

Report 1: Stakeholder Conversation Results

Background and Approach

The Woodland Park School District (WPSD) board of education and leadership team initiated a strategic planning process in September 2016. The desired outcome is a robust, dynamic, and measurable strategic plan that articulates a compelling vision, drives the district's day-to-day work, bolsters accountability, and increases transparency with stakeholders. The district leadership team contracted the WestEd Policy Center to conduct the data collection phase of the strategic planning process.

WestEd Policy Center staff collaborated with district leaders to design a protocol for structured, interactive stakeholder conversations to gather input regarding values, outcomes, and priorities for the district. In early November 2016, nine conversations were facilitated with a total of 118 participants in four locations. Participants represented a variety of stakeholder groups, including students, parents, teachers, administrators, business representatives, and other community members.

During each conversation small self-managing groups engaged in three activities, summarized their responses, and then reported to the full group. Full group notes were prepared for each of the nine conversations. Notes were then aggregated by the following topics: expectations, guiding principles and beliefs, strengths, appreciate most, challenges, and improvements. Qualitative data for each topic were analyzed to identify trends and then larger themes were extracted from these trends.

This report includes a list of themes by topic and includes number of responses for each theme. Responses are higher for the themes associated with expectations. For this topic, participants were asked to stand in the shoes of three different role groups and then describe what each group wants or expects of WPSD graduates. Responses were aggregated across the three roles groups. Responses for the other topics are based upon consensus and reporting from small groups within each of the nine conversations. Complete responses for each topic follow the summary of themes.

Topics and Themes

Expectations

Self-managing groups (three to five individuals) stood in the shoes of students and families, educators, and business and community members, then noted phrases describing what each group wants or expects of WPSD graduates.

Small groups considered the following dialogue questions:

- When preschoolers enter our doors, what kind of promise can we deliver on by the time they graduate from high school?
- What qualities matters most?

Themes and Response Counts:

1. Develop a skill set that serves them well in the 21st century [71]
2. Civic-minded, contributing citizens [34]
2. Demonstrate good character traits [34]
4. Prepared for life and successful in their future endeavors [32]
5. Motivated, engaged in and responsible for their own learning [29]
6. Lifelong learners [28]
7. Employable and demonstrate a strong work ethic [27]
8. Well-Rounded [8]
9. Global perspective [7]

Guiding Principles and Beliefs

Self-managing groups (three to five different individuals) reviewed examples of guiding principles from other districts and current core beliefs of the WPSD. Small groups then discussed the principles that should guide the district over the next 15 years.

Themes and Response Counts:

1. Child-centered decisionmaking [11]
2. Maintain clear and high academic and behavioral expectations for students. [10]
3. Invest in finding, developing and retaining highly-qualified individuals. [9]
4. Relationships that are positive, productive and collaborative. [8]
5. Learning as a unique, evolving, lifelong endeavor that increases access to an ever changing world. [6]
6. Commit to continuous improvement [5]
6. Instruction as a dynamic process that is focused, rigorous, engaging, and inspiring. [5]
8. Provide a safe, welcoming and supportive environment. [4]
9. Embrace complexity, diversity and change. [3]
9. Treat others with courtesy and respect. [3]
11. Encourage a culture of reflection, conversation, and collaboration. [2]

Strengths

Self-managing groups (three to five different individuals) reviewed and discussed the high school profile and district programs handout, then identified strengths.

Themes and Response Counts:

1. Opportunities [21]
2. Community and parent involvement [13]
3. Positive learning environment [10]
4. Size and location [9]
5. Continuous improvement [5]
5. Staff [5]

- 7. Innovation [3]
- 7. Leadership and continuity [3]
- 9. Safe [2]

Appreciate Most

After identifying the district's strengths, small groups noted what they appreciate most about the district and its schools.

Themes and Response Counts:

- 1. Culture [21]
- 2. Staff [16]
- 3. Physical environment and school climate [14]
- 4. Opportunities for students [10]
- 5. Community [7]

Challenges

Self-managing groups (three to five different individuals) reviewed and discussed the high school profile and district programs handout, then identified challenges.

Themes and Response Counts:

- 1. Staff quality and retention [14]
- 2. Expectations, student behavior and school climate [8]
- 2. Resources [8]
- 4. Image [6]
- 4. Leadership [6]
- 6. Communication [5]
- 6. Equipment, facilities, infrastructure [5]
- 6. Program quality [5]
- 6. Strong curricula and effective instructional approaches [5]
- 10. Parent involvement [4]
- 11. Declining enrollment [3]
- 11. Involvement [3]
- 11. Schedule [3]
- 14. Attitudes [2]
- 14. Opportunities [2]

Improvements

At the end of each conversation, self-managing groups reviewed all of the information recorded on the wall charts and suggested improvement strategies.

Themes and Response Counts:

- 1. Capacity [14] – Recruit, develop, empower, and retain highly effective educators
- 1. Planning and budgeting [14] – Pursue a comprehensive, long-range strategic and financial planning process

3. Supports [12] – Integrate community resources as appropriate to increase opportunities for and better support students
4. Niche marketing [11] – Identify, promote, and recognize distinctive, high-quality programs and practices
5. Policies [9] – Establish clear, consistent, districtwide expectations and operating practices
6. Curricula [5] – Provide a basic life skills course that includes financial planning
7. Instruction [4]
8. Engage stakeholders [3]
8. Raise expectations [3]
9. Collaboration [2]
9. Schedule [2]

Complete Lists of Responses by Topic

Expectations

Develop a skill set that serves them well in the 21st century [71]

- Access and use available resources
- Applied skills; Apply knowledge and skills
- Basic academic skills; Reading and writing skills; Understand content
- Basic tools to overcome adversity
- Broad base; Strong educational base
- Broad skills
- Communication skills
- Communication skills
- Communication skills
- Communication skills
- Communication skills
- Cope well with challenges, resilience, mental health
- Confidence in learning from the opportunities they had
- Confident; Confident
- Conflict resolution skills
- Creative
- Critical thinkers
- Critical thinking
- Critical thinking skills
- Value innovation and critical thinking
- Curious
- Develop as leaders
- Executive functioning skills
- Executive functioning skills

- Executive functioning skills
- Independence; Independent
- Independent – leave home
- Intellectual and social skills
- Interpersonal relationship skills
- Interpersonal skills
- Leadership skills; Leadership skills
- Life skills
- Life skills
- Life skills
- Life skills
- Organized
- People skills
- Perseverance, grit
- Personal/time management skills
- Problem solving; Problem solving process
- Problem solving skills
- Push comfort zone and occasionally fail
- Real-world skills for vocation
- Relevant skills
- Relevant training
- Research
- Skill sets to be successful
- Skills and attitudes to do well
- Skills to access and assess knowledge
- Skills to further one another and help our peers achieve their goals
- Social skills
- Social skills; not just computer/technology skills
- Take initiative and follow through
- Team member, team player
- Technical and vocational skills
- Thinkers and problem solvers
- Thinking and thoughtful
- Thorough understanding and respect for economics of country, government, and decision making
- Thoughtful decision makers
- Time management skills
- Try new things, experiment
- Understand and implement a process
- Work as a team

Civic-minded, contributing citizens [34]

- Benefit the community as individuals
- Charitable
- Citizenship
- Committed to apply education in real world
- Connectedness
- Contribute through service and by voting
- Contribute, give back to the community
- Function in society
- Give back
- Give back
- Give back to society
- Good citizens
- Improve ourselves and the community
- Integrity as citizens
- Interact, contributing students
- Kids know their civic responsibility
- Know what the community offers them
- Make a difference
- Part of society, buy-in to community and the good of the many
- Productive citizens
- Productive members of society
- Productive students
- Productive
- Self-sufficient
- Sense of pride for community
- Serve, return, give back
- Social responsibility – give back
- To want/be connected to and invested in the community (mentorship)
- Town/civic pride “Go Panthers”
- Understand civic duty
- Upright citizens
- Valuable asset in community
- Vested and active in the community.
- Youth carry forward traditions, values, practices, and beliefs

Demonstrate good character traits [34]

- Anticipate needs
- Better human beings
- Bold yet understanding
- Build relationships with teachers
- Character

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- Character and leadership
- Do what is asked of you
- Equipped with life skills, mannerisms, and respectfulness
- Good person
- Great, new generation that is well mannered, respectful, and prepared for life
- Happy, confident, comfortable, out-going
- Integrity
- Lead good lives
- No criminal record
- Not belittle intelligence
- Open minded
- Open-minded
- Pride in self, peers, community
- Proud of education
- Reliable
- Respect
- Respect for adversity
- Respect for others, self, community
- Respect for the past
- Respectful
- Respectful
- Respectful
- Respectful
- Respectful
- Respectful
- Responsibility
- Responsible
- Responsible
- Responsible

Prepared for life and successful in their future endeavors [32]

- Accomplish anything
- Achieve highest potential
- Reach their full potential
- Attend the most realistically high level university of choice
- College bound
- College skills
- Excel in strengths
- Get into college
- Ideas of areas to pursue
- Keep standards at a high level
- Opportunity to attend the college of their choice

- Prepared
- Prepared educationally and emotionally for college or other choices
- Prepared for four-year college
- Prepared for life
- Prepared for life
- Prepared for life
- Prepared for next grade level, school, and career
- Prepared for the next level
- Prepared for the next level
- Prepared for the next level (academics and athletics)
- Prepared for the workforce
- Prepared for the world and the jobs that we want
- Prepared to work
- Reach fullest potential
- Ready for next steps
- Ready to succeed
- Rise to a challenge
- Succeed
- Successful
- Successful
- Successful in passions and paths

Motivated, engaged in, and responsible for their own learning [29]

- Accountable
- Active students who participate
- Challenged
- Connect with mentors along the way
- Engaged
- Engaged
- Engaged
- Feel safe to take risks
- Feel valued and supported by administration, parents, and community
- Follow instructions
- Fun
- Fun and engaging
- Good study habits
- Inquisitive
- Interactive
- Internally reflect and improve
- Introspective
- Make an effort
- Mindfulness as foundation

- Own and are accountable for their learning
- Own needs in relationship to self and community
- Ownership
- Ownership – select courses, set their goals
- Responsible for own learning
- Self-advocacy
- Self-awareness
- Self-confidence
- Self-confidence
- Self-motivated

Lifelong learners [28]

- Appreciation to learn
- Ask questions
- Ask questions of civic and government organizations
- Awareness of career paths
- Care about the future and what they do in the classroom now
- Coaches and mentors
- Commitment to apply learning and share with others; “be an educator”
- Dedicated
- Desire to excel
- Direction in life
- Drive to learn
- Empower parents to encourage lifelong learning
- Enthusiasm for the future
- Far forward looking
- Focus on the future
- Foundational love of learning
- How to learn new things
- Inspire to be lifelong learners
- Lifelong learners
- Lifelong learners
- Lifelong love of learning
- Love of learning and fun
- Love to learn, curious, passionate, motivated
- Nurture passions
- Passion
- Passion for lifelong learning
- Professional learners
- Value education

Employable and demonstrate a strong work ethic [27]

- Add value to the business
- Basic, well-rounded and fundamental skills necessary to be a valuable employee (basic math, ethics, dependability)
- Customer service – understand internal and external customers
- Economically self-sufficient
- Employability = how to get and keep a job
- Employability skills
- Employability skills – independent, know how to ask for help, find answers, proactive
- Get a job or start a business
- Hold a job
- Internships from local businesses during school year and summer
- Interviewing and resume writing
- Job opportunities
- Know what it takes to get and keep a job
- Punctual
- Self-sufficient and not a burden on the community
- Skilled trade
- Trustworthy
- Work ethic
- Work ethic
- Work ethic
- Work ethic
- Work ethic
- Work ethic
- Work ethic
- Work ethic – value jobs and work hard to keep them
- Work hard
- Work skills
- Workforce skills

Well-rounded [8]

- Multidimensional
- Well-rounded
- Well-rounded
- Well-rounded
- Well-rounded so they have interests and outlets later
- Well-rounded students
- Well-rounded, broad experience (arts, sports, extracurricular, classes)
- Wholistic child to adult

Global perspective [7]

- Accepting of different perspectives
- Access to diverse experiences
- Experience variety of skills, knowledge, and people
- Exposure to diverse cultures, experiences, ideas
- Global perspective and ideas
- National and global perspective
- World citizen

Additional Items (Wants):

- Good grades
- Good students
- Good students and teachers
- Hands-on learning
- Help kids and parents navigate opportunities
- High achievement goals versus minimal ones
- Individualized learning
- Keep parents involved; use parents
- Nurturing environment
- Parental engagement
- Parental involvement
- Parents help
- Parents own children's education
- Partnerships
- Physical safety
- Physical, emotional, and social safety
- Play to child's strengths
- Positive impact of investment
- Positive learning environment
- Professionalism within the education community
- Proof that tax dollars are used wisely; demonstrate value of having good schools
- Provide tools and resources
- Put money where mouths are
- Quality equipment, buildings
- Quality staff – enthusiastic, current techniques
- Reinforcement of discipline by parents and administration
- Resources in classrooms for student use
- Retention
- Rigorous and challenging education
- Rigorous and relevant experiences
- Safe and caring environment
- Safe and effective learning environment

- Safe and inclusive learning environment
- Safe environment
- Safe environment
- Safe environment
- Safe to fail, make mistakes
- Safety, safe place
- Schools and district as hub for the community
- Schools to be a support system
- See each individual child not mass mob
- Sense of belonging and safety
- Sense of community – caring, empathetic, considerate
- Skilled workforce
- Specialized teaching methods
- Strengthen weaknesses
- Teach strengths, weaknesses, talents and interests
- Teachers are supported to teach and challenge all students
- Teachers who are passionate
- Understand what students are good at and which careers may be a good fit for them
- Up to date technology
- Variety of classes
- Vocational, career programs
- Voice

Guiding Principles

Child-centered decisionmaking [11]

Focus on the development of future citizens

Focus on the future and where these opportunities will take students

Student-centered approach

Student-centered approach to learning encourages students to achieve.

Students and staff being at the heart of our actions and decisions.

Students are at the heart of our actions and decisions.

Students being at the heart of our actions and decisions.

Students being at the heart of our actions and decisions.

Students being at the heart of our actions and decisions.

Students being at the heart of our actions and decisions.

Maintain clear and high academic and behavioral expectations for students. [10]

Maintain clear and high academic and behavioral expectations for students.

Maintain clear and high academic and behavioral expectations for students; raise the bar (current expectations too low).

Maintain clear and high academic and behavioral expectations for students while pursuing excellence.

Maintain clear and high academic and behavioral expectations for students
Maintain clear and high academic and behavioral expectations for everyone not just students.
Maintain clear and high academic and behavioral expectations for students
Maintain clear and high academic expectations.
Raise the bar; expect more; higher expectations that are clear and supported by parents and community; communicate expectations; consequences for not meeting expectations
Students and teachers co-develop expectations and goals.

Invest in finding, developing and retaining highly-qualified individuals. [9]
Invest in finding, developing and retaining highly-qualified individuals.
Invest in finding, developing and retaining highly-qualified individuals; value educators
Invest in finding, developing and retaining highly-qualified individuals.
Invest in finding, developing and retaining highly-qualified individuals
Invest in finding, developing and retaining highly-qualified individuals.
Invest in finding, developing and retaining highly-qualified professionals
Invest in finding, developing and retaining highly-qualified teachers and staff.
People are our greatest asset.

Relationships that are positive, productive and collaborative. [8]
Relationships that are positive, productive and collaborative.
Relationships that are positive, productive and collaborative.
Relationships that are positive, productive and collaborative.
Relationships that are positive, productive, collaborative, and inclusive.
Relationship development between students and staff
Relationships and respect
Promote trust within the district and at the student level.

Learning as a unique, evolving, lifelong endeavor that increases access to an ever changing world. [6]
Learning as a unique, evolving lifelong endeavor that increases accessibility to an ever changing world and self.
Learning as a unique, evolving, lifelong endeavor that increases accessibility to an ever changing world.
Learning as a unique, evolving, lifelong endeavor that increases accessibility to an ever changing world
Learning as a unique, evolving, lifelong endeavor that increases accessibility to an ever changing world.
Learning as a unique, evolving, lifelong endeavor that increases accessibility to an ever changing world.

Commit to continuous improvement [5]
Commit to continuous improvement
Commitment to continuous improvement (embody the beliefs)

Continuous improvement mindset
Culture of continuous improvement

Instruction as a dynamic process that is focused, rigorous, engaging, and inspiring. [5]
Instruction as a dynamic process that is focused, rigorous, engaging, and inspiring.
Instruction as a dynamic process that is focused, rigorous, engaging, and inspiring.
Instruction as a dynamic process that is focused, rigorous, engaging, and inspiring.
Instruction as a dynamic process that is focused, rigorous, engaging, inspiring, and results in students who are well-rounded, engaged, and prepared to be successful.

Provide a safe, welcoming and supportive environment. [4]
Expect and cultivate a learning environment that motivates, empowers, and encourages staff and students.
Provide a safe, welcoming, and supportive environment where everyone is treated with courtesy and respect (two-way).
Provide a safe, welcoming, supportive and connected environment

Embrace complexity, diversity and change. [3]
Embrace complexity, diversity, and change
Diversity – individuals, learning, thinking, global, success outside the school

Treat others with courtesy and respect. [3]
Treat others with courtesy and respect.
Treat others with courtesy and respect. Live the Golden Rule.

Encourage a culture of reflection, conversation, and collaboration. [2]
Encourage a culture of reflection, conversation and collaboration across the entire community.

Additional Items:

- Accountability
- Be nimble and resilient
- Be proactive not reactive (e.g., safety, asset management)
- Be progressive not static
- Community of growth and partnership
- Community partnerships
- Espouse a cohesive vision from preschool through grade 12.
- Excellence
- Exposure to new experiences to develop talents and build confidence.
- Freedom and choice
- Have a growth mindset; resilience
- Invest in taking quality time to make sure that students understand the content versus just passing the class.
- Investment in pride in self, school, community that is actively developed and nourished.

- Involve stakeholders in decisionmaking.
- Support educators to teach to their strengths (curriculum).
- Think creatively about the future.
- Worldwide view; small community, big minds; think globally, act locally

Strengths

Opportunities [21]

- Arts program, arts night at high school (sliding)
- The arts and their dedicated staff
- Broad array of activities for students
- College programs; ability to earn credits
- Diverse programs
- Dual credit to save money on college expenses
- Fun, intriguing activities and clubs; ability to start our own clubs
- Great social sciences department
- Honors, AP, vocational opportunities at school
- Many varied opportunities, prek-21
- Master classes beyond the regular curriculum
- Strong, one-of-a-kind programs such as athletic training and honors classes
- Opportunities
- Opportunities
- Opportunities for teachers
- Options at high school for all kids and to meet all needs
- Outdoor education
- Outdoor education – Aspen Valley Ranch
- Unique learning opportunities (e.g., Destination Imagination, Robotics)
- Variety of opportunities to be involved; extracurricular, no cuts
- Wide variety of afterschool activities

Community and parent involvement [13]

- Community involvement and feeling in schools
- Community support
- Community within schools
- Community events make it feel like the high school is supported
- District strong participant in the community; leverage partnerships
- Increased community support (recent vote)
- Partnerships with other agencies to help students develop life skills
- Passionate community
- Strong, engaged community
- Support from teachers and adults

- Core of caring parents
- Interested parents who want to be involved
- Parent support at elementary level

Positive learning environment [10]

- Accept different cultures, religions, and beliefs
- Creative learning environments
- Individual learning at the elementary level
- Learning environment; geography and within buildings
- Meet needs of kids where they are; tailor to needs
- No cliques at the high school
- Small community values
- Students are accepting of differences
- Students are supportive of one another
- Teachers get to know kids as individuals

Size and location [9]

- Size
- Size
- Size and location allow for agility and risk taking
- Location
- Small class sizes
- Small class sizes allow for more individualization
- Small group focus
- Small size – relationships
- Small size yet large enough to offer opportunities

Continuous improvement [5]

- Looking for ways to make things better
- Continually evolve standards in all areas. STEM is an example.
- Desire to improve
- Recognize need to make changes
- Systems aimed at continuous growth and improvement

Staff [5]

- Hard working, dedicated, loyal, committed, flexible, passionate
- Good number of outstanding educators dedicated to the district
- Great teachers and counselors
- Some good educators
- Some good teachers and dedicated staff

Innovation [3]

- Innovative, creative approaches to learning at classroom and school level
- Agility due to isolation; be agile and innovative; under the radar
- Flexibility – making changes, implementing programs

Leadership and continuity [3]

- Superintendent has reached out to and improved ties with the community
- Willingness to invest in developing leadership and teacher leaders

Safety [2]

Security – kids are safe

Additional Items:

- Accreditation – external review and validation
- Developing real life skills (e.g., DARE program)
- Family-oriented culture
- Site-based decisions
- Students are learning
- Support early childhood

Appreciate Most

Culture [21]

- Ability to try new things
- Accepting
- Community we have in schools
- Culture of shared decisionmaking
- Efforts to improve such as this strategic planning process; they care and want to improve
 - Strive to improve (e.g., technology)
 - Recognize that change is needed
 - This opportunity – have my voice heard and hear the voices of others
 - Willingness of the district to improve and seek external input
- Enthusiasm in austere conditions
- Flexibility for schools to do their own thing
- Flexibility, accommodations for different students
- Having a contribution
- Having a voice – people, schools, in my building, “What I say matters”
- Relationships
- Responsive to parents
- Share what’s going on
- Support from within the district

- Transparency
- Willingness to involve the community
- Work together

Staff [16]

- Caring staff
- Columbine principal turned the school around – share what she did with others
- Coming to school and being greeted by our teachers
- Committed and caring staff
- Dedication of staff
- Individualized attention
- Instructional resource teacher in every building
- Invest in staff
- Opportunities for professionals
- Some staff commitment
- Some teachers are flexible and lenient, understand our schedules, let us retake tests
- Some teachers are here early and care and try to help us; they don't just dismiss us
- Staff
- Staff dedication
- Teachers
- Teachers who relate to us

Physical environment and school climate [14]

- Beautiful area
- My kids love going to school here
- Quality of facilities; curb appeal
- Safety
 - ALICE training – emphasize this more
 - General level of safety and learning
 - Proactive regarding safety of students
 - Safe community
 - Security (and alerts)
- School spirit
- Setting
- Small classes
- Small size community
- Small town feel
- Use of environment; outdoors education

Opportunities for students [10]

- Arts – drama, choir, music, band; don't let them go away
- Arts program

- Broad range of classes, activities, supports
- Commitment to well-rounded education
- Opportunities for well-rounded students
- Opportunities provided
- PE program
- Specialty classes that meet kids' interests
- Students can excel in areas of choice
- Summit preschool

Community [7]

- Close knit community
- Community feel
- Community involvement
- Community-based school
- Connectedness
- New voter-approved funding
- Support from the community

Challenges

Staff quality and retention [14]

- Attraction and retention of high quality teachers
- Competition for teachers; pay scale
- Expectations of staff; no pause time to process or reflect; pushed to keep adding more
- Not replacing teachers that leave; double-duty for some
- Retaining and training teachers
- Retention, hard-to-fill positions
- Staff at high school is unhappy.
- Talent – finding, developing, keeping
- Teacher and staff pay – higher pay and reduced cost of living down the hill
- Teacher pay, retention, burnout
- Teachers are fearful and afraid to advocate for kids
- Teachers need more support – help from paraprofessionals and parents
- Teachers: Too much on teachers' plates; bottom-up, burnout, how to compensate staff
- Tenured teachers bidding their time

Expectations, student behavior and school climate [8]

- Bad behavior (running in the hallways) and language
- Classroom management – too much talking in classrooms is disruptive
- Elementary schools do not have the same opportunities. (Columbine has more.)
- Expectations for student behavior and clear consequences; impact on safety at the high school
- Lack of focus on the arts and how arts education affects learning in other areas
- Lack of respect – kids don't listen to one another or care about others' feelings
- Low expectations; raise the bar
- Must embody the core beliefs. These sound good but not lived; not my kids experience.

Resources [8]

- Affordability
- Asset management – Is there a plan? What about aging roofs and maintenance?
- Family and community partnerships; underutilize human resources
- Funding – don't fit categories so don't qualify for some grants
- Resource – time, staff, money
- Resources – what happened to the marching band? Strong now weak.
- Resources deficient – books, supplies, technology, teachers
- State financial support

Image [6]

- Battle with perceptions and image
- Community perceptions; negative reputation
- Drug use at the high school
- Perceptions – truth, reality
- Poor perception of the district, especially middle and high schools
- Senior citizens resent students and the high school.

Leadership [6]

- We keep people that need to move on/be fired
- Administration (principal) at high school is divisive.
- Lack of capacity to embrace complexity, diversity and change
- Lack of strong and gifted leadership
- Under-performing board
- Vision/lack of big picture – schools operate independently; need to work together; what are we trying to achieve as a district?

Communication [5]

- Communication from administration to teachers, teachers to families, district to community; impact of poor communication is feeling unsupported and parents feel left out

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- Communication – all ways, among home, school, teachers within schools; need weekly update newsletters; know about volunteer opportunities and what kids are doing
- Communication – toward community and community wanting more from us
- Communication – with community; no kids = no information; no point person in the district, who do we talk to?
- Communication: Listening to parents especially at higher grade levels

Equipment, facilities, infrastructure [5]

- Band instruments not well maintained
- Building maintenance and upkeep
- Infrastructure failing – technology, track is obsolete and unsafe, roofs, internet
- Level playing field (internet)
- Outdated technology – computers are old

Program quality [5]

- Afterschool programs for kids of working parents
- Arts, physical education, music programs seem to be struggling as a result of structured curriculum
- Dwindling skill sets – some programs no longer offered
- Leading-edge programs and technology
- Support and recognition for all successful programs – promoted but not supported; no full time specials at elementary level

Strong curricula and effective instructional approaches [5]

- Academic performance
- Lack of consistency in instructional and educational rigor; some students may not be adequately challenged
- Move toward structured curriculum causes teachers to teach to the middle rather than to student strengths
- Teachers don't put themselves in our shoes; they just teach and don't take time to understand us; we learn differently and need different things
- Teachers use one approach, lectures and notetaking; need to focus on different learning styles and individualize instruction

Parent involvement [4]

- Parent involvement at middle and high schools
- Parent involvement decreases with grade level; more difficult at middle and high school
- Parental involvement and engagement
- Parental involvement and engagement

Declining enrollment [3]

- Declining enrollment
- Enrollment
- Families are leaving, so coddle and cater to those who stay

Involvement [3]

- Community backing – older folks, those with no kids in school
- Community involvement (especially those without kids)
- Community involvement and support (retirees)

Schedule [3]

- Content cram; chaotic class schedule
- Schedule
- Sleep deprived – too much to do with homework, sports, and other afterschool activities

Attitudes [2]

- Education does not matter to a contingent of families
- Some groups don't value education

Opportunities [2]

- Mentorships with local businesses
- Too many clubs – drop those with low participation; need criteria for starting new clubs

Additional Items:

- Charis Bible College – start after count date and impacts resources, transfer and credit issues, enrollment, transient students but has increased diversity in the community
- Competition with other schools; choice; being able to market locally
- Data and review plans – to help us understand why people leave the district, core beliefs, where graduates go and what they do
- Facility use; closed to the public, locked, can't access
- Geography affects participation and access
- Graduates don't stay
- Mandates: Slave to state and federal mandates
- Mobility – kids moving into and out of the district
- Small town mentality prevents change
- Social skills of students and engagement in an electronic environment
- Support systems: Lack of support systems
- Testing: Online testing – go back to paper

Improvements

Capacity [14] – Recruit, develop, empower, and retain highly effective educators

- Build motivation with staff and teachers
- Dismiss ineffective teachers
- Empower and help teachers improve with clear expectations and appropriate professional development
- Empower staff to tell their own stories and advocate for themselves; teachers own and share stories
- Evaluate teachers on multiple criteria not just test scores; ask parents and student who the best teachers are and why to establish new criteria; consider student evaluations
- Give the best teachers a bigger role; why are some of the best only part time?
- Increase teacher pay
- Invest in district leadership, reset the culture, excitement, optimism, staff support, raise the bar
- Methods to staff hard-to-fill positions
- Professional development – clarifying quality instruction and utilizing staff strengths through instructional walks, reflections, lesson studies, etc.
- Professional development – educators mentored by subject-matter experts to keep them up to date; meaningful
- Recruit more effectively
- Teachers able to manage classrooms
- Teachers receive feedback regarding how well prepared graduates are for next steps and where they went

Planning and budgeting [14] – Pursue a comprehensive, long-range strategic and financial planning process

- Be strategic about prioritizing current resources
- Better financial planning to use funds and retain educators and address challenges
- Develop an interest in and embrace complexity, diversity, and change with regards to commitment to continuous improvement
- Focus on our challenges – solve problems together and learn from what works
- Follow through on plans
- Gaining resources – part of the plan; must be thoughtful, long range
- Get out of the funding race
- Glean more from students and fresh voices to be on the cutting edge
- Have a plan
- Rethink priorities and programs given fiscal constraints; what should we focus on and make excellent?
- Revisit data to update the plan
- Roadmap – cohesive plan for curriculum, discipline, rules
- Strive for balance – technology (a tool), resources, humans
- Target improvements to items under control

Communication [12]

- Communicate about where the money (sales tax) goes; what does it support?
- Communicate regularly
- Communication – all ways
- Communication – Middle school weekly emails
- Communication mechanisms – weekly email updates to parents; Facebook social groups for each school; Community calendar, updated regularly, in local paper with events
- Communication with, by, and from community to stop generalizations, “What is Eagle hour”
- Be proactive and out in front of rumors
- Need more outreach; connecting with families
- Ombudsmen program – group of people to communicate opportunities and what is happening
- Communications – create database of emails; create a communications department; high school journalists publish articles in local paper
- Communications group and process; dedicated person; systematic and continuous process
- Conscious, deliberate effort to build trust

Supports [12] – Integrate community resources as appropriate to increase opportunities for and better support students

- Bring graduates back to give us advice about classes to take, how to prepare, career paths
- Community resources and supports for struggling students – Teen Center; more extra-curricular activities for kids so they stay out of trouble
- Community service program and hours required for graduation; reach out to community to identify opportunities and develop a menu of options for students
- Community should provide opportunities to retain graduates
- Create opportunities to integrate kids into the community (e.g., with seniors and the community at large) which will increase support and funding
- Identify business needs and create more opportunities for kids
- Keep high school library open and teachers available to help kids
- Kids go to senior citizens to change image of schools and kids
- Teachers and parents trust each other to make best decisions for kids
- Transition programs, elementary to middle to high school, need attention
- Trust teachers to make the best decisions for kids
- Ways to better integrate school and community

Niche marketing [11] – Identify, promote, and recognize distinctive, high-quality programs and practices

- Advertise programs, trickle up approach from classroom to district
- Commit to being the district of choice in this area

**Woodland Park School District
Strategic Planning Process Data Collection**

- Community should take pride in graduates
- Image management (limited drug use)
- Need a niche – beyond being a small community in the mountains; perhaps a specialty course on life skills that lasts a quarter or semester or master classes; could use 1451 marijuana funds for prevention purposes
- Provide data to prove reality
- Recognition of high achieving students and programs – dispel myths
- Share the great things that are happening
- Use the strategic planning process to define what is special and embrace it; stand behind it; differentiate
- Value and promote education; benefits the community – strong schools, strong community
- Work with community to promote the positive around low drug and alcohol use

Policies [9] – Establish clear, consistent, districtwide expectations and operating practices

- Administrators remove red-tape
- Allow creative access
- Consistency across elementary schools – perceptions
- Consistent administration K-12; buildings do their own thing; some processes should be the same; same overall picture for all
- Expectations similar and consistent across schools (confusing, changes by level)
- Fulfill commitment to community – labs closed, follow through
- More site-based decisionmaking; too top-down at the high school
- Need to review expectations throughout the year not just once at the beginning
- Schools should operate under a similar structure and principles
- Transform operating model – dramatically reshape policy and process versus incremental
- Work as a district – one vision and how schools fit

Curricula [5] – Provide a basic life skills course that includes financial planning

- Balance vocational and college-ready
- Life specific classes in high school (housing, banking, insurance, taxes, first aid)
- More vocational programs; opportunities for students based on strengths
- Need more departments, programs, pathways
- Required basic life skills course – personal finances, writing, communication, job applications

Instruction [4]

- Age-appropriate learning environments
- More hands-on learning – we need to do it
- Place less emphasis on testing and more on instruction; adopt a more relaxed attitude
- Teachers become coaches and mentors who nurture students' passions

Engage stakeholders [3]

- Engage all stakeholders to change the culture
- Engage the community, get buy-in and trust
- Get input from various sources for decisions

Raise expectations [3]

- Raise the bar; reset expectations
- Don't let families get away with bad behavior
- Students responsible and accountable for behavior

Collaboration [2]

- Schools need to work together and share what works
- Collaboration – regular opportunities to share and work together

Schedule [2]

- Later start times – too tired in the morning; sleep through classes
- Longer lunch time; all grades allowed off campus or better food so we want to stay on campus

Additional Items:

- Dedication to the arts; need a qualified band instructor
- Charis – schedule a meeting to discuss issues
- Sports coaches emphasize endurance and conditioning over skills; we need to know how to play the game and have good technique