

2025-2030

# North Santiam School District 29J

Results 2030 Strategic Plan

1155 N 3RD AVE, STAYTON, OREGON 97383

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# A LETTER FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dear North Santiam School District Communities,

On behalf of the North Santiam School District Board of Directors, I am honored to introduce our district's strategic plan Results 2030, a guiding framework that reflects our shared vision for the future of our schools. This plan is the result of months of meaningful collaboration among students, families, educators, staff, and community members who are committed to do what is best for all kids and ensure that every single student receives high-quality educational opportunities.

At the heart of this plan are our core values: citizenship, accountability, relationships/connections, and excellence. These values shape our goals and strategies, ensuring that we provide the best possible learning environment for all students.

We recognize that a strong school district is built on trust, transparency, and continuous improvement. This plan is not just a document—it is a commitment to action, accountability, and progress. Over the coming years, we will work diligently to implement these initiatives, measure our success, and adjust as needed to meet the evolving needs of our students and community.

I invite you to explore Results 2030 and join us in our mission to empower students for success. Your voice and partnership are invaluable as we work together to create a brighter future for the North Santiam School District.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication to our schools,

Erin L. Cramer Board Chair North Santiam School District 29J



## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The North Santiam School District includes the communities of Stayton, Sublimity and Lyons/Mehama. These communities send about 2100 students to the five different campuses that make up the district. The effort to educate these students is guided by:

- Our Vision: Future-Ready Graduates.
- Our Mission: Provide a skills-based and rigorous academic education for all students.
- Our Guiding Principle: Do what is best for all kids.
- Our Values: C.A.R.E.
  - Citizenship.
  - Accountability.
  - Relationships/Connections.
  - Excellence.

Reviews of the state of the district and input heard from staff, students and families, and numerous members of our communities resulted in priority focus areas shown in the table that follows. The intended outcomes and key metrics for tracking our progress are outlined. Additional background information and details follow the table and this section.

Strategic Themes and Focus Areas	Desired Outcomes	Metric Concepts
<ul> <li>Future-Ready Students</li> <li>Next-step readiness.</li> <li>Work skills.</li> <li>Career-connected learning.</li> <li>Social-Emotional readiness and resilience.</li> </ul>	Increases in:     Student participation in activities.     Attendance and timely arrivals.     Participation in career or college learning.     Appropriate use of cell phones, etc.	<ul> <li>Student attendance and timeliness.</li> <li>Student participation in sports, co- and/or extra- curricular activities.</li> <li>College credits earned.</li> <li>Career Pathways completers.</li> </ul>
Teaching & Learning  • Rigor.  • Competency.  • Tech habits.	Increases in:  • Academically on-track.  • Testing participation.	<ul> <li>Students academically on-track.</li> <li>Participation in STAR assessments.</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Thriving Communities</li> <li>Collaborate and engage with communities.</li> <li>Promote belonging.</li> <li>Encourage civic engagement and service.</li> </ul>	Increases in:     Student collaboration & engagement in communities.     Student community service.     Participation in student government elections.	<ul> <li>Hours of student community service.</li> <li>Annual participation in student elections.</li> </ul>
Quality Staff  • Hiring.  • Retention.  • Professional growth.  • District & building support.	<ul> <li>Hire well.</li> <li>Retain quality staff.</li> <li>Relevant professional development.</li> <li>Support mechanisms for staff success.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Staff renewed.</li> <li>Staff who continue with NSSD.</li> <li>Satisfaction with professional development.</li> <li>Positive support.</li> </ul>
Fiscal Stewardship  • Sustainable budget.  • Quality learning spaces.  • Safety and security.	<ul> <li>Transparent budget.</li> <li>Quality learning spaces, facilities and technology.</li> <li>Safe and secure facilities.</li> <li>Community engagement in facilities planning.</li> </ul>	<ul><li>Annual balanced budget.</li><li>Quality of learning spaces.</li><li>Support of communities.</li></ul>

# STRATEGIC THEMES & FOCUS AREAS

Strategic themes guide implementation of this plan. Each strategic theme will be operationalized over the next five years based on key focus areas within each strategic theme. These efforts include and integrate with additional and more specific planning, such as those required by the Oregon Department of Education or district-specific plans like those outlining investments and stewardship of learning spaces of the district.

The superintendent will also engage with both staff and the board to use existing metrics or to develop those needed to effectively monitor the successful implementation of this plan. A select summary of representative metrics will be made available in a public-facing dashboard within the first year of this plan.

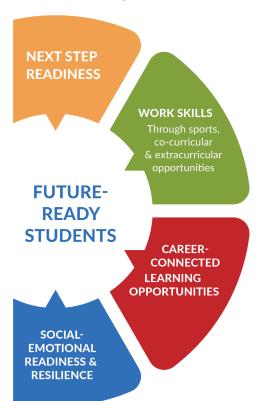
Themes and priorities for focus emerged from comments heard from almost 300 in-person interviews and questionnaires conducted as part of the analysis of the state of the district. Beyond the board and the district office, about a third of this input came from building staff, about another third came from students, and the remaining third came from families and diverse members of all the district's communities.

## Focus Areas & Priorities within Strategic Themes



## Focus Areas & Priorities within Strategic Themes

### **Future-Ready Students**



#### Why this is Important:

The district operates in partnership with students, parents and the communities of the district. Students who make individual progress each year and are subsequently ready to successfully engage with their future in their communities' benefit all at a micro and a macro level. Great schools contribute to thriving communities for all.

Students build toward being "Future-Ready" each year of their primary education. Future-ready students are those who build upon their academic readiness with social and emotional growth that prepares them for independence. Complimentary careerconnected learning starts with exposure to different careers in elementary school to career pathway learning in high school. Student participation in athletics, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities provides important opportunities for students to learn work-ready skills such as dependability, work ethic, teamwork, and communication.

#### Metrics we'll use and/or develop:

- Percent student attendance by school and by grade.
- Percent students on time.
- Percent students participating in sports, co- and/or extra-curricular activities.
- Number of college credits earned by graduates.
- Number of Career Pathways completers.
- Reduced discipline referrals for technology use.

#### **Desired Outcomes:**

- Increases in middle school and high school student participation in sports, co- and extracurricular opportunities.
- Increases in student attendance and timely arrivals at school.
- Increases in participation in career or college learning (CTE, internship opportunities, college credit opportunities).
- Reduced inappropriate use of cell phones or other similar technology.



## Teaching & Learning



#### Why this is Important:

Future-ready graduates are the result of 13 years of teaching and learning – each day, week, month, term, and year building on the one prior. Effective efforts require attention on teaching methods and learning outcomes in the rapidly evolving needs for the 21st century. Students' needs extend beyond traditional academics; they require skills in critical thinking, collaboration, creativity and technology.

Teaching and learning are at the core of all educational efforts. NSSD staff strives to incorporate proven, evidence-based strategies for instruction, so all students optimize competency and mastery of subjects. The district philosophy on cell phones is to teach responsible use, which contributes rather than detracts from student learning.

#### **Desired Outcomes:**

- Increases across all academically on-track metrics for grade level and graduation rates.
- Increased participation in formative (checking on learning progress) and summative (learning mastery) testing.

#### Metrics we will use and/or develop:

- Percent students academically on track for grade level and ready for their next level of learning.
- Percent of students who participate in STAR interim assessments.



# Focus Areas & Priorities within Strategic Themes Thriving Communities



#### Why this is Important:

It has been well established that successful schools contribute significantly to thriving communities, both economically and in terms of livability. Successful students who learn the importance of this engagement will graduate and go on to contribute to the strong fabric of their thriving communities.

Quality learning in area schools contributes to thriving communities, but an engaged civic and community-minded citizenry significantly enhances this. Schools have always taught government, but the North Santiam School District seeks to enhance this by teaching citizenship and civic involvement by fostering more community engagement and volunteerism. To do this well, the schools and students of the district must engage with all the communities of the district. Equally important is creating and maintaining school environments where all students feel welcome, valued, and that they truly belong. Having students' meaningful engagement begins with a strong sense of inclusion and connection within the school community. The broader the engagement, the better the outcomes for all.

#### Metrics we'll use and/or develop:

- Hours of student community service completed.
- Annual Middle School and High School Associated Student Body (ASB) Election Participation.

#### **Desired Outcomes:**

- Increase student collaboration and engagement in the community.
- Increase student community service participation and hours.
- Increase student participation in student government elections.



### **Quality Staff**



### Why this is Important:

The quality of staff directly influences teaching and learning for students. Both licensed and classified staff are critical for learning and readiness to learn. When the district hires well and subsequently grows and supports all staff, the school culture and environment for learning are enhanced.

The district retains quality staff who will continue their employment here for many years. When staff do leave, open positions are in high demand due to the culture, professional development opportunities, and support for success for both new and established staff.

### **Desired Outcomes:**

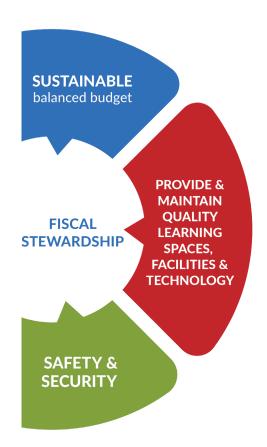
- Hire well and retain quality staff.
- Relevant professional development and growth for licensed and classified staff.
- Support mechanisms for the success of all staff.

#### Metrics we'll use and/or develop:

- Percent of staff renewed in each of their first three years in the district.
- Percent of staff who continue NSSD employment each year.
- Percent of staff satisfied with professional development opportunities (survey).
- Percent of staff who feel supported (survey).



# Focus Areas & Priorities within Strategic Themes Fiscal Stewardship



### Why this is Important:

Being fiscally strategic is foundational for stability and longterm success. The board and both the previous and current superintendents have maintained a sustainable approach to fiscal management of district resources. NSSD was one of very few districts across the state to not have to make drastic cuts in the last budget cycle.

Fiscal stewardship includes budget, buildings, safety, and security management. NSSD will continue a sustainable annual and biennial philosophy for its operating budget. Capital improvement must be funded predominantly by local bonds, so the district will also seek a sustainable, prudent approach to fund upgrades to learning spaces. This prudent approach will regularly include community input on a master facilities plan.

#### **Desired Outcomes:**

- Maintain a transparent, sustainable budget and process.
- Quality learning spaces, facilities, and technology.
- Safe and secure facilities for students and staff.
- Broad community engagement and support for facilities plan to ensure quality learning spaces.

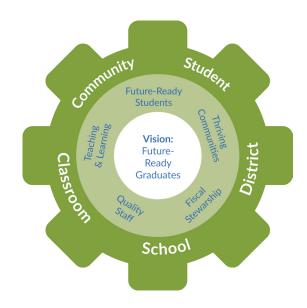
### Metrics we'll use and/or develop:

- Annual balanced budget.
- Learning spaces quality metric.
- Supportive survey or vote by all four communities.



## BACKGROUND

# About the North Santiam School District



## Communities and Schools

**Lyons and Mehama:** These two smallest communities of the district exist on each side of the North Santiam River. The two communities include over 500 households and are collectively home to about 1500 residents. One district school campus serves students in the area:

Mari-Linn School: Home of the Hornets includes Kindergarten through eighth grade.

**Stayton:** The largest community in the district includes over 2500 households, home to 8000 residents. There are three district school campuses:

- Stayton Elementary: Home of the Cheetahs offers Kindergarten through third grade, a preschool program, and specialized life skills classes.
- Stayton Intermediate/Middle School: Home of the Vikings encompasses two buildings on one campus, one with fourth and fifth grades; the other a typical middle school with sixth-eighth grades.
- Stayton High School: The home of the Eagles is the comprehensive high school for the district, serving grades 9-12.
- Options Academy: Includes Stayton Virtual Academy, an online K-12 academy, and Locust Street Academy, the district's grades 9-12 alternative school.

**Sublimity:** Sublimity is on the north side of Highway 22, includes over 1000 households, and is home to about 3000 residents. One district school campus serves students in the area:

• Sublimity School: The home of the Wildcats consists of one building serving elementary grades kindergarten through fifth grade and another building that serves Middle school students, grades 6-8. A third building includes the gym with a cafeteria below serves all students.

## **Our Students**

The total student enrollment in the district averaged approximately 2100 students over the past five years. Each school across the district is unique in its own student demographics, yet the collective demographics of the district are as follows:

#### **Student Demographics:**

White: 69% Hispanic: 21% Other: 10%

## Our Programs

District programs include but are not limited to:

- Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID Schoolwide)
- BERC Instructional Habits and Evaluation System (BERC)
- Emotional Intelligence and Resiliency Program (RULER)
- Advanced Placement (AP), Willamette Promise, Early College, College Now Programs (University/College Credit)
- Career-Preparation Learning and Pathways. (CTE)
- Outdoor School for all 6th-grade students. (OS)
- Special Education Services, including Learning Resource Centers, Life Skills, and Structured Learning Classrooms.

## Our Staff

North Santiam School District 29J is one of the larger employers in the area, with a total staff of approximately 275 employees. Our dedicated team includes 130 teachers, with roughly 70% having three or more years of teaching experience. Student well-being is prioritized through comprehensive support, with school guidance counselors and/or deans of students available on every campus. Our classified staff, exceeding 100 individuals, plays a vital role, encompassing educational assistants, food service personnel, maintenance teams, office staff, and other essential roles that directly or indirectly support student learning. Transportation Services for students are provided by an independent contractor.

## Our Administrators & Superintendent

The Superintendent stewards the operations and human capital of the school district as the superintendent. Administrators and directors steward and lead school campuses or programmatic areas of the district, such as Teaching & Learning, Special Programs, Fiscal & Business Services, Nutrition Services, Human Resources, and Facilities & Maintenance.

## Our School Board

A seven-member, publicly elected board of directors oversees the hiring and performance of the district superintendent, as well as policies and budget for the district. The 2024-2025 Board of Directors who created and approved this strategic plan include:

- Erin Cramer, Chair, 6 years on the NSSD board;
- Mackenzie Strawn, Vice-Chair, 4 years;
- Coral Ford, 4 years;
- Mark Henderson, 4 years;
- Alisha Oliver, 8 years;
- Mike Wagner, 18 years;
- Laura Wipper, 20 years

## **OUR VISION**

Future-ready graduates.

## **OUR MISSION**

Provide a skills-based and rigorous academic education for all students.

## OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLE

Do what is best for all kids!

## OUR VALUES

The following district values serve as a framework for both staff behavior and student learning:

**Citizenship:** District staff and students who are ready to be active, informed, responsible members of our communities and society, including civic participation.

**Accountability:** As a public entity, the district and its staff strive to achieve successful outcomes while being good stewards of public resources. We also teach and expect students to do the same and to learn responsibility for themselves. Accountability for the district includes transparency with honesty, integrity, and ethical principles in all we do.

**Relationships/Connections:** Strong, supportive relationships among students, staff, families, and our four communities are a priority. This includes fostering an inclusive environment where every student and staff member feels valued and connected within their school and the district. This also includes connecting and collaborating with our business community in efforts to improve graduate readiness.

**Excellence:** We are committed to achieving the highest standards in education and district operations. This includes fostering curiosity in students that encourages exploration and adaptation in the face of challenges and nurtures thoughtful innovation. We want students to develop the same aptitudes for their own success.

## PLANNING PROCESS

## Background

The North Santiam School District embarked on a year-long process to develop a strategic plan. The goal was to develop an implementable plan that would refine our approach, optimize existing successful strategies, and maximize our impact on critical student outcomes. The process included reviews of existing district plans and data and extensive outreach to students, staff, families, and community members. Key considerations in these reviews were the analysis of pre-pandemic performance and the emerging trends observed as student learning recovered and progressed following the impacts of 2020.

The demographics and unique characteristics of the district's four communities and six schools were additional considerations in the planning process. The district understands how its schools serve as hubs in each community and is committed to maintaining community schools.

Work sessions with the school board and district superintendent wrapped around all planned activities Material efforts were made to engage representatives of all demographics that make up the district which resulted in some sessions being translated into Spanish. Student input came from middle schoolers at all three campuses and data from the work of the "Stayton 7" student advisory group at the high school. District representatives went to local events to hear from community members. There were listening sessions with community governments, organizations, businesses, and faith-based representatives.

Representatives of the North Santiam School District sought input from many individuals from every corner of the district to explore as many perspectives as possible. The discussions and questions revolved around four main topics:

- What attribute or knowledge is most important for a graduate's readiness for their future?
- What is working or "good?"
- What needs improvement or "is hard?"
- What else do you want us to know?



## What We Heard

Comments from almost 300 in-person interviews and questionnaires were curated. Beyond the board and the district office, about a third of this input came from building staff, about another third from students, and the remaining third from families and diverse members of all the district's communities.

### Excerpts of what we heard that will guide the implementation of this plan:

#### **Elements of Readiness for Graduates:**

- Responsible, accountable, and prepared to be independent.
- Social skills and emotional maturity.
- Academic proficiencies.
- Career readiness includes work ethic, dependability, teamwork, communication skills, critical thinking, etc.
- Civic and community-mindedness.

#### **Efforts to Continue:**

- Positive district, school, and staff culture at campuses serving pre-K through 8th grade.
- Staff district-wide who care and are dedicated to student outcomes and readiness for what is next.
- Strategies and instruction methods from AVID practices.
- Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS).

### **Opportunities for Improvement:**

- High school culture.
- Partial implementation of AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) creates mixed perceptions and questions.
- Increase academic rigor and expectations, especially at the high school.
- Frenetic pace of today's education is hard on students and staff.
- Want more advanced courses and relevant electives at the high school AND middle school grades.

#### **Challenges to Manage Throughout Efforts:**

- Extensive demands of regular documentation and reporting required by the Department of Education.
- Student mental health has declined; behavior issues have increased in magnitude and frequency; and new laws make it more difficult to navigate.
- Still in recovery from the pandemic all students have not returned to in-person learning; student engagement remains affected.
- Retaining quality staff under the above conditions is more of a challenge.

## Analysis of Data and Inputs

Themes were identified based on review and analysis of all of the data, input, and comments collected. Common themes stood out, but there were also differences between perspectives from staff versus students versus families and community members. Top themes are shown in the tables below.

## Top areas for Graduate Readiness by Source

NSSD Staff	Students	Families / Community Members
Independence	Social/Emotional	Independence
Social/Emotional	Academics	Social/Emotional
Civic/Community	Health	Personal Growth

## Top Areas Felt to Be Working or Good by Source

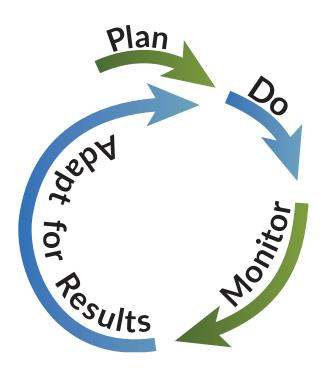
NSSD Staff	Students	Families / Community Members
District/School Culture	District/School Culture	Independence/Career
Academics	Academics	Academics
Staff Culture/Development	School Activities	Social/Emotional

## Top Areas Felt to Need Improvement by Source

NSSD Staff	Students	Families / Community Members
Operations	Academics	Academics
Academics	District/School Culture	Social/Emotional
Social/Emotional	Social/Emotional	Operations

### **Brief Definitions of Top Themes**

- Academics: Learning outcomes, course options, including advanced and electives, rigor.
- Independence/Career: Combination of personal skills, critical thinking, and other basics for successful independent living and responsible member of the work force.
- **Civic/Community:** Active interest in contributing to the community and active engagement in civic activities.
- **District/School Culture:** Perceptions of a positive school or district climate.
- **Growth:** Eye on the future, goals, and how to improve opportunities.
- Health: Nutrition and activities that contribute to physical and mental health.
- Operations: Related to how the district is doing things (as opposed to what).
- School Activities: Co-curricular sports and activities and school/district events.
- **Social/Emotional:** Ability to navigate basic social norms and age-appropriate levels of maturity, coping skills, and mental health.
- **Staff Culture/Development:** Teacher and other staff collaboration, support, and preparation to do what is best for kids.



The school board spent its work sessions assimilating all the details of input and data as well as the themes. Reflection on the district's core work crystallized its strategic focus over the next five years and led to refinement of the district mission, vision and values included in this strategic plan.

The superintendent will lead the implementation of all elements of this strategic plan. The board will support implementation by overseeing the budget, policy, and the superintendent's management of outcomes.

Several thoughtful ideas were also heard that didn't necessarily lend themselves to a five-year strategic plan but were nearterm operational improvements. Some of these ideas were implemented and some will be evaluated further for potential implementation.

# A LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT:

## Lee Loving

Dear North Santiam School District 29J Community,

I look forward to leading implementation of the North Santiam School District's strategic plan, Results 2030 - a roadmap that will guide our priorities, decision-making, and continuous improvement over the next five years. This plan reflects our shared commitment to future-ready students, academic growth, student and staff well-being, and thriving local communities for years to come.

Grounded in valuable input from staff, families, students, and community members, this strategic plan is designed to ensure that every student is equipped for success in their next steps, no matter what that student chooses to pursue. As we implement this plan, we will focus on strengthening instructional practices, maintaining strategic and responsible budgeting, investing in the growth and support of our staff, and providing students with the skills they need to be future-ready.

Research and experience continue to show that strong community support leads to better student outcomes. As we move forward, we are committed to deepening the partnership between our schools and the broader community. To foster transparency and engagement, we plan to introduce a public dashboard in the coming year that will track strategic plan progress and share meaningful updates with the community.

Thank you for your ongoing partnership and support as we work together to make the North Santiam School District a place where every student has the opportunity to succeed.

Thank you for your support and dedication to our students and schools...Proud to be NSSD!

Lee W. Loving Superintendent North Santiam School District 29J

