

# STRATEGIC PLAN

## Arlee Public Schools

### Strategic Planning Process

2012

#### Overview

**The Arlee Public Schools** has created a new direction for the school district to strategically focus its resources on identified wants, preferences, and needs of its community. As part of this process, Arlee Public Schools has begun a strategic planning and thinking process that will lead to a stronger and more vital school district. This process will be ongoing as Arlee Public Schools move into the future. This Strategic Plan is intended to help Arlee Public Schools in focusing its resources in a manner that will best benefit the students enrolled in Arlee Public Schools.

The Arlee Board of Trustees, Staff Leadership Team and community began the strategic planning and thinking process necessary to fit with its commitment to students, to community engagement, to moving the District forward and to utilizing a knowledge-based decision making process.

As part of its preparation for planning strategically, Arlee Public Schools brought in staff from the Montana School Boards Association with expertise in strategic planning for public schools to help facilitate the group through the initial strategic planning process.

On February 12, 2013, the Arlee Board of Trustees formally adopted its new strategic plan.

The Arlee Board of Trustees and Staff Leadership Team view the process of strategic planning as an ongoing process within the school system. This is not a "strategic planning project" that is completed. Nor is it intended as the end of a conversation, but rather as the beginning of one – a conversation regarding how Arlee Public Schools can best serve the community and maximize the focus and impact of its resources on its Core Purpose. Arlee Public Schools intend that this plan become the means by which the Arlee community's values, needs and priorities can be regularly discussed, clarified, documented, prioritized and pursued by our school system over time.

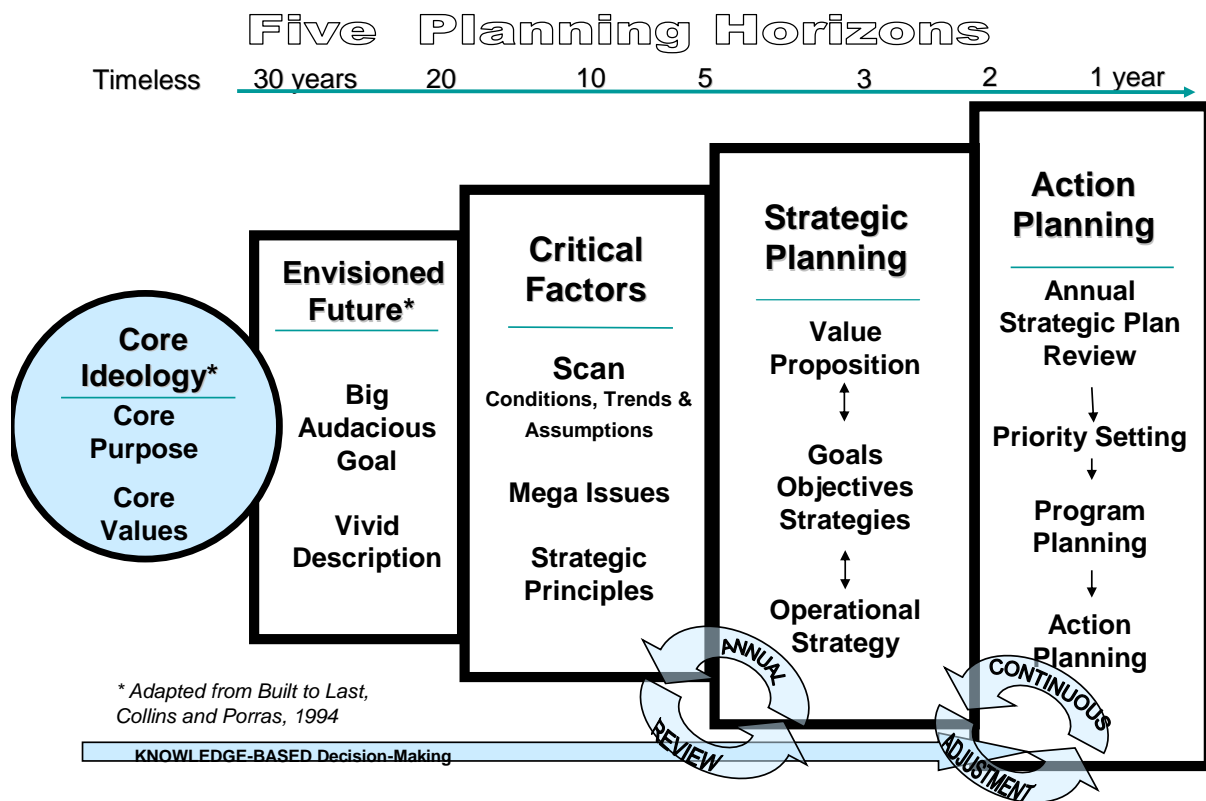
Adoption of a plan is an affirmation of the initial general intent and direction articulated by the Core Ideology, Envisioned Future and Goals and Strategic Objectives. It is understood that the strategies identified in this document will change over time as we implement the plan and gain a

deeper understanding of what does and does not work and incorporate the feedback of our constituents to ensure that the plan remains relevant and contemporary over time.

Progress toward achieving identified strategic objectives will be assessed at least annually, and the plan will be updated based on achievement and changes in the needs of the students served by the Arlee Public Schools.

## Strategic Planning Framework

The framework used by the Arlee Public Schools for its strategic planning process was adapted from a model developed by Jim Collins, author of “Built to Last” and “Good to Great.” The Board and Staff Leadership Team focused on five different planning horizons, starting with the long term issues first to provide focus on shorter term efforts.



## **Core Ideology of the Arlee Public Schools:**

**Core ideology** describes a school district's consistent identity that transcends all changes related to its relevant environment. It consists of two elements - **core purpose** - the school district's reason for being - and **core values** - essential and enduring principles that guide a school district. **Envisioned future** conveys a concrete yet unrealized vision for the school district. It consists of a **big audacious goal** - a clear and compelling catalyst that serves as a focal point for effort - and a **vivid description** - vibrant and engaging descriptions of what it will be like to achieve the big audacious goal.

### **Core Purpose:**

*The Core Purpose of the Arlee Public School is to be a model, mentor, and monitor for students while providing them with a safe atmosphere and the necessary tools to become well-rounded, productive citizens while maintaining the cultural identity of who they are.*

### **Core Values:**

*The Core Values of Arlee Public Schools are:*

**Pride** – We value pride in the culture of our reservation. We believe there is strong pride in our school and the tradition of being a “Warrior” and “Scarlet”.

**Respect** – We value respect for ourselves and others at all times. We believe that respecting other’s individuality and accepting the unique attributes of everyone is vital to our success. We also value the environment surrounding the Arlee community.

**Community** - We value the honored traditions our community has maintained. We believe the involvement of the community in our school and the nurturing it provides for our young people will encourage life-long learning for our students, staff, the Board and parents.

**Cultural Awareness** – We value the long tradition of accepting cultural diversity and maintaining our native language. We believe it is important to accept everyone for who they are, and in doing so it will help our young people become successful in the world outside of Arlee.

**Family** – We value the family. We believe the long-term, generational families provide a legacy for our young people by providing them with the history of our culture and language.

## **20 Year Planning Horizon**

### **Envisioned Future of the Arlee Public Schools:**

#### **Big Audacious Goal:**

Arlee Public Schools is recognized as a safe and inviting school where students want to be and staff that helps students find their passions.

### **Vivid Descriptors of the Desired Future**

- We have created a culture of caring and capable students.
- We have developed a Salish language core curriculum for grades K-12 to maintain and increase cultural heritage.
- We have developed a rigorous K-12 curriculum by keeping our teacher/student ration to 1:15.
- We have integrated IEFA across the curriculum.
- We have state-of-the-art facilities and equipment.
- We have increased our graduation rate to 90% or obtain equivalency and at the same time have lowered our dropout rate.
- We have a safe school environment free of harassment and bullying.
- We have obtained grants to assist the District with our programs and services.
- We are continually making advancements in technology staying ahead of the curve while maintaining and promoting the value of human interactions.
- We support access to technology in and out of the classroom.
- We have recruited and retained highly effective and highly trained staff in all areas and have increased the number of Native American teachers.
- All levels of government adequately support education as well as community control and support of our schools.
- We have strengthened cultural identity while embracing cultural diversity and as a result our students see the value in the differences of our society.

## **5-10 Year Planning Horizon**

### **Assumptions Regarding the Relevant Future for the Arlee Public Schools**

In order to make progress against the 20 year Envisioned Future, Arlee Public Schools must constantly anticipate the strategic factors likely to affect its ability to succeed, and to assess the implications of those factors. This process of building foresight about the future will help Arlee Public Schools to constantly recalibrate its view of the relevant future, a basis upon which to update the strategic plan on an annual basis. As the outcome-oriented goals that will form the basis of the long-range strategic plan will be based on this foresight, annual review of these statements will be an appropriate method of determining and ensuring the ongoing relevance of the strategic plan.

Creating the Assumptions - during the Strategic Planning Process, the Arlee Board of Trustees, Staff Leadership Team, and community members made many assumptions about the future. While many different assumptions were made, what follows are those assumptions that are likely to have the greatest influence on the development of Arlee Public School's Strategic Plan.

## **Assumptions about the future**

### **Demographics**

- K-6 class size will remain about the same (35-40)
- The school will remain as the largest employer
- Economy will drive many of the current realities (housing, jobs, socio-economic related issues)
- Arlee will continue to be a bedroom community
- Single parent/non-parent caregivers around 50%
- High school students as first generation attendees will reduce
- Taxable land is small in proportion to federal and trust property
- Free and reduced lunch will remain around 70% of student population

### **Business/Economic Climate**

- Increase in small businesses and recreational use
- There will only be growth in the area if the economy picks up (construction, service industry, recreational)
- Satellite offices will increase (SKC, CSK Tribes)
- Increase a need for basic services.
- There will not be a big influx of businesses. The status quo will continue.

### **Legislation/Regulation**

- Reauthorization of ESEA (whatever it will look like) will have a huge impact on education.
- Unfunded mandates will continue and be on the increase.
- State funding -- not optimistic in terms of having the state adequately funding schools.
- Public schools will look drastically different
- Certification for Vocational Pathways will extend into junior colleges and tech schools.

### **Technology /Science**

- Schools are going to have to adapt to the needs, wants and preferences of students/parents.
- The prohibition of cell phones in schools will no longer be a topic of discussion.
- We will need to address the issue of ensuring that every student, especially at the lower grade levels, has access to technology tools.
- We need to address the issue of more math and science at the lower grades.
- We need to provide more adult education on technology.

## **Politics and Social Values**

- It may be a struggle to preserve the Native American language.
- Preservation of environmental issues will continue to be on the forefront. Water is sacred.
- Maintaining traditional cultural values vs. mainstream cultural values will continue to be a struggle.
- School politics will continue to be a tender subject.

## **5-10 Year Planning Horizon**

### **Mega Issues facing the Arlee Public Schools**

**Mega issues** are issues of strategic importance, which represent choices the school district will need to make in defining the ultimate direction of its long-range plan. These issues represent potential impediments to achievement of the Envisioned Future, and form a basis for dialogue about the choices facing the school district. These questions can serve as an ongoing "menu" of strategic issues that, using a knowledge-based approach in gathering insights relative to Arlee Public Schools' strategic position and directional choices for each of the issues, can be used by the Board to create regular opportunities for strategic dialogue about the future issues facing the school district.

Note: The mega-issue questions are not necessarily arranged in priority order.

### **Mega-Issue Questions for consideration by the District:**

- How do we effectively utilize the land owned by the District (e.g. sell all or a portion of it)?
- How do we ensure that our students are exposed to different culture, viewpoints and opinions, and at the same time preserve their cultural heritage?
- How do we plan for the anticipated change in our financial resources (e.g. depleted reserves, disappearance of \$300,000 of grant programs)?
- What can the school district do to address AYP at the elementary level?

### **Knowledge-Based Decision Making Questions**

The Board should prioritize the above-referenced mega issues and decide which of these issues require immediate attention on the part of the Board. Once the identified mega-issues are prioritized, the Board will set aside time at scheduled meetings to analyze a particular mega issue. At such meetings, the Board's primary focus will be on the mega-issue at hand. All other business (routine or otherwise) will be conducted at the end of the meeting once the dialogue and

deliberation on the mega-issue has been concluded for that meeting. When analyzing mega issues, the Board will utilize a knowledge-based decision making process. This will keep the focus of the Board on relevant factors to consider as it develops strategies to overcome particular impediments/barriers that may impact the Board's strategic direction. The Board will analyze mega-issues by answering the following questions:

1. What do we know about the wants, needs and preferences of our constituents that are relevant to this decision?
2. What do we know about the current realities and evolving dynamics facing our constituents/community that is relevant to this decision?
3. What do we know about the capacity/strategic position of our school district that is relevant to this decision?
4. What are the ethical implications of our choices?

## **Five Year Planning Horizon**

### **Outcome-Oriented Goals and Strategic Objectives**

The following thinking represents goals for the next five years. They are areas in which Arlee Public Schools will explicitly state the conditions or attributes it wants to achieve. These outcome statements will define, "what will constitute future success." The achievement of each goal will move the school district toward realization of its Envisioned Future.

Strategic Objectives provide direction and actions on how the school district will accomplish its articulated goals. All strategies included in the strategic plan should be considered accomplishable at some point in the future. Strategic Objectives are reviewed annually by the Arlee Board of Trustees, Staff Leadership Team and faculty.

### **Goals of the Arlee Public Schools:**

#### **Goal Area 1: Community Engagement and Support**

**Statement of Intended Outcome, Five years:** Arlee Public Schools has worked effectively to gain community trust and unity. The staff, administration, board and community work in collaboration for the betterment of all our students. As a result of our collective efforts, resolution to the issues that polarize the school and community have been addressed and resolved.

#### **Strategic Objectives – Two Year Plan:**

- We will engage and listen in frequent, open and honest communication between staff, board, parents and community

- We will be proactive with communications that are school/community related through the district automated phone system, newsletters and website
- We will utilize various media communication to get our messages out
- We will increase our adult education opportunities in an effort to enhance the public's interactions with the District
- We will implement a family night
- We will continue to make our district website more user friendly

## **Goal Area 2: Enhanced Student Achievement**

**Statement of Intended Outcome, Five Years:** Arlee Public Schools has enhanced the educational opportunities, programs and services to promote enhanced student achievement and developed systems that promote continuous improvement.

### **Strategic Objectives – Two Year Plan:**

- We are advancing in the direction to fully adopt the common core standards and assessment.
- We will align the K-12 math and science curriculum programs.
- We will identify the necessary steps to be taken to implement a Salish language core curriculum for grades K-12.

## **Goal Area 3: Financial Accountability and Certainty**

**Statement of Intended Outcome, Five Years:** Arlee Public Schools understands that we have limited financial and human resources and we have successfully maximized the resources that we do have. As a result of school and community collaboration, we have maximized every dollar to ensure that we are putting our resources into our identified areas of priority.

### **Strategic Objectives – Two Year Plan:**

- We will refine the budgeting process to include specific categories of revenues and expenditures.
- We will conduct ongoing analysis of anticipating trends that might impact the financial future condition of the District.
- We will develop strategies for examining other resources of funding and/or human resources.
- We will analyze the amount of money that needs to be set aside to ensure that the ongoing needs of our students and staff are met to achieve and maintain accreditation.
- The administration and board will remain actively involved in the district caucus and legislature.



## **Goal Area 4: Quality Instruction**

**Statement of Intended Outcome, Five Years:** The Arlee Public Schools continue to recruit and retain highly qualified and effective personnel. Our K-12 staff is united and collaborates in an effective manner in order to maximize student achievement. Our evaluation instruments are designed to clearly identify the District's high expectations and to assist our staff and the District in meeting those high expectations.

### **Strategic Objectives – Two Year Plan:**

- We will engage and empower staff by developing strategies to identify and prioritize tools, processes, etc., that will provide staff with what they need to continuously improve their skills and abilities for the benefit of our students.
- We have revised our evaluation instruments to ensure that the evaluation tool adequately evaluates the performance of our employees while meeting the expectations of the District.
- The District will continue to take the steps necessary to develop a competitive recruitment package to attract highly qualified staff.
- We will engage and empower staff by developing strategies to identify core programs that work well and eliminating non-essential programs and/or programs that are not deemed to be essential for student achievement.

## **Goal Area 5: Facilities**

**Statement of Intended Outcome, Five Years:** The Arlee Public Schools has facilities that are conducive to learning and meeting the needs of our students. We have a program in place for making continual improvements to our facilities to ensure that our facilities remain relevant, equipped with the necessary technology to meet the needs of our staff and students.

### **Strategic Objectives – Two-Year Plan:**

- We will continue to utilize our Facility Needs Assessment as a guide for the purpose of prioritizing and identifying the current and anticipated needs of the District.