



# Strategic Plan Development: VISION RETREAT

**Elevating District Performance:**  
A Strategic Framework for Success

HANDOUT

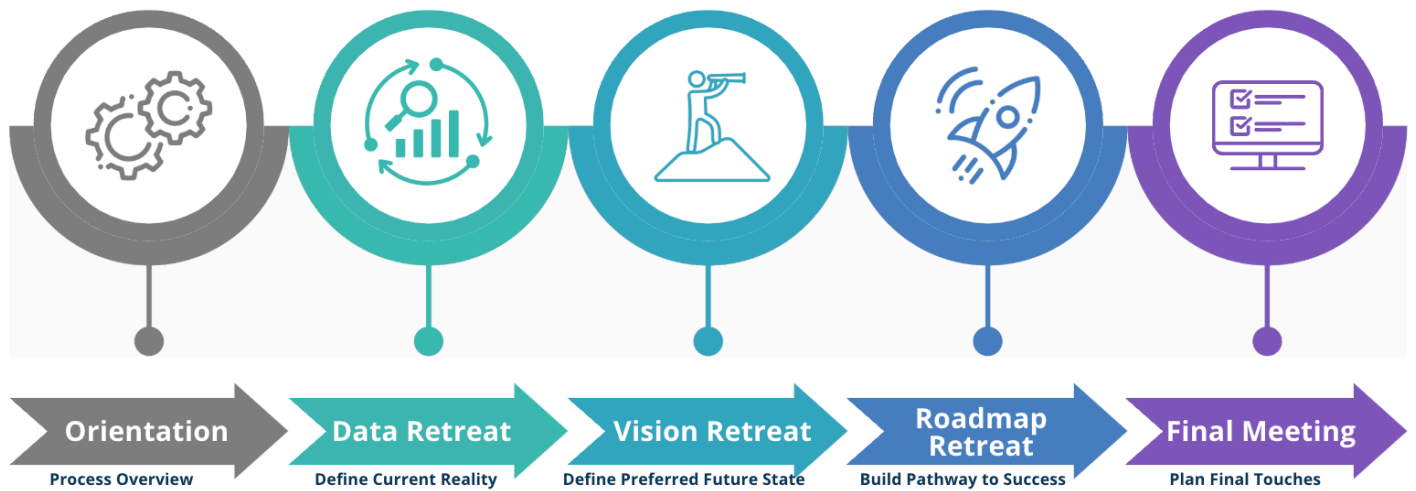
**Catalyst for Educational Change**



# THE PROCESS

## CEC Strategic Planning Process

Elevating District Performance: A Strategic Framework for Success





# VISION RETREAT

## DEFINING PREFERRED FUTURE

**THE VISION RETREAT** provides the Strategic Plan Team with an opportunity to invent the future and identify how the district will look, feel, and sound differently several years from now. They will draft a Preferred Future Statement that describes how the district will be different at the end of the strategic plan life.

**GOAL:** Define a PREFERRED FUTURE to move the district to an even higher level of performance and guide the actions and behaviors of the district as it works to achieve that future

- **Reflect on stakeholder feedback to revise our SWOT analysis from the Data Retreat**
- **Discuss homework investigations to identify practices and ideas to inform a preferred future for the district**
- **Define the district's preferred future, including mission, vision, core values, and portraits for students, staff, parents, and the system.**

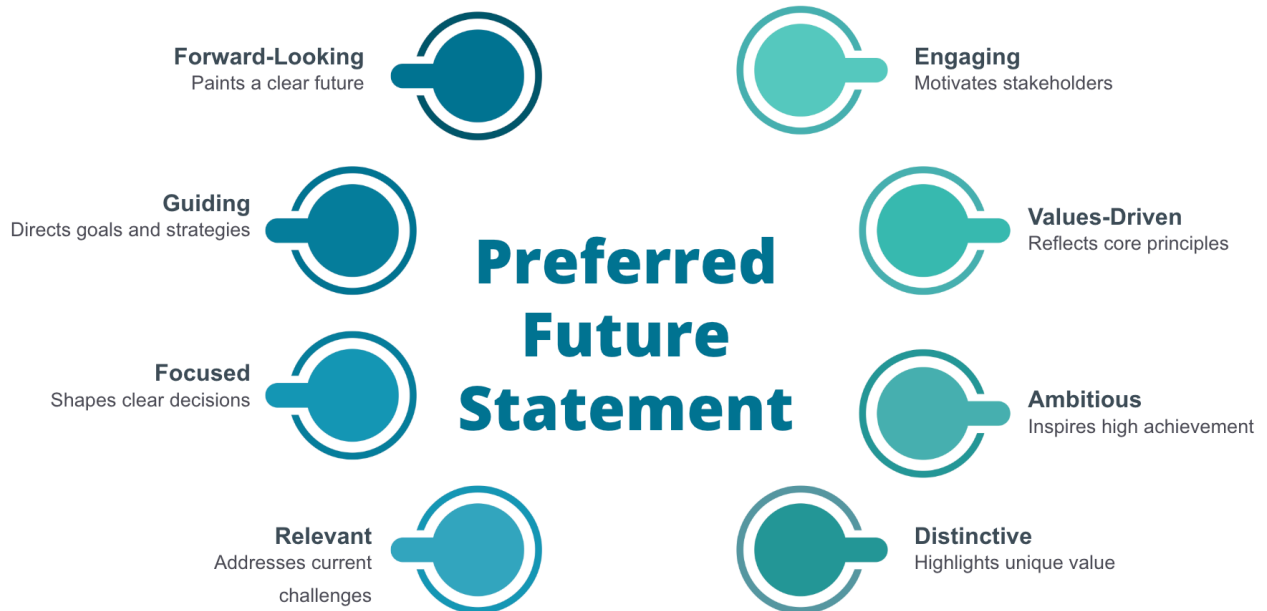


## VIDEO REFLECTION

A decorative teal underline consisting of a thick, slightly wavy line that tapers at both ends.



# Preferred Future Statement



Why is a Preferred Future Statement necessary for a district's strategic plan?

How might the district use mission, vision, and core values during the implementation of the strategic plan?

How do the characteristics align with keywords, phrases, and takeaways from your homework assignment?



## ACTIVITY 2

### Pre-Work Exploration Sharing

PRE-RETREAT HOMEWORK	
Resource Title	Key Ideas
The Future of Learning	
What Will High Schoolers Be Learning in 2033?	



## ACTIVITY 2

### Pre-Work Exploration Sharing

PRE-RETREAT HOMEWORK	
Resource Title	Key Ideas
Redefining What High School Is Supposed to Look Like	
XQ Super Schools	



# BUILDING ON OUR CURRENT MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT

**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 an agreement regarding the fundamental purpose of the organization. This clarity of purpose can help establish priorities and becomes an important factor in guiding 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 must 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 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 they 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 primarily 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 a 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?





## BUILDING ON OUR CURRENT MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT

**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 the district's current reality 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 than 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 years 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 an emotionally inspiring message, creating 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 gives employees a larger sense of purpose, so they see themselves as building a cathedral instead of laying stones.
- 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?



# BUILDING ON OUR CURRENT MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT

## CURRENT MISSION



Township High School District 113 has an unwavering commitment to providing all students opportunities to realize their unique potential through a rigorous and engaging curriculum, meaningful relationships, varied experiences, a positive school culture, and the cultivation of individual passion and resilience.

## CURRENT VISION



Cultivating passion, unlocking potential, inspiring excellence –  
everyone, everywhere



# BUILDING ON OUR CURRENT MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT

**CORE VALUES:** The core values pillar asks, "Why?"—that is, "Why do we do what we do?" In pursuing this question, the district articulates the fundamental beliefs that guide its actions and decisions. Core values define the district's culture, shape its priorities, and establish a foundation for building trust and unity among stakeholders. They represent the enduring principles that are essential to achieving the district's mission and vision. Core values are not just words on a page; they are lived experiences that inform every aspect of the district's work.

## **Core values:**

- Reflect the district's deeply held beliefs and guiding principles.
- Shape the district's culture and inform its decision-making.
- Provide a framework for ethical behavior and accountability.
- Are enduring and transcend changing circumstances.
- Align with the district's mission and vision, as well as the desired attributes of graduates, families, staff, and the system itself.
- Take the form of concise, actionable statements that guide behavior.

Criteria for evaluating core values:

- ✓ Do they reflect the desired attributes of graduates, families, staff, and the system?
- ✓ Are they clear, concise, and easily understood?
- ✓ Are they actionable and guide behavior?
- ✓ Are they enduring and reflect the district's long-term priorities?
- ✓ Are they aligned with the district's mission and vision?
- ✓ Do they foster a culture of equity, inclusion, and collaboration?
- ✓ Do they promote continuous improvement and innovation?



## ACTIVITY 4

### Portraits

At the center of an educational vision is **the Student Portrait**—a description of the community's aspirations for its young people. It describes the **knowledge, skills, dispositions**, and **mindsets** that students need to thrive in life and career.

A Graduate Portrait should also **guide adult actions and decisions**, aligning leadership, management, teaching and learning, and resource allocations for student success. The objective is to prepare each student for life by supporting them in reaching their full potential.

**Choose (or write in) your top ten:**

PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE OPTIONS				
Personal & Ethical Development	Cognitive & Creative Skills	Technological & Digital Fluency	Interpersonal & Collaborative Skills	Global & Civic Engagement
Self-Awareness & Resilience	Critical Thinking & Problem-Solving	Digital Literacy & Cybersecurity	Communication & Collaboration (Digital & In-Person)	Global Citizenship & Cultural Competence
Ethical Decision-Making & Integrity	Creative Thinking & Innovation	Data Literacy & Analysis	Empathy & Active Listening	Civic Engagement & Advocacy
Mental & Emotional Well-Being	Information Literacy & Media Evaluation	AI & Emerging Tech Awareness	Conflict Resolution & Negotiation	Sustainability & Environmental Stewardship
Growth Mindset & Adaptability	Systems Thinking & Interdisciplinary Learning	Digital Content Creation & Design	Team Leadership & Influence	Social Justice & Equity Awareness
Personal Responsibility & Accountability	Computational Thinking & Coding Basics	Adaptive Technology Use & Learning Agility	Networking & Relationship Building (Online & Offline)	Intercultural Communication & Understanding



## ACTIVITY 4

### Portraits

Widespread successful achievement of the Scholar Portrait is only possible if a **supportive and intentional community of adults work together**. This Educator Portrait applies to **all adults working in the school district**, not just teachers, because every adult's work supports student success; therefore, the language here is broad.

The ability of adults to model and continuously develop these attributes will be critical in helping students achieve the Scholar Portrait. They will also help adults support one another and create respectful and beneficial relationships with the community that further support students' learning and skills building.

**Choose (or write in) your top ten:**

PORTRAIT OF AN ADULT OPTIONS				
Personal & Ethical Leadership	Instructional & Pedagogical Expertise	Technological & Data-Driven Proficiency	Collaborative & Community Engagement	Equity & Inclusive Practices
Ethical Leadership & Integrity	Personalized Learning & Differentiation	Data Analysis & Evidence-Based Decision Making	Effective Communication & Relationship Building	Culturally Responsive Practices & Advocacy
Resilience & Adaptability	Innovative Pedagogy & Curriculum Design	Digital Literacy & Instructional Technology Integration	Collaborative Teamwork & Shared Leadership	Social-Emotional Learning Expertise
Self-Awareness & Continuous Improvement	Assessment Literacy & Data-Informed Instruction	Cybersecurity & Digital Citizenship Education	Family & Community Engagement	Equity & Access Advocacy
Emotional Intelligence & Empathy	Mentoring & Coaching Expertise	Learning Management Systems & Online Platforms Proficiency	Conflict Resolution & Mediation Skills	Inclusive Classroom Management & Support
Professional Responsibility & Accountability	Content Area Expertise & Interdisciplinary Connections	Adaptive Technology Use & Learning Agility	Networking & Professional Learning Community Participation	Restorative Practices & Trauma-Informed Care



## ACTIVITY 4

### Portraits

Meaningful and sustained student growth, as defined by the Graduate Portrait, is deeply rooted in the collaborative partnership between the school district and its families. The Family Portrait outlines the **essential qualities and actions that families can cultivate to actively contribute to their children's success and the overall well-being of the school community.**

The active demonstration and ongoing development of these attributes by families will play a vital role in empowering students to achieve the Scholar Portrait. It will also strengthen the bond between families and the school district, fostering a supportive and unified environment where students thrive. These attributes will encourage families to support one another, build strong relationships with educators, and engage constructively with the broader community, all of which are crucial for nurturing student learning and holistic development.

**Choose (or write in) your top ten:**

PORTRAIT OF A FAMILY OPTIONS				
Student Advocacy & Support	Active Engagement & Collaboration	Learning Environment at Home	Communication & Partnership	Community & Cultural Connection
Empowering Student Voice & Agency	Collaborative Goal Setting & Decision-Making	Fostering Curiosity & Lifelong Learning	Open & Transparent Communication Channels	Cultural Responsiveness & Inclusivity
Promoting Student Well-being & Resilience	Participation in School Events & Activities	Creating a Supportive & Structured Learning Space	Regular Check-ins & Feedback Exchange	Community Resource Awareness & Utilization
Advocating for Student Needs & Success	Shared Responsibility for Student Learning	Encouraging Digital Literacy & Responsible Use	Proactive Communication & Problem-Solving	Building Strong Family-School-Community Ties
Supporting Student Academic Growth & Development	Active Involvement in Student Progress Monitoring	Promoting Reading & Literacy at Home	Timely Information Sharing & Accessibility	Celebrating Diversity & Promoting Understanding
Fostering Student Self-Advocacy Skills	Partnership in Student Learning Pathways	Creating a Positive & Encouraging Atmosphere	Mutual Respect & Trust-Building	Connecting to Local & Global Opportunities



## ACTIVITY 4

### Portraits

The Educational System Portrait defines the **essential characteristics of our school district, outlining the conditions our leaders will foster to fulfill our commitment to students and families.**

A successful system comprises interconnected elements: organizational structures, support systems, standards, agreements, incentives, and culture. These components must be carefully aligned with our Graduate, Adult, and Family Portraits, as well as our Core Values, to ensure a cohesive and effective educational environment.

**Choose (or write in) your top ten:**

PORTRAIT OF A SYSTEM OPTIONS				
Culture of Innovation & Agility	Data-Driven & Personalized Learning	Collaborative & Inclusive Partnerships	Equity & Holistic Well-being	Ethical & Future-Focused Leadership
Adaptive Capacity & Systemic Resilience	Personalized Learning Pathways & Mastery-Based Progression	Family & Community Engagement Ecosystem	Social-Emotional Learning Integration & Support	Ethical Governance & Transparency
Strategic Agility & Continuous Improvement	Data Analytics for Instructional Decision-Making	Collaborative Professional Learning Communities	Inclusive & Accessible Learning Environments	Future-Ready Curriculum & Pedagogy
Culture of Innovation & Experimentation	Digital Learning Ecosystem & Technology Integration	Community Partnerships & Resource Alignment	Student-Centered Well-being & Mental Health Support	Sustainable Resource Management & Environmental Stewardship
Distributed Leadership & Empowerment	Student Data & Progress Monitoring Systems	Shared Leadership & Distributed Decision-Making	Equitable Resource Allocation & Opportunity Access	Visionary Strategic Planning & Foresight
Proactive Problem-Solving & Systems Thinking	Evidence-Based Practices & Research Utilization	Intercultural Competence & Global Connections	Culturally Responsive Pedagogy & Practices	Community Stewardship & Civic Engagement



## ACTIVITY 4

### Identify Core Value Themes

TABLE # \_\_\_\_\_

Core Value Themes

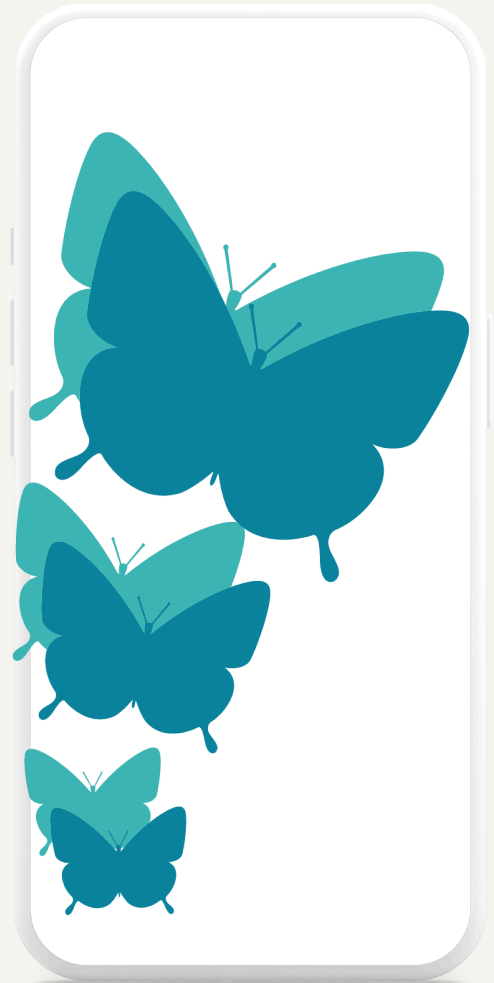


# Thank you!

Catalyst for Educational Change (CEC) is a nonprofit consulting agency solving complex problems in educational systems.

We use continuous improvement practices and deep collaboration to help educational systems build internal capacity, create better outcomes, communicate with leadership, and re-think our children's futures.

[www.cecweb.org](http://www.cecweb.org)



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