

Strategic Planning: Round 2 Feedback, Compilation

11 May 2023



Introduction

DCSC's strategic planning process intentionally centers students and their families, aligns our goals and strategies with the Duluth Public School District and community partners, and reflects best practices for full-service community schools. We began by identifying and engaging key stakeholders, then used their input to drive our work. With that stakeholder guidance, we conducted a comprehensive SWOT analysis, developed an organizational vision and updated mission, and then drafted goals and strategies.

In this final round of engagement, we gathered feedback on the draft vision, mission, goals, and strategies via a virtual session with board and staff, and an online survey for students, parents / guardians / other family members, volunteers; school staff, administrators, or board members; and community partners. We will use these results to form a working strategic plan to drive our work plans and any necessary adjustments to our organizational structure, partnerships, governance, and evaluation processes.

Vision

Draft vision

Students and families flourish in connected schools and communities

Vision questions

What inspires you about this vision? (Students and families flourish in connected schools and communities)

- Acknowledging families and students
- Clearly states the vision
- Connected
- Connected Schools and community
- Connected- recognizing the community aspect
- Connecting schools and community
- Connection
- Connection
- Connections & communities. YES
- Encompassing students AND families
- Families - I love how broad the term is
- Families, schools and communities are connected
- Flourish
- I like Flourish over Thrive..thrive sometimes feel overused so this is more impactful
- I love the idea of flourishing kiddos
- Including both schools and communities
- Interconnectedness
- It focuses the goal
- Paints a cool picture of families, schools, communities. Flourish is a great word for DCSC and hopefully for families, students, and communities.
- Schools and community need to be connected to each other
- Sounds fine . . vague enough to encompass anything you might want to do. Indicates schools, families, and communities are connected without focusing on minutiae
- Sounds good
- Strengths-based and organic language appropriate for the collaborative. Seems to make for the vision statement for what we want to see and how we get there can be delineated in mission.
- Students and families
- Students and Families are flourishing. It is who we serve
- Students and families come first
- Students and families flourish
- Students and families flourish
- students and families flourish
- Students and families flourish
- Students and families flourishing
- Students thriving
- Students thriving
- The focus on connection is important to the vision.

- The idea of flourishing, not just "getting by"
- The word "flourish" - meaning something really good - above and beyond just getting by or doing well - really points to an atmosphere of growth and health
- The word flourish suggests something richer than succeed
- United front in helping students thrive
- Very concise and easy to remember, which makes it more usable for us in many ways
- "Flourish" is indicative of growth, great word choice

What are your questions or concerns about this vision? (Students and families flourish in connected schools and communities)

- All students and families
- Feels like the word opportunities should be included
- Flourish creates a vivid image, but it doesn't always say how you do that. But if you have a vision then you can find a way to get there. Hope there is enough substance
- Hard to measure flourishing. Like the term, but can't be measured.
- I wonder if the word thrive would be better understood than flourish.
- Important role our school staff play feels missing
- In what areas do they flourish?
- It would be more clear if it said schools connected with their communities
- It's okay that it can't be measured
- N/A
- None
- Not sure of any details of what the vision means
- Seems like it needs more
- Teachers should be included in this statement
- The word 'connected', the definition of that means. Who is 'connected', who is part of 'connected'?
- The word flourish is too general and ambiguous
- The wording "in connected schools and communities" isn't clear - could be read as "connected schools" and "communities" which I don't think is the intention. Maybe something like "in schools and communities that are connected" or "in schools and communities that are woven together"
- Vague
- What are the markers for flourishing?

Mission

Draft mission

DCSC partners, celebrates, and mobilizes for equitable educational experiences that promote wellbeing and success for Duluth Public Schools students and families

Mission questions

What do you find exciting or appealing about this mission statement? (DCSC partners, celebrates, and mobilizes for equitable educational experiences that promote wellbeing and success for Duluth Public Schools students and families)

- ACTION! Mobilize!
- Celebration and Mobilization. Action-oriented
- Clear about the mission.
- Education as experiential
- EQUITABLE educational experiences! YES
- Equity focus
- Families are a part of it – students don't come by themselves
- Feels relationship-based
- Focus on partnerships
- Focused on students and families
- I like the focus on the goal of creating equitable educational experiences and promoting wellbeing and success
- I like the verbs - partner, celebrate, mobilize
- It's inspirational
- Like the part "for equitable educational experiences that promote wellbeing and success" -it's concise but clear
- More detailed that's nice
- Nothing really
- Partners & celebrates. Appears to be action-oriented. Drives the mission statement

- Promote wellbeing & success in whatever way it looks for that kiddo & their family!
- Promoting well-being and success
- Recognizing that it takes partners
- Seems like it can be shortened to say partners & celebrates for equitable experiences that

promote well being and success for all DPS students and families-

- The concept of wellbeing along with success
- The verbs: partner, celebrate and mobilize
- The words partners & celebrates promote well being and success
- Well-being and success

What are your questions or concerns about this mission? (DCSC partners, celebrates, and mobilizes for equitable educational experiences that promote wellbeing and success for Duluth Public Schools students and families)

- Academics should be the main mission
- Change the order, e.g. partners, mobilizes, and celebrates equitable educational experiences that. . .
- Co-creates?
- Connect the community to the schools, create spaces for collaborative leadership (or create programs/services...create equitable solutions), mobilizing efforts with partners, while celebrating our families' values and accomplishments
- Could the two clauses of the statement be flip-flopped? DCSC promotes wellbeing and success for Duluth Public Schools students and families by partnering, celebrating, and mobilizing for equitable educational experiences.
- Equitable education experiences - learning environments that have the capacity to meet all needs equitably
- For the section "...that promotes wellbeing and success for DPS students and families..." (wondering whether something is missing)?? (valued, honored, seen by community, shared leadership, voice,...??)
- How does the collaborative celebrate education experiences?
- I have no questions or concerns
- I think it is important to be more clear about how the DCSC works to achieve its goals. Listening to the children, families, and community are a key facet and should be included. I have made a suggestion below for expressing the essence of how the DCSC works to achieve its goals.
- I think the definition of "equity" and "equitable" isn't always understood. Could this be said another way?
- If you are tying in education need to tie in our staff too
- Is mobilizing a way of saying advocacy?
- Listens to the people it serves, partners with like-minded organizations, and mobilizes the community
- Maybe swap the words 'partners' and 'celebrates'. Not a concern though.
- None
- Partners can read as a noun instead of a verb
- Starting with a list of things can muddy things a bit. Can be a lot to process initially.
- Still not a call to action
- The grammar isn't quite right. One partners with, celebrates with and mobilizes for
- Too long. Maybe just say "mobilizes the community to promote well being and success for . . ."
- What does success mean/look like for students and families
- Whoosh too long
- Wonder about connect, create, mobilize and celebrate as words we're using for our presentations
- Wonder about verb choices like connect (could it replace partnering?), create (could it replace celebrate?), co-create as possibilities
- Wonder about "DCSC connects, creates, and mobilizes for equitable experiences that celebrate wellbeing and success for DPS students and families"

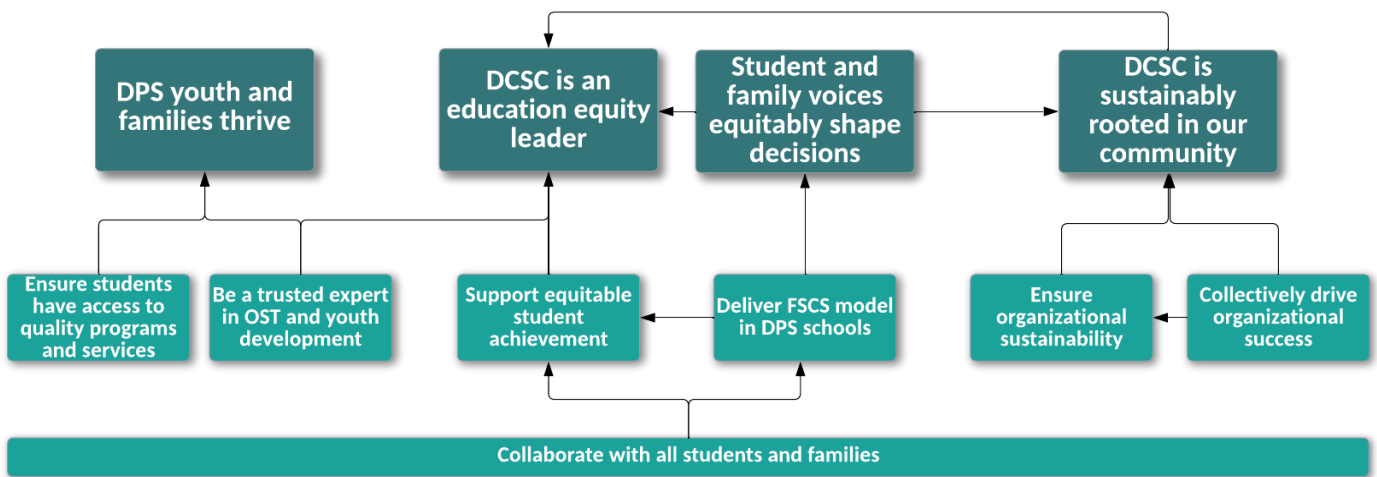
Goals and key strategies

Summary

Working from extensive community input, DCSC staff, board of directors, and core community partners convened in a full-day in-person workshop to draft goals and strategies. Facilitated by our strategic planning consultant, we identified draft goals (10-15 years), key strategies (5-7 years), and a large number of shorter-term supporting actions. A smaller team then refined and organized the results to prepare for this feedback round.

We did this using a “causal” strategy mapping process that links actions to outcomes using arrows. This helps us see what we can do about opportunities and concerns, then commit to focused actions that will lead to agreed-upon, desired outcomes.

Below is a summary showing the draft long-term goals and mid-term key strategies. Following these are goal-strategy clusters with brief descriptions and questions for your feedback.



Cluster 1

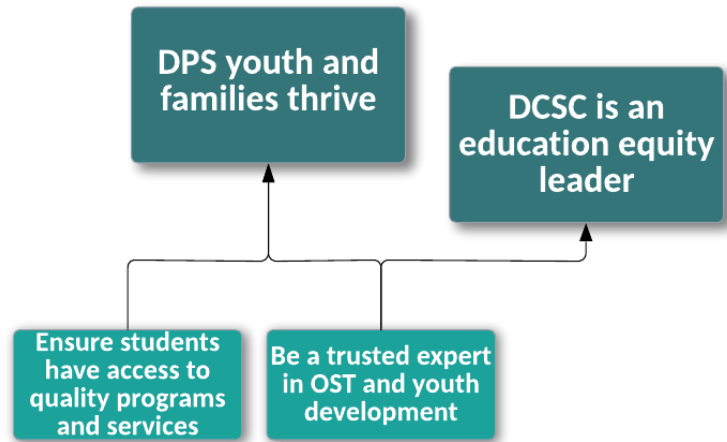
Goals

- **Duluth Public Schools (DPS) youth and families thrive**
- Link to: DCSC is an educational equity leader (see cluster 2)

Key strategies

Ensure students have access to quality programs and services: Create and support strong partnerships, and connect students and families to quality programs and services to help meet their needs

Be a trusted expert in out-of-school-time programs (OST) and youth development: Hire and support diverse staff; provide ongoing training in equity and youth development; ensure high-quality staff to deliver programs and services



Cluster 1 questions

What do you find exciting or appealing about these?

- Being a leader in educational equity is needed to gain the trust of all sectors being served most especially the youth and their families.
- connecting people to services that will help them thrive
- Diagram is clear and makes sense.
- Education equity leader
- Ensuring access
- Ensuring access is at the heart of reaching those students who most need the supportive opportunities that DCSC and its partners can provide.
- I think these are FAB
- Like how having high-quality staff feeds into this so we have the ability to be the trusted experts. That whole support network is there.
- Like the way it looks, one thing leads into the next thing (Anne was a great leader in making sure everything logically flowed together)x
- Love how thrive in the key goal fits in with flourish in the vision
- Quality practices and programs to meet the needs
- Services are focused both in/out of school
- Source and model for positive youth development in the community
- The emphasis on being a trusted expert in OST and Youth Development is key to providing quality programming that is aligned with identified outcomes.

Which of these are confusing or may be hard to explain? For those, what edits would you recommend?

- DPS youth and families thrive should be at the top as it is the goal that everything supports
- For the “be a trusted expert in OST and youth development...” where does health/well-being, trauma informed, culturally responsive, RP, etc fit in??
- For the “ensure students have access to quality programs and services,” I wonder about adding connections and relationships. Recommendation: Ensure students have access to (trusting?) relationships, quality programs, and services
- For “ensure students have access to quality programs and services,” I wonder about adding connections and relationships...thinking through the lens of our organizational values, dual-capacity framework. We have youth development/OST and equitable achievement covered, but I feel we are missing something from the well-being aspect. While we do want to ensure students have access to these programs and services, the “how” (building protective factors, trauma informed, culturally responsive, shared power etc aspects feel those are missing and critical)

- I think somewhere in this, the emphasis around quality developmental relationships needs to be highlighted
- I think this cluster is well-worded and clear.
- Note that ensure students have access..... Means all programs and services, not just OST, and that quality means having trusting relationships within those.
- OST would need to be defined, although I am familiar with Out of School Time
- Part of thriving is critically contingent on their holistic wellbeing and the how..
- Quality involves monitoring and constant improvement cycles
- The phrase 'trusted expert'. Is it research driven? Or data driven?
- Youth and families thrive feels misplaced and causing confusion with being closely tied to OST

Cluster 2

Goals

- DCSC is an educational equity leader
- Student and family voices equitably shape decisions
- Links to / from: DCSC is sustainably rooted in our community (see cluster 3)

Key strategies

Collaborate with all students and families:

Increase student and family engagement, leadership, and advocacy in their schools, with a special emphasis on people who are underrepresented in decision making

Support equitable student achievement *and* deliver full-service community schools (FSCS) model:

- Collectively identify student and family needs and assets, and strengthen community support
- Co-create, evaluate, and refine aligned school improvement, advocacy strategies
- Deliver high-quality programs and services within the FSCS model, and include stakeholders in rapid-cycle improvement
- Gain and maintain public support for DCSC and the FSCS model

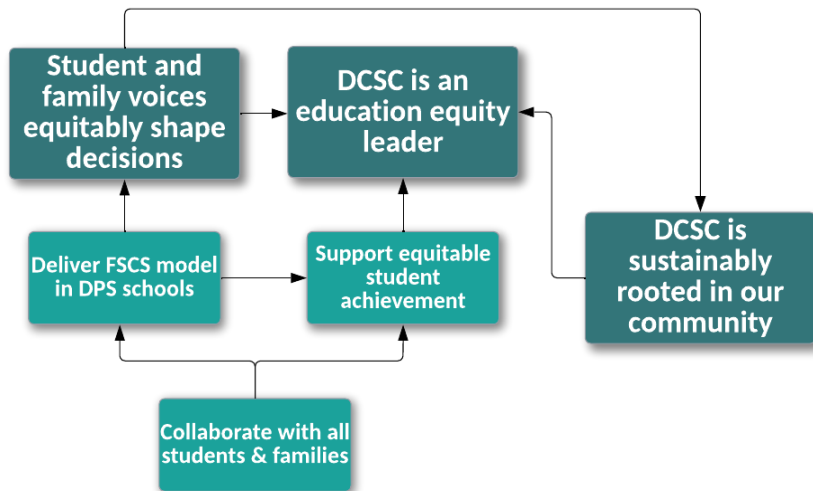
Cluster 2 questions

What do you find exciting or appealing about these?

- | | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Delivering the FSCS model in DPS schools sets the vision for expansion to all schools and clarifies that the model is integrated within the schools. ● Everything looks great. ● How connected each item is to another ● I like “sustainably rooted” ● rooted in community ● Rooted in community makes me feel more connected as a board member. We are people | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● of the community who are building into this. Students and families are at the center and we are all rooted in the same community and building towards the same thing. ● that student and family voices inform DCSC ● The emphasis on collaboration with students and families. ● The high priority of student and family voices equitably shape decisions ● YES |
|---|---|

Which of these are confusing or may be hard to explain? For those, what edits would you recommend?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Equitable student achievement may need some further detail to express the sense that achievement includes, but is much broader than academic scores . Suggested edit: Support equitable and holistic student achievement. ● I think an emphasis on developmental relationships is what creates the conditions for student and family voices, as well as equitable student achievement ● I think the graphic explains the connection | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Is there a reason DCSC is sustainably rooted in our community is lower? ● Student and family voices equitably shape decisions → should it go to DPS Youth and Families thrive ● The how??? ● The statement about including stakeholders in rapid-cycle improvement is unclear to me. I'm not sure how that could be worded differently, but something that is more concrete. ● What is equitable student achievement? Does it mean everyone turns out the same? Does it |
|---|---|



mean opportunities to achieve personal goals, whatever those may be? How are these evaluated?

- Wonder about the verb choice of deliver. Like deliver in that it's an action word– “we're going to deliver/get things done” like a promise.
- “Deliver FSCS in DPS schools...” is there another verb that would be more appropriate?

(Deliver seems more transactional than transformative. Also seems to put more responsibility on DCSC for this rather than our whole school. What is DCSC's role? To support, promote, help facilitate, partner with..to... (doing things with people rather than to or for them)

Cluster 3

Goals

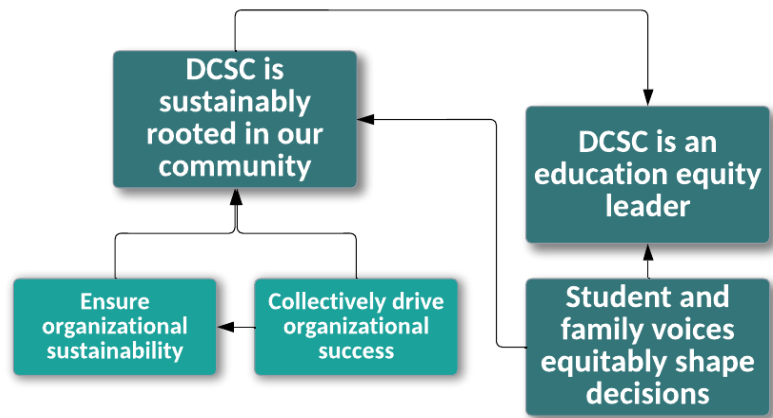
- **DCSC is sustainably rooted in our community**
- Links to/from: Student and family voices equitably shape decisions (see cluster 2)
- Links to/from: DCSC is an educational equity leader (see cluster 1)

Key strategies

Ensure organizational sustainability:

- Ensure aligned, stable, and sufficient funding and support for the organization's critical priorities
- Raise community awareness of DCSC's impact
- Be accountable to students, families, and the community

Collectively drive organizational success: Recruit and support a diverse board and volunteer network to advance critical priorities



Cluster 3 questions

What do you find exciting or appealing about these?

- Community involvement
- Flow chart is concise.
- LOVE IT
- student and family involvement
- that student and family voices shape decisions
- The goal of DCSC being sustainable in our community.
- The inclusion and emphasis on student and family voices.
- The interconnection with the other areas
- The term “rooted in a community” would make me excited to join a board. Feels powerful why you should care, volunteer, be on the board, be involved, etc.

Which of these are confusing or may be hard to explain? For those, what edits would you recommend?

- Collectively drive organizational success is unclear to me. It would seem that along with a diverse board and volunteer network, key partnerships that are embedded in programming play an important role. Perhaps leadership, partners, and constituents drive organizational success.
- I am wondering where the link to the National Full Service Community Schools comes in. There is strength in being aligned with FCSC nationally. Perhaps it contributes to DCSC being an education equity leader and should have its own square. wording suggestion: DCSC is informed by and aligned with the National FCSC best practices. This would also be appropriate being connected to organizational sustainability.
- Is there a way to clarify the role of funders such as local foundations and governmental entities?
- Graphic demonstrates connections well
- What are equitably shaped decisions? Do you mean students and families (which ones) are involved in decisions? The question is not what is important, but how this will be accomplished.

Closing question

In what new or different ways could you contribute to DCSC’s work?

- Assisting with family events