

Updated: September 2023

Developing an Effective Strategic Plan

A Guide for B.C. Boards of Education

The planning and [reporting processes](#) that school districts use are integral to improving educational learning outcomes, creating public assurance, and demonstrating accountability. This guide is intended to share effective practices to support boards of education as they develop new district strategic plans.

Additional resources are available on the [Framework website](#).

As part of a continuous improvement review cycle, the ministry will continue to update this document on a regular basis.

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Section A: Background

Please note: Throughout this document, the use of Local First Nation(s) refers to First Nations and Treaty Nations on whose traditional territory or Treaty Lands the board operates schools.

Policy Vision

In British Columbia's education system, we share the common goal of continuously improving the quality of public education for all students. Over the past several years, the Ministry of Education and Child Care has broadened its approach to continuous improvement, which is reflected in the [Framework for Enhancing Student Learning Policy](#) (the Policy).

The Framework for Enhancing Student Learning (the Framework) is a collective approach, developed and maintained through collaboration with First Nation(s) through the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) and engagement with Indigenous communities, including Métis and Inuit peoples, and education partners through organizations including Métis Nation British Columbia (MNBC). By building on existing planning and reporting practices such as school plans, district strategic plans, Local Education Agreements (LEAs), and Equity Action plans, it provides structure to ensure that the B.C. education system continues to improve. It values and relies on Indigenous ways of knowing, sector experiences, promising practices, and evidence-informed decision making.

The Framework aims to align system-wide efforts while recognizing and fostering Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, diversity, honoring students, family, and community agency, and respecting local autonomy to deliver educational programs. At its core, the Framework's shared commitments are to improve:

- Student success; and
- Equity of student learning outcomes, with a particular focus on Indigenous students, children and youth in care, and students with disabilities or diverse abilities.

As it works to create alignment across the system towards the goal of continuous improvement, the Framework itself also continuously adapts to better reflect the needs of the sector.

A Note on Strategic Plans

Strategic plans **do not** need to be renewed annually to address newly identified trends/patterns of need. The annual Enhancing Student Learning Report allows districts to adjust/adapt existing strategies and/or objectives to address these emerging needs, and/or introduce and implement new high yield, impactful strategies. New priorities should be considered in the development of a new strategic plan based on the board of education's planning cycles in collaboration with local First Nation(s).

Framework Guiding Principles

The Framework for Enhancing Student Learning:

1. Creates a system-wide focus on individual student learning to ensure all students in B.C. achieve their full potential;
2. Continues to build public trust and confidence in B.C.'s education system by ensuring that all students are provided a high-quality learning experience;
3. Provides a structure to ensure that what is measured and reported is consistent with the focus on student success and in keeping with the goals of education in the province of British Columbia;
4. Ensures the capacity building and a system-wide commitment to continuous improvement and lifelong learning;
5. Recognizes that local First Nation(s), Indigenous peoples, and education partners each have unique contributions and share responsibility for student learning;
6. Recognizes the individual learning needs of students and fosters equitable and inclusive learning environments;
7. Focuses on intellectual, career, and human and social development, including exploration of one's identity;
8. Facilitates communication and ongoing authentic collaboration with local First Nation(s);
9. Facilitates communication and ongoing authentic engagement with Indigenous peoples and education partners in respectful collaborative action;
10. Reflects local contexts, enabling innovative and flexible responses in classrooms, schools, and districts with necessary support from the government;
11. Supports growth and achievement among specific groups of students, most notably Indigenous students, children and youth in care, and students with disabilities or diverse abilities;

12. Consistently uses evidence from a variety of sources to ensure a responsive and transparent decision-making process; and
13. Commits to demonstrating fiscal responsibility and effective stewardship of resources in supporting both system and student outcomes.

Section B: Building System-wide Coherence through Alignment with Legislation

The Framework policy was developed under the authority of the [School Act](#) and draws from and aligns with the following pre-existing legislation, policy, declarations, agreements and reports:

- [BC Tripartite Education Agreement \(BCTEA\)](#)
- [Draft Principles that Guide the Province of British Columbia's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples](#)
- [Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action](#)
- [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(UNDRIP\)](#)
- [BC's Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act \(DRIPA\)](#)
- [Statement of Education Policy Order \(Mandate for the School System\)](#)
- [Policy for Student Success](#)

Similarly, provincial, district, and school educational plans and outcomes should align with pre-existing legislation, policy, declarations, agreements, and reports.

To ensure system-wide coherence and alignment, district planning and reporting processes should also reflect the Policy for Student Success, as well as the [Educated Citizen](#) and Goals of Education outlined in the Statement of Education Policy order (mandate for public education). School plans should then align with district plans.

Section C: Purpose of a Strategic Plan

School districts and public schools are expected to develop multi-year strategic plans which reflect the Framework's guiding principles and illustrate a clear focus on improving student learning outcomes. The strategic plan guides the district's operations over several years and should be updated according to a timeline determined by the board of education. A common cycle in the B.C. education sector is 3-5 years.

An effective strategic plan is developed based on the analysis of relevant data sets and evidence and the results of an authentic strategic engagement process.

A strategic plan should outline:

- The district's mission, vision, values, and priorities for the current planning cycle;
- Objectives and strategies the district will use to achieve the current priorities;
- Specific strategies the district will use to achieve student learning outcomes, including focused strategies to improve equity of outcomes for Indigenous students, children and youth in care, and students with disabilities or diverse abilities;
- What resources will be used to implement strategies; and
- The strategic engagement process applied through authentic collaboration with local First Nation(s) and engagement with Indigenous peoples and education partners to create the Strategic Plan.

Section D: Components of an Effective Strategic Planning Process

Working Toward Equity

Educational outcomes for Indigenous students, children and youth in care, and students with disabilities or diverse abilities vary significantly, and numerous factors contribute to the level of educational success they experience. Additional, focused efforts are necessary to improve educational outcomes for these students. These efforts should be outlined in the district and school strategic plans.

Guiding Questions

Consider:

- What provincial direction, such as the [Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan](#) and the [BC Tripartite Education Agreement](#), might be relevant?
- Which district strategies are currently having a positive impact on student learning based on the review of data and evidence?
- What high-yield, high-impact strategies offer a continued focus on improving inclusion and equity based on the [Educated Citizen](#) and align with the B.C. curriculum?
- What promising practices have been discovered through networking with other districts?

Determine:

- The stories the data and evidence reveal about the current approaches taken by the district to support Indigenous students, children and youth in care, and students with disabilities or diverse abilities in the district.
- The strategies the district should implement to improve equity of outcomes for Indigenous students, children and youth in care, and students with disabilities or diverse abilities.
- If the district's approach for supporting Indigenous students reflects commitments in existing agreements with local First Nations, Métis Chartered communities, and Indigenous communities, including:
 - Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements;
 - Equity Action Plans; and
 - Local Education Agreements.

- If the district has educational strategies focused on Indigenous students that have been jointly determined with Indigenous Education Councils and the board of education.
- How the district allocates budget in the Multi-year Budget Plan to work towards equity.



Dive Deeper with Sector Talk Videos:

- [***Improving Outcomes for Indigenous Students***](#) with Jo Chrona
- [***Advocating for Children and Youth in Care***](#) with Carolynn Schmor and Jody Shaw
- [***Inclusive Education Best Practices***](#) with Shaune Gowe

Using Evidence-informed Planning

Boards of education are expected to use data and evidence to define the current state, determine desired state, and identify relevant priorities, objectives, strategies, and success measures. The use of data and evidence allows boards to monitor progress in meeting district strategic priorities, tracking progress in student growth and achievement, and identifying systemic inequities.

Please note that the completed strategic plan should provide a description of how evidence, data, and stories influenced the selection of new strategic priorities.

An evidence-informed strategic planning process should:

- Use meaningful data and evidence to inform district and school objectives and strategies with respect to students' intellectual, human and social, and career development. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - ✓ Results for First Nations, both those living on reserve or Treaty Lands and those living off reserve or Treaty Lands;
 - ✓ Results for Métis and Inuit students;
 - ✓ A comparative review of graduation quality data sets, including:
 - Dogwood Certificates, Adult Dogwood Certificates, and Evergreen Certificates; and
 - Students requiring skill and course upgrading for post-secondary institution admissions.
- Draw from provided district data sets in conjunction with locally collected evidence to inform local planning efforts and decision-making (district data sets are available using the Ministry's K-12 [Data Portal](#)).

Data and Evidence Elements to Consider during Planning:

- A comparative review of disaggregated data for diverse cohorts of students, including data sets on:
 - Indigenous students (students with First Nation(s), Métis, and/or Inuit ancestry);
 - Children and youth in care; and
 - Students with disabilities or diverse abilities.
- A comparative review of disaggregated data to consider:
 - How a district is doing compared to itself (improvement over time).
 - How a district is doing compared to the provincial average.
- An analysis of triangulated evidence with multiple sources, both provincial and local, as well as trends over time.
- A review and analysis of a variety of examples of local evidence, such as:
 - Qualitative and quantitative data from Local Education Agreement engagement, Equity in Action Scanning, student forums etc.
 - Report cards and district-based assessments;
 - Disaggregated attendance data;
 - Enhanced student, parent, teacher, and community surveys;
 - Competency-based student assessment tools; and
 - School portfolios that communicate evidence in a variety of ways and can be readily updated as new information becomes available.
- Locally developed assessments.

Guiding Questions

Consider:

- Research-based, high yield/impact strategies to achieve priorities and objectives.
- Results from high-quality formative and summative assessment practices.
- Diverse research that describes characteristics of highly effective school districts and schools.

Analyze:

- What the trends in the data and evidence are, and what these trends highlight for the district.
- What qualitative / quantitative data sets are prioritized by local First Nation leadership, and what these data sets demonstrate about district practices and student outcomes.
- What qualitative / quantitative data sets are prioritized by Indigenous families and students, and what these data sets demonstrate about district practices and student outcomes.

- Has the district disaggregated the data sets to view the outcomes of Indigenous students living on and off reserve, children and youth in care, and students with disabilities or diverse abilities.
- If the disaggregated data sets illuminate any inequities.
- If multiple points of data were considered when assessing the abilities and learning needs of Indigenous students. E.g., Are ministry, district, school, and classroom assessments considered together?
- If the district has triangulated the qualitative and quantitative sources of data and evidence where applicable.
- If the district has analyzed cohort data sets where applicable.

Determine:

- Which district challenges need further clarification or are confirmed by the review of data and evidence.
- If the data sets highlight any emerging areas of need for students or the district that are not already being addressed.
- What stories the data and evidence reveal about the district's current approaches to equity in learning for Indigenous students, children and youth in care, and students with disabilities or diverse abilities.
- What the data and evidence reveal about the district's approaches for:
 - Literacy;
 - Numeracy;
 - Grade-to-grade transition;
 - Human and social development; and
 - Career development.



Dive Deeper with Sector Talk Videos:

- [Authentic Voice as Evidence](#) with Leona Price
- [Alignment Across the System \(Data Triangulation\)](#) with Sandra Herbst
- [Research Foundations](#) with Linda Kaser

Establishing a Clear Focus on Student Outcomes

The strategic plan should focus clearly on student learning; its implementation should lead to stronger learning outcomes for students, with an emphasis on ensuring equity of learning outcomes for all students.

Strategic plans should:

- Build on the goals in the [Policy for Student Success](#) by aiming to support students in the following areas:
 - ✓ Intellectual development;

- ✓ Human and social development; and
- ✓ Career development (including skills development and transitions to post-secondary education).
- Focus on achieving student success and improving educational outcomes for all students regardless of place of residence in the province;
- Focus on achieving equity of outcomes for Indigenous students, children and youth in care, and students with disabilities or diverse abilities; and
- Expand focus on achieving equity of learning outcomes for students regardless of diverse abilities, medical diagnosis, race, skin colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, physical or mental disability, academic ability, family status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Guiding Questions

Consider:

- From the data and evidence review, what evidence-informed information will lead to enhancing learning and success for each student?
- What trends/patterns emerge within the Student Performance Data Analysis? What do those patterns mean?

Determine:

- The existing challenges within the district that the data and evidence clarify or confirm.
- If the data sets indicate any emerging areas of need that are not already being addressed.
- If the disaggregated data sets illuminate any inequities, and how the district can address the identified inequities.
- The learner strengths identified from the data and evidence review.
- The stories the data and evidence reveal about the district's current approaches to improving student outcomes.
- How the district can build on learners' strengths.



Dive Deeper with Sector Talk Videos:

- [*Adapting Systems for All Student Outcomes*](#) with Lisa McCullough
- [*Learning and Teaching in an Indigenous World*](#) with Lorna Williams

Strategic Engagement

Strategic engagement refers to structured, targeted, and purposeful engagement that:

- Occurs throughout the district's continuous improvement cycle; and
- Aims to address specific areas of need, with the goal of improving student learning.

Districts should engage in strategic engagement throughout the strategic plan's development. This process should include authentic collaboration with local First Nation(s) and engagement with Indigenous peoples and education partners. This inclusive engagement process ensures a process to consider unique contributions and a shared responsibility in improving student learning.

Strategic plans should:

- Be developed in collaboration with local First Nation(s) through First Nation Education Councils;
- Be developed with Métis Chartered communities and other Indigenous community structures;
- Be developed with education partners, such as District Education Committees, District Parent Advisory Councils, community forums, and other existing committee structures;
- Reflect existing Local Education Agreements, Equity Action Plans, and/or Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements to ensure consistent and meaningful support of Indigenous students;
- Be informed by engagement with the community, including parents, students, and teachers, and district staff;
- Be informed by engagement with organizations that support children and youth in care and students with disabilities or diverse abilities;
- Proactively attend to unique local contexts; and
- Be developed with careful consideration of provincial goals and the local context.

As part of the engagement process, districts should have a Communications Plan that exists within the engagement strategy to communicate with local First Nation(s) and Indigenous leaders and district communities. Care should be taken to communicate the findings of the engagement processes in meaningful and effective ways, enabling members of the local community to understand the value of this information and how it is being used to inform the strategic plan and district efforts for continuous improvement.

District communication plans should:

- Exist within the overall engagement strategy of the planning and reporting processes;
- Use plain and accessible language;
- Identify who will receive communication about the strategic planning process; including, local First Nation(s), Indigenous peoples, and education partners who have been engaged;

- Identify what and how information will be shared, and the timeline for the communications;
- Share, as a narrative, the aspects of the district’s strategic planning for student success; and
- Share, as a narrative, the aspects of the district's annual continuous improvement cycle to review progress on an annual basis.

Note that while it not required that districts share communications plans, districts should refer to the communication plan in the Strategic Plan.

Strategic Engagement with local First Nation(s) and Indigenous Communities

Guiding Questions

Consider:

- Is the district engaging with:
 - Local First Nation(s)?
 - Indigenous, including Métis and Inuit, communities and organizations?
- How can the district respectfully and reciprocally collaborate with local First Nation(s) to access additional approaches towards Indigenous student success?
- What specific strategies are improving collaboration with local First Nations communities to carry forward with a new strategic plan? What new approaches can the district implement to further reach and collaborate with local First Nations communities?
- How can the district respectfully engage with Indigenous communities, including Métis and Inuit, for Indigenous student success?
- What specific strategies are improving engagement with Indigenous communities? What strategies can the district implement to reach and engage Indigenous communities further?
- Has the district considered hosting engagement sessions in welcoming spaces (i.e., Friendships Centres, Indigenous spaces)?

Determine:

- If the district has a process for ongoing, inclusive strategic engagement with local First Nations and Indigenous peoples for the development of the strategic plan and continuous improvement.
- How the district aligns engagement practices to local education agreements, equity action plans, and enhancement agreements.
- How the district meaningfully collaborates and cooperates with local First Nations, including those who have not previously been involved, in the development of the Strategic Plan’s priorities, objectives, and strategies.
- How the district meaningfully engages with other local Indigenous peoples, including Métis and Inuit, and community members in the development of the Strategic Plan priorities, objectives, and strategies.

- New innovative approaches to increase Indigenous student success identified in the district’s engagement efforts.

Engaging with Education Partners and Community Members

Guiding Questions

Consider:

- Is the district engaging with:
 - Students, teachers, parents, and guardians?
 - Organizations representing and/or supporting children and youth in care and students with disabilities or diverse abilities?
- How can the district respectfully engage with community members and education partners to increase student learning outcomes, particularly for children in youth and care and students with disabilities or diverse abilities?
- What specific strategies are improving engagement with organizations who represent and/or support children and youth in care and students with disabilities or diverse abilities to carry forward with a new strategic plan?
- What new approaches can the district implement to further reach and engage education partners and community members?

Determine:

- Which voices/community members should be involved that are not, and how the district will engage them.
- If the engagement process is being effectively utilized to drive continuous improvement of student learning in the district.
- The strategies the district can implement to reach populations that have historically been difficult to engage with.
- If the district has a process for ongoing, inclusive strategic engagement with education partners and community members for the development of the strategic plan and continuous improvement.
- New innovative approaches to increase student learning outcomes and student success identified in the district’s engagement efforts, especially for children and youth in care and students with disabilities or diverse abilities.

Boards of education should publicly communicate the process for strategically engaging local First Nations, Indigenous communities, and local education partners, including Indigenous Education Councils and District Parent Advisory Councils.



Dive Deeper with Sector Talk Videos:

- [Engagement in an Urban Setting](#) with Val Windsor

Setting Aspirational Priorities and Measurable Objectives

Strategic plans should include a district's identified priorities and clear and attainable objectives with the implementation of effective strategies. **Priorities** should guide the district's direction for the Strategic Plan cycle and act as high standards to pursue.

Objectives are specific steps or milestones that will enable districts to achieve these priorities. Objectives may evolve year to year based on successful completion and on a district's continuous improvement cycle. School and operational plans should align with the Strategic Plan to implement strategic priorities throughout the district.

Strategic plans should:

- Align with the broader provincial priorities;
- Reflect other key commitments in place to establish coherence, such as Aboriginal education enhancement agreements, equity action plans, and local education agreements; and
- Outline success measures which, together with senior leadership team, will be used to monitor the implementation of the Strategic Plan

Priorities should:

- Align with the [Educated Citizen](#) and the [Policy for Student Success](#);
- Align with the [First Peoples Principles of Learning](#);
- Aim to create momentum and a future planning mindset; and
- Be informed using data, evidence, and results from authentic engagement.

Objectives should:

- Be specific, attainable, measurable, and responsive to local needs;
- Be designed to achieve the district's priorities set out in the Strategic Plan; and
- Include measures pertaining to student success at district and school levels.

Guiding Questions

Consider:

- Which district strategies and objectives have improved student learning outcomes from the previous Strategic Plan?
- What existing and emerging areas of need has the district identified?
- What relevant feedback has been gathered through the district's engagement processes with the community?
- Do district learning priorities and objectives address inequities and enhance learning for each student?
- Are priorities and objectives informed by relevant evidence, data, and stories such as:
 - Equity action plans,
 - Current context,

- Research regarding deeper learning, and
- Broad, inclusive engagement to identify potential areas of focus.
- What are areas of concern identified through Local Education Agreements, Equity Scans, and Enhancement Agreements?
- What are the board of education’s mission, vision, and values, and the Ministry of Education and Child Care’s guiding policies and curriculum?
- Are the objectives transformative in nature by being:
 - Student-centred?
 - Forward-thinking?
 - Holistic and core competency focused?
 - Focused on personalization?

Determine:

- What trends were noticed while reviewing student learning data and evidence, including results from the district’s strategic engagement processes.
- The strategies the district can implement to reach populations that have historically been difficult to engage with.
- How the district can build on learners’ strengths.
- How the district plans to continue to focus on Indigenous students, children and youth in care, and students with disabilities or diverse abilities.



Dive Deeper with Sector Talk Videos:

- [Setting Meaningful Goals](#) with Lisa Carson
- [The Enhancing Student Learning Report’s Role in a Board’s Strategic Planning](#) with Stephanie Higginson

Developing Effective Strategies

To meet the objectives listed in the Strategic Plan, districts must identify effective strategies to be implemented and monitored for the strategic plan’s cycle.

School districts should select strategies that:

- Are research-based and demonstrate effectiveness to improve student outcomes;
- Address biases through an equity lens (e.g., [Gender-Based Analysis Plus](#));
- Are jointly developed through collaboration with local First Nation(s), specifically for First Nation(s) students;
- Are informed by engagement with local First Nation(s), Indigenous Education Councils, and Indigenous peoples;
- Target existing and/or emerging areas of need as determined through evidence-informed planning;

- Are annually reviewed and adapted as required, using an evidence-informed approach to improve the quality and effectiveness of educational programs in the district;
- Continue to develop capacity at district and school levels using existing and newly developed networks, cross-district teams, and professional learning opportunities and practices; and
- Are shared annually with the public and the ministry as part of the Enhancing Student Learning Report.

Guiding Questions

Consider:

- Over the span of the recent strategic plan, what specific, targeted strategies worked to improve learning outcomes of:
 - Indigenous students;
 - Children and youth in care; and
 - Students with disabilities or diverse abilities.
- Are the proposed strategies and measures proactively attentive to meeting objectives for improving learning outcomes of Indigenous students, children and youth in care, and students with disabilities or diverse abilities?
- Do the suggested strategies include evidence-informed approaches for intellectual, social and emotional, career, and life development, such as:
 - First Peoples' Principles of Learning?
 - Trauma-informed approaches?
 - Building of identity?
- If the intended strategies enhance the daily, lived experience of the students and enrich their learning.
- If strategies and measures are aligned with and reflective of Local Education Agreements, Equity Action Plans, and Enhancement Agreements.
- What current leading research can the district draw from to inform strategy selection?
- Are the strategies transformative in nature by being:
 - Student-centred?
 - Forward-thinking?
 - Holistic and core competency focused?
 - Focused on personalization?

Determine:

- Which effective strategies the district will continue for now.
- The emerging areas of need the district plans to address in the coming Strategic Plan, and the new strategies the district plans to adopt to address these areas of need.

- If strategies include ongoing and evidence-informed professional learning plans to build collective efficacy of staff and leaders at both the district and school levels.
- If the district responds to equity action plans and deep analysis involving local First Nation(s) to identify actions to improve student learning and wellness.
- If the district responds to equity action plans and deep analysis, involving local Indigenous communities, to identify actions to improve student learning and wellness.



Dive Deeper with Sector Talk Videos:

- [Strategic Planning Cycles](#) with Korleen Carreas
- [Applying Research to Identify High-Yield Strategies](#) with Stephen Petrucci

Using Resources Strategically

Objectives and strategies should be realistic and practical in terms of what resources are available to achieve success.

Strategic plans should:

- Identify appropriate resources to implement strategies to meet district objectives;
- Adhere to existing ministry and district policies;
- Include evidence of financial and other operational planning to support resourcing of strategies;
- Leverage existing resources which may require re-allocation;
- Utilize equity action plans, enhancement agreements, and local education agreements to determine priorities for Indigenous students;
- Leverage and adhere to multi-year budget plan resource allocation; and
- Target specific students to ensure equitable opportunities for success (e.g., [Indigenous Education Targeted Funding Policy](#) and [Special Education Target Funding Policy](#)).

Guiding Questions

Consider:

- What is the annual and multi-year budget development process that is driven by the strategic plan priorities?

Determine:

- How the district will allocate resources throughout the strategic plan cycle to improve student learning outcomes and achieve strategic priorities.
- How the data and evidence inform resource allocation.

- If the district operational plans leverage existing resources in an efficient and effective manner to support the Strategic Plan's success.
- If the operational plans demonstrate innovative and creative solutions in the re-allocation of resources.

Establishing Timelines

Timelines should be reasonable and in line with the scope of the district's overall planning cycle.

Districts are required to establish timelines for:

- The Strategic Plan (priorities, objectives, and strategies) with the board of education; and
- The district's annual results review process as part of a [continuous improvement cycle](#).

Writing and Publishing for Accessibility

District strategic plans and school plans are public documents. Boards of education in British Columbia must ensure these documents are **easily accessible to all local community members**.

Language should be respectful, consider local context, and clearly describe what the district has prioritized for the Strategic Plan's cycle.

Strategic plans should:

- Acknowledge the traditional territories on which the district and schools operate;
- Be accessible and available on a variety of platforms;
- Incorporate elements such as white space, graphics, bullet points, etc. for ease of readability;
- Be provided in the languages common in the community;
- Be written in accessible language;
- Demonstrate coherence in the district by aligning all key documents to the Strategic Plan; and
- Outline an engagement plan that clearly articulates the monitoring and communication process, including further engagement opportunities with:
 - Local First Nation leaders and communities;
 - Indigenous peoples, including Métis and Inuit, leaders, and communities; and
 - Education partners.

Section E: Implementation of the Strategic Plan

Strategic plans **do not** need to be renewed annually to address newly identified trends/patterns of need. The Enhancing Student Learning Report allows districts to adjust/adapt existing strategies and/or objectives to address these emerging needs and/or introduce and implement new high yield, impactful strategies. Any new priorities should be considered during the development of a new strategic plan based on the board of education's planning cycle.

To ensure the board's strategic priorities are successfully executed in the district, the superintendent, along with other district leaders will develop and action an implementation plan.

Implementation

To successfully action strategic plans, school districts are expected to create an implementation plan. Ensuring all operational plans, school, equity action plans, and multi-year budgetary plans all work towards achieving strategic plan priorities will build district coherence. Implementation plans are adjusted annually based on the outcomes of a reflective process. The Enhancing Student Learning Report is part of this yearly reflection cycle.

Implementation plans should:

- Describe and outline the district's process to implement strategies outlined in the Strategic Plan;
- Outline processes to align operational and school plans to the district Strategic Plan priorities;
- Assess and ensure the efficacy of strategies and operations through of the reflective process of an annual continuous improvement cycle;
- Outline performance measures for strategies to assist with tracking progress;
- Allocate adequate resources to successfully implement strategies;
- Show new adaptations of strategies and/or objectives as required; and
- Designate a team/team members responsible to carry-out and/or monitor the implementation of specific strategies.

Building Coherence and Alignment

An effective implementation process creates district-wide coherence and alignment. School and operational plans are implemented to initiate strategies at the school and district levels, which work to achieve strategic objectives. This is done through an implementation plan. The processes of alignment and coherence is part of the implementation cycle.

An effective planning cycle includes aligning district operational plans with the Strategic Plan to achieve strategic priorities. To build coherence and create alignment, the district should implement processes to review and adjust existing operational plans to ensure each one supports the eventual achievement of the strategic plan priorities. As part of the reflection cycle, the Enhancing Student Learning Report, allows superintendents to adjust practices to achieve stronger coherence and alignment based on evidence of outcomes for strategic priorities for the previous year. Operational plans should also align with relevant provincial direction.

Guiding Questions

Consider:

- What [plans and processes](#) are currently in place in the district? For example:
 - Operational plans (i.e., IT plans, HR plans, financial plan),
 - School plans,
 - Equity action plans,
 - Multi-year budgetary plans.
- How does the district currently keep these plans aligned to the Strategic Plan priorities?
- How does the district currently keep these plans aligned to the Implementation Plan to work towards strategic priorities at all levels?
- How does the district ensure system-wide effort towards the common goal of continuous improvement for equity of learning outcomes for all students and for Indigenous students, children and youth in care, and students with disabilities or diverse abilities?
- What is effective and ineffective about the district's current alignment strategies?
- Does the district have and support professional learning to build the collective efficacy of staff and leaders at both the district and school levels? How do these plans reinforce alignment with the district Strategic Plan?
- Does the district maintain alignment with local education agreements, equity action plans, and enhancement agreements?
- Does the district have iterative cycles of reflection and revision using relevant evidence, data, and stories to assess the impact strategies have in meeting objectives?

Determine:

- How the district will align school plans to reflect and actualize the new strategic priorities.
- A process for school plan development and ongoing review with parents, caregivers, students, and the community to ensure coherence and that it:
 - Is collaboratively developed;
 - Is focused on achieving student learning priorities;
 - Includes objectives, targets, and evidence-informed approaches with clear alignment with Local Education Agreements, Equity Action plans, and Enhancement Agreements;
 - Is developed in collaboration with district annual operation plans; and
 - Aligns school budgets to action.
- How the district will ensure alignment between its school and operational plans and the goals in the [Policy for Student Success](#).
- How the district will implement an on-going continuous improvement cycle to monitor, evaluate, and report progress in the Enhancing Student Learning Report.
- How the district operational plans (human resources, information technology, finance, communications, and facilities) and school plans will support the successful implementation of the board's strategic plan.
- How the superintendent will build the implementation plan and align with local context at the school and district level in addition to the strategic priorities.
- What changes are required in operational plans to support the successful implementation of the new strategic plan.
- What strategies need to be implemented to create coherence between strategic priorities and school and operational plans.

Aligning Operational Plans

District operational plans are created by the superintendent along with district senior leaders once the board has approved the strategic plan and has developed key indicators of success. This process allows the district to align all operational plans to the strategic plan, leading to operational practices that directly support the achievement of the strategic plan priorities.

District operational plans should be:

- Reviewed each year as part of the Enhancing Student Learning reporting process for continuous improvement;
- Evaluated annually for relevance, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability;
- Recalibrated annually;
- Realistic in terms of what resources are available to achieve success; and

- Target specific students to ensure equitable opportunities for success (e.g., [Indigenous Education Targeted Funding Policy](#) and [Special Education Targeted Funding Policy](#)).

Guiding Questions

Consider:

- How the district operational plans reflect and support the implementation of priorities, objectives, and strategies of the Strategic Plan?
- Does the district reflect on and revise all operational and school plans each year to align with the implementation plan?
- How do operational plans support principles of equity and inclusivity and consider individual students' needs, cultures, and experiences?
- How does the district review and assess operational plans each year? What process does the district undertake and what data and evidence are considered in the revision process?
- How are budgets monitored and adjusted through the annual review of operational and school plans? Are budget decisions informed by data and evidence within the district?

Determine:

- If the district's operational plans leverage existing resources in an efficient and effective manner to support the Strategic Plan's success.
- If the operational plans demonstrate innovative and creative solutions in the re-allocation of resources.
- How the district aligns and builds district operational plans to meet new strategic plan priorities.

Show:

- A priority-focussed budgeting process, including:
 - ✓ The evaluation of the effectiveness of targeted funding allocations (e.g., Indigenous Education Targeted Funding Policy, Special Education Targeted Funding Policy);
 - ✓ Joint sign off with Indigenous Education Councils on the spending plan for the targeted funding for Indigenous students;
 - ✓ A focus on improving educational outcomes for Indigenous students, children and youth in care, and students with disabilities or diverse abilities.

Planning for the Future

Long-term planning is an essential component of achieving and sustaining strategic alignment.

School districts should consider creating the following long-term plans together with the Strategic Plan:

- Capital Plan (Long Term Facilities Plan or Long-Range Facilities Plan);
- Information Technology Plan (IT Plan); and
- Human Resources Plan.

Conclusion

The development of a strategic plan takes time and consideration. This document is designed to support and act as a guide to walk through the components to assist boards of education in developing an effective strategic plan.

The annual Enhancing Student Learning report is part of the reflection cycle that allows districts to adjust practices. Strategic and implementation plans do not need to be changed after this annual reflective process; however, the reflections in the Enhancing Student Learning Report allow districts to adjust implementation practices based on data and evidence of the previous year. This practice ensures continuous improvement.

Additional resources on strategic planning are available on the [Framework website](#), including a closer look at [continuous improvement cycles](#).