

# HINSDALE TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 86



TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE – FUTURE OF PROMISE  
*The District 86 Vision and Strategic Plan*

*MAY 2008*



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# I. INTRODUCTION

Hinsdale Township High School District 86 has a strong tradition of excellence, and the Hinsdale Township community perceives that District 86 provides an exceptionally high quality education to students at both Hinsdale Central and Hinsdale South High Schools. Exemplifying its forward-thinking approach to decision-making, the leaders of Hinsdale Township High School District 86 recently partnered with ECRA Group, Inc., a leader in educational research, to conduct a strategic planning process and determine a future vision for the district. The strategic plan will serve to maintain the District 86 tradition of excellence in the years to come.

Under the guidance of the District 86 Board of Education and its Vision/Strategic Plan Committee, the process engaged thousands of district stakeholders in developing a new district vision and plan to ensure a successful future for the community's schools and the students of Hinsdale Central and Hinsdale South High Schools. The strategic planning process, which was launched in September 2007, was designed to be entirely transparent. The district aggressively attempted to offer every District 86 stakeholder – including current students, recent graduates, administrators, faculty and staff members, parents, and community members who do not have children in the district – the opportunity to provide input into the plan if they so desired.

An extensive amount of information was obtained throughout the seven-month study, which truly engaged the entire community. The result of this input and additional research and analysis of many data sources is a future vision for the district, and this strategic plan.

Contained in this report are the findings, goals and strategic initiatives upon which the District 86 Strategic Plan were built. Extensive data and evidence to support these findings are contained in the accompanying Research Findings Report, in addition to information about ECRA Group, the principal investigators and the sophisticated methodology used in the study.

## STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT

The Vision / Strategic Plan document, “A Future of Excellence,” contains the fundamental goals and initiatives that were derived from the key findings of the strategic planning process. Findings are also included as a point of reference. One should understand that all of the goal areas and initiatives are part of a holistic structure that is interrelated and interdependent. The intent of any initiative is to create new processes and new structures that will carry the district forward, not to concentrate on existing structures and problem-solving that will constrain the district from reaching its potential. By focusing on the underlying mechanisms behind challenges, the district will find that many of the more symptomatic problems will be eliminated. In the medical field, leaders refer to this as treating the disease, not the symptoms. By staying ahead of the curve, the district will meet challenges head-on to prevent them from becoming incurable problems.

Findings, goals and initiatives within this report fall under one of the following clusters:

- Overall Quality of Education
- Mission, Vision and Values
- Academic Standards and Expectations
- Curriculum and Instruction
- Research and Assessment
- Human Resources
- Technology
- Culture and School Climate
- Facilities
- Equity
- Communication and Outreach
- Finance

Each goal is original and has been customized to the needs of School District 86 as they relate to the findings. In turn, the initiatives have been developed to help District 86 meet its goals. This report is supplemented by a comprehensive findings report, which contains extensive data to support each finding.

## II. THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The most important foundation of any organization is its people. The Board of Education, administration, faculty, staff, parents and community members are the cohesive groups that endeavor to transform the vision, values and beliefs into feasible and achievable outcomes. The primary source of learning and knowledge lies in the creative thinking, evaluation, follow-up plans and policies determined by stakeholder groups. Effective education of District 86 students requires a commitment from all stakeholder groups.

To this end, the District 86 strategic planning process engaged thousands of district stakeholders in developing the future vision for District 86 and a plan to achieve it. ECRA Group, in cooperation with District 86, successfully reached out and solicited input from the following stakeholder groups:

- The Board of Education
- District-level and building-level administrators
- Faculty members
- Staff members
- Students
- Graduates
- Parents
- Community members who do not have children in District 86 schools

Collectively, the data documents the aspirations of District 86, its current state of reality, its future challenges, and other important considerations in the development of an effective strategic plan.

This page summarizes all the data sources that were used throughout the process.

### FOCUS GROUPS CONDUCTED

Stakeholder Group	Number Conducted
District 86 Board of Education	1
District- and building-level administrators	2
Faculty and staff members from each school	2
Parents invited by district administration	1
Students from each school	1
Community night open to all parents and community members who do not have children in District 86 schools	1

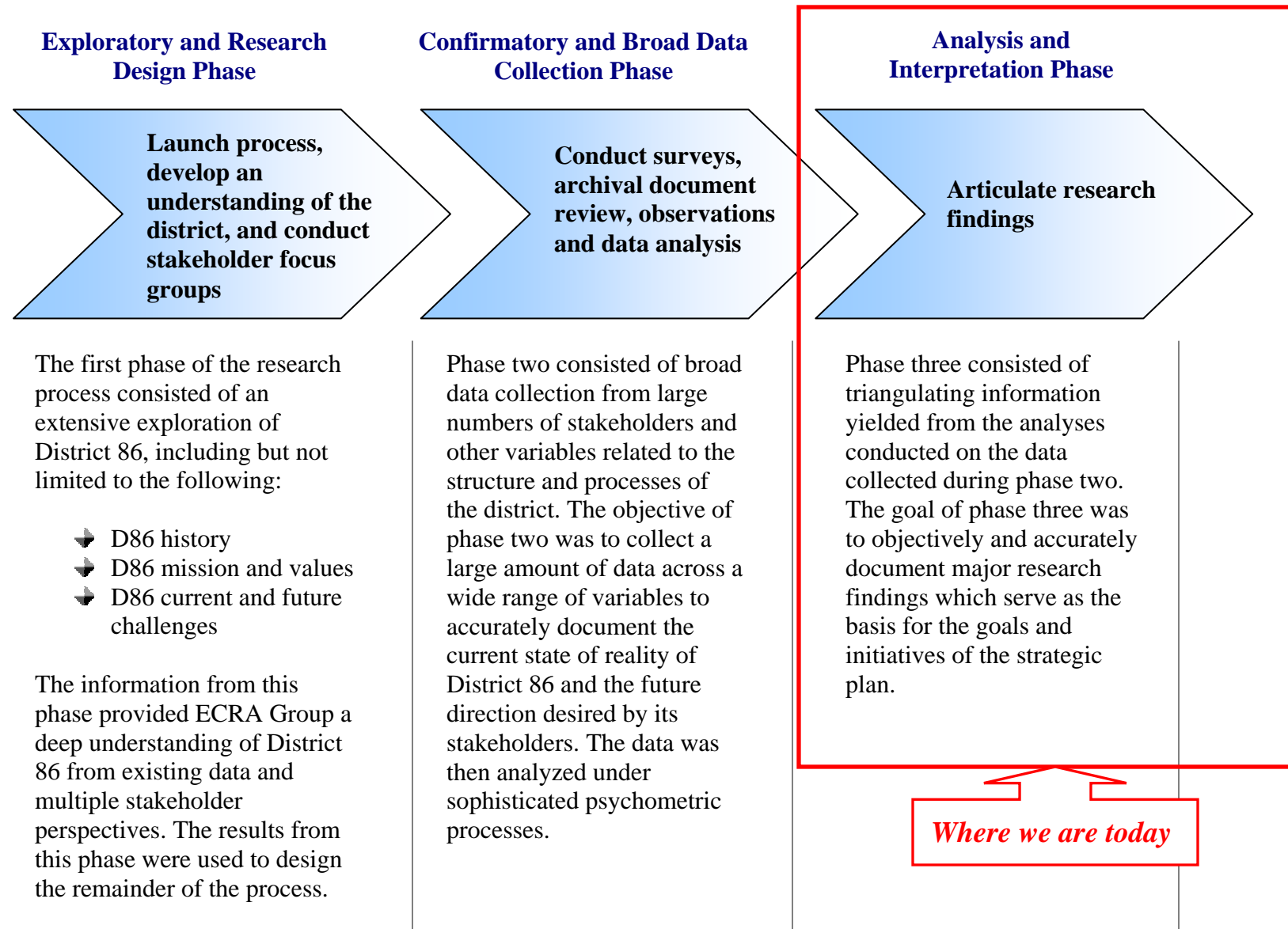
### SURVEYS CONDUCTED

Stakeholder Group	Method	Languages	Valid Responses
District 86 Board of Education	Online	English	6
Administrators, faculty and staff	Online and paper	English	453
Current Students	Paper	English	3,614
District 86 Graduates	Online	English	345
Parents	Online and paper by mail	English and Spanish	896
Community members	Telephone	English	361

### ARCHIVAL AND EXISTING DATA

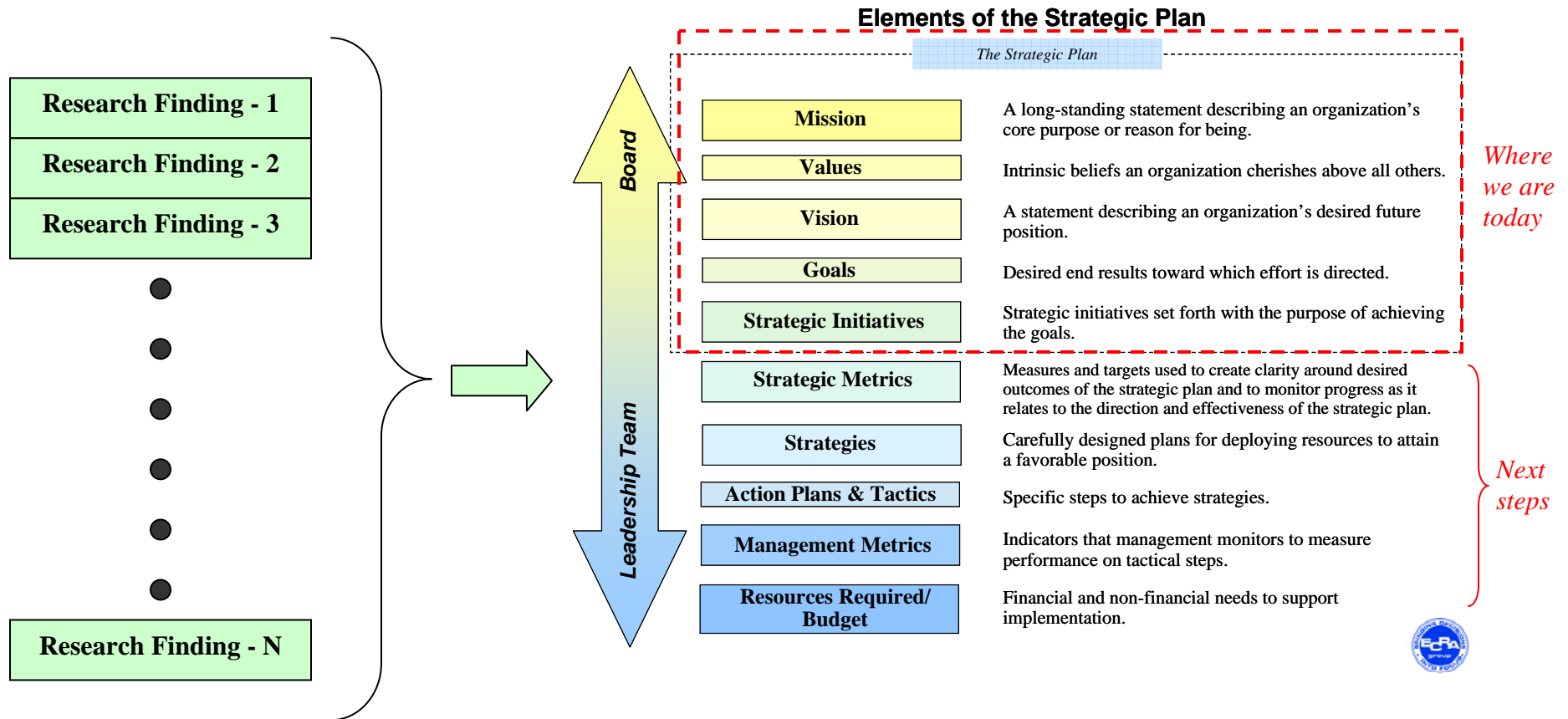
Including but not limited to the following:
District achievement data
Prior strategic planning documents
District and school profiles
Mission and values statements
Community demographic information
Curriculum documentation
School improvement plans
Policy manuals
2007-2008 Organizational Structure Analysis conducted by ECRA separate from the strategic planning process

The following diagram illustrates the design and logic of the research process that was implemented.



## ELEMENTS OF THE DISTRICT 86 STRATEGIC PLAN

The following illustration shows the relationship between the research findings (presented as a separate document) and the strategic plan. The findings in this report served as the foundation of all elements of the final strategic plan.



# III. METHODS

## DATA COLLECTION, ACQUISITION & ANALYSIS

Between September 2007 and April 2008, a vast amount of quantitative and qualitative data was collected through the following methods:

- Focus groups
- Surveys
- Archival documents provided by District 86, including achievement data, curriculum documents, prior strategic plans, district policy manuals, etc.
- Observations
- Additional information, such as the Organizational Structure Analysis conducted by ECRA in the fall of 2007, as well as information from outside sources

Quantitative data refers to numerical data that resulted from forced-choice survey responses. Qualitative data refers to unstructured text data that resulted from focus groups, open-ended survey questions and observations. Additional information on methodology is contained in the findings report.

### **Focus Groups**

The focus groups served as the exploratory phase of the research process, and helped guide the development of the survey instruments and many of the subsequent analyses which followed. Focus group qualitative data were analyzed via grounded theory methods. Grounded theory methods are well-established within the qualitative research literature and are considered best practice for research within a wide range of social contexts. Grounded theory is based on inductive logic that builds theory directly from data.

### **Surveys**

Surveys provided both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data produced from the surveys were analyzed using advanced survey methodology similar to that used by major government agencies, such as the U.S. Census Bureau, Department of Education and other highly reputable survey research firms such as Gallup and Nielsen. Stratification and weighting techniques were used to ensure that major subpopulations were appropriately represented in the data. Such methods help to ensure that all inferences drawn from the sample data are valid and represent the entire population of interest. The qualitative data from the surveys were analyzed via grounded theory under a mixed methods framework. Qualitative data were used to provide richer inferences and substantiate quantitative findings.

### **Archival Documents, Observations and Additional Information**

Archival documents involve all available formal and informal documentation including, but not limited to, district achievement data, district curricula, prior planning documents, historical information, mission and values statements and the district web site. ECRA also conducted observational research and analysis through District 86 site visits and in general interactions with district stakeholders. Additionally, ECRA referred to the Organizational Structure Analysis conducted in the fall of 2007 separate from the strategic planning process, and other data obtained from outside sources when appropriate.

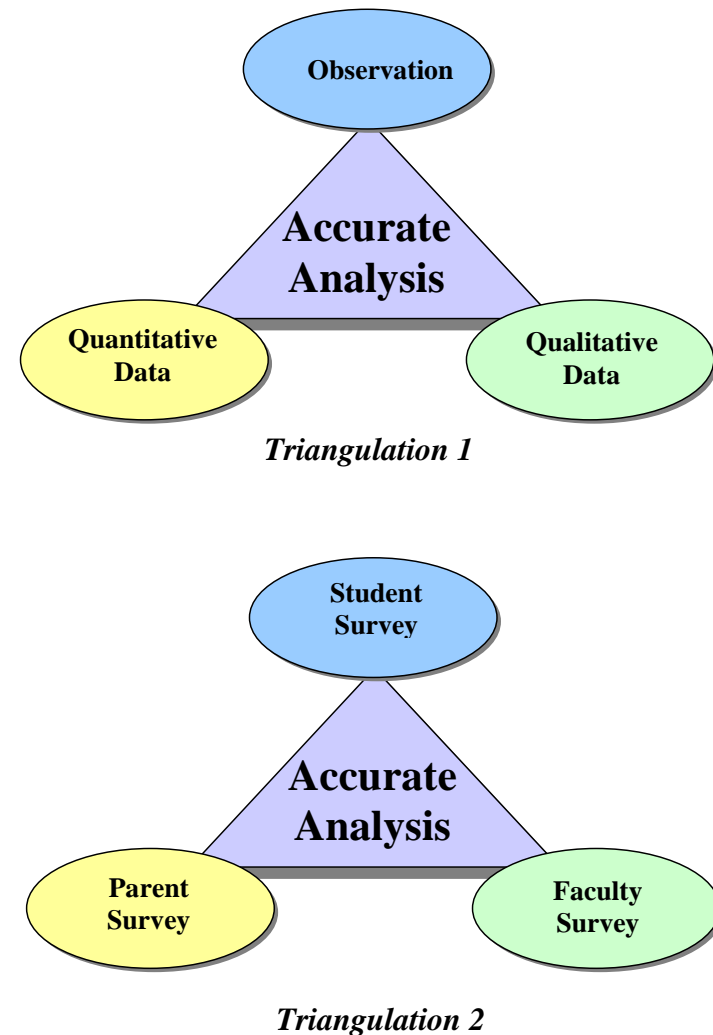
## TRIANGULATION

ECRA used the process of triangulation to arrive at all findings contained in this report. It is important to understand that triangulation eliminates bias and single-agenda purposes to ensure that the initiatives presented in the plan are truly strategic and supported by district stakeholders.

Triangulation yields accurate findings because it only considers those findings emerging from multiple parts of the study. Triangulation comes in various forms, two of which are explained below.

Triangulation can refer to findings that surface through multiple data types as depicted in figure *Triangulation 1*. An example of this would be if findings related to a quantitative analysis of the community survey agreed with findings related to the community focus groups.

Triangulation can also refer to findings from different data sources and populations agreeing with each other as depicted in the figure labeled *Triangulation 2*. An example of this would be if a particular finding related to the student survey also surfaced through the parent survey and faculty survey.



# IV. GOALS, FINDINGS & STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

When collecting data, ECRA started with a big-picture approach, asking stakeholders to provide input related to their overall perception of the quality of District 86. A major theme emerged from all sources of data and all stakeholder groups throughout the strategic process. ECRA has developed this theme into an umbrella finding to serve as the basis for the strategic plan.

## HOLISTIC FINDING

### FINDINGS

#### **A: Overall Quality of Education**

District 86 stakeholders feel that the education provided by both Hinsdale Central and Hinsdale South High Schools is excellent.

Despite areas identified for improvement and some concerns over inequities in the district, the Board of Education, administrators, faculty and staff members, students, graduates, parents and community members rate the overall quality of education provided by District 86 schools very high.

With a reputation of such high quality comes an enormous responsibility for the district to maintain its quality, to be future-oriented in its vision, and to challenge its leadership to continue to develop programs and structures that are consistent with a high-achieving and respected school system.

### STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

- 1) Challenge the organization to continually improve its quality and be a leader with respect to educational best practices.

Mission, vision and values are at the essence of what makes any organization function and succeed. Without them, organizations have no focus, sense of direction, or way of knowing when they have grown or diminished in their effectiveness. It is through these fundamentals that strategic initiatives and goals for the district vision are formulated. Clear findings emerged, which demonstrate how the various stakeholder groups view District 86 as a whole. Findings are also supported by archival documents, observation and additional information, all contained in the accompanying Research Findings Report.

The mission statement of District 86 addresses the instructional goals of the Hinsdale Township high schools:

*Hinsdale Township High School District 86 is a community of learners committed to education in an environment that promotes excellence, respect, and responsibility. We believe...*

- *Learning is a lifelong process*
- *All students are capable of learning*
- *Respect for diversity is an integral part of education*
- *Students learn best in a safe and supportive environment*
- *Education is a shared responsibility among students, parents, the school and the community*

The next finding, which relates to the future vision for the district, will set the tone for the entire strategic plan and its implementation.

## GOAL: MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

District 86 stakeholders, including the Board of Education, administrators, faculty, staff, students, parents, graduates and community members, will create and embrace a common vision for the future. The District 86 mission statement will reflect the values of stakeholders, including the provision of the highest quality education to *all* students. In future planning, the district will take a proactive approach to decision-making, always striving to meet the diverse and individualized needs of the District 86 student population.

### FINDINGS

#### **B: Mission and Values**

The existing District 86 mission statement addresses the instructional goals of Hinsdale Township high schools, but it may not be entirely relevant to the current values of district stakeholders. The Board of Education, administrators, faculty and staff members, students, graduates, parents and community members agree that District 86 provides an excellent education in a safe, supportive environment. District 86 stakeholders strongly believe in the ability of all children to learn, and in the importance of providing the highest quality education for all students. However, the District 86 community is growing and changing rapidly, and it is essential to reevaluate the mission in relation to the unique and individualized needs of the diverse student population.

#### **C: Vision**

There is not a clearly articulated, common vision for District 86 schools. District stakeholders express a desire to engage in proactive planning and embrace a common vision for the future. In moving forward with the strategic plan, district stakeholders want a clear picture of where the district is headed, and the confidence that they are achieving their goals together to ensure future excellence for the community's schools and future success for its students and graduates.

### STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

- 2) The strategic plan is intended to serve as the district's vision for the future. As a first step to launching the strategic plan, the District 86 Board of Education should engage in a generative discussion involving the district's mission, values and vision statements. The district should consider updating the statements to ensure that they align to the strategic plan, and that they project forward thinking attitudes, proactive decision-making, and the district's commitment to excellence and to the quality education for all children of diverse backgrounds.

## GOAL: ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND EXPECTATIONS

District 86 high schools will maintain the highest academic standards and expectations for all students. Academic standards will be defined, articulated and aligned on an equitable basis across the district to ensure that all students are achieving to their highest potential, regardless of ability level, ethnicity, socioeconomic status or school attended. The curriculum and instructional program will reflect these high standards, and District 86 will provide the necessary guidance and other student services to ensure that students are successful.

### FINDINGS

#### **D: Overall Academic Standards and Expectations**

District 86 has a rich tradition of high academic achievement, priding itself in the quality of education it provides its students. Overall, it is felt that the academic standards and expectations in both District 86 high schools are high. The district's honors and AP programs are held in high regard by parents, graduates, students and district personnel. However, there is a growing perception that the average and lower-achieving students are falling behind and not achieving their full academic potential. The district maintains that all students are capable of learning, and that it strives to provide the highest quality education for all students. Thus, it is important that district stakeholders continue to ensure high academic standards and expectations for its high-achieving students as well as average and lower-achieving students. It is important to continually review and update the curriculum and instructional program as necessary to improve achievement levels for students of all abilities, and provide the necessary guidance and other student services to ensure that all students are placed in courses that will challenge them to their full potential and that they succeed in their coursework.

#### **E: Hinsdale Central/Hinsdale South Disparity**

Although they generally feel standards and expectations are high, administrators, faculty members, staff members, graduates and students at Hinsdale South rated the academic standards and expectations significantly lower than their counterparts at Hinsdale Central. In other words, there is a general perception that standards at Hinsdale South remain lower than those at Hinsdale Central. To ensure equity in academic opportunities for all District 86 students, regardless of unique demographic characteristics and student needs, it is essential to maintain and articulate the highest standards and expectations possible and align them across the district.

### STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- 3) Increase academic standards with a focus on the middle and below-average student without compromising the existing high standards for higher-ability students in the honors and AP programs.
- 4) Monitor the implementation and integration of special education and English Language Learners program to ensure that it is consistent with the values of the school district.
- 5) Increase the perceived academic standards and expectations at all ability levels at Hinsdale South High School to ensure that they are aligned to the philosophy and expectations of the district.

## GOAL: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

The District 86 curriculum and instructional program will reflect high standards for students of all ability levels, and be based on best practices. The instructional program will contain strong core subjects while providing students with ample opportunities to explore their interests in high school. The curriculum will be well-documented and aligned vertically and horizontally across the high schools and the feeder districts. Staff development programs will be aligned to the curriculum and promote innovated, engaging teaching methodologies.

### FINDINGS

#### **F: Quality of the Curriculum and Instructional Programming**

District 86 stakeholders believe that children are receiving an exceptional education. The emphasis on honors and AP programming has contributed greatly to the very positive perceptions of the quality of the school district. However, there is also a perception that the curriculum and instructional program are not meeting the needs of the average and lower-achieving student.

Additionally, there is concern about special education services and the English Language Learners program being effective. Ratings for individual subject areas and instructional programming received generally higher ratings at Hinsdale Central than at Hinsdale South across stakeholder groups. Most core academic subject areas received generally positive ratings. Through this strong emphasis on core subjects and advanced placement courses, there is a perception that there are not enough opportunities for nonacademic elective courses, character education and vocational and trade exploration.

Stakeholders value very highly a broad, research-based curriculum based on best practices. They maintain it is important to have a strong program for core subjects, but that the district must continue to offer a wide variety of elective programming for students. Career education is also important, and there should also be excellent curricular opportunities for students who do not plan to attend college. The curriculum must incorporate character education and material that reflects the diverse student population, and it must allow for individualized learning.

### STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- 6) Refine the core curriculum and instructional program to ensure that it is challenging to the middle- and lower-achieving students while maintaining high quality at the higher-achieving course level.
- 7) Provide opportunities for students to explore interests in elective programming outside of core academic programming.

## GOAL: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION (*continued*)

### FINDINGS

#### G: Alignment and Documentation

There is a general perception among stakeholders – administrators, faculty and staff members, especially – that there are no district-wide curricular initiatives, and that alignment of the curriculum needs to be improved so that students are receiving an equitable education across the district. There is also a desire to achieve improved curricular alignment with the feeder schools so that students are entering District 86 adequately prepared.

District 86 does not appear to provide strong documentation of the curriculum that educators can use to guide instruction and ensure that curricular goals are being met.

#### H: Instructional Methodologies

Most stakeholder groups agree that one of the greatest strengths of District 86 is its highly qualified faculty. Faculty members feel they are doing an excellent job of integrating relevant, real-life topics into the curriculum and instructional program, and that they are teaching students to work with others and in groups. Graduates remember caring, knowledgeable teachers as contributing to a positive experience in District 86 high schools. However, students, in particular, stress the need for more engaging teaching methodologies in the classroom, and express that they would like teachers to be more receptive to student input on how they best learn, and how they are progressing in their classes. Parents also expressed that there was a lack of consistency in the quality of instruction from class to class and teacher to teacher.

Faculty and staff members feel the district is committed to innovative instruction and appreciate autonomy and allowance for creativity in doing their jobs. However, many cite the need for greater teamwork, vertical articulation and standardization of coursework to improve instructional efficacy.

### STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- 8) Document and align the curriculum both vertically and horizontally to provide a guide for instruction and assessment of the curriculum and instructional program across the district high schools.
- 9) Coordinate and articulate curricular programs with the feeder districts and provide entry-level assessment systems to monitor abilities and skills of students entering District 86 high schools.
- 10) Provide staff development in innovative teaching modalities, engaged instructional methodologies and differentiated instruction to ensure that the learning needs of all students are being met. This initiative is aligned with the staff development goal.

## GOAL: RESEARCH AND ASSESSMENT

District 86 will utilize a state-of-the-art research and information system on which to base future decisions. The district will also provide a comprehensive internal assessment system that will monitor student achievement and provide educators with useful information to improve instructional programming.

### FINDINGS

#### I: Research

The district values information-driven decision making, but there is inadequate infrastructure to support the production and dissemination of valid, reliable and useful information.

#### J: Assessment

There is no clear, cohesive internal assessment system to assess student achievement, monitor instructional and structural effectiveness or evaluate programs in the district.

### STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- 11) Establish a research and information infrastructure to empower leadership and other stakeholders with accurate information for decision support.
- 12) Develop an internal assessment system aligned to curriculum and instructional standards.

## GOAL: HUMAN RESOURCES

District 86 will maintain the highest quality administration, faculty and staff, and will ensure that district personnel have abundant opportunities for professional growth. The District 86 administrative structure will be efficient and effective and contribute to a positive teaching and learning environment.

### FINDINGS

#### **K: Staff Development**

Professional growth opportunities were identified as significant to the maintenance of quality within the district. There appear to be ample opportunities for staff development within the departmental structure, but there does not seem to be a well coordinated and articulated district staff development program focused on district initiatives and district priorities. Staff development programs seem to be focused primarily at the department level, and have not been deemed effective by faculty. Students and graduates have expressed a desire for more innovative and engaged instructional practices within the educational programs.

#### **L: Quality of Faculty**

The hiring and retention of quality teachers is a major concern of stakeholders if District 86 is to remain a high quality school district. The current administrative structure in human resources does not support a proactive strategy to attract and retain high quality teachers.

#### **M: Faculty Access to Human Resource Information**

Faculty members do not know where to go to receive information on fringe benefits, retirement, policy and other human resource information.

### STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- 13) Develop a staff development program that includes district-wide initiatives and departmental initiatives in its structure.
- 14) Implement the Human Resources Department recommendations as set forth in the District 86 Administrative Organizational Study.

## GOAL: TECHNOLOGY

The District 86 technology plan will provide a focused future direction for district technology initiatives. It will ensure state-of-the-art technology resources, access to appropriate technology for all teachers and students, and effective integration of technology into the classroom to enhance instruction and learning.

### FINDINGS

#### **N: Technology**

There seems to be lack of focus in the district's technology initiatives. Stakeholders are unaware of the direction in which technology initiatives are moving. Stakeholders feel that there is access to technology in the district, but its use is not considered effective. In addition, there is inconsistency in reliability. Students do not feel it is fully integrated into learning in the classroom.

### STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- 15)** Instructional technology initiatives should be aligned to the curriculum and instructional programs, and expectations for use of technology should be clearly communicated to the faculty and staff.
- 16)** In-service training of faculty in the use of instructional technology should be incorporated into the district staff development program.

## GOAL: CULTURE AND SCHOOL CLIMATE

District 86 will provide a safe, high quality school environment that is conducive to learning. District 86 will be a desirable place of employment for top quality educators because of its reputation for a highly positive organizational culture.

### FINDINGS

#### **O: Organizational Culture**

Despite Hinsdale South personnel giving lower ratings across a wide range of issues, for example, curriculum, instruction, technology, and equity, they are relatively happier working in the district than faculty and staff at Hinsdale Central. Hinsdale Central faculty and staff members rate the overall quality of education and other characteristics of the district higher, but are less satisfied in their jobs.

#### **P: Board and Faculty/Staff Relations**

Faculty and staff members do not feel supported by the Board of Education in their work or that their efforts are appreciated.

#### **Q. School Climate**

Stakeholder groups agree that there is a growing concern for safety issues and the quality of the learning environment across the district. This concern is more apparent at Hinsdale South High School, which received more negative ratings from stakeholder groups regarding safety, gangs, drug and alcohol use, than Hinsdale Central.

### STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- 17) Develop a plan to improve employee satisfaction throughout the district.
- 18) The Board of Education should develop protocols and procedures to improve faculty/board relations and communication.
- 19) Monitor school climate at both schools to ensure that discipline procedures are consistently enforced and school climate and safety issues are addressed to ensure a healthy learning environment is maintained.

## GOAL: FACILITIES

District 86 will invest in state-of-the-art facilities to optimize the quality of the learning environment, contribute to a safe and positive school climate, and enhance extracurricular opportunities.

### FINDINGS

#### R: Facilities

Many clear and consistent themes emerged when facilities were discussed. The most prominent issue is that the facilities are aging, and that the quality of the learning environment is interfering with learning due to outdated classrooms. The buildings lack adequate climate control – including heating and cooling. Amenities such as bathrooms and locker rooms are outdated, and it was stated that there is a general problem with maintenance and cleanliness. Students especially notice a lack of cleanliness throughout the school buildings. Athletic facilities, including gymnasiums, fitness rooms, athletic fields, swimming pool and adequate practice space were also cited as being problematic. Parking is becoming a growing problem, as well.

### STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- 20) Conduct a comprehensive facilities renovation study to ascertain the needs of the district to bring facilities up to date. The facilities study should address the facility needs of the curriculum and instructional programs, as well as extracurricular programming.
- 21) A custodial and maintenance study of the district should also be conducted to ensure that cleanliness standards are high and that district resources are well-maintained.

## GOAL: EQUITY

District 86 will provide equitable educational and extracurricular opportunities to ensure that all students' academic, social, physical and emotional needs are being met.

### FINDINGS

#### **S: Equity Between Schools**

Stakeholders agree that there are inequities in many aspects of the schools, from facilities to curriculum to the way resources and finances are distributed. Stakeholders repeatedly stressed that Hinsdale South and Hinsdale Central High Schools have very different needs, and that equitable does not necessarily mean the same. At Hinsdale Central, it is important to address the perception that additional resources are needed to address the larger student population. At Hinsdale South, increasing ethnic and socioeconomic diversity is a greater issue, and there is a greater amount of students with special needs. The culture in the schools – especially among faculty and staff - differs as well.

Hinsdale South students stated that they do not like their high school to be compared to Hinsdale Central because they are each very unique entities with distinctive strengths. At the same time, there is a perception by Hinsdale South students and graduates that they have or had the same opportunities as students at Hinsdale Central. However, students from each school indicated that they would like to participate in more frequent collaboration with students at the other school.

At the very least, the curriculum needs to be aligned between the schools to ensure that students have the same curricular opportunities across the district. The extracurricular activities offered in District 86 are considered one of the district's greatest strengths by all stakeholder groups, but equity in access to student opportunities between both schools needs to be ensured.

### STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- 22) Given the significant perceptions of inequitable differences in the district, the district must determine what is real and what is perceived. The district must ensure that resources and opportunities are equitably distributed and provided within the two schools to ensure that needs of all students are being met.

## GOAL: COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH

District 86 will maintain transparent communication with all district stakeholder groups, as well as promote highly positive stakeholder perceptions of District 86 schools, teachers and students through active public relations initiatives.

### FINDINGS

#### **T: Internal and External District Communication:**

Communication emerged as a major area for improvement from all stakeholder groups, with the exception of teacher-parent communication, which received higher ratings and complimentary responses. It is generally felt that the district has been working on improved communication, but that it needs to continue to become more frequent and transparent.

Communication among building-level administrators, faculty and staff is considered good. It is communication at the district level – from the Board of Education and district administrators to faculty/staff, parents and community members – that appears to need the most improvement.

#### **U: Public Relations**

Transparent communication will especially be essential as the strategic plan is launched, and it is generally felt that improved communication now will better prepare District 86 for any future financial appeals to the community (e.g. future referendums) that will need to take place.

### STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- 23) Develop protocols to improve internal and external district communication among all stakeholder groups.
- 24) As part of a comprehensive public relations plan, develop a marketing and branding program to communicate the quality of the district to all stakeholders.

## GOAL: FINANCE

District 86 will practice fiscal responsibility while at the same time providing adequate financial resources to support teaching and learning and maintain its tradition of providing the highest quality education for its students.

### FINDINGS

#### V: Finance

Stakeholders agree that the community has always been very supportive of District 86 schools. There is a growing concern about future financial needs, however, because of aging facilities and the need for renovation and maintenance.

### STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- 25) Develop a long-range financial plan that addresses the district's infrastructure, facilities renovation and maintenance, and ensures equity in resources between the schools.

## V. NEXT STEPS

Moving forward, the Strategic Implementation Plan will be developed so that the various tactics can be connected to and interwoven throughout different initiatives. The Implementation Plan should result from a generative process by district personnel aimed at understanding the interrelationships among the initiatives. The focus should be on developing tactics that address several initiatives within the same process, rather than coming up with separate tactical plans for each initiative.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Moving forward, the Strategic Implementation Plan will be developed so that the various tactics can be connected to and interwoven throughout different initiatives. The Implementation Plan should result from a generative process by district personnel aimed at understanding the interrelationships among the initiatives. The focus should be on developing tactics that address several initiatives within the same process, rather than coming up with separate tactical plans for each initiative.

The research conducted as part of the strategic plan further documents that District 86 exemplifies excellence in education. The findings in this strategic plan have also identified challenges that stakeholders believe, if not proactively addressed, will result in quality erosion over time. The goals and initiatives in this strategic plan will provide District 86 with the focus and direction needed to sustain its quality.