



2024-25 Board of Directors

Board Chair, Erin Cramer **Board Vice-Chair**, Mackenzie Strawn

Board Members: Mike Wagner, Laura Wipper, Mark Henderson, Coral Ford & Alisha Oliver

Student Representatives to the Board, Lucas Joyce & Haley Butenschoen

Superintendent, Lee W. Loving

Director of Business & Fiscal Services, Rhonda Allen

Director of Human Resources, Danielle Blackwell

Director of Teaching & Learning, Nicole Duncan

Interim Director of Special Programs, Melissa Glover

Director of Nutrition Services, John Barnes

Director of Safety, Security and Health Services, Gary Rychard

Director of Facilities, Dave Parsons

Superintendent/School Board Executive Assistant, Tonia Whisman

Special Work Session

Monday, June 10, 2024 ~ 6:00 PM

NSSD District Office/Santiam Room

1155 N 3rd Ave

Stayton, OR 97383

<https://youtube.com/live/58qHMu9EPfQ?feature=share>

1. CALL SPECIAL WORK SESSION TO ORDER

The Special Work Session of the North Santiam School District’s Board of Directors is called to order at 6:00 pm. It is an open meeting of the Board and the public is allowed to observe in-person and via livestream on YouTube.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Erin Cramer

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Erin Cramer

2. AGENDA APPROVAL

Changes to the agenda after posting on June 4, 2024 will be acknowledged:

Added Attachments-

Removed Agenda Items-

RECOMMENDED MOTION-AGENDA APPROVAL

I move that the Board approve the agenda as modified.

3. SURVEY/FORUM DATA REVIEW

Laura Wipper and Alisha Oliver will share the themes identified from surveys and forums conducted with students, staff, parents, and community members for the purpose of understanding and prioritization.
Strategic Plan Input Summary

4. ADJOURN

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

The North Santiam School District shall promote nondiscrimination and an environment free of harassment based on an individual's race, color, religion, sex, national origin, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, marital status or age or because of the race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, marital status or age of any other persons with whom the individual associates. This meeting location is accessible to persons with disabilities. A request for an interpreter for the hearing impaired or for other accommodations for persons with disabilities should be made at least 48 hours prior to the meeting. If you require special accommodations, please contact Tonia Whisman at the North Santiam School District Office at 503-769-4928.



North Santiam School District

Strategic Plan Input Summary

Guiding Principle

Do what is best for all kids!

Vision

We change kids' lives through a commitment to excellence, integrity, equity, and community engagement.

Mission Statement

Ensure students reach their highest academic and vocational potential and develop into productive citizens.

Strategic Plan Objective

The objective is creation of a comprehensive five-year strategic plan for North Santiam School District (NSSD) that reflects the community's values and fosters student success throughout their NSSD education. This plan will entail refining or confirming the district's vision, mission, and core values to ensure they align with the strategic plan's objectives.

The strategic plan will serve as a framework for decision-making across the district, including allocation of budgetary resources and identifying NSSD's competitive advantage.

Background for Review of Themes and Categories

We embarked on a series of engagement efforts in support of development of a strategic plan for the district. We have curated as much input as possible from as many perspectives as we could schedule from January through April 2024. In the end, we have interviewed or received questionnaire responses from close to 300 individuals. Beyond the board and the district office, about a third of this input came from building staff, about another third came from students and the remainder came from families and members of the district's communities.

The most important attribute or knowledge of a graduate was discovered to be a key question as an "ice-breaker," but, more importantly, responses provided very useful insight into perspectives on needs, hopes and expectations for graduates to be future ready. This is sorted in the included Excel file in worksheets for internal, student and family/external views. For this topic only, the internal views also include the Board and Lee's responses. The contents of each of these worksheets are also sorted based on themes for the inputs.

Additional interview/questionnaire questions quickly boiled down to variations of what's working or good, what's not working or hard and what else do you want us to know. We have sorted and made the first pass at categorizing all these inputs to give the superintendent and the rest of the board a head start on assimilating the essences of all that we heard. These inputs do NOT include those from the board or the superintendent. Those interviews are in a separate worksheet in the same file.

Some inputs were more complex to categorize. Many inputs came from interviews. These were captured in notes by us. We discussed all of these to establish consensus to reflect what we heard. We also used some questionnaires. We asked for the single, most important comment, but many who responded to questionnaires added more...sometimes much more for some questions. This are included as submitted, but we categorized them based on their first point on the assumption that this was their most important. The details are made available for strategic planning work sessions, but also for later insights as more detailed plans are developed to implement the key strategies identified as a result of our planning efforts.

Definitions of Themes and Categories

Characteristics of a Graduate Themes:

- Academics: Learning outcomes; course options, including advanced and electives; rigor.
- Career: Related to desired soft skills and accountabilities of future employees.
- Civic/Community: Awareness of reasons for and benefits of civic and community engagement and participation.
- Communication: Ability to communicate adequately in writing, by phone, in person, etc.
- Financial: Basic knowledge of budgeting, banking, credit, loans, major purchases, etc.
- Growth: Awareness and habit of goal setting, life and self improvement and reflection.
- Independence: Awareness, experience and readiness for basics of independent living.
- Social/Emotional: Ability to navigate basic social norms and age-appropriate level of maturity and mental health.
- Health: Personal health, including nutrition.

Themes for What's Working or Good:

- Academics: Learning outcomes, course options, including advanced and electives, rigor.
- Career/Independence: Combination of employee soft skills, critical thinking and basics for successful independent living.
- Communication: Ability to communicate adequately in writing, by phone, in person, etc.
- District/School Culture: Perceptions of a positive school or district climate.
- Engagement: Students who want to be there and learn; parents, stakeholders and community members who want to partner in support of students.
- Operations: More related to how district is doing things (as opposed to what).
- School Activities: Co-curricular sports and activities and school/district events.
- Social/Emotional: Ability to navigate basic social norms and age-appropriate level of maturity and mental health.
- Staff Culture/Development: Teacher and other staff collaboration, supports and preparation to do what is best for kids.

Themes for What to Improve or What's Hard:

- Academics: Learning outcomes, course options, including advanced and electives, rigor.
- Belonging: Differences in campus culture, potential biases, insufficient translation and help for non-English students and families.
- Career/Independence: Combination of employee soft skills, critical thinking and basics for successful independent living.
- Civic/Community: Ability to communicate adequately in writing, by phone, in person, etc.
- Communications: Ability to communicate adequately in writing, by phone, in person, etc.
- District/School Culture: Perceptions of a positive school or district climate.
- Engagement: Students who want to be there and learn; parents, stakeholders and community members who want to partner in support of students.
- Operations: More related to how district is doing things (as opposed to what).
- Other: Miscellaneous other inputs.
- Schedule/Pace: Mainly issues with schedule and/or pace at the high school.

- School Activities: Co-curricular sports and activities and school/district events.
- Social/Emotional: Ability to navigate basic social norms and age-appropriate level of maturity and mental health.
- Staff Culture/Development: Teacher and other staff collaboration, supports and preparation to do what is best for kids.

Lastly, we will include our impressions that linger from all this input. Since we all have our biases, we recognize our own known and lesser-known biases influence our impressions from all this input, but we will share them anyway with that caveat. You will also be able to draw some of your own interpretations based on all the detailed inputs attached.

SWOT Impressions for each, in no particular order:

Strengths:

- District, school, and staff culture at campuses serving pre-K through 8th grade.
- Staff district-wide who care and are dedicated to student outcomes and readiness for what is next.
- AVID strategies and instruction methods.
- PBIS – SIMS recognizes the value of the efforts at SES as primary efforts end up being for students new to the district.

Weaknesses:

- High school culture.
- Partial implementation of AVID creates mixed perceptions and questions.
- Decreased rigor and expectations.
- Too many demands on staff mean they can't catch a breath, gather their thoughts to enable best efforts for student learning – frenetic pace is hard for students as well.
- Lack of advanced courses and relevant electives – high school and middle school.
- Insufficient supports for staff – district-wide for student behavior; high school- specific for staff.
- High school learning labs.
- Coordination with teachers by counseling office – too often students aren't in appropriate classes.

Opportunities:

- Consider combined learning opportunities for middle school students (opportunities are not the same at K-8 campuses).
- Consider adding adult education – especially English and GED for non-English families, but could also include exchange with English speakers who want to learn Spanish and other topics of interest.
- Consider ways to expand early childhood education district-wide and include childcare options (staff at a minimum, but community interest as well).
- Consider adding social curriculum.
- Consider total overhaul of high school schedule – trimester-based, six hour-long classes per day (elimination of Stayton diploma), hour-long single lunch (mixed views of on- versus off-campus though) – but this, gives students more time for a break, to eat, to interact, to make up tests (see next point), etc. Could allow staff better use of time as well.
- Consider offering proctored test retakes during lunch hour for more efficient and effective practice.

- Be deliberate about creating more interaction and more connection across all campuses, i.e., more older students helping younger students, activities and interaction beyond sports for middle schoolers, high schoolers, staff and coaches fostering a lot more relationships regularly across other campuses, etc.
- Find ways to be more deliberate and do more to expose students throughout school to careers; to offer many more intern opportunities for juniors and seniors while preparing freshman and sophomores for same.
- Develop innovative ways to make NSSD THE place to work – for example ways to provide more support to cope with challenging environment, to provide childcare for staff, to mitigate rent/moving/housing costs so new teachers want to move here, etc.
- Including student voices might also increase engagement.
- Faith-based community leaders stand ready to help.

Threats:

- Documentation and reporting – ODE and AVID certification.
- Behaviors – students and family function that gets in the way of student learning and emotional well-being. Frequency and magnitude growing as significant issue (new policy exacerbates).
- Still in recovery from COVID – primarily student engagement for many reasons, but too many students also came back “broken.”
- Challenge of retaining staff.

Other Observations

Willingness to Help:

- Government, business and faith-based community are willing and eager to help support students and staff.
- Internship programs.
- Mentorship programs.
- Teach a lesson(s) on their area(s) of expertise.
- Tutoring.
- Faith-based is willing to ask their congregations if they can help when there is a specific request.

Character, Life Skills and Readiness:

There was a strong emphasis on cultivating character traits and life skills among all the groups, including by students.

Concerns emerged regarding students’ readiness for future endeavors; many are perceived as lacking preparedness for higher education, independent living, and workforce expectations.

Social Emotional:

Great care was expressed about the social emotional well-being of students. The systems the district has in place, such as RULER, foster an environment that supports this. However, the escalating need for social-emotional support underscores the necessity for ongoing focus and resources in this area.

Academic “Right Sizing”:

- Rigor.
- Elective options, particularly in middle schools.
- Vertical alignment.
- High expectations with accountability.
- Students in the “right” class for them.

Future Ready:

- Prepared for what’s next.
- Foster independence, including financial literacy, navigating systems and having accountability.

Be the Destination District:

- Be the preferred employer. Staff want to be here or come here.
- Be the school of choice. Students want to be here or come here.
- School Culture.
- Staff Culture.
 - Transparency.
 - Professional support.
 - Professional development.
- Behavior support.
- Special Education support and adequate staffing.

Spanish Speaking Resources:

- More translators.
- Offer more Spanish-language documents, such as policies and academic materials, to facilitate communication and engagement with Spanish-speaking families.

Belonging and Connections:

- Community.
- Citizenship.
- Communication.

Categories

Feedback was categorized to facilitate the grouping of related items, acknowledging that certain comments may pertain to multiple categories. However, each feedback comment was assigned to a single category for organization.

Internal:

This group is board members and employees of the district - classified, certified and district office.

- Academic.
- Career.
- Communication.
- Community.
- Emotional.
- Growth.
- Independence.
- Social.

Students:

This group represents North Santiam School District students. The groups is largely made up of upper middle school students.

- Academic.
- Career.
- Communication.
- Emotional.
- Financial.
- Health.
- Independence.
- Social.

Families and External:

The groups represents families with students in district schools and (external) civic organizations, faith-based community, business, and any others that do not fall under internal, students or families.

- Academic.
- Career.
- Communication.
- Community.
- Emotional.
- Growth.
- Independence.
- Social.