Developing and Implementing
Sioux Falls School District’s
Strategic Plan

February 2017

Mission:
“To educate and prepare each student to succeed in a changing world.”

Vision:
It is the vision of the Sioux Falls School District to provide the opportunities and challenges for each student to succeed as a lifelong learner in a changing world. The District values a highly trained and committed workforce, continually evaluating and improving student performance and their own. The District recognizes its role as a key contributor to the social, civic and economic foundation of this community. To achieve this vision, we must ignite the hearts and minds of our students, staff, families, the business community and citizens.
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Acknowledgements

The following Sioux Falls School District stakeholders were involved in the creation of this document at varying points throughout the process.

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In partnership with

District Management Group
Helping Schools and Students Thrive
Executive Summary

The education landscape across the country, as well as in Sioux Falls, is changing rapidly. Across the board, students are held to higher standards yet are expected to maintain stellar results. While environmental pressures are changing, Sioux Falls School District (herein referred to as SFSD) continues to be committed to responding to a changing landscape while maintaining its high levels of academic performance and becoming a world leader in preparing its students for the future.

SFSD is proud of its achievements and academic performance to date and believes when it comes to educating our children, “average” is not part of our vocabulary. SFSD highly values diversity in both the community and in our schools and recognizes we must do more to support the whole student in the best way possible to close the achievement gap across our student populations.

In the fall of 2015, SFSD embarked on a strategic planning process, acknowledging there was a great need in Sioux Falls for its schools to be exceptional, regardless of varying circumstances. More so, SFSD recognized there was room for internal improvement and that exceptional quality could be a reality for the District as a whole.

As part of the process, SFSD created a Steering Committee to serve as the project owners for developing the strategic plan. The Steering Committee membership included leaders and staff from the central office, District schools, and the Board, all of whom came with unique perspectives needed to ensure that the work was applicable and meaningful to all system stakeholders. In addition, the Steering Committee engaged parents, community leaders, school employees, students, and others throughout the process to participate in thoughtful dialogue around draft goals and priorities.

SFSD takes pride in the fact that this plan has been shaped by a diverse group of constituents who together, through community-wide conversations, formed the foundation for defining key goals for the District over the next five years. These key goals and feedback helped to inform SFSD’s overarching theory of action and priorities, as well as additional goals that allow the Board, the District, and the larger community to measure progress and to increase transparency into system-wide success.

Implementation efforts are already underway in SFSD, and began with identifying initiatives and developing detailed action plans that drill down to how these efforts will impact SFSD students and staff.

The remainder of this document will outline the framework that guided the strategic planning work, the District’s theory of action, the final priorities, the measurable goals the school District is currently pursuing to make the priorities a reality, and initial steps being taken by the District to implement the strategic plan. Together, these goals form a broad vision that reaffirms SFSD’s commitment that each SFSD student graduates as an engaged citizen prepared to succeed in a changing world.

This plan is viewed as a living document used to guide the District’s future work and help to prioritize resources and reach its goals.
Developing Sioux Falls School District’s Strategic Plan

Sioux Falls School District understands that in today’s increasingly globalized, 21st century economy, our students must be nurtured and challenged to be critical thinkers, analytical problem solvers, and lifelong learners. We also recognize the critical role we play in the social and economic success of the community. We believe, with the presence of the right systems and an effective and committed workforce, all students can achieve. The following elements of the strategic plan, taken together, reflect the District’s plan to ensure all students graduate as confident 21st century leaders.

What Was Our Process?

The Steering Committee adopted a Strategic Planning Framework, as seen in the diagram below, from which to develop the strategic plan. This framework ensured a methodological approach to identifying and articulating a broad vision for the District. Once established, this broad vision was then connected with increasing degrees of specificity to arrive at a set of aligned and interconnected goals and implementation tactics.

![Diagram of Strategic Planning Framework]

Source: District Management Group
What Do We Hope to Accomplish?

A theory of action is a set of beliefs and underlying assumptions about what drives improved student performance. The theory of action articulated by Sioux Falls presents a unified and coherent framework for actions needed to realize the District’s mission. SFSD’s theory of action is a product of a collaborative effort between the Steering Committee, the District leadership team, and school and community stakeholders.

**Sioux Falls School District’s Theory of Action**

*If SFSD...*

- Empowers all staff to successfully innovate to meet the unique and changing needs of our students

*And*

- Promotes a culture of excellence and continuous improvement by measuring and monitoring performance across all levels of the organization;

*Then We Will...*

Enable each and every student to succeed.

This theory of action is a solidified agreement between the District and community stakeholders that communicates to the larger Sioux Falls community exactly what SFSD is trying to accomplish, what defines success, and how the District intends to get there.
What Are Our Priorities?

SFSD’s priorities were developed by the Design Steering Committee in conjunction with District leadership. The Design Steering Committee reviewed extensive qualitative and quantitative data to identify challenges the District is currently facing. Through multiple discussions, the team then dug deeper to identify root causes of these challenges. These identified root causes led to a refined list of eight strategic priorities which are grouped into four broad areas and outlined below.

The priorities are the key focus areas that will allow SFSD to execute the theory of action and achieve their mission. These broad priorities help the District address some of the root causes of their challenges as well as guide the District towards a more strategic use of resources and efforts.

Sioux Falls School District’s Priority Areas

- Student Outcomes
- School Climate & Culture
- Staff
- Community Engagement

How Will We Measure Our Progress?

The Design Steering Committee developed specific, measurable goals related to each broad priority area, which will be used to ensure that Sioux Falls is able to monitor District progress, help District and school level stakeholders adjust course as necessary, and provide the community with more transparency into District success. Metrics were chosen by identifying the desired outcomes, assessing the data-tracking needs of all stakeholders, and benchmarking using historical internal performance as well as the performance of peer districts. These metrics were then refined using a systematic process that ensured all final metrics were in alignment with other measurement systems the District currently used. These goals will form a comprehensive tool for tracking and improving performance for the District.¹

The following pages outline each priority area and priorities, the rationale behind the priorities, the measurable goals that will be used to monitor progress, and the first steps in support of the priorities that are currently underway in the District.

¹ A baseline for some measurable goals will be established in SY2016-2017 and the targets for these goals will be defined in SY2017-2018.
Priority Area 1: Student Outcomes

- SFSD will provide rigorous, effective, and engaging curriculum and instruction for all students to emphasize growth and reduce the achievement gap, with special focus on the following areas:
  - Literacy, particularly in early years, to build a strong foundation for academic success across all subject areas and across all grades
  - Maximized time on instruction and learning
  - Differentiated and engaging pathways
  - Equitable access to highly effective programs
  - College readiness and/or career preparedness
  - Holding all schools to high expectations for students’ social and emotional growth and development

- SFSD will continue to foster an environment of high expectations combined with focused interventions and support in order to meet the learning needs of all students.

Rationale for Student Outcomes Priorities

Teaching and learning is at the heart of SFSD’s mission to “educate and prepare each student to succeed in a changing world.” To ensure effective teaching and learning, Sioux Falls will focus on providing rigorous curriculum and instruction and setting high expectations for all students. In addition to rigor, the District will focus on providing an engaging, student-centered classroom experience, as student engagement is a strong predictor of student success.

Special focus will be given to early literacy, as we know developing literacy skills in the early years provides a very important foundation for students’ academic careers. A study conducted by the Annie E. Casey Foundation found that a student who cannot read on grade level by 3rd grade is four times less likely to graduate high school on time than a child who does read proficiently by that time. If he or she lives in poverty, they are 13 times less likely to graduate on time compared to his or her proficient, wealthier peer.²

² http://www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/aecf-EarlyWarningConfirmedExecSummary-2013.pdf
A needs assessment conducted in the early phase of the strategic planning process indicated a wide range in 3rd grade reading proficiency levels across elementary schools in SFSD, with the overall District average being 2 percentage points below the state average of 48% proficiency. In addition, the analysis highlighted a trend where schools with a higher percentage of students receiving free or reduced priced lunch had some of the lowest reading proficiencies in the District. Given this trend, Sioux Falls is placing a renewed emphasis on creative and innovative ways to improve literacy in the early years. This focus on literacy is not meant to place a higher value over other subjects but rather it reflects SFSD’s belief that success in all other subjects relies on a foundation of strong reading skills. In addition to the focus on early literacy, the District will work to reduce the achievement gap and enhance performance by maximizing time for instruction for all students, especially those who are struggling.

SFSD recognizes that in order for students to be prepared for college and/or their career they need to be equipped with 21st century skills gained through equitable access to highly effective, differentiated and engaging programs. Achieving this requires a blend of traditional content knowledge skills and expertise, as well as behaviors and attitudes crucial to postgraduate performance. Sioux Falls students must develop critical “non-cognitive” skills such as perseverance, leadership, curiosity, grit, etc. The District will continue to provide engaging and differentiated pathways for all students in the pursuit of imparting these non-cognitive skills and ensuring all students graduate feeling college and/or career ready. Sioux Falls is a richly diverse community and District comprised of a variety of students who come with many different, unique needs. While SFSD views their diversity in cultures, languages, ethnicities, and genders as an asset, the District also recognizes it must do more to close the achievement gap across the inherent student populations. Sioux Falls firmly believes all students can learn and individual student academic performance is innately tied to overall academic expectations. To address this gap, Sioux Falls will continue its culture of high expectations district-wide.

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3 Analysis based on SBAC Spring 2015 results from South Dakota Department of Education.
Measurable Goals for Student Outcomes Priorities

- By 2019, graduation rates will increase by 5%.

- By 2020, the District completion rate will be 94%.

By 2020, the difference between the District’s 4-year cohort graduation rate and the 4-year cohort graduation rate for students eligible for FRPL will decrease by 5 percentage points.

- By 2018, District 3rd grade reading scores will be at the state average.

- By 2020, the proficiency gap between FRPL students and students without economic disadvantages will decrease by 5% per year.

By 2020, 67% of ELL students enrolled in the District for at least 2 consecutive years will demonstrate growth in language proficiency of at least 0.3 in their composite score on the WIDA ACCESS.

- By 2020, each school’s average Smarter Balance reading and math results in all grades will increase to be above the state average.

- By 2020, the number of graduates scoring 24 or higher on the ACT will increase by 5%.

- By 2020, the number of students scoring a 3 or higher on AP assessments will increase by 2%.

- By 2020, parents surveyed stating they perceive teachers to hold students to high expectations will increase 10%.

First Steps for Student Outcomes Priorities

- **Develop individualized plans for students at-risk of not graduating**

  The District will monitor students at-risk of not graduating, and customize plans for each identified student.

- **Refine and articulate the support model for struggling high schoolers**

  Each high school will closely examine, refine, and articulate its pyramid of interventions for struggling students.

- **Implement and evaluate programs for struggling elementary readers**

  As a part of this process, the District will be conducting a study that measures the academic return on investment (A-ROI) of its Literacy in Action program.
• Implement and evaluate the District’s Summer Climb Summer School Pilot

The District will implement and evaluate its summer school program which targets struggling students in grades K-2 in three of the District’s Title I schools.

• Build District capacity for data-driven decision making

As a part of this process, the District will evaluate the effectiveness of the NWEA MAP as a tool to measure student growth and inform targeted interventions. The District will also evaluate Ellevation as a tool to monitor progress of English Language Learners (ELL).

• Create a model for consistent and effective staff collaboration

The District will examine its current model for collaboration and recommend a plan for improving the model of data-driven instruction to target student needs.

• Continue to expand and evaluate multiple pathways for students

The District will continue to expand and evaluate multiple pathways for students. As a part of this work, the District will explore a partnership with Code to the Future and establish a coding pathway.
Priority Area 2: School Climate & Culture

• SFSD will provide a nurturing and safe learning experience for all.
• SFSD will develop strategies to enhance a culturally responsive workforce.

Rationale for School Climate & Culture Priorities

Without a safe learning environment, the goals set forth by Sioux Falls cannot be achieved. The walls of our schools are not the only place where safety and respect must be felt and maintained, therefore we have enlisted the larger Sioux Falls community as a partner in ensuring that our students are given every opportunity for success. Safety and respect must be our culture and our mindset. To aid in the development of students into empowered learners and engaged citizens, Sioux Falls will ensure students are being taught and nurtured in a safe and respectful environment, allowing them to perform to the best of their ability in the classroom and beyond.

Additionally, Sioux Falls will ensure all students are being taught and cared for by high-quality individuals. At each level of the organization, members of the District have an impact on student success and it is SFSD’s responsibility to make sure each member of the workforce is committed and able to achieve student success. For SFSD, a quality workforce is one that excels as educators, cares deeply about students, and understands and celebrates students’ diverse identities.

Measurable Goals for School Climate & Culture Priorities

➢ By 2020, the number of students reporting they feel safe at school will increase by 10%.

➢ By 2020, the number of staff reporting they feel safe at school will increase by X%.

➢ By 2020, the number of K-8 students who did not attend school at least 94% of the time will decrease by 5%.

➢ By 2020, the number of severe behaviors (Levels 3, 4, 5 and 6) in elementary schools will decrease by 5%.

➢ By 2020, the number of students reporting adults have high expectations and positive attitudes toward all students regardless of their backgrounds will increase by X%.

➢ By 2020, the number of staff reporting teachers and administrators have high expectations and positive attitudes toward all students regardless of their backgrounds will increase by X%.
First Steps for School Climate & Culture Priorities

• Create plan to help increase student attendance
The District will research and develop a plan to help increase student attendance rates.

• Evaluate effectiveness of the school-wide Boys Town Well-Managed School program
The District will evaluate the effectiveness of the school-wide Boys Town Well-Managed School program to determine the future direction.

• Provide SmartSnack training
The District will provide SmartSnack training for school stores based on the South Dakota Department of Education compliance review.

• Evaluate and select model for culturally responsive practices
The District will evaluate and select a model to help stimulate dialogue and reflection for all staff groups about culturally responsive practices.

• Evaluate supports and services for struggling students
The District will evaluate the effectiveness and consistency of Tier II services and supports for struggling students at the elementary level.

• Evaluate the Success Coordinator program
The District will evaluate the effectiveness of the Success Coordinator program.

• Implement the social-emotional curriculum as part of the Early Childhood partnership with USD and Sanford Heath
The District will participate in the implementation of a developmental social-emotional curriculum as part of the Sanford Harmony Program Early Childhood partnership with USD and Stanford Heath.
Priority Area 3: Staff

- SFSD will develop strategies to enhance the quality and diversity of its workforce.
- SFSD will explore strategies to retain high-quality staff.
- SFSD will support and train staff to encourage innovation and enable them to grow throughout their careers.

Rationale for Staff Priorities

The District will ensure all SFSD students continue to be taught by the very best principals, teachers and staff as teacher effectiveness has been found to be the number one school-based factor in determining a student’s academic achievement. ⁴

SFSD values the diversity of its students in both the community and schools and recognizes the importance of having a workforce that reflects this diversity. SFSD believes a high-quality workforce is enhanced through diversity. The District will strive to create a highly effective and culturally responsive workforce that honors differences and is representative of its student population.

To maintain a high level of performance, SFSD is committed to both hiring, training and retaining a high-quality workforce. In addition to ensuring a quality environment for students, Sioux Falls will create a culture where staff are also able to learn and grow throughout their careers. SFSD believes the establishment of a robust professional development system, along with other opportunities for recognition and training, will enable the District to retain high-quality professionals and encourage innovative practices and programs to enhance SFSD’s long-term mission and vision.

Measurable Goals for Staff Priorities

• By 2020, X% of all responding teachers and school leaders will rate the evaluation process as improving their professional practice.
• By 2020, the percentage of employees stating that both the District and building Professional Development programming was beneficial to their growth as a teacher will be at X% or higher.
• By 2020, we will increase the number of racially diverse teachers by 25% in the SFSD to more closely match the student population belonging to minority groups.
• By 2020, the percentage of employees surveyed indicating by selecting a 4 or a 5 that their opinion matters will increase by 10 percentage points.

First Steps for Staff Priorities

• Recruit a more diverse workforce reflective of our student population
The District will explore ways to successfully recruit a diverse workforce so that staff demographics better reflect student demographics.

• Review the Professional Staff Evaluation system
The District will closely examine and refine its current evaluation system, with the goal of helping teachers and school leaders improve their professional practice.

• Evaluate the requirements of the K-5 elementary teacher’s instructional day
The District will closely examine, and if necessary, refine requirements for the elementary instructor’s day.

• Analyze participation and results of the staff annual Gallup Engagement Survey
The District will closely analyze staff survey data in order to better assess staff engagement and understand staff opinions. As a part of this process, the District will be exploring actionable ways in which it can demonstrate to staff that it is taking their concerns seriously.

• Evaluate the model for technology integration at each building
The District will closely examine and evaluate the model and implementation plan for technology integration at each building.
Priority Area 4: Community Engagement

- SFSD will equip staff with knowledge and tools necessary to effectively engage with families, partners, and the community to foster shared responsibility for student success.

Rationale for Community Engagement Priority

Exemplified by the well-known adage “it takes a village to raise a child,” SFSD recognizes it plays a large role as a key contributor to the social, civic, and economic foundation of this community. In order to build schools that are strongly embedded in and supported by the community, the District will continue developing the tools to support schools as they foster broad community investment in the success of students.

This investment can come in many forms, including engagement with parents, program development with non-profit providers, and ongoing discussions with the business community. It is important that each and every school in the District incorporates the parent voice and takes advantage of the wealth of opportunities Sioux Falls has to offer its students. The responsibility of community engagement extends beyond the school leader and should be a joint effort on the part of all teachers and staff.

Measurable Goals for Community Engagement Priority

- By 2020, X% of parents surveyed will report they feel informed about what is happening in their student’s school.
- By 2020, 100% of schools in Sioux Falls will have a parent and/or community and/or business support group.
- By 2020, 90% of SFSD employees will report they know how to access information they need to be successful in their position.
**First Steps for Community Engagement Priority**

- **Gather feedback from all stakeholders**

  In order to gather feedback from all stakeholders, the District will insert an “Ask a Question” section on its website, as well as conduct surveys of stakeholder groups. The District will also conduct town hall/community meetings and six focus groups annually. Of these focus groups, four will be with staff, one will be with parents, and one will be with the community.

- **Engage community in dialogue about enrollment trends**

  The District will further engage the community about enrollment trends and their potential impact on facilities. This engagement will occur as a part of the focus groups and town hall/community meetings described above. Additionally, the District will take steps to educate the public on facility needs.

- **Equip staff with the knowledge and tools to support and participate in District initiatives**

  The District will make sure that staff have the resources to effectively support and participate in District initiatives. In order to provide these resources, the District will create website tutorials on how and where to find important information. The District will also closely examine and revise its onboarding process for new hires.
III. Conclusion

In this time of shifting demographics, increased social disparity, and economic pressures, SFSD is determined to educate and prepare each student to succeed. Now more than ever, SFSD needs to work strategically to provide the greatest level of service to its students and to the community at large.

Significant time has been spent creating this strategic plan but this document is much more than the sum of its words and phrases. The strategic plan contained in these pages is the District’s roadmap for this important work over the coming years. Together, the theory of action, priorities, and measurable goals define a clear and cohesive 5-year plan with tangible benchmarks for all of us in the District and community to reach. This plan will guide decision-making and resource allocation across the District so we can remain intensely focused on delivering a high-quality learning experience to all of our students.

We recognize implementation of this plan may be stressful as change is rarely easy. In light of the social, political and fiscal challenges we are likely to face along the way, the District will need help and support and cannot accomplish this work alone.

The success of the plan we have articulated rests on the community’s collective shoulders. Stakeholder voices have been incredibly influential in the development of this strategic plan and it will be crucial for the same stakeholders remain engaged and committed to the plan’s success as we move into implementation.

Together, the District and the community can use this plan to ensure we honor a very important promise: To educate and prepare each student to succeed in a changing world.
IV. Appendices

Process Overview

The strategic plan was formulated through a rigorous 9-month process. The process consisted of four major phases: (i) Needs Assessment; (ii) Adoption of Framework; (iii) Formulation of the Strategic Plan; and (iv) Community Engagement & Finalization of Strategic Plan.

i. Needs Assessment

The first phase of the process involved an extensive analysis of the current state of Sioux Falls School District. This thorough examination of past performance enabled the Design Steering Committee to determine what needs SFSD currently fulfills and what deficiencies need to be addressed. This assessment was conducted through several key activities:

- Conducted comprehensive and rigorous performance analysis of SFSD schools over the past five years, examining student achievement, culture and climate data across grades and school types in order to identify the areas most in need of urgent attention; and
- Conducted qualitative, focus group discussions with principals, staff members, Board of Education members, and Steering Committee members.

This analysis was critical to ensuring SFSD deeply understood the challenges and successes of the District and could quickly identify those areas requiring urgent change. Additionally, this performance analysis established a baseline from which SFSD could set goals.

Methodology of Needs Assessment

SFSD collected and analyzed both quantitative performance data as well as qualitative data from focus groups:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantitative Performance Data</th>
<th>Qualitative Interviews</th>
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<tr>
<td>Publicly available data was collected to analyze the overall performance and trajectory for SFSD since 2011. Additional pieces of data were also gathered by SFSD to contribute to the performance analysis. The analysis looked at the following types of data: enrollment data, budget data, SBAC performance data, college readiness-related data, behavior-related data, school climate data, and achievement gap data.</td>
<td>At the very beginning of the process, focus groups were conducted with a number of different stakeholders in SFSD, including Steering Committee members, parents, School Board members, principals from all levels, teachers and instructional coaches, and central office leaders and staff. During these focus groups, each stakeholder group was asked what is working well in the District. Additionally, each group was asked about the major issues preventing change in the District, his/her expectations from the strategic planning process, etc. Feedback gathered from stakeholders was synthesized with research and knowledge about successful strategic plans from other school districts into a presentation that was shared with the Steering Committee and stakeholders who participated in focus groups for its review and deliberation in an open meeting.</td>
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Key Takeaways from Needs Assessment

A sampling of the key takeaways from the analysis is outlined below. These takeaways ensured the Steering Committee’s dialogue was grounded in fact-based research.

### Performance

At the elementary level, there is a wide range in reading proficiency across schools, with the overall District average slightly below the state average. However, at the secondary level, the proficiency levels for 8th and 11th graders in math and ELA is above the state average.

The percentage of students taking one or more Advanced Placement course has increased. However, only 16% are from low-income households.

### Demographics

Similar to other school districts around the county, the Sioux Falls community has been experiencing a change in demographics over the past few years. In particular, SFSD’s enrollment has steadily grown (+1.5% growth each year over the past five years) and the needs of students from different backgrounds have increased (e.g., ELL and FRPL populations).

### Behavior

While the total number of suspensions at the secondary level have declined over the past five years, there has been a significant rise in the number of moderate to severe behavior-related incidents at the elementary level.

It was also suggested during qualitative focus groups that the current services and programs offered for behavior supports may not be sufficient to serve growing student needs.
ii. Adoption of Framework

The Steering Committee adopted a framework from which to develop the strategic plan. This Strategic Planning Framework ensured a methodological approach to identifying and articulating a broad vision for the District. This broad vision was then connected with increasing degrees of specificity to arrive at concrete goals and implementation tactics which are aligned and interconnected.

The first step in creating the strategic plan was to articulate SFSD’s theory of action. A theory of action describes the District’s core beliefs and actions that will lead to long-term success and will support the District’s mission/vision to help achieve the desired outcomes. Because the theory of action is a foundational component, it envelops all components of the Strategic Planning Framework.

Once the theory of action was established, the priorities were defined, which are a short list of focus areas aligned with the theory of action to sharpen SFSD’s focus to achieve the long-term vision of the District.

It is critical that a strategic plan first determine the way to measure progress against these priorities. To this end, the Steering Committee defined a concise list of external-facing measurable goals to monitor progress. Finally, in the implementation phase, these priorities were converted into initiatives and action steps that can be carried out by various members and departments of SFSD.

In keeping with governance best practices, the Design Steering Committee was charged with the responsibility of articulating the strategic plan for the District, and moving forward, the Implementation Steering Committee focused on developing the initiatives, action steps, and executing the plan.

Source: District Management Group
iii. Formulation of Strategic Plan

With baseline quantitative and qualitative data and a strategic planning framework in place, the Steering Committee embarked on the process of developing the strategic plan itself. Their mandate was to create a clear and actionable plan for the District to serve as SFSD’s “dynamic guide for identifying new opportunities to achieve long-term goals” around which resources and efforts are aligned. The Steering Committee focused on articulating a very clear and concise strategy that can be translated into all functions of the District. During this phase, the Steering Committee met multiple times in which they discussed the future of the District and drafted a preliminary plan of the District’s theory of action and priorities to share with the broader community.

iv. Process Steps for Selection of Measurable Goals

A number of work steps were involved in arriving at the final set of Measurable Goals in support of SFSD’s strategic plan. There were 5 core steps within the process for selecting the Measurable Goals:

- **Step 1:** Gather potential metrics related to each priority
- **Step 2:** Refine metrics with steering committee based on relevance and applicability to SFSD
- **Step 3:** Review committee’s refined list of metrics and provide additional feedback or metrics to the shortlist
- **Step 4:** Further refine metrics with district leaders
- **Step 5:** Final list

*Source: District Management Group*

A wide range of potential metrics were researched and collected by the Steering Committee. This list was analyzed and refined by the Steering Committee to ensure the goals were both relevant and applicable to the key priorities of the strategic plan. This list was finalized through a collaborative effort of the Steering Committee and District leadership.
v. Community Engagement & Finalization of Strategic Plan

The Steering Committee launched extensive community engagement efforts that included social media and electronic outreach, as well as a series of three community engagement sessions across the District to solicit input from community stakeholders. Based on these discussions, the Steering Committee will incorporate this feedback into the Measurable Goals and Initiatives to better reflect the voice of the community.

The Sioux Falls School District exists to serve the community by educating and preparing each student to succeed in a changing world. Therefore, it was critical to the strategic planning process that the community had ongoing opportunities to reflect on the current challenges facing the District and to provide feedback on the theory of action and priorities initially proposed by the Steering Committee. The primary objective of the community engagement phase of the strategic planning process was to ensure the plan incorporated a diverse set of perspectives from across the community. Efforts were designed to solicit feedback that would help test whether the theory of action and priorities drafted by the Steering Committee were responsive to community needs, and whether the intent behind the theory of action and priorities was communicated effectively with the current language. Additionally, engaging the community helped to generate awareness from a large set of stakeholders, with the goal of creating a united front behind the strategic plan moving forward.

To solicit a broad range of perspectives, the Steering Committee used multiple methods to share information about the strategic plan and to solicit feedback. These efforts took place in January 2016. Below is a summary of these efforts:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Community Engagement Sessions</th>
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<td>On January 25th and 26th, 2016, Sioux Falls School District hosted three community engagement sessions (See below for a complete schedule and map of locations). Each community roundtable was attended by all Steering Committee members. A wide range of SFSD parents, community partners, education leaders, and other stakeholders were formally invited to each session so they could provide input. Additionally, members of the public were encouraged to attend and participate in the discussion along with the invited partners. The community engagement sessions followed a predetermined protocol:</td>
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<td><strong>Presentation of strategic plan:</strong> Facilitators and select members of the Steering Committee opened each session by providing a brief overview of the strategic planning process and framework, and presented the draft theory of action and priorities.</td>
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<td><strong>Discussion of plan and questions:</strong> Invited all participants to ask clarifying questions about the draft theory of action and priorities, and whether they believed these resonated with community needs and if anything was missing.</td>
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<td><strong>Solicit written feedback:</strong> At the end of each session, the participants were provided a feedback form to provide additional input about the draft theory of action and priorities.</td>
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• **Website:** Sioux Falls School District posted a draft of the strategic plan with the theory of action and priorities, along with all relevant contextual documents on its website. The website was updated to reflect progress throughout the process. In addition, the website was used to publicize the community engagement sessions (described below) and to solicit feedback on the strategic plan.

• **Social & Print Media:** Lastly, the Sioux Falls School District Office of Community Relations utilized local media and social media channels to inform the public about the strategic planning process. These included local television stations KDLT, KELO, and KSFY, the District’s cable access channel KLRN-TV, the *Argus Leader*, the Sioux Falls School District Facebook page, Sioux Falls School District Twitter feed, and the Sioux Falls School District mobile app, “ParentLink”.

The Steering Committee was very pleased with the turnout at these community engagement sessions, as well as the constructive praise and feedback provided. The participants in the community engagement sessions - which included school leaders, educators, parents and families, and community advocacy and activist organizations - provided perspectives from a wide range of the stakeholders who work in and with Sioux Falls School District. The Steering Committee received feedback from over 100 community partners and members of the public. In addition, SFSD leadership and Steering Committee members were able to have valuable face time with members of the larger community, which will pave the way for further SFSD engagements and involvement efforts.

The Steering Committee took care to document the oral and written feedback and input provided by the community. These notes were then compiled to identify broad themes, which
the Steering Committee reviewed, discussed and incorporated into a revised draft of the strategic plan.

Much of the feedback centered on specific language and wording choice. The Steering Committee took care to address such feedback to ensure the final language conveyed its intended meaning while reflecting the needs of the community. A few other pieces of feedback were more pertinent to the implementation phase of the work and will be incorporated into the creation of the initiatives and action steps emerging from each priority area.

In general, community members expressed support for the basic framework and the direction of the theory of action and priorities. The District will closely monitor the progress of measurable goals defined in this strategic plan.
About District Management Group

Founded in 2004, District Management Group seeks to address the most important management challenges facing American public school leaders. The leaders of our school systems are charged with the enormous responsibility of providing students with the resources to succeed in school and beyond. To achieve this, district and school leaders must not only be great educators, they must also be great managers. District Management Group seeks to provide district leaders with the best management techniques and educational practices to produce measurable, sustainable improvements that help schools and students thrive.

Our unwavering focus is on solutions that improve student outcomes, and simultaneously enhance operational efficiency and resource allocation. Achieving only one of these objectives in isolation is not enough. It is in achieving these three objectives simultaneously that improvements in student outcomes and the public education system as a whole can be made sustainable.

To achieve these objectives, District Management Group engages with districts in different ways:

**District Management Solutions**
District Management Solutions offer a comprehensive combination of deep expertise, proprietary software, and dedicated support to help districts in the areas of:
- Scheduling: elementary and secondary
- Special education
- Strategic planning
- Program evaluation
- Strategic budgeting

District Management Solutions also provides professional development programs in these areas.

**District Management Council**
District Management Council is a network of forward-thinking district leaders committed to driving transformational change in public education. Membership in District Management Council gives you access to our research and though leadership, prepaid access to our professional development conferences, and opportunities to share ideas with a national network of like-minded district leaders.

**District Management Journal**
District Management Journal distills our in-depth research and years of experience to provide insightful and practical articles, case studies, and toolkits that help school district leaders implement measurable, sustainable improvements in student outcomes.