

District 89 VISION RETREAT

Location: Board Meeting Room

Date: March 7, 2018

Time: 8:00 am -3:00 pm

Participant Handout

The Vision Retreat provides an opportunity for the strategic plan team to develop a shared understanding of the current mission, vision, core values and strategic themes and build upon those ideas to move the district forward in answering the question, *“Where do we want to be five years from now that is different than where we are today?”*

The Vision Retreat offers an opportunity for the plan team to review the components of a continuous improvement framework based on research best practices and benchmark where the District is in relationship to those practices.

The outcome of today is for the Plan Team to describe a clear vision for the future through a product known as a Preferred Future Statement.

Common Vocabulary

Mission	The district’s purpose described in the language of the business, including who is served and what products, programs and services are provided to customers and stakeholders.
Vision	A vivid, emotionally inspiring, time-specific picture of a future to which the organization aspires. A description of how the district will look, sound and feel differently than it is today.
Vision Result	An achievable stretch target identified in order to measure the success of an organization’s vision statement. Sometimes this is referred to as a Preferred Future Statement.
Core Values	The district’s beliefs and principles that articulate the culture of the organization. These are the standards that describe how employees and the organization are expected to behave internally and externally. They serve as the basis for decision-making and influence actions in everyday situations.

Toward a Strategic Foundation:

MISSION: The mission pillar asked the question, “WHY?” More specifically, it asks “Why do we Exist?” The intent of this question is to help reach agreement regarding the fundamental purpose of the organization. This clarity of purpose can help establish priorities and becomes an important factor to guide decisions.” Your mission statement is the best vehicle to get the word out about the “why” and the “wow” behind your district. In truth, your mission statement is no less important than your business plan. It needs to explain — eloquently, succinctly, and passionately — the core reasons for your existence. Your mission statement should inspire others to want to know more about your ideas, helping to position your district in the marketplace and to fuel growth. (DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, and Many, *Learning By Doing*, Second Edition: Solution-Tree, 2010)

A mission:

- Tells a story, in a few words that defines why the organization exists.
- Describes the core purpose of the organization that is persistent over time.
- Answers the following questions: Why does this organization serve and how are the served? What is the organizational purpose?
- Incorporates features of the organization that highlight its uniqueness and define its purpose.
- Helps define why the organization exists.
- Focuses on satisfying customer needs.
- Take the form of: “Our mission is to provide (what) to (whom) in order to (provide what benefit) while (maintaining what values).

Criteria for evaluating a mission statement:

- ✓ Is it clear and understandable?
- ✓ Is it brief enough for most people to remember and say in one breath?
- ✓ Does it clearly specify the school's fundamental purpose?
- ✓ Does it have a primary focus on a single strategic thrust (such as learning)?
- ✓ Does it reflect the distinctive competence and culture of this school?
- ✓ Is it broad enough to allow flexibility in implementation, but not so broad as to create lack of focus?
- ✓ Will it help school personnel, parents, and community members make decisions?
- ✓ Is it energizing and compelling? Does it motivate and inspire employee commitment?
- ✓ Does it say what you want your district to be remembered for?

VISION: The vision pillar asks “What?”—that is, “What must we become in order to accomplish our fundamental purpose?” In pursuing this question, the district attempts to create a compelling, attractive, realistic future that describes what they hope their district will become. Vision provides a sense of direction and a basis for assessing both the currently reality of the district and potential strategies, programs, and procedures to improve upon that reality. There is no more powerful engine driving an organization

toward excellence and long-range success that an attractive, worthwhile and achievable vision of the future that is widely shared. (DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, and Many, *Learning By Doing*, Second Edition: Solution-Tree, 2010)

A vision:

- Describes where the organization wants to be, typically three to five year in the future. Focuses on the district's "North Star."
- Vividly captures the organization's "picture of the future".
- Is brief and easy to understand and communicates a message that is emotionally inspiring, to create a passion to contribute to the organization's future success.
- It is audacious and takes you way beyond where you are to the "mountain top."
- It builds on core competencies. It give employees a larger sense of purpose so they see themselves as building a cathedral instead of laying stomes.
- The vision takes the form of "Our vision is to become (achieve, improve, etc.) by (date)."

Criteria for evaluating a vision statement:

- ✓ Does it manifest our mission?
- ✓ Is it concise and compelling?
- ✓ Is it inspirational?
- ✓ Does it communicate promise?
- ✓ Does it create an image of something that cannot be seen today, but is possible tomorrow?
- ✓ Does it focus on ends not means?
- ✓ Does it manifest the mission and values?

CORE VALUES: The third pillar of the foundation, the values pillar identifies our beliefs and then clarifies those beliefs through collective commitments. It asks, "How must we behave to create the district that will achieve our purpose?" In answering the question, educators shift from offering philosophical musings on mission or the shared hopes for the district of the future to making commitments to act in certain ways. Clarity guides the individual work of each member and outlines how each person can contribute to the improvement initiative. Policy manuals and directives are replaced by commitments and covenants. Clarifying collective commitments is one of the most important strategies in building a PLC. (adapted from DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, and Many, *Learning By Doing*, Second Edition: Solution-Tree, 2010)

Core Values:

- Describe what the organization stands for in the context of its mission and vision.
- Guiding principles, defining the code of conduct and behavior that is expected of all employees.
- Provide ethical guidelines for decision-making and daily conduct.
- Are aligned with organization vision, mission and culture.
- Should be described in vivid behavioral terms.

- Are represented in a phrase but not a sentence or paragraph.
- Should not include more than 5-7 so they can be memorable.
- Supports mission and vision.

Criteria for evaluating a value/ commitment statements:

- ✓ Does it manifest our mission and vision?
- ✓ Is it compelling and based on a belief we would not compromise?
- ✓ Is it a guiding principle that guides behaviors and actions?
- ✓ Is it clear and easy to understand?
- ✓ Does it create an unwavering and unchanging guide?
- ✓ Is it something we will hold each other responsible and accountable for our actions?
- ✓ Is it something we would want future staff members to support?
- ✓ Does it have a commitment to describe what we would do to move the belief to action?

ACTIVITY ONE: Feedback Review of Data Retreat SWOT from Stakeholders:
 Identify the top ten strengths, top ten weaknesses, top ten opportunities and top ten threats by examining the SWOT analysis from the Data Retreat and any feedback from stakeholders.

Feedback Review of the Data Retreat SWOT Analysis	
DRAFT SWOT ANALYSIS	REVISED SWOT ANALYSIS
<p>Strengths: What do we consider to be our strengths? What advantages do we have? What do others say our strengths are?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Solid Financial Standing ● Improved Culture & Climate ● Increased Student Academic Growth ● Updated Curriculum & Resources ● Inclusion – “All Means All” ● Bilingualism ● Gold Standard Preschool ● Parent Engagement (PAC/PTOs/Family Nights) ● Use of Data ● Student Attendance ● Advanced Degrees Teachers ● Decreased Suspensions ● Professional Development 	

Weaknesses: What do we consider to be our weaknesses? What are we most criticized for or receive the most complaints about? What do we seem to have a hard time doing well?

- **Diversity, Retention of Staff**
- **Student Academic Attainment/ Close Achievement Gap**
- **Long-term Financial Stability**
- **Parent Engagement**
- **Current Technology Access**
- **Student Behavior**
- **Facilities/Space Needs**
- **Student Truancies & Tardiness**
- **Playgrounds & Recess**
- **Class Size (Too Large)**
- **Teacher Team-building/Attendance**

Opportunities: What opportunities for improvement do we know about, but have not addressed? Where with a little work could we change a weakness into a strength?

- **Instruction/Curriculum Improvements**
- **Increased Parent Engagement** (teacher- parent communication, parent training)
- **Technology Opportunities**
- **Playgrounds & Recess**
- **Student Emotional Well-being**
- **Community Partnerships & Support**
- **High School Collaboration**
- **Further PLC Development/Refinement**
- **Staff Diversity**
- **Student Health & Wellness**
- **Grants/ Financial Stability**
- **Preschool Expansion**
- **Expanded Instructional Day**

Threats: Who or what threatens us the most?
What challenges are coming that we must respond to? What might block our progress?

- **Politics & State Finances**
- **Challenging Home Environments**
- **State & Federal Mandates**
- **Aging, Landlocked Facilities**
- **Stigmas Toward Staff & Parents**
- **Teacher Recruitment & Retention**
- **Gap Between Student Attainment Levels and State Expectations**

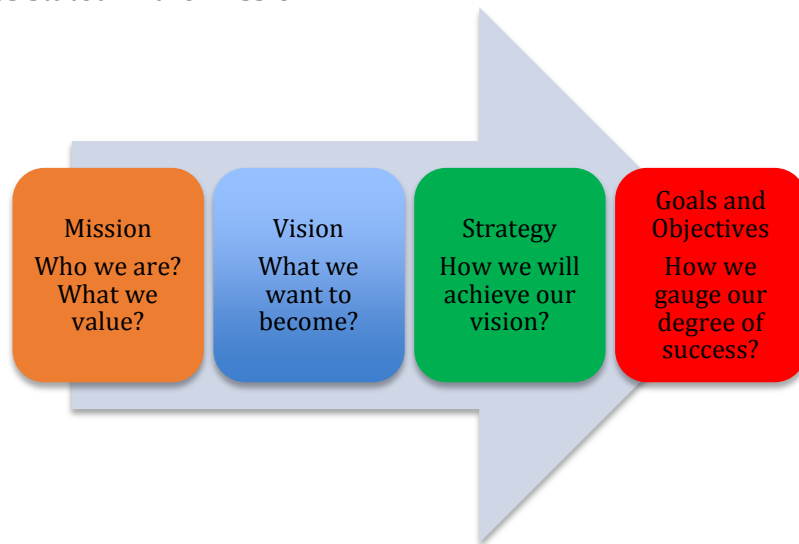
Activity Two: Investigate a Preferred Future: Electronically learn about some schools/districts who are inventing the future. Answer the question: What can we envision as to how the district should look, sound and feel 5-10 years from now to make it a better place to learn and work?

Why is mission and vision critical to a school district: How do you live a mission and vision?

First, mission and vision provide a vehicle for communicating an organization’s purpose and values to all key stakeholders. Typically, these statements would be widely circulated and discussed often so that their meaning is widely understood, shared, and internalized. The better employees understand an organization’s purpose, through its mission and vision, the better able they will be to understand the strategy and its implementation.

Second, mission and vision create a target for strategy development. That is, one criterion of a good strategy is how well it helps the firm achieve its mission and vision.

Third, mission and vision provide a high-level guide, and the strategy provides a specific guide, to the goals and objectives showing success or failure of the strategy and satisfaction of the larger set of objectives stated in the mission.



Vision Retreat Investigation

You are about to explore an electronic site to learn about a 21st century approach to teaching and learning. ***The purpose of the investigation is to stimulate strategic plan team thinking about a new district mission and vision that will incorporate ideas and concepts not currently in place. It will help the team describe a Preferred Future.*** **The purpose of this investigation is NOT to find a site we most would like to emulate. We will be looking across all investigations to create the District 89 hybrid mission and vision.** Some of the sites are public school sites, some are magnet programs or charters within a district, a few are private school sites. The sites were selected from ten possibilities by the district leadership and the facilitator.

Within the sites are opportunities to learn about the vision of each program. You can learn about the features of the site to assist you in completing your answers to the essential questions of the investigation. All investigations are focused on the same set of essential questions. You will find: video clips (view the clips), icons for further information (click on the icon), history about the origin of the program, information about a network of similar schools across the country focusing on the same concepts, etc.

You are asked to summarize your findings on a team poster. The poster is what you will use to communicate your investigation to the other teams.

Use the Vision Investigation Document to assist you with this activity.

Use the notes template on the next page to record your learnings from each of the Investigation Presentations

Record the Key Concepts you want to keep in mind when to begin to think about the future state of the districts. We will use these concepts and ideas to develop a new mission and vision

Investigation	Key Concepts: Notes
Vision Illinois	
Stonefields School, New Zealand (Visible Learning)	
Marzano High Reliability Schools	
Michael Fullan's Network of Schools (Deep Learning)	
XQ - The Super School Project	
Competency-based Learning	

Activity Three: Draft a Preferred Future Statement: Use the information from the articles you read, the investigation information that inspired you, and your own hopes and dreams to craft a new district mission, vision and core values statement.

Key Questions to Consider:

1. How do you define student success?
2. What is the overarching statement of that success?
3. What are the components that contribute to that success?
4. How can you communicate what that would look like so you can reflect in the future on where you are in achieving your vision? How can this become a shared vision?

Why is mission and vision critical to a school district? How do you *live* a mission and vision?

First, mission and vision provide a vehicle for communicating an organization’s purpose and values to all key stakeholders. Typically, these statements would be widely circulated and discussed often so that their meaning is widely understood, shared, and internalized. The better employees understand an organization’s purpose, through its mission and vision, the better able they will be to understand the strategy and its implementation.

Second, mission and vision create a target for strategy development. That is, one criterion of a good strategy is how well it helps the firm achieve its mission and vision.

Third, mission and vision provide a high-level guide, and the strategy provides a specific guide, to the goals and objectives showing success or failure of the strategy and satisfaction of the larger set of objectives stated in the mission.



Mission Ideas:

- Preparing students today for success tomorrow.
or
- Every student will graduate with college, career, and life readiness skills.
or
- To graduate our students ready for college, career, and life, prepared to pursue the future of their choosing.
or
- To prepare Francis Howell graduates for a successful transition to post-high school education and the workplace
or
- To empower students every day to be ready for college, career and life.

Current Mission (2013 Strategic Plan)	Criteria for evaluating a mission statement:	Future Mission
<p>The mission of Maywood-Melrose Park-Broadview School District 89 is to ensure the well-being of our students academically, emotionally, and socially. It is our responsibility to provide an environment that will prepare students to pursue college or career opportunities through meaningful learning experiences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Does it manifest our mission? Does it paint a mental image you desire? ● Is it concise and compelling? ● Is it inspirational? Does it reflect passion and commitment? ● Does it communicate promise for the future? ● Does it create an image of something that cannot be seen today, but is possible tomorrow? ● Does it focus on ends not means? ● Does it define success? ● Does it use present or future tense? ● Does it use clear, concise language that all stakeholders can understand? 	

Remember, the vision statement is a reflection of what the mission would look like if it were fully achieved.

Vision Ideas:

Every student will graduate with college, career, and life readiness skills.

- Being COLLEGE READY means student leave high school equipped with the academic knowledge and skills deemed essential for success in university, college, and community-college programs. Their admission ensures no need for remedial or developmental coursework. Their interests and post-high school aspirations influence the precise knowledge and skill profiles necessary to be ready for postsecondary studies.
- Being CAREER READY means student leave high school equipped with the knowledge and skills deemed to be essential for success in the modern workforce. They have received a broad set of knowledge, skills, work habits, and character traits that are believed—by educators, school reformers, college professors, employers, and others—to be critically important to success in today’s world.
- Being LIFE READY means students leave high school with the commitment and perseverance to tackle and achieve their goals. They possess the growth mindset that empowers them to approach their future with a strong self-concept. They have received social and emotional support and experiences to give them knowledge, tools and strategies they will need for success in their future.

Or

To be the school district of choice that provides for all students a successful path to college, career and life readiness by ensuring each student can:

- **Think:** Use Cognitive Strategies
- **Know:** Articulate Content Knowledge
- **Expect:** Forecast Transition Knowledge and Skills
- **Apply:** Demonstrate Learning Skills, Techniques and Behaviors

Current Vision (2013 Strategic Plan)	Criteria for evaluating a vision statement:	Future Vision
<p>As a result of our “Whole Child” approach to education, District 89 Schools will be the school system of choice and source of community pride.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Does it manifest our mission? Does it paint a mental image you desire? ● Is it concise and compelling? ● Is it inspirational? Does it reflect passion and commitment? ● Does it communicate promise for the future? ● Does it create an image of something that cannot be seen today, but is possible tomorrow? ● Does it focus on ends not means? ● Does it define success? ● Does it use present or future tense? ● Does it use clear, concise language that all stakeholders can understand? 	

Values Ideas:

- ✓ **Trust:** Communicating and collaborating with transparency, dignity and respect.
- ✓ **Growth:** Encouraging risk taking, courage and innovation to challenge the status quo.
- ✓ **Learner Focus:** Promoting learner ownership and self-sufficiency of their learning
- ✓ **Citizenship:** Developing responsible citizens who can contribute to world
- ✓ **Commitment:** Executing with fidelity and perseverance.
- ✓ **Partnership:** Working with families and the community to ready students for their future
- ✓ **Shared Accountability:** Holding ourselves accountable for what we do.
- ✓ **Results:** Acting on results to continuously grow and improve.

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Current Values Statements</u> (2013 Strategic Plan’s Guiding Principles)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Criteria for Writing Good Value Statements</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Future Values</u></p>
<p>We believe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A stimulating, safe, and orderly environment is the first step in providing a quality education for all students. • All students can learn at high levels. • A high quality teaching staff is critical to student learning. • It is the District’s responsibility to develop self-discipline, responsibility, and respect in our students. • The development of literacy in our students is essential for future success. • School, family, and community commitment are essential components in the teaching and learning process. 	<p><u>Criteria for evaluating a value/ commitment statements:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does it manifest our mission and vision? • Is it compelling and based on a belief we would not compromise? • Is it a guiding principle that guides behaviors and actions? • Is it clear and easy to understand? • Does it create an unwavering and unchanging guide? • Is it something we will hold each other responsible and accountable for our actions? • Is it something we would want future staff members to support? 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Does it have a commitment to describe what we would do to move the belief to action?● Is it energizing and compelling?	
--	---	--

Strategic Foundation or Preferred Future

Table # _____

Mission Statement: Our Core Purpose Why do we exist?	Vision Statement: Our Preferred Future Where are we headed?
Core Values: How we act and behave What do we stand for?	Vision Description: What will it look like (bullet points) How will we know when we are there?

Setting Direction Retreat: April 25

8:00 am - 3:00 pm