



***Raising the B.A.R.
Better Achievement through Reinvention***

***Adams School District 50
Strategic Plan***

November 2007

Approved Nov 13, 2007

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Adams County School District 50 Strategic Plan Overview

Introduction

The students of Adams County School District 50 (District 50) have changed significantly in recent years. They come from all walks of life. As a result, the District has to change to meet the educational needs of our students and the community. The District is not standing pat—it intends to reinvent itself in order to provide the best education it can for its students.

As part of the District's reinvention, District 50 initiated a strategic planning process. A strategic plan is a long range plan, often three years or more in length, identifying key goals and objectives by which the District directs its energies and resources. To ensure the plan reflected the needs of our local community, District 50 brought together a large group of representative stakeholders—students, parents, teachers, administrators, and community business partners—who met regularly to voice their observations and identify key issues for the District to confront. Subsequently, a strategic plan was created, identifying **four key goals** with strategies and actions capturing the urgency to prepare District 50 students for the 21st Century as learners and as citizens ready to contribute to the community workforce as desired employees. The goals listed below are slated to begin the Fall of 2007 and to continue until the Spring of 2010:

- 1. Seek and implement effective academic programs to raise student performance to the highest levels in the state.**
- 2. Form school-community and business partnerships that honor and embrace the diversity of the community and nurture the success of its students.**
- 3. Operate with fiscal responsibility to utilize resources for maximum effectiveness and efficiency.**
- 4. Provide adequate safe and secure schools for the school community.**

With these goals, the strategic plan unifies District 50 by integrating and aligning educational, fiscal, and operational strategies and actions to address the academic and social needs of our students. The successful completion of this plan will bring life to the District's shared vision of the future and to the mission of its work.

Finding the Future

District 50 envisions a future of high expectations: high achievement, workplace competences, rigorous learning, and challenge for all students. Foremost, its vision intends to ensure that students leaving District 50 will be well prepared to contribute in society, prepared for the demands of a new century, and highly sought after by institutions of higher education and by employers.

Vision

District 50 is a district that ...

Ensures students' skills and knowledge meet or exceed the requirements of a successful 21st Century citizen.

Honors and embraces the diversity of its school community.

Nurtures the love of learning and inquiry with every District 50 student.

Serves as a lighthouse district in the state of Colorado for students' academic achievement and life long success.

District 50's mission succinctly describes the overall purpose of the organization.

Mission

Push to Excel; Prepare to Succeed.

Lastly, District 50 has established operating principles by which staff measures their daily actions and relationships with others:

Operating Principles

Character	We act and communicate in an ethical, responsible and caring manner.
Relationships	We build and sustain meaningful relationships that help students and adults achieve their highest level of performance.
Teamwork	We work together by seeking and valuing the input of others to accomplish common goals.
Diversity	We value each individual and our diversity.
Excellence	We commit to high expectations and outstanding achievement in all we do.

The structure and process by which these important goals, strategies, and actions were achieved is detailed in the remainder of this document.

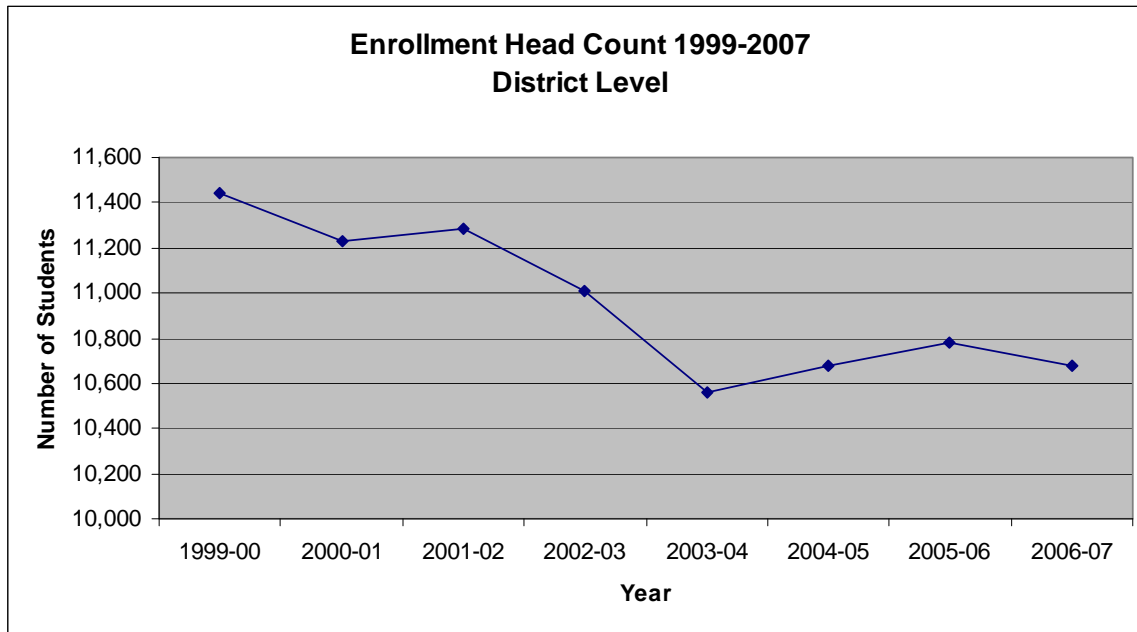
District Profile

District 50 is located in the north Denver metropolitan area, contiguous with the northern Denver city limits. Bounded by the Denver Public Schools to the south, Jefferson County Schools to the west, Mapleton School District 1 and by the Adams County School District 14 schools (Commerce City) to the east, and to its north by the Adams County School District 12 (primarily Northglenn-Thornton), Adams County School District 50 is the second largest school district in Adams County.

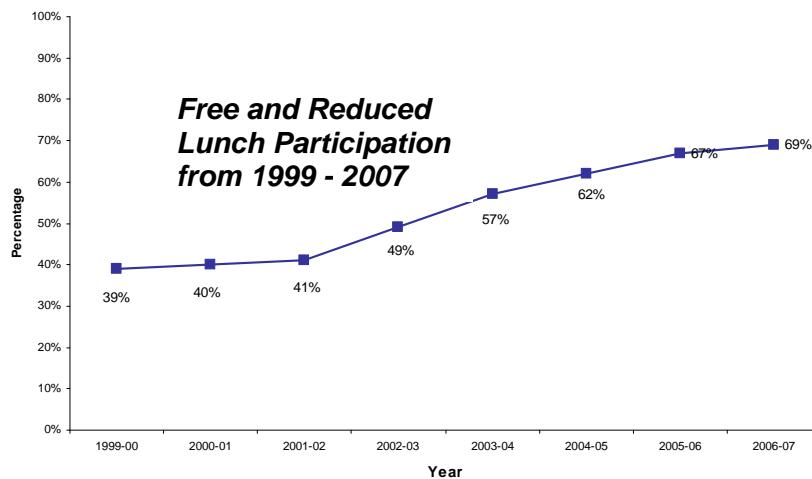
Incorporated in 1946 and then having boundaries established in its present form in 1955, the district has seen cycles of population and economic growth—at one point being the hub of the

residential growth in the northern metropolitan area during the 1990's and having a student enrollment of nearly 17,000 students. However the District's current size of 10,683 reflects a considerable change of community demographics, as the county's population and economic center has moved further north and east. Dramatic changes to its students' demographics have occurred during the past five years.

- The student population size is approximately 10,683 students; 65% Hispanic; 26% White; 6% Asian; 2% African American and 1% American Indian. Enrollment numbers have varied over the years with a trend of decline and demographic composition continues to change as noted on in the graph below:



- Approximately 69% of the students are eligible for free or reduced price lunches. As the graph below depicts, the percentage in this category has grown considerable over the past five years and represents a growing population that are lower income.



- The District currently employs 650 teachers and 447 classified support personnel.
- During the 2006-07 school year there were a total of twenty-four schools in the District to include fifteen elementary schools; four middle schools; three (two traditional and one alternative) high schools, one preschool Early Childhood Center (ECC), and one K-8 charter school.
- Several school facilities are in need of replacement. Three schools were closed at the end of the 2006-07 school year, two elementary schools and one middle school. A recent \$98.6 million property tax levy was passed in November 2006 with the majority of the funds being allocated to build a new elementary school and a new high school. Some funds will be used to continue maintenance and repair of existing buildings.
- A three year trend of no or limited growth in our CSAP scores has resulted in the District being placed on Academic Watch by the Colorado Department of Education. Low achievement has also resulted in the District being identified as in need of improvement under the federal legislation of the “No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.”

The significant change of the District’s student population, the change of needs, and the lack of positive change in student achievement led to a compelling conclusion that new, decisive action had to be taken.

Change is Good; Change is Needed

As a district undergoing reinvention, District 50 knows that it cannot retain or hang onto past practices. The changes to the student population are so great that it demands a new way of doing business. District leadership has foreseen the need for reinvention of the district to meet the needs of a new reality—meeting the needs of its current and future students. There is urgency and energy to reinvent, in part because the District wants to address the state’s concerns regarding student performance, but more importantly, the District views the present as an opportune time to be creative and to reinvent its educational programming. Using the building of new schools as a driver for this change, the District will increase students’ performance by developing a standards-based system, streamlining its services to those things that are more focused and effective, and by targeting its energies on those things that matter the most.

The Planning Process

The strategic planning process began in early 2007. The District Leadership Team conducted work sessions with *stakeholder groups* (see “Glossary of Terms”) to better understand their needs and concerns. Using a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis the District provided stakeholders an opportunity to present and discuss what they perceived as strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in the current district design. Additional sessions were conducted to review existing academic, workforce, operational, community, and fiscal data to establish an objective view of the current state of the district.

The stakeholder groups reviewed the issues and reached a consensus in prioritizing these issues. These ideas were synthesized into logical groupings and it was here that four goals emerged: 1) academic programs for achievement, 2) school/community partnerships, 3) fiscal responsibility, and 4) safety and security.

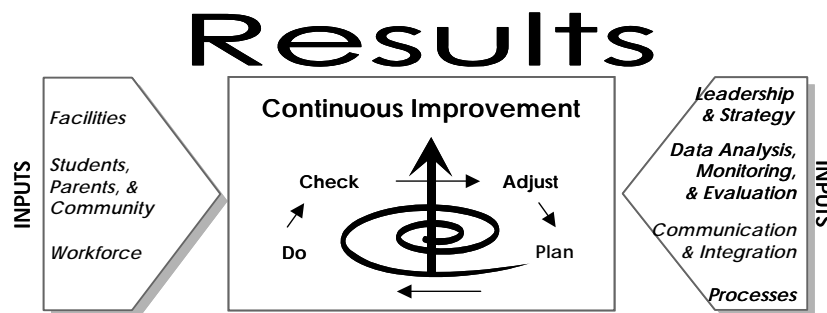
Action plans for each goal were created through group and sub-group work sessions designed to address specific issues. On June 26th, the entire group of stakeholders met to review and approve drafts of the action plans, ensuring the “voices” of our stakeholders were embodied in this plan.

Staff-based activities continued after the stakeholder review of the plan on June 26th. These activities included quantification of the action plans to determine manpower and incremental costs and timelines implement the recommended actions.

Systems Thinking – A Strategy for the Future and for Improvement

In order to create its future, the district applied a *Systems Thinking* approach to create this strategic plan. This included key concepts such as: 1) taking a management systems perspective; 2) understanding the needs of students, families and the community; 3) implementing processes to address issue areas, and 4) implementing a set of measures to monitor progress throughout the organization and to permit course corrections.

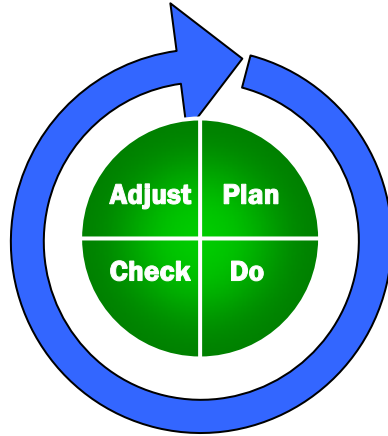
- **Management Systems Perspective** – At the onset of the strategic planning project, the Leadership Team utilized a District 50 Management System model, illustrated below, to show how strategic goals and actions influence the entire system.



This model includes major components of the school district operations, such as facilities, leadership and annual strategies, communication systems, workforce and organizational processes. The systems approach supports an understanding of “causes and effects” and relationships that are crucial to realize desired improvements (e.g., implementation of a standards-based system approach, improved academic scores, increased graduation rates, satisfied students, families and community members, etc.). Additionally, built into this system’s model is also the component of reflective review of results and adaptations or adjustments to keep improving throughout the organization, depicted by the spiral of “planning, doing, checking, and adjusting” as part of a continuous improvement cycle that is used throughout the system.

- **Understanding the Needs of Students, Families and the Community** – Intent on redesigning the curricula and instructional structure to reflect a standards-based approach as well as building in rigor and developing relevant experiences for students, the Leadership Group focused first on understanding the needs of stakeholders. As a result, the District seeks to improve its “customer focus” and its ability to adjust workforce, academic structure, and processes to build relationships with and to better meet the needs of its “customers”—students, parents, community, and business partners.

- Implementing Processes to Address Issue Areas** – Traditional strategic plans emphasize one-time ‘fixes’ to address issues. In this plan, a process of **plan, do, check** and **adjust (PDCA)** is utilized to both address current issues and provide the basis for sustained improvement over time as noted in the illustration below.



The methodology that was used to develop the strategic action plans was: 1) **plan** (e.g., plan the improvement and understand requirements, 2) **do** (i.e., implement the improvement), 3) **check** (i.e., monitor results against targets), and 4) **adjust** (i.e., make adjustments and improvements). This is a model for continuous improvement that can keep all of the components of the organization improving at a regular rate and maintain a connected relationship throughout the organization.

- Implementing a Balanced Set of Measures (Balanced Scorecard)** – A balanced set of measures will be implemented to determine when and if corrections are appropriate for implementation of the strategic plan. These measures, collectively called the District 50 Balanced Scorecard (and depicted in the schematic that follows), will enable the implementation team to better “manage by fact” and have a better basis to adjust processes, which will lead to improved results.

**District 50
Balanced Scorecard**

Academic Achievement	
Stakeholder Satisfaction	Workforce / Innovation
Organizational Excellence	Fiscal Responsibility

Not only reflecting multiple measures of progress, the “balanced score card” also represents the “systems thinking” approach critical to sustaining improvement in District 50’s future. This approach best supports visionary leadership, organizational learning, managing for innovation, agility, social responsibility, and system response to raise academic achievement.

Determining Strengths and Issues

When the strategic planning process began in early 2007, the District Leadership Team conducted work sessions with stakeholder groups to better understand their needs and concerns. Using a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis the District provided stakeholders an opportunity to present and discuss what they perceived as strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in the current district design. Using this process, the Task Force identified many areas that District 50 did well and valued, some of which are listed below:

- Exciting vision and direction for the school district
Reinvention—a new energy to be creative
BEST (Building Excellence for Students and Teachers) Plan
Operating Principles (agreements by which employees work)
- High qualified staff; caring teachers
- Dedicated District “family” teamwork
- District is small enough to get a personal feel
- Great Students and Parents
Desire for students for success
Diversity of students and community
Lifelong learners
- Successful Bond referendum: new schools and building renovation
- Sound financial management and reporting
- Strong academic programs, for example International Baccalaureate Programme, Advanced Placement classes, AVID, Full-day Kindergarten, Career Technical Education (CTE), etc.
- VOICES (District 50 community resource center)
- Effective Student-led programs
CU Succeed
Link Crew
District 50 Youth Conference
- Valued community partnerships:
Adams County Economic Council (ACEC)
Business partners: e.g., St Anthony’s North Hospital
Hyland Hills
Rotary
Elks
School Resource Officers (Westminster Police Department & Adams County Sheriff’s Department) available to work with schools
Front Range Community College
District 50 Foundation

While these strengths served as a foundation to build more success, they were not deemed enough to keep the district progressing or to achieving the exemplary success it envisions.

Top Strategic Issues

Additionally, the SWOT process surfaced 34 over-arching issues that served as barriers to students' success and District's progress. Through a process of research, review, and discussion, 14 issues were targeted as being of primary importance. These issues were:

- *A lack of engagement, motivation, and involvement of students and families exists within the District.*
- *The District has not addressed the needs of the changing community population.*
- *A lack of high expectations and accountability for students, families, teachers, staff, and administrators exists throughout the District.*
- *A culture of racism and discrimination in the District is present at all levels.*
- *Academic scores are too low and must be improved.*
- *Graduation rates are too low and must be improved.*
- *There is not adequate support and access provided to students interested in various District programs.*
- *The District has not ensured adequate security and safety for students and staff.*
- *District staff does not have an understanding and respect of cultural diversity.*
- *The District must improve the recruiting and retention of quality staff.*
- *Professional development must improve to be consistent, focused, and meaningful in order to improve all staff skills.*
- *A lack of customer service exists between District staff and its school community/customers.*
- *The District fails to provide adequate communication with families.*
- *The District lacks consistent alignment between District and State assessments.*

Identifying commonalities among these issues, the fourteen key issues were grouped under four key strategic goal areas and supported by strategies and actions.

Strategic Goals

The Strategic Goals serve to direct and move the entire District 50 organization to its vision and a powerful future for its students.

Goal #1--District 50 will seek and implement effective academic programs to raise student performance to the highest levels in the state.

Strategies to Achieve Goal #1

- Develop alignment between standards, instruction, assessments at all levels (PK-12).
- Develop common expectations and accountability for students, parents, teachers, staff and administrators.
- Create a culture of respect and understanding for students, parents, and staff of all diverse backgrounds.
- Create a sense of urgency for improvement, awareness, and opportunity for inclusion among the community.
- Improve academic scores and graduation rates.
- Improve student access and support to programs.

- Recruit and retain quality staff.
- Provide consistent, focused, meaningful professional development to improve all staff skills.

Goal #2--District 50 will form school-community and business partnerships that honor and embrace the diversity of the community and nurture the success of its students.

Strategies to Achieve Goal #2

- Engage, motivate, and involve students and families in the school community.
- Create a culture of respect and understanding for students, families, and staff of all diverse backgrounds.
- Educate to understand cultural diversity and to increase mutual respect.
- Establish common expectations and accountability for students, families, and district staff.
- Improve and provide culturally proficient customer service to all stakeholders, from students, parents, and staff to business leaders.
- Improve and provide culturally proficient communication outreach between District 50 and all its stakeholders.

Goal #3--District 50 will operate with fiscal responsibility to utilize resources for maximum effectiveness and efficiency in a standards-based system.

Strategies to Achieve Goal #3

- Clearly define and monitor expectations and accountability for students, parents, teachers, staff and administrators regarding financial processes, legal requirements, and stewardship.
- Create a culture of respect and understanding for students, parents and staff of all diverse backgrounds that supports responsible utilization of resources for maximum effectiveness and efficiency.
- Seek outside of general fund resources and funding to address students' needs.
- Align budget development and funding allocation cycles with Strategic Plan priorities and division budget development.

Goal #4--District 50 will provide safe and secure schools for its students, staff, and community in a standards-based system.

Strategies to Achieve Goal #4

- Clearly define and monitor expectations and accountability for students, parents, teachers, staff and administrators to increase safety and security.
- Create a culture of respect and understanding for students, parents, and staff of all diverse backgrounds.
- Increase staff and students sense of security and safety.

Data Driven Analysis and Decision Making

The data that follows serves as a baseline of measures by which to monitor progress as the strategic plan is implemented. The information is presented in the categories of achievement, stakeholder satisfaction, organizational excellence, workforce climate, and fiscal responsibility.

Academic Achievement

- District graduation rates averaged 58% in the 2005-06 school year which was approximately 16% lower than the state average of 74.1%.

Graduation Rates 2003 - 2005

District/School	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Hidden Lake HS	--	--	57.8
Ranum HS	80.2	60.9	63.4
Westminster HS	81.2	70.1	52.4
District	78.5	64.0	58.0
State	82.5	80.1	74.1*

* Note: final state averaging is not completed until October 2007.

- District dropout rates stabilized from the previous year. There remains a considerable difference, approximately 3 percentage points, between the district and the state averages.

Dropout Rates 2003 - 2005

District/School	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Hidden Lake HS	--	--	21.1
Ranum HS	10.1	9.0	3.8
Westminster HS	10.6	9.0	6.4
District	8.4	7.1*/7.3**	6.2*/4.7**
State	3.8	4.2	4.5

* Includes alternative school data

** Excludes alternative school data

Note: The combination of Graduation Rates and Dropout Rates are not intended to add up to 100% because formulas that the Colorado Department of Education uses are different for each. (See the Colorado Department of Education website for details: www.cde.state.co.us.)

- **Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) scores** in 2006 for the District and the State are illustrated below:

CSAP Aggregated Scores for 2006

Content	District %P/A ¹	State %P/A
Math	32	52
Reading	47	68
Writing	32	54

Scores for the past three to four years have remained mostly flat with very modest gains, if any.

¹ %P/A = percent scoring proficient and advanced

- **ACT scores** for District 50 grade 11 students averaged 15.3 points; the state average was 19.0. The district was 3.7 points lower than the Colorado average.

Composite ACT Scores for Grade 11 Students

School	2004	2005	2006	2007
Hidden Lake HS	--	--	10.7	14.0
Ranum HS	15.6	16.2	15.4	16.3
Westminster HS	16.5	16.8	15.9	15.2
District	16.1	16.4	15.3	15.6
State	18.8	19.0	19.0	19.1

- **Annual Yearly Progress (AYP)** goals have been established to measure improvement in student performance and required Federal targets. The desired outcome is to have every school meet 100 percent of the AYP targets and the district also to meet 100% of the AYP targets.

The Percent of Targets by Level Meeting Adequate Yearly Progress

School Level	2004	2005	2006	2007
Elementary	95.7%	84.8%	93.8%	79.2
Middle	83.3%	95.8%	82.0%	91.7
High	97.1%	89.2%	75.7%	81.1
District % total targets	91.4%	90.1%	84.4%	84.2%

- **Accreditation.** All schools in District 50 are accredited. Based on the accreditation contract that District 50 has with the State of Colorado, the district monitors the progress of schools on several student achievement factors, including CSAP. The collective results from these measures determine how well each school is meeting the accreditation requirements. As a result, six schools are on “monitor” status and one is on “watch” status, meaning that they must improve on some of the accreditation measures.

Stakeholder Satisfaction

- School year 2006-2007 was the first year that a **district wide school climate survey** was administered. Teachers, students, and administrators were surveyed to get their responses to questions on four domains: 1) Learning environment; 2) School Relationships; 3) School Safety; 4) Inviting School Culture. The data that follows, aggregated by school levels and district totals, serves as a baseline for future measurement.

District Wide School Climate Survey Results by Percent Agreement

STUDENT Results: Percentage Agreeing/Strongly Agreeing with Favorable Climate

School Level	Learning Environment	School Relationships	School Safety	School Culture
Elementary	98%	94%	91%	87%
Middle	80%	77%	74%	74%
High	74%	73%	75%	70%

STAFF Results: Percentage Agreeing/Strongly Agreeing with Favorable Climate

School Level	Learning Environment	School Relationships	School Safety	School Culture
Elementary	92%	90%	96%	88%
Middle	80%	77%	86%	73%
High	71%	78%	83%	71%

The survey trend indicates less satisfaction in all domains for both students and staff as they move through the upper grades.

Workforce

Compared to the previous year, the number of teachers in the District was reduced by a hundred positions for the 2007-08 school year, in part due to closing of several buildings, ending a few programs deemed ineffective, and a major restructuring of the workforce. Also, teacher turnover rates were 14.7% in the 2005-06 school year as compared to the state average of 12.8%.

Organizational Excellence

Organizations are successful when they demonstrate a high level of performance around core competencies. District 50 and all departments and sites will demonstrate high-level performance in the Core Competences.

Core Competences for District 50

- Customer Service: Do district teachers and staff create a warm, inviting, and welcoming school environment? Are families, students, and community greeted with politeness and respect? Do all stakeholders understand their responsibilities in creating an effective system? Data will be collected in order to answer these questions.
- Instruction: Do principals, teachers, and supporting staff use instructional strategies that most effectively help our students learn? Is learning rooted in relevant curriculum? Is curriculum developed around clearly defined standards? What additional support instructional interventions are used to provide extra time and attention when students struggle? Effective use of outside relevant resources will be geared to enhance instruction and there will be a focus on raising student achievement.

- Financial management: Are district funds managed carefully to not exceed revenue? Are funds utilized in creative, efficient, and effective ways? Managing existing revenues as well as identifying potential revenues will be the charge of every division in the District.
- Safety. Do our students and staff feel physically and psychologically safe when they work in our schools and with each other? The District will apply concerted efforts to secure the safety of its staff and students.

Fiscal Responsibility

- District enrollment is on the decline. For example, enrollment declined by around 88 students between the 2005-06 and 2006-07 school years. This represents a decrease of approximately \$1.3 million in funding. The District will take action to seek outside funding resources as well as to align expenditures to district goals.

Anticipated Benefits

Benefits of the strategic plan described in this document are described below.

- Improved Academic Achievement and Graduation Rates - This strategic plan provides a *solid basis* for improvements in areas such as CSAP Scores, graduation rates, school attendance, and positive reputation in the community.
- Improved Curriculum Alignment and Instructional Effectiveness – This plan develops a standards-based system, bringing instructional component of the organization into alignment. Higher expectations and quality will result in increased student learning.
- Better Alignment with Stakeholder Needs – This plan reflects the “voices” of numerous stakeholder groups who have worked together to create the strategy. As a result, the organization will be *better aligned with the needs of the community*.
- Actionable Initiatives – This plan includes actionable and administrable initiatives. This sets the stage *to communicate* the vision and strategies for the District, and *to successfully implement* supporting initiatives.
- Sustainable Improvement – The plan utilizes a systems-based framework that *increases integration, repeatability and sustainability* of the resulting strategy. This should produce better results in a more effective and efficient manner.
- Measurable Outcomes – The strategic plan specifies balanced measures that include the dimensions of academic achievement, stakeholders, workforce, operations and financial measures. This provides the *basis to measure sustained improvement* in the District in a more integrated manner than was previously available.

Integration with Other Plans

Integration with the BEST (Building Excellence for Students and Teachers) Plan

In early December of 2006, District 50 took a big step toward improving the academic achievement of the district by participating in a Comprehensive Appraisal for District Improvement (CADI) audit, which was conducted by an outside team of professionals who had great knowledge about education and educational systems. Results of this audit were used to help write the district improvement plan (titled the BEST Plan), which will link with the goals of the district strategic plan. The improvement plan includes narrowing the focus of educational programs that impact student achievement, enhancing professional development, and utilization of data to improve instruction and to evaluate program effectiveness.

The BEST Plan identifies four focus areas: 1) Academic Achievement, 2) Program Evaluation, 3) Professional Development, and 4) Culture, Safety, and Communication. Action plans for each of these areas have been developed. Integration of the BEST Plan and Strategic Plan is a logical next step. As stakeholders developed action plans for the Strategic Plan, a cross-reference with the BEST Plan occurred. Twenty-three of the thirty-four identified strategic issues were also addressed in the BEST Plan. The Strategic Plan serves to focus the actions necessary for District improvement.

Integration with the CREATE Advisory Board Plan

After District 50 led a successful effort to pass a bond referendum for approximately \$98.6 million in November of 2006, the CREATE Advisory Board was created from District parent and community stakeholders. They were charged to address four tasks:

- Study all of the existing facilities and recommend which schools should be decommissioned due to underutilization and/or excessive financial upkeep, and plan a timeline for decommissioning.
- Identify which facilities would provide greatest savings by decommissioning or greatest potential revenue if sold.
- Support the reinvention of education programming in the district by recommending the type and location for building of new state-of-the-art schools.
- Develop a plan for long-term investment in the District's facilities, both existing and new.

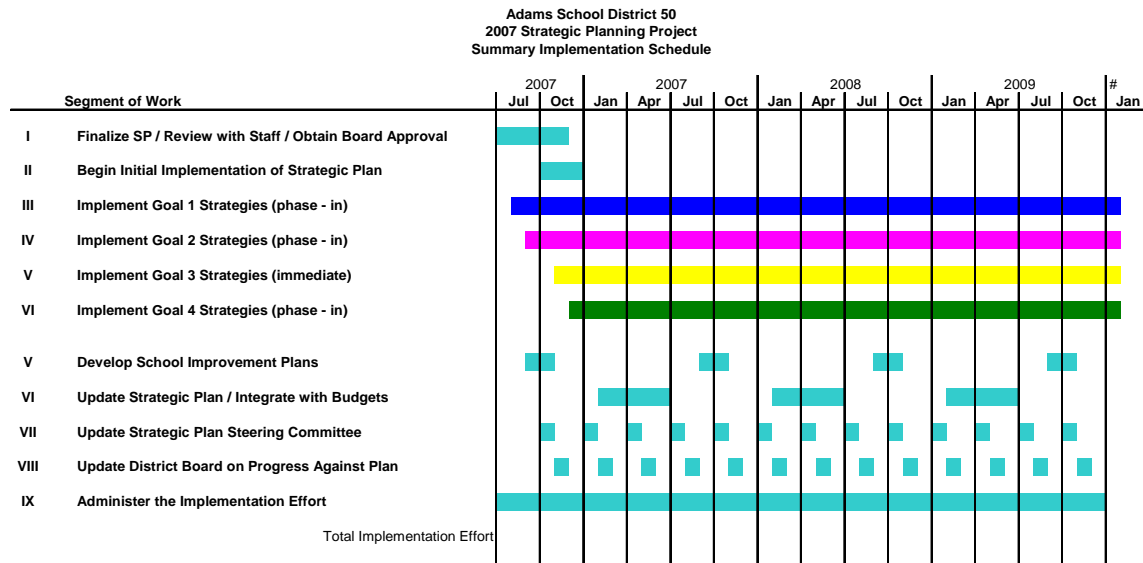
The actions of the CREATE Advisory Board are integrated into the District 50 Strategic Plan.

Summary Implementation Plans

District 50 is committed to implementing the Strategic Plan over the course of three years and seeing it to its successful completion. Components for the effective implementation are discussed next.

Preliminary Implementation Schedule

Based upon the scope of the plan presented in this document, implementation of these strategies will require 36 elapsed months to complete. A bar chart depicting the overall timing of implementation of the strategies is illustrated on the chart that follows:



Managing Implementation and Accountability

As the strategic plan is implemented, a formal Strategic Plan Steering Committee, comprised of representatives from the Task Force, as well as from district stakeholders, will be charged to monitor regular progress on Strategic Plan actions. This group will provide advisement on relevant issues, and confirm accountability for implementing the overall change plan. It will be charged with . . .

- Reporting to the Superintendent of Schools and the Board of Education.
- Advising the approach and timing goal initiatives.
- Providing a representative voice.

The District Leadership Team will be charged to follow the strategies and actions outlined in the Strategic Plan, making adjustments as appropriate, but always moving forward to address the four goals of the plan. Progress will be measured by collecting results and data on a regular basis and comparing it against the District’s “balanced scorecard” of targets for progress.

Measuring Progress: The Balanced Scorecard

The District 50 Strategic Plan will incorporate a set of measures to monitor implementation progress. Similar to the attitude indicator on an airplane (which tells how much the craft is tipping—upwards or downwards), one gauge alone is barely enough to “fly the plane.” Other gauges such as the “rate of climb” and altimeter (which tells the pilot at what altitude the aircraft is at) indicators add immensely to the likelihood of a successful journey. Likewise, a single measure of measuring academic achievement alone does not provide a balanced view of changes in an organization’s performance.

As a result, the District 50 leadership team has established a balanced scorecard – a set of measures to help guide, and provide feedback to the District. The categories of measures include academic achievement, stakeholder satisfaction, operational excellence, and workforce/innovation.

District 50 Balanced Scorecard

Summary of Strategic Plan Balanced Scorecard

Scorecard Dimension	Goal	Frequency of Measurement	Measures	Targets
Academic Achievement/ Results	Increase achievement Improve results	Bi-Annually	Varied: CSAP, ACT NWEA, etc.	Meet or exceed state gains
Stakeholder Satisfaction	Increase partnership satisfaction & security	Annually	Survey State measures	Increase 5%/year satisfaction
Operational Excellence	Increase effectiveness & satisfaction	Bi-Annually	Survey evaluations	Increase 5%/year efficiencies
Workforce / Innovation	Increase effectiveness & satisfaction	Bi-Annually	Survey evaluations	Increase 5%/year satisfaction/improve
Fiscal Responsibility	Increase effectiveness & efficiencies	Annually	State/Federal Compliances	100% within budget requirement

Budget Alignment

Strategic Plans have greater success of completion and outcome when necessary resources are aligned with the actions and are available to support the actions. At this time of the initial development of the Strategic Plan, only certain areas and actions of the plan are aligned with the 2006-2007 budget cycle. Financial and human resources may have to be shifted to address various actions being implemented. In subsequent years, it will be the task of District 50 to align the Strategic Plan goal areas, actions and activities during the budget development cycle.

Key Success Factors

Evidence of success of the District 50 Strategic Plan will be the following:

- The Superintendent and Board of Education carry the message and mission of the Strategic Plan to the larger school community.
- The development of a broad leadership base drives the execution of the objectives and key actions with decisiveness. This leadership will demonstrate collaboration and cooperation with other support groups in the community.
- The establishment of a leadership team to provide oversight to the Strategic Plan and to support the change initiative.

- The implementation of a standards-based system as a comprehensive redesign of the district's educational approach.
- Sufficient financial and human resources will support all of the activities outlined by the Strategic Plan.
- A systematic approach is established to collect and analyze specific data that serve as progress markers for the Strategic Plan.
- The District 50 organization—all employees—will express a sense of urgency to implement and complete the strategic plan in its entirety.

It has been said that ***a journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step.*** District 50 is poised to begin its journey to excellence. The Strategic Plan serves as the road map to achieving District 50 Vision of exemplary achievement.



Glossary of Key Terms and Definitions

1. **Action** – The state or process of doing or acting, for example, the implementation of an activity, project, or tactic with the intended purpose of addressing and achieving an overall strategy, objective, or goal.
2. **Balanced Scorecard** – a set of balanced measures to monitor implementation progress. These measures are gathered from various divisions within the organization and, collectively, they provide greater information as to the progress of the organization in meeting its goals.
3. **Continuous Improvement** – The process by which an organization regularly monitors its progress, using the information to consciously make adjustments in order to meet specific targets and goals. Also, it is the process by which goals are reevaluated once they have been accomplished in order to increase the quality, effectiveness, standards, and overall improvement of the organization.
4. **Goal** – Broad key areas by which the organization sets a purpose to achieve.
5. **Strategy** – A collection of actions intended to address and achieve an objective or goal.
6. **Stakeholders** – Those individuals that have a keen interest in the progress, development, and/or success of an organization. Stakeholders may be those immediately working in and for the organization (sometimes identified as “internal stakeholders”) or those individuals who, although not working for the organization, have regular interaction with the organization and have a desire to support the success of the organization (also know as “external stakeholders”).
7. **Systems approach** – A process that considers all of the components within organization and recognizes the systematic integration and connection amongst the components in order to drive the organization forward. The better the integration and the components, the more effective the organization.
8. **Task force** – A group of individuals charged to complete a special or unique project.

Strategic Planning Task Force Acknowledgements

District 50 appreciates the dedication and conscientious work of the Strategic Planning Task Force

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