DRAFT

Belgrade Public Schools’ Strategic Planning Process

2014

Overview

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

The Belgrade Board of Trustees, Staff Leadership Team, faculty, and community members 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, Belgrade Public Schools brought in Debra Silk and Joe Brott of the Montana School Boards School to help facilitate the strategic planning process.

On ______________, 2014, the Belgrade School District Board of Trustees formally adopted its new strategic plan.

Belgrade Public Schools’ Board, Staff Leadership Team, faculty, and community members 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 Belgrade Public Schools.
Strategic Planning Framework

The framework used by the Belgrade 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.

Core Ideology of the Belgrade 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.
Core Purpose of the Belgrade Public School District:

The Core Purpose of Belgrade Public Schools is to empower students with the skills, knowledge, creativity and confidence to become lifelong learners and accomplished citizens.

To educate students to become responsible members of society.

Core Values of the Belgrade Public School District

S – Students first
C – Community and families as partners
H – High expectations
O – Our community’s acceptance of diversity
O – Optimizing the highest level of respect, responsibility and integrity for all
L – Learning and working in a safe environment
S – Serving families

20 Year Planning Horizon

Envisioned Future of the Belgrade School District

Big Audacious Goal:

Belgrade Public Schools is THE model of excellence in providing a progressive, innovative and effective education for each student.

A Vivid Description of the Desired Future:

- Through trust, teamwork and cohesive unity, the district, parents and the community work together to advance student achievement and growth.
- We meet the needs of students on their terms by providing both tradition and non-traditional classroom environments.
- Our educational programs reach beyond the K-12 structure. We view education of our students as starting from birth and extending beyond to their careers.
- Our educational programming is designed to prepare students for future employment opportunities and to be leaders in the industries/positions of interest to students.
- We have high quality staff. All teachers, principals and the Superintendent are National Board Certified.
- We offer curricula that inspires students to embrace learning.
- We have outstanding facilities that meet the needs of our students, parents, staff and community.
- We have outstanding transportation and safe route programs that put safety first.
- We embrace and honor diversity.
- The community of Belgrade fully supports our school district.
- We have up-to-date learning tools that meet the needs of our students and staff.
- Our breakfast and lunch program is outstanding.
- Families want to move into the community to attend Belgrade schools.
- Our school provides a safe and welcoming environment for all students, staff, parents and community members.
- We emphasize effective communications in everything we do which results in a collaborative approach to addressing issues facing our school and our community.
- We have a mentorship program that provides students and staff with personal and professional connections that help them excel.

5-10 Year Planning Horizon

Assumptions Regarding the Relevant Future for the Belgrade Public School District

In order to make progress against the 20 year Envisioned Future, Belgrade 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 Belgrade 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 February 27, 2014, Strategic Planning meeting, the Belgrade 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 Belgrade Public Schools' strategic plan.

Assumptions about the future

Legislation and Regulation

- We anticipate that we will continue to experience challenges with adequately funding Montana public schools at the state and federal levels.
- We anticipate that we will continue struggling with the inequities that exist from district to district because of the continued reliance upon local taxpayers to fund Montana’s public schools.
• We anticipate that we will continue to have legislators who do not support public education.
• We anticipate continued attacks on public education and introduction of privatization legislation.

Demographics
• We anticipate that the population of Belgrade will continue to increase and as a result our student count will continue to rise starting with increases in Kindergarten counts.
• We anticipate that the make-up of our community will continue to consist of retired individuals, families with children, small business owners and non-residential landowners.
• We anticipate that we will continue to have an increased level of lower socio-economic conditions.
• We anticipate an increase in the number of homeless students.
• We anticipate a more diverse ethnic population in our community.

Technology and Science
• We anticipate that our society will continue to be technology dependent.
• We anticipate that we will need to be equipped to compete at a global level.
• We anticipate that schools will need to partner with the business world to keep up with technological advancements.
• We anticipate that students will continue to know more about technology than staff and parents.
• We anticipate that as a society we will have less privacy because of technological advancements.
• We anticipate that technology will continue to be more user friendly.

Politics and Social Values
• If we do not find an effective way of educating the public on ballot issues, we anticipate that we will continue to have underinformed voters.
• We anticipate that unless we find an effective way to build trust, parents and community members will continue to question the school and its decisions.
• We anticipate that our community will continue to be fiscally conservative.
• We anticipate that there will be a continued push for privatization of education.
• In order for the District to succeed, it is imperative that we create and communicate the message about what we are doing and how this will affect our community, our school and our students.

Business and Economic Climate
• We anticipate that local businesses will continue to experience challenges because of our transient population and due to Belgrade being known as a bedroom community to the Bozeman area.
• We anticipate that there will be an opportunity for local economic growth if we take advantage of the opportunities that will exist with the growth and improvements of the airport.
• We anticipate that there will continue to exist significant tax disparities between the community of Bozeman and our community.
• We anticipate a need for enhanced school facilities south of the interstate.
• If we do not learn lessons from the past, anticipate challenges and plan accordingly, we could possibly face another economic crisis.

5-10 Year Planning Horizon

Mega Issues facing the Belgrade 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 Belgrade 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 can we ensure that we have the funding necessary to support student achievement and provide our students with every opportunity to be successful as productive citizens?
• How can we best prepare for the anticipated growth in our school district to ensure that the present and future needs of our students are met?
• How can we ensure that our community is taking advantage of every opportunity for local economic growth that will, in turn, positively impact the resources for our school and for our community?
• How do we create a culture of trust and transparency with our community and effectively communicate the District’s direction and needs to ensure that we are providing the best possible education for our students?
• What can we do to ensure that we have adequate human and financial resources to embrace advancements in technology and other tools that enhance student achievement?

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 Belgrade 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 Belgrade School Board, Staff Leadership Team, and faculty.

Goals of the Belgrade Public School District

Goal Area 1: Students
Statement of Intended Outcome, Five years: Everything we do is centered on meeting the needs of our students and providing them with an exceptional educational experience.

Strategic Objectives:

1. We will provide increased opportunities for students to learn and succeed.
2. We will provide services and opportunities for students with special needs as well as students who have exception talents and/or skills.
3. We will move towards an individualized approach to education for each student attending Belgrade Public Schools.
4. We will emphasize the necessity of life-long learning in all of our programs and services.
5. Our educational programs will emphasize and provide students with life skills and problem-solving skills.

Goal Area 2: Decision Making
Statement of Intended Outcome, Five years: When making decisions that impact students, we utilize a knowledge-based decision making process.

Strategic Objectives:

1. The impact on students will be at the forefront of every decision we make.
2. We will use an inclusive process in our decision-making that will allow ample opportunities for input and ownership while also holding people accountable for follow-through.
3. We will be consistent in our approach to addressing issues of major significance.
4. As part of our knowledge-based decisions making process, we will:
   a. Examine what we know about the needs, wants and preferences of all stakeholders;
b. Examine what we know about the current realities and evolving dynamics that are relevant to the issue;
c. Examine what we know about the capacity of our school district and our strategic position that is relevant to the issue; and
d. Examine the ethical implications of our choices.

Goal Area 3: Safety/Facilities

Statement of Intended Outcome, Five Years: Safety of our students, staff and community is a high priority.

Strategic Objectives:

1. We will continue to examine how to increase the safety of our facilities and our campus.
2. We will increase our safety trainings for the students, staff and board.
3. We will increase our collaborations with local agencies (e.g., fire, police, DTT, sheriff, etc.)
4. We will increase safety measures associated with technology (e.g., firewalls, cyberbullying, etc.)
5. We will increase safety measures associated with the emotional well-being of students and staff.

Goal Area 4: Community Engagement

Statement of Intended Outcome, Five Years: The relationship between the school and the community is one in which we fully support one another as we view the community and the school as one.

Strategic Objectives:

1. We will enhance our communication relating to:
   a. District news, needs and plans;
   b. Feedback opportunities; and
   c. Teacher to parent interactions.
2. We are actively involved with our local businesses as partners in innovation and in workforce development.
3. In order to give back to the community, we will designate certain days and/or events as “Community Service” opportunities.
4. We will collaborate with other service and related organizations in order to provide our students with enhanced services and opportunities.
5. We recognize the value that our Senior Citizens bring to the community, the school and the students we serve. We will work with our Senior Citizens to provide enhanced services to them and to utilize those citizens as a valuable resource.
6. We will establish a “Career Day” giving our students access to information, resources and opportunities as they select their career paths.
Goal Area 5: Professional Development  
Statement of Intended Outcome, Five Years: We believe that in order to be successful, taking advantage of professional development opportunities at all levels is a necessity.

Strategic Objectives:

1. We will increase opportunities for life-long learning that includes the community.
2. We will increase the support system to deliver training.
3. We will actively seek out relevant and timely professional development opportunities for the staff and board.

Goal Area 6: Innovation  
Statement of Intended Outcome, Five Years: We fully acknowledge that flexibility, innovation, calculated risks and allowing opportunities for exploration are vital to the success of our students, school district and our community.

Strategic Objectives:

1. We will embrace a culture that allows for the willingness to experiment while at the same time being aware of our current realities and circumstances.
2. We will embrace a culture that supports innovation and flexibilities that have a positive impact on our students, staff, parents and community members.
3. We will allow students and staff both the time and the opportunity to explore and innovate.
4. We will collaborate with third parties whenever doing so will bring some benefit to the district and our students that would not exist without such collaboration.