

Prepared for the Bismarck Public School Board & Dr. Jason Hornbacher, Superintendent

by

Dr. Jeffry M. Schatz

April 2020



Contents

Bismarck Public Schools Strategic Plan	3
2019-20 Bismarck School Board:	
BPS Leadership Team	4
Strategic Planning Committee	4
Strategic Plan Overview 2020-2025	7
Our Mission	7
Our Vision	7
Our Values	
Portrait of Students and Staff	
Our Strategic Priorities	7
Learning Excellence - Multi-Tiered Systems of Support for Academics (MTSS-A)	
Learning Excellence – Standards-Based Education	10
Learning Excellence - Effective Teaching Practices	11
Learning Excellence - Personalization	
Learning Excellence - Authentic Learning	13
Personal Excellence - Multi-Tiered Systems of Support for Behavior (MTSS-B) / Interconnected Systems Framework (ISF)	14
Personal Excellence - Inclusive Practices	15
Personal Excellence - Extracurricular/Co-Curricular	16
Environmental Excellence - Safety	17
Environmental Excellence - Culture and Climate	18
Environmental Excellence - Digital Stewardship	19
Operational Excellence - Human Capital Development	
Operational Excellence - Partnerships	
Operational Excellence - Comprehensive Plans	
Strategic Plan Measures and Evaluation	

To Our Community

Bismarck School District (BPS) #1 is a public school district serving more than 13,300 students in 2019-20 in grades K-12. The district operates 16 elementary schools for students in grades K-5, three middle school grades 6-8, three traditional high school grades 9-12, as well as the district's alternative high school. BPS also has a Career Academy and Technical Center on the campus of Bismarck State College. We are also home to BECEP, the Bismarck Early Childhood Education Center, which serves hundreds of PreK students in Early Childhood Special Education, Early Intervention, Early Head Start/Head Start, Right Track, and Community Friends.

In 2020, Bismarck has an estimated population of nearly 75,000 people. The limited ethnic diversity of the school population is reflective of the community-at-large. The student population is 82.2% Caucasian, 8.9% American Indian, and 8.9% Other. About 24% of students take part in the Free and Reduced meal program.

The Bismarck School District is accredited by AdvancED, now known as Cognia, and the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction. The district takes great pride in all of the curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular offerings made available to students. These commitments enable students to become life-ready to make a successful transition from high school to whatever next step is appropriate for each student. Additionally, a focus on providing a challenging, but supported pathway for each student has resulted in standardized test scores that meet or exceed state and national averages.

In addition to academic programs, support services are available to all students and families, such as guidance and counseling. A full range of services are also provided to students ages birth to 21 with intellectual disabilities, emotional disorders, speech/language impairments, hearing impairments, or learning disabilities. Our Special Education services include assistive technology, extended school year, health, hearing impaired services, life education for students ages 18-21, occupational and physical therapy, school psychology, social work, transportation, and vision services.

The focus of this Strategic Planning Process has been to directly and transparently outline the future direction of the Bismarck School District. This plan includes rationale, definitions, goals, and objectives. Indicators of success and measures will be developed in an operational plan. This plan

will be reviewed quarterly to ensure accountability, alignment, relevancy and respond to necessary changes.

Thank you for your support as we live our Mission to "Empower every learner to thrive." Our Mission is truly a collaborative statement that requires the commitment and work of all stakeholders.

Dr. Jason Hornbacher, Superintendent

Bismarck Public Schools Strategic Plan

This Strategic Plan is a contract between the school district and its owners—the residents of the Bismarck School District. It provides a road map to create the kind of educational experiences we want for children. A mix of current and new initiatives can be found in the plan for both the academic side and the operational side of the school district. This plan makes our priorities clear, ensures transparency in what we do, and uses measureable outcomes to hold us accountable for maintaining a focus on what truly benefits our students.

Process/Timeline

Spring 2019: Consultant Dr. Jeffry Schatz conducted a SWOT Analysis and an Environmental Scan of Bismarck Public Schools including surveys of teachers and administrators.

April 2019: Consultant presented a Strategic Alignment Study to Board & Superintendent.

July-August 2019: Consultant met individually with each School Board member.

August-September 2019: Superintendent conducted 12 focus groups with the following committees:

- Native American parents & staff
- Parents & advocates of students with special needs
- Chamber EDC members
- Bismarck High School students
- Century High School students
- Legacy High School students
- South Central High School students
- Teachers & Professional Support Staff
- Support Staff
- Booster groups for athletics, fine arts & clubs
- PAC/PTO Presidents
- BPS Principals & Directors

Sept. 2019-March 2020: Strategic Planning Committee met to discuss the District's Mission, Vision, Values, Portrait of a Graduate, Portrait of an Educator, and Strategic Initiatives for the next five years.

March 2020: Community input sought on the Strategic Plan.

April 2020: Strategic Plan approved by the School Board.

2019-20 Bismarck School Board:

Rick Geloff President
Karl Lembke Vice-President

Heide Delorme

Jon Lee

Matt Sagsveen

BPS Leadership Team

• Dr. Jason Hornbacher Superintendent

Dr. Ben Johnson
Brad Barnhardt
Asst. Superintendent of Secondary Schools
Asst. Superintendent of Elementary Schools

Darin Scherr
Stacey Geiger
Brittany Upton
Danica Nelson
Dr. Tanna Kincaid
Business & Operations Manager
Human Resources Manager
Director of Professional Learning
Special Education Director
Technology Director

Dr. Tanna Kincaid
Misti Werle
Renae Walker
Special Education Briector
Technology Director
Library Media Director
Communications Director

Strategic Planning Committee

Bismarck Public Schools Leadership Team Members (listed above)

Jon Lee
Sarah Jordan
Jill Vallejo
Dr. Tabby Rabenberg
Russ Riehl
School Board Member
Elementary School Principal
Middle School Principal
Middle School Principal

Strategic Planning Committee (cont.)

Dr. Ryan Townsend

Dylan Beck

Cassandra Irwin

David Wisthoff
Tom Schmidt
High School Principal
High School Principal

Joe Kalvoda Alternative High School Principal

Dale Hoerauf
Melissa Haas
Brittany Kuester
Josh Standing Elk
Caitlin Nicks
Stephanie Holtz
Darryl Duttenhefner
Career Academy Director
Elementary School Teacher
Elementary School Teacher
Elementary School Teacher
Middle School Teacher
Middle School Teacher

Lori Furaus Middle School Teacher & BEA President

Middle School Teacher

Kacie Schlecht
Sara Kincaid
Emily Jacobsen
Rissa Williams
Tana Sukauskas
Adam Christ
Middle School Counselor
High School Teacher
English Learner Aide
AVID Program Coordinate

AVID Program Coordinator Adam Christ School Psychologist **Elementary Social Worker** Tracy Famias Mike Yantes High School Social Worker Pat Phillips **District Systems Innovator** District Staff Developer Andrea Seibel High School Student Maigan Wilmes Jace Weishaar **High School Student** Tristan Carufel **High School Student** High School Student Skylar Carufel

Ann Richardson
Dee Daniels Nuestel
Stephanie Orr
Elementary School Parent
Elementary School Parent
Elementary School Parent

Milt Rue Elementary, Middle & High School Parent

High School Student Preschool Parent

Strategic Planning Committee (cont.)

Roxanne Romanick Designer Genes of ND

Lorraine Davis Native American Development Center

Weston Dressler Sanford Health

• Bill Baumann YMCA

Dr. Dan Leingang
Karen Erickson
Dr. Brenda Tufte
Brenna Gerhardt
Bismarck State College
University of Mary
ND Humanities Council

Mark Heinert YouthworksCarrie Grosz Carries Kids

Kim Osadchuk Burleigh County Social Services

Randy Bina Bismarck Parks and Recreation District

Erin Oban
ND State Senator

Tim Gienger West Central Human Services

Dan Eastgate Eastgate Funeral Home

Lt. Luke Gardiner Bismarck Police Department, School Resource Officers
Luke McKay Bismarck Police Department, Police Youth Bureau

Lucy Fredericks
ND Department of Public Instruction

Ben Ehreth City of Bismarck

Dr. Shawn Oban
City Commissioner, Elementary School Principal

NOTE: many community members on the committee also have or had children in Bismarck Public Schools.

Strategic Plan Overview 2020-2025

Our Mission Empower every learner to thrive.

Our Vision Together, our strong relationships build inclusive, collaborative, and innovative environments that create agency and inspire a passion for learning, excellence, and discovery.

Our Values

Inclusion

Strengthen our community by valuing people for who they are, nurturing our diversity, and embracing the contributions of all students, families, and staff.

Excellence

Ensure all learners receive an exemplary education that is academically challenging and meets their social and emotional needs.

Innovation

Engage in forward-thinking to identify bold ideas that enable us to be responsive to the expectations of our organization and community while cultivating creativity, critical thinking, and resourcefulness.

Leadership

Grow all learners as reflective leaders with high levels of integrity who are inspired and inspire others to work, learn, and solve problems.

Portrait of Students and Staff

During the Strategic Planning process our Bismarck Public School community of stakeholders described their desires for the skills and aptitudes of our students and staff. During the first quarter of the Strategic Plan rollout BPS will engage with our staff and students to arrive at portraits; providing a visual commitment developing all our BPS learners.

Our Strategic Priorities

The Bismarck Public School District will achieve its Mission, Vision, and Values through the fulfillment of its Strategic Plan. The following Strategic Priorities will guide our efforts. NOTE: "Learner" typically refers to both students and staff.

- 1. <u>Learning Excellence</u>: Bismarck Public Schools is a place where learners are motivated to learn and grow because experiences for each individual are matched to their level, style, strengths and interests. All learners are empowered, committed, and deeply reflective, and we work collaboratively to advance our knowledge and skills.
 - a. Multi-Tiered Systems of Support for Academics (MTSS-A)
 - b. Standards-Based Education
 - c. Effective Teaching
 - d. Personalization
 - e. Authentic Learning
- 2. <u>Personal Excellence</u>: Bismarck Public Schools' learners display high levels of integrity, are well balanced (mentally, emotionally and physically), and cultivate an awareness and appreciation for others' opinions, feelings, needs, and concerns. Learners embrace diversity among people, cultures, events, and issues. We serve in the community to effect positive change.
 - a. Multi-Tiered Systems of Support for Behavior (MTSS-B) / Interconnected Systems Framework (ISF)
 - b. Inclusive Practices
 - c. Extracurricular/Co-Curricular
- 3. **Environmental Excellence**: Bismarck Public Schools establishes physical and digital learning environments that are safe, welcoming, and engaging. We proactively identify and resolve any barriers to access and full participation by learners.
 - a. School Safety
 - b. Culture and Climate
 - c. Digital Stewardship
- 4. **Operational Excellence:** Bismarck Public Schools establishes system-wide operations that meet the needs of our growing and changing community. We honor stakeholder feedback, foster strategic partnerships, and create comprehensive, effective and efficient operational plans.
 - a. Human Capital Development
 - b. Partnerships
 - c. Comprehensive Plans
 - i. Financial Plan
 - ii. Facilities Plan
 - iii. Communication Plan
 - iv. Technology Plan
 - v. Transportation Plan

Learning Excellence - Multi-Tiered Systems of Support for Academics (MTSS-A)

RATIONALE: Bismarck Public Schools believes in empowering all learners to be choice-ready through a tiered systems framework.

DEFINITION: Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is an integrated framework for continuous improvement of high-quality instruction, data-driven decision-making, collaboration, and shared leadership to provide all students with the best academic opportunities to succeed.

GOAL: Every student experiences growth through multi-tiered instruction and assessment practices inclusive of differentiated learning paths and supplemental support.

- Ensure that all students experience core instruction that is responsive to their needs.
- Ensure that intervention and enrichment opportunities support students by closing achievement gaps and accelerating growth.
- Focus the work of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) in each building on the essential questions of high functioning PLCs.

Learning Excellence – Standards-Based Education

RATIONALE: Bismarck Public Schools believes standards drive instruction and that all students need to meet or exceed proficiency on North Dakota state standards.

DEFINITION: Standards-based education is a systemic approach to delivering high quality, equitable learning experiences inclusive of instruction, assessment, grading, and academic reporting practices deliberately focused on students demonstrating mastery of skills and understandings inherent in the standards.

GOAL: Deliver a high quality, equitable, standards-based education that is consistent across grade levels and courses.

- Increase all stakeholders' (e.g. staff, students, families, community) understanding of the components of effective standards-based education. (SBE Pocket Guide/Parent Guide)
- Establish and maintain a K-12 curriculum review and revision cycle that aligns to budget priorities.
- Establish and communicate clear and consistent grading practices that are supportive of learning, bias resistant, and intrinsically motivating.

Learning Excellence - Effective Teaching Practices

RATIONALE: Bismarck Public Schools believes that all learners deserve effective teaching that supports them in growing to their full potential.

DEFINITION: Effective teaching is the application of evidence-based practices based on collaboration and intentional, reflective planning. To optimize learning, experiences are inclusive of supportive relationships, clarity of purpose, and appropriate challenge.

GOAL: All educators implement research-based instructional strategies, inclusive of social emotional support, culturally responsive practices, success skills, and disciplinary literacies.

- Increase competence of all staff in implementing effective teaching strategies in all tiers represented within each school's instructional framework.
- Ensure all staff participate in professional learning opportunities aligned to personal professional development goals.
- Expand our existing coaching model to include more co-teaching and peer coaching.
- Build internal capacity to facilitate professional learning and PLC collaboration.

Learning Excellence - Personalization

RATIONALE: Bismarck Public Schools believes personalization honors who learners are, how they learn, and what they aspire to do.

DEFINITION: Personalization is a relationship-based approach that provides learners with more choice in how they demonstrate mastery. Instruction is tailored for each learner's culture, strengths, needs, and interests - including enabling voice and choice in what, how, when, and where they learn. Personalization empowers exploration, practice, agency, communication, creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, and efficiency.

GOAL: Every learner has access to personalized learning paths.

- Foster skills and dispositions that support staff, student, and stakeholder engagement in personalized learning.
- Identify alignment and clarify or revise inconsistencies in policy, infrastructure, curriculum, instruction, and professional development needed to systemically support personalized learning across the district.
- Expand learning environments for all learners to include supports that accelerate personalized competency-based learning (i.e. blended learning, flexible time, multiple learning paths).

Learning Excellence - Authentic Learning

RATIONALE: Bismarck Public Schools believes authentic learning experiences empower learners to develop agency, efficiency, and passion.

DEFINITION: Authentic learning allows students to explore, discuss, and meaningfully construct concepts and relationships in contexts that involve real-world problems and projects. This can take the form of learning trips, projects, capstones, internships, alternative pathways for graduation, or other learning opportunities that result in relevant and useful products or experiences.

GOAL: Every learner has access to a variety of experiences that facilitate meaningful connections to relevant real-life situations.

- Design and implement a model for developing authentic learning experiences.
- Collaborate with community partners to develop authentic learning experiences.
- Ensure that experiences are grounded in and connected to standards.

Personal Excellence - Multi-Tiered Systems of Support for Behavior (MTSS-B) / Interconnected Systems Framework (ISF)

RATIONALE: Bismarck Public Schools believes supporting social and emotional needs through a tiered systems framework is foundational to learning.

DEFINITION: An Interconnected Systems Framework (ISF) serves to integrate School Mental Health and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports through the blending of resources, training, systems, data, and practices (Multi-Tiered System of Supports). There is an emphasis on prevention, early identification, and intervention of the social, emotional, and behavioral needs of students. Family and community partnerships are critical to this framework.

GOAL: All learners are supported through a continuum of evidence-based practices that promote behavioral and mental health.

- Establish and monitor a continuum of evidence-based interventions at all MTSS levels that results in early identification and intervention implementation using data-based decision making.
- Increase efficiency and effectiveness of Student Support Services (School Counselors, School Psychologists, and School Social Workers).
- Provide professional development to meet the social and emotional needs of all staff and students.
- Engage community collaborators in supporting schools in the promotion of behavioral and mental health for all learners.

Personal Excellence - Inclusive Practices

RATIONALE: Bismarck Public Schools believes each learner thrives within an equitable and inclusive learning environment that values the contribution of personal, cultural, and historical aspects of identity to enrich our schools and community.

DEFINITION: Inclusive practices ensure that each learner is valued as an equal member of the school community. They support positive school climates and foster an understanding of each student's strengths and weaknesses while providing intentional and meaningful opportunities to engage in all aspects of learning.

GOALS: Each learner is valued for their distinct characteristics, ideas, and perspectives.

- Ensure that schools cultivate and integrate diversity in all learning environments by recognizing each learner's distinct needs, ideas, and perspectives.
- Examine and revise our curriculum and teaching practices as necessary to ensure that we are effective in reaching each learner.
- Improve access to equitable school opportunities across buildings and for each student.

Personal Excellence - Extracurricular/Co-Curricular

RATIONALE: Bismarck Public Schools believes all students deserve extracurricular/co-curricular experiences that facilitate exploration of interests and passion in order to enhance school experience and build life skills.

DEFINITION: Extra/co-curricular activities provide additional opportunities to support and reinforce learner skills and understandings through passion driven participation in teams, clubs, and specialized courses both in and outside of school.

GOAL: All learners have diverse opportunities to participate in or lead activities that enhance their experience.

- Provide diverse and relevant opportunities for all students to experience success in activities.
- Improve communications and outreach to inform parents and students about activities.
- Provide leadership training to coaches, advisors, and students involved in activities.

Environmental Excellence - Safety

RATIONALE: Bismarck Public Schools believes safe environments are foundational for all students, staff, and community members to thrive at school and in the community.

DEFINITION: Safe environments are free from harassment, violence, bullying, drugs, and harm in order to ensure students, staff, and visitors are physically, emotionally, academically, and socially supported. School safety includes building solid relationships with students and first responders, reporting threatening behavior to identify threats, physical hardening of buildings with regular safety inspections, and regular training and drills to support emergency response.

GOAL: All learners are physically, emotionally, academically, and socially safe.

- Increase collaboration on safety between internal and external departments.
- Establish a cross departmental team from student support services, special education, safety, administration, and teachers.
- Design a continuum of safety supports and training for all learners.
- Develop and train all stakeholders on safety processes and procedures including safety mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.
- Improve communication to all stakeholders on safety processes and procedures.

Environmental Excellence - Culture and Climate

RATIONALE: Bismarck Public Schools believes all our stakeholders deserve to learn, work, and have meaningful educational experiences in safe, welcoming, and nurturing environments which allow them to reach high academic standards and peak personal potential.

DEFINITION: A positive school culture and climate is the foundation for supportive relationships among staff, students, and parents. School culture is a group's shared beliefs, customs, and behavior. School climate is the "feel" of the school environment and how people perceive their relationship with the school.

GOAL: All stakeholders contribute to and benefit from welcoming and supportive environments.

- Identify and implement strategies to foster welcoming and supportive school environments.
- Create experiences for all learners which instill joy and celebrate success.
- Create school cultural proficiency plans to help stakeholders interact effectively in our diverse community.
- Implement leadership opportunities for all learners.

Environmental Excellence - Digital Stewardship

RATIONALE: Bismarck Public Schools believes developing digitally fluent learners is vital to navigating and contributing to the technological world in which we live, work, create, and communicate.

DEFINITION: Digital stewardship is the obligation of all learners to be positive digital citizens and to manage their online environments. Digital environments are used with sophisticated intent to accelerate and improve the educational system. An education in and practice of high levels of digital citizenship, online safety, data security, data use for decision making, and information literacy skills are vital to digital stewardship.

GOAL: All learners have the tools, skills, and behaviors to positively contribute in digital environments.

- Set clear expectations for data use and security in the district; ensuring the highest quality of data-driven decisions.
- Develop best practices and procedures for monitoring, re-teaching, and promoting digital stewardship for all learners.
- Increase school/family communication on expectations for data use and digital citizenship.

Operational Excellence - Human Capital Development

RATIONALE: Bismarck Public Schools believes in developing human capital where employees can learn and apply ideas and acquire new competencies, behaviors, and attitudes that align with our foundational values.

DEFINITION: Human capital development serves to position the district as a sought-after choice for employment. It is a system to implement and improve human capital decisions, recruitment strategies, hiring and onboarding, retention, professional development, mentoring, evaluation processes, and compensation and benefit packages.

GOAL: Recruit, hire, develop, and retain a diverse and premier workforce.

- Develop processes and partnerships for recruitment and hiring.
- Develop an evaluation growth model that encompasses BPS values.
- Streamline and connect human resources processes from hiring to retirement.

Operational Excellence - Partnerships

RATIONALE: Bismarck Public Schools believes collaborative partnerships with the community enhance and enrich experiences for learners.

DEFINITION: Partnerships include the formal and informal community connections, collaborative projects, and relationships that advance a school's learning goals.

GOAL: Create and refine our partnerships based on the mutually beneficial interests between BPS and other agencies, citizens, and private-sector companies.

- Expand the Bismarck Public Schools Foundation and its services to benefit all learners.
- Develop partnerships with providers aimed at establishing a continuum of services for wellness, school-based behavioral and mental health.
- Promote and market the BPS Mission, Vision, Values, and Strategic Plan as a means to create collaborative partnerships that enhance district operations and learning experiences for all learners.

Operational Excellence - Comprehensive Plans

In addition to the Strategic Priority areas, BPS believes having comprehensive plans for critical operational functions within the district are essential for optimal performance. Our Facilities, Finance, Transportation, Technology, and Communication Plans will be located online at https://www.bismarckschools.org/Page/53.

Financial Plan

This Long-Range Financial Plan provides a road map for the district's financial well-being and our plan to achieve educational results by combining financial projections with financial strategizing.

Facilities Plan

The Long-Range Facilities Plan will assist in guiding decisions made for future facility needs and usage (presented September 2020).

Communication Plan

The Bismarck Public School District's Community Relations Office practices the 4C's: Communicate Clearly & Consistently with Compassion. Our role will be to communicate all aspects of the new BPS Strategic Plan. This community relations plan is based on National School Public Relations Association audit (presented December 2020).

Technology Plan

BPS believes proactive and comprehensive technology planning is a foundation for district success. Our vision for engaged digital learning is for all students to have individual access and sophisticated integration of digital tools for personalized learning. We strive for cost-savings and efficiencies through effective uses of technology. We strive for our financial model to include the metrics and processes to ensure not only sustainability, but also accountability for learning returns on investments. Our 2020-2025 Technology Plan is available on the district website.

• Transportation Plan

The Long-Range Transportation Plan will assist in providing a safe and effective transportation system (presented January 2021).

Strategic Plan Measures and Evaluation

The strategic plan will be evaluated for continuous improvement during the school year. Specific measures will be identified through the operationalizing of this plan during the 2020-2021 school year and will include:

- Coherent Governance School Board Operational Expectations (OEs) and Results (Rs) report indicators
- AdvancED/Cognia School accreditation indicators
- High Reliability School Framework Indicators (Leading and Lagging Measures)

This strategy will allow all Bismarck Public School Administrators and their buildings the opportunity to make significant contributions to the overall Strategic Plan and how it is measured. Once measures are collaboratively established, BPS will revisit this plan quarterly to review progress and measures. It is essential that the indicators of progress take the form of either qualitative and quantitative metrics or both.

This strategic plan was facilitated and procured in collaboration with the Strategic Planning Committee and BPS administration by:

Dr. Jeffry M. Schatz, Owner/Consultant Schatz & Associates, LLC Strategic Planning and Leadership Development <u>im.schatz@outlook.com</u>

