



Responsive Strategic Planning at North Tonawanda City Schools

Why Responsive Strategic Planning?

This fall, the district is at an important turning point and has a prime opportunity to engage with the community about a vision and strategic direction for the district. Based on their deep contextual knowledge of our district and passion for responsive planning, North Tonawanda is partnering with [Education Elements](#) to support us in creating our next Strategic Plan. Education Elements is an education consulting firm that, since 2010, has worked with more than 250 districts and 1,000+ schools across the country. Education Elements is a team of passionate, mission-driven former educators – teachers, coaches, principals, district administrators, data experts – all of whom are committed to improving student outcomes.

This partnership will take us through four phases of designing a strategic plan beginning with aligning on needs and current state of the district and culminating with the launch of our new strategic plan in spring 2022.

By the end of the project, we will:

<p>Deepen awareness of community needs, strengthening relationships and support</p>	<p>Build coherence and alignment across district, school and departmental initiatives</p>	<p>Build knowledge of leading strategic planning and implementation practices</p>	<p>Prioritize efforts to maximize value for students, families and the community at large</p>	<p>Design structures to look ahead and adapt plans when new information is known</p>	<p>Define success metrics that communicate progress and build overall confidence in the plan's execution</p>
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Teams We will Activate

Who you engage and how you engage people says more about your values than your plan ever will. To develop a responsive plan, Education Elements recommends incorporating all stakeholders into a feedback loop. This feedback loop serves to generate ideas, present proposals and catalyze change. Teams engaged with this loop are also encouraged to collaborate actively and dynamically. As a result, the strategic planning process becomes a new way of operating within an organization versus a document that sits on a shelf.

Education Elements has created a governance structure for this project that ensures clear roles, diverse voices, deep collaboration, and strong project management. The district will identify team members to serve in the roles listed below to ensure optimal engagement and effective communication.



- **Project Sponsor** - Approves project roadmap and goals, signs off on major deliverables, participates in Strategic Planning Steering Committee (1 District Leader).
- **Project Team** - Manages project planning, logistics, and communications, participates in the Strategic Planning Steering Team (up to 4 District or School Leaders).
- **Steering Team** - Committee of district, school, student, family, and community representatives who design and refine major deliverables. (up to 15 people)
- **Planning Team(s)** - Committees of district, school, student, family, and community representatives who plan towards individual focus areas (some of these members may also be members of the steering team, 5-7 members per planning team recommended).
- **Advisors** - Individuals who provide context, perspective, feedback and ideas. (number varies)

Detailed View Project Roadmap

With each phase, we will continue to update our progress.

Purpose	Timeline	Deliverables
PHASE:PLAN AND ALIGN		
First, we understand existing strategic planning beliefs and processes to align on goals, roles, and structure. We determine which teams we need to put into place to design, advise, and execute on the plan. We make a plan for involving the community in feedback on the strategic direction of the district.	September- November 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strategic Planning Teams ● Stakeholder Engagement Plan ● Responsive Planning Structure for Project Team
PHASE:FOUNDATIONS		
Our goal in this phase is to continue engaging with stakeholder groups including students, families, staff, and the larger community to assess strengths and capabilities while identifying opportunities for growth. We also begin building our foundational themes for the new strategic plan as well as the future mission, vision and values.	November- January 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strategic Planning Architecture ● Continued stakeholder input and feedback ● Initial Strategic Planning Themes/Focus Areas
PHASE:DESIGN		
The majority of our work will be spent designing and iterating the plan. In this phase, we finalize the strategic planning focus areas, a vision for the plan, and a set of initiatives that prioritize what matters most to the district community. We will again invite community engagement through a design night or “soft launch” of the plan. Planning teams for each of the focus areas will begin work at this time.	January- February 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Final Strategic Planning Themes/Focus Areas ● Prioritized list of initiatives and action steps ● Outline of external-facing plan
PHASE LAUNCH & MONITOR		



We will finalize the strategic plan document and create a process for launching and celebrating it with the public. We will design a process for implementation and monitoring of the plan so that we can continually pivot as needed.

February-
March 2022

- Final strategic plan document
- Final Board Presentation
- Sprint Cycle # 1
- Governance Structure for Progress Monitoring