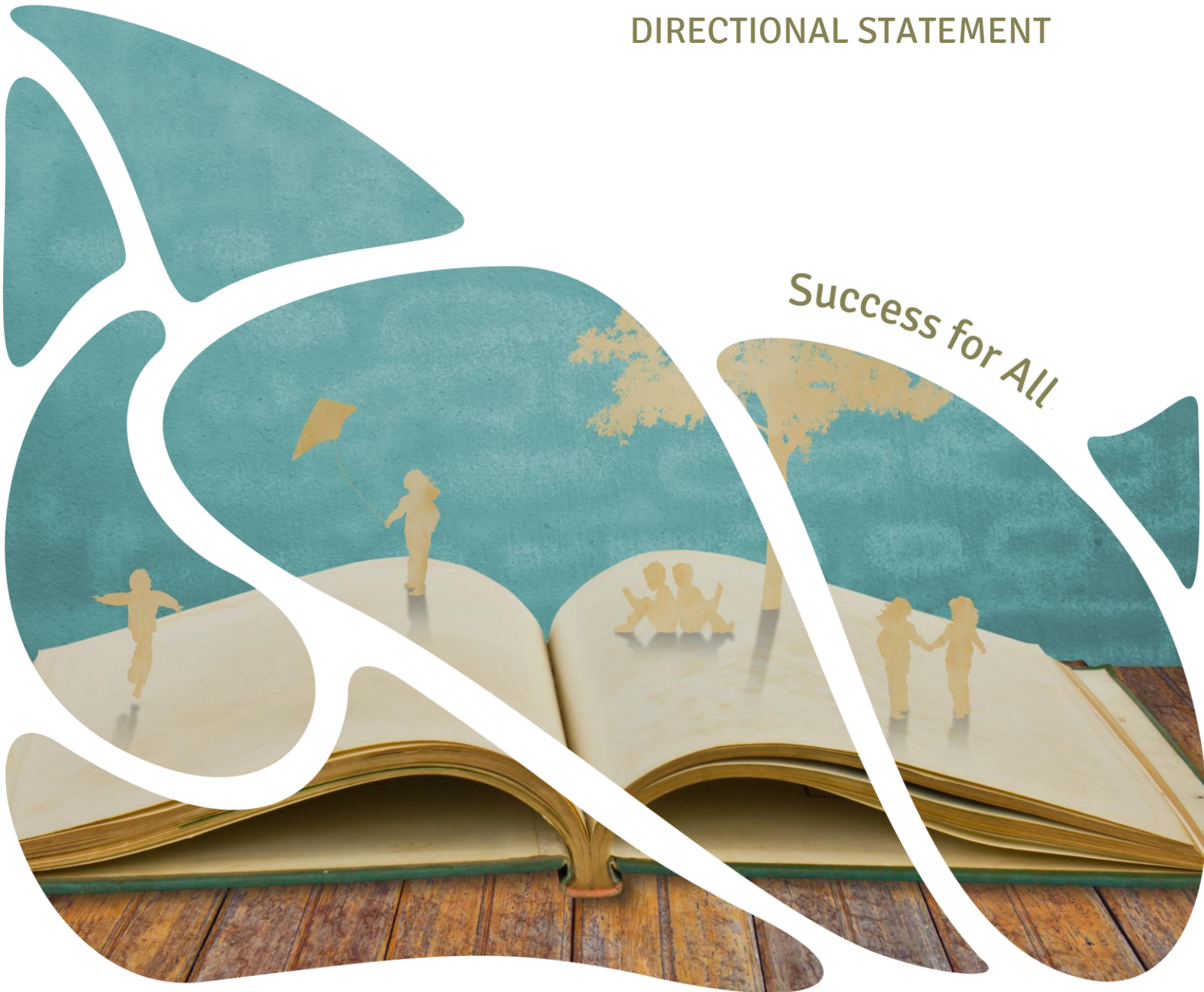




NANAIMO LADYSMITH
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**2020 VISION:
A THREE YEAR PLAN
DIRECTIONAL STATEMENT**



2020 Vision: A Three Year Plan

Directional Statement

In the Fall of 2016, Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools (NLPS) launched an engagement process that sought feedback on current and future learning, the Central Nanaimo and Ladysmith zones, asset management and the 2017-18 budget.

2020 Vision: A Three Year Plan provided an opportunity for students, their families, local organizations and the public to share their views on the direction the district should take in the coming years. Feedback was collected via online survey, email and face-to-face meetings. The district collected approximately 1,500 responses over a two-month period.

Board Goals – Strategic Plan

The district is guided by its Board Goals. In the coming weeks departments will be presenting their respective budget strategies and goals, which makes up, in part, the annual budget development process.

All decisions are based on the following Board Goals:

- *Meet Each Student's Unique Needs*
- *The Continuous Improvement of Instruction and Assessment*
- *Enhanced Facilities for Learning*

What is *2020 Vision: A Three Year Plan*?

***2020 Vision* will focus on the following over the next three years:**

- **Increasing student success**
- **Developing a sustainable budget**

2020 Vision aligns with Ministry of Education (MoE), Board and district goals and is intended to meet the MoE's *Framework for Enhancing Student Learning*, a public commitment by districts in BC to work together to continuously improve student learning for each student, and to address long-standing differences in performance amongst particular students.

The district's *Framework for Enhancing Student Learning* will be an annual process (See Appendix A) that links learning to Board and budget strategies and will include an engagement process with the community, updating and utilizing the district's Asset Management Plan (AMP), establishing a long-term budget plan, recurring requests for feedback (How are we doing?), data-driven decision making, and strategic planning aligned with Board goals. The Board is currently in the process of updating its Strategic Plan. In it will be the Board's goals which are the statements and beliefs that

guide all district decisions. The Board will receive a draft of the updated Board Goals at the February 8, 2017 Business Committee meeting.

Before moving forward, the district must look back to previous documents such as *Becoming Sustainable* and the Updated Facilities Plan (September 2, 2015), while at the same time considering new proposals. While a great amount of work was needed to create previous plans, the ever-changing expectations for student achievement and needs for increased programs and services combined with a reduction in resources leads to deficiencies in facilities.

On an annual basis, the district must decide to continue with its current plan or adapt to address current challenges. *2020 Vision* is a blueprint to address the district's immediate and near-term opportunities through a consultative process that is respectful, effective and aligns with the district's available resources to achieve the best possible future for students and the community.

Meeting Each Student's Unique Needs – Framework for Enhancing Student Learning

With over 13,700 students and approximately 2,000 employees, NLPS is integral to the success of the community it serves. Parents and guardians have high expectations of the school system in that it provides high quality programs and services for their children. The district is left to make responsible and responsive decisions in creating a strong future for each learner.

The district believes that the *Framework for Enhancing Student Learning* annual feedback and collaboration process provides the district with the immediate needs of its students, their families, employees, community groups, and partners.

What is the MoE's Framework for Enhancing Student Learning?

- A new vision by the Ministry of Education, the *Framework* replaces many past accountability documents like the Superintendent's Report and the Achievement Contract
- The goal of the *Framework* is to develop school district plans that are collaboratively developed by educational partners of NLPS
- A chance to determine what is important to NLPS learners and create a document that helps to promote continuous learning that is meaningful, sustainable and ensures each student reaches their potential
- It is an opportunity for the district to witness the strengths that exist in all its students beyond academics and reflect on student success inclusive of multiple behaviors including intellectual, human, social, and career development.

Guiding Principles

The following set of principles guided the development of the draft *Framework for Enhancing Student Learning*, and will be used as an ongoing reference point in its implementation and continuous improvement.

The *Framework for Enhancing Student Learning*:

- Is grounded in the belief that all education partners are responsible for student learning, with each having unique responsibilities;
- Creates a system-wide focus on student learning, to ensure each student in BC achieves their full potential;
- Is meaningful, impactful, flexible, realistic, and sustainable;
- Addresses differences in performance among particular groups of students, most notably Aboriginal students, children in care, and students with special needs;
- Is strength, support, evidence, and results based;
- Reflects system-wide commitment to continuous improvement and lifelong learning; and
- Continues to build public confidence in BC’s education system.

Budget

Becoming Sustainable

The 2016-17 school year is the second year of *Becoming Sustainable*, the district’s two-year plan that established a budget that didn’t require the use of surplus money – effectively functioning within the operational budget. This process allowed the district to focus capital and grant funding into student support and educational programming, facilities renewal, and the vulnerable students in the district.

Year one of *Becoming Sustainable* focused on school consolidations and closures. This strategy aligned district efficiencies and savings with the *Updated Facilities Plan*.

Staff recommended that the Board look at a two-year budget process which would include school consultations and facility efficiencies. This also allowed departments to systematically plan reductions based on assured facility closures.

There were three major components in the plan:

- 1) The 2015 budget must be sustainable on its own. The need to use surplus dollars from previous years did not allow the district to maintain a sustainable budget. This means that significant cuts must be made to ensure that the district does not need to “dip into the cupboard” to support existing programs and staffing that have been protected in the past.
- 2) The unrestricted surplus is significantly higher than in previous years due to job action. Staff recommended that the money be directed to strategic projects that enabled the district to maintain long-term budget sustainability while aligning with the Board goals.
- 3) Connecting unrestricted surplus and school closures to create efficiencies and savings created a sustainable budget by the 2016-17 school year. Once achieved NLPS was able to plan for the improvement of student learning and the Updated Facilities Plan.

With the end of year two of *Becoming Sustainable* approaching, district staff is able to confirm that all but three budget strategy initiatives were completed:

Accumulated Surplus to be used to help Balance 2016-17 Budget:

- \$500,000 – savings from the closure of Rutherford Elementary
- \$160,000 – moving costs due to school consolidations. This is a one-time cost.
- \$230,000 – defer proposed reductions by maintaining the majority of existing routes while Transportation Policy is being redeveloped.

The closure of Rutherford Elementary represents \$500,000 in operational savings. This plan was contingent on Ministry funding for the construction of a new wing at Frank J. Ney Elementary. In January 2017, the Ministry had given the district \$1.3 million to be used for the Frank J. Ney Expansion Project.

\$160,000 is a one-time cost of school closures and amalgamations. On June 30, 2016, Woodlands Secondary closed and Woodbank Primary began the process to consolidate all students at North Cedar Intermediate – with the new amalgamated school called Cedar Elementary. The costs includes programs and equipment moves as well as the construction of new classrooms at Cedar Elementary.

Beginning in the spring of 2016, the district began public consultation on the current Transportation Policy and Administrative Procedures. In the Fall of 2016, the Board approved the updated Transportation Policy and received the updated administrative procedure that included 30-day notice of motion for the public to provide feedback.

2020 Vision – Planning Process

In preparation of *2020 Vision: A Three Year Plan*, district staff have begun the planning of the following:

- 1) Updated Facilities Plan - implementation is in progress
- 2) Update the district's Strategic Plan
- 3) The development of Framework for Enhancing Student Learning
- 4) Asset Management review and recommendations
- 5) The completion of the Policy and Administrative Procedure manual
- 6) New transportation Policy and Administrative Procedure
- 7) Collaboration and discussion on new Reporting structure, Curriculum and Assessment
- 8) Continue relationship with unions in creating a smooth flow of information and decision making
- 9) Implementation of succession planning at the all levels of the organization
- 10) Collaboration with partner groups of school timetables and calendars, with a focus on creating Professional Learning Community (PLC) opportunities
- 11) A greater focus on Data Driven conversations and decision making
- 12) Forecasting enrolment trends and shifting individual catchment areas
- 13) Centralized Registration
- 14) ETAG Strategic Plan

2020 Vision also takes into consideration the BC Auditor General's recommendations in the *Improving Budgeting and Expenditure Management in the Public Education System* report (May 2016). See Appendix B

- Resourcing decisions to achieve strategic goals not communicated
- Reporting of performance against budget can be improved

Asset Management

The Updated Facilities Plan called for the closure and consolidation of schools, which allowed the district to reduce annual operating costs, reduce future capital expenses, and identified capital assets for future consideration. In approving this plan, it enabled the district's limited resources to be directed towards student learning.

The updated plan was divided into three stages:

1. Immediate actions to be undertaken in years one (2015-16) and two (2016-17)
2. Mid-term actions to be undertaken in years three (2017-18) to five (2019-2020); and
3. Long-term actions which include recommendations for year six.

As the Updated Plan evolves, the district will continue reviewing surplus space for alternative use or sale through its Asset Management Plan. By disposing of surplus space, the district will generate funding that may be directed to enhance facilities and reduce operating costs, allowing more resources to be allocated directly to students.

Years Three and Four (2017-18 and 2018-19)

1. Completion of Frank J. Ney Expansion Project and closure of Rutherford Elementary school. Annual savings of \$500,000 realized.
2. Continue to work with City of Nanaimo on the NDSS lands disposition.
3. Begin analysis of NDSS needs and prepare for upgrades to start in short-term (\$2.5 million to start).
4. Develop Project Identification Report (PIR) for Hammond Bay gym and/or addition (Year three).
Secure funding and build Hammond Bay gym and/or addition or alternate use of Dufferin Crescent (Year four).
5. Create an analysis of schools for consideration of amalgamation into Dufferin Crescent (Year three).
Staff develops PIR and funding for Dufferin Crescent site and apply to the Ministry (Year four).
School closure consultations may be required.
Build addition at Dufferin Crescent, begin transition process to reopen school (Year five)
6. Continue conversations in Ladysmith zone with Town Council and move towards a reconfiguration of schools by closing Ladysmith Intermediate School (Year two and three).
7. Begin consultation on a new facilities plan and future vision (Years five and six)

Appendix A

NLPS Framework for Enhancing Student Learning – Collaboration Cycle Chart



Appendix B

BC Auditors General Report

Improving Budgeting and Expenditure Management in the Public Education System Report, May 2016

Recommendations:

- Resourcing decisions to achieve strategic goals not communicated
- Reporting of performance against budget can be improved

Resourcing decisions to achieve strategic goals not communicated

The school district had prepared a strategic plan in consultation with stakeholders documenting its goals and strategies and risks and opportunities. While this is good practice it could be improved by documenting how strategies to achieve goals were resourced through formation of a budget.

Strategic planning is the process of establishing and communicating to stakeholders the goals of the district, the strategies to achieving those goals and the resourcing decisions to pursue strategies. Budget decisions based on sound strategic and operational planning result in the best outcomes. Therefore, development of a budget that links with strategies to achieve goals is an important principle.

Recommendation

We recommend that the district prepare a strategic plan that demonstrates how the process for identifying priorities and developing agreed to goals informs both operational strategies and related budget decisions. The strategic plan should align with operational planning and budgeting at the program level.

Management's Response

The budget process was changed for the development of the 2015-16 budget to base resource allocations based on the existing strategic plan, as opposed to prior years, when budget allocations were based on a separate philosophy.

Reporting of performance against budget can be improved

Management reports financial results to the board at set intervals throughout the year. While this is good practice, the reporting could be improved by including discussion and analysis that explains significant variances, risks to the forecasts and proposed changes to spending plans requiring approval.

Recommendation

We recommend that management improve the reporting of performance against budget as described above.

Management's Response

For the development of the amended 2015-16 budget, a more thorough process is being developed to ensure the Board understands the variations and changes in the operations of the district.