



Forest Lake Area Schools STRATEGIC PLAN Summary for 2012-13

Strategic Plan Approved by the School Board August 2, 2012

BELIEFS... *An expression of fundamental values; ethical code, overriding convictions, inviolable principles.*

We believe that...

Every person has intrinsic value.

All people deserve to be treated with respect.

All people have unlimited potential to learn.

Honesty and trust are critical for building community.

Every person has a responsibility to contribute positively to their community.

The community benefits from individual uniqueness because it brings forth new and better ideas.

All people need a safe environment, with caring and supportive networks, to thrive and prosper.

Personal success requires hard work and persistent effort.

The strength of any public organization is dependent on the level of community ownership.

The public education system is essential to a vibrant and thriving community.

OBJECTIVES... An uncompromising commitment to achieve specific, measurable, observable, or demonstrable results that exceed its present capability.

All students love to learn.

All students are creative and apply critical thinking skills.

All students are inter-culturally proficient.

All students thrive academically.

All students achieve their goals and dreams throughout their lives.

All students voluntarily provide service to others.

All students take ownership of their learning.

All students live physically and emotionally healthy lives.

PARAMETERS... Boundaries within which the organization will accomplish its mission; self-imposed limitations.

We will always consider/reference the Strategic Plan as we review current programs and consider new ones.

STRATEGIES... Bold resolutions that dedicate the organization's resources and energies toward the continuous creation of systems to achieve the extraordinary as expressed in the mission and objectives.

- I. We will create learning environments that support the ability to work effectively within the context of cultural differences.
- II. We will develop a comprehensive understanding of every student's interests, talents, abilities and needs to challenge and inspire them to lead healthy lives and reach their full potential.
- III. We will provide creative, rigorous and relevant educational experiences and service opportunities.
- IV. We will develop a system that recruits, hires, and retains the best staff and provides maximum professional growth.
- V. We will develop a communication system that considers and responds to internal and external ideas and concerns.
- VI. We will develop a process to review facility and technology needs and implement an action plan.
- VII. We will extend current partnerships and foster new ones.
- VIII. We will enhance and create opportunities for learners of all ages.

Forest Lake Area Schools
Strategic Plan
Action Plans List

Strategy I: We will create learning environments that support the ability to work effectively within the context of cultural differences.

Action Plan:

1. The district will utilize an equity analysis to identify achievement gaps, disparities in discipline, occurrence of bullying, participation in extracurricular activities, etc. among groups of students (groups of students including ethnicity, poverty, special education status, sexual orientation, etc.).

Carolyn Latady has been working on this, along with three consultants. They have been examining data, conducting individual and group interviews and reviewing policies and practices within the district. They have also met regularly with Jennifer Tolzmann, Lloyd Komatsu, Deb Wall and Linda Madsen. The work will continue in 2013-14 to complete the equity analysis.

2. The district will utilize a research-based inventory as part of an overall intercultural staff development plan to increase licensed staff's understanding of their beliefs and biases related to cultural differences.
3. The district will integrate the elements of Universal Design for Learning (USL) and culturally responsive teaching into all curriculums to increase student achievement.
4. The district will increase student engagement in all extra-curricular activities and clubs elementary and secondary.

Strategy II: We will develop a comprehensive understanding of every student's interests, talents, abilities and needs to challenge and inspire them to lead healthy lives and reach their full potential.

Action Plan:

1. Utilize an interactive tool to identify every student's interest, talents, abilities, and needs, documenting goals and progress throughout their pre K to 12+ educational career. Students, their parents, and school personnel will use this information to challenge the learners to lead healthy lives and reach their full potential.

Strategy III: We will provide creative, rigorous and relevant educational experiences and service opportunities.

Action Plan:

1. The district will create a system to increase awareness and understanding of E-12 educational opportunities for students and families.
2. The district will provide programs and staff development focused on increasing rigor and student engagement by addressing different engagement styles.
3. To support the development of 21st Century skills, the district will provide service learning opportunities for all students.
4. The district will compile and communicate a list of service opportunities for all students and the benefits of participating in them.

Strategy IV: We will develop a system that recruits, hires, and retains the best staff and provides maximum professional growth.

Action Plan:

1. The district will have a recognition system for exceptional professional accomplishment and milestones.
2. The district maintains an evaluation system that provides positive feedback where staff members are doing well and provides improvement plans in areas where staff members are not meeting the basic expectations of their assignments.
3. The district has a recruiting system that leads to the hiring of ideal candidates for all positions.
4. The district maintains mentorship and professional coaching programs for each employment group or department, as appropriate to provide a positive on-boarding experience as well as professional coaching into employment.
5. The district will have wage and compensation targets that are competitive with nearby or metro districts.

The attachments at the end of this document summarize the data collected thus far. This work will continue in 2013-14.

Strategy V: We will develop a communication system that considers and responds to internal and external ideas and concerns.

Action Plan:

1. District community members will know their input is valued and they will be provided with current tools to send and receive information.
2. District staff will know their input is valued.
3. District students will know their input is valued.
4. All teachers and secondary activities maintain an interactive website.
5. The district will implement a universal web-based calendar program.
6. Implement a “Partnering with Parents” series.

Strategy VI: We will develop a process to review facility and technology needs and implement an action plan.

Action Plan:

1. Establish a committee that meets regularly to identify future needs and investigate trends in the areas of technology and building & grounds, evaluating their potential value to the Forest Lake Area School District and offering recommendations for future growth in both areas. (Possible to have two different committees – one for technology and one for buildings & grounds.)
2. Establish a school district-wide program to encourage employees and community members to make suggestions for improving district facilities and technology by making facilities/technology more efficient or effective, increasing savings and/or improving safety.

A task force was formed to:

- *Update the Gap Analysis Report*
- *Make a recommendation to the School Board regarding the facility needs within the district. The recommendation was to include specific work to be completed at each site, an overall cost target and timing of a bond vote by the public.*

The task force was comprised of 55+ community members and staff members. The group met in the evening from October through April to discuss information and options. They also met during three Saturdays from 8 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. to tour all district facilities. At the April 2013 School Board meeting, the task force presented their recommendations to the School Board. In summary, the recommendation included: shifting all 7 – 12 graders to the high school/Century campus, moving all schools/programs/staff from the Central Learning Center to Southwest, tearing down the Central Learning Center, upgrading all elementary schools, setting the cost of the recommendations not to exceed \$130 million and setting the date for the bond vote at March 2014 or later. The task force provided the School Board with a PowerPoint and a video to illustrate their recommendations.

A group of district staff, Lee Meyer (architect) and other consultants have met, and will continue to meet, throughout the summer and fall to determine the cost of the recommendations. In addition, other decisions are being made as the details of the project unfold.

At the October 10 School Board meeting, the School Board will receive the costing information. On October 12, the School Board will meet to discuss the information and potentially make decisions regarding a bond vote in the future.

Strategy VII: We will extend current partnerships and foster new ones.

Action Plan:

1. Building upon the district's partnership with TEFFLA, the district will explore a process enabling businesses and organizations to donate to the district and receive recognition for their support.

The idea of having TEFFLA as the flow through organization to streamline donations to the school district, from various sources, was explored. The TEFFLA Board of Directors thoroughly discussed the idea and considered it. Although they could see the need for such a function within the community, their work centers on providing grants to individuals and groups.

Being the organizing entity between those that want to donate to the district for a number of reasons and the various entities within the school district is not within their scope or mission. The need certainly exists, but TEFFLA is not the organization to provide this function.

2. The district will communicate to parents and community members about resources supporting students and families, including how to access help, volunteer or donate. (Strategy III, Action Plans 3 & 4 link back.)
3. The district will have personnel coordinate a committee of ambassadors that work to enhance connections with current partners and foster new partnerships.

This work has started with administrators in the district. The superintendent and directors have been involved in many partnerships for the past few years and continue that work. The principals have worked to enhance and increase the partnerships within the boundaries of their schools and throughout the district with specific emphasis this past school year which will continue in 2013-14.

Strategy VIII: We will enhance and create opportunities for learners of all ages.

Action Plan:

1. Before or during the 2014-2015 school year the Forest Lake Area School District will explore all-day every day kindergarten for all students of kindergarten age.
2. The district will initiate a minimum of three activities at each elementary for preschool children and their families to participate during the school year.
3. Create an inter-generational community by pairing schools with organized senior/adult communities and/or organizations. All schools within the district would create at least three activities during the school year, either at the school or the senior/adult community and/or organization.