New Milford Board of Education
Special Meeting Minutes
June 14, 2021
Sarah Noble Intermediate School Library Media Center

Present:	Mrs. Wendy Faulenbach
	Mr. Pete Helmus
	Mr. Brian McCauley
	Mrs. Tammy McInerney
	Mrs. Eileen P. Monaghan
	Mrs. Olga I. Rella
Absent:	Mr. Joseph Failla
	Mrs. Cynthia Nabozny

Also Present:	Ms. Alisha DiCorpo, Superintendent of Schools
	Mrs. Catherine Calabrese, Interim Assistant Superintendent
	Ms. Jamie Terry, Technology Director

1.	**Call to Order**		**Call to Order**
A.	**Pledge of Allegiance**		**A. Pledge of Allegiance**
	The special meeting of the New Milford Board of Education was called to order at 7:10 p.m. by Mrs. Faulenbach. The Pledge of Allegiance immediately followed.		
2.	**Public Comment**		**Public Comment**
	• There was none.		
3.	**Item for Information and Discussion**		**Item for Information and Discussion**
A.	**Strategic Planning**		**A. Strategic Planning**
	• Jonathan Costa, Assistant Executive Director for EdAdvance, presented regarding Strategic Coherence Planning. Mr. Costa said the conceptual goal is to prepare every student for learning, life, and work beyond school. The Strategic Process seeks to focus, enhance and align systems of learning to ensure you have the best possible opportunity to achieve that goal. In this system, stakeholders agree on an outcome and then align systems with it, and come up with key indicators of success if it is		

working. Assessment is a critical part of the process. Mr. Costa said it is not about reinventing the wheel, it is building on what the district already has. He said the district should not need additional annual resources if the process is done properly. He said the typical timeline is a six month process. If starting in September, the process will be mostly complete by December/January so the Board will know the key priorities prior to the budget process. The overall cost of the planning is driven by consultant time and amount of community involvement.

- Ms. DiCorpo asked how the district will know how it is doing in the process in real time.
- Mr. Costa said through review of the systems framework, the way the work is getting done, and review of data and documents.
- Mr. Helmus said this is a complex system and he wonders if it will be difficult to implement.
- Mr. Costa said not if you work through the process and build upward as you go. The goal is incremental progress.
- Mr. Helmus said that another example of concern might be parents who have issues with the judgement of the new assessment.
- Mr. Costa said it is about finding those things that everyone agrees are important and focusing on those. The goal is to make objectives so transparent that it is in everyone's best interest to make them succeed. Focus should be on what matters most for ultimate student success.
- Mrs. Monaghan asked if the process will involve a rewrite of curriculum.
- Mr. Costa said it could, but that is not definite. It is more about closing the gaps than starting from scratch.
- Mrs. Monaghan asked if the process looks vertically or horizontally and Mr. Costa said it does both.
- Mrs. McInerney asked what the Strategic Planning Committee will look like. Mr. Costa said it is typically anywhere from 16-26 people with 60% staff and 40% Board and community.
- Mrs. Faulenbach noted that a good Strategic Plan doesn't sit on the shelf when the process

	is complete. She asked if there is a plan for follow up and check in.	
	• Mr. Costa said in every place that this process works, it is key to come back to it and review. He said planning strategies should not go more than one year out for that reason.	
	• Mrs. Monaghan asked how special education students fit into the plan. Mr. Costa said there is equity language all the way through, all means all.	
	• Mrs. Faulenbach asked if the plan is to move forward with this process in September. Ms. DiCorpo said that is correct.	
	• Mr. Costa said they will look to form the large planning group, from which subcommittees will evolve. The entire community will be offered some level of participation.	
	• Mrs. McInerney wondered if people should be approached now to gauge interest.	
	• Mrs. Faulenbach said they will use the summer to outline the process further. She said it is exciting to be starting. There is a need for a Strategic Plan, and the use of alternate funding separate from the operating budget is a bonus.	
4.	**Discussion and Possible Action**	**Discussion and Possible Action**
A.	**Discussion and evaluation of Board members' roles and performance. Executive session anticipated. The Board may take action when it returns to public session.**	**A. Discussion and evaluation of Board members' roles and performance. Executive session anticipated. The Board may take action when it returns to public session.**
	Mrs. Rella moved to enter into executive session for discussion and evaluation of Board members' roles and performance, and to invite into the session Ms. Alisha DiCorpo, seconded by Mr. McCauley.	**Motion made and passed unanimously to enter into executive session for discussion and evaluation of Board members' roles and performance, and to invite into the session Ms. Alisha DiCorpo.**
	The motion passed unanimously.	
	Entered Executive Session at 8:18 p.m.	
	The Board returned to Public Session at 10:01 p.m.	
5.	**Adjourn**	**Adjourn**

	Mrs. Rella moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:02 p.m., seconded by Mrs. Monaghan and passed unanimously.	**Motion made and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 10:02 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted:

Tammy McInerney
Assistant Secretary
New Milford Board of Education

Strategic Coherence Planning
What, Why and How?

Jonathan P. Costa, Sr.

Spring, 2021

costa@edadvance.org

The Conceptual Goal

To prepare

EVERY student

for **learning, life,**

and **work**

beyond school.

New Milford Mission

The mission of the New Milford Public Schools, a collaborative partnership of students, educators, family and community, is to prepare each and every student to compete and excel in an ever-changing world, embrace challenges with vigor, respect and appreciate the worth of every human being, and contribute to society by providing effective instruction and dynamic curriculum, offering a wide range of valuable experiences, and inspiring students to pursue their dreams and aspirations.

The Strategic Process

To focus, enhance and align systems of learning **(curriculum, instruction, and assessment)** to ensure you have the **best possible opportunity** to achieve that goal.

Leadership Focus

- The Board of Education, Superintendent, and administration are committed to the systemic acquisition of the Vision of the Graduate through focused, deep learning for all students.

- Board, administration, and district leadership are committed to equitably aligning district systems to support the systemic acquisition of the Vision of the Graduate through focused, deep learning for all students.

- Board, administration, and district leadership are committed to developing the capacity and competencies to support the systemic acquisition of the Vision of the Graduate through focused, deep learning for all students.

Regional School District 17 Vision of the Graduate

Thinks Critically

Demonstrates Respect Empathy & Kindness

Displays Character Courage & Integrity

The HK Student

Contributes Productively

Communicates Effectively

Maintains a Growth Mindset

A graduate of the RSD17 School District is a compassionate critical thinker, who collaborates to solve problems, and is prepared to contribute to improving our world.

The main thing…

…is to make sure
"The Main Thing"
remains
the main thing.

Goals for Learning

1. **Goal setting context and philosophy** – there is an established Vision of the Graduate, equitable outcomes for all, and the focus is on deep learning rather than coverage.

2. **Goal setting processes** – the annual district, building/course and professional goals are focused on high leverage student learning goals, clearly tied to a data-based need, and are aligned through the Pre-K to 12 system.

3. **Goal setting support and engagement** – students, parents, staff and other constituents are well informed regarding the rationale that inform the district's student learning goals at every level.

4. **Materials and resources** – instructional and assessment materials provided by the district show evidence of alignment and focus with the district's critical student goals for learning.

Instruction for Deep Learning

1. The existence of a **unified vision of the characteristics of deep learning** and the instructional practices that lead to effective, higher order student engagement

2. The use of **digital learning** resources to support rigorous instruction.

3. The alignment of **professional learning practices** with these articulated priorities.

4. Evidence of **specific equity strategies** designed to ensure that all students are achieving at high levels.

Boston Massacre:

An Important Event in American History

1. Read Chapter 6 – focus on the pages that describe what happened in the Boston Massacre and the events that followed it.

2. Answer the end of chapter review questions related to the massacre.

3. Bring your answers to class and be prepared to discuss them with your classmates.

Designed for a "just in case" curriculum.

Designed for a "just in time" curriculum.

Boston Massacre: Murder or Justifiable Homicide?

1. **Team One find 5 historical narratives by different authors**

2. **Team Two find 5 primary source documents from the trial**

3. **Team Three find 5 British history references and opinions**

4. **Team Four find 5 contemporaneous editorials.**

- Present your work to the other teams.

- Create a narrative outline of the event that includes data from all four teams.

- Create a work that defends your summary/conclusion with your facts and evidence.

- Be prepared to share your product with others if called upon.

EdAdvance, 2016

Assessment & Measurement

1. **Assessment philosophy and practice** (including balance between formative and summative assessment resources).

2. **Assessment capacity** (the ability to effectively measure the things that matter most).

3. How data collection practices **support priority goals for learning**.

4. How both **professional measures and measures at the building and district level also support feedback** for improved student and professional performance.
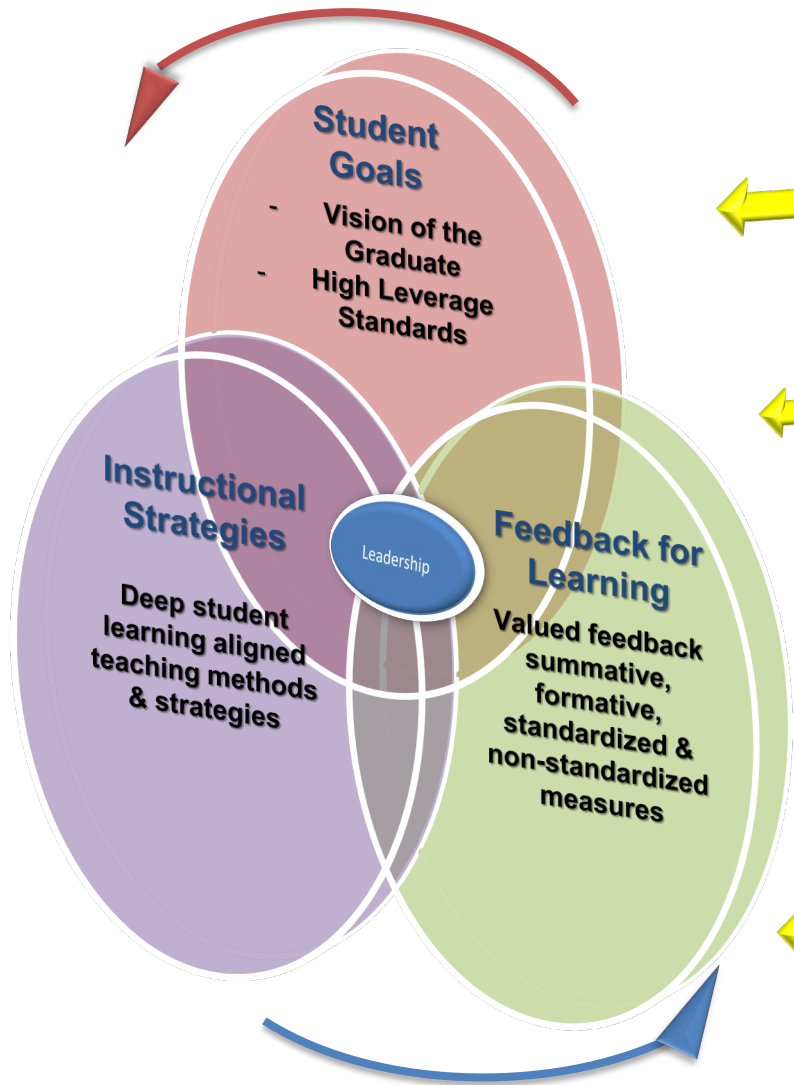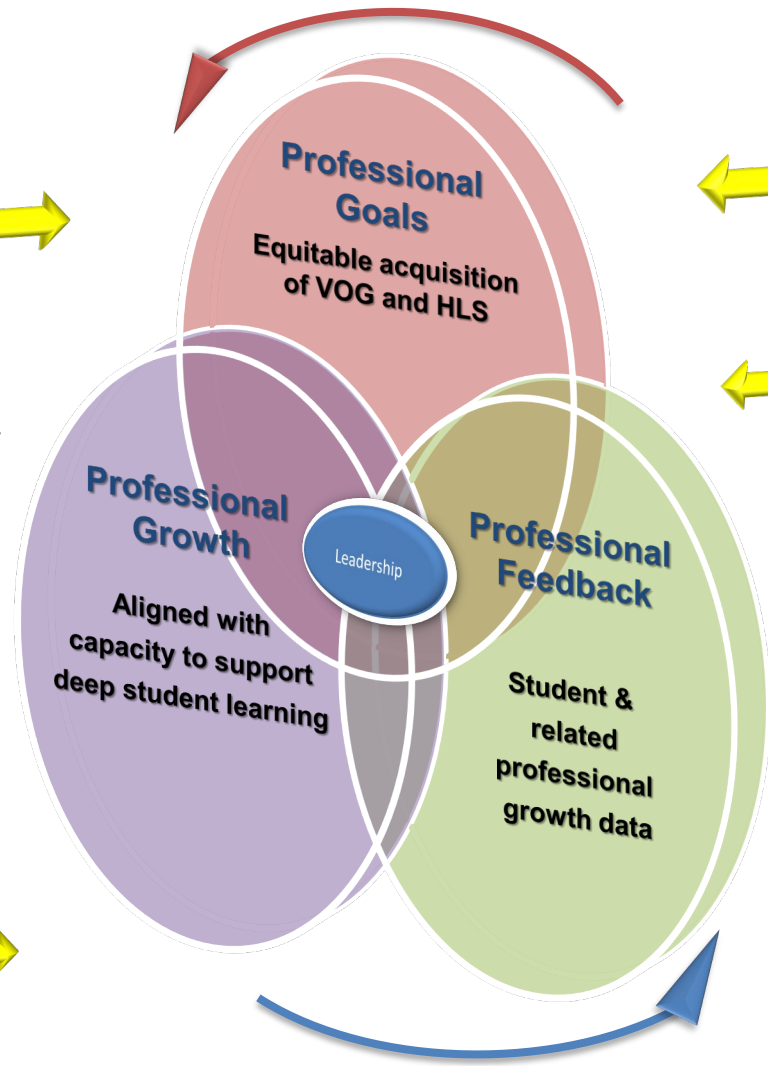
Coherence Is Supported by Assessment

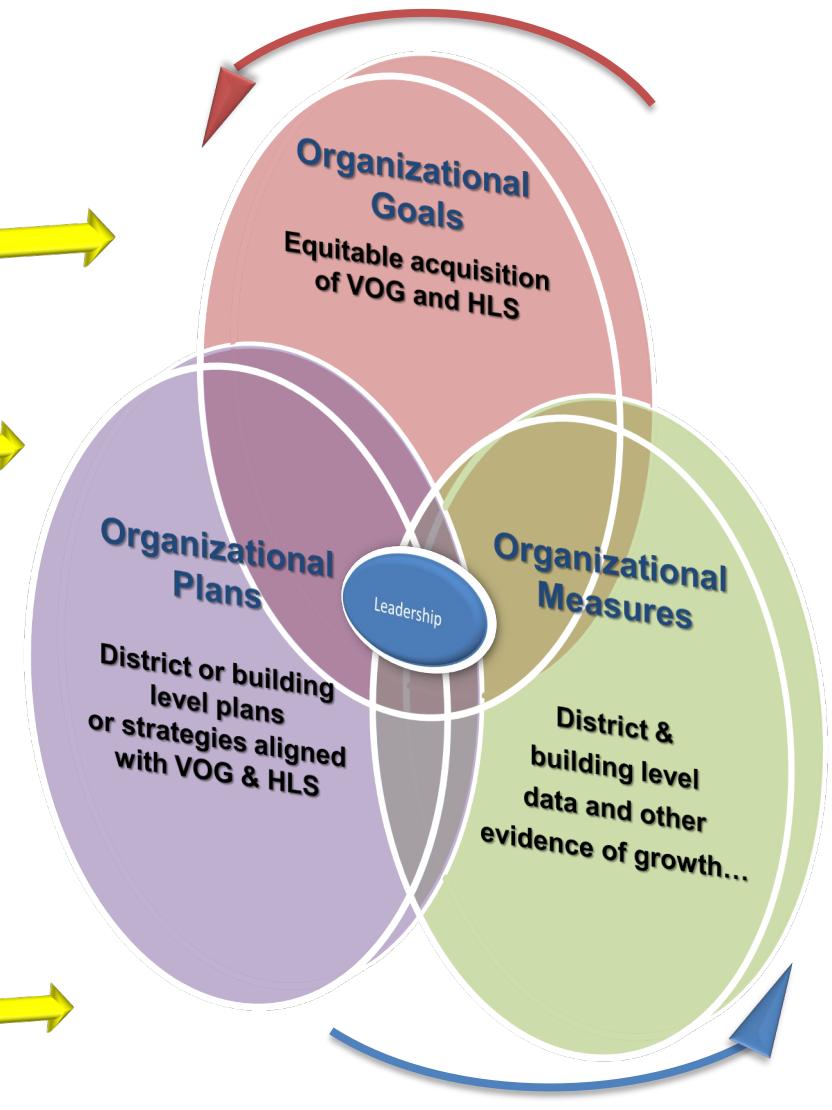## Measure what you value, value what you measure.

Value

Reliability

Student Improvement

Professional Improvement

Building/District Improvement

Student Goals
- Vision of the Graduate
- High Leverage Standards

Instructional Strategies
Deep student learning aligned teaching methods & strategies

Leadership

Feedback for Learning
Valued feedback summative, formative, standardized & non-standardized measures

Professional Goals
Equitable acquisition of VOG and HLS

Professional Growth
Aligned with capacity to support deep student learning

Leadership

Professional Feedback
Student & related professional growth data

Organizational Goals
Equitable acquisition of VOG and HLS

Organizational Plans
District or building level plans or strategies aligned with VOG & HLS

Leadership

Organizational Measures
District & building level data and other evidence of growth…

Community Engagement

Policy and Regulation

Resource Deployment

1. **Policy & Regulation - The Board of Education works with the Superintendent** to craft and apply policy that supports the district's pursuit of its Mission, its Vision of the Graduate, and equitable outcomes for all students.

2. **Community Engagement - The district's many stakeholders believe that they are** meaningfully involved, engaged, kept up-to-date and respected by the leadership structures in the district regardless of their backgrounds or privilege.

3. **Resource Deployment – budgets and resources are** developed and defended based on equitable alignment with the district's Vision of the Graduate **and high leverage standards.**
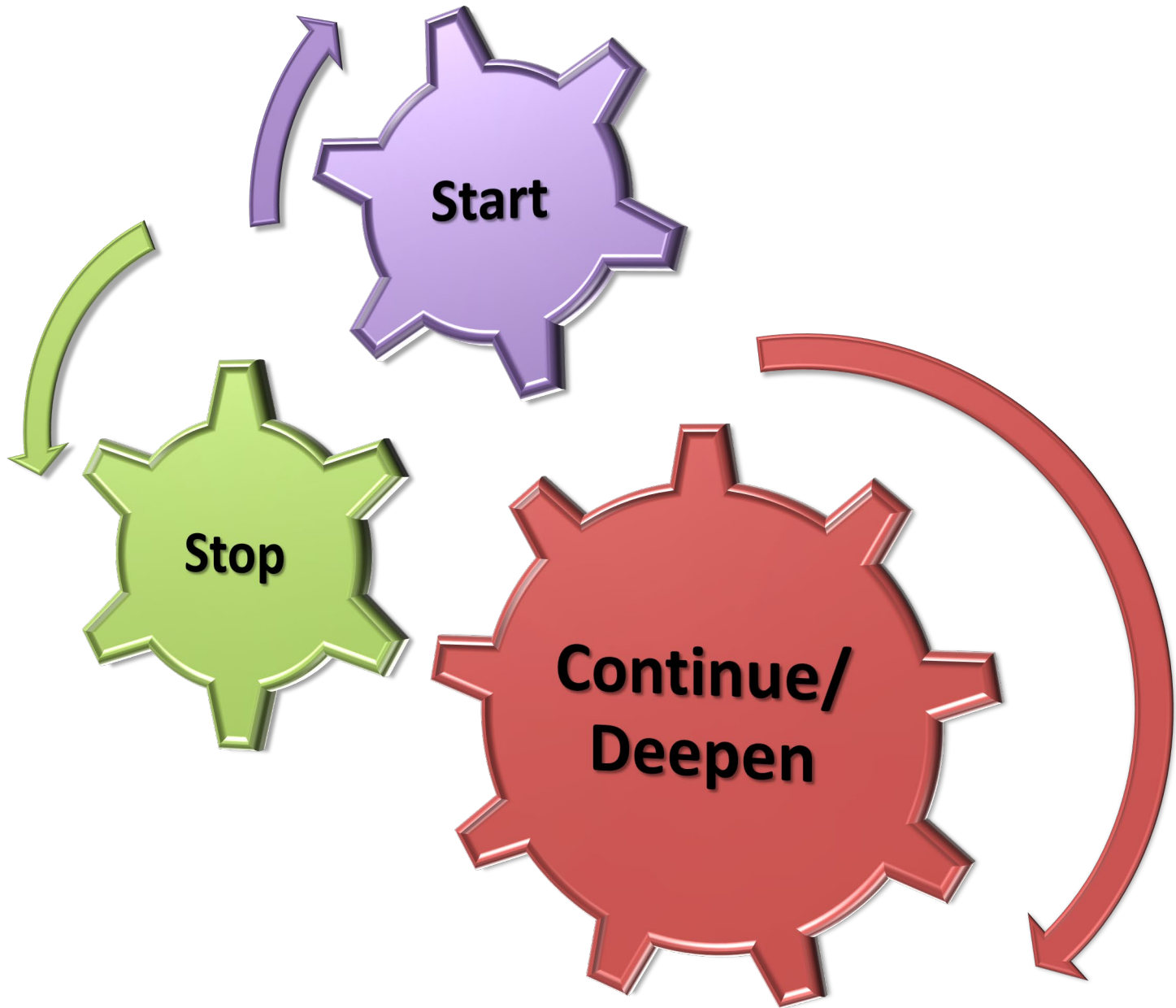
District-Wide Planning as Backwards Design

What we want...
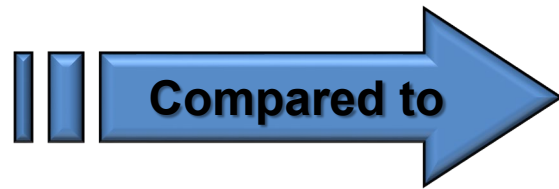
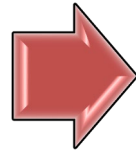Compared to → **What we are doing already....**

Leading to → **What we need to do...**

Process Steps For Phase II

1. Review desired Coherence Outcomes or research targets for your area.

→

2. Review capacity requirements for achieving those outcomes – explore the systems/data sources within the district that are responsible.

→

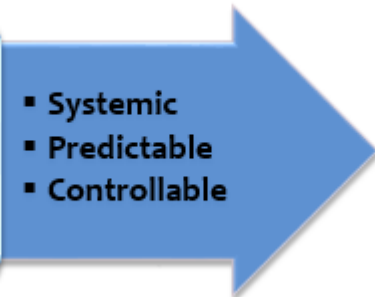**3. Analyze, rate and report the strengths and weaknesses of the district systems associated with your Coherence Outcomes.**

Keep In Mind...

Common Causes
- Systemic
- Predictable
- Controllable

→ **Mission Driven Decision Making**

Special Causes
- Random
- Unpredictable
- Beyond Control

→ **In-Context Problem Solving**

Required Reflections – Scoring Frame of Reference

Score	Description
0 - Not Present	The Desired Coherence Outcome is non-existent, there is no evidence of it in any form.
1 - Beginning	There may be some individual efforts or minimal group attempts, but there is no systemic evidence or process in place to support the existence of the Desired Coherence Outcome.
2 - Emergent	There have been systemic efforts to create the Desired Coherence Outcome, but its implementation is uneven and has yet to deliver meaningful changes in student or adult performance.
3 - Proficient	There has been a systemic effort to create the Desired Coherence Outcome and it is generally working. It is regularly creating evidence of meaningful changes in student and adult performance.
4 - Excellent	There has been a systemic effort to create the Desired Coherence Outcome and it is functioning effectively. There have been meaningful changes in student and adult performance and there is evidence that data is driving further improvements in the system.

DataScan

Team Three: Teaching for Learning (Overview)

The district has committed to supporting instructional and adult learning strategies that ensure rigorous, digitally supported pedagogical experiences aligned with the district's student goals.

The purpose of this outcome is to focus resources and attention on a very small number of highest leverage professional practices that have an outsize impact on student performance. The inherent assumption is that the most important indicator of instructional success is the percentage of available time students are engaged in rigorous, higher-order thinking course content activities. This element, when combined with a positive learning environment, are the two most powerful predictors of sustained/improved student learning. Accordingly, this group will be focusing on teaching and learning practices and the quality of instructional feedback focused on these critical elements. To judge this, the three following areas will be examined; 1. The existence of a unified vision of the characteristics of effective, higher order student engagement, 2. The use of digital learning resources to support rigorous instruction, and the alignment of professional learning practices with these articulated priorities.

DataScan

Team Three: Teaching for Learning

The district has committed to supporting instructional and adult learning strategies that ensure rigorous, digitally supported pedagogical experiences aligned with the district's student goals.

Coherence Outcome Two Findings Summary:

Indicator	0	1	2	3	4
1. Student Engagement in Rigorous HOT					
2. Digital Learning Practices					
3. Professional Learning Practices					

What we found – Part Three: Summary Reflections

Concerns/Biggest Gaps

1. **Inconsistency in using assessment in driving learning forward 21**

2. Inconsistency around the use of digital learning 4

3. **Definition and assessment of rigor and higher order thinking skills 11**

4. Parents feel there is a lack of communication regarding children's progress throughout the school year 8

5. Concerns about mutual respect and not being heard 0

6. **Lack of vertical and horizontal alignment for SEL/Curriculum K-12 (perseverance, ethical, self directed) 37**

7. Lack of understanding about roles within district or school 1

8. Assessment needs to be aligned with district vision and goals more consistently 7

9. **Lack of curriculum alignment (horizontal and vertical) K-12 36**

10. Need a balance between teacher autonomy and consistency/coherence 7

DataScan

What We Need to Do:

Strategy One: *Define, promote, and consistently assess the most important student skills and attributes required for success in life, learning and work beyond school and use the results of those assessments to continuously improve the district's capacity to support student achievement.*

Strategy Two: *Appropriately define rigor and higher-order thinking so that feedback systems on teaching and learning can be aligned with these high-leverage forces.*

Strategy Three: *Align definitions, scope and sequence of Pre-K to 12 Social and Emotional Learning curriculum resources and include the critical attributes of perseverance, ethical behaviors and self-directedness.*

Strategy Four: *Build or complete the vertical/horizontal alignment of Pre-K to 12 academic curriculum resources and include integration of problem-solving, communication, and critical/creative thinking.*

P l a n s

Strategy One: *Define, promote, and consistently assess the most important student skills and attributes required for success in life, learning and work beyond school and use the results of those assessments to continuously improve the district's capacity to support student achievement.*

I – Present State	II – Beginning	III – Progressing	IV - Accomplishing
· No common definitions for key terms	· Common definitions for key terms have been established	· Common definitions are working their way into the staff vocabulary and are often used and accepted definitions for key terms in context	· Commonly used and accepted definitions for key terms are used regularly and productively in professional dialogue regarding student learning.
· Organic system of assessment at all levels – no evidence of consistent alignment of expectations of key Successful Graduate skills or attributes	· Some inconsistent evidence of alignment of expectations (shared rubrics or standards) of key Successful Graduate skills or attributes	· Consistent evidence of aligned expectations (shared rubrics or standards) of key Successful Graduate skills or attributes	· Implemented system of aligned assessment (shared rubrics or standards) and evidence at all levels for key Successful Graduate skills or attributes
· No systemic use of data as a foundation for improvement planning of instruction or for professional learning related to key Successful Graduate skills or attributes	· Some use of data for improvement planning of instruction or for professional learning related to key Successful Graduate skills or attributes	· Many use data for improvement planning of instruction or for professional learning related to key Successful Graduate skills or attributes	· Systemic use of data for improvement planning of instruction or for professional learning related to key Successful Graduate skills or attributes
· No district-wide measures or framework to determine how well the district is doing at achieving its Profile of a Successful Graduate.	· District and community representatives are engaged in a dialogue regarding district-wide measures or framework to determine how well the district is doing at achieving its Profile of a Successful Graduate.	- District and community representatives are generally agreed on district-wide measures or framework to determine how well the district is doing at achieving its Profile of a Successful Graduate.	· District and community representatives are implementing a district-wide system of measures or frameworks to determine how well the district is doing at achieving its Profile of a Successful Graduate.

Plans

Impacted Systems:

- Collective Bargaining Agreements
- PD & TE
- School level data teams
- Assessment calendar
- Data collection, assessment systems, and data collection
- Professional learning schedule and calendar
- Board Policies that are associated with teacher evaluation and administrator teacher evaluation
- Curriculum Development committees
- Federal, state, and local mandates
- Financial implications
- IT Department
- Evaluation program and plan

Plans

Required Step	Outcome	Resource/Resp.	Date Due
Assessment Plan created and implemented	A plan to generate baseline student data and student work samples in the two priority skill areas at elementary, middle and high school performance levels is created and implementation begins. Goal would be a shared assessment implemented in the spring of 2015.	Instructional Development Team	12/30/17
Coherence Checkpoint #2	Central office and/or CPT convene by the end of February with consultant to review and monitor assessment plans and implementation progress.	Consultant/CO/CPT	2/28/18
Baseline data collected	Baseline standardized and non-standardized data created through the implementation of the assessment plan is collected.	Instructional Development Team	5/30/18
Baseline data analyzed	Baseline standardized data associated with priority skills are mapped and analyzed with strength and weakness recommendations reported to Central Office, IDT, and Board of Education.	Instructional Development Team	6/30/18
Coherence Checkpoint #3	Central office and/or CPT convene by the end of June with consultant to • review district SLO and professional growth goal results • review the baseline student performance data • adjust Year Two Tasks as needed based on reported results and Year One Reflections	Consultant/CO/CPT	6/30/18

Common Timeline….

Re-Form Planning Team — Apr 1 - Apr 29

Recovery and Renewal Retreat — Apr 30

Reflection Period — May 1 - Jun 18

Administrator Meeting — May 3

Summer Research Launch Meeting — Jun 18

Summer Research — Jun 20 - Aug 20

Administrator Meeting — Aug 16

SCP Phase One — Aug 23 - Aug 24

SCP Phase Two — Aug 25 - Nov 2
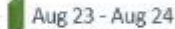
SCP Phase Two Check In Meeting — Oct 4

SCP Phase Three & Four — Nov 2 - Nov 3

SCP Phase Five — Nov 4 - Jan 7
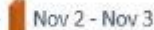
Strategic Action Support — Dec 7

SCP Results Review — Jan 7

2021 | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | 2022 | 2022

What does it cost?

Most plans cost between 15K and 30K depending on the desired depth of community engagement.

Strategic Coherence Planning Process

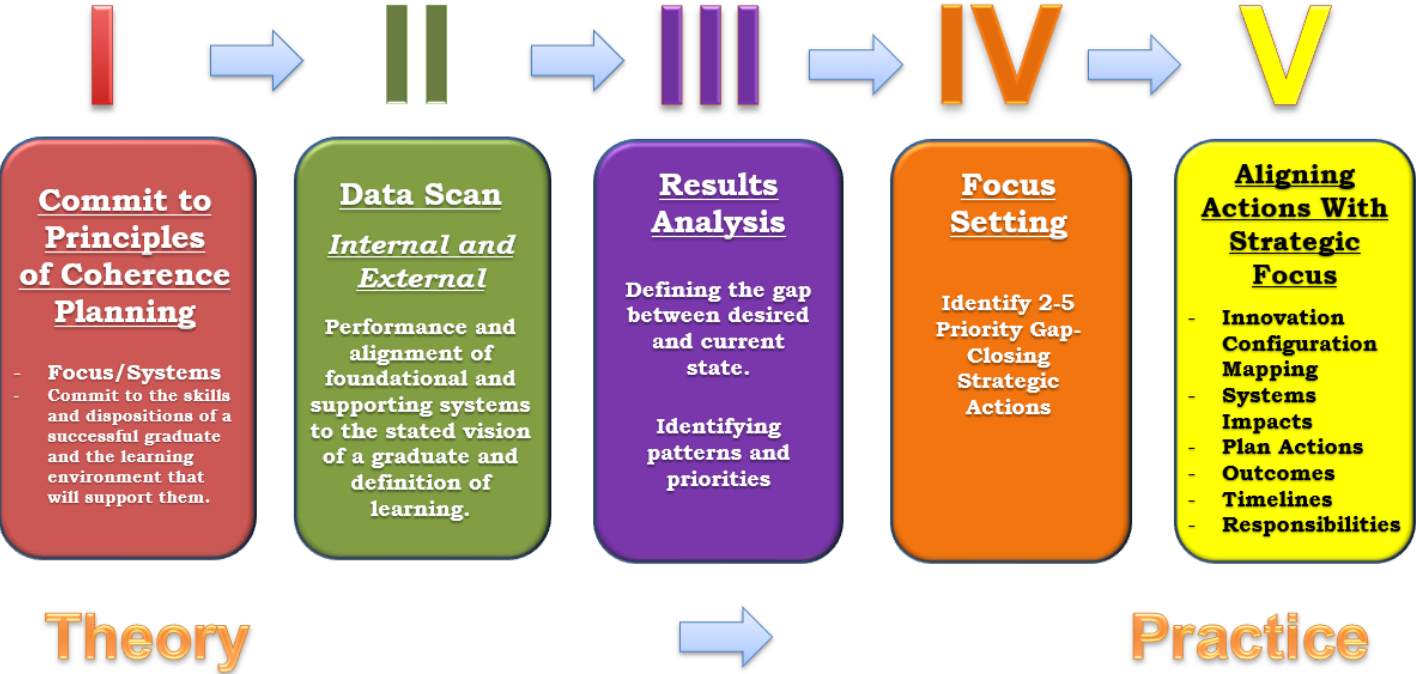| I	II	III	IV	V
Commit to Principles of Coherence Planning - Focus/Systems - Commit to the skills and dispositions of a successful graduate and the learning environment that will support them.	**Data Scan** *Internal and External* Performance and alignment of foundational and supporting systems to the stated vision of a graduate and definition of learning.	**Results Analysis** Defining the gap between desired and current state. Identifying patterns and priorities	**Focus Setting** Identify 2-5 Priority Gap-Closing Strategic Actions	**Aligning Actions With Strategic Focus** - Innovation Configuration Mapping - Systems Impacts - Plan Actions - Outcomes - Timelines - Responsibilities

Theory → **Practice**

Contact Information

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