



OAK LAWN-HOMETOWN

School District 123

Strategic Plan

2019-2024

A Long-Range Plan for the Future

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Introduction

One of the most important responsibilities of the board of education and superintendent is to establish a vision, mission, and strategic direction for a school district. Developing a shared focus and clear direction are essential characteristics of a high-performing school district. This is most effectively accomplished by working collaboratively with all stakeholders to create a comprehensive blueprint for success from which all decisions are measured and assessed.

Purpose

The purpose of strategic planning is to set overall goals for the school district and to develop a plan to achieve them. Strategic planning is an organizational management activity that is used to set priorities, focus energy and resources, strengthen operations, ensure that employees and all stakeholders are working toward common goals, establish agreement around desired results, and assess and adjust the organization's direction in response to a changing environment. It is an effort that produces fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, who it serves, what it does, and why it does it, with a focus on the future. Effective strategic planning articulates not only where an organization is going and the actions needed to make progress, but also how it will know if it is successful. Strategic planning provides clarity, direction, and focus for the school system, which ultimately drives organizational alignment and communicates a plan to the community.

Definitions

A **Strategic Plan** is a document that establishes the direction of our school system. It is used to communicate organizational goals and the actions needed to achieve those goals, with a focus on optimizing our future potential. Effective strategic planning articulates not only where our organization is going and the actions needed to make progress, but also how we will know if we are successful.

The Oak Lawn-Hometown School District 123 strategic plan is formatted into goals, strategic initiatives, desired outcomes, and success metrics. **Goals** define what our district wants to achieve over the next five years. A **Strategic Initiative** is a long-term plan of action or work that needs to be accomplished if our goals are to be achieved. Basically, a Strategic Initiative is what gets us to where we want to go. **Desired outcomes** are the result of well deployed strategies. They clarify what we should see happening if the Strategic Initiative was working well. **Success Metrics** help Board of Education, administrators, staff, and the community assess how well a Strategic Initiative is working, if it is moving our district closer to the goal or not. Success Metrics are measures that provide accurate feedback to decision makers so they can judge if things are going according to plan or if adjustments need to be made.

Our **Vision** statement focuses on tomorrow and what an organization wants to ultimately become. Our **Mission** statement focuses on today and what our organization does to achieve its Vision. Both are vital in directing goals and providing guidance in making systemic decisions.

Core Values are ideas that we hold to be important. Core Values stem from our beliefs and determine how we interact and behave, which affect our behavior and character.

Guiding Principles are fundamental truths that serve as the foundation for our system of beliefs, behaviour, or chain of reasoning. These principles help define what we commit to being a leader in and how that commitment is prioritized and present in our decision-making and practices.

Core Values and Guiding Principles are used to drive decision-making and ultimately help shape our culture.

Expectations

VISION: (What we strive to become...)

A dynamic and supportive environment that ignites lifelong learners who embrace diversity and contribute positively to our community and global society.

MISSION: (What we do today to achieve our vision..)

Preparing today's learners for tomorrow's world.

Core Values

CHILDREN...We believe each child has unlimited potential and deserves equal access to challenging and comprehensive learning experiences in an optimal learning environment.

PEOPLE...We believe in recruiting, hiring and retaining quality and diverse staff, developing positive relationships, and providing meaningful, continuous learning.

LEARNING...We believe in providing an engaging and active educational experience infused in whole-child success and community engagement to foster lifelong learning.

COMMUNICATION...We believe transparency and open two-way communication build positive relationships, trust, and pride.

COLLABORATION...We believe that teamwork and collective problem solving are essential to success.

INTEGRITY...We believe in modeling honesty and maintaining a respectful and ethical learning environment.

RESPONSIBILITY...We believe in demonstrating responsibility with all resources and being accountable to the highest standards.

COMMUNITY...We believe in public service and building partnerships between families, schools, and our community.

Guiding Principles

A CULTURE OF SUCCESS: A successful school culture is purpose driven and child-centered, embracing a “we can” attitude in our ability to make a positive difference. A culture of success values growth, feedback, diversity, teamwork, and engagement, requiring steadfast commitment and consistency in the way these values exist and are communicated. A culture of success is an upward dynamic built each day, shepherded by many, working together in a common direction that yields the greatest results.

PERSONALIZED LEARNING: The future of education is personal, which requires learning environments that are optimized to meet the needs and aspirations of each learner. Personalized learning environments are welcoming, meaningful and relevant to each learner, driven by their interests and often self-initiated, with the intent to increase engagement, achievement, and develop competent lifelong learners and global citizens. Personalization is a cornerstone to whole child success and active learning.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT: Continuous improvement is a recognition that the pursuit of excellence is ongoing. We believe that no organization is perfect and realize that there is always room to improve. What is excellent today may be the definition of mediocrity tomorrow. It is an acknowledgement that what we do is never finished, but present continuous opportunities for improvement. We always move forward, progress, and aspire to get better.

DATA-BASED DECISION-MAKING: The use of information to measure and analyze performance is an indispensable part of the decision-making process and used to support continuous improvement within all aspects of our district. If what we do is not measured, we cannot accurately hold ourselves accountable to excellence. Data-informed decisions require the continual collection of authentic measurement data in order to enhance productivity and manage resources effectively and efficiently.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: We believe that community engagement is a foundation that makes our school organization excel. Building dynamic, life-changing relationships with families and the community does not happen by chance. Our actions are manifestations of this principle which are centered on perpetually looking outward, adding value, and being collaborative and transparent in all phases of connecting with our community. Through creating networks and sustaining reciprocal partnerships, we seek to cultivate inclusive, caring, and culturally responsive communities.

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY: The fiscal choices we make today will determine what kind of future education our children will inherit. Being a responsible fiscal steward of community resources requires a devoted commitment to maintaining the community’s confidence that tax dollars are well spent. This is accomplished by establishing sound fiscal policy and practices that safeguard school district assets, while being clear with constituents about how budgets are determined, allocated, and balanced. Fiscal responsibility is essential to creating a stronger and more prosperous school system both now and for future generations.

Challenges

Oak Lawn-Hometown School District 123 faces current and upcoming trends and events that have the potential for influencing the future success of the school district. Some of these challenges were identified through community and staff input as having a likelihood of impacting the district. Developing appropriate solutions to these challenges will determine the quality of education that students experience now and in the future. Some of these challenges include:

1. Providing a rigorous and challenging education to each student that will prepare them for success in life and future careers.
2. Meeting the increasing mental, physical, and emotional health needs of each student.
3. Addressing the broadening academic and social-emotional needs of an increasingly diverse student population.
4. Maintaining the current state of academic excellence, breadth of resources, and a balanced budget under current economic and funding constraints, as well as legislative uncertainty.
5. Recruiting and developing a quality and diversified staff.
6. Maintaining extracurricular and special programming, as well as reasonable class sizes.
7. Ensuring that the school culture, facilities, and resources are optimal for our learning environment.

These challenges have become areas of focus for Oak Lawn-Hometown School District 123 to address over the next five years. By meeting these challenges, we affirm our commitment to the community by providing the best possible education for each student.

Goal One

Whole Child Success: Building foundational mastery, supportive schools, and high expectations

Whole child success in Oak Lawn-Hometown School District 123 starts with a curricular design that helps build foundational mastery of what children should know and be able to do during each step of the elementary school experience, preparing them to achieve high school, postsecondary and career dreams. A whole child approach ensures that each student is appropriately challenged and academically ready, setting a high standard for long-term success. Success in life relies not only on scholarly achievement, but also on developmental skills and mindsets that prepare and support how students can learn best. Whole child success depends on the maturation of social and emotional skills which help children understand and manage emotions, set and achieve goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. It is through the development of these skills, coupled with academic scholarship within a flexible, supportive and challenging learning environment that works to help each student reach their highest potential.

Strategic Initiative (A)	Desired Outcomes	Success Metrics
Implement rigorous, coherent, and content-rich written curriculum	A1. Each student will master the foundational skills of mathematics, writing, and the advanced communication skills of reading comprehension, writing, speaking, and active listening through meeting or exceeding readiness standards and personalized growth targets by the end of each grade.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Local Assessment → MAP Readiness → MAP Growth → Writing, Speaking, and Listening Teacher and Student Rubrics
	A2. Each student will enter kindergarten ready to learn with the social-emotional and developmental skills necessary to access the curriculum and reach readiness standards by the end of 3rd grade.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Local EC Assessments → MAP Readiness → MAP Growth
	A3. Each school has access to a useful local assessment data warehouse to track student outcomes of curricular skills and standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Local Assessment
	A4. Each teacher will have access to a coherent and user-friendly curriculum with topics and standards develop from teams of educators in the district.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Written Curriculum → Teacher Survey → Aligned Curriculum Structure Checklist
	A5. Each student, family, and teacher is given a list of precisely what they will learn in that grade level or course at the beginning of a grade level or course.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Grade Level Lists → Teacher Survey → Parent Survey

Strategic Initiative (B)	Desired Outcomes	Success Metrics
Support social-emotional well-being	B1. Each student will undergo social-emotional screenings from kindergarten through 8th grade.	→ SABRES Data
	B2. The District will implement a comprehensive framework to support student social-emotional development.	→ SEL Framework → SABRES Data → Student Data
	B3. Each school will develop a plan to implement the teaching of social-emotional developmental skills, restorative practices, and cultural awareness within the school day for each student.	→ PBIS Products → Curricular Map → Student Data
	B4. Each student will develop adequate social and emotional evidence-based skills and mindsets that facilitate and foster success in school and life.	→ Student / Parent Surveys → SABRES Data → Bias Assessment
	B5. Each student will develop lifelong healthy living habits, including physical, mental and social-emotional self care.	→ Student Self-care Survey → Student Self-care Rubric

Strategic Initiative (C)	Desired Outcomes	Success Metrics
Create challenging classrooms	C1. Each student is given challenging work in a personalized fashion no matter where they are on the academic continuum.	→ Local Assessment → MAP Readiness → MAP Growth → Student Engagement Survey → Parent Surveys
	C2. The district establishes common criteria for determining placement and flexible programming for all students, as well as methods of engaging families in the process and branding the program.	→ Common Criteria → Participation Rates → Student / Parent Surveys → Enter/Exit Data → ELL Reclassifications
	C3. Each student is challenged by using adaptive practices, grouping, acceleration, advanced curriculum, and other programs within and outside the school day.	→ Local Assessment → MAP Readiness → MAP Growth → Student Surveys
	C4. Each teacher is committed to and has the knowledge to create challenging lesson plans and enrichment experiences, and is able to gauge regular productive struggle in each learner by increasing the frequency, type, and quality of student performance feedback.	→ Lesson Plan Structure → Teacher Survey

Goal Two

Active Learning: Growing engaged problem solvers and empowered creators

Active learning addresses how we teach and who we want our students to become in a world that will reward adaptability amid rapid and ongoing change. We strive to develop learners who not only are able to critically consume knowledge, but can create, apply, and transfer it. Through the art and science of teaching we strive to provide clear guidelines for the skills, knowledge and approaches needed for students to succeed as critical thinkers, problem solvers, and knowledge creators each day in school. Project-based learning or PBL is an authentic instructional model that will be used to help students plan, implement, and evaluate projects that have real-world applications. PBL emphasizes interdisciplinary, long-term, and relevant projects that empower learners to take ownership over learning and ideally engender a love of learning.

Strategic Initiative (A)	Desired Outcomes	Success Metrics
Initiate student agency through project-based learning	A1. The district will adopt a research-based high quality project learning model to guarantee access and consistent implementation for each student.	→ PBL Model
	A2. Each teacher will plan projects that require the application of knowledge in multiple disciplines and contexts to help students develop transferability knowledge.	→ PBL Frequency → Student Survey → Teacher Survey → Lesson Plan Analysis
	A3. Each student is exposed to authentic project-based learning as active and responsible participants in their own learning, demonstrating initiative and ownership over learning.	→ Teacher Application Rubric
	A4. Each student will develop skill-sets related to problem-solving, collaboration, critical thinking, quality production, self-direction, and overall engagement in learning.	→ Success Indicator Rubric → Student Engagement Survey → Teacher/Student Skill Rubrics
	A5. Each student graduates prepared to achieve postsecondary and career aspirations.	→ PACE Rubric → Postsecondary Survey → Capstone Projects, Essays, Exhibitions, Portfolios

Strategic Initiative (B)	Desired Outcomes	Success Metrics
Empower students as critical creators and designers	B1. Each teacher can plan learning lessons that require students to design and create regular products that demonstrate understanding, application, and transferability of knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Lesson Plan Structure → Teacher Application Rubric → Student Survey
	B2. Each student is provided experiences centered on a properly vetted group of essential skills for success in a connected world and is empowered through voice and choice to become designers of the learning process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → ISTE Standards Alignment → Student Engagement Survey → International Community Participation
	B3. The district adopts and implements a digital citizenship curriculum to teach students safe, responsible, and ethical technology use for media creation and evaluating their own work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Disciplinary Data → Media Ethics Rubric → Student Digital Citizen Self-Assessment
	B4. Each student practices being a critical thinker, a collaborative worker, a self-directed worker, and a quality producer by developing a tinkering mindset, through exposure to STEM, makerspace and gamified experiences, as well as applying computational thinking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Success Indicator Assessment → D. Scratch Analysis → Maker Learning Self-Assessment Rubric
	B5. Each student is provided self-directed opportunities to initiate their own learning, as well as self-managers who are able to finish tasks and persevere when things get difficult. Students can accurately evaluate and archive their own authentic work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Student Self-Assessment → Portfolio Development

Goal Three

Operational Excellence: Maintaining a thriving workforce, optimal facilities, and fiscal responsibility

Operational Excellence in Oak Lawn-Hometown School District 123 is demonstrated in several different ways. It is shown through our direct service to schools and students; our adherence to sound financial practices; our commitment to optimal facility and infrastructure enhancement; as well as how we recruit, hire, and develop the best staff in education. Measuring our performance in these key areas of operation is an important part of our ongoing effort to support the success of our students, demonstrate responsibility to the greater community and our assurance to continuous improvement.

Strategic Initiative (A)	Desired Outcomes	Success Metrics
Recruit and hire quality and diverse staff	A1. The district implements intentional recruitment efforts including building relationships and effective networks of educational partners in higher education who share similar values and produce high quality educators.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Recruitment / Hire Ratios → Track Recruitment Efforts → Quality of Substitutes
	A2. The district creates promotional materials that reflect the expectations of the school district and demonstrate the value of quality and diversity within the system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Product Development → Branding Impact
	A3. The district attracts a diverse staff reflecting, to the extent possible, the diversity of the student body.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Annual Staff Diversity Report
	A4. Each incoming staff member engages in hiring and onboarding activities that reflect the district's mission, vision, and values, as well as internal processing efficiencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Onboarding Checklist → New Staff Survey → Employee Engagement → Turnover Rate
	A5. Each student is exposed to highly qualified and licensed professionals hired with demonstrated competencies to achieve the district's mission, vision, and values.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Student Survey → Evaluation Data → Workforce Productivity

Strategic Initiative (B)	Desired Outcomes	Success Metrics
Enhance collective efficacy	B1. Each student experiences staff members who receive regular job-embedded professional development activities focused on relevant competencies and strategies described in the strategic plan, as well as the district professional learning values.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Staff Surveys → DLT Feedback → Friday Morning Feedback
	B2. Each teacher explores pedagogy that engage and challenge students to develop proficiency with foundational skills and connect these skills with student interests and real life applications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Staff Surveys → DLT Feedback → Classroom Walk-Throughs
	B3. Each student is supported by staff who receive social-emotional, self care and diversity training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Staff Surveys → DLT Friday Morning Feedback
	B4. Each staff member is engaged, dedicated to and motivated by their work, and part of a learning community that shares knowledge, grows together, and sets realistic goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Staff Engagement Survey → PLC Rubric
	B5. Each school practices common data review processes and collaboration structures that make informed decisions about effective teaching and learning processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Quality Review Data → Local Assessment → MAP Readiness → MAP Growth

Strategic Initiative (C)	Desired Outcomes	Success Metrics
Develop optimal learning spaces	C1. The district conducts an annual review of the Capital Renovation Plan to support optimal learning environments to meet the changing needs of students and staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Annual Review of Capital Renovation Plan → Cost Projections
	C2. The district develops a blueprint of facility standards and expectations, including how the district's learning spaces will be used to support the strategic plan goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Annual Facilities Review (Board, Parent, Staff)
	C3. The district manages the effects of student population shifts to ensure that all students, teachers, and staff have access to quality facilities, resources, and instructional programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Enrollment Projection Data
	C4. Each school has flexible facility designs that allow all stakeholders to re-configure spaces to meet the needs of specific populations, as well as the learning environments needed to achieve the goals of the strategic plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Staff Surveys → Friday Morning Feedback → Parent Surveys → Facility Adaptability
	C5. Each student learns in attractive, safe, and engaging spaces and grounds that engage them in active and meaningful ways.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Teacher/Student Surveys → Student School Specific Focus Groups → Custodial Satisfaction Survey → Food Quality Satisfaction Survey

Strategic Initiative (D)	Desired Outcomes	Success Metrics
Advance fiscal productivity	D1. The district projects costs and manages operations associated with Strategic Plan initiatives within budgetary limitations to ensure successful planning and allocation of resources.	→ Strategic Planning Cost Analysis
	D2. The district manages resources efficiently, effectively, and transparently to enhance learning and demonstrate trust in the community.	→ Smarter School Spending Process → Baldrige Criteria Self-Assessment
	D3. The district plans, manages, monitors, and reports spending to provide decision makers and the community with a reliable, accurate, and complete view of the financial performance of the educational system at all levels.	→ Meritorious Budget Award → Comprehensive Annual Financial Report → Certificate of Excellence
	D4. The district uses the Smarter School Spending process to align resources (people, time, and money) with instructional initiatives for improving student achievement.	→ Smarter School Spending Process → Program Effectiveness Analysis → Cost Savings
	D5. The district will demonstrate fiscal responsibility by maintaining a balanced budget and align fund balances within School Board policy parameters.	→ Balance Budget Projections

Goal Four

Community Spirit: Looking outward, adding value, and building trust

Through fostering strong and authentic family and community relationships, Oak Lawn-Hometown School District 123 will serve as a central hub for family and community engagement. Research has demonstrated that school-community-home partnerships can have a positive impact on both community pride and student achievement. Our school system will strive to grow community trust by looking outward to partner with families and community organizations to open lines of communication, add value and provide support. Great schools make strong communities. The partnering work we accomplish will create a culture where people feel a sense of commitment and service to their neighbors and greater community.

Strategic Initiative (A)	Desired Outcomes	Success Metrics
Utilize targeted outreach	A1. The district secures annual outreach targets based on feedback from the Board of Education and administrative recommendation.	→ Annual Outreach Targets
	A2. The district engages with specific community partners, deepening relational integration that promotes outgrowth that adds value and trust to both the school district and community.	→ Partner Survey → Partner Focus Groups → Rapid Partnership Profile
	A3. The district will make every effort to provide families healthcare and social service information and resources through increased community partnering connections.	→ Notification Rates → Family Engagement Totals
	A4. Each school engages families in the learning process by developing activities with diverse communities, provide welcoming environments that grow family involvement and use family friendly language that is comfortable and inviting for all.	→ Participation Rates → Annual Events Calendar
	A5. Each student's family is provided regular opportunities for two-way communication and informed of learning events designed for parents, which include strategies which empower them in advocacy and support of their children's education and growth.	→ Family Surveys → Language Translation Rates → Two-way Communication Data

Strategic Initiative (B)	Desired Outcomes	Success Metrics
Build reciprocal relationships	B1. The district seeks to develop reciprocal relationships with the community, intentionally connecting our students with the community and the community with our students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Partner Surveys → Partner Focus Groups
	B2. The district will build upon, enhance and support existing partnerships to ensure student success, as well as seek to create and engage new partnerships that align with strategic priorities of the school system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Partner Surveys → Administrator/Teacher Feedback
	B3. Each school initiates opportunities to develop relationships that provide reciprocal support that add value to the school and community, provide authentic educational experiences, and serve to build trust.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → PACE Rubric → Field Experience → PBL Model
	B4. Each student is aware of and has the opportunity to actively serve in school and community partnerships as volunteers and through service projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Volunteer Rates → Service Learning Rates

Strategic Initiative (C)	Desired Outcomes	Success Metrics
Grow community trust	C1. The district will look outward to strategic partners and develop community trust with colleges, social service agencies, community groups, parochial organizations, local leaders, public officials, and businesses to improve student learning and respond to greater community needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Partnering Surveys → Exit Interviews → Level of Trust
	C2. The district will outline procedures and guidelines for tightly modeling formalized school partnerships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Partnering Agreements
	C3. The district will develop a communications plan to include the use of multiple communications strategies that serve to inform and engage the community in school district information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Annual Communications Plan Report
	C4. The district will regularly remain in close communication with and engage all community partners, informing them of new developments, listening to their unique needs, and purposely bringing them together.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → News Story Engagement → Track Multi-partnering Efforts
	C5. Each school will continue to make family and community collaboration and engagement an integral part of the school culture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Goal Setting

Implementation

It is the responsibility of the Oak Lawn-Hometown School District 123 Board of Education, administration, and staff to implement the strategic plan. We must be aligned and goal focused to achieve exemplary student performance. The strategic plan provides information we need to move from an abstract set of goals to an actionable set of priorities. The strategic plan strategies, desired outcomes, and Success Metrics form the “game plan” to achieve our mission, vision, and goals.

The School Board and leadership team play key roles in communicating the district’s mission, vision, core values, and goals to community members, parents, and staff in order to gain consensus, support, and commitment. It is the School Board’s responsibility to monitor the implementation of the strategic plan, as well as the resulting outcomes, using the performance indicators derived from the Success Metrics specified in the strategic plan.

Oak Lawn-Hometown School District 123 will utilize two tools that are essential to the successful implementation of a school district strategic plan: an action plan which lays out how the goals and strategies will be implemented year by year; and a scorecard which identifies the key performance indicators under each goal that will be monitored to determine progress and make any necessary corrections along the way.

Action Plan

The action plan provides the “blueprint” we will use to accomplish the mission, vision, and strategic plan goals. The strategic initiatives identified in the plan are used by school district leaders to prioritize and determine specific programs, processes, and practices. An action plan is developed to show a year by year progression of activities that will need to be accomplished for the strategic plan goals to be achieved.

Scorecard

The district scorecard identifies the key performance indicators that we will use to monitor and determine progress toward specific desired outcomes and ultimately the successful achievement of the strategic plan goals. The key performance indicators are the metrics derived from the Success Metrics listed in the strategic plan. These indicators operationally define the standards the district will hold itself accountable for and the most salient measures within each goal area. Continuous improvement targets have been set for each indicator, considering the importance of high standards for all students and the district’s already relatively high levels of performance in many areas. Our performance data will be provided in reports delivered to the School Board and through graphic displays accessible on web-based dashboards linked to each performance indicator.