



Strategic Plan

2026-2030

Approved by the ISD 917 School Board on June 2, 2026

History

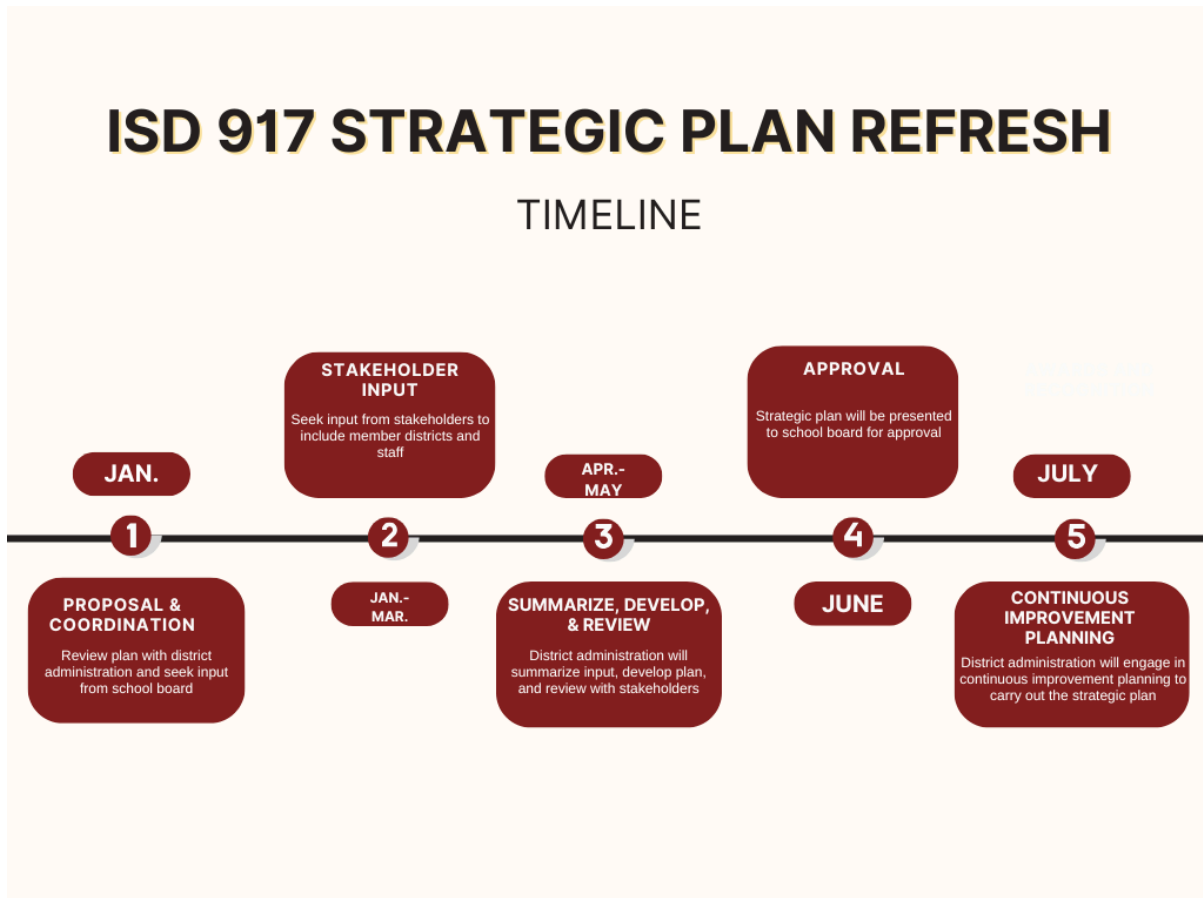
In the first half of 2022, Intermediate School District 917 embarked on a comprehensive planning process to develop an updated strategic plan for the organization. The process included the following:

- Developing a story wall documenting the history of ISD 917
- Defining the mission, vision, core values, and strategic directions for the district
- Defining the desired daily experience which included seeking stakeholder feedback to include member districts, staff, families, and students
- Developing a theory of action
- Utilizing vision cards to outline desired daily experiences in measurable terms
- Develop a three-year operational plan

In September 2022, the ISD 917 School Board approved a [three-year strategic plan](#) based on the results of the comprehensive planning process. The plan has provided us with direction and focus as an organization, especially living the plan's core values.

In January 2026, the ISD 917 School Board approved a [proposal](#) to update the strategic plan. The strategic plan for 2026-2030 was drafted utilizing a Refresh Framework based on [the 3C's](#) as guideposts to direct the work.

Timeline



Stakeholder Input

To ensure our strategic plan reflects the needs of our members, we considered ample stakeholder input. Stakeholders included students, parents, guardians, and caregivers, staff, school board members, member districts, especially superintendents and directors, and strategic partners. To gather input, eighteen listening circles were conducted and a survey was utilized to gather feedback on the following questions:

1. Please identify your role related to or within ISD 917.
2. What site/program is most aligned with your association to or position with Intermediate School District 917.
3. Which core value(s) resonate most with you regarding your experience with ISD 917?
4. What 2-3 things are going well for ISD 917 & provided services?
5. What 2-3 things need to be worked on or improved?
6. What should ISD 917 take on as near-term priorities in the next 12-18 months?
7. What should ISD 917 look like in 5 years?
8. Is there anything else you would like to share as we develop our new strategic plan?

A summary of input from stakeholders follows.

Executive overview

Across stakeholder groups, the most consistent strengths were caring relationships, teamwork, communication, and student-centered support. The most common challenges were staffing, consistency across systems and programs, facilities, access, and communication clarity. Near-term priorities focused on stabilizing systems, expanding access thoughtfully, strengthening transitions, and preserving relationship-based practice while the district grows.

Common districtwide themes

- **Strengths:** caring staff, teamwork, improved communication, student-centered practice, and program growth.
- **Challenges:** staffing shortages, waitlists, consistency across sites and systems, facilities, and communication clarity.
- **Priorities:** stabilize core systems, expand access thoughtfully, strengthen transition supports, and preserve strong relationships.

Summaries by stakeholder

Student

Question	Summary of themes
Core values that resonate most	Students most often pointed to communication, empathy, collaboration, and feeling understood. They valued environments where adults listen, explain decisions, and create a sense of safety and belonging.

What is going well	Students highlighted supportive teachers, patient staff, access to accommodations, friendships, breaks, and community at school. DHH students especially valued interpreters and advocacy support; SUN students noted feeling safer, more accepted, and better able to participate than in prior settings.
What needs improvement	Common student concerns centered on lunch quality and choice, school spaces and facilities, discipline systems, and wanting adults to understand student behavior more fully before responding. Many also wanted more engaging activities, less repetitive instruction, and more age-appropriate environments.
Near-term priorities (12-18 months)	Students want practical quality-of-life improvements: better food options, more activities and clubs, more supportive staff interactions, stronger follow-through on grievances, and clearer, fairer behavior expectations.
What ISD 917 should look like in 5 years	Students envision more opportunity and belonging: more clubs, music, sports, outdoor spaces, better facilities, stronger transition preparation, and staffing that allows more individualized support and course access.
Anything else to share	Additional comments reinforced a desire for student voice, more choice in lunch and activities, more technology and enrichment, and school structures that feel more typical, inclusive, and motivating.

Parents/Guardians/Caregivers

Question	Summary of themes
Core values that resonate most	Parents most often emphasized personalization, equity, empathy, and communication. They value programs that recognize individual needs and treat students and families with care and dignity.
What is going well	Families described students thriving because of caring staff, reliable supports, community experiences, and strong teacher/case manager relationships. Parents particularly appreciated kindness, flexibility, and inclusive approaches.
What needs improvement	Parents want stronger communication consistency, clearer district-level alignment,

	more staffing stability, better accessibility and nutrition options, and smoother transportation and transition routines.
Near-term priorities (12-18 months)	Top priorities included individualized planning, appropriate staffing, expanded community partnerships, and stronger support across a wider range of disability needs.
What ISD 917 should look like in 5 years	Parents generally want the district to preserve what works while becoming more communicative, more responsive to diverse needs, and more innovative in how it supports students across age groups and disabilities.
Anything else to share	Parents encouraged the district to continue listening to success stories as well as concerns, create more opportunities for family understanding of the school experience, and explore more transition/job opportunities for students.

ISD 917 Staff Members

Question	Summary of themes
Core values that resonate most	Staff most frequently named collaboration, communication, personalization, empathy, innovation, and integrity. Their responses show a strong commitment to teamwork and student-centered practice.
What is going well	Staff consistently praised teamwork, relationships, leadership support at many sites, growth in programs, better communication, and movement toward more student-centered and less punitive practices. Many also cited stronger systems, innovation, and growing opportunities for students.
What needs improvement	The strongest themes were staffing shortages, need for more collaboration time, consistency of systems and expectations, training and onboarding, facility limitations, and communication overload or fragmentation. Staff also raised concerns about safety, due process consistency, and initiative fatigue.
Near-term priorities (12-18 months)	Staff want the district to stabilize and strengthen systems before adding more initiatives, improve staffing and substitute coverage, expand resources and programs thoughtfully, and create time to implement

	training, curriculum, and behavior frameworks well.
What ISD 917 should look like in 5 years	Staff described a future district with stronger facilities, sustainable staffing, expanded transition programming, continued innovation, broader language and cultural responsiveness, and more support for students after graduation. They also want growth without losing quality or coherence.
Anything else to share	Additional comments called for fewer competing initiatives, stronger visibility of values, better operational support, contingency staffing, and more consistent leadership presence and recognition across sites.

School Board Members

Question	Summary of themes
Core values that resonate most	Board members identified diversity, empathy, equity, collaboration, integrity, stewardship, and innovation, suggesting broad alignment with the district's stated values.
What is going well	Board members saw progress in reducing waitlists, strengthening finances, growing CTE and ITRAC, retaining staff, and continuing innovation in programming.
What needs improvement	Main concerns centered on collaboration among board members and member districts, communication to and from the board, and ongoing staffing and waitlist challenges.
Near-term priorities (12-18 months)	Board members emphasized expanding space and programs, prioritizing and executing goals well, strengthening existing initiatives, deepening partnerships, and using innovation such as AI strategically and positively.
What ISD 917 should look like in 5 years	No responses were recorded for this question from school board members.
Anything else to share	No additional comments were recorded for this question from school board members.

Member District Stakeholders (including Directors and Superintendents)

Question	Summary of themes
Core values that resonate most	Member district stakeholders emphasized collaboration and equity, reflecting the importance of partnership and access across the service continuum.
What is going well	They praised the breadth of services, responsiveness to district needs, strong communication, real-time information sharing, and creative problem-solving around staffing shortages.
What needs improvement	Their clearest concern was the waitlist and its impact on timely access to services, along with the need to continue refining programs based on student and family needs.
Near-term priorities (12-18 months)	They want collaborative, creative solutions to shorten waitlists, expand programs and transition services, and work with member districts to address barriers earlier.
What ISD 917 should look like in 5 years	They envision ISD 917 as a collaborative leader with additional sites, much shorter wait times, strong transition programming, and recognized best practices across early childhood through transition.
Anything else to share	The one additional comment strongly affirmed the responsiveness and thoughtfulness of the leadership team.

AEC-CEC/IDEA/SUN

Question	Summary of themes
Core values that resonate most	Responses from AEC-CEC/IDEA/SUN most often emphasized diversity, collaboration, innovation, and empathy.
What is going well	Feedback from AEC-CEC/IDEA/SUN most often highlighted caring relationships and student-centered support, teamwork, communication, and collaboration, facilities, space, and access as current strengths.
What needs improvement	The most common improvement themes for AEC-CEC/IDEA/SUN were facilities, space, and access, caring relationships and student-centered support, safety, consistency, and behavior supports.
Near-term priorities (12-18 months)	Near-term priorities for AEC-CEC/IDEA/SUN centered on facilities, space, and access, staffing and

	retention, caring relationships and student-centered support.
What ISD 917 should look like in 5 years	In five years, respondents connected to AEC-CEC/IDEA/SUN most often envisioned stronger facilities, space, and access, caring relationships and student-centered support, staffing and retention.
Anything else to share	Additional comments for AEC-CEC/IDEA/SUN reinforced themes related to facilities, space, and access, caring relationships and student-centered support, quality-of-life improvements and enrichment.

BTC & DCTC-TESA

Question	Summary of themes
Core values that resonate most	Responses from BTC & DCTC-TESA most often emphasized collaboration, communication, and empathy.
What is going well	Feedback from BTC & DCTC-TESA most often highlighted teamwork, communication, and collaboration, caring relationships and student-centered support, transitions, pathways, and future readiness as current strengths.
What needs improvement	The most common improvement themes for BTC & DCTC-TESA were facilities, space, and access, staffing and retention, transitions, pathways, and future readiness.
Near-term priorities (12-18 months)	Near-term priorities for BTC & DCTC-TESA centered on facilities, space, and access, program growth, systems, and innovation, teamwork, communication, and collaboration.
What ISD 917 should look like in 5 years	In five years, respondents connected to BTC & DCTC-TESA most often envisioned stronger facilities, space, and access, staffing and retention, caring relationships and student-centered support.
Anything else to share	Additional comments for BTC & DCTC-TESA reinforced themes related to caring relationships and student-centered support, staffing and retention, transitions, pathways, and future readiness.

CEC-SUN

Question	Summary of themes
Core values that resonate most	Responses from CEC-SUN most often emphasized collaboration and empathy.

What is going well	Feedback from CEC-SUN most often highlighted caring relationships and student-centered support, teamwork, communication, and collaboration, safety, consistency, and behavior supports as current strengths.
What needs improvement	The most common improvement themes for CEC-SUN were program growth, systems, and innovation, facilities, space, and access, quality-of-life improvements and enrichment.
Near-term priorities (12-18 months)	Near-term priorities for CEC-SUN centered on program growth, systems, and innovation, quality-of-life improvements and enrichment, staffing and retention.
What ISD 917 should look like in 5 years	In five years, respondents connected to CEC-SUN most often envisioned stronger facilities, space, and access, quality-of-life improvements and enrichment.
Anything else to share	Additional comments for CEC-SUN reinforced themes related to quality-of-life improvements and enrichment, teamwork, communication, and collaboration, facilities, space, and access.

CTE

Question	Summary of themes
Core values that resonate most	Responses from CTE most often emphasized innovation, personalization, equity, and integrity.
What is going well	Feedback from CTE most often highlighted program growth, systems, and innovation, caring relationships and student-centered support, teamwork, communication, and collaboration as current strengths.
What needs improvement	The most common improvement themes for CTE were teamwork, communication, and collaboration, caring relationships and student-centered support, staffing and retention.
Near-term priorities (12-18 months)	Near-term priorities for CTE centered on caring relationships and student-centered support, program growth, systems, and innovation, facilities, space, and access.
What ISD 917 should look like in 5 years	In five years, respondents connected to CTE most often envisioned stronger staffing and retention, program growth, systems, and innovation.
Anything else to share	Additional comments for CTE reinforced themes related to facilities, space, and access, program growth, systems, and innovation.

Cedar-SUN

Question	Summary of themes
Core values that resonate most	Responses from Cedar-SUN most often emphasized collaboration and Empathy.
What is going well	Feedback from Cedar-SUN most often highlighted teamwork, communication, and collaboration as current strengths.
What needs improvement	The most common improvement themes for Cedar-SUN were facilities, space, and access, safety, consistency, behavior supports, teamwork, communication, and collaboration.
Near-term priorities (12-18 months)	Near-term priorities for Cedar-SUN were varied without a single dominant pattern.
What ISD 917 should look like in 5 years	Long-term hopes for Cedar-SUN varied across responses.
Anything else to share	There were few or no additional comments recorded for Cedar-SUN.

Concord Education Center-SUN

Question	Summary of themes
Core values that resonate most	Responses from Concord Education Center-SUN most often emphasized empathy.
What is going well	Feedback from Concord Education Center-SUN most often highlighted facilities, space, and access, caring relationships and student-centered support, staffing and retention as current strengths.
What needs improvement	The most common improvement themes for Concord Education Center-SUN were transition pathways and future readiness, facilities, space and access, teamwork, communication, and collaboration.
Near-term priorities (12-18 months)	Near-term priorities for Concord Education Center-SUN centered on facilities, space, and access, program growth, systems, and innovation, transition pathways and future readiness.
What ISD 917 should look like in 5 years	In five years, respondents connected to Concord Education Center-SUN most often envisioned stronger facilities, space, and access.
Anything else to share	Additional comments for Concord Education Center-SUN reinforced themes related to teamwork, communication, and collaboration, caring relationships and student-centered support, facilities, space, and access.

DASH

Question	Summary of themes
Core values that resonate most	Responses from DASH most often emphasized collaboration, integrity, and communication.
What is going well	Feedback from DASH most often highlighted staffing and retention, transition pathways and future readiness, teamwork, communication, and collaboration as current strengths.
What needs improvement	The most common improvement themes for DASH were staffing and retention, program growth, systems, innovation, caring relationships and student-centered support.
Near-term priorities (12-18 months)	Near-term priorities for DASH centered on staffing and retention, teamwork, communication, and collaboration, transition pathways and future readiness.
What ISD 917 should look like in 5 years	In five years, respondents connected to DASH most often envisioned stronger facilities, space, and access, caring relationships and student-centered support.
Anything else to share	Additional comments for DASH reinforced themes related to transition pathways and future readiness, caring relationships and student-centered support, staffing and retention.

DCALS-Main & North

Question	Summary of themes
Core values that resonate most	Responses from DCALS-Main & North most often emphasized personalization and empathy.
What is going well	Feedback from DCALS-Main & North most often highlighted caring relationships and student-centered support, teamwork, communication, and collaboration, program growth, systems, and innovation as current strengths.
What needs improvement	The most common improvement themes for DCALS-Main & North were facilities, space, and access, program growth, systems, and innovation, teamwork, communication, and collaboration.
Near-term priorities (12-18 months)	Near-term priorities for DCALS-Main & North centered on program growth, systems, and innovation, facilities, space, and access.
What ISD 917 should look like in 5 years	Long-term hopes for DCALS-Main & North varied across responses.

Anything else to share	Additional comments for DCALS-Main & North reinforced themes related to teamwork, communication, and collaboration.
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DHH Resource-LCE, IGMS, SHS

Question	Summary of themes
Core values that resonate most	Responses from DHH Resource-LCE, IGMS, SHS most often emphasized collaboration, communication, and personalization.
What is going well	Feedback from DHH Resource-LCE, IGMS, SHS most often highlighted caring relationships and student-centered support, teamwork, communication, and collaboration, program growth, systems, and innovation as current strengths.
What needs improvement	The most common improvement themes for DHH Resource-LCE, IGMS, SHS were caring relationships and student-centered support, staffing and retention, teamwork, communication, and collaboration.
Near-term priorities (12-18 months)	Near-term priorities for DHH Resource-LCE, IGMS, SHS centered on teamwork, communication, and collaboration, transitions, pathways, and future readiness, facilities, space, and access.
What ISD 917 should look like in 5 years	In five years, respondents connected to DHH Resource-LCE, IGMS, SHS most often envisioned stronger caring relationships and student-centered support, staffing and retention, transition pathways and future readiness.
Anything else to share	There were few or no additional comments recorded for DHH Resource-LCE, IGMS, SHS.

Districtwide

Question	Summary of themes
Core values that resonate most	Responses from Districtwide most often emphasized collaboration, stewardship, and communication.
What is going well	Feedback from Districtwide most often highlighted staffing and retention, caring relationships and student-centered support, program growth, systems, and innovation as current strengths.
What needs improvement	The most common improvement themes for Districtwide were program growth, systems, and innovation, teamwork, communication, and collaboration, facilities, space, and access.

Near-term priorities (12-18 months)	Near-term priorities for Districtwide centered on program growth, systems, and innovation, caring relationships and student-centered support, facilities, space, and access.
What ISD 917 should look like in 5 years	In five years, respondents connected to Districtwide most often envisioned stronger program growth, systems, and innovation, facilities, space, and access, staffing and retention.
Anything else to share	Additional comments for Districtwide reinforced themes related to program growth, systems, and innovation, staffing and retention, facilities, space, and access.

Itinerants

Question	Summary of themes
Core values that resonate most	Responses from Itinerants most often emphasized collaboration, innovation, personalization, and empathy.
What is going well	Feedback from Itinerants most often highlighted caring relationships and student-centered support, teamwork, communication, and collaboration, belonging, inclusion, and equity as current strengths.
What needs improvement	The most common improvement themes for Itinerants were teamwork, communication, and collaboration, safety, consistency, and behavior supports, caring relationships and student-centered support.
Near-term priorities (12-18 months)	Near-term priorities for Itinerants centered on program growth, systems, and innovation.
What ISD 917 should look like in 5 years	Long-term hopes for Itinerants varied across responses.
Anything else to share	There were few or no additional comments recorded for Itinerants.

Lebanon Education Center & ECSE-TEA

Question	Summary of themes
Core values that resonate most	Responses from LEC & ECSE-TEA most often emphasized collaboration, empathy, equity, diversity, and personalization.
What is going well	Feedback most often highlighted caring relationships and student-centered support as a core strength. Respondents also noted teamwork, communication, and collaboration, along with program growth, systems, and innovation, and facilities, space, and access as positive aspects of

	the current environment. Safety, consistency, and behavioral supports were also identified as important strengths.
What needs improvement	The most common improvement themes included staffing and retention, facilities, space, and access, and program growth, systems, and innovation. Continued attention to caring relationships and student-centered support was also noted as an area to strengthen and sustain.
Near-term priorities (12-18 months)	Near-term priorities centered on staffing and retention, program growth, systems, and innovation, and facilities, space, and access. Respondents also emphasized strengthening teamwork, communication, and collaboration, as well as maintaining a focus on caring relationships and student-centered support.
What ISD 917 should look like in 5 years	In five years, respondents most often envisioned stronger staffing and retention, improved facilities, space, and access, and sustained caring relationships and student-centered support. They also highlighted the importance of continued growth in teamwork, communication, and collaboration across programs.
Anything else to share	Additional comments reinforced themes related to caring relationships and student-centered support, teamwork, communication, and collaboration, staffing and retention, and facilities, space, and access.

Other

Question	Summary of themes
Core values that resonate most	Responses from Other most often emphasized personalization and empathy.
What is going well	Feedback from Other most often highlighted teamwork, communication, and collaboration, staffing and retention, program growth, systems, and innovation as current strengths.
What needs improvement	The most common improvement themes for Other were facilities, space, and access, teamwork, communication, and collaboration, staffing and retention.
Near-term priorities (12-18 months)	Near-term priorities for Other centered on program growth, systems, and innovation, staffing and retention, safety, consistency, and behavior supports.

What ISD 917 should look like in 5 years	In five years, respondents connected to Other most often envisioned stronger caring relationships and student-centered support, transitions, pathways, and future readiness, facilities, space, and access.
Anything else to share	Additional comments for Other reinforced themes related to caring relationships and student-centered support, program growth, systems, and innovation.

Mission and Vision

As a reminder, mission statements generally focus on why an organization exists while vision statements focus on what an organization should become to accomplish their purpose.

Based on stakeholder input, it is recommended that both the mission and vision for Intermediate School District 917 be refined. The current statements are directionally strong and already reflect major themes such as partnership, equity, specialized services, and support for students and families. However, stakeholder feedback suggests the language could better emphasize belonging, trust, personalization, responsiveness, and clear pathways for student success.

Area	Current	Proposed	Recommended
Mission	In partnership with member districts, Intermediate School District 917 provides high quality, equitable and specialized programming to meet the needs of all students.	Refine slightly	In partnership with member districts, Intermediate School District 917 provides high-quality, equitable, and personalized services to build on the unique strengths and needs of students in support of families and caregivers.
Vision	Intermediate School District 917 models an innovative culture with diverse pathways serving students and families through equitable practices with highly trained staff.	Refine more clearly	Intermediate School District 917 exhibits an innovative culture centered in belonging with diverse pathways serving students and supporting families and caregivers through equitable practices and highly trained staff.

Rationale

- The current mission and vision align with stakeholder priorities, so a full rewrite is not necessary.

- The mission would be stronger with more explicit student- and family-centered language and a clearer emphasis on strengths and individualized needs.
- The vision would benefit from less abstract language and a stronger emphasis on trust, belonging, responsiveness, and meaningful pathways.
- These revisions preserve the district's current direction while making the statements more human, distinctive, and reflective of stakeholder voice.

The recommended revision keeps the foundation of both statements, but refines the wording so the mission and vision more clearly reflect belonging, trust, personalization, equity, and student-centered pathways.

Core Values

Once again, based on stakeholder feedback, it is recommended that the current core values are refined rather than replaced. Stakeholder feedback suggests the district's current values are directionally strong, but definitions could be updated to better reflect what stakeholders emphasized most: collaboration, personalization, empathy, communication, trust, belonging, and practical improvement.

Further, the revised core values have been reordered. The first core values focus on student outcomes (personalization, equity), and then follow as detailed:

- Building trust (integrity, empathy)
- Centering belonging (diversity)
- Focusing on working together (collaboration, communication)
- Ending with action and accountability (innovation, stewardship)

Original core values

- **Personalization:** Building on the strengths and addressing the unique needs of individual students
- **Equity:** Intentionally providing opportunities while removing barriers at all levels of the organization
- **Empathy:** Considering and respecting the perspective and needs of member districts, students, families, and staff
- **Collaboration:** Working together to achieve more collectively
- **Innovation:** Ongoing improvement of programs and services
- **Stewardship:** Managing financial and human resources carefully and responsibly
- **Communication:** Multi-dimensional, transparent conversation focused on sharing information and creating a positive learning and working environment
- **Integrity:** Aligning our actions with our values and beliefs
- **Diversity:** Appreciating and valuing everyone's unique selves

Suggested revised core values

- **Integrity:** Acting with honesty and accountability to align actions with our values
- **Empathy:** Actively listening to honor the perspectives and needs of others
- **Personalization:** Building on everyone's strengths and addressing their unique needs
- **Diversity:** Valuing intersectionality, lived experiences, and perspectives to foster belonging for all
- **Collaboration:** Fostering relationships and working in partnership to achieve shared goals
- **Communication:** Engaging in transparent, multi-dimensional communication that fosters trust
- **Equity:** Ensuring access and outcomes by removing barriers and providing appropriate support
- **Innovation:** Continuously improving programs and services through practical, responsive solutions
- **Stewardship:** Responsibly managing financial and human resources to build trust and effectiveness

These core values build on our existing foundation while using more human, mission-aligned language that reflects what stakeholders most consistently shared. Our core values are the basis for individual or team-based decision-making throughout the implementation of our Strategic Plan.

Strategic Directions

Purpose

This draft strategic plan and specifically strategic directions is to guide district improvement over the next three to five years. It is intentionally simpler than prior planning documents so it can be used as a living framework for action, reflection, and accountability. The plan builds from the strongest elements of the previous strategic directions and aligns them with recent stakeholder feedback.

Why a revised approach is needed

The previous plan included many strong ideas, but its structure made it difficult to sustain and monitor over time. Stakeholders emphasized the need for clearer direction, stronger communication, staffing stability, belonging, individualized student support, and practical follow-through. This draft responds by focusing the district on five strategic priorities with a smaller number of shared outcomes and annual action steps.

Planning commitments

- Keep the plan concise, actionable, and aligned across the district
- Center students, families and caregivers, staff, member districts, and stakeholders in decision-making
- Use stakeholder feedback and data as part of continuous improvement
- Review progress annually and refine actions based on what is working
- Focus on implementation and sustainability, not just initiative adoption
- Ensure involvement of strategic partners in our initiatives to support our core values

1. Student Learning, Engagement, Achievement, and Pathways

Ensure students experience meaningful, personalized, and engaging learning that increases achievement and prepares them successfully for next steps.

Objectives

- Increase student engagement, connection, and academic growth
- Strengthen access to relevant, hands-on, and individualized learning experiences that support engagement and achievement
- Expand and clarify pathways that support transition to employment, postsecondary learning, and adult life
- Involve appropriate strategic partners to connect learning, engagement, achievement, and pathways to support students as they prepare for transition

Desired outcomes

- Students demonstrate increased engagement, stronger staff connections, and improved academic achievement
- Programs provide consistent, high-quality pathways and transition opportunities
- Student achievement and success indicators improve over time
- Strategic partnerships expand relevant learning experiences and strengthen pathways that support student achievement and successful transition

Suggested measures

- Student engagement survey results
- Student-staff connection data
- Number and consistency of active strategic partners supporting pathways
- Academic growth and achievement data (skill attainment, course completion, progress toward IEP goals)
- Participation in pathways, transition, work-based, or experiential learning opportunities
- Completion, transition, placement, or graduation-related indicators

2. Safe, Supportive, and Inclusive Environments

Create environments where students and staff experience safety, belonging, emotional and behavioral regulation, and inclusion.

Objectives

- Strengthen systems of prevention and support, including social-emotional learning and behavioral supports
- Increase consistency in inclusive and culturally responsive practices
- Promote environments where students and staff feel seen, valued, and safe
- Effectively integrate strategic partners into prevention, support, and inclusion efforts to better meet student and staff needs

Desired outcomes

- Students and staff report stronger feelings safety and belonging
- Restrictive and exclusionary practices decrease over time
- Inclusive practices are more visible and consistent across sites
- Strategic partners are consistently engaged in coordinated efforts that enhance student and staff safety, belonging, and access to supports

Suggested measures

- Student and staff safety survey results
- Family, staff and strategic partner inclusion/belonging data
- Restrictive procedures, discipline, and threat assessment trends
- Student attendance trends
- Implementation of systems of prevention and support, including SEL and behavior support practices

3. Staff Development, Support, and Stability

Attract, support, develop, and retain high-quality staff across programs and roles.

Objectives

- Improve staffing stability and reduce vacancies
- Provide meaningful professional learning, coaching, and support
- Increase staff recognition, voice, and trust in district systems
- Engage strategic partners to support staff development, recruitment, and retention efforts

Desired outcomes

- Staff feel more valued, supported, and prepared

- Retention improves across employee groups and programs
- Professional learning is relevant and connected to district priorities
- Strategic partnerships contribute to stronger staff support systems, development opportunities, and workforce stability

Suggested measures

- Staff retention rates
- Vacancy/fill rates by program
- Staff climate and satisfaction survey results
- Participation in coaching, mentoring, and professional development
- Impact of strategic partner contributions to staff development, recruitment, or retention

4. Family, Caregiver, District, and Community Partnerships

Strengthen trust, communication, and shared responsibility with families, caregivers, member districts, and community partners.

Objectives

- Improve consistency and accessibility of communication
- Increase meaningful family and caregiver engagement and partnership
- Deepen trust and responsiveness with member districts and community organizations
- Strengthen collaboration with strategic partners to support coordinated communication, engagement, and services for families and students

Desired outcomes

- Families and caregivers feel informed, welcomed, respected, and empowered
- Member districts experience ISD 917 as a trusted partner
- Communication systems are easier to access and use
- Strategic partners work collaboratively with the district to provide coordinated, responsive, and accessible support for families and students

Suggested measures

- Family and caregiver survey results
- Member district partner feedback
- Strategic partner feedback on effectiveness of collaboration and communication with ISD 917
- Participation in family and caregiver engagement opportunities
- Communication access and responsiveness measures

5. Organizational Effectiveness and Continuous Improvement

Strengthen district systems so improvement work is aligned, data-informed, and sustainable.

Objectives

- Clarify annual priorities and align program plans to district goals
- Use common improvement routines (i.e., continuous improvement planning) and data review cycles
- Improve consistency in communication, intake, referral, and operational systems
- Collaborate with strategic partners to align systems, share expertise, and strengthen continuous improvement efforts

Desired outcomes

- District priorities are clearer and more manageable
- Programs use annual improvement cycles tied to shared goals
- Systems become more efficient, aligned, and easier to navigate
- Strategic partnerships contribute to aligned systems, shared learning, and continuous improvement across programs and services

Suggested measures

- Annual progress monitoring by strategic priority
- Completion of district action steps
- Program-level continuous improvement planning cycle documentation
- Operational consistency and process improvement indicators
- Evidence of strategic partner involvement in continuous improvement efforts

Implementation & Review

Implementation and review, grounded in principles of implementation science and focused on continuous improvement, are guided by our core values, which serve as a lens for decision-making, collaboration, and reflection throughout this plan.

Implementation cycle

- Year 1
Under each strategic direction, to ensure alignment with core values:
 - Confirm priorities
 - Establish baseline data
 - Set 1–3 district or program/site action steps
- Years 2–3
Based on data and stakeholder feedback, using core values to guide decision-making and adjustments:
 - Implement
 - Monitor
 - Define strategies
- Years 4–5
Reflecting on how core values are demonstrated across the system:
 - Scale successful practices
 - Strengthen consistency across programs
 - Prepare the next planning cycle

Annual review process

- Review progress on each strategic direction at least annually
- Use survey, staffing, operational, and student outcome data to assess progress
- Assess the extent to which actions and outcomes reflect the district's core values
- Identify what should continue, improve, stop, or start
- Engage stakeholders in reflecting on how well the system is living its core values in practice
- Publish a brief annual progress update for stakeholders, including examples of core values in action

Conclusion

This strategic plan builds on the strongest elements of the district's prior work while creating a more coherent, focused, and sustainable path forward. It establishes clear priorities, a manageable set of measures, and a structure for ongoing reflection, learning, and continuous improvement.

At the center of this work are the district's core values—integrity, empathy, diversity, collaboration, communication, personalization, equity, innovation, and stewardship—which serve as a foundation for how decisions are made, how relationships are built, and how progress is evaluated. These values are not only guiding principles, but a commitment to how we will carry out this work in practice.

Through intentional implementation and regular review, this plan is designed to remain responsive to student, staff, family, and partner needs while maintaining alignment with our shared values. In doing so, it supports a system that is not only effective, but also reflective, inclusive, and grounded in trust—ensuring meaningful outcomes for all learners and a strong foundation for the future.

Notes

ChatGPT was utilized to analyze data collected including comparison to current elements of the strategic plan. Further, ChatGPT was utilized when developing the elements of the updated Intermediate School District 917 Strategic Plan.