



# PLEASANTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## STRATEGIC PLAN PROPOSAL

Presented by:  
Nebraska Association of School Boards

# Strategic Planning Proposal for Pleasanton Public Schools



## Board of Education

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### **Presented by the Nebraska Association of School Boards**

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April 15, 2019

To the Pleasanton Public Schools Superintendent and Board of Education,

We appreciate the opportunity to share the NASB Strategic Plan Proposal with the Pleasanton Administrators and Board of Education. The NASB Board Leadership Department is pleased to provide a multitude of programs and services to our members, including the following strategic planning process.

The Association adopted protocol and procedures are characteristic of a comprehensive planning process. The proposal outlines the scope and sequence that includes engagement of both internal and external stakeholders through one-to-one interviews, online surveys, and purposeful focus group discussion. The process ensures open and continuous communication with our staff, but also a strategic plan design that will meet the vision and expectations of administration and board of education.

The team at NASB would value the opportunity to work with the Pleasanton School District through this most important endeavor. As the Director of the Leadership Department, I will serve as the lead facilitator with assistance from Kori Stanosheck, NASB Engagement Associate, and Melissa Lusk, NASB Development Associate.

Once again, thank you for allowing us to present a proposal. I look forward to the opportunity to discuss and address questions and points of clarification as needed. Please feel free to contact me at 402-817-0296 at your convenience.

Respectfully submitted,

***Marcia R. Herring***

Marcia R. Herring, Director of Board Leadership

Nebraska Association of School Boards

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## Need for Strategic Planning

For many school districts, the purpose for engaging in strategic planning begins with the belief that a school district's primary mission is the education of students and all actions and decisions are dedicated to improving educational outcomes. Experienced educators also understand that, although the district is accomplished, the bar must be raised to ensure improvement and growth of learning for all students. This commendable goal is quite often tempered by the certainty that most school districts are challenged with needs that exceed access to adequate resources and meeting the expectations of stakeholders to be more efficient and accountable with the investment of resources.

## NASB Strategic Planning

The Nebraska Association of School Boards has been advocating for, working with, and training Nebraska school boards since 1918. Traditionally, the NASB's Board Leadership department has worked with school boards and their superintendents in more narrowly focused goal setting exercises. As recent as 2014, district leaders requested that we expand community engagement to include a comprehensive strategic planning process. Since that time, NASB has facilitated strategic planning for more than 25 school districts ranging from Class A to Class D (see Appendix IV for testimonials).

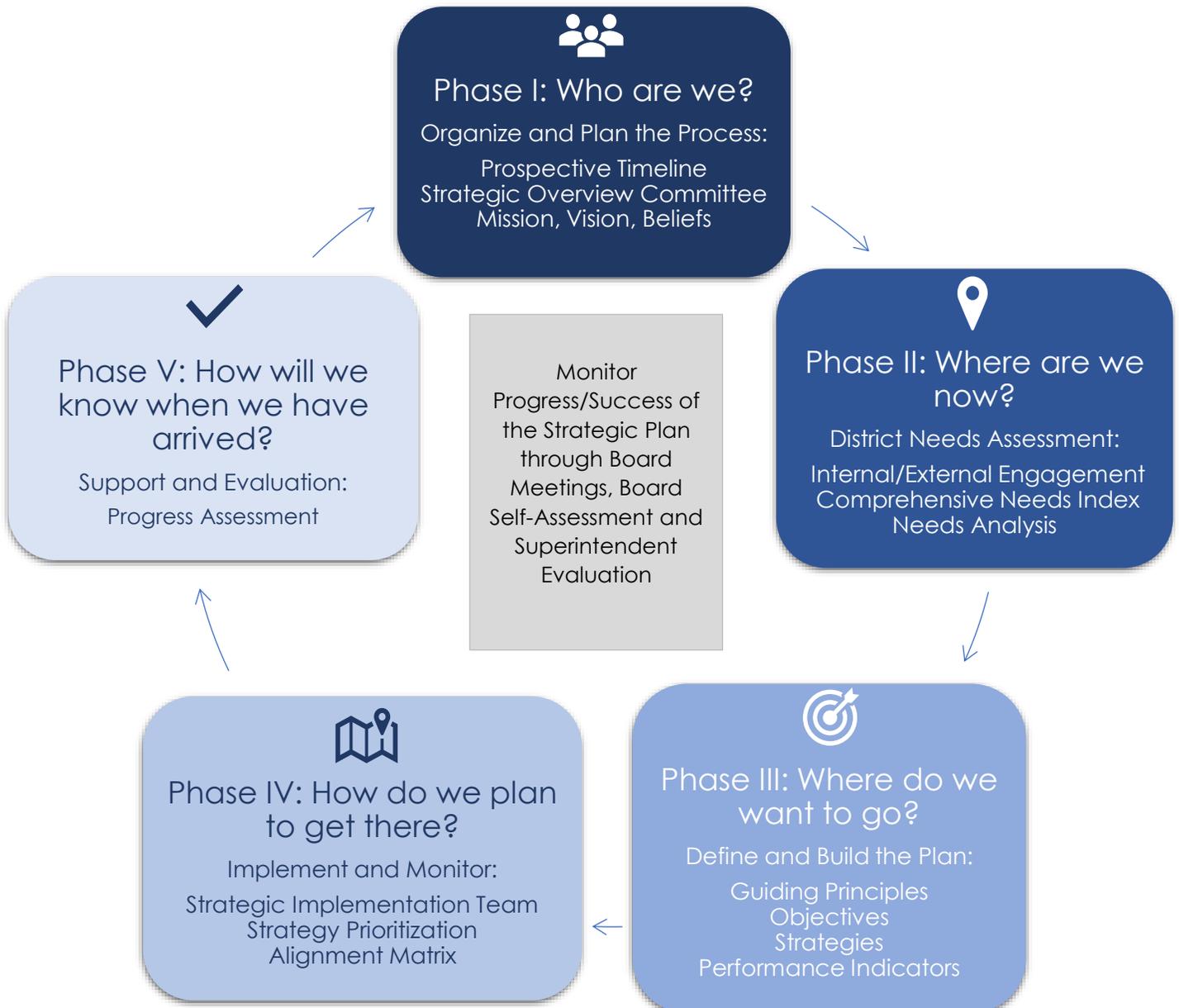
NASB strategic planning ensures that common purpose and values are established for the school through the strategic direction for the next three to five years. The strategic plan is expressed through guiding principles, objectives, and strategies, and is a critical component that ensures stakeholders the district is operating strategically and planning for the future and success.

The NASB Strategic Planning Process:

- Validates the mission, vision, and beliefs of the district
- Informs through internal and external engagement
- Produces qualitative and quantitative data to identify needs
- Empowers the district leadership team to prioritize and focus on target areas
- Enables the district to allocate and align resources to address priorities
- Provides a mechanism for the board to monitor and assess the progress and success of learning

## NASB Strategic Planning Model

The NASB approach to strategic planning utilizes tested methods for guiding schools through this important process. We modify our methodology to align to the vision and expectations of the process as defined by the **District Leadership Team** (see Appendix VI for Glossary) and Board of Education. The process is designed to meet two, central goals: the collection of high-quality data necessary for the creation of prioritized strategies and to engage stakeholders' perspective, ideas, and suggestions for growing education.



PHASE I



Who are we?

Organize and Plan the Process:

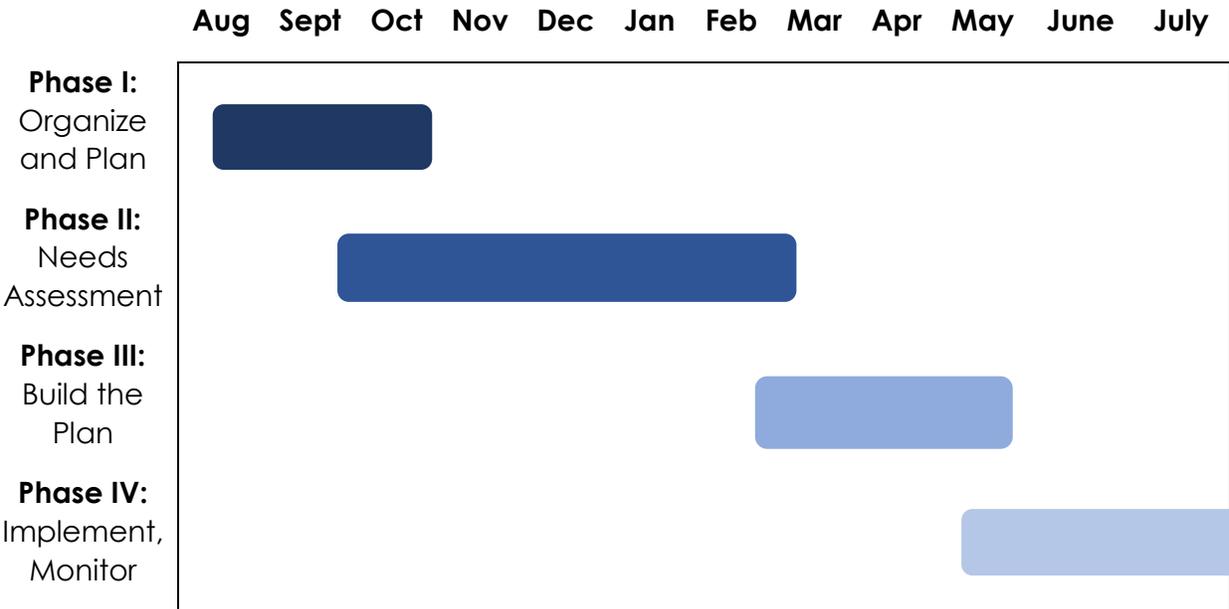
Prospective Timeline | Strategic Overview Committee | Mission, Vision, Beliefs

### Organize and Plan the Process

Embarking on an effective strategic plan begins with organizing a timeline to establish a unified vision and expectations amongst stakeholders regarding how the process will unfold. This phase provides the district an opportunity to identify internal and external stakeholders that contribute to the community and district's identity. Once identified, the stakeholders are extended an invitation take part in the strategic planning process.

### PROSPECTIVE TIMELINE

While each district's timeline is unique, dependent upon the varying schedule and the timeframe by which the strategic planning process is initiated, the general outline and respective expenses are depicted in the diagram below. The Association will work diligently with the district to create a cost-effective and timely schedule to meet the needs of the district. For a more detailed timeline, see Appendix I.



**Phase V:**  
Follow Up  
Evaluation

2-3 Years After Implementation

## The Strategic Overview Committee

The most diverse and instrumental group to the creation of a purposeful and effective strategic plan is the development of the Strategic Overview Committee (SOC). The committee represents a cross-section of both internal and external stakeholders. This committee will be tasked with:

- Reviewing and providing feedback regarding the district mission, vision, and beliefs.
- Engaging in purposeful discussion pertaining to the:
  - Strengths of the district
  - Needs of the district
  - Opportunities for growth in the district
  - Barriers that may potentially prevent achievement of the goals in the district

### *Identification of the SOC Members*

The creation of the SOC shall be initiated by the board and administration. In accordance with the guidelines defined throughout this proposal, the Association recommends that the committee encompasses the following essential stakeholders including, but not limited to:

- Superintendent
- Members of the Board of Education
- District Level Directors
- Building Level Administrators
- Staff Leaders
- Parents
- Business Leaders
- Students
- Other

The membership of this committee will ensure greater participation, provide a diversity of perspectives, lessen the work load of individual team members, and contributes to the success of the strategic plan process.

## Mission, Vision, Beliefs

Before assessing district needs, NASB engages the SOC committee on a review of mission, vision, and beliefs (see Appendix III for a description of engagement methods). By revisiting the core of "who we are" at the outset of the process sets the tone for the purpose and direction of all stakeholder engagement and the development of the strategic plan.



## Where are we now?

District Needs Assessment:

Internal and External Engagement | Comprehensive Needs Index | Needs Analysis

### DISTRICT NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND DATA COLLECTION

The core of a good strategic plan rests on the collection of accurate and relevant data. The **Needs Assessment** is the period of collecting and assessing district needs and challenges, as well as the expectations for the future of the district structured to collaboratively engage internal and external stakeholders while remaining focused on student learning. The Needs Assessment data will:

- provide direction for programs and services that support the system's mission and vision;
- allow staff to determine priorities and allocate limited resources to activities that will have the greatest impact;
- create cohesion through the alignment of goals, strategies, professional development, and desired outcomes;
- enable benchmarking and monitoring of implementation and impact; and
- assist with continuous improvement by helping staff identify change, which instructional and other practices are working, and the strategies associated with the greatest success.

Direct stakeholder data collection provides an objective view of the district that informs the needs, goals, and strategies to be outlined in the plan. Examples of this type of data include, but are not limited to, current school district standards, assessment and achievement data, information about curriculum and instructional models, prior or current strategic plans, school improvement plans, facilities and maintenance master plans, community demographic information, and annual reports.

## INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Shaping and strengthening the public image of the school district and building a positive working relationship with stakeholders is a requirement in this era of accountability.

**Stakeholders** are those who may be affected by or have an effect on the mission, vision, goals, and/or policies of the school district (for a list of potential stakeholders to engage in your strategic planning process, see Appendix II). Engaging stakeholders in the strategic planning process aids in:

- Creating transparency
- Demonstrating why key stakeholders should trust and value the school district
- Conveying what is being done to improve and grow student learning
- Providing evidence of how tax dollars are properly invested in education
- Expressing to stakeholders that their input is relevant
- Establishing open lines of communication with stakeholders enables the school district to foster positive relations and interactions moving forward

The Association utilizes a variety of methods to engage stakeholders including focus group discussion, one-to-one interviews, and online surveys. The process is directed and focused so that it does not become simply an opportunity for individuals to air complaints (see Appendix III for details regarding engagement methods).

Our team collects and compiles all responses and feedback from stakeholder engagement and organizes the data into a useful format. Although not all of this data will directly inform the final strategic plan, the responses, organized by stakeholder group and, in the case of staff, organized by building, can be a valuable source of information for administrators.

## COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS INDEX

The Comprehensive Needs Index (CNI) is a secondary mechanism by which to identify needs that possibly did not surface in the engagement data and provides an additional lens to confirm, compare, and contrast the identified stakeholder needs in the needs analysis by building level and across the district.

## NEEDS ANALYSIS

Together, the CNI and the stakeholder data provide a comprehensive needs analysis to be developed. Once NASB facilitators have completed the data collection, the results are compiled, organized into summaries, and the work of crafting the Needs Analysis will begin. NASB facilitators are responsible for drafting all parts of the Needs Analysis.

This document will provide the board, administration, and other stakeholders with an overview of all significant, emergent themes from the data. Prominent themes from all engagement methods will be included. Once developed, this document is presented to the board and administration before initiating the process of building the strategic plan.



## Where do we want to go?

Define and Build the Plan:

Guiding Principles | Objectives | Strategies | Performance Indicators

### BUILDING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Once the Needs Analysis has been reviewed, the creation of the strategic plan begins. Development of the plan is a collaborative process between the SOC, District Leadership and NASB facilitators, which is modified dependent upon the leadership preference of the school district. Building the plan begins with collaborative input to identify **Guiding Principles, Objectives, and Strategies**. Following identification of these components of the plan, the facilitator will organize and draft a preliminary version of the strategic plan that also includes **Performance Indicators**. Once a complete drafted plan has been created, the plan will be presented, made available for modifications, and the final plan will be prepared for adoption by the board. The 3-5-year plan will contain additional elements useful for planning implementation and monitoring. These components include:

- Target Date
- Point Person Responsible
- Program, Level, or Building
- Action Plan
- Funding Status
- Annual Evidence of Progress

Note: For detailed explanations and examples of Guiding Principles, Objectives, Strategies, Performance Indicators and the other components mentioned above, see Appendix VI: Components of the Strategic Plan.

## PHASE IV



## How do we plan to get there?

Implement and Monitor:

Action Plans | Strategy Prioritization | Alignment Matrix

## IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR

A strategic plan, no matter how good it is on paper, is of little value if it is not implemented well. NASB will work closely with District Leadership to put mechanisms in place to ensure the strategic plan is implemented in a realistic and meaningful way; often this means creating action plans inclusive of specific tasks and goals at the building or classroom-level.

Even where a well-crafted strategic plan has been properly implemented, it can be difficult to gauge success. Therefore, NASB recommends that the district leadership adopt the **Strategic Implementation Team (SIT)** Process to ensure that administration and staff effectively implement and assess progress and/or success of the Strategy/Performance Indicator(s)/Action Plan.

### + Strategy Prioritization

Upon adopting the comprehensive strategic plan, districts can become overwhelmed with strategizing an effective implementation process. The Association provides a process by which to engage internal stakeholders to prioritize the strategies within the plan according to impact and urgency. The prioritization feedback is processed and graphed, providing direction to administration as to which areas of the plan are considered most impactful and/or extremely urgent.

+ Indicates an optional component of the NASB Strategic Planning Process.

## + Alignment Matrix

The Association recognizes that each district has significant responsibilities and commitments to improvement and student learning. The alignment matrix is designed to assist the district in this capacity by cross-referencing the components of the strategic plan with AQuESTT and Nebraska Framework/AdvancEd standards or tenets. In doing so, this matrix saves administration time while also indicating the level of connection the strategic plan has in supporting districtwide improvement.

+ Indicates an optional component of the NASB Strategic Planning Process.

## PHASE V



## How do we know when we have arrived?

Support and Evaluation:  
Progress Assessment

## SUPPORT AND EVALUATION

Ongoing support from the Board Leadership Team will continue after the board has officially adopted the plan. At the district-level, consistent assessments at regularly-identified intervals will ensure that the adopted strategic plan provides an effective and purposeful mechanism to support growth and improvement of learning; through this evaluation process, the district will measure the positive progress realized and areas of growth that remain.

### + Progress Assessment

The Association provides re-engagement of stakeholders and a review of the progress and status of the strategic plan two to three years following implementation.

+ Indicates an optional component of the NASB Strategic Planning Process.

## APPENDIX I: DETAILED PROSPECTIVE TIMELINE

The draft timeline provides a general scope of the project and the optimum timeline for strategic planning. The timeline for a district will vary based upon the ability to schedule stakeholder engagement meetings.

Phase One		
Organize and Plan the Process	Target Date	Date Complete
Identify district point person		
Identify strategic overview committee		
Identify internal and external stakeholders		
Design communications packet/engagement criteria		
Create a proposed timeline to support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strategic Overview Committee meetings</li> <li>▪ Staff engagement meetings</li> <li>▪ Community engagement meetings</li> <li>▪ Business leader engagement</li> <li>▪ Other</li> </ul>		
Meeting preparation		
Send invites, press release, social media promo		
Verify attendance		
Phase Two		
District Needs Assessment	Target Date	Date Complete
Administrative review of district		
Program and services overview		
District assessment		
Initial Strategic Overview Committee meeting		
Stakeholder engagement meetings Method of engagement: focus group and online survey		
Business and community leaders Method of engagement: focus group and online survey		
Staff at all schools Method of engagement: online survey		
Students: focus group discussion/online survey		
NASB facilitator compiles all stakeholder data		
Conduct Comprehensive Needs Index with administration		
NASB facilitator drafts strategic Needs Analysis utilizing CNI and other engagement data		

Phase Three		
Define and Build the Plan	Target Date	Date Complete
Review of compiled data and Needs Analysis with Strategic Overview Committee		
Review of compiled data by administration and board		
Identify Guiding Principles, Objectives, and Strategies		
NASB facilitator will organize and draft: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Guiding Principles</li> <li>▪ Objectives</li> <li>▪ Strategies</li> <li>▪ Performance Indicators</li> <li>▪ Timeline</li> <li>▪ Responsible parties</li> </ul>		
Facilitator presents draft at Strategic Overview Committee meeting		
Board adopts plan		
Phase Four		
Implement and Monitor	Target Date	Date Complete
Present final plan to all stakeholders		
+NASB Board Leadership creates Alignment Matrix for the strategic plan		
Promote plan internally and externally		
+NASB Board Leadership conducts the strategy prioritization to help administration identify a strategic implementation process.		
Establish Strategic Implementation Team to monitor progress and success at regular intervals		
Phase Five		
Support and Evaluation	Target Date	Date Complete
Establish superintendent evaluation aligned to strategic plan		
Establish board self-assessment aligned to strategic plan		
NASB re-engages internal and external stakeholders		
Contact, schedule, and conduct Progress Assessment with NASB		

## Appendix II: Identification of Stakeholders

Below contains an unexclusive list of potential stakeholders to consider in the engagement process:

### External Stakeholders

- a. Community
  - Parents (e.g., households with school-age and non-school age children)
  - Residents
  - Community groups
  - Neighborhood leaders
- b. Business and Industry Representatives
  - Chamber of Commerce
  - Community Economic Development
  - Developers
  - Business owners/leaders
  - Realtors
  - Banking
  - Preschool providers
  - Daycare providers
  - Post-Secondary Institutions
  - News media
- c. Community and Youth Service Organization Representatives
  - Ministerial leaders
  - YMCA, Teammates, other
  - Civic Club Youth Programs (Optimist, Rotary, Kiwanis, Legion, Lions, etc.)
  - Veteran organizations (United Way)
  - Community Based Programs
  - Family/Student resource systems and organizations
- d. Social and Mental Health Service Representatives
  - Comprehensive care centers, drug prevention programs
  - Social Services
  - Health and Human Services
- e. Local and State Government Representatives
  - Mayor and/or City Council Members
  - County Board
  - Sheriff and Chief of Police
  - Legislators
  - Commissions
  - Minority Advocacy groups

### Internal Stakeholders

- Board
- Superintendent
- Assistant Superintendents
- District Level Administration
- Building Level Administrators
- Certificated/Classified Staff
- Students (Middle and High School)
- Advisory Councils
- Booster Club Officers/Members
- PTO/PTA Groups
- Organized Parental Support Groups
- Foundation
- Alumni

## APPENDIX III: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT METHODS

The following are some of the assessments that are conducted in engaging the external stakeholders.

### ***Mission, Vision, Beliefs***

The first engagement of the Strategic Overview Committee will consist of reviewing the mission, vision, and beliefs of the district. This process will incorporate group discussion and assessment of the current mission, vision, and belief statements and will provide opportunity for constructive feedback for potential areas of growth.

### ***District Program and Service Overview***

The Program Service Overview invites district-level and building-level administrators to analyze how effective district programs, services, and instruction enhance the district's mission while efficiently utilizing all resources. The process enables administrators to answer fundamental questions about the district's programs and services:

- Are we mastering the learning process the curriculum is designed to achieve?
- Are we providing the professional development needed to ensure success in our classrooms?
- Do we have appropriate policies and procedures in place?
- Do we create, review, implement, and disseminate our policies and procedures consistently throughout the district?

The comprehensive study of the programs and services through the strategic planning process will add to the data necessary to make informed decisions related to continuing services, addition of new services and to direct limited resources where needed and effective.

Note: The inclusion of the Program and Service Overview has helped numerous districts to realize tangible improvements of the services and programs provided. The absence of the Program and Service Overview would be detrimental to the development and design of a credible strategic plan.

### ***SWOT Analysis***

Various stakeholders, often including the Strategic Overview Committee, Administration, and the Board, play a key role in assessing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the district. This engagement tool helps identify areas that the district is excelling as well as potential areas of concern for the future.

## ***Comprehensive Needs Index***

As briefly described on page 10, the Comprehensive Needs Index (CNI) is a secondary method by which to identify needs that possibly did not surface in the engagement data; it is a rubric by which participating stakeholders can review the district's efforts in six priority areas.

## Appendix IV: Testimonials

“Our Board and Superintendent engaged the leadership services of Marcia and the NASB team to facilitate our district's development and adoption of our strategic plan. Marcia provided instrumental assistance in guiding and eliciting stakeholder input to identify key strategic plan goals. The strategic plan developed through the assistance of Marcia and NASB has been crucial in district decision-making to help our Board maintain strong governance to support our students.” - Superintendent and Board President

“I really appreciated that we had the time to discuss real issues and the possibility to solve them.” -District Administrator

“I learned that it takes oversight and effort from all to have a lasting impact in our schools.” -Business Leader

“I liked the opportunity to hear multiple viewpoints from such knowledgeable people.”  
-Business Leader

“Every school needs a road map to move forward from where they currently are to where they want to be in the future. NASB was instrumental in assisting us collaborate with district stakeholders through a guided process that has helped accomplish this. Together, we were able to identify our district's Vision, Mission, Values and Core Beliefs which has defined who we are, and who we want to be.” -Superintendent

“The NASB process is a powerful experience for school and community! It is an opportunity for school administration and board of education members to hear patron perception, and in turn provide stakeholders with factual information pertaining to the school. Deficit areas are discussed which aids in the strategic planning and school improvement processes of the district, but the strengths of the district will dominate the discussion. It is awesome! The process truly helps a school district to move forward for the betterment of kids!” -Superintendent

## APPENDIX V: THE NASB STRATEGIC PLANNING TEAM

The Nebraska Association of School Boards has been advocating for, working with, and training Nebraska school boards since 1918. Traditionally, the NASB's Board Leadership department has worked with school boards and their superintendents in more narrowly focused goal setting exercises. However, in 2014 district leaders requested that we expand community engagement to include a comprehensive strategic planning process. Since that time, NASB has facilitated strategic planning for more than 25 Nebraska school districts. As demand has grown, our Strategic Planning Team has grown to include four facilitators:

### ***Marcia Herring – NASB Director of Board Leadership***

Marcia began her service to public education as a school board member on the Waverly School District Board of Education, completing 12 years of service. During her tenure as a local board member she was elected by her peers to serve on the Nebraska Association of School Boards—Board of Directors completing three terms as Director. She began her work as a superintendent search consultant more than 18 years ago. Marcia served as Director of NASB Search Services for 8 years.

As the Director of Board Leadership, Marcia has expanded the programs and services to meet the ever-changing needs of our members. We currently support our members through Strategic Planning, Community Engagement, Board Development Learning Retreats and Workshops, and Online Board Self-Assessment and Superintendent Evaluation. The growth of the Department and scope of services has enabled our team to provide impactful and purposeful leadership for school districts across the state and ranging in enrollment from 125 students to more than 10,000.

### ***Kori Stanosheck – NASB Board Leadership Engagement Associate***

Kori brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to her role as Engagement Associate. As a Strategic Advisor for more than ten years, Kori provided nationwide coaching leadership to executive leaders and board members. She exhibits strong competencies through her leadership skills and facilitation work in strategic planning, large group engagement, and role in the NASB Board Leadership Department developing value-driven resources for Association members. Kori is also directing the efforts for the Whole Child Project, which aims to cultivate the development of a healthy, safe, supportive, challenging and engaged healthy schools and communities, on behalf of the Association.

### ***Melissa Lusk – NASB Board Leadership Development Associate***

Melissa serves as the Board Leadership Development Associate, providing support services and coordination for Board Leadership events and initiatives. Her extensive work in the growth and development of our data analysis has enhanced the integrity and quality of the Department's Needs Analysis phase of the Strategic Planning Service. Melissa is currently developing the Department C.A.R.E. (Child Advocates and Resources for Education) Program, targeting enhanced early childhood parent engagement programs and services. Melissa began her involvement in public education through teaching English to local refugees and immigrants. She has a passion for working with diverse communities and considers it an honor to be part of the evolving work at NASB.

## Appendix VI: Strategic Planning Glossary

### **Strategic Planning Terms**

#### **Assessment of Needs**

The period of collecting and assessing data, structured to ensure a high level of collaboration among the internal and external stakeholders.

#### **Comprehensive Needs Index (CNI)**

A supplemental assessment that provides a comprehensive analysis of areas of excellence and need; especially useful in detecting overlooked needs that did not surface in the stakeholder feedback.

#### **District Leadership**

A group comprised of the superintendent, other specified district administrators, and the school board.

#### **External Stakeholders**

May include, but not be limited to parents, community leaders, local business leaders, elected officials, representatives from community service organizations, local and state government officials, representatives from local or regional institutions of higher education, any and all interested members of the community.

#### **Internal Stakeholders**

Include superintendent, assistant superintendent(s), district directors, coordinators, administrators, building administrators, certified staff, classified staff, and students.

#### **Needs Analysis**

A comprehensive, multifaceted reflection of the district as well as its perceived and potential needs. The collected data and summary of needs enable the district to address and discuss the objectives and planned outcomes. It is a distinct and necessary phase of the strategic planning process to ensure the board and administration model educational accountability through purposeful planning and measurable goals to support growth of student learning districtwide.

#### **Program and Service Overview**

The analysis by district-level and building-level administrators of district effectiveness in programs, services, and instruction to support the district's mission while efficiently utilizing all resources (i.e. funding, facilities, technology, personnel, time, graduation rates, etc.). The process enables administrators to answer fundamental questions about the district's programs and services:

- Are we mastering the learning process the curriculum is designed to achieve?
- Are we providing the professional development needed to ensure success in our classrooms?
- Do we have appropriate policies and procedures in place?
- Do we create, review, implement, and disseminate our policies and procedures consistently throughout the district?

#### **Stakeholders**

Individuals who may be affected by or have an effect on the mission, vision, goals, and/or policies of the school district.

**Strategic Overview Committee (SOC)**

A diverse group of 15 to 25 internal and external stakeholders identified by district leadership. The SOC meets multiple times throughout the process and plays a critical role in guiding the creation of the strategic plan by defining the district's mission and vision, reviewing collected data, and helping to set guiding principles. Individuals to consider for the SOC may include, but are not limited to:

- Board Members
- District Level Directors
- Building Level Administrators
- Staff Leaders
- Parents
- Business Leaders
- Community Leaders
- Students

**Strategy Prioritization**

Supplemental data collected and graphed to support the district in identifying the most impactful and urgent priorities within the strategic plan.

**Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis**

For various stakeholder engagement sessions, we ask the participants to discuss what they perceive to be the SWOT of the district. This is a very effective approach for initiating purposeful discussion and conversations as the stakeholder groups begin to identify needs.

**Components of the Strategic Plan****Alignment Matrix**

A correlation of each strategy to corresponding AQuESTT and Nebraska Framework/AdvancEd standards or tenets.

**District Point Person**

A member of administrative staff appointed to be the primary point of contact between NASB and the district to direct and coordinate all activities, scheduling, and communication for the district.

**Evidence of Progress**

The action(s) that has/have been taken to meet an indicator.

**Funding**

An approximate figure for how the program/service will impact district resources.

**GAP Analysis**

The process we use with district leadership and administrators to help answer the question, "What can we do to meet our goal?" It includes identifying the goal (the desired outcome), examining the current conditions that relate to that goal, and analyzing the difference between the current state and the goal (the "gap"). Understanding what is missing can help create a plan of action to meet the goal.

**Guiding Principle**

An area of identified need that the district addresses in the Strategic Plan. It is the direction in which the district would like to move. Example: To ensure that quality student service programs engage, empower, and equip students districtwide.

**Objective**

A specific, achievable goal the district identifies as a way of measuring progress in the direction it has set out in the guiding principle. Example: To provide a comprehensive before and after school program to address the needs of students and families.

**Performance Indicators**

Any method that measures whether a specific strategy has been implemented; it does not necessarily indicate whether an entire objective has been achieved. However, if the strategy or strategies have been thoughtfully crafted, implementation of all strategies under an objective should result in the district achieving the associated objective. Example (with respect to Strategies Example (a)): completed plan for implementation presented to Board of Education.

**Program/Building Level**

The defined point of impact for the respective performance indicator, strategy, or objective.

**Strategies**

The specific actions to be implemented that will allow the district to achieve an objective. A district often employs more than one strategy to achieve a particular goal. Strategies may be applicable to the entire district, or to specific buildings, departments, or programs. Example: (a) study, assess, and design a plan to implement a before and after school program for PK-6 students; (b) address obstacles that may prevent implementation of this program including, but not limited to: funding, transportation, space, staff, and community support.

**Target Date**

An identified point in time when the indicator is assessed for progress and/or a target completion date.