

# Midkota Public Schools 2019-2024 Strategic Plan

*“Educating students to be accountable, competent, and confident as they pursue their passion in an ever-changing world.”*



*Prepared for:*

*Midkota Board of Education  
Sara Bilden, Superintendent  
May 2019*

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### **Midkota School Board**

Joel Utke- School Board President  
Veronica Vollmer- School Board Vice President  
Louis Halvorson  
Preston Hoffman  
Shian Hoyt  
Laura Kulsrud  
Ethan Stangeland

### **Midkota Leadership Team**

Sara Bilden- Superintendent  
Linn Dockter- Elementary Principal  
Iris Brandt- High School Counselor  
Stacy Adrian- Elementary Counselor  
Rami Topp- 6th Grade Elementary Teacher  
Carrie Braaten- High School Math Teacher  
Richard Danielson – High School Principal

### **Strategic Planning Committee**

Iris Brant- High School Counselor, Grandparent  
Stacy Adrian- Elementary Counselor, Mother  
Carrie Braaten- High School Math Teacher  
Linn Dockter- Elementary Principal, Mother  
Kallie Frappier- High School Science Teacher  
Ethan Stangeland- Board Member, Parent  
Justin Spickler- Parent  
Praire Topp- Parent  
Jon Johnson- Grandparent  
Nikki Boote- Business Manager, Parent  
Sara Bilden- Superintendent

Dr. Jeffry M. Schatz served as the Chair/Facilitator while the district administrators played the role of the support team and assisted in facilitating the process.

## **Executive Summary**

At Midkota Public School, we believe it is important for families, community, resources, and schools to work together in supporting student success. We value family and community partnering for all students. We want our students to know the importance of schools, families and community members together supporting their work at school. In 1992, the communities of Binford, Glenfield, Grace City, McHenry, and Sutton came together to form Midkota Public School District #07. Over the years the district has faced challenges, but the communities have banded together to provide the best possible education for all students. The future is bright for the Midkota School District as we work together, and students thrive in a school where they are the number one priority.

With a brand-new renovation completed in 2019 at the high school, a new building trades program and a budding STEM lab, the district is moving forward progressively to provide the best education opportunities possible. Also, in 2019 Midkota formed a committee of teachers, administration, community members, and parents to focus on planning for the future. This Long-term Strategic Planning Committee led by Dr. Jeff Schatz, analyzed community demographics, data, strengths, and weaknesses and were then able to provide insight, direction, and feedback as to where the school needs to grow and place its resources to meet goals and expectations for our students and community. The outcomes of these studies and meetings are gathered here in this report to make school district priorities clear, to ensure transparency, and to hold the school accountable for measurable outcomes as they support the intended goals.

Sara Bilden, Superintendent  
Midkota Public Schools

## **School District Systems Alignment**

There are three main tenants of a quality school district organization – board governance, strategic planning, and operational planning. The following definitions help clarify the roles each play in a strategically aligned school district.

### **Board Governance**

The governance of a school district is provided by the School Board, which is tasked with supervising the superintendent, overseeing the finances of the district, setting the mission and vision, and monitoring the results of the district. School Boards across the nation differ in the methods used to govern a district, with options including a traditional operational oversight to an overarching policy governance model.

### **Strategic Planning**

A strategic plan is a living document used to communicate the organization's goals, the priorities needed to achieve those goals, and metrics used to measure progress on those goals. The plan outlines a mission, vision, values, and strategic initiatives (focus) for the three to five-year period. A focused strategic plan strengthens operations and ensures that employees, board members, and stakeholders are all working toward common goals. Once strategic goals are established, the strategies for achieving the goals are developed. These strategies are generally three to five-year strategies, depending upon the arc of the strategic plan.

## **Operational Planning**

An operational plan is a yearly plan that focuses on the work of the district during one school year. The operational plan is the mechanism used to implement a strategic plan. It is directly aligned to the strategic plan and includes metrics to measure the progress of the plan throughout the school year. A one-year operational and action plan becomes the strategic assignments for administration and staff to address. The operational plan emphasizes both the academic and operational aspects of the school district. This integration provides the proper balance between planning and acting to assure forward movement of the strategic plan. The key is to make this challenging, yet manageable, as the school district still must meet its day-to-day responsibilities.

In short, an aligned district has a governing board that approves policy and budget while monitoring results and helps to shape the vision of the district by approving a strategic plan. Then, the administration executes an annual operational plan to carry out the initiatives listed in the strategic plan.

## **Elements of a Strategic Plan**

A comprehensive strategic plan includes both the academic and operational aspects of a school district as identified in the district's accreditation process; the AdvancED school improvement model. This model consists of three domains:

- ❖ Leadership Capacity
- ❖ Learning Capacity
- ❖ Resource Capacity

The Domains are statements that define the capacity of a school district to provide quality student experiences as measured by a set of standards and meet the rigorous demands of continuous school district improvement. A Strategic Plan will align the work of the school district in both academic and operational strategic initiatives, goals and result metrics. The elements of a good strategic plan include: Mission Statement, Vision Statement, Belief or Value Statements, Strategic Initiatives, Goals, and Results and are aligned with the AdvancED performance standards for continuous school improvement.

## **Strategic Planning vs. Operational Planning**

A strategic plan is a living document used to communicate the organization's goals, the priorities needed to achieve those goals, and metrics used to measure progress on those goals. It outlines your mission, vision, values, and strategic initiatives (focus) for the next three to five years. A focused strategic plan will strengthen operations, and ensure that employees, board members, and stakeholders are all working toward common goals.

An operational plan is a yearly plan which will focus the work of the district during the current school year. It is the mechanism used to implement a strategic plan. The operational plan is directly aligned to the strategic plan and includes metrics to measure

## **Environmental Scanning**

Engaging in a strategic planning process involves looking at the internal and external factors both perceptual and factual associated with the school district's current performance. A method typically used to complete this task is called "Environmental Scanning."

Environmental scanning is a process where both internal and external factors that impact the effectiveness of a school district are examined. The method identifies the strengths and challenges facing the school district.

Environmental scanning occurs through several different processes to include a review of the following:

- Current strategic and operational plans
- District policies which pertain to operational practices
- Advanced Reports
- ND Insights review – DPI dashboard
- Internal academic measurements and metrics
- District demographic trends
- Review of current district initiatives

## **SWOT Analysis**

In addition to the review of these documents, the Strategic Planning Committee engaged in a strength, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats or SWOT analysis activity. A SWOT analysis is a process where both internal and external factors that impact the effectiveness of a school district/organization are examined. A SWOT analysis can assist in identifying these factors.

### **Strengths**

Strengths are internal factors which represent the things your organization/school district does well. The following is a list of strengths identified by the strategic planning committee.

- Student to teacher ratio.
- Dedicated staff.
- Parent involvement.
- Highly invested in individual student needs.
- STEM in K-6.
- Willing to give feedback.
- Community interest.
- PD Opportunities.
- New Superintendent.
- School culture.
- New facility.
- Acceptance of students.
- Teachers.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> generation of families.
- Sense of belonging by students and staff.
- Caring environment.
- Listen to the needs of stakeholders.
- Staff willingness to collaborate to meet the needs of students.
- "We care about our students."

- Students want to learn.
- Unique sense of spirit and persistence.

### **Weaknesses**

Weaknesses are internal factors which hinder progress. They inhibit your district/organization from functioning effectively. The following is a list of weaknesses identified by the strategic planning committee.

- Location of schools- two campuses.
- Communication – internal and external.
- HS Principal/AD Position needed.
- Understaffed/overstaffed – rightsizing.
- Some resistance to change because of fear or lack of knowledge of what is being required or where change is leading.
- Lack of advanced degrees.
- K-6/7-12 disconnect due to location and challenges presented in collaboration between buildings.
- Some divisions in communities.
- Lack of ability to provide a variety of classes and experiences for students.
- Human resource capacity – limitation, i.e., finding highly qualified teachers.
- Lack of financial resources.

### **Opportunities**

Opportunities are external factors which when considered could help your school district/organization enhance overall effectiveness. By identifying possible external opportunities, the school district/organization can be proactive in their approach to communicating and collaborating with external resources. The following is a list of opportunities identified by the strategic planning committee.

- Agriculture community personnel.
- Pasta Plant.
- Grandparents program.
- Increase in enrollment.
- People are moving back home to the farm.
- SCDRC
- Local businesses volunteers.
- Enrollment on the increase.
- Open Enrollment.
- Use local resources for CWE.
- Federal and State initiatives.
- Current trends.
- Research grant \$\$.
- Use local resources more effectively.

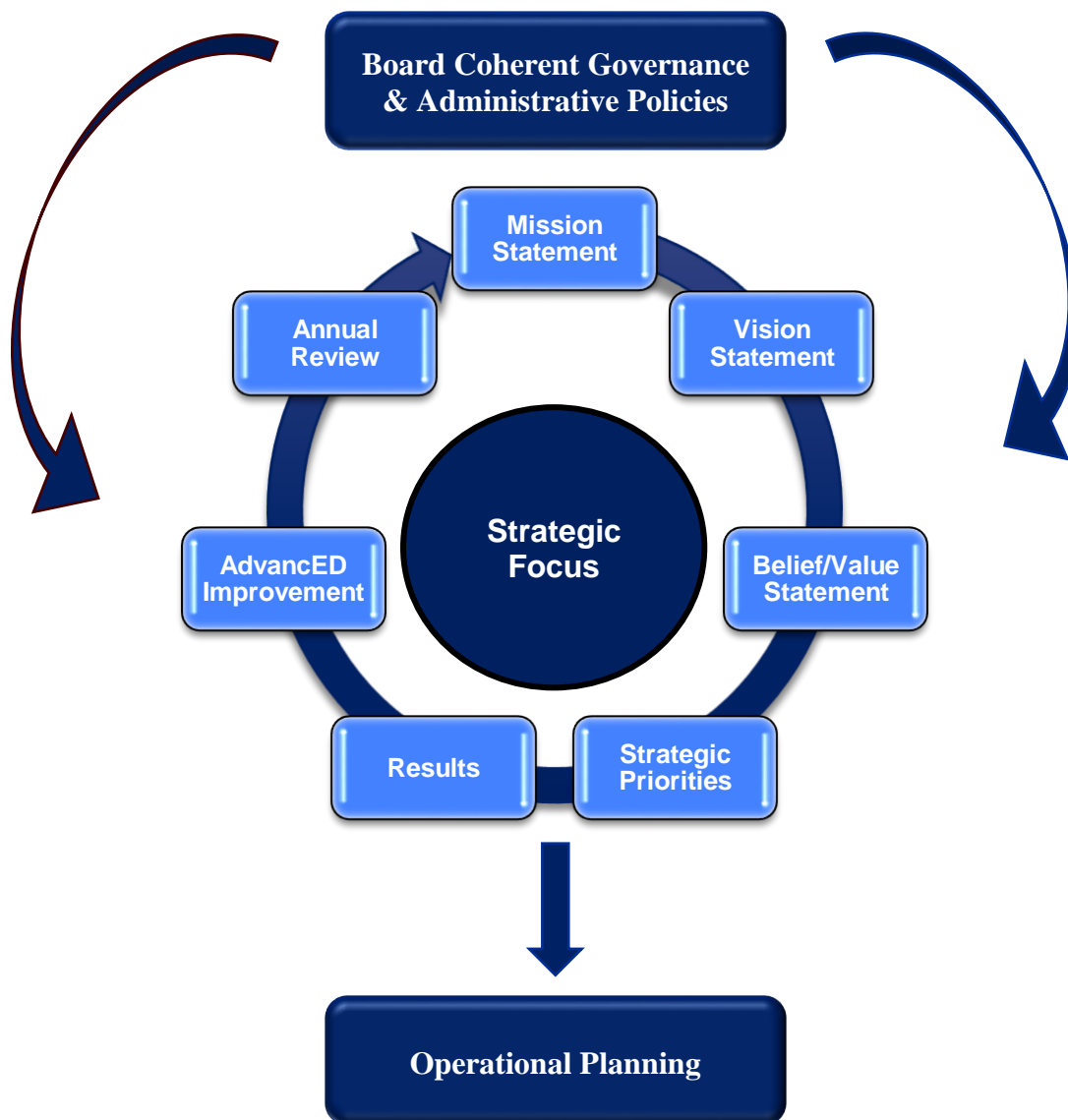
### **Threats**

Threats are external factors which can negatively impact your school district or organizations. The following is a list of threats identified by the strategic planning committee.



- Farm economy/Agricultural prices.
- Sustainable enrollment.
- Paraprofessional pay.
- Social media – Facebook.
- Open Enrollment.
- Political views.
- Mistrust – past issues – use of money.
- Loss of business base.
- Loss of population – 32-40 age groups.
- Aging populations with limited incomes.
- Financial restraints of communities.
- Competition with Carrington & GCC.
- Stakeholder demands.
- Human Resources are limited in rural areas.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING MODEL



# Midkota Public Schools Strategic Plan 2019-2024

## Our Mission

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Educating students to be accountable, competent, and confident as they pursue their passion in an ever-changing world.

## Our Vision

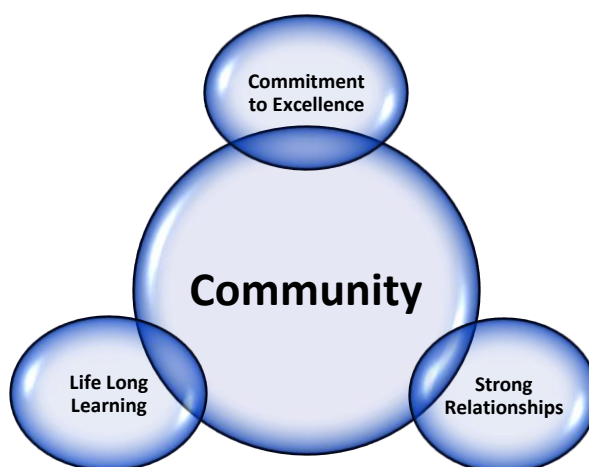
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To create a thriving educational environment for our students, parents, staff, and community. We will ignite excellence in our school district by providing a standards-based education supported by the essential skills of collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking. Every student will be empowered to pursue personal excellence as they make a positive impact in our community and ever-changing world.

## Our Values

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Midkota values a learning environment where all students can reach their full potential. We value a commitment to excellence, life-long learning, strong relationships, and community.



## Our Strategic Focus

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The Midkota Public Schools will achieve its mission, vision, and values through the fulfillment of its Strategic Plan. The following strategic initiatives will guide our efforts as we “*educate students to be accountable, competent, and confident as they pursue their passion in an ever-changing world.*”

- I. Academic Engagement
- II. Professional Learning and Development
- III. School Culture and Climate
- IV. Resource Management and Planning
- V. Continuous Improvement and Accountability
- VI. Consideration for Future Study

## Strategic Initiative 1

### **ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT**

Midkota Public Schools will offer a school learning environment that encourages each student to engage in their own learning experience. By engaging students in the learning process, students can focus their attention to reach a higher level of critical thinking skills and participate in meaningful learning experiences.

#### **GOAL 1: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Readiness**

Midkota Public Schools will use the 21st Century skills of collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking to provide the structure for teaching and learning. 21st Century skills encourage high achievement of every student and support the teaching of the North Dakota State Standards.

#### **Objectives**

1. Project Based Learning - Midkota teachers will plan and implement a minimum of one Project Based Learning Unit into each semester course by the year 2022-2023.
2. Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) - Midkota teachers and students will incorporate STEM learning into their lessons. Teachers will work together in PLC's to structure STEM activities throughout the K-12 curriculum.
3. Personalized Learning - Midkota teachers will use instructional best practices to meet the needs of diverse learners, positive learning environments responsive to different student needs and populations, and a variety of learning platforms to create individual student pathways based on student needs and requirements.

#### **Progress Monitoring**

1. Teacher peer groups will conduct ELEOT observations and review results quarterly to measure the progress of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills and student engagement within the K-12 classroom.
2. Project Based Learning units and implementation dates will be created to track progress and showcase Midkota successes.
3. Teachers will include at least one lesson a semester that allows students to weigh in on how they learn the standards that are required. They will be given options that address multiple skill levels, personal strengths, and interests. A short survey of students and teachers in each class will be given by the principal each semester to monitor evidence of personalized learning opportunities that were given.

#### **GOAL 2: North Dakota State Standards - Curriculum Scope and Sequence**

Midkota Public Schools will use the North Dakota State Standards to provide the structure for teaching and learning. Standards define the knowledge and skills that students should acquire at each grade level.

### **Objectives**

1. Midkota staff will engage in the development and implementation of vertical alignment and common assessments utilizing North Dakota State Standards.
2. Midkota Public Schools will review vertical alignment and Power Standards whenever North Dakota State Standards change the content, or new curricula are adopted.

### **Progress Monitoring**

1. Staff will meet yearly to evaluate Power Standards and skills tied to the standards.
2. Midkota Public Schools will begin the development of common assessments based upon North Dakota State Standards during the 2019-2020 school year.

### **GOAL 3: ND MTSS (Multi-Tier System of Supports)**

North Dakota's Multi-Tier System of Supports (NDMTSS) is a framework to provide all students with the best opportunities to succeed academically and behaviorally in school. NDMTSS focuses on providing high-quality instruction and interventions matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make decisions about changes in instruction or goals. Data are used to allocate resources to improve student learning and support staff implementation of effective practices

### **Objectives**

1. Midkota Public Schools will engage in a process to develop an MTSS program with Wayne Callender. This program will address concerns when students first begin in the classroom so that possible interventions can be implemented promptly. It will also address curriculum scope and sequence.
2. High-quality instruction will be provided by selecting and effectively utilizing the evidence-based curriculum that addresses Tier 1, 2 and 3 needs.
3. The MTSS team will monitor student data gathered from NWEA, NDSA, teacher assessments, and STAR Math and Reading to assess progress.

### **Progress Monitoring**

The MTSS team will design a process to refer a student who is not being successful with the interventions provided for further support. This process will include monitoring and recording data for the individual student that will effectively show progress as related to each specific intervention.

### **GOAL 4: Data-Driven Decision Making**

Midkota Public Schools will use assessment data to make decisions about student achievement and growth.

### **Objectives**

1. Midkota Public Schools will develop a data analysis process to consistently collect, analyze, and apply findings from multiple data sources to verify student learning and assess programs that support the learning environment.

### **Progress Monitoring**

1. Midkota teachers will review student throughout the school year.

## Strategic Initiative 2

### **PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Midkota Public Schools will promote individualized and focused professional development on enhancing professional practice and impact student learning.

#### **GOAL 1: Professional Development**

Midkota teachers and support staff will engage in multiple types of Professional Development activities throughout the school year.

##### **Objectives:**

1. Teachers and support staff will participate in a variety of professional development activities to include: professional development days, weekly professional development communities, book studies, staff meetings, and online staff development.
2. Teachers and support staff will be encouraged to engage in professional development based upon individual and district needs that impact student learning and availability of funding.

##### **Progress Monitoring**

1. District professional development will be planned, tracked, and organized by the Administrative Team.
2. Individual professional development will be tracked by and include a follow-up meeting with the administration to determine district implications and any necessary next steps.

#### **GOAL 2: Wayne Calendar - ND Multi-Tier System of Supports (NDMTSS)**

Midkota Public Schools will implement MTSS. Wayne Callender, renowned MTSS expert, will guide us in the implementation of evidence-based instruction, interventions, and assessments to address the full range of student academic and behavioral student needs.

##### **Objectives:**

1. Midkota teachers and staff will identify students who are at risk for not meeting grade-level standards and need additional educational supports to meet grade-level standards.
2. MTSS team and staff will monitor student progress to determine if students are progressing toward grade-level standards or have fallen behind,
3. MTSS team and staff will collect information to plan instruction.
4. MTSS team and staff will assess the effectiveness of supports at each tier.

##### **Progress Monitoring**

1. Midkota Public Schools will work with Wayne Callender to plan a progress monitoring system that will identify our data strengths. This will include teacher assessment, STAR math, and reading, DIBELS, NWEA, and NDSA.

## Strategic Initiative 3

### **SCHOOL CULTURE AND CLIMATE**

Midkota Public Schools will support our students in their intellectual, social, and emotional growth by providing a safe and caring environment and positive relationships among students, parents, staff, and community members.

#### **GOAL 1: Sources of Strength**

Midkota Public Schools will value the importance of upstream and strength-based suicide prevention by incorporating Sources of Strength program with Adult and Peer Leaders.

#### **Objectives:**

1. Midkota Public Schools will facilitate a Peer Leader team in carrying out hope, help, and strength-based messaging and activities that build youth-adult connectedness, break down codes of secrecy and silence and promote help-seeking behaviors and the eight key protective factors or strengths of the program.

#### **Progress Monitoring**

1. Midkota Public Schools will conduct surveys for staff and students to evaluate the efforts of the peer-lead messaging campaigns that were held through the school year.
2. The Sources of Strength leaders will also complete the Team Assessment Tool that is provided by Sources of Strength to evaluate the program.

#### **GOAL 2: Communications**

Midkota Public Schools will practice open communication and transparency among staff, students, parents, and community.

#### **Objectives:**

1. Midkota Public Schools will hold weekly staff meetings, administrative meetings, and leadership team meetings to ensure that all team members are getting the same information and opportunities to have a voice.
2. School board meetings will be audio recorded and placed on the school website to ensure a high level of transparency.

#### **Progress Monitoring**

1. Communication is measured in the surveys that all stakeholders take twice per year.

#### **GOAL 3: Restorative Practices – Conflict Resolution -MTSS B**

Midkota Public Schools will implement a restorative practices program in the district. This program will help to instruct students to be accountable for their actions and behavior and teach them how to mend relationships while providing them with skills that will follow them for a lifetime.

**Objectives:**

1. Midkota Public Schools will send principals and counselors to be trained in restorative practices.
2. Counselors and principals will train staff in restorative practices and implement them K-12.
3. Students with behavioral or relational problems will be referred to the counselor or principal to begin the therapeutic process.

**Progress Monitoring**

1. Reports from each session will be kept on file, and follow-up meetings will be required for each referral. Student and staff interviews will be held at the close of each school year.

**GOAL 4: Staff Culture – Team Centered Climate and Culture**

Midkota Public Schools will emphasize a team centered, inclusive workplace.

**Objectives:**

1. Midkota Public Schools administration will provide a team building activity or gathering at least once per month during the school year. The focus will be on spending time as a team and getting to know one another outside of working hours.

**Progress Monitoring**

1. Anonymous exit tickets at gatherings and a question on the staff feedback survey at the beginning and end of the school year will provide feedback regarding these activities.

## Strategic Initiative 4

### **RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING**

As a result of the Midkota Public School's efforts, the school district will secure and allocate resources needed to fund and carry out this strategic plan adequately. Meeting the needs of all students by providing equitable opportunities across the school district will be a priority in all decisions made to educate our students. We will accomplish this by ensuring that we create and maintain current long range and yearly operational plans to include: *A Long-Range Facilities Plan, a Long-Range Technology Plan, and a Long-Range Financial Plan.*

#### **GOAL 1: Long-Range Facilities Planning**

Midkota Public Schools will strive to build and maintain facilities necessary to carry out the mission of the district with appropriate space available for all aspects of education. As a result of our efforts, this will be accomplished through the following objectives:

##### **Objectives**

1. Midkota Public Schools will develop a Long-Range Facilities Plan.
2. Midkota Public Schools will implement the Long-Range Facilities Plan using appropriate resources necessary to both maintain existing facilities, and design and remodel or build new facilities if needed.
3. Annual Operational Maintenance – Midkota Public Schools will systematically plan maintenance projects annually for completion. The plan will include a detailed list of annual needs and schedule to ensure that designated projects are completed.

##### **Progress Monitoring**

1. A task force including school board members, school administration, and community members will be developed during the Fall of 2019 to create a Long-Range Facilities Plan. The task force will develop the plan over a series of meetings completing a plan document by May of 2020.

#### **GOAL 2: Long Range Technology Planning**

Midkota Public Schools will integrate technology within the curriculum to optimize the individual learning of each student. Integrated technology assists students in gathering, evaluating, and or use information, conduct research, solve problems, and or create original works. As a result of our efforts, this will be accomplished through the following objectives.

##### **Objectives**

1. Midkota Public Schools will create a long-range plan for technology to ensure our students are college/career ready by using up to date technology
2. Midkota Public Schools will plan to use technology as an efficient and efficient mode of communication with school stakeholders.



### **Progress Monitoring**

1. Development of a comprehensive Long-Range Technology Plan will be completed by May of 2020.
2. Professional development opportunities will include training for faculty and the use of technology in the delivery of classroom curriculum.

### **GOAL 3: Long-Range Financial Planning**

Midkota Public Schools will develop long-term financial stability and sustainability plan. This effort will require ongoing state commitment to education funding, local support for the educational experience expected by district stakeholders, and current federal support for federal educational mandates. As a result of our efforts, this will be accomplished through the following objectives.

### **Objectives**

1. Midkota Public Schools will create a long-range financial plan which is data driven with historical, current, and future data projections.
2. Midkota Public Schools will prepare a budget aligned with AdvancED school improvement plans and strategic initiatives with a shared vision of the district's strategic initiatives.
3. Midkota Public Schools will prepare an annual budget which addresses facility and technology needs to support effective instruction.

### **Progress Monitoring**

1. Midkota Public Schools will research and develop a Long-Range Financial Plan by December 2019.
2. Midkota Public Schools will develop an annual budget with final approval by the Board of Education. The budget will be prepared using data metric provided by the long-range financial plan which includes historical, current, and future forecasted parameters.

## Strategic Initiative 5

### **CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

Midkota Schools are committed to making data-driven decisions to ensure continuous improvement and accountability. The school district will engage in a comprehensive process of building and district level evaluation and accreditation. This will be accomplished by using the AdvancED School Improvement and Accreditation Model. AdvancED has defined three standards and corresponding indicators to assess overall school district performance. The three standards are:

#### **Standard 1: Leadership Capacity Domain**

The capacity of leadership to ensure an institution's progress toward its stated objectives is an essential element of organizational effectiveness. An institution's leadership capacity includes the fidelity and commitment to its purpose and direction, the effectiveness of governance and leadership to enable the institution to realize its stated objectives, the ability to engage and involve stakeholders in meaningful and productive ways, and the capacity to implement strategies that improve learner and educator performance.

#### **Standard 2: Learning Capacity Domain**

The impact of teaching and learning is the primary expectation of every system and its institutions. The establishment of a learning culture built on high expectations for learning, along with quality programs and services, which include an analysis of results, are all key indicators of the system's impact on teaching and learning.

#### **Standard 3: Resource Capacity Domain**

The use and distribution of resources align and support the needs of the system and institutions served. They ensure that resources are aligned with its stated purpose and direction and distributed equitably so that the needs of the system are adequately addressed. The utilization of resources includes support for professional learning for all staff. The system examines the allocation and use of resources to ensure appropriate levels of funding, sustainability, and system effectiveness.

#### **AdvancED Engagement and Review Improvement Goals**

Midkota Public Schools have identified and ensured that the recommendations made by the AdvancEd report team are embedded throughout the strategic plan.

### **CONSIDERATION FOR FUTURE STUDY**

Midkota Public Schools will engage in the study of the following topics for future consideration as strategic initiatives:

**STUDY 1** – Schoolwide Title I classification and services.

**STUDY 2** – STEM to STEAM Initiatives.

## **MIDKOTA PUBLIC SCHOOL STRATEGIC PLAN ANNUAL REVIEW**

The Midkota Public Schools Strategic Plan will serve as a compass to maintain the priorities, goals, and achievements of the school district. Engaging community stakeholders about what is the most comprehensive approach to providing educational experiences for students we serve is essential to understanding what is critical to the community. This plan responds to growth and opportunity, the sustainability of programs, and community needs. In February/March of each year, the plan will be reviewed by the administrative leadership team and presented to the Board of Education to consider annual adjustments to the plan.

This plan was facilitated and procured in collaboration with the strategic planning committee and school district administration by *Dr. Jeffry M. Schatz*.

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Dr. Jeffry M. Schatz, Owner/Consultant  
Schatz & Associates, LLC  
Strategic Planning and Leadership Development  
[jm.schatz@outlook.com](mailto:jm.schatz@outlook.com)

