

Adopted: August 14, 2014

Updated: February 2015

Updated: October 2015

Oakes Public Schools



Strategic Plan

August 2014

Introduction

Strategic Planning Process

In April 2014, a group consisting of school board members, administration, school staff, parents, and community members took part in a process aimed at identifying the main things the Oakes Public School (OPS) district needed to pay attention to and plan for during the next five years.

Participants were divided into seven sub-groups and asked to respond to questions in order to identify Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats/Trends. Finally, participants were asked to consider the other four areas and identify the main things they believed the district should pay attention to and plan for in the next five years. “Main Thing” was defined as a factor that is likely to affect the school district such as current or emerging problems, issues, opportunities, threats, or trends.

Throughout the planning process, the concept of “building from strength” was emphasized. The philosophy adopted by the group was that nothing in a Strategic Plan should diminish the strengths, which have enabled the school system to be successful to this point. The following major strengths were identified:

- **PEOPLE:** The staff is caring, supportive, approachable, dependable, and engaged. The teaching staff is dedicated to improving through participation in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). There is strong, enthusiastic leadership from the administration and Board. There is a strong, proactive school board that puts time, effort, and thought into decisions.
- **PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR STUDENTS:** There is a diverse curriculum at the high school that offers both career and college readiness classes. The curriculum is enriched through ITV, online classes, and a partnership with the Vocational Center. There are dual credit (earn both high school and college credit) classes in English and math. There are multiple opportunities to participate in extra-curricular activities (e.g., music, drama, speech, sports).
- **TECHNOLOGY:** There have been recent upgrades in technology hardware. All the classrooms have Smart Boards. Ipad, laptop computers, and wireless labs have been added.
- **SCHOOL OPERATIONS:** There is a low student to teacher ratio. There is a “welcoming” atmosphere in the school. The district is financially stable. Students are well-disciplined. There is a school resource officer (SRO). There is good and timely communication between the school and community (e.g., PowerSchool [an internet-based student information system], website, mobile applications, media blasts). Lines of two-way communication have been opened.
- **FACILITIES:** There are modern, well-maintained, highly functional facilities, particularly the Vocational Center and gyms.
- **COMMUNITY SUPPORT:** The school works well with the community. The community supports the school.

Introduction

In addition to strengths, the groups identified a cluster of “main things” the district might pay attention to and plan for during the next five years. These included the following:

- STAFFING: OPS should recruit and retain quality teachers, administrators, and staff.
- PROGRAMS AND SERVICES: OPS should maintain and improve its curriculum to ensure students are career and college ready.
- SCHOOL OPERATIONS: OPS should develop effective, consistent policies for managing disruptive student behavior. OPS should promote community relations to foster community involvement and help make the community proud of the school.
- EDUCATION FUNDING: OPS should do what it can to ensure the district stays in a stable financial position. OPS should be alert to the implications of the movement to eliminate property tax.
- FACILITIES: OPS must maintain its aging building, particularly the high school. OPS should be alert to changes in space needs.
- SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY: OPS should address the safety issues caused by not having a central entry point and centralized office.
- TECHNOLOGY: OPS should work to anticipate technology needs and changes in technology use.

Introduction

Later in April 2014, the group convened again. Recommended goals to address the “main things” identified in the previous session were reviewed and approved. Seven small groups were formed with each group focusing on one of the potential goals. The tasks of each group were as follows: 1) Review the language of the goal and make changes as appropriate (WHAT), 2) Review the rationale for the goal that included the desired outcomes wished to be achieved and make changes as appropriate (WHY), 3) Review the potential strategies to achieve the potential goal and make changes as appropriate (HOW), 4) List special considerations during implementation, and 5) Review the potential assessments to monitor progress or measure success during implementation and make changes as appropriate. All of the plans were displayed online and the planning session participants were invited to rate how much they agreed with the plans from each group. They also ranked the degree of priority the district should give each goal. The response rate was 24 of 43 or 56%, and the results are displayed in a document titled “Planning Summary Report,” which is on file at the OPS Superintendent’s office and may be reviewed upon request.

Maintenance Goals

The aim of maintenance goals is to continue past practices and prevent backsliding. While usually no new strategy is required for a maintenance goal, the school board and administration should be aware that maintaining the curriculum, maintaining funding practices, and maintaining facilities are perceived as something very important to stakeholders, and, therefore, nothing in the strategic plan should detract from or diminish what already exists.

Strategic Goals

The goals and strategies listed are intended to address the main things the Oakes Public School district will pay attention to and plan for during the next five years.

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Oakes Public Schools Maintenance Goals 1-5

Maintenance Goal 1: The Oakes School District will develop a **Master Plan for building and grounds.**

Background: In addition to maintaining aging buildings and grounds, it was recommended that the District should be alert to changes in space needs.

Maintenance Goal 1 Status:

- The Oakes School District had a facilities assessment completed in the spring of 2015 by the Consolidated Construction Company. This assessment will be used to create a Master Plan for the building and grounds. The Oakes School Board will use this plan to guide future needs within the district as it relates to buildings and grounds.

Updated- 10.05.15

Maintenance Goal 2: The Oakes School District will develop and implement a plan to assess technology usage and as well as to ensure that **technology is used wisely to increase learning for all students.**

Background: The district recently added a great deal of technology with computers, Ipads, smartboards, and other tools being used in the elementary and high school. However the group recommended that more could be done to ensure that technology is used wisely to increase learning for all students. The current rage is to purchase laptops or iPads for every student, while some schools have gone completely away from textbook purchases. The group agreed that technology will not necessarily result in an increase in student learning, it is how technology is used that makes the most difference. A focus on professional development with technology was also discussed as a means to provide increases in student learning.

Maintenance Goal 2 Status:

- The Oakes School District created a Technology Committee in the spring of 2013 for the purpose of discussing and meeting this goal.

Oakes Public Schools Maintenance Goals 1-5

Maintenance Goal 3: The Oakes School District will develop and implement a plan to **identify and prioritize new programs and services.**

Background: The groups recommended that more should be done to improve the curriculum to ensure students are college and career ready.

Maintenance Goal 3 Status:

- The Oakes Public School Board adopted the strategic plan on August 14th, 2014

Maintenance Goal 4: The Oakes School District will develop and implement a plan to better **manage disruptive student behavior.**

Background: The group recommended that school operations change and that the district develop effective, consistent policies for managing disruptive student behavior.

Maintenance Goal 4 Status:

- The Oakes Public School Board adopted the strategic plan on August 14th, 2014

Oakes Public Schools Maintenance Goals 1-5

Maintenance Goal 5: The Oakes School District will develop and implement a plan for continued **promotion of strong community relations.**

Background: The groups recommended that the school operations change and that the district develop a plan to Promote community relations, to foster community involvement, and to help make the community proud of the school.

Maintenance Goal 5 Status:

- The Oakes Public School Board adopted the strategic plan on August 14th, 2014

Oakes Public Schools Strategic Goal 1

GOAL: The Oakes School District will develop and implement a plan to **recruit and retain quality teachers, administrators, and other staff.**

Background: The most frequently mentioned need was to recruit and retain high quality teachers, administrators, and staff. While salary and benefits are important factors, other factors usually come into play in a decision to come to and stay at a school.

Rationale/Desired Outcomes:

- Retain high quality existing teaching staff.
- Recruit excellent candidates for open teaching positions.
- Recruit and retain high quality and effective administration.
- Recruit and retain high quality staff in other areas.

| Strategies/Action Steps | | Timelines | People Responsible or Involved | Considerations | Assessment |
|-------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | A Professional Development (PD) plan was adopted in the spring of 2014 by the school board to address the growing needs of the teaching staff in regards to PD. | Implementation of the PD plan began at the start of the 2014-2015 school year. | Professional Development Committee and School Board members | Consider increasing financial allocations to provide added PD opportunities for teachers for the 2015-2016 school year. | Distribute a survey at the end of the 2014-2015 school year to teachers to determine the effectiveness of the plan. |
| 2. | Conduct an exit interview with teachers, administrators, and other staff to determine reasons why an employee is leaving the school district. | The written exit interview will be conducted at the time the employee notifies the district they are leaving. | Administrative Assistant will distribute the interviews. | Interviews are voluntary and not all employees may participate in the interview. | Interview information that is gathered will be distributed to Admin and School Board members |
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Strategic Goal 1 Status:

- The Oakes Public School Board adopted the strategic plan on August 14th, 2014

Oakes Public Schools
Strategic Goal 1

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To be Continued.....

Oakes Public Schools Strategic Goal 2

GOAL: The Oakes School District will develop and implement a plan to **review and update school safety and security plans and procedures.**

Background: The groups identified that not having a central entry point and a centralized office is a safety and security concern. Although not listed as a “main thing,” the groups listed other safety concerns such as cyber-bulling and threats of violence.

Rationale/Desired Outcomes:

- Children and parents believe the school is safe and secure and they feel free from threats (physical, verbal, electronic).
- Staff and administration feel confident in their ability to respond to any type of emergency situation.

| Strategies/Action Steps | | Timelines | People Responsible or Involved | Considerations | Assessment |
|-------------------------|--|---|--|---|--|
| 1. | Develop a safety and security committee that will periodically review safety plans and procedures in the district | Committee was created at the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year and meets on a need basis at this time. | Committee representation involves members from the school staff, community, and school board. | The committee representation may change and members can be added as necessary. | Task completed. Committee is in place. |
| 2. | Conduct safety assessment to determine needs in addressing safety and security issues in the district: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All potential safety and security gaps including not having a central entry point and a centralized office already identified. • The degree that staff and administration feel confident in their ability to respond to any type of emergency situation. | Safety assessments were conducted during the 2013-2014 school year. | The safety committee, law enforcement from four county area, ND Department of Homeland Security, and Wench Associates assisted in conducting safety assessments for the district during the 2013-2014 school year. | Several assessments have already taken place. Use information already gathered to determine a plan. The plan needs to be simple (e.g., flip manual, for staff. Include all staff members/substitute teachers). | Task completed. |

Oakes Public Schools Strategic Goal 2

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| | | | | There needs to be PD (Professional Development) training for staff. | |
| 3. | Develop a partnership with the city of Oakes to hire a part-time School Resource Officer (SRO) to assist in addressing safety and security needs in the district. | In January of 2014 the city of Oakes and the school district entered into an official agreement through the 2016-2017 school year for a part-time SRO at the Oakes Public Schools. | The city of Oakes and the school board. | Serious consideration needs to be taken at the end of this agreement in the spring of 2017. Will the school district want to continue providing funds to pay for the part-time SRO position? | Ongoing and will be evaluated at the end of the 2016-2017 school year. |
| 4. | The district addressed the need for more updated safety and security by changing the door handles and locks for all of the classrooms in our facilities. In addition 10 key-less entries were added to the exterior doors of the facility. | This project was completed in the spring of 2014. | The recommendation for this change came from the safety committee and final approval from the Oakes School Board. | The district will need to keep an updated inventory of keys and maintain the safety and security procedures to be established during the 2014-2015 school year. | Task is completed. |
| 5. | The school staff will participate in safety exercises and drills on a regular basis. After conducting these drills without students, the next plan of action will be to include students as part of the safety drills. | Safety drills will be conducted on a periodical basis throughout the school year as mandated by North Dakota Century Code. | School administration will work alongside the School Resource Officer. | A team will evaluate the drills and make recommendations to the administration and safety committee for areas to improve. | This ongoing plan of action will occur frequently throughout the school year. Assessment of the drills will be compiled at the end of the school year |

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| | | | | | and changes made as necessary. |
| 6. | <p>A new emergency flipchart and emergency operations plan (EOP) will need to be developed to meet the need of safety and security in the school district.</p> <p>Both of these manuals should include safety information that is applicable for the school staff in emergency situations.</p> | <p>The emergency flipchart has been completed and distributed to teachers. These charts will be included in the emergency bags along with other emergency materials. The EOP plan will be developed throughout the 2014-2015 school year and finalized prior to the start of the 2015-2016 school year.</p> | <p>The safety committee of the district and the school board have tasked the administration and school resource officer with the task of completing these manuals.</p> | <p>The district will need to pay close attention to the always changing emergency plans and procedures for the school district. The flipchart and plans should be reviewed semi-annually by the school staff and a full review done each summer by the administration. The EOP plan should also be reviewed annually by the staff and administration.</p> | <p>The emergency flipchart has been completed by August of 2014. The emergency operations plan (EOP) will be completed by the start of the 2015-2016 school year.</p> |
| 7. | <p>A new centralized office located between the elementary and high school buildings is currently being constructed. Upon completion there will be one main entry point and all administrative offices will move to one location. The one office will be built to allow guests/visitors/parents to enter into the school at this location after checking in with a school staff member.</p> | <p>Construction of the centralized office has begun and estimated for completion in February 2016.</p> | <p>The school board and administration were involved in the design and overseeing of the centralized office project.</p> | <p>The school board and administration considered costs of the project, safety and security needs, and timeline for the project.</p> | <p>Task will be completed in February 2016.</p> |

Oakes Public Schools Strategic Goal 2

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| 8. | New procedures for school bus safety has been reviewed, revised, and implemented across the school district. | Procedures were reviewed during the summer of 2015 and implemented at the beginning of the 2015-2016 school year. | The school administration, transportation director, school resource officer, and bus drivers were involved in revising safety procedures for the school bus. | The district needs to consider a continued process to review and revise procedures as necessary considering changes in situations and technology with school buses. | Ongoing |
| 9. | | | | | |

Strategic Goal 2 Status:

- The Oakes Public School Board adopted the strategic plan on August 14th, 2014

