



Nova Classical Academy

"Defining our Future: 2022 - 2027"

Strategic Planning Committee Meeting #1
Thursday, October 27, 2022



Welcome

- **Introductions**
- **Meeting Resources:** *Review Materials*
- **Ground Rules:** *Open/Honest Communication; Respect; All Ideas Valued; Have Fun!!!*
- **Housekeeping:** *Use the Chat Room or Unmute Microphone to Speak; Comfort Breaks as Needed*
- **Role:** *Develop the next Strategic Plan; Required M.S. 120B.11 Subd. 2; Supports WBWF and ESSA Requirements*
- **Process:** *MSBA Facilitation; Listening Session; Three Strategic Planning Committee Meetings; Resources Provided*
- **Session Goals:** *Work on Elements of the Strategic Plan*



**The Minnesota School Boards Association,
a leading advocate for public education,
supports, promotes, and strengthens the
work of public school boards.**



Thank You

IF YOU WANT TO GO FAST, GO
ALONE. IF YOU WANT TO GO FAR,
GO TOGETHER.

~NIGERIAN PROVERB



Session Goals

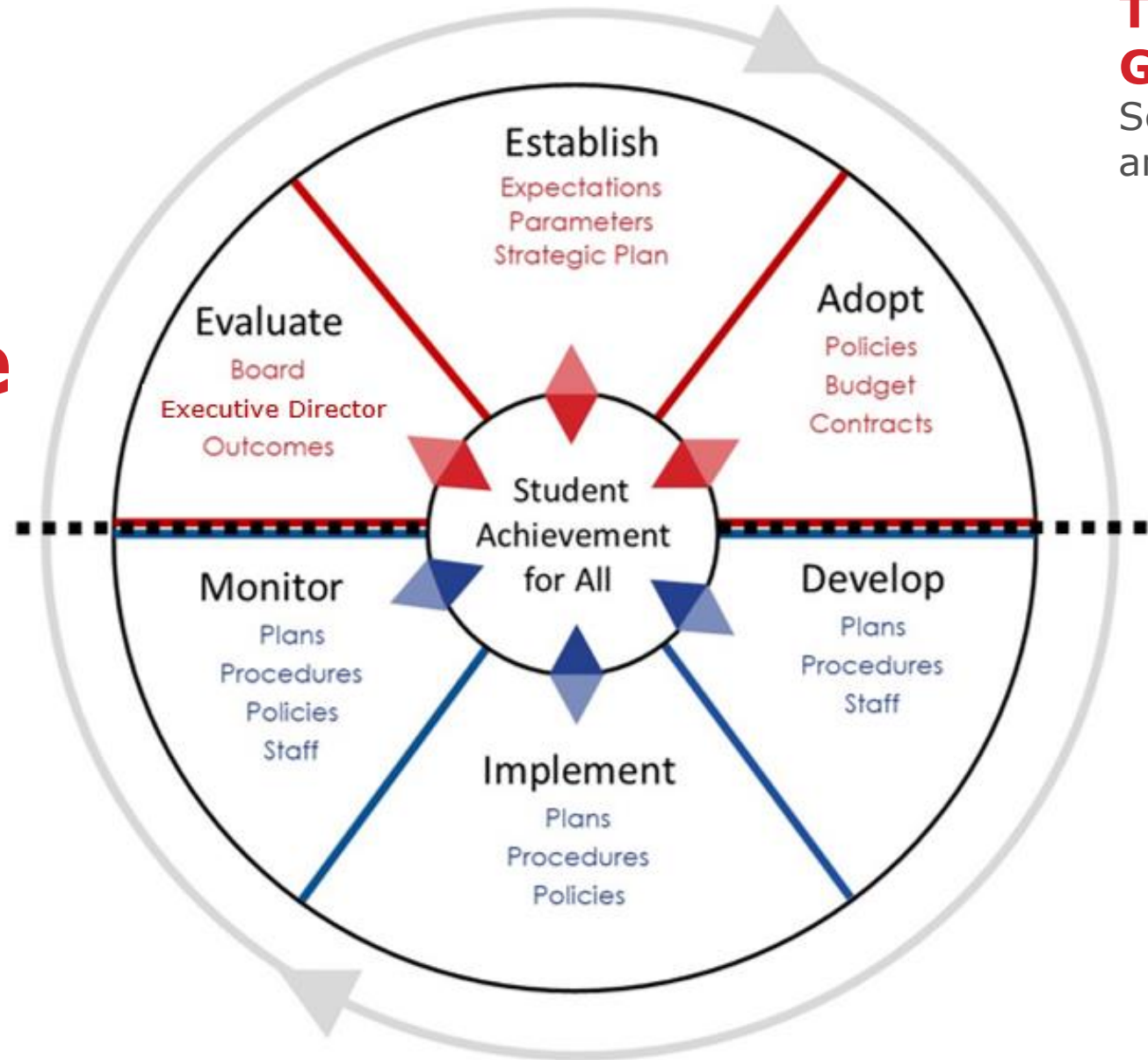
- **State-of-the-Academy – Executive Director of School**
- **Review results of “Strategic Planning Engagement Activities” – MSBA Staff**
- **Complete Environmental Scan - “Prouds, Possibilities, Must Haves Analysis”**
- **Time Permitting - Develop Belief Statements for the Academy**



The School Board Governs

Sets parameters and expectations

The Board Governance Model



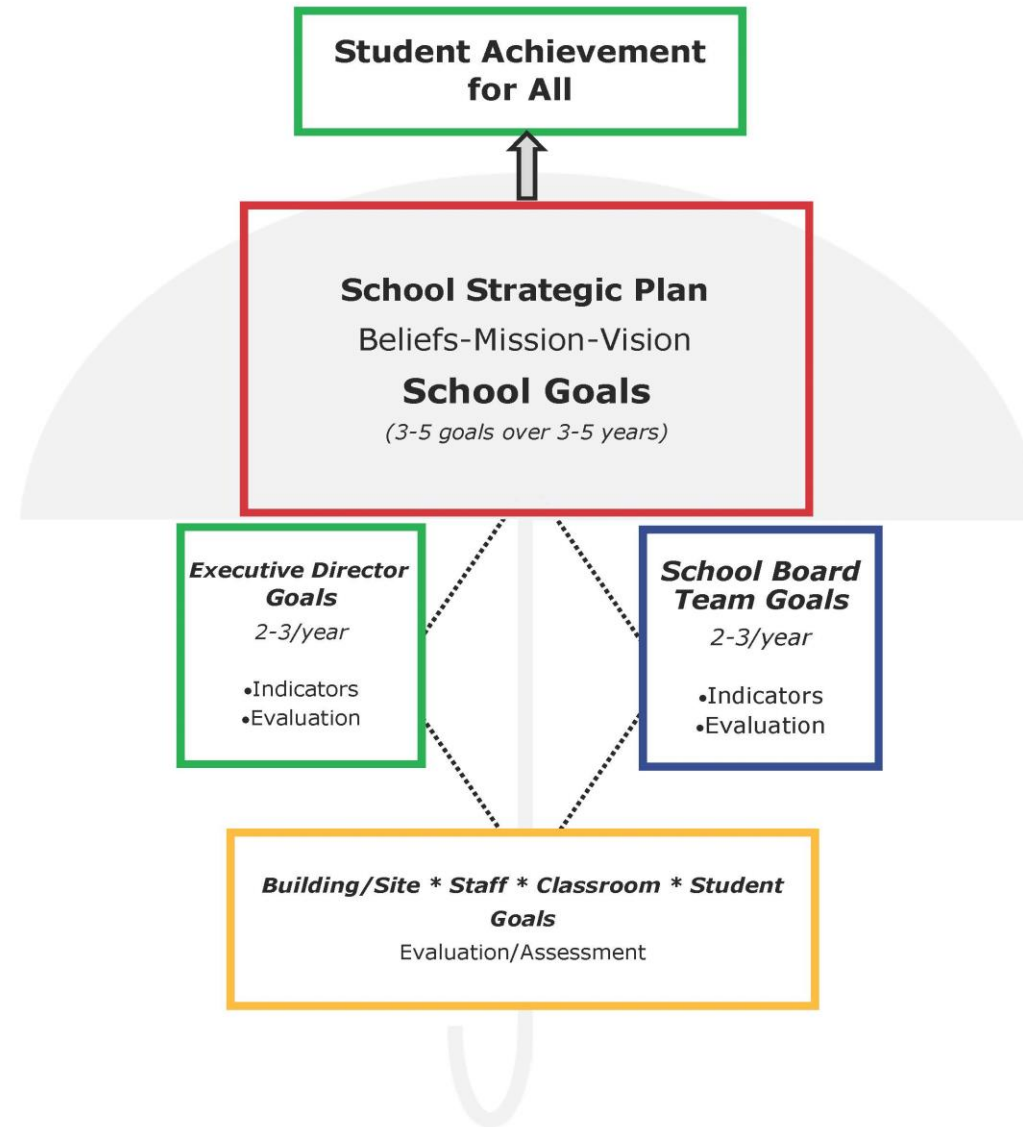
The Executive Director Manages

Provides leadership and supervision



School Goal Alignment

Strategic Governance Framework





State of the Nova Classical Academy

Executive Director Brett Wedlund



Reflections: State of the Academy Update

The purpose of the State of the Academy Update is to inform you about what is in order to help you think about what could be.

In your small groups: Share your reaction(s) to the State of the Academy Update.

- **What did you learn that you didn't know before?**
- **What surprised you?**
- **What would you like to know more about?**
- **What concerns do you have?**
- **What questions do you have?**

"EVEN IF YOU ARE ON THE RIGHT TRACK, YOU'LL GET
RUN OVER IF YOU JUST SIT THERE."



WILL ROGERS



Focusing on the Future

- **Are we meeting the requirements of the World's Best Workforce legislation?**
- **Are we educating all students?**
- **Are we providing Equitable Education for all students?**
- **Are we meeting the needs of our students, staff, teachers, administration, parents/guardians, and alumni?**
- **Are we satisfied with all systems and operations (food service, transportation, business/finance, technology, buildings and grounds, etc.)?**
- **Are we making the best decisions possible?**
- **Are we identifying the programs/services we should keep, modify, eliminate or add?**



Engagement Activities “Some Big Ideas” Strengths (from Surveys and Listening Sessions)

Teacher, Staff, Administrator, Board of Director (6)

School facilities are safe, secure, and well maintained.	94.67%
Policies, procedures, and resources are in place in regard to a safe, orderly, and caring environment that supports learning.	93.33%
The school does an excellent job of educating all students.	89.33%
The “climate” of the school building is conducive to teachers being able to teach and students being able to learn.	89.33%
The school uses student achievement data to inform and improve instruction.	86.67%
The school uses effective instructional programs, practices, and interventions to help all students.	85.14%

Student, Parent/Guardian, Alumni (6)

In general, I am satisfied with the quality of education provided by the school.	91.30%
School facilities are safe, secure, and well maintained.	90.87%
I am satisfied with the overall condition of the school's building.	89.70%
The school does an excellent job of educating all students.	87.26%
I am satisfied with the academic program of the school.	86.75%
In general, I am satisfied with the teachers of the school.	86.48%



Engagement Activities “Some Big Ideas” Strengths (from Surveys and Listening Sessions)

Staff Comments- Good teachers and staff; Fun activities-teacher; Staff-friendly; The teachers are good at learning; Smaller size-get to know teacher; Teachers and counselors helpful; The relationship the teachers have developed with their students and the way we as a school can get to know each other; Connection with teachers; Teacher support; Small class size to form a specific relationships with teachers; Smaller classes so better connection with teachers; Caring faculty; Staff feel heard and support one another; Strong colleagues who are content experts and trained in classical pedagogy make this school what it is; We do a nice job emphasizing to students why it is we do what we do in school; We have committed staff that seek to do what is best for their students; The special education department is doing a nice job of setting up professional development opportunities for members of the special education team; Collaboration with colleagues who are interested in collaborating is amazing; Teachers with strong content knowledge; Clear dedication of teachers especially during the pandemic; Teachers; Teachers care-they love my kids; Teacher support for tutoring and assistance; Teachers are great; Teachers, support staff, leadership know my children personally and address them when they attend to their social/emotional behavior; Quality of Teachers (2); Excellent teachers and support staff; The teachers are incredible, and I really appreciate that the leadership appears to take a growth mindset about the teachers and is happy to help teachers grow where they see the need; Supportive Educators; Attentive, Responsive Principals; Teacher availability; Teachers that are committed to the students; Staff involvement; Teaching strategies (memorize, analyze, synthesize); Support from other staff; Colleagues will help-like a family; Dedicated staff/teachers; Faculty Collaboration- facilitating teamwork across schools; Building relationships with teacher, student, and parent; Connected community of faculty, students, and families; Caring community across all groups: students and adults; Amazing students and staff!; Collaborative faculty community; Dedicated and skillful/knowledgeable faculty and staff; Good staff community; Staff passionate about student success; Solid staff; Consistent leadership team; Excellent classroom management and choreography of movement around the building to make for a smooth day for students and staff; Fantastic teaching; Dedicated and skillful teachers; Warm inviting classrooms and friendly faces that are students, staff, and faculty; Student-focused staff; Staff stay, not a high turnover; Intentions of staff well-aligned; Strong, caring relationships between teachers/students



Engagement Activities “Some Big Ideas”

Strengths (from Surveys and Listening Sessions)

– Continued

School of Logic 6th-8th Grade Students and School of Rhetoric 9th-12th Grade Students–

- Extracurriculars
- AB day-system is good
- Disciplined environment
- A comparatively peaceful student body environment where it's okay to be smart
- The core values of our school are good, and the grammar, logic, and rhetoric system works really well
- Discussion-based classes as well as lecture
- Nice to know people since elementary school

Teachers/Staff –

- Great students
- High standards for curriculum
- Staff feel heard and support one another
- Strong colleagues who are content experts and trained in classical pedagogy make this school what it is
- Most students care about their work and have home support
- We begin by seeing students as individuals and future citizens, where our mission was to nurture their whole selves through reason and discourse
- We have had an intentional curriculum that created value-added meaning as students moved through and across the curricular sequence
- We have culture that emphasizes the building of humanity for success outside of school
- Collaboration with colleagues who are interested in collaborating is amazing
- Teachers with strong content knowledge



Engagement Activities “Some Big Ideas”

Strengths (from Surveys and Listening Sessions)

– Continued

Parent / Guardian / Alumni –

- **Communication and taking feedback to action**
- **Love the school/rigor/focus on virtues**
- **Parent involvement opportunities**
- **Families are ready to support the school if we were given better opportunities**
- **Teachers, support staff, leadership know my children personally and address them when they attend to their social/emotional behavior**
- **Facility of school building is clean, nice, upkeep well**
- **K - 12 opportunity, public reputation, tuition-free, classical model**
- **High expectations for academics and behavior**
- **Teaching strategies (memorize, analyze, synthesize)**



Engagement Activities “Some Big Ideas”

Strengths (from Surveys and Listening Sessions)

– Continued

Board of Directors –

- **Character development in students**
- **Faculty Collaboration- facilitating teamwork across schools**
- **Value and virtue-based education and community-building model**
- **Building relationships with teacher, student, and parent**
- **Strong and interesting curriculum**
- **Connected community of faculty, students, and families**
- **Currently in a strong financial position**
- **Rigorous and engaging academics**
- **Accessible academics and extracurriculars**
- **Enthusiastic and interested stakeholders**



Engagement Activities “Some Big Ideas”

Strengths (from Surveys and Listening Sessions)

– Continued

Administration –

- **Great communication-always improving-fearless communication**
- **Strong parent-teacher organization**
- **Virtues and character are emphasized and tied to curriculum**
- **Excellent classroom management and choreography of movement around the building to make for a smooth day for students and staff**
- **Rich curriculum that connects the students with our shared world in so many ways**
- **Warm inviting classrooms and friendly faces that are students, staff, and faculty**
- **Small-school feel and ability to adapt to the needs of our students and families, especially through COVID**
- **Student-focused support – well-behaved student body**
- **Safe, welcoming, open for all**
- **Involved parent/community**
- **Increased diversity in student population**



Engagement Activities “Some Big Ideas” Opportunities (from Surveys and Listening Sessions)

Teacher, Staff, Administrator, Board of Director (7)

The school seeks input from all stakeholders on key decisions regarding school policies and practices.	60.00%
The school effectively manages available funding and resources needed to advance student learning and achievement.	60.00%
The entire school is committed to long-range, continuous improvement and has agreement on a shared purpose and direction for the school.	58.11%
The school works to build community support among a wide variety of groups.	54.67%
All school staff are equipped to address bias and exclusionary language or behavior when it occurs.	54.05%
The school has a process to ensure that the school board-adopted curriculum for a course or grade level is being taught by all teachers.	53.33%
The board of directors is visible and accessible throughout the school and school community.	44.59%

Student, Parent/Guardian, Alumni (5)

I am satisfied with the overall condition of the school's fine arts facilities.	57.69%
I am satisfied with the opportunities the school's co-curricular program provides for students.	56.53%
The school provides good opportunities in career and technical education.	49.36%
I am satisfied with the school's budget and use of funds.	46.28%
The school spends its funding effectively and efficiently.	42.98%



Engagement Activities “Some Big Ideas” Opportunities (from Surveys and Listening Sessions)

School of Logic 6th-8th Grade Students and School of Rhetoric 9th-12th Grade Students –

- Lunch – Some portions are too small
- Need longer time for lunch
- Expanding the grounds for more extracurriculars
- Study skills (study hall) get more homework in 8th grade and less time to work on it
- More clubs and extracurriculars and athletics and languages
- Recognition programs for good work versus rewarding bad behavior that has improved
- Efforts towards hiring people of color for Nova faculty/staff
- Hearing even more input from student voices for impactful decisions!
- Connecting with the community
- More electives
- Making rewards like merits easier to gain for everyone, not just those improving
- Increased real-world experience

Teachers/Staff –

- Address facilities for the long term
- Need time for teachers to collaborate
- Well thought out and intentional growth
- Build a library
- We have outgrown the space and didn't build a building that would foster school culture, the arts, or collaboration
- Admin might want to engage with students in a more authentic way
- A Classical School is supposed to be highly intentional; it seems we do a lot of things without clear intention
- Replacement of Merit/Demerit system
- Opportunity for upper-school students to design lessons for lower school students that are classically sound
- How to fulfill classical education pedagogy with larger class sizes and different student population
- Appropriate compensation commensurate to work required



Engagement Activities “Some Big Ideas”

Opportunities (from Surveys and Listening Sessions) – Continued

Parent / Guardian / Alumni –

- Under emphasis on whole person once in the upper school i.e., physical activity is less and academics is more
- Time needed for homework; Need to find a find balance
- What's the plan for the land - “The triangle”?
- Need an auditorium/big fundraisers
- Listen to students and graduates at why they leave Nova
- Overall security and safety
- Need more Advanced Placement for science students and financial courses
- More Post Secondary Education Options
- Typing class
- Reintroduce band and orchestra or give referral source
- College and career counseling for juniors and seniors
- Educate the whole child, not just the MCA test score
- Class sizes are growing beyond what Nova promised families
- Early lunch times - and widely different times between siblings
- Tight space, not enough room for kids to do more extracurricular activities that support academic performance
- Increasing the “joy” for the upper schoolers experience
- Increase in BIPOC teachers & staff
- Deliberate, measurable equity & inclusion efforts
- Communication consistently with upper schoolteachers. Some email, some use Google classroom, some add docs to Infinite Campus, some don’t use anything
- Continue emphasis on virtues in upper school
- Increase awareness of other ways of knowing through curriculum and classroom and lived experience
- More support for special needs or learning challenges
- Allow fundraising for specific areas (clubs, sports, etc.)



Engagement Activities “Some Big Ideas”

Opportunities (from Surveys and Listening Sessions)– Continued

Board of Directors –

- A better focus on priorities
- Better definition of who Nova is/wants to be
- Concern that class sizes are large/getting larger
- Not a wide array of extra-curricular opportunities
- Ethnicity of teachers/staff; They do not represent all students
- Holding true to the motto "not for school but for life"- incorporating that into programming, curriculum, and community building
- Better explanation for the need to rebrand and create a new tagline- know yourself know the world- what does that mean and how does it fit
- Go back to our roots of a smaller school- lower class sizes
- Communications- create a position that coordinates the communication efforts
- Alumni- create an alumni association that draws people back to nova and partner with our alums with the "for life" part of our motto
- Continue to do more long-range (5 year+) financial planning to support whatever goals we set
- Possibly growing our own administrators so we don't lose so much momentum when we lose a principal, Director of Curriculum, or Executive Director
- Some programming increases: band or instrument education, developing existing extracurriculars
- Leverage interest in equity issues to increase support for all our students
- Make careful decisions about "the triangle"
- Continue to get folks re-engaged post-Covid shutdown
- Continue to train, support, and retain faculty and staff
- Classrooms are overenrolled, limiting teacher's effectiveness
- Board and admin reluctant to take risks



Engagement Activities “Some Big Ideas”

Opportunities (from Surveys and Listening Sessions)

– Continued

Administration –

- **Facilities design not conducive to programs**
- **Need more robust interventions**
- **Lack of cohesion between upper and lower school culture**
- **Community gathering spaces for upper school students and families**
- **Music program - bring back and improve access to the instrumental music program**
- **Utilize "the triangle" space to expand**
- **Define the School of Logic more as a bridge to our School of Rhetoric; carry over the virtue education that is done so well in the Lower School as a way to educate the whole person up to 12th grade**
- **Diversity of staff**
- **Addition of an additional principal for 6-8 or 9-12**
- **Facilities - need for flexible spaces, multi-purpose rooms**
- **Facilities - need for athletic, instrumental, and performing art space**



Our Collective Goal

Striving for Minnesota's World's Best Workforce



Each plan must address the following goals:

1. All children are ready to start kindergarten.
2. All third-graders can read at grade level.
3. All achievement gaps between students are closed.
4. All students are ready for career and/or postsecondary education.
5. All students graduate from high school.

Under Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.11, school boards are to adopt a long-term, comprehensive strategic plan to support and improve teaching and learning.



Equitable Education

MSBA's Definition

"A collective set of conditions where all students are given access to the opportunities, resources, and supports they need to learn and develop to their fullest potential."



DIVERSITY

- The differences that make a difference.
- Numerical representation of people of diverse backgrounds, viewpoints, and experiences.

Count the People





INCLUSION

- Diverse perspectives are included.
- Actions, policies, practices, and behaviors support the differences.
- Everyone feels a sense of belonging.

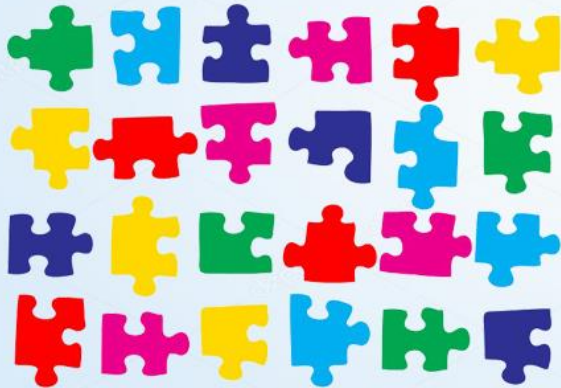
The People Count



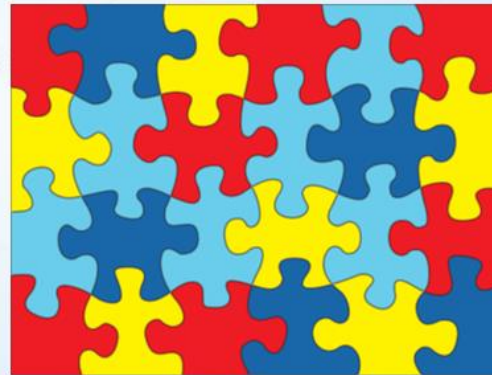


Diversity AND Inclusion

DIVERSITY



INCLUSION





Distinguishing Between Equity and Equality

Equality = Sameness

Equity = Fairness

Equality \neq Equity

Sameness \neq Fairness





EDUCATIONAL EQUITY



A collective set of conditions where all students are given access to the opportunities, resources, and supports they need to learn and develop to their fullest potential.



Eliminating barriers.



Increasing access.



Distinguishing Between Equality and Equity

Equality	Equity
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Every student receives a computer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Every student receives the device they need to learn.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Every student has stable WiFi connectivity.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Every student is given the skills and knowledge needed to use the device.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Every student has access to a space conducive for learning.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Every student has the opportunity be fully engaged.



The Mindset of an Equitable Education



The belief that each student, can, will, and shall learn.



The belief that every student belongs and is deserving of the resources they need to achieve.



The belief that each of us has the ability and responsibility to work toward transformational change.



Environmental Scan

Prouds

Possibilities

Must Haves/ Must Address



Prouds can also be your Strengths:

- **Definition:** Strengths are internal, positive assets (both tangible and intangible) that contribute to the ability of the school to achieve its mission. These are within the school's control.
- **Importance in Planning:** Strengths are those attributes that are the most effective in helping a school achieve its intended purpose. Schools that achieve excellence do so by capitalizing on their strengths; that is, doing what they do best.



Possibilities can also be your Opportunities:

Definition: Opportunities are potential areas for growth and higher performance.

Opportunities are external, positive factors that represent the reasons why the school is likely to do well.

Importance in Planning: Opportunities are those areas of time and circumstances that, if capitalized on, can push the school's mission forward.



Examples of Prouds

Tangible

Excellent Financial Condition

Strong Student Test Results

Small Class Size

Multiple Opportunities for Students in Arts and Athletics

Intangible

Strong Leadership

Dedicated Teachers and Staff

School Reputation

School Pride



Examples of Possibilities

Market the school

Attract new families and students to the school

Create a solid financial base

Develop effective school/community partnerships

Ensure that buildings, grounds, FF&E and technology infrastructure contribute to student success

Identify the skills, attributes, and abilities expected for High School graduates



Examples of Must Haves/Must Address

Improved test scores

Addressing growing mental health needs

Improve Stakeholder communication

Effectively market the school – Increase enrollment

Expand Career and Technical Education

Identify skills, attributes, and abilities expected of a high school graduate

Identify and create school/community partnerships

Update facilities and grounds

Stabilize the budget



Focus Area Analysis

Environmental Scan

- **Individually, list “Prouds”; “Possibilities”; and “Must Haves/Must Address” - Reference Reports – MSBA Staff will share definitions. Utilize Strategic Planning Engagement Activities Report, State of Academy Update, personal thoughts, ideas, observations.**
- **As a group, identify 3-5 descriptors for each area.**
- **Record and share via Forms Link.**



Review

Focus Area Analysis:

“Carousel Walk”

- **Group analyzes each topic area by “virtually walking around”**
- **Add to/refine analysis – Any “Big Ideas” missing**
- **Clarification/Questions**



Belief Statements

- **State the values the group holds for the Academy.**
- **Establish the moral and ethical priorities that guide the Academy's activities.**
- **Should be sincere and uncompromising positions.**



Examples

We believe:

- **All individuals have value.**
- **All students can learn, though at different rates and in different ways.**
- **In doing the right thing, in the right way, at the right time, even when no one is aware.**
- **In valuing others for their diverse talents, backgrounds, cultures, and viewpoints.**
- **In a guaranteed and viable curriculum.**



Writing the Academy's Belief Statements:

- **Think about what is important.**
 - **What do we believe about kids and learning?**
 - **What do we believe about teachers and teaching?**
 - **What do we believe about the role of parents/guardians?**
 - **What do we believe about the role of the community?**
- **Write them Share with the group.**
- **Agree on four to six belief statements and write them on the handout and post it.**

MSBA Public Schools | Strategic Plan | 2022-2027

BELIEF STATEMENTS

The MSBA Public Schools believe that:

- Collaboration, communication, and support between the home, the school, and the community have a positive impact on our students.
- Students learn best through authentic and engaging experiences.
- Involved students are invested students.
- By embracing diversity, we promote compassion and understanding ensuring integrity and unity among students, parents, and staff.

MISSION STATEMENT

Investing in students so they succeed and excel in an ever-changing world.

VISION STATEMENT

Inspiring Excellence for *All*



FOCUS AREA	GOALS	OBJECTIVES
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT	1. Achieve the goals of the World’s Best Workforce (WBWF) for all students in the school district.	<p>1.1. The percentage of preschoolers who have attended MSBA Public Schools who meet or exceed growth will increase by at least two percentage points from Spring 2022 to Spring 2023 in the areas of language, literacy and communications; social-emotional development; and number knowledge.</p> <p>1.2. For the 2023-2024 school year, 65% of students enrolled at MSBA Public Schools as of October 1 in grades K-3 will meet their individual growth targets on Reading Assessment, which is an increase from 57.5% the year prior.</p>
STUDENT SUPPORT	2. Develop and implement a well-defined student support system that enables all learners to achieve at high levels.	<p>2.1. Establish a districtwide Professional Development model that ensures all staff from all departments are educated on Social-Emotional Learning Indicators, as defined by the Minnesota Department of Education, during the 2024-2025 school year.</p> <p>2.2. By the end of 2025-2026, develop a defined system of criteria for each tier in the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) model covering academics, behaviors, and attendance.</p>



Next Steps

- **Review Summary of Environmental Scan Analysis**
- **Identify Core Values**
- **Develop or Finalize Belief Statements**
- **Create Mission Statement and Vision Statement**
- **Begin “Goal Writing” for Focus Areas**
- **Complete Homework Assignment for Strategic Planning Committee Meeting #2 on **Thursday, November 10 at 5 PM**. A Meeting Invitation and Resources will be emailed to you.**



**Thank You
for Your Time
and Input!!**