



NMSBA Strategic Planning Support (SPS) for School Boards

A Key Work of School Boards Initiative

Sponsored by the New Mexico School Boards Association

Background

New Mexico school boards are constantly being tasked to do more with less; hard choices are being forced on school districts by tight budgets and escalating demands. Effective strategic planning is a tool which enables a school board to make the most of what they have, to identify the real priorities of the district, and to focus on those priorities. Effective strategic planning is not additional work--a busy work burden to be endured--effective strategic planning is truly the key work of school boards.

The NMSBA is offering a training module for interested school boards to help member boards clearly understand the strategic planning process and to help them create a strategic plan owned by the district. The training module is predicated on the following assumptions:

- Strategic planning is one of the most important tasks a board can undertake.
- Strategic planning to be effective must become a process which is owned by those who undertake it.
- An effective strategic plan integrates all ongoing and existing planning efforts, e.g. Capital Facilities Master Plan, Educational Plan for Student Success, Technology Plan.
- A good strategic planning process has a relatively small set of key components which make it strategic.
- The school board and superintendent can themselves conduct all the needed activities to create a strategic plan required by these key components.
- A strategic plan is never "finished"; a regular review process makes the strategic plan truly strategic.
- As the strategic plan is implemented it must be monitored and those charged with implementation held accountable

The NMSBA Strategic Plan Support (SPS) Training Module

The training module is offered to NMSBA members at no cost and consists of the follow components. The module which is delivered live via Skype or GoToMeeting introduces the board to the initial key components of a good strategic plan. These elements include:

- How the board validates the district's mission and vision statements.
- How the board reviews the mandates under which the district operates
- How the board can conduct an environmental scan (sometimes known as a SWOT analysis-- strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) which will help identify the strategic issues the district faces.
- How the board can identify and prioritize the strategic issues the district faces.
- How the board can create SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely) goals to address the strategic issues.
- Finally, how the board monitors the SMART goals so that the plan actually forms the basis for meaningful change in the district.

The module may be requested by calling or emailing Dr. Hugh Prather (505) 321-1467 or hugh.h.prather@gmail.com. He will schedule a mutually convenient time to deliver the modules and work with your district's technical staff to test the Skype or GoToMeeting setup well in advance of the delivery of the training modules.

Additional Support

The training module is made available on a no cost basis to all NMSBA member districts. If additional technical support for the strategic planning process is needed, this support can be individually negotiated through the NMSBA Executive Director, Mr. Joe Guillen. He has a range of support resources available to assist districts in the strategic planning process.