



Updating Inter-Lakes School District Strategic Plan

Phase I – Engage All Stakeholders Summary Report



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Visit the strategic plan website: <https://www.interlakes.org/strategic-plan>.

For further discussion about this phase and the data collected contact Mary Moriarty.

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About Phase 1: Engage All Stakeholders

Community engagement is key to any strategic plan. One of many components of the Inter-Lakes School District Vision, Mission, and Core Values is community connections where the “active commitment of family, community, and schools is essential for a quality learning experience.”¹ In line with this commitment is Phase 1 of the district’s current strategic planning process. **District administration invited community members to join asking people to:**

“Help Shape Our Future! Together, we can strengthen our Inter-Lakes Community, set meaningful goals, and create a brighter future for all our students!”

Timeline and Overview

- Timing**
- March 2025: School Board input initial session
 - April 2025: Community Conversations
 - May 2025: Upper-level student Conversations, Post-Graduate Survey, and Post-Graduate Reception
 - June 2025: School leadership session and Follow-up community survey
 - July 2025: Strategic Planning Committee begins framing the plan

Objective To inform the Vision of the Inter-Lakes School District over the next 5-years

Process Engage all stakeholders (parents/guardians, students, community, and staff) through surveys and community based listening sessions. Seek feedback from graduates who graduated within the last ten years.

Disclaimer and Purpose of this Summary

This engagement summary was drafted by New Hampshire Listens to inform the development of Inter-Lakes School District’s strategic planning conversations among district leadership and the mixed stakeholder writing team.

The information compiled here should not be considered the opinion or perspective of the district or New Hampshire Listens nor should they be considered representative of the entirety of the Inter-Lakes School District Community – whether it be students, staff, leadership, families, or community members.

The summary offers those writing the strategic plan and leading the district to engage in dialogue that helps move everyone forward together. This wealth of knowledge, expertise, and experience shared by a variety of stakeholders will benefit Inter-lakes schools for years to come as everyone continues to grow and learn.

¹ From <https://www.interlakes.org/strategic-plan>

Engagement Process and Participation

Winter 2025 - School Board and Superintendent Framing

In late winter 2025 New Hampshire Listens began working with district leadership to prepare for the engagement activities. On March 18, 2025, the Inter-Lakes School Board spent time discussing how to begin framing the strategic plan—what questions would be helpful to ask during the April 2025 conversations? The board hoped to see a focus on opportunities, strengths, and solutions – with students’ many different pathways to success as a central goal.

Spring 2025 – Community Conversations and Survey, and Current Student Conversations and Post-Graduate Survey

April – Community Conversations

In April 2025, all members of the Inter-Lakes community were invited to join conversations that would help build a shared vision and plan for the future of their schools. The process for each conversation included time for participants to engage in at stations that represented six areas of focus (see Table 4). Questions included a focus on strengths, hopes, sources of information and data, projects, and community collaborations.

Participants were welcomed by school board members and district leadership. Everyone listened to student speeches from Meredith Rotary Club’s annual Four-Way Test Speech Contest and learned about the draft “Vision of a Laker.”² Leadership took notes while New Hampshire Listens moderated. The superintendent and principal of the middle-high school were available for anyone who wanted a one-on-one conversation.



Figure 1. People gathering at tables in Meredith, Center Harbor, and Sandwich for Community Conversations

² Inter-Lakes School Board members: <https://www.interlakes.org/school-board>; Rotary Four-way speech contest winter: https://www.laconiadailysun.com/community/announcements/rotary-hosts-annual-four-way-speech-contest/image_c83f47bc-9320-4f2c-a2da-cceb7c2fbff2.html.



Across all three conversations, 125 different people participated. When counting the people who attended multiple sessions, the total number of participants was 152. Table 1 shows how many people participated at each location and their role.

Table 1. Community Conversation Counts (Participant Type and Location)

Type of Participant	Totals	Meredith (4/3/25)	Center Harbor (4/10/25)	Sandwich (4/15/2025)
Staff	59	19	23	17
Parents	40	18	5	17
Community	22	3	9	10
Staff and Parent	11	5	2	4
Students	7	1	3	3
School Board	7	2	2	3
Local Selectmen	4	1	3	0
Town Administrator	1	0	0	1
State Representative	1	1	0	0
TOTALS	152*	50	47	55

*Table 1 shows the total number of participants by event including repeaters (n=152). The number of unique participants across all community conversations was 125. Fourteen members of the administrative team attended 2 to 3 conversations. Three teachers and one parent also attended more than one conversation. The counts in this table are totals that include repeat participants.

May - Student Conversations and Post-Graduate Survey

In May 2025, students in grades 7-12 engaged in conversations during their advisories, using a similar process, questions, and focus areas as the community sessions in April. Advisory teachers facilitated. The themes from the student conversations are embedded in Table 4.

Additionally, a post-graduate survey was sent out through the superintendents’ office. **Thirty-six graduates responded to the survey sent out by the superintendents’ office in May 2025.** Figure 2 shows how many graduates responded by graduation year. Table 2 shows survey participation by school(s) attended.

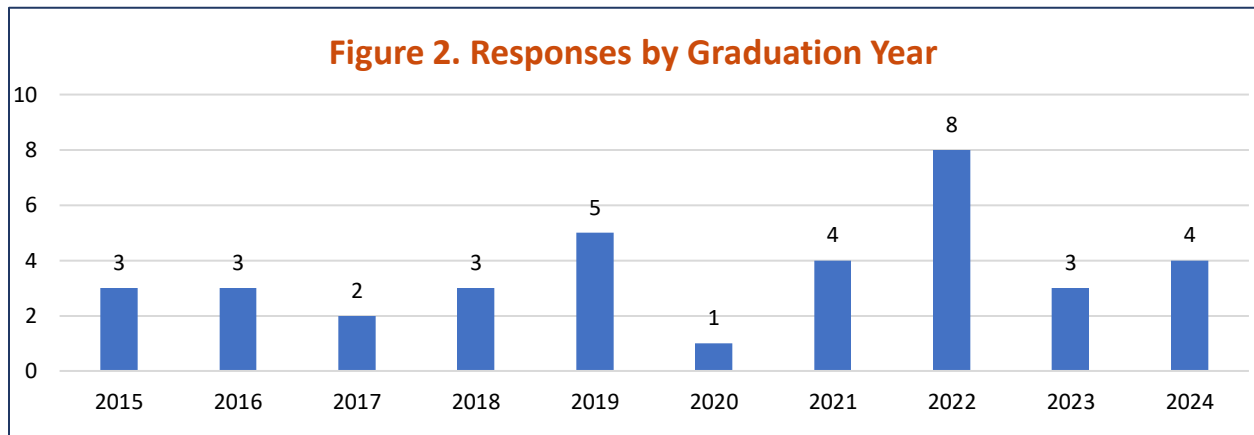




Table 2. Responses by Schools Attended

Schools	Count
Inter-lakes Elementary School	29
Inter-lakes Middle School	33
Inter-lakes High School	34
Sandwich Central School	5

**Note respondents could select more than one option, given many will have attended elementary through high school in the district.*

June - Community-Wide Survey

In June 2025, a community-wide survey was also sent out through the superintendent’s office. Ninety-six community members responded to the survey; see Table 3 for details.

Table 3. Community Connections to Inter-Lakes School District

Type of Participant	Count
Staff	17
Community member (no school age children)	12
Parent/Guardian (with school age children not enrolled in the district)	3
Student	2
Alumni	2
Parents of Alumni	2
Grandparent of school age children enrolled in district	1
Retired Paraeducator	1
Club advisor	1
TOTAL	104*

**Table 4 shows the total number of participants by event including repeaters (n=104). The number of unique participants was 96.*

Synthesis of Themes for Further Discussion³

Community, Student, and Leadership Conversations

The themes in Table 4 are a synthesis of student, community, and leadership conversations. The focus areas resulted from consultation with the school board and superintendent in March 2025. In June 2025, school administrators provided their reflections on community and student conversations that occurred in April and May respectively using summaries developed by New Hampshire Listens, and their own experiences as district leaders and community conversation notetakers.

³ Phase 2 (Mid-June–August 2025) Objective: Use the information gained in Phase 1 to draft a Strategic Plan with measurable outcomes. This draft will be developed through a small working Strategic Planning Committee.



Table 4. Community, Student, and Leadership Conversation Themes

Areas of Focus	Themes to Support Further Discussion*
<p>Teaching & Learning: <i>What and how we teach, what tools we use to teach; How we know if students have learned; What we do to meet the different learning needs for all students; What we provide for professional learning for staff</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to enhance and strengthen implementation of competency-based teaching and learning. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use assessment practices to reflect authentic, real-world, collaborative, work-based, performance-based, nature-based approaches. ○ Anchor lesson planning in competency-based education practices and calibrate on the science of learning. ○ Leverage learner-centered, high-engagement instructional practices (i.e., individualized topics of study and passion projects). ○ Utilize evidence-based instructional resources. ○ Develop interdisciplinary experiences. ○ Ensure consistent practices across grade levels and content areas. ○ Support the refinement and operationalization of the “Vision of a Laker.” ○ Continue to develop and support personalized learning pathways for learners (i.e., work-based, technical centers, community-based, career preparations). • Analyze current technology integration practices (including AI) and intentionally develop balanced, age-appropriate experiences and learning expectations.
<p>Co-Curricular & Athletics: <i>How we extend student learning experiences beyond the school day through clubs, sports, and programs (e.g., Destination Imagination, Lakerbots, Interact, Athletics).</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop elementary co-curriculars and athletics. • Develop strategies for sustainable balance of offerings based on student interest and participation. • Develop strategies to create fiscal balance between co-curriculars and athletics. • Integrate communication plans to reach the community outside of schools.
<p>Finance & Operations – Facilities, Technology, Human Resources, Transportation: <i>How we budget and allocate funds; How we have safe, functional and future ready physical environments (e.g., buildings, grounds, fields); How we have safe and future ready technology infrastructure and learning tools; How we operate as an employer; How we transport students to and from school and to other experiences off of the school campus (e.g., field experiences, club/sporting events).</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to keep facilities and infrastructure clean, safe, and secure. • Continue to be deliberate and explicit about technology usage in the district and support students, families, and staff on use of technologies. • Create a forward-thinking budget—looking at tax rate, attrition, declining enrollment, future capital improvements. • Continue the practice of analysis of the budget and operational needs to get the most out of the community investment.



Staff – Culture & Climate, Wellness

Social, Emotional, Physical: *How we create and sustain a positive, respectful, and connected work environment for all staff.*

- Include strategies that help support staff’s work-life balance and professional relationships and/or networks.
- Incorporate a structure and plan for staff to give ongoing feedback, ensuring all perspectives are heard and integrated into our collective work.
- Plan for opportunities that lend to staff bonding and team building.

Students – Culture & Climate, Wellness

Social, Emotional, Physical: *How we create and sustain learning environments in which every student feels safe, valued, and connected in their school experience.*

- Develop plans to support students’ intentional cellphone and social media use, and technological literacy.
- Strategize for curricular opportunities that support students’ abilities to adapt and face failure or discomfort—to boost confidence, initiative, and perseverance.
- Maintain evolving structures and staffing to support students’ mental health needs.
- Develop the structure and means to help students and staff move, go, and learn outdoors.
- Utilize data to help implement culture and climate changes.
- Develop and/or refine opportunities for student engagement (e.g., build time for faculty, staff, and students to talk about belonging and checking in with students about the climate, co-curriculars).

Family & Community Engagement

How we build strong connections between families, the community, and our schools (e.g., beginning of the school year calls home, conferences, volunteer opportunities, partnerships).

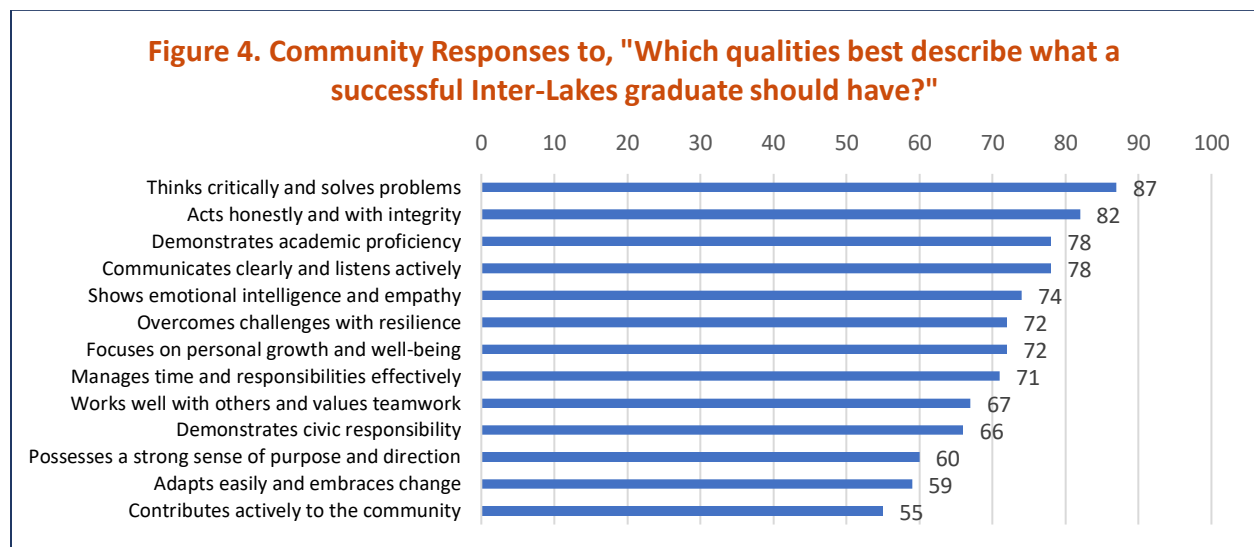
- Develop a unified communication system to promote shared understanding and involvement across a range of stakeholders (community members, families, inter-generational, roles, towns, etc.)
 - Develop ways for district-wide collaboration to enhance connectedness and access to resources/opportunities across age spans and towns.
 - Increase inter-family networks and opportunities for community and families to join interactive school activities.
 - Increase partnerships and increase community presence in the Inter-Lakes schools.
 - Plan for intentional invitations into the school buildings for families throughout the school year.
 - Balance the spectrum of digital and physical resources/materials for students and families.
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Post-Graduate and Community-Wide Survey

Summary of Closed-Ended Responses

The graduate and community perspectives from the surveys reveal alignments in their desire for the district to continually build a relevant, well-rounded education that aligns with life and career preparedness and success. Areas of focus included real-world preparation (e.g., financial literacy, study skills, and career readiness), academic rigor, staff quality, and student well-being.

Their combined feedback suggests a desire for the district to prepare students beyond academics, but also socially and practically for life beyond graduation. Figures 3 and 4 show responses from graduates and community members respectively that focused on learning and success. These figures can support further discussion (note: people could select more than one response. Totals do not equal the number of respondents, see pages 4 and 5 for participation).



Themes from Open-Ended Question

When asked, “If you could describe your time as a student in the Inter-Lakes School District in three words, what words would you choose?” graduates who responded to the survey most often said, “fun!” memorable, and engaging. A few graduates expressed challenges in school and a less positive experience. The word cloud in Figure 5 depicts all the responses from graduates.



Figure 5. Word Cloud of open-ended responses about graduate experiences during school.

There are many overlaps among the community and student conversation themes and those that were discerned from graduate and community survey responses. Table 5 shows these themes from the surveys and serves as a means for framing further discussion during the next phases of strategic planning and perhaps beyond.

Table 5. Graduate and Community Survey Open-Ended Response Themes

Source	Themes to Support Further Discussion
Post-Graduate Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Literacy & Life Skills • Academic Rigor & College Preparation • Study Skills & Personal Development • Diversity, Cultural Awareness & Communication • Career/Vocational Preparation
Community Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Culture/Community and Family Engagement • Academic Quality, Curriculum, and Rigor • Student Behavior & Accountability • Qualified/Accountable Staff and Support Services • Life Skills and Career Preparation • Intentional Use of Technology



Communication Preferences

A final area of interest was communication – this was true for all types of stakeholders. Communication is an evolving process in every school district and community. When asked their preferences community survey respondents leaned more toward text messaging and email newsletters, followed by updates on the district website and social media. Table 6 shows all responses (note: people could select more than one).

Table 6. Communication Preferences Shared by Community Survey Respondents

Type of Communication	Count
Text messages or alerts	63
Email newsletters	59
District website	44
Social media	39
Flyers sent home with students	25
Phone calls or robocalls	25
Local newspaper or community bulletin	24
School board or community meetings	19
Other	3
Monthly reports on school wide activities and opportunities	1
Weekly reports on classroom activities	1

Next Steps

The goal is to share a draft strategic plan fall 2025 for feedback. This feedback will be used to inform the next iteration before it is presented to the School Board for consideration in December 2025. To stay up to date and learn more, visit the strategic planning website: <https://www.interlakes.org/strategic-plan> or contact Mary Moriarty.