of grade 2, students should know the basic addition and subtraction combinations, should be fluent in adding two-digit numbers, and should have methods for subtracting two-digit numbers. At the grades 3–5 level, as students develop the basic number combinations for multiplication and division, they should also develop reliable algorithms to solve arithmetic problems efficiently and accurately. These methods should be applied to larger numbers and practiced for fluency (NCTM, 2003, p. 35).
Fractions and division fluency as strong predictors of Algebra success	Grades 3-9	Analyses of large, nationally-representative, longitudinal data sets from the U.S. and the U.K. revealed that elementary school students' knowledge of fractions and division uniquely predict those students' knowledge of algebra and overall mathematics achievement in high school, five or six years later, even after statistically controlling for other types of mathematical knowledge, general intellectual ability, working memory, and family income and education. Siegler, Duncan,, Davis-Kean, Duckworth, Claessens, Engel, Susperreguy, and Chen (captured at http://www.psy.cmu.edu/~siegler/Siegler-etal-inpressPsySci.pdf on October 24, 2012
Attendance falling below 90-95% range; failing grades; and poor student behavior linked with dropping out	Middle and High School Grades	The key indicators that researchers have identified as indicative of who is mot likely to drop out are poor grades in core subjects, low attendance, failure to be promoted, and disengagement in the classroom, including behavioral problems. (National High School Center, 2007)
SAT score of 1650+	Grades 11-12	See Montgomery County Maryland Public Schools Pathway indicator for SAT and http://collegeapps.about.com/od/sat/f/goodsaFSCore.htm

Focus Area 1: Educate/Rigor: High Student and District Performance
CEOs: Superintendent, Principals, Directors

Target 1: 90+% K-12 students are reading on or above grade level

Strategy 1.1: Provide professional development in the five dimensions of reading for all teachers.

Evidence in Support of Strategy: Literacy (reading and writing) is at the heart of all learning and may explain as much as 50-67% of the cause of success in state testing in all subjects including math, science, and social studies. The Turnaround Schools Literature discusses the centrality of literacy and the importance of high quality instruction. Herman, Dawson, Dee, Greene, Maynard, Redding, and Darwin (2008) suggest that we should maintain a consistent focus on improving instruction. Hershbery (2005) has found that good instruction is 15-20 times more powerful than family background, income, race, and gender. Joyce, Bruce and Showers (2002) have found that coaching of teachers that takes place in the classroom led to 95% of participants able to transfer those skills to the work setting as opposed to 20% of participants with demonstration outside the classroom. Cryan (1992) reports that "overall, students who attend full-day kindergartens manifest significantly greater achievement than students who attend half-day kindergarten." Improvement in the use of formative assessments for learning has shown significant potential to increase the effectiveness of teaching and learning in literacy" has been reported by Black and William (1998). Reynolds et. Al. (2002) found that the most consistent predictor of children's academic achievement are parent expectations of the child's academic attainment, while Dauber and Epstein (1993) found that parents want to know more about how to help their children learn.

Action Steps	Who	When	Status
1. All teachers will become expert in the elementary or secondary IDOE Literacy Frameworks and be observed implementing instruction that is aligned with these best practices.	Superintendent,Principals, Teachers, Dept. Heads-JSHS	Fall 2021 ongoing	
2. Provide ongoing Indiana Acadmemic Standards training especially linked with instructional shifts (DoK)	Superintendent, Principals, Teachers	Spring 2020 ongoing	Completed in Math and Social Studies mapping sessions
3. Utilize In-house experts to provide mentoring and professional development	Superintendent, Principals, Teachers	2020 ongoing	Started in 2020 and ongoing
4. Review resources to ensure that students are provided with plenty of high-interest, leveled reading materials.	Principals, Adoption Committee, Teachers, librarians	Spring 2022	
5. Investigate teacher resource needs (access to free reading materials, training in Close Reading, etc.).	Principals, Adoption Committee, Teachers, librarians	Fall 2021	
6. All teachers will use high quality reading assessment data to identify students' needs and plan instruction accordingly. Use short cycle assessments.	Principals, Teachers	Fall 2021	
7. Interpret and read assessment data; share assessment data with all stakeholders	Superintendent, Principals, Teachers, Board	2019-ongoing	Principals and superintendent maintain data dashboards as of

			2020-2021SY
8. Investigate options for remediation in reading comprehension (use Spartan Time possibly), especially at the secondary level.	Superintendent, Principals, teachers, Title 1	Summer 2021	

Target 2: 90+% of K-12 students demonstrate success on state and national tests-			

Strategy 2.1: Each teacher follows North Newton/IDOE Standard aligned curriculum maps and high quality units of instruction linked to those maps; uses data from mastery assessments to inform reteaching for higher mastery.

Evidence in Support of Strategy: Effective Schools Research states that for each loop of reteaching, we can expect a 25% gain in student achievement (Lezotte and Pepperl, 1999); Goldberg and Cole (2002) found that achievement gaps can be closed by 20 points and overall student achievement can approach 90+% for all groups; Marzano (2002) indicates that the most important factor at the school level that impacts student achievement is the guaranteed and viable curriculum; and Benjamin (2009) has found that aligning the taught and tested curriculum with state standards, identifying essential skills, use of interim assessments of mastery, and reteaching contribute to higher student mastery levels.

Action Steps	Who	When	Status
1. Ensure all teachers are aware and know how to access IDOE assessment guidance documents and instruction reflects these blueprints.	Principals	2020	Reviewed in Math and Social Studies mapping
3. Ensure high quality instruction in each classroom meeting the needs of all learners (best practices, engaging instruction, differentiation, universal design for learning, posting of agenda, etc.)	Principals, Teachers, Dept. Heads	2020 ongoing	
4. Engage in mastery teaching utilizing assessment data to make instructional changes. Utilize 8 Step Process, short cycle assessments.	Superintendent, Principals, Teachers	2021 ongoing	
5. Data dashboards at superintendent/board; principal/superintendent; teacher/principal and student/teacher levels; conduct S2S meetings across system	Superintendent, Principals, Board, teachers, students	2020-2021 ongoing	Superintendent and principals maintain data dashboards; Some teachers also maintain
6. Complete a school board approved special education handbook equipped to provide teachers (general education and special education) with tools to help all students.	Superintendent, Principals, special education teachers, CSS	Fall 2025	
7. Develop a comprehensive K-12 Literacy initiative/roadmap grounded in research and best practices.	Superintendent, Principals	Fall 2021	

Target 3: 100% graduation rate			

Strategy 3.1: Monitor early warning signs (attendance, behavior, failing grades)

Evidence in Support of Strategy: Dropping out has been described as a "slow process of disengagement from school" (Bridgeland, Dilulio, and Morison, 2006). Willms (2003) found that there is "a high prevalence of students who are disaffected from school" (p. 53) and that "schools with high levels of engagement tended to have high levels of literacy skills" (p. 56). Students who took the High School Survey of Student Engagement (2009) voiced three common school-related factors that caused them to consider dropping out (and nearly 20% have thought about dropping out): "I didn't

like the school" (50%), "I didn't see the value in the work I was being asked to do" (42%), and "I didn't like the teachers" (39%). Review Approaches to Dropout Prevention: Heeding Early Warning Signs with Appropriate Interventions (National High School Center, 2007); Putting Middle Grades Students on the Graduation Path (Balfanz, 2007); Identifying Indicators of Risk/Success in Seattle Middle and High Schools (Celio, 2011).

Action Steps	Who	When	Status
2. Craft individual interventions and contracts with at-risk students.	Principals, Teachers, Guidance Counselors	Fall 2022	
3. Assign mentors/business partners.	Principals, Guidance Counselors, Teachers	Fall 2022	
4. Ensure a system for credit recovery including Edmentum seats utilized during school and after school and in the summer	High School principal, high school counselor	2020-2021	Currently provided but could be expanded
6. Safety nets for special education students at risk of dropping out (mandatory case conference) and regular education students (possible superintendent required conference)	Superintendent, Principal, Guidance Counselor	2020-Ongoing	

Target 4: 90+% of students choose career paths and related academies at NNSC			

Strategy 4.1: Institute maximum number of academies following state guidelines and student interests.			

Evidence in Support of Strategy: Input research

Action Steps	Who	When	Status
3. Survey students regarding their career pathway interests (Career Explorer, free materials, Naviance)	Principals, School Counselors	2022-2023	
4. Research what other high schools are doing regarding pathways and academies (see Beech Grove, others).	Principal, High School Counselor	Ongoing	
5. CTE teachers provide yearly marketing campaign and disseminate information to students about their courses.	CTE teachers, principal, Indian Trails	2021-2022	
6. New courses and pathways explored annually.	Principal, High School Counselor	2021-2022	Technology, CNA class

Target 5: District to Maintain 15% cash balance in Education Fund			

Strategy 5.1: Funding education for community, board, administration on an on-going basis			

Evidence in Support of Strategy: Input Research

Action Steps	Who	When	Status
1. Superintendent and Business manager to provide informational sessions to public and staff	Superintendent, Director of Finance	2021-2022	Annually during budget preparation, ongoing; spring
2. Continual review of purchase orders, spending by	Superintendent, Director		Ongoing review by

superintendent and business office to ensure alignment with district and school goals and initiatives	of Finance; Board		Superintendent, Director of Business
3.Review of high expense utilities, other expenses; elimination of subscriptions no longer needed; evaluation of all staffing positions as openings arise			Ongoing review by Superintendent, Director of Business

1. **Target 6: 100% highly effective staff**			
Strategy 6.1: Provide high quality workshop, online, and job-embedded professional development that is aligned with NNSC best practices.			
Evidence in Support of Strategy: Wright, Horn, and Sanders (1997) established that more can be done to improve education by improving the effectiveness of teachers than any other factor. Cron and Rigden (2002) reported the results of a study of 7 urban districts and found that the only reform that clearly resulted in increased student achievement was clear instructional expectations supported by extensive professional development over a period of several years. Wong and Wong (2010) state that it is teachers and their practices, not curriculum programs or a change in school structure that improves student learning.			
Action Steps	**Who**	**When**	**Status**
2. Revise schedules and responsibilities to provide all categories of staff regular time for collaboration and continuous improvement.	Superintendent, Principals	Ongoing	Zoom meetings elementary, elementary planning times, release time
Strategy 6.2: Review motivation levels of current NNSC employees to determine key motivators and de-motivators with an eye to increasing motivational levels of employees.			
Evidence in Support of Strategy: Stolovitch (2004); Pink (2009). Society for Human Resource Management (2010). "In today's marketplace, where companies seek a competitive edge, motivation is key for talent retention and performance. No matter the economic environment, the goal is to create a workplace that is engaging and motivating, where employees want to stay, grow and contribute their knowledge, experience and expertise."			
Action Steps	**Who**	**When**	**Status**
Target 7: Staff attendance rate meets or exceeds student attendance rate			
Strategy 7.1: identify causes of select cases of poor attendance including policies, motivation levels, job characteristics.			
Evidence in Support of Strategy: M. Michael Markowich in a summary of an article he wrote for the September 1993 issue of *Small Business Reports*. "Most sick leave policies foster a 'use it or lose it' mind-set, and employees feel entitled to a certain number of sick days." In a survey of 5,000 companies conducted by Commerce Clearing House Inc. (CCH Inc.) unscheduled absences cost small businesses, at that time, $62,636 a year, on average, in lost productivity, sick time, and replacement costs. Indeed, absenteeism can take a financial toll on a small business (or a multinational company, for that matter) in several different respects. The most obvious cost is in the area of sick leave benefits—provided that the business offers such benefits—but there are significant hidden costs as well. The *SOHO Guidebook* cites the following as notable hidden cost factors associated with absenteeism: Lost productivity of the absent employee; Overtime for other employees to fill in; Decreased overall productivity of those employees; Any temporary help costs incurred; Possible loss of business or dissatisfied customers; Problems with employee morale.			
Action Steps	**Who**	**When**	**Status**
1. Review North Newton policies and those of other corporations	Superintendent,	Ongoing	

regarding staff attendance.	Principals		
2. Link positive recognition and reward programs with initiatives to improve attendance.	Superintendent, Princials	Ongoing, 2022-2023	

Target 8: Maintain a 3-month operating balance while devoting 65% of expenditures to instruction thus ensuring that North Newton School Corporation will sustain financial stability in all school funds from 2020-2030 while recognizing that instruction is the most important priority

Strategy 8.1: Benchmark high performing school corporations and review best practice documents in order to identify powerful methods for increasing the percentage of expenditures devoted to instruction.

Evidence in Support of the Strategy: Increasingly, the relationship between spending and student achievement is taking center stage in education debates across the country. The No Child Left Behind Act is pressuring educators to achieve annual gains in their students' performance. School district budgets are being stressed by rising operating costs, particularly in light of the economic strain imposed by the recent hurricanes, elevated oil prices, and rising pension and health care costs for district staff. Consequently, policymakers, "Taxpayers, and district leaders are seeking ways to maximize the impact of every dollar spent on public education and thus improve their educational "return on resources." (Standard and Poor's, 2005). Indiana schools spent an average of 58% of their available funds on instruction during the 2008-09 school year, while the Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation spent 65.3 percent.

Action Steps	Who	When	Status
1. Conduct a review of the literature and identify benchmark organizations that have increased the percentage of school fund expenditures devoted to supporting instruction, staffing, maintenance, busing, and other financial needs in order to identify potential methods of increasing efficiency and effectiveness throughout the district.	Sup, Director of Business, Principals	2020-2021	IASBO, principals manage their budgets which help ensure
3. Generate and monitor all fund reports for monthly revenues/expenditures via accounting software system.	Superintendent, Director of Business, Principals, Board	2021-2022 ongoing	Currently doing
4. Evaluate progress towards meeting percentage of cash surplus balance in identified funds (10%, EF, OF, Rainy Day)	Superintendent, Director of Business, Board	2021-2022 ongoing	Currenlty doing

Strategy 8.2: Seek external grants (USDOE, IDOE, private foundations, local businesses and faith-based organizations, etc.) to support instructional programs, personnel, resources, and activities.

Evidence in Support of Strategy: Building effective partnerships is one method for generating support (financial, materials, people/mentors) for NNSC (Baldrige Education Criteria for Performance Excellence, 2011).

Action Steps	Who	When	Status
1. Continue to utilize opportunities to seek grant opportunities for NNSC (those targeted at increasing funds for instruction, e.g., technology, professional development).	Superintendent, Principals, Teacher, Other Staff with Permission	Now and ongoing	Limited now, but will be encouraged, promoted
3. Update Board and Superintendent on grants submitted and	Supt. Principals	Now and	Currently approved by

		ongoing	Board

Target 9: Each NNSC building receives Energy Star certification

Strategy 9.1: Benchmark high performing school corporations like the ones mentioned below and review best practice documents in order to identify powerful energy saving recommendations (HVAC, transportation, etc.) that are easy to implement.

Evidence in Support of Strategy: Davenport Community School District (IA) has been able to reduce costs per student to $88.46 per school year, compared to the national average of $181.53. They have saved more than $1 million over 3 years. Seaford School District (DE) implemented an energy management plan that has reduced its energy use by 16% annually, saving nearly 82 million kBtus of energy. Nearly 2,000 schools have earned EPA's Energy Star label for superior energy efficiency, including some in Oregon's Gresham-Barlow School District, which cut energy use by 48 percent. In one year, the district saved more than $1.3 million in utility costs, the equivalent of 24 fulltime teachers' salaries. Council Rock, a school district in Pa., has reduced its energy use by 40 percent since 2005, mostly through improved operations and maintenance of building systems. In a three-year period, the district saved more than $4.7 million.

Action Steps	Who	When	Status
1. Study resources such as *Schools: An Overview of Energy Use and Energy Efficiency Opportunities.* Benchmark the above-mentioned school districts and others in order to develop a list of actions that can be implemented easily, and implement.	Superintendent, Director of Business	Now and ongoing	Performance Services currently helps with this

Focus Area 2: Engage/Relevance: Safety, Security, Service **CEOs: Superintendent, Principals, Athletic Director**

Target 1: 100% of students, staff and parents report that our schools are safe from physical and emotional harm, including bullying

Strategy 1.1: Update school and district crisis plans and behavior policies.

Evidence in Support of Strategy: Input research

Action Steps	Who	When	Status
1. Work with community fire, first responders to coordinate safety plans.	Principals, School Safety trained adminstrators	Annuallly, early in school year 2021 ongoing	
2. Conduct mock drills.	Principals, School Safety trained administators	Monthly and semester based; 2021	
3. Provide staff and student information about social media, alcohol/drug use/abuse (Every 15 Minutes, internet safety, alcohol/drug education, vaping curriculum).	Principals, Teachers, student groups, Newton County Drug Coaltion (to help)	2021 ongoing	
4. Engage in administrative Table Top activities	Principals, School	Monthly and	

| | Safety trained administators | semester based; 2021 | |

Strategy 1.2: Investigate infrastructure improvements (cameras, electronic locks, other).			

Evidence in Support of Strategy: Input research

Action Steps	Who	When	Status
1. Complete a walkthrough of all facilities and grounds to review lighting, appropriate signage, fencing, and make needed improvements.	Superintendent, Director of Maintenance, Principals	Prior to start of school; continually; 2020	

Strategy 1.3: Implement PBIS principles.			

Evidence in Support of Strategy: The implementation of School-wide Positive Behavior Supports (SW-PBS) makes the school environment more conducive to learning and results in significantly higher test scores and academic achievement when all elements of SW-PBS are implemented with fidelity to the model (Eber, Esperanza, Horner, Nakasato, et al. (2009).

Action Steps	Who	When	Status
1. Provide training and inservice for teachers in principles of PBIS.	Superintendent, Principals, trainer	Teacher inservices; 2021 ongoing	
2. Ensure PBIS principles are reflected in behavior policies.	Superintedent, Board,	2022 reflected in handbook	

Strategy 1.4: Teach Social-Emotional Curriculum and implement Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) practices in all schools.			

Evidence in Support of Strategy: Input research

Action Steps	Who	When	Status
1. Second Step implemented K-8 all schools	Principals, Teachers	2020 ongoing	Purchased 2020; partially implemented
2. Review school discipline policies for alignment with SEL best practices	Superintendent, Principals, Teachers	2020 ongoing	
3. Provide high quality professional development in SEL	Superintendent, Principals	2020 ongoing	

Target 2: 100% of students participate in activities that lead to healthy lifestyles			

Strategy 2.1: Create/review/update Wellness Policy.			

Evidence in Support of Strategy: Input research

Action Steps	Who	When	Status
1. Update Wellness plan/policy, create a Wellness committee.	Superintendent,	Spring 2022	

	Principals, Committee Food Service Director		
2. Reflect new policy in school handbooks.	Superintendent, Principals, Committee, Food Service Director	Fall 2022- Winter 2022	
5. Review "A La Carte" offerings	Superintendent, Principals, Committee, Food Service Director	Spring 2022	

Strategy 2.2: Increase physical activity/education consideration across all classes.

Evidence in Support of Strategy: Input research

Action Steps	Who	When	Status
1. Educate teachers and students regarding positive effects of increased activity.	Principals, Wellness Committee, PE teachers,	Spring 2022	
2. Increase course offerings/including in class for Junior/Senior high students (Zumba, body pump, body combat, yoga).	Principals, Wellness Committee, PE Teachers, PE Depatment head, health teachers	Spring 2022	

Strategy 2.3: Ensure high quality learning opportunities for students regarding making good choices (drugs, sex, alcohol, social media, vaping).

Evidence in Support of Strategy: Input research

Action Steps	Who	When	Status
1. Review course and unit offerings to ensure adequate coverage.	Principals, PE teachers, Heatlh teachers	Fall 2021	
2. Schedule motivational/informative speakers/educators to talk with students and parents.	Principals	Ongoing	
3. Implement district-wide character education program, cohesive plan of shared expectations, language.	Superintendent, Principals	2021-2022	Started 2020; Elementary currently does

Target 3: 100% of students participate in at least one service learning project yearly (peer tutoring, Pop Tops for Riley, singing at nursing home, helping, adopting a class, peer mentoring)

Strategy 3.1: Ensure that all NNSC students engage in service projects that meet the needs of our community while providing meaningful learning experiences for our students.

Evidence in Support of Strategy: See the extensive research on the value of service learning (Sudeck and Hartman, July 2009, Service Learning: The

Power to Inspire, Educational Leadership.			
Action Steps	**Who**	**When**	**Status**
1. Gather information from parents, staff, community, students about desirable student learning projects.	Principals, Teachers, Counselors	Fall 2021, Annual	
2. Assign types of projects appropriate for each level K-12/Ask JH/HS clubs to do at least one leadership activity, Grade levels select activity, discuss during grade level meetings	Principals, Teachers, Counselors	Winter 2021, Annual	
3. Assign projects/recognize students and sponsor for their support.	Principals, Teachers, Counselors, School Board	>Project takes place; annually	

Target 4: 100% of classrooms provide technology resources consistent with 21st Century needs

Strategy 4.1: Create a technology committee to research and review best practices for supporting the needs of an organization through the use of technology from the classroom level, department level and administrative level based on current/future needs and financial/personnel resources to support those practices.

Evidence in Support of the Strategy: 21st Century Classroom reported key findings that in order to create and sustain an educational experience that prepares students to succeed in today's classroom and on tomorrow's college campus, faculty must have technology that includes access to the Internet and teacher computing devices and LCD projectors." ISTE members have monitored research on the effectiveness of education technology on student outcomes for more than 20 years, and one convincing trend has emerged: when implemented appropriately, the integration of technology into instruction has a strong positive impact on student achievement" (International Society for Technology in Education, 2008). On average, students who use computers in classrooms score as much as 14 percentile points higher, they learn more in less time, and enjoy school more (Schacter, 1999). When you put inquiry-based learning and true technology integration together there's a synergy that really boosts students' learning (Brannigan, 2002). Corporation. Title I Distinguished Schools Program.

Action Steps	**Who**	**When**	**Status**
1. Establish a Technology Committee or other structure who can demonstrate and teach technology integration.	Superintendent, Principals	2021-2022	
2. Conduct a review of the research for best practices for supporting classroom instruction using technology in the classroom.	Principals, Dept. Heads		
2. Review costs and funding sources for the implementation of the necessary technology infrastructure, hardware and software costs.	Superintendent, Principals	Ongoing	
4. Evaluate the implementation process and schedule for installation and upgrades to the district wide technology program.	Technology Committee, Principals, Superintendent	2021-2022	
5. Link plans and new learning with professional development system mentioned in Focus Area 4.	Committee, Principals, Superintendent	2021-2022	

Focus Area 3: Empower/Relationships: Communication, Partnerships, Student Engagement

CEO's: Board, Superintendent, Principals

Target 1: 100% students report being engaged in school activities

Stategy 1: Service requirement delineated at each grade

Evidence in Support of Strategy: Input research

Action Steps	Who	When	Status
1.1 Explore and implement graduation service requirement	Board, Superintendent, HS Principal, HS counselor	2021-2022 explore; implement 2022-2023	
1.2 Develop tiered school service model K-12	Board, Superintendent, Principals, counselors	HS by 22-23 JH by 23-24 EL by 24-25	
1.3 All students tied to one school activity, club or event	Principals, Coaches, Community	2021-2025 phased in	

Target 2: 100% of parents are actively involved in the education of their child(ren) for example: attending P/T conference, checking grades, assisting with homework, attending school functions

Strategy 2.1: Improved school/teacher communication with families.

Evidence in Support of Strategy: Input research

Action Steps	Who	When	Status
1. Ensure that all buildings have regular newsletter communication with parents.	Superintendent, Principals	2020-2021	
2. Teachers update information weekly/Google Classroom.	Prinicpals, Teachers	2021-2022	
3. Provide incentives for parents to attend (free babysitting, food, gift cards.) Could use NHS to babysit	Principals, PTO, Boosters,	Fall 2021 start	
4. Explore PTO at Junior High/High School levels	Principal, Teachers, parents,	Fall 2021	
5. Provide parent training on accessing PowerSchool, checking grades (Open House/Meet the Teacher, Virtual How to)	Principals, Teachers, students	Spring 2021 ongoing	

Strategy 2.2: Parents provide support for student learning at home.

Evidence in Support of Strategy: Input research			
Action Steps	**Who**	**When**	**Status**
1. Communicate with parents the expectations and methods by which they can provide learning support at home (homework) including establishing quiet space, time for study, checking with students about homework/school, setting high expectations for children. (Could use Facebook, website, newsletters)	Prinicpals, Teachers	2021 ongoing	
2. Explore other resources to bridge lack of internet (mifi's is one example we do, but funding runs out)	Principals,	2021 ongoing	

Strategy 2.3: Review homework procedures and expectations.

Evidence in Support of Strategy: Input research			
Action Steps	**Who**	**When**	**Status**
1. Review other schools' practices related to homework and grading.	Principals, Teachers	2021 ongoing	
2. Research current research, trends, and practices related to homework and grading.	Principals, Teachers	2021 ongoing	
3. Revise homework/schoolwork expectations once studies have been completed.	Principals, Teachers	Fall 2021	

Target 3: 100% of staff and board members hold high expectations for one another, students and outcomes

Strategy 3.1:   School Board reports given by administration and board follow general outline

Evidence in Support of Strategy: Input research			
Action Steps	**Who**	**When**	**Status**
1. Administrator reports regularly highlight data progress	Superintendent, Princiapls, Board	2020	Currently done periodically
2. Board and administrator reports review school improvement and district improvement goals, strategies and progress four times per year	Superintendent, Principals, Board	2020	
3. Promote board meetings and news through various forms (YouTube, etc.)	Student Media students, Admin Asst.	2020	

Target 4: Maintain at least 10 business/community partnerships at each school

Strategy 4.1: Create, Maintain and Sustain Community Partnerships

Evidence in Support of Strategy: Input research

Action Steps	Who	When	Status
1. Catalog current business/community partnerships.	Principals (Secretaries and PTO can assist)	Fall 2021	
3. Identify additional partners in and out of community, approach them.	Superintendent, Principals	2021-2022	
4. Recognize community helpers (volunteers, mentors, coaches, etc.) yearly	Superintendent, Principals, Board	Annually evaluate	Could be recognized as events happen
2. Communicate with parrternships regularly	Board, Superintendent, Principals	Annually evaluate	Currently do
3. Recognize partners at the board level (Board hosts a meal for partners) and thanks them, discuss how they can provide ongoing support for our strategic plan.	Board, Superintendent, Principals	May 2022	