Strategy Development for Any Size District

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What we will cover

- Why we (Cimarron Schools) decided to develop a strategic plan
- How Dr. Prather can help
- What we did
- How it’s working
About Cimarron Municipal Schools

• We have two campuses and a charter
  • Cimarron
    • Elementary/Middle School K-8
    • Cimarron High School 9-12
  • Eagle Nest Elementary/Middle School K-8
  • Moreno Valley High School (district charter 9-12)

• Total Student population of just over 400 students spread over a LARGE area

• We had no Strategic Plan, but did have a Mission and Vision statement that were several years old
Why strategic planning?

• We are a small district with resource constraints (sound familiar?)
• Everyone has great ideas, but we can’t do everything
• To give our Superintendent clear guidance
• To build consensus on our goals to improve the district
• To address the challenge of being on the same page on both sides of the mountain
Getting Started

• We reached out to Dr. Prather for the NMSBA Superintendent/Board Training on Strategic Plan Development
• Received via a “Go To Meeting” session virtually
• Participated in the SPS Module and received training credit
How the SPS Project Came into Being

- Need for targeted Training Modules
- “Pro Bono” Offer from Your Presenter
- NMSBA Board Approved
- Piloted and field tested
- Modified and now available for all NMSBA Boards
Outcomes of the Strategic Planning Support Project

• **Facilitates** accomplishing a most important Board task.
• **Creates** a process which is owned by those who undertake it.
• **Integrates** all ongoing and existing planning efforts, e.g. Capital Facilities Master Plan, PED Requirements, Technology Plan, into one coherent path and process.
• **Defines** a relatively small set of key focus areas which make it strategic.
Outcomes of the Strategic Planning Support Project

• **Empowers** the school board and superintendent to conduct all the needed activities to create a strategic plan required by these key components.

• **Establishes** a dynamic process in which the strategic plan is never "finished"; a regular review process makes the strategic plan truly strategic.

• **Enables** the Board to set goals for accountability as it is implemented and monitored.
What the Strategic Planning Support Project Aims to Accomplish

- At the conclusion of the training your board can make an informed decision about the type of strategic planning process your district wishes to undertake.
- Your board can also decide if resources are sufficient to conduct the planning internally or to seek the services of a facilitator.
What a Board and Superintendent Experience During the Course of an SPS Training Session

• Scheduled to fit your schedule
• Delivered via GoToMeeting and PowerPoint
• Model for public sector planning is presented
• Key components are outlined
• Session is totally interactive
What we did

• Board and Superintendent decided to pursue
• Training
• Build a team
• Gather & analyze data
• Update Mission/Vision
• Develop Strategy Document
• Develop and track SMART Goals
Our Strategy Team

• Dr. Prather as Trainer and encourager and provider of templates and moral support
• Elizabeth LeBlanc from I4TL as a Consultant
• Ron Anderson and Nancy Hooker, Board Members
• Staff members – both teachers and support staff from all campuses
• Superintendent (as a participant not the driver)
• High school student advisors

• The drivers/facilitators were Elizabeth and Nancy
Activities

• The Strategy Team met several times to
  • Agree the deliverables
  • Develop the Elevator Speech
  • Draft the surveys. We had two surveys, one for parents and community members and one for internal staff.

• Data gathering
  • We used Survey Monkey to distribute surveys.
  • At the end of the school year, we did “Plus/Delta” meetings with all staff grouped by grade level and work group. Mr. Estrada facilitated and Nancy took notes on a visible screen
Activities

• Elizabeth and Nancy categorized the data and created
  • A one-page summary
  • An overview of the results by respondent group (parents, students, community, staff)
  • An Excel workbook that contained the responses to each question along with comments

• The Board used these deliverables to prepare the
  • Strategy Document, including Values, Belief Statements and the Strategic Goals.
  • SMART Goals for each Strategic Goal
How is it working?

• We have SMART goals for our strategic areas that we are tracking

• The top two areas we are focusing on in year one are
  • Communication
  • Collaboration

• We have seen great improvement in these areas – really because we called it out.

• Having the strategic areas and goals helps drive the Superintendent Evaluation
Updated Vision Statement

Inspiring our students to reach their individual potential in an ever-changing world.

Updated Mission Statement

Cimarron Municipal Schools will work hand-in-hand with our families and community to provide our students the experience of a challenging and safe educational environment through staff who know and nurture every child.
Our Values

Cimarron School District is a PREMIER school with familia at its core

Pride
Relationships
Empathy
FAMILIA
Integrity
Excellence
Respect
What do you really need to get started?

- Acknowledge the need
- Board/Superintendent Training
- Someone to be a driver
- Willingness to do things your way that work in your district
Contact Information

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Slides that follow provide more detail
Our deliverables

• Elevator speech (to get the team on the same page, using same words)
• Timeline/Plan
• Survey(s) and Meetings
• Response Data & Analysis
• Strategy Document
• SMART Goals
• Quarterly SMART Goal Tracking Sheet
Resources

• Dr. Prather
• Ms. LeBlanc
• Two books by John M. Bryson
  • *Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations*
  • *Creating Your Strategic Plan Workbook* (Bryson & Alston)
• Strategic plan presentations and documents from
  • Los Alamos
  • Loving
  • Others via Google
• [https://instituteforteachingandleading.org](https://instituteforteachingandleading.org)
Specific Resources

• Elevator Speech: Creating an Elevator Speech worksheet, Creating Your Strategic Plan Workbook, p 81
• Action Plan: Microsoft Project Schedule Template, Creating Your Strategic Plan Workbook, p 199.
• Surveys:
  • Template provided by Dr. Prather based on SWOT
  • Also reviewed some other surveys and incorporated those ideas, including
    • Eunice Parent Vision-Mission Validation and Environmental Scan and
    • Community Survey for the Strategic Planning Process Marietta City Schools
• Survey Monkey for survey distribution and data collection