

# GALLATIN GATEWAY SCHOOL

## Strategic Plan

Updated November 2022

### Overview

**The Gallatin Gateway School** has created a new direction for the school district to strategically focus its resources on identified wants, preferences, and needs of its community. As part of this process, the District has begun a strategic planning and thinking process that will lead to a stronger and more vital school district. This process will be ongoing as the District moves into the future. This strategic plan is intended to help the District in focusing its resources in a manner that will best benefit the children enrolled in the District.

The Gallatin Gateway Board of Trustees and staff began the strategic planning and thinking process necessary to fit with its commitment to children, to community engagement and to knowledge-based decision-making processes.

As part of its preparation for strategic planning, the District brought in Debra Silk of the Montana School Boards Association to help facilitate the strategic planning process.

On August 15, 2018, the Gallatin Gateway Board of Trustees formally adopted its new strategic plan. The Board has made it a priority to meet on a regular basis to update the plan and discussed strategies to ensure the Plan remains at the forefront of the ongoing focus and work of the Board and Staff in collaboration with parents and community members.

The District views the process of strategic planning as an ongoing process within the school system. This is not a "strategic planning project" that is completed. Adoption of a plan is an affirmation of the general intent and direction articulated by the Core Ideology, Envisioned Future and Goals and Strategic Objectives. It is understood that progress toward achieving plan strategic objectives will be assessed at least annually, and the plan will be updated based on achievement and changes in the needs of the children served by the District.

## Executive Summary

The following are the key components of the District's Strategic Plan. A more comprehensive description of these components is included in this publication following this Executive Summary:

### THE CORE PURPOSE OF GALLATIN GATEWAY SCHOOL IS TO:

*embrace an engaging learning culture in a safe, nurturing environment where each student thrives now and into the future.*

### THE CORE VALUES OF GALLATIN GATEWAY SCHOOL ARE:

- **Individualized Success** – *We value a commitment of success from each board member, each staff member and each student. The dedication and enthusiasm of each board member and each staff member together with our nurturing, inspiring environment is critical to each student's individual success.*
- **Student-Centered** – *The focus of all decisions is based first and foremost on the best interests of each and every student. We value the individual attributes of each student and a school environment that promotes positive, individual opportunities for each student.*
- **Sense of Community** – *We believe that engagement with and respect for our community is vital to our success.*
- **Accountability** – *We believe that holding ourselves accountable for our successes and our challenges is essential to reaching our envisioned future.*
- **Culture of Collaboration and Support** – *We believe that fostering a culture in which our staff are and feel valued and supported in their roles and a culture where collaboration is embraced and honored is vital to our success.*

### OUR LONG-TERM ENVISIONED FUTURE:

*Gallatin Gateway School is the premier school in our area because of our dynamic, collaborative, and stimulating environment where each student thrives.*

### Our priorities are centered around the following 3-5 year goals/priorities:

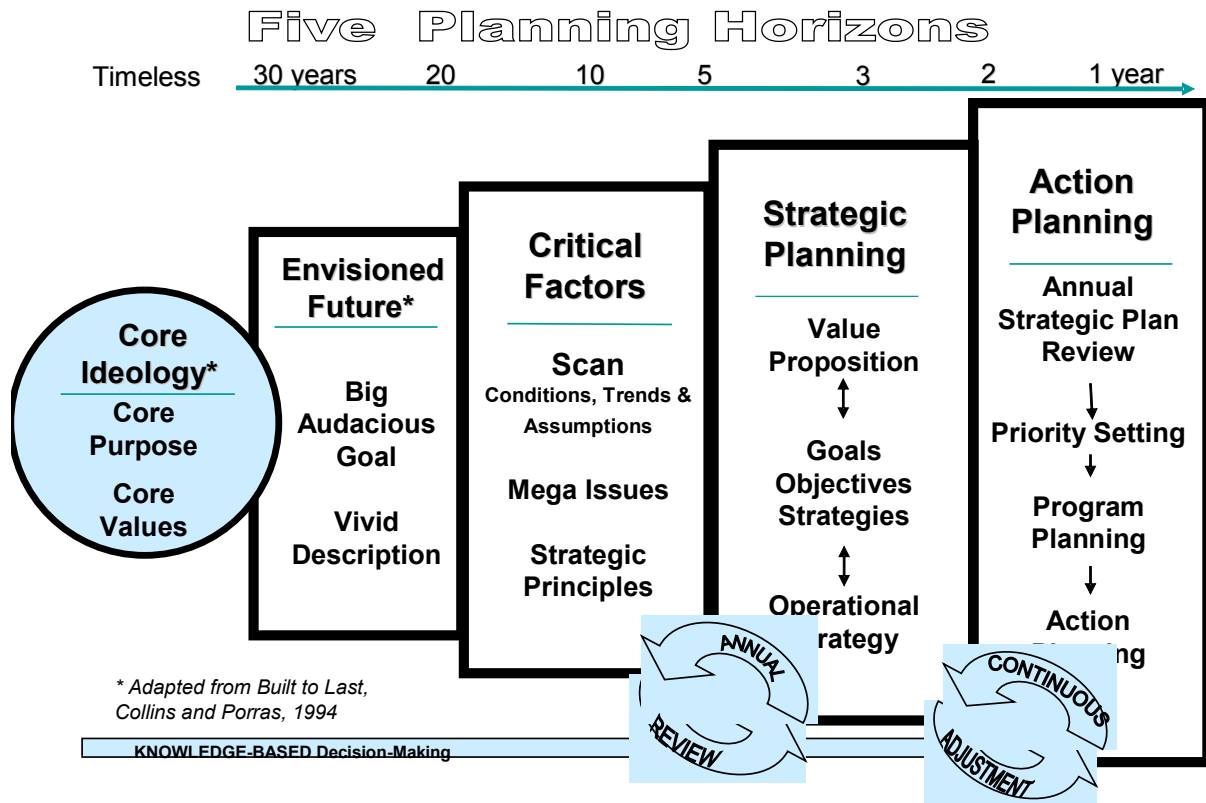
- **Individual Student Success**
- **Facilities**
- **Staff and Volunteers**
- **Leadership, Communication and Collaboration**
- **Safety**

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# Strategic Planning Framework

The framework used by Stevensville Public Schools for its strategic planning process was adapted from a model developed by Jim Collins, author of “Built to Last” and “Good to Great.” The Board focused on five different planning horizons, starting with the long term issues first to provide focus to shorter term efforts.



## Planning Horizons:

### Part I: Planning Horizon: Timeless

## Core Ideology<sup>1</sup> of the Gallatin Gateway School

### The Core Purpose of Gallatin Gateway School:

The Core Purpose of Gallatin Gateway School is to embrace an engaging learning culture in a safe, nurturing environment where each student thrives now and into the future.

### Core Values of the Gallatin Gateway School:

- **Individualized Success** – We value a commitment of success from each board member, each staff member and each student. The dedication and enthusiasm of each board member and each staff member together with our nurturing, inspiring environment is critical to each student’s individual success.
- **Student-Centered** – The focus of all decisions is based first and foremost on the best interests of each and every student. We value the individual attributes of each student and a school environment that promotes positive, individual opportunities for each student.
- **Sense of Community** – We believe that engagement with and respect for our community is vital to our success.
- **Accountability** – We believe that holding ourselves accountable for our successes and our challenges is essential to reaching our envisioned future.
- **Culture of Collaboration and Support** – We believe that fostering a culture in which our staff are and feel valued and supported in their roles and a culture where collaboration is embraced and honored is vital to our success.

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<sup>1</sup> **Core ideology** describes a school district's consistent identity that transcends all changes related to its relevant environment. It consists of two elements - **core purpose** - the school district's reason for being - and **core values** - essential and enduring principles that guide a school district.

## Part II: Planning Horizon: 10-15 years

### Envisioned Future<sup>2</sup> of the Gallatin Gateway School

**Big Audacious Goal:** Gallatin Gateway School is the premier school in our area because of our dynamic, collaborative, and stimulating environment where each student thrives.

#### Vivid Descriptors of our Desired Future:

- Our small student to staff ratio allows us to focus on the individualized success of each student.
- We embrace a whole-child approach through safety, mental health, engagement, support and a challenging environment.
- Our staff are highly trained in meeting the individual needs, skills and learning styles of each student.
- Our staff are valued and supported in their respective roles. As a result of the supportive, collaborative environment we have cultivated, we attract and retain high quality staff.
- Our students enjoy a variety of opportunities for out-of-classroom experiences that enhance their learning.
- Our students excel in science, technology, engineering, music, arts, literacy and math.
- Our school schedule fully supports the needs, skills and learning styles of each student.
- Our educational programming is set up to fully integrate subject matters, to include real-world applications, and smooth transitions from subject to subject and grade to grade.
- Students interact with multiple caring, dynamic staff and volunteers each day. This keeps our students stimulated and enthusiastic about their learning environment.
- Because of our quality programming, we have an excellent reputation, and are well-respected.

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<sup>2</sup> **Envisioned Future** conveys a concrete yet unrealized vision for the District. It consists of a **Big Audacious Goal** - a clear and compelling catalyst that serves as a focal point for effort - and a **Vivid Description** - vibrant and engaging descriptions of what it will be like to achieve the big audacious goal.

- Families that have children enrolled in our school are enthusiastic about having their children here and have provided us with important feedback on the impacts we had on their child(ren);
- Our parents and community members welcome opportunities to volunteer. As a result of our strong volunteer program and the ongoing collaboration with businesses and professionals in our area, our students are exposed to a variety of opportunities that they wouldn't otherwise have.
- Our facilities fully support our dynamic, collaborative, and stimulating environment and the needs of our community.

### **Part III: Planning Horizon: 5-10 Years**

#### **Assumptions Regarding the Relevant Future for the Gallatin Gateway School**

In order to make progress toward the 10-15 Envisioned Future, Gallatin Gateway School must constantly anticipate the strategic factors likely to affect its ability to succeed, and to assess the implications of those factors. This process of building foresight about the future will help the District to constantly recalibrate its view of the relevant future, a basis upon which to update the strategic plan on an annual basis. As the outcome-oriented goals that will form the basis of the long-range strategic plan will be based on this foresight, annual review of these statements will be an appropriate method of determining and ensuring the ongoing relevance of the strategic plan.

Creating the Assumptions - during the Strategic Planning meetings held in the Spring of 2018, the Gallatin Gateway School Board of Trustees, Staff Leadership Team, and faculty made many assumptions about the future. While many different assumptions were made, see Appendix "A" to this Plan for those assumptions that are likely to have the greatest influence on the success of Gallatin Gateway School.

### **Part IV: Planning Horizon: 3-5 Years**

#### **Outcome-Oriented Goals and Strategic Objectives**

The following thinking represents goals for the next three to five years. They are areas in which Gallatin Gateway School will explicitly state the conditions or attributes it wants to achieve. These outcome statements will define, "what will constitute future success." The achievement of each goal will move the school district toward realization of its Envisioned Future.

Strategic Objectives provide direction and actions on how the school district will accomplish its articulated goals. All strategies included in the strategic plan should be considered accomplishable at some point in the future. Strategic Objectives are reviewed annually by the Gallatin Gateway School Board, Staff Leadership Team, and faculty.

# Goals of the Gallatin Gateway School

## Goal Area 1: Individual Student Success

**Statement of Intended Outcome, Five years:** We have successfully enhanced our expectations of students, the exposure of our students to learning opportunities, and our individualized approach to education. As a result, our students are literate and enthused about their education, are enjoying their experiences, and are thriving.

### 1-2 Year Strategic Objectives:

#### High Priority Strategy:

1. We will establish high expectations for each student and provide the necessary supports, to attain proficiency and continued growth for individual student success. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - Building on the depth of subject matters and integrating opportunities in our curriculum and programs to enhance the exposure and opportunities for each student.
  - Enhancing the educational opportunities for each student and provide our families with the tools needed to best support their children.
  - Enhancing the opportunities for our students to learn through real world application of concepts, problem solving and critical thinking.
  - Enriching the team-building and collaboration opportunities that support individual student success.
2. We will enhance the exposure and opportunities for each student in the arts, foreign languages, and music programs.

## Goal Area 2: Facilities

**Statement of Intended Outcome, Five Years:** We have successfully integrated environmentally friendly initiatives into our school and enhanced the current and future use and efficiency of our facilities to ensure that our school meets the contemporary needs of our students, staff and the community we serve.

### 1-2 Year Strategic Objectives:

#### High Priority Strategy:

1. We will continue with our comprehensive review of our existing space to address deferred maintenance and analyze options for future expansion in order to maximize the efficiency and use of our facilities and to ensure that our facilities support our students, staff and community.



2. We will advocate for the support and funding of facilities to reach our intended outcome, including but not limited to, advocating for the passage of bonds and levies needed to reach this goal in compliance with the law.

### **Goal Area 3: Staff and Volunteers**

**Statement of Intended Outcome, Five years:** Our staff are highly valued and supported and because of our positive work environment, our staff flourish in their respective positions. Our staff, with our volunteers, collaborate in a cohesive manner that fully supports the individual needs of our students. Our staff and volunteers have positively impacted each student enrolled in our school.

#### **1-2 Year Strategic Objectives:**

##### High Priority Strategies:

1. We will enhance the professional development and mentorship opportunities for our staff with a clear focus on increasing the individual success of each student.
2. We will enhance the opportunities for staff to collaborate in work sessions with a focus on alignment of our curriculum from subject to subject, grade to grade and the transition to secondary education.

##### Medium-Level Priorities:

1. We will enhance the professional development opportunities and effectiveness of our volunteer program for the mutual benefit of the school, staff, students and those who volunteer their time.

### **Goal Area 4: Leadership, Communication and Collaboration**

**Statement of Intended Outcome, Five Years:** Leadership roles have been articulated and enhanced resulting in quality and effective communications and collaboration with parents, staff and the community. Through our efforts, we now operate in a cohesive manner that has significantly improved our District operations, programs and services and enhanced individual student success.

#### **1-2 Year Strategic Objectives:**

##### High Priority Strategy:

1. We will enhance the effectiveness of our communications with students, staff, parents and community members to create a school environment that is collaborative and solution-based involving all relevant stakeholders.
2. We will enhance the effectiveness of a strong, consistent administrative leadership team and efficient school operations.

### **Goal Area 5: Safety**

**Statement of Intended Outcome, Five Years:** We have enhanced the safety and security of our facilities to minimize the risk and harm to our students and staff in the event of a safety or security breach. We have effectively enhanced our emotional support services for students.

**1-2 Year Strategic Objectives:**

1. We will enhance the safety, health and well-being of our students and staff and the security of our school building and property. This includes but is not necessarily limited to:
  - Enhancing our safety procedures and training for all emergency situations.
  - Enhancing our counseling support for students.
  - Increasing our awareness of, training on and implementation of alternative means of addressing student behaviors.
  - Ensuring our facilities are safe and secure.

**Next Steps:**

The Board, Staff Leadership Team and Staff will be developing action plans identifying the key activities/events, primary person(s) responsible for championing each activity/event identified and the timeline(s) for implementing and/or completing each activities/event.

## Appendix “A”

### Megatrend Analysis to Help Inform and Assess Gallatin Gateway

#### School’s Strategic Plan

#### Assumptions about the future (5-10 years)

### 5-10 Year Planning Horizon

#### Assumptions Regarding the Relevant Future for the Gallatin Gateway Schools

In order to make progress toward the District’s Envisioned Future, Gallatin Gateway Schools must constantly anticipate the strategic factors likely to affect its ability to succeed, and to assess the implications of those factors. This process of building foresight about the future will help Gallatin Gateway Schools to constantly recalibrate its view of the relevant future, a basis upon which to update the strategic plan on an annual basis. As the outcome-oriented goals that will form the basis of the long-range strategic plan will be based on this foresight, annual review of these statements will be an appropriate method of determining and ensuring the ongoing relevance of the strategic plan.

Creating the Assumptions - during the Strategic Planning meetings, the Gallatin Gateway School Board, Staff Leadership Team, faculty and community made many assumptions about the future. While many different assumptions were made, what follows are those assumptions that are likely to have the greatest influence on the development of Gallatin Gateway Schools' Strategic Plan.

#### Assumptions about the future

- Demographics/Business and Economic Climate
  - We anticipate continued housing developments. The unknown is the amount of growth and the impact on our school and our community.
  - We anticipate that economic conditions (e.g., unemployment rates, higher taxes, cost of living, etc.) are going to have an impact on the District. We are unsure at this time of the impact this may have on the District.
  - Given the changing dynamics of our community, we anticipate it will be a challenge to keep our community informed of the ongoing needs of the District.
  - We anticipate that recruitment and retention of staff will continue to be a challenge and will continue to impact staff shortages.
  
- Politics and Social Values
  - We anticipate that the politics and social climate at the national, state and local levels will continue to be a challenge. Compromise and personal responsibility are becoming less common. Additional parental rights movement and/or legislation is an unknown at this time.

- Technology and Science
  - We anticipate that it will be a challenge to maintain a 1:1 District. This will require that we effectively utilize our resources so that students have the technology and tools that serve them on an ongoing basis.
  - We anticipate having the need for more technology support for our students and our staff.
  
- Legislation and Regulation
  - We anticipate that reports required by the state and at the federal level will continue to consume more and more time of our staff.
  - Legislation impacting our public schools is always a moving target. This is largely driven by who has control of the legislative and executive branches.

## 5-10 Year Planning Horizon

### Mega Issues facing the Gallatin Gateway Schools

**Mega issues** are issues of strategic importance, which represent choices the school district will need to make in defining the ultimate direction of its long-range plan. These issues represent potential impediments to achievement of the Envisioned Future and form a basis for dialogue about the choices facing the school district. These questions can serve as an ongoing "menu" of strategic issues that, using a knowledge-based approach in gathering insights relative to Gallatin Gateway Schools' strategic position and directional choices for each of the issues, can be used by the Board to create regular opportunities for strategic dialogue about the future issues facing the school district.

Assumptions: Taking into consideration the external trends, challenges and issues likely to impact the future success of Gallatin Gateway Schools, the following mega issue was identified by those who took part in the strategic planning meetings held in 2017 and 2018:

Mega Issue(s) that require the District's attention:

*How do we ensure our facilities meet the contemporary needs of our students, staff and the community we serve?*

This mega issue will be analyzed using a knowledge-based decision-making process using the following four questions to gain insight and to develop options for consideration:

Question #1: What do we know about the **needs, wants, and preferences of our stakeholders** (students, staff, parents and community members) that is relevant to this issue?

Question 2. What do we know about the **current realities and evolving dynamics** of our environment that is relevant to this issue?

Question 3. What do we know about the **“capacity” and “strategic position”** of our District and our community that is relevant to this issue?

Question 4. What are the **ethical implications of our options/choices?**

## Appendix “B”

### Institutionalized Strategies

**The District has made significant progress as a result of planning strategically. The following strategies have been characterized as “institutionalized” due to the fact that they are now part of the culture of our District and remain relevant to preserve our current and ongoing success.**

#### **Goal Area: Staff and Volunteers**

- We have increased the effectiveness, efficiency and professionalism of our staffing levels to ensure that we are meeting the individual needs of our students.
- We have facilitated and promoted a positive culture and make workplace enhancements that increase the satisfaction levels and enthusiasm of our staff in the performance of their duties.