

Turner Public Schools

Strategic Planning Process

2021

Overview

The Turner Public School District (Turner Public Schools) 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, Turner Public Schools 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 Turner Public Schools moves into the future. This strategic plan is intended to help Turner Public Schools in focusing its resources in a manner that will best benefit the children enrolled in Turner Public Schools.

The Turner Board of Trustees, Staff Leadership Team, and faculty 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, Turner Public Schools works with consultants from the Montana School Boards School to help facilitate the strategic planning process.

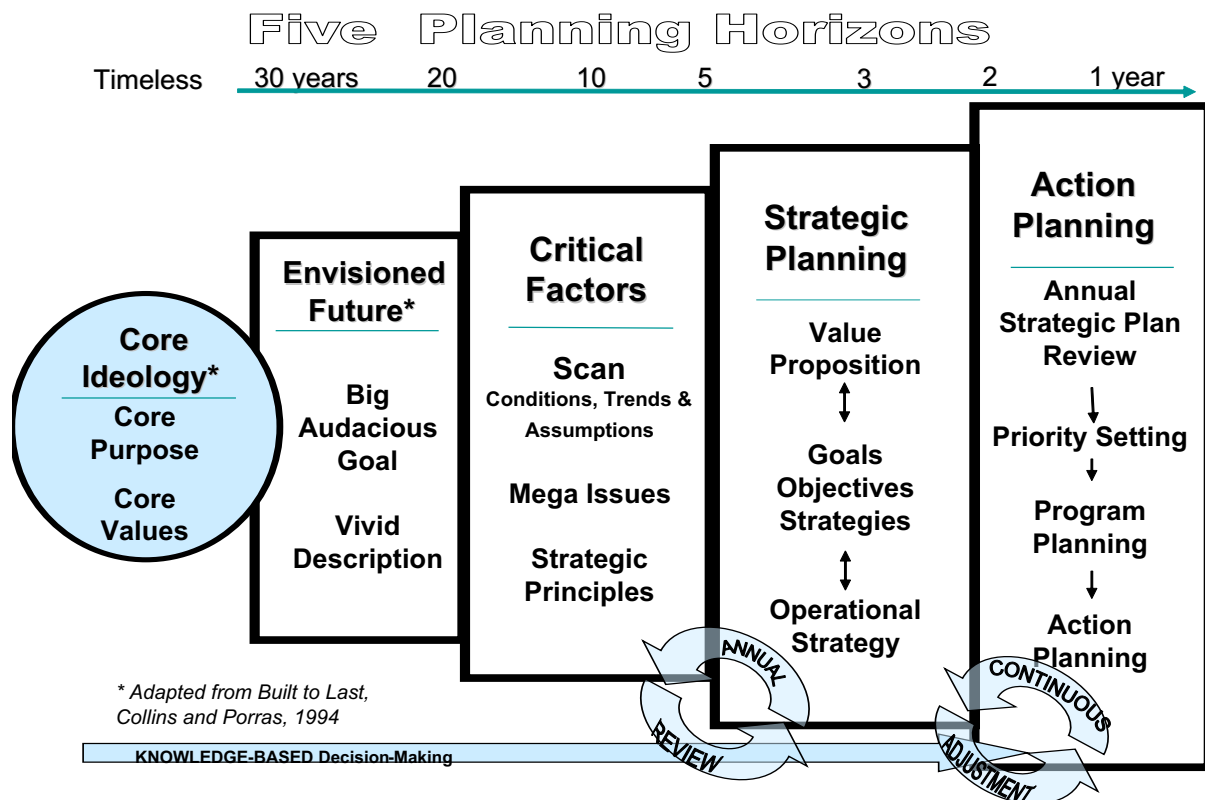
The Turner Public Schools' Board, Staff Leadership Team, and faculty view the process of strategic planning as an ongoing process within the school system. This is not a "strategic planning project" that is completed. Adoption of a plan is an affirmation of the general intent and direction articulated 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 Turner Public Schools.

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Strategic Planning Framework

The framework used by the Turner Public Schools 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.



Part I: Planning Horizon: Timeless

Core Ideology¹ of the Turner Public School District

Core Purpose of the Turner Public School District is to personalize the educational experience for each student and prepare our youth for their future success.

Core Values of the Turner Public School District

- **Perseverance** – We believe that our persistence and dedication to excellence will lead to the success of each student.
- **Commitment** – We value the commitments that we make to our students, staff and community. We hold ourselves accountable for our actions, celebrating our successes and overcoming barriers to our success.
- **Acceptance** – We are accepting of and respectful of others' attributes, qualities, and exceptionalities and opinions and believe that is our difference that make us stronger as a school and a community.
- **Citizenship** – We believe in personal responsibility, service to others and a strong sense of community. We are a caring community who believes it is our responsibility to protect and serve one another.

¹ **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.

Part II: Planning Horizon: 10-15 Years

Envisioned Future² of the Turner School District

Big Audacious Goal:

Turner Public School is an educational destination in Blaine County where each student is our focus and where staff are invested.

A Vivid Description of the Desired Future:

Student Learning Opportunities

- We provide quality student learning opportunities without students having to leave Turner area.
- We have exceptional vocational agriculture/FFA, music and arts opportunities for our students.
- We offer in-person and/or virtual learning options for all core classes to meet the needs of students.
- We offer dual enrollment opportunities to students wishing to earn college credits at minimal cost to parents.

Staff

- We have maintained our excellent staff and have enhanced our recruitment efforts to attract high quality staff.
- We provide quality staff professional development that is relevant to improving learning opportunities for students.
- Our quality and caring staff are invested in each student and the success of school/community.
- Our staff are remarkable observable role models for our students.

Facilities

- We have updated our facilities and infrastructure to support our students, staff, parents and community members.

Curriculum

- We have a system of continuously updating/upgrading our curriculum to ensure it meets the contemporary needs of students.

² **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 **Vivid descriptions** - vibrant and engaging descriptions of what it will be like to achieve the big audacious goal.

- We have systems in place that provide for the immediate learning needs of students and have a culture of prioritizing learning for the future.
- We have improved our student outcomes by focusing on and meeting the unique, individual needs of each student.
- Our students are creative and critical thinkers who are prepared to successfully navigate life's challenges.

Technology

- We have made technology and innovation a priority to meet the individual needs of our students.
- We have effectively incorporated technology and other innovations to provide enhanced opportunities for each student.
- We provide ongoing training to our staff to ensure they are proficient in the use of technology and other innovations.

Part III: Planning Horizon: 5-10 Years

Assumptions Regarding the Relevant Future for the Turner Public School District

In order to make progress against the 10-15 year Envisioned Future, Turner 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 Turner 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.

See Appendix "A" hereto for the assumptions about the future that have been made by the District. The District is committed to a process of continuing to look at the horizon to anticipate barriers to the intended success of the District.

Part IV: Planning Horizon: 1-5 Years

Outcome-Oriented Goals and Strategic Objectives

The following thinking represents goals for the next five years. They are areas in which Turner 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 Turner School Board, Staff Leadership Team, and faculty.

3-5 Year Goals and 1-2 Year Strategic Objectives of the Turner Public School District

Goal Area 1: Enhanced Opportunities for Each Student

Statement of Intended Outcome, Five years: Turner Public Schools has created an optimal environment for each student to learn and thrive. We have enhanced the opportunities for our students and have individualized our approach to meeting the needs and skill-set of each student.

1-2 Year Strategic Objectives:

1. We will improve the utilization of technology and other available innovations to provide advanced opportunities for our students.
2. We will enhance our relationships with local businesses and community partners to create expanded educational experiences for our students.

Goal Area 2: Staff

Statement of Intended Outcome, Five Years: Turner Public Schools has been successful in its recruitment and retention efforts. We attract and maintain quality, dynamic staff whose focus is student-centered. As a result, our school has a welcoming and positive environment, and our students are excited to learn.

1-2 Year Strategic Objectives:

1. We will enhance professional development opportunities and educational resources for our staff so they can be effective and professionally grow in their respective positions.
2. We will enhance our connections with neighboring schools to maximize educational resources and implement best practices that benefit our students.
3. As part of our recruitment and retention strategies, we will enhance the positive attributes of our schools and our community to promote the benefits of working in a small, rural community.

Goal Area 3: Facilities

Statement of Intended Outcome, Five Years: Turner Public Schools has facilities that support the contemporary needs of our students, staff, parents and community.

1-2 Year Strategic Objectives:

1. We will increase the efficiency and maximize resources (local, state and federal) to support the maintenance, repair, renovation, and construction of our school facilities.
2. We place an emphasis on preventative maintenance, so facility issues are addressed promptly in order to minimize the need for more expensive alternative.
3. We have developed a process for effective and efficient record-keeping of school district records that must be retained in accordance with local, state and/or federal laws.

Appendix “A”

Megatrend Analysis to Help Inform and Assess Turner Public School District’s Strategic Plan

Assumptions about the future (5-10 years)

Assumptions: The following are 5-10 year assumptions concerning the key external trends, challenges, or issues facing Turner Public School District in the future. They may represent either future opportunities or threats to the District.

5-10 Year Planning Horizon

Assumptions Regarding the Relevant Future for the Turner Public School District

Demographics

- We anticipate our student enrollment with decline over time. However, given that we are the only school within 30 miles, this could be an opportunity to increase our enrollment.
- We anticipate that recruitment and retention of quality staff will be an ongoing challenge due to Turner’s location, pay, and fewer people choosing education as a profession:

Business/Economic Climate

- Our community has a long track record of passing all voted levies. We anticipate this trend to continue but we need to ensure that the community understands our needs, envisioned future, goals and strategies.
- Given our dynamics, our students to have enhanced vocational learning opportunities.
- With school funding based primarily on the number of students enrolled, this could prove to be a disadvantage for us if our enrollment declines.

Legislation/Regulation

- We anticipate an ongoing concern about the inherent risk and potential liability of our school district as we navigate difficult issues and challenges.
- The extensive duplicative reporting requirements and red-tape at the state and federal level consume much staff time and we don’t anticipate this to get any easier moving forward.
- The flexibility to obtain provisional/alternative certification/emergency licensure is needed to ensure quality staff in our District.

Technology/Science

- We are fortunate that our technology levies have been supported by our community. This has allowed us to regularly update technology that is critical to student learning.

- Our staff receive training on technology that supports our students. We anticipate this will continue to be a challenge to keep up with the pace of technology.
- It is unlikely that our schools will receive a significant injection of money similar to what we have and received during COVID. We need to be strategic in our approach to planning for future upgrades to our technology.

Politics/Social Values

- Our community and our families value a quality education for our children. We anticipate this dynamic to continue.
- Given our rural community and small school, we need to be cognizant of not letting local tensions/disagreements become larger issues.
- Because Turner Public School serves a small population, there is a fine line our staff need to maintain for working relationships with families and community members.

5-10 Year Planning Horizon

Mega Issues facing the Turner 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 Turner 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-Issue Questions:

TO BE FURTHER ARTICULATED BY THE BOARD!!

Knowledge-Based Decision-Making Questions

The Board should prioritize the above-referenced mega issues and decide which of these issues require immediate attention on the part of the Board. Once the identified mega-issues are prioritized, the Board will set aside time at scheduled meetings to analyze a particular mega issue. At such meetings, the Board's primary focus will be on the mega-issue at hand. All other business (routine or otherwise) will be conducted at the end of the meeting once the dialogue and deliberation on the mega-issue has been concluded for that meeting. When analyzing mega issues, the Board will utilize a knowledge-based decision-making process. This will keep the focus of the Board on relevant factors to consider as it develops strategies to overcome particular impediments/barriers that may impact the Board's strategic direction. The Board will analyze mega-issues by answering the following questions:

1. What do we know about the wants, needs and preferences of our constituents that are relevant to this decision?
2. What do we know about the current realities and evolving dynamics facing our constituents/community that is relevant to this decision?
3. What do we know about the capacity/strategic position of our school district that is relevant to this decision?
4. What are the ethical implications of our choices?