

**Ashland School District
Strategic Plan 2007-2012**

ADOPTED 1/14/08

Strategic Plan Introduction

Welcome to Ashland School District's Strategic Plan. This plan builds on the Ashland Quality Education Model (AQEM)* adopted by the District in April of 2005. The Oregon Quality Education Model* also informed the development of the Strategic Plan. In September of 2006, the Ashland School Board held a community wide meeting to engage the citizens of Ashland in a dialog about what our schools should look like in the 21st century. The theme of that meeting was "Ashland Public Schools in a Rapidly Changing World" and was facilitated by Kate Dickson, an educational consultant who specializes in strategic planning for school districts. Kate has served as an advisor to the district throughout our strategic planning process.

Community members who attended the meeting gave the District feedback about the potential future of Ashland Schools. This was combined with the work the Board and District's administrative leadership team had done previously. The Board then appointed a design team to work on the development of the first draft of the strategic plan. The Design Team met for several months during the 2006-07 school year to develop the draft vision, mission, guiding principles and strategic directions. The draft was reviewed by each school's staff and site council. Their suggestions and revisions were evaluated by the Design Team, and the plan underwent further editing. The School Board adopted the plan at the February 2007 School Board meeting. District administrators and school board members developed the various strategies and indicators of success during the summer of 2007. The Board adopted these elements of the plan in December of 2007. Action Plans, including budgets, assigned personnel and timelines, were developed in early 2008.

The focus of our strategic planning efforts is to accomplish the outcomes for Ashland School District graduates that are included in the final section of our strategic plan. The outcomes are designed to show the life roles, knowledge, skills and attitudes that we think our young people must possess to be effective, positive citizens of the 21st century. Our world is rapidly changing, and our students need to be prepared to work in a global economy. We believe that while mastery of core academic content is important, it is no longer sufficient for success in the 21st Century. Students must also master the new content of global awareness, literacy in economics and civics, along with health and wellness consciousness. Embedded in this learning are the skills of critical thinking, communication, creativity and innovation, collaboration, and media literacy skills. The outcomes express the shared community vision for student success in our rapidly changing world.

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The Strategic Plan consists of the vision and mission statement, guiding principles and strategic directions. These sections of the plan will remain fairly constant for the foreseeable future. Each strategic direction includes a number of strategies and the indicators of success that will be used to measure our progress on that strategy. The strategic directions embody our best thinking about the compelling first steps that need to be taken to help us obtain the outcomes for graduates. Detailed action plans related to these directions and strategies will be developed by the District's administrative team. The strategies, indicators and action plans will be revised annually based on progress made and in response to any new opportunities or challenges that may arise. The Board will review progress on the actions-plans on an annual basis, and the District will then publish a report to the community.

Included in the Strategic Plan are the AQEM prototype schools, with an analysis of the current conditions that exist at each level of schooling. A cost estimate for accomplishing each element of the prototype schools is also included. The annual report to the School Board and the community will outline the progress being made in getting closer to the prototype schools.

The Strategic Plan is a "rolling" five year plan. This means that after the annual review, the timelines and action plans will be extended for a new five year period. In this way, we can ensure that the plan includes both short and long range goals, and that we are continually recalibrating our efforts to achieve the strategic directions.

The Ashland School District would like to thank all of the community members and district staff who have contributed to this work. We know that the strong partnerships that we have between our staff, parents and community members will assist in accomplishing our goal of success for every student in the Ashland School District. To follow our progress, please visit our website at: <http://www.ashland.k12.or.us/SectionIndex.asp?SectionID=67>

Mission

Inspiring learning for life

Vision

Ashland Schools: Empowering students to be lifelong learners, responsible citizens and stewards of the world.

Guiding Principles

Our Guiding Principles express our shared values and beliefs. These form the foundation of our work with students and will always be considered as we develop our strategies and indicators of success.

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- ◆ We believe that students, families, community and staff collaboration is essential for students to become responsible participants in local and global communities.
- ◆ We believe in challenging students to become creative and critical thinkers.
- ◆ We believe each student is unique and benefits when provided choices and guidance in education.
- ◆ We believe that students learn best from compassionate, knowledgeable staff who inspire students to reach their potential.
- ◆ We believe learning is a lifelong process requiring motivation, inspiration and opportunity.
- ◆ We believe that learning is best served when staff members are supported to be innovative, effective educators.
- ◆ We believe safe, welcoming, environmentally responsible and well-equipped facilities support learning.
- ◆ We believe that schools must be flexible with the amount of time and support that individual students receive in order for all students to achieve high levels of success.

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Strategic Directions

We developed our strategic directions after a thorough analysis of our existing conditions. The strategic directions were carefully selected as compelling first steps in accomplishing our vision for all students. We have also selected strategies and success indicators for each direction. Detailed action plans will be developed for each strategic direction that outline immediate, short range and long range actions, budgets, assigned personnel, and timelines. We believe that working on these strategic directions will bring us closer to realizing our graduate outcomes for all of our students.

Strategic Direction 1

All students have the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to successfully navigate a dynamic and changing world.

Strategies

1.1 Educators will align and update K-12 curriculum using content standards* as well as ASD Outcomes for Graduates.

Indicator of Success: This strategy will be successful when we publish and implement aligned curriculum for one subject area each year on the state adoption cycle, resulting in improved student achievement in each subject area.

1.2 Educators will implement Positive Behavior Supports* K-8 to improve students' social skills.

Indicator of Success: This strategy will be successful when we observe improved results from the Schoolwide Evaluation Tool* data and reduced student discipline referrals.

1.3 Ashland School District will create a task force to develop a long-range plan for Ashland High School to maintain excellence while responding to declining enrollment and developing 21st century skills in our students.

Indicator of Success: This strategy will be successful when the task force develops a long-range plan that is then implemented, resulting in academic excellence and providing 21st century skills for students.

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1.4 Ashland School District will utilize a task force to research how to strengthen second language programs and provide a comprehensive second language acquisition program for students K-12.

Indicator of Success: This strategy will be successful when the task force presents program options to the Board for consideration resulting in enhanced second language opportunities for students.

1.5 Teachers will participate in professional development related to technology integration so that technology skills will be embedded in the curriculum and integrated in students' projects.

Indicator of Success: This strategy will be successful when curriculum documents include technology standards K-12; technology skills are incorporated in teaching, and evident in student projects and demonstrations.

1.6 Professional Learning Communities* will define "Essential Learnings*" in each grade level and content area. In this way we will establish a cohesive K-12 school system with a continuum of learning that includes horizontal and vertical articulation* within and across all schools in the district.

Indicator of Success: This strategy will be successful when we publish and implement the Essential Learnings* in all classrooms resulting in improved student achievement on classroom based and state assessments.

1.7 Enhance Power School* and encourage utilization of this program by parents and students.

Indicator of Success: This strategy will be successful when we have increased Power School* utilization rates leading to informed students and parents, improved grades and attendance rates.

1.8 Improve communication among staff, students, parents and community members by enhancing the district website, distributing a district wide newsletter to community members, publishing the Rogue News student newspaper, and by strengthening ties between and among all district schools and programs.

Strategic Direction 2

We recruit, retain and support innovative, effective, exceptional staff in all disciplines, grade levels and support roles.

Strategies

2.1 Ashland School District will implement a Mentoring Program for new teachers and a process to evaluate the Mentoring Program.

Indicator of Success: This strategy will be successful when we retain effective teachers and receive positive results of evaluations related to the Mentoring Program.

2.2 Each school will implement Professional Learning Communities* to support teachers' professional development and continuous improvement.

Indicator of Success: This strategy will be successful when we have improved teacher retention rates, improved instruction, enhanced student learning and received positive program evaluation data.

2.3 The Professional Development Committee* will research the connection between teacher professional development and compensation.

Indicator of Success: This strategy will be successful when the Professional Development Committee makes a recommendation on a compensation model.

2.4 Educators will develop an effective staff development, training and evaluation program for each employee

Indicator of Success: This strategy will be successful when we improve staff retention rates, improve instructional strategies, enhance student learning and receive positive program evaluation data.

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2.5 Ashland School District will initiate research and development regarding staffing issues as they relate to recruitment and retention of talented staff from diverse backgrounds. We will identify quality recruiting and hiring processes and explore options that could allow teachers and other staff to live in the community.

Indicator of Success: This strategy will be successful when we expand and improve recruiting and hiring practices that result in increased staff diversity and improved staff retention.

2.6 Educators will use the Domains of Teaching*, published in the teacher evaluation system, to develop a shared understanding of effective teaching throughout the school district.

Indicator of Success: This strategy will be successful when we routinely use the Domains of Teaching* for self-reflection, staff development and evaluation, resulting in improved classroom instruction.

Strategic Direction 3

All instruction is purposeful, personalized, and rigorous, resulting in students attaining ASD graduation outcomes.

Strategies

3.1 Educators will develop and implement Education Plans* for each student in grades 7-12.

Indicator of Success: This strategy will be successful when Education Plans* are completed, easily accessible, and routinely used by students, parents, counselors and teachers. We anticipate increased graduation rates, improved results from senior class focus groups and surveys and increased participation in parent/teacher/ student conferences at AHS. This strategy will also increase family involvement in course selections for their students, and improved college preparation.

3.2 Each Professional Learning Community* will implement common assessments* K-12.

Indicator of Success: This strategy will be successful when we see improved results in the common assessments including a variety of measures of student achievement for all content areas

3.3 Ashland School District will implement the district Continuous Improvement Plan* to achieve our goals in Reading, Writing and Math.

Indicator of Success: This strategy will be successful when students reach the targets set in the Continuous Improvement Plan*.

3.4 Ashland School District will develop a Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program (CGCP)* to support students' development in academics, social and career skills. It includes guidance curriculum in classrooms, individual student planning, responsive services and system support through professional development and community outreach.

Indicator of Success: This strategy will be successful when the K-12 CGCP Committee presents and implements the final program design. We anticipate increased graduation rates, reduced discipline referrals, and improved attendance as a result of this strategy.

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3.5 Administrators will solicit and include student input in the planning and evaluation of school programs and encourage the use of student inquiry groups in school improvement efforts.

Indicator of Success: This strategy will be successful when we increase student participation on school and district committees and when we receive positive responses from student surveys and focus groups.

3.6 Ashland High School will implement a Credit by Proficiency *program for selected courses.

Indicator of Success: This strategy will be successful when we establish criteria for Credit by Proficiency* and report the number of credits earned each year by proficiency, resulting in increased options for student challenge.

Strategic Direction 4
The school district partners with the community to provide students with highly effective instructional tools, programs, facilities and technologies.

Strategies

4.1 Ashland High School will enhance partnerships with RCC and SOU for Professional Technical Education* and early college credit.

Indicator of Success: This strategy will be successful when we increase the offerings for early college credit and increase the number of students earning college credits.

4.2 Ashland School District will secure funding to allow students to pursue their interests in academics, athletics, the arts, activities and community-based learning. This includes working with legislators to improve K-12 funding in Oregon.

Indicator of Success: This strategy will be successful when voters pass local levies resulting in varied opportunities for students to pursue their interests and to achieve their goals both in and out of the classroom.

4.3 Ashland School District will continue to update technology for student and staff use, K-12.

Indicator of Success: This strategy will be successful when we implement a 5-year computer replacement program, replacing 20% of the computers and other technologies in the district each year. We will also increase student access to computers with internet access.

4.4 Ashland School District will improve our facilities through use of bond revenue, regularly scheduled maintenance and sustainable practices.

Indicator of Success: This strategy will be successful when construction projects are efficiently and effectively completed on time and within budget, sustainable practices are implemented, and facilities are well maintained.

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4.5 Ashland School District will employ sustainable practices that conserve natural resources, reduce pollution and increase recycling district-wide.

Indicator of Success: This strategy will be successful when sustainable practices are fully integrated into all district operations. Sustainable solutions will be long lasting, cost effective, and socially and environmentally responsible.

4.6 All schools will use volunteers and provide meaningful roles for their participation in school programs and activities.

Indicator of Success: This strategy will be successful when we increase the number of volunteers and increase roles for volunteers throughout the district.

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Outcomes for Graduates of the Ashland School District

Our Strategic Plan has been developed to ensure that all of our students accomplish these outcomes. The outcomes are designed to show the life roles, knowledge, attitudes and habits of mind that we feel are necessary for our students to be successful in the rapidly changing world of the 21st Century.

- **Effective Communicators:** Students have achieved high levels of literacy, and communicate effectively by speaking, listening, reading, writing and thinking well. They have read a wide range of literature from diverse periods and genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions of human experience. Students are able to communicate in at least two languages. They have developed the use of technology as a communication tool, and are adept at matching the appropriate technology tool to the communication mode. Students are able to conduct research and evaluate information from diverse sources. They are critical thinkers who are able to respect multiple viewpoints on complex issues. They are able to communicate their thinking through oral and written expression.

- **Creative and Collaborative Problem Solvers:** Students have achieved high levels of mathematical thinking and scientific literacy, and they apply these skills to complex problems. They are able to develop multiple solutions by working individually and with others and by persisting through apparent obstacles. They adjust their thinking based on their observations and results, and are able to utilize various strategies in approaching problems. Technology is effectively utilized in both the problem solving process and to demonstrate solutions.

- **Involved Citizens who Value Diversity:** Students are prepared for responsible citizenship and active community service in our pluralistic society. They are able to evaluate historical and contemporary issues, and to understand their global impact. Students understand the contributions of diverse groups and they value our multi-cultural society. They employ technology and other strategies to research and evaluate significant issues, and to understand these issues from multiple perspectives

- **Stewards of the Natural World:** Students understand the inter-relationship of the earth's systems and the impact of industrialized society on limited resources. They make sound life-style choices that conserve natural resources, and actively seek solutions for reducing pollution and conserving resources in the natural world.

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- **Healthy and Active Community Members:** Students are physically active, and have developed leisure activities that promote fitness. They make sound, nutritional decisions about diet. They are able to initiate and maintain supportive family and peer relationships. They demonstrate effective communication skills, and work actively to promote safe and caring emotional environments for themselves and others.

- **Appreciators of the Arts:** Students have attained literacy in at least one form of artistic expression, and use this expertise to appreciate other disciplines. Their artistic sensibility allows them to understand and appreciate diverse cultural and artistic expression throughout the world from different time periods. They are able to evaluate and communicate about works of art, and have developed strong audience and observation skills.

- **Self-Directed and Lifelong Learners:** Students have participated in a personalized, active, and meaningful education that has prepared them for academic success and their next steps in life. They recognize their personal interests, aptitudes, strengths and goals as they plan for the future. Students understand economic concepts and principles, and are able to apply them to personal finance. Students demonstrate adaptability and ethical behavior in all circumstances to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing world.

Appendix A – Glossary of Terms

Appendix B – AQEM Prototype Schools

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**APPENDIX A
Glossary of Terms**

A

B

C

Common Assessments –

These are classroom-based assessments of student learning developed by teachers in a professional learning community to determine if students are achieving learning objectives. The assessments are given to students in the same course or grade level on or about the same date.

Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program (CGCP) –

A complete educational program to support students' development in academics, personal/social skills and career goals, the CGCP includes guidance curriculum, individual student planning, responsive services and system support through professional development and community outreach.

Content Standards –

These are academic standards published by the Oregon Department of Education to define learning outcomes for students in each discipline.

Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) –

This document is submitted to the Oregon Department of Education every two years that includes an evaluation of the district, as well as academic goals and action plans to improve student achievement.

Credit By Proficiency –

This provides a process through which students can earn high school credits by demonstrating knowledge and skills that meet or exceed defined levels of performance.

D

Domains of Teaching –

This document is an aspect of the Ashland School District teacher evaluation program, there are standards articulated on a continuum for five areas of teaching: Curriculum Planning, Classroom Management, Instruction, Assessment and Professionalism

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E

Education Plan and Profile –

Each student in grades 7-12 develops a collection of documents for purposes of identifying strengths and interests, planning course work, post-high school goals and potential career opportunities.

Essential Learnings –

Essential Learnings define the critical skills, knowledge and dispositions each student must acquire as a result of each course, grade level, and unit of instruction, also known as essential outcomes or power standards.

F

G

H

Horizontal articulation –

Teachers articulate or agree upon curriculum expectations across a grade level.

I

J

K

L

Leadership Team –

The district governance group whose membership includes all school district administrators.

M

N

O

P

Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) –

This creates a school-wide system of support that includes proactive strategies for defining, teaching, and supporting appropriate student behaviors to create positive school environments.

PowerSchool –

A student database system used by Ashland School District, it allows parents and students to review assignments and access student attendance and grades.

Professional Learning Community (PLC) –

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Educators work collaboratively in an ongoing process of inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve.

Professional Development Committee –

This representative group of teachers and administrators recommends the annual professional development calendar and will study various teacher compensation models.

Professional Technical Education (PTE) –

Also known as Career and Technical Education (CTE), it is a program of study that integrates technical career skill proficiencies with academic content and prepares students for the workplace and postsecondary education.

Q

R

S

Schoolwide Evaluation Tool (SET) –

SET is a brief student and staff interview used in PBS to assess the consistency of behavioral expectations across a school campus.

Second Language Acquisition –

Gaining proficiency in speaking, writing and reading a language other than one's native language.

T

U

V

Vertical Articulation –

Teachers articulate or agree upon curriculum expectations from one grade to the next.

W

X

Y

Z

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APPENDIX B – AQEM PROTOTYPE SCHOOLS

Elements of Quality Schools

Elementary – 340 students max.	Middle School – One Site	High School – One Site
Full Day Kindergarten	Class Size: 22/Core; 25/Electives	Class Size: 24
Class Size: K/1-18, 2/3-20, 4/5-22	Teacher Load: 100/Core; 125 Elec/Day	Teacher Load: 150
Support Services – See Below	Support Services – See Below	Counselors: 1.0 FTE per 250 students
Administrative/Student Ratio: 300-400: 1	Administrative/Student Ratio: 300-400: 1	Administrative/Student Ratio: 300-400: 1
Teacher Professional Development: 9 days	Teacher Professional Development: 9 days	Teacher Professional Development: 9 days
Student/Computer Ratio: 6:1	Student/Computer Ratio: 6:1	Student/Computer Ratio: 6:1
Supplies and Equipment: \$165 per student	Supplies and Equipment: \$180 per student	Supplies and Equipment: \$280 per student
Textbooks: \$60 per student	Textbooks: \$60 per student	Textbooks: \$75 per student
Student Instruction Time: National Average	Student Instruction Time: National Average	Student Instruction Time: National Average
Co/Extra Curricular Programs: After School Programs	Co/Extra Curricular Programs: Sports and Activities	Co/Extra Curricular Programs: Sports and Activities
Structure/Configuration: K-5 with one K-8 strand	Structure/Configuration: Team Concept with Full Electives	Structure/Configuration: Block schedule with full 8 periods and appropriate alternatives/options for small groupings
Facility: Sufficient classroom space for students and specialized/small group instruction	Facility: Sufficient classroom space for students, team activities, and specialized instruction	Facility: Sufficient classroom space for students and comprehensive high school programming
Support Services (per school): Nurse - .33 FTE ELL Support – 1 FTE per 30 students Librarian – 1.0 FTE Office Support – 1.5 FTE EA’s – 1 hour per day/ 10 students CDS – 1.0 FTE Reading Specialist – 1.0 FTE Arts Specialist - .33 FTE Music/PE Specialists – As needed for 1 hour per week Special Education: ERC 1.0 FTE per 22 students; SLP as needed (40 max. case load); 1 site based classroom/district	Support Services: Nurse – 1.0 FTE ELL Support – 1.0 FTE per 35 students Librarian – 1.0 FTE + 1.0 EA Office Support – 5.0 FTE EA’s = 1 hour perday/10 students SRO – 1.0 FTE Counselors – 2.5 FTE Dean – 1.0 FTE Student Advocate – 1.0 FTE Volunteer Coordinator - .5 FTE Sports and Activities Coordinator- .5 FTE Special Ed: ERC 1.0 FTE per 25 students; 1 site based class; SLP as needed (40 max. caseload)	Support Services: Health Center – 1.5 FTE ELL Support – 1.0 FTE per 40 students Library Support – 1.0 FTE Cert.; 2.0 FTE Classified Office Support – 10.0 FTE EA’s – 2.0 FTE SRO – 1.0 FTE Additional Counseling: 2.0 FTE Dean – 1.0 FTE Volunteer Coordinator - .5 FTE Athletic Director: 1.0 FTE Special Ed: ERC 1.0 FTE per 30 students; site based classroom; SLP as needed (40 max. case load)

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