

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

(Information put together by SiteLogIQ (formerly known as Unesco))

Public Forum 2020

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GRAND FORKS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Grand Forks Public School District #1

Grand Forks Air Force Base School District #140



PARTICIPANT BOOKLET #2

Strategic Planning Summary

The strategic plan is the most important document guiding the work and the direction of the school districts. It provides clarity and focus in aligning the work of the organization collectively.

Mission: Our purpose

Growing together to change the world.

Vision: What we want to achieve

We provide diverse and meaningful experiences for all learners in a safe and supportive environment by fostering curiosity, inquiry, and innovation. By embracing change and taking risks, we grow and learn together.

Values: What we stand for

We believe strong relationships in our schools and community will result in developing connected, innovative learners, grounded by strong character.

Strategic Priorities: How we get there

The strategic priority areas were developed to guide the school districts' focus and effective use of resources to achieve student outcomes that will prepare students for their future. The following represents the strategic priority areas and subcategories from a macro view.

I. Academics – High-Reliability Schools Framework

1. Academic Engagement and Strategies for Student Success
2. Professional Learning & Technology
3. Innovation and Creativity

II. Comprehensive School District Mental Health System

1. Mental Health
2. Positive School Climate & Culture
3. Social-Emotional Learning
4. Community Engagement

III. Resource Management and Long-Term Planning

1. Master Facilities Planning
2. Long-Term Technology Planning
3. Long-Term Financial Planning

Resource Management and Long-Term Planning

School Districts exist solely for the betterment of our students and as such, all resources including facilities, technology and budgets must be aligned with a common goal of student growth and achievement. When challenges exist, we must succeed in overcoming these in order to have student success. The strategic plan outlines three primary resource areas that need to be addressed for the long term: Master Facilities Planning; Long-Term Technology Planning; and Long-Term Financial Planning.

Challenges: Where are we at today?

All school districts have challenges they face. The questions are: what are they, which ones affect students the most, and how do we solve them? With regard to Resource Management and Long-Term Planning in the Grand Forks School Districts, we can identify the following:

Master Facilities Planning

- Aging infrastructure, equipment and building systems
- Educational environment (temperature, lighting, acoustics, and physical appearance)
- Capacity and location (do we have the right facilities in the right places?)

Long-Term Technology Planning

- The right technology in an ever-changing environment, and the budget to keep up is essential
- Having the infrastructure in place to utilize the technology we have (or will have)
- Using technology to truly impact student learning

Long-Term Financial Planning

- Budget demands are everywhere – choosing what impacts students the most
- Aligning revenues with expenditures – gaining the additional revenue required to accomplish what we need
- Tax impact – being responsible to the community with the understanding that most facility and infrastructure costs are funded by the local taxpayer

Opportunities: Where do we want to be?

School is not what it used to be in the 20th century and keeping up with the demands of educating students for a future unknown world can be challenging. We are attempting to educate students for jobs that don't exist today and most students in school right now will have 5-7 completely different careers during their lifetime. In the 20th century, we obtained information (memorizing formulas, the periodic table, capitals of states) and what we didn't memorize we learned how to locate the information. In the 21st century, nearly all information is available in milliseconds via a computer or smartphone. Now we are teaching students how to disseminate the information they really need and how to apply it to their advantage. Reading, writing and arithmetic are still extremely important, but how they are applied by an individual student in their varied careers means that learning, while collaborative, is much more personalized.

**With every
challenge there
is an
opportunity
that awaits!**

Using the Districts' strategic plan, mission, vision, and values, opportunities can be identified that both address the exciting future for our students and address our largest challenges. We can answer questions such as:

- What opportunities do the districts have in addressing facility concerns and aging infrastructure through revitalizing and reimagining our buildings?
- What opportunities do the districts have in analyzing building capacity and location?
- What opportunities do the districts have in maximizing student achievement through changes in the learning environment?
- What opportunities do the districts have with revenue by implementing energy and cost saving solutions?
- What opportunities do our students and community gain through a fiscally responsible bond referendum to fund larger long-term capital needs?

Planning & Community Engagement: How do we get there?

Recognizing that the community members are the owners of the school districts, and that the school districts are a direct reflection of the communities they serve, the School Boards understand that the community has a significant role to play in determining how challenges and opportunities are addressed.

Input into the long-term planning process comes in a variety of ways and can be broken down into two categories:

Macro Involvement

Macro level involvement by the community allows broad thoughts and ideas to be gained through a variety of engagement opportunities that community members can choose to participate in:

- Community meetings (like tonight)
- Community-wide surveying
- Community forums and gallery walks

Micro Involvement

Micro level involvement by the community is more focused and intentional and allows representatives of the community to go deeper in their learning and understanding of both the challenges and opportunities that exist. This will involve:

- Community planning task force
- Focus groups

Over the next several months, the School Boards are committed to providing opportunities for community involvement and input in all these ways so that solutions to both challenges and opportunities are truly reflective of the desires of the community.

Community Planning Task Force

The community planning task force will explore what the long-term facility master plan should look like and how this impacts the long-term technology and long-term financial planning efforts from a scope and cost standpoint. The School Boards are particularly interested in having a broad and diverse representation of the community involved in this work, therefore there is an application that can be filled out that will allow the School Boards and Districts to populate the task force in the most appropriate way. It is important to understand that this task force will be made up of entirely community members and will not include School Board Members or district administration. Meetings will be facilitated independent of the school districts and this will be an important opportunity for the community to be engaged in this work and offer their unique voice in the process.

Timeline

The task force is scheduled to begin meeting in March and complete their work in the fall. This will provide the School Boards time to work with the recommendations and feedback from the task force along with other information and formulate a plan that will likely culminate with a potential referendum in the spring of 2021.

Meeting Timeframe: Anticipated twice per month – March through September (12 total meetings)

Meeting Time: Evening meetings – approximately 2-1/2 hours each

Application Process

An application can be obtained online or in person tonight or at the District Office. The application will allow for potential participants to share the unique attributes they bring to the diverse nature of the group – more than just parents are needed. Only 40-50 participants can be accommodated but those who are not selected will be provided other opportunities to participate in the process.

Link to online application: <https://tinyurl.com/GFSD-Application>

Deadline: Applications will be due no later than 4:00 pm CST on Monday, February 24th.

Part 2: Small Group Input

All thoughts and ideas are welcome and important when doing work in the small group sessions, but please consider the following norms for this type of work:

- Be attentive during the session please be considerate with technology (phone) use
- Share the air: everyone's voice is important
- Listen actively: seek to understand first, then react
- Assume positive intentions
- Keep a district-wide vs. individual focus
- Remember: schools impact many things, but they exist for the betterment of all students

In an effort to provide the community planning task force with a baseline of community input to begin their process, we encourage participants at the Community Meeting to continue the conversation in the small group sessions. Each person will be assigned a room to collaborate with 10-12 of their peers to engage in this work. Each room will be staffed with a facilitator, resource person, and recorder so that your feedback may be accurately provided to the task force when they begin meeting.

There will be three exercises that we ask for your input on:

1. **BRAG-WORRY-WONDER-BET**

Please provide your best thinking around the following four areas:

- What do you **BRAG** about when you talk to people about the Grand Forks school system?
 - What do you **WORRY** about when you think about the Grand Forks school system?
 - What do you **WONDER** about when you think about the future of the Grand Forks school system?
 - What would you **BET** on regarding the future of the Grand Forks school system?
2. In thinking about the work of the community planning task force, what advice would you give the group as to the **PRIORITIES** they should be considering when developing a plan that addresses the challenges and opportunities of the Districts?
3. Considering when the task force completes its work it will be offering one or more recommendations to the School Boards, what do you believe are **OPPORTUNITIES** for students and the community that the task force should consider thinking about in developing their recommendation?
4. In order to continue the conversation after the Community Meeting, you will be given instructions at the end of the small group exercise on how to access a Thoughtexchange opportunity to provide additional feedback you may not have had time to provide during the meeting.