



WATERFORD UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

STRATEGIC PLAN

2024–2029

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Waterford Unified School District Strategic Plan 2024–2029

SUPERINTENDENT MESSAGE



Dear Waterford Unified School District Community,

The 2024–29 Strategic Plan for our district is a forward-thinking guide with five strategic objectives that are crucial for the growth and development of our students in an ever-changing global landscape. Developed through a collaborative process involving community stakeholders, school visits, and conversations with students, staff, and community members, the plan reflects diverse perspectives on upcoming challenges and opportunities. It focuses on a well-rounded developmental approach, harmoniously balancing academic achievement with the social, emotional, physical, and mental well-being of students. The plan highlights the vital role of robust partnerships among parents, the community, and educational institutions in achieving educational excellence.

This plan signifies our dedication to cultivating students who are not only academically equipped but also globally conscious and morally grounded leaders. We eagerly anticipate working closely with our community members to actualize this vision, ensuring that our students are fully equipped for their future pursuits.

Warm regards,

José M. Aldaco
Superintendent
Waterford Unified School District

INTRODUCTION

The Purpose of Strategic Planning

A Strategic Plan is a living document that outlines an organization's vision for growth and how they will get there. In education, it is important to have a document that includes goals and a plan on how to reach these goals because it organizes people towards a shared mission, defines how success will be measured, and helps with innovation.

A Strategic Plan for Waterford Unified School District is not just about education; it is about community development, growth, and creating a positive environment for all residents. By setting clear goals, involving the community, and allocating resources effectively, Waterford Unified School District can play a pivotal role in the overall well-being and holistic success of the community it serves.

OUR PROGRESS

2018–2023 Strategic Plan

Since 2018, Waterford Unified School District has effectively pursued the goals, objectives, and evaluation criteria set by the existing Strategic Plan. The 2018–2019 Strategic Plan followed seven key strategic goals:

- **Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, and Technology:** Continue to design, implement, evaluate, and improve instructional programs and processes to ensure every student meets the district's standards.
- **Human Resources:** Recruit, select, orient, train, develop, support, evaluate, and retain the highest quality staff.
- **Student Services:** Continue to design, implement, evaluate, and improve programs and services to support success for all students.
- **Family and Community Partnerships:** Continue to design, implement, evaluate, and improve partnerships that support the goals and objectives of the district.
- **Facilities and Equipment:** Provide a safe, healthy, clean, and functional supportive environment which promotes student learning and fosters student, staff, and community pride.
- **Alternative and Optional Educational Programs and Services:** Provide for alternative and optional educational programs and services for students, families and communities.
- **Strategic and Financial Planning:** Continue to design, implement, evaluate, and improve the strategic planning process to ensure that the short-term and long-range human, financial, and capital resources are optimally and effectively allocated.

Accomplishments:

- Since 2018, Waterford Unified School District (WUSD) has demonstrated strength despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Here are some key areas of growth:
 - **Increase Career Navigation and Counseling:** The district enhanced its focus on career guidance and counseling, providing students with more resources to navigate their future paths.
 - **Increase Mental Health Services:** Recognizing the importance of mental well-being, WUSD expanded its mental health services to support students more effectively.
 - **Increased School-to-Home Communication:** There was a significant improvement in communication between schools and families, ensuring better information flow and engagement.
 - **Addition of New Classrooms:** The district addressed growing student needs by adding new classrooms, expanding its capacity for learning spaces.
 - **Update to Existing Facilities:** The district made significant updates to its existing facilities, enhancing the learning environment for students.
 - **Greater Opportunities for Professional Development:** The district provided more opportunities for professional development, aiding in the growth and skill enhancement of its staff.
 - **Growth in ELA and Redesignation Rates:** The district saw notable growth in English Language Arts proficiency and redesignation rates, indicating academic progress.
 - **High Graduation Rates:** The district maintained high graduation rates, reflecting the success of its educational programs and student support systems.
 - **Public Information Analyst Position Added:** A new position for a Public Information Analyst was created, focusing on improving communication and data analysis.
 - **Family Liaison Position Added:** The district added a Family Liaison role, emphasizing the importance of family involvement in the educational process.
 - **Multi-Tiered System of Supports:** Programming has been developed, benefiting students with coordinated academic, behavior, and social-emotional supports.

OUR TIME TOGETHER SINCE SEPTEMBER

In September of 2023, local Stanislaus County firm, Debrief Methodologies Inc., began working with Waterford Unified School District to facilitate a process to create a new plan that would build off the existing one and include wider engagement of voices from students, staff, and community members.

Debrief's five-phase approach is rooted in ensuring that the Strategic Planning process initiates and concludes in collaboration with diverse groups of people who are involved and impacted by the school district daily. Debrief's community engagement approach ensures that the needs and perspectives of all stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers, and community members, are considered. This inclusivity not only strengthens the relevance and applicability of strategic plans but also fosters a sense of ownership and commitment among those involved.

Our Methodology

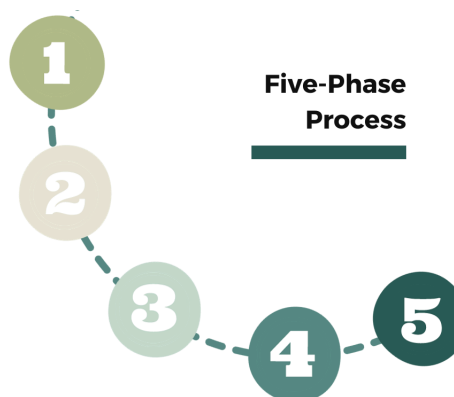
Phase 1: Planning & Preparation

Phase 2: Community Engagement

Phase 3: Data & Environmental Review

Phase 4: Community Planning

Phase 5: Finalizing Plan



DEBRIEF

During the months of September through November, Debrief led **six community meetings** with **26 students** from Waterford Junior High School and Waterford High School, **15 parents/guardians and community members**, and **41 staff members** representing both certificated and classified staff.

In-depth interviews were conducted with an additional **12 staff members**.

A survey was deployed in December and received **687 responses**.

The Strategic Planning Committee, composed of **29 individuals** (students, staff, and community), met monthly to discuss the plan's progress.

Finally, all participants engaged in the process were invited to participate in half-day retreat sessions on December 7th and December 12th to review all of the community sentiment findings, data collection analysis, and recommendations to finalize the five focus areas for the plan.

This plan is the result of extensive collaboration, and we express our gratitude to all who contributed to its development.



The Strategic Planning Committee – *THANK YOU!*

Adriana P. Vega
Alexa Huerta
Alfredo Guerra
Amanda Wilson
Carolyn Viss
Dan Clipper
Diego Gutierrez
Emilio Castillo
Frank Kampen
Gene Blocker

James Stotlar
Jenn Parman
Karina Beas
Karina Morales
Lee Clipper
Michael Elizondo
Orlando Robles
Rachel Sneed
Ryan Smith
Samantha Juarez

Saray Aguirre
Shelly Perez
Sonia Bugarin
Stephanie Winter
Suzanna Hall
Toney Henry
Tonya Bibbins
Whitney Elizondo
Yvette Hall

THE 2024–2029 STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

Here, we review Waterford Unified School District’s Vision, Mission, Commitments, and the Five Focus Areas of the 2024–2029 Strategic Plan.

Mission Statement

Develop self-directed and collaborative learners who are college, career, and community ready.

Values

WUSD, in partnership and collaboration with families and the community is committed to developing:

- ✓ A safe, healthy, and supportive environment
- ✓ Academic excellence and achievement for all students
- ✓ Well-rounded, successful citizens with personal integrity
- ✓ Diverse learning opportunities
- ✓ Critical thinking and creative expression
- ✓ Effective use of technology as a tool for learning

Vision

Committed to excellence, achievement, and success

2024–2029 Strategic Plan Focus Areas

1. **Academic Success:** Build high-achieving learners who have strong academic foundations and meet goals and standards on time.
2. **Student & Staff Wellness:** Promote a wellness approach to health that addresses the physical, mental, social, and emotional well-being of both students and staff.
3. **Future Readiness:** Equip our students with the necessary tools, abilities, and critical thinking skills to succeed as they advance through school and beyond.
4. **Family & Community Connections:** Strengthen the connections between schools, families, and communities, recognizing their key role as valuable partners in our student’s educational journeys.
5. **Facility & Learning Environments:** Create positive, safe, and welcoming spaces accessible to students, staff, and community while upholding our financial responsibility.

2024–2029 Strategic Plan Focus Areas Breakdown

Focus Area #1: Academic Success

Goal Statement:

Develop high-achieving learners who have strong academic foundations that meet or exceed grade standards.

Commitments:

1. Teachers are provided with relevant and continuous professional development to improve teaching and provide strong academic instruction for diverse learners.
 - a. Actions:
 - i. Design ongoing professional development programs for teachers focusing on innovative and inclusive teaching methods that cater to diverse learners and culturally responsive techniques.
 - ii. Establish a feedback and evaluation system to continuously assess the effectiveness of professional development activities and adjust them to meet the evolving needs of teachers and students.
2. Narrow the achievement gaps between student groups while maintaining high academic expectations for all students.
 - a. Actions:
 - i. Regularly assess and monitor student performance data across different groups to identify and address disparities in achievement levels.
 - ii. Develop a district-wide action plan that identifies targeted interventions and solutions for achievement and equity gaps.
 - iii. Increase opportunities to celebrate student achievements across school sites.
3. Provide equitable access to high-quality educational resources for all students with limited access, including but not limited to English learners and students with special needs.
 - i. Allocate resources and funding specifically for enhancing educational materials and support services for long-term English learners, students with special needs, and other priority student groups.

- ii. Provide inclusion training for teachers and staff to effectively address the unique needs of English learners, students with special needs, and other priority student groups.
 - iii. Establish partnerships with educational experts specializing in English learners and special education to bring in external resources and expertise to engage with families.
- 4. Increase and improve student's progress towards achieving early numeracy and literacy milestones on time.
 - a. Actions:
 - i. Assess students' progress in early numeracy and literacy to identify those needing additional support and adjust teaching methods accordingly.
 - ii. Revisit and refine early intervention programs focusing on numeracy and literacy skills for students at the foundational level.
 - iii. Develop a campaign to engage parents and guardians through workshops and resources that can enable them to support their children's numeracy and literacy development at home.
- 5. Target a consistent year-over-year improvement in both graduation rates and the proportion of students who exceed educational benchmarks.
 - a. Actions:
 - i. Implement data-driven strategies to identify and address factors affecting graduation rates and academic performance, ensuring targeted interventions.
 - ii. Recognize and display student achievement in both school and community settings to foster a sense of pride and motivation.
 - iii. Provide targeted support programs to help students complete A-G graduation requirements, including academic resources and counseling.
 - iv. Implement individualized academic planning for each secondary student, considering their unique strengths, interests, and career goals.

Quotes from the community:

"I think the most important area for improvement in our school district is after-school tutoring. I feel like it is a good time to go catch up and not waste school or weekend time."

"More support and training in all departments [is needed for] classified and certificated staff."

Focus Area #2: Student & Staff Wellness

Goal Statement:

Promote a wellness approach to health that addresses the physical, mental, social, and emotional well-being of both students and staff.

Commitments:

1. Increase access to information and resources across all grade levels to equip teachers with strategies to foster students' emotional intelligence and resilience.
 - a. Actions:
 - i. Integrate Social Emotional Learning (SEL) content into educational curriculum.
 - ii. Develop a comprehensive professional development program for teachers on emotional intelligence and resilience strategies across all grade levels.
2. Enhance student and family access to health and wellness resources.
 - a. Actions:
 - i. Enhance the range of communication tools focused on health and wellness to ensure families are well-informed about the resources accessible through the school and the broader community.
 - ii. Work in partnership with community resources and health service providers to improve the availability of services for our students and the community.
 - iii. Provide training for teachers and staff on recognizing signs of distress in students and referring them to appropriate health and wellness services.
3. Cultivate a school culture that emphasizes well-being and positive relationships through restorative practices, conflict resolution, and the celebration of diversity and achievements.
 - a. Actions:
 - i. Standardize protocols for the district-wide conflict resolution program, focusing on problem-solving skills, empathy, and mediation techniques.
 - ii. Develop and integrate programs that celebrate diversity and inclusion, prioritizing those that reflect the student population's backgrounds and experiences.
4. Provide staff with access to wellness-focused services and team-building opportunities to ensure a healthy and supportive work environment.

a. Actions:

- i. Facilitate regular team-building activities and workshops to strengthen interpersonal relationships among staff members, fostering a collaborative and supportive work environment.
- ii. Develop and implement a comprehensive wellness program for staff that includes access to physical and mental health services, stress reduction resources, and wellness resources.
- iii. Ensure the allocation of resources within the school budget and planning frameworks to support wellness initiatives.

Quotes from the community:

"They have social-emotional check-ins, a plethora of counselors to see students, wonderful teachers that go above and beyond, many different interventions for each category listed above, and an amazing school culture for students and staff alike."

"I believe we have improved recently by adding mental health counselors, but we could improve district-wide most especially in social and emotional areas."

"I think the most important area for improvement in our school district is the people who are caring for us, the students."

Focus Area #3: Future Readiness

Goal Statement:

Equip our students with the necessary tools, abilities, and critical thinking skills needed to succeed as they advance through school and beyond.

Commitments:

1. Provide professional development opportunities for teachers to enhance critical thinking in the classroom and foster creativity.
 - a. Actions:
 - i. Further the existing professional development programs to integrate advanced technological skills and innovative teaching methods, thereby equipping educators to better prepare students for the rapidly changing demands and technological advancements of the modern workplace.
 - ii. Offer opportunities for teachers to attend conferences and educational events focusing on cutting-edge instructional methods, technological tools, and critical thinking skills.
 - iii. Offer opportunities for feedback from staff on the effectiveness and relevance of professional development opportunities.
2. Emphasize the development of necessary life skills by providing access to opportunities outside and within core subjects that apply to the real world.
 - a. Actions:
 - i. Integrate life skills education into the curriculum, focusing on practical skills like financial literacy, social skills, public speaking, and problem-solving.
 - ii. Organize community service and volunteer opportunities for students to apply their skills in real-life settings, fostering a sense of social responsibility and community engagement.
 - iii. Provide resources and professional development for teachers to incorporate real-world applications into their subject teaching, making learning more relevant and engaging.
3. Shape students to be contributing members of society and be well-equipped for the challenges of college and career pathways.
 - a. Actions:
 - i. Develop partnerships with colleges and industries to provide students with exposure to real-world college and career experiences through

- work-based learning like internships, mentorships, and job shadowing beginning in junior high.
- ii. Develop an initiative in partnership with local business owners to train students with the essential traits most sought in local high-paying vocational careers.
 - iii. Increase access to career guidance and counseling services to help students understand various career paths and the educational requirements for each, assisting in informed decision-making for their future.
4. Ensure every student is fully prepared and confident to advance to the next grade level.
- a. Actions:
 - i. Enhance staff and leadership collaboration to align and refine assessment systems across schools for consistent student progress tracking and identifying strengths and improvement areas.

Quotes from the community:

"Creating more college opportunities and dual enrollment opportunities as well as more AP classes"

"Seniors need more help applying to and figuring out about college and post-graduation opportunities."

"I don't know of an option but one way to help with careers is maybe more clubs that are not like, "Snack clubs, Gaming clubs" I mean like carpentering clubs and technology clubs that teach you how to make and fix electronics."

Focus Area #4: Family & Community Connections

Goal Statement:

Strengthen the connections between schools, families, and communities, recognizing their key role as valuable partners in our student's educational journeys.

Commitments:

1. School and district communications are effectively delivered in both English and Spanish, and there's an increased level of access to information in other languages as feasible.
 - a. Actions:
 - i. Establish regular community events focused on receiving feedback that provides opportunities to provide feedback in both English and Spanish.
 - ii. Implement training for school and district staff, emphasizing cultural sensitivity.
 - iii. Enhance the availability and caliber of interpretation and translation services tailored for special educational programs.
2. Parents and guardians report a stronger connection to their child's educational journey.
 - a. Actions:
 - i. Improve parent-teacher communication, including regular updates and feedback mechanisms, to keep parents and guardians closely informed about their child's progress and school activities.
 - ii. Organize inclusive parent and guardian engagement events and workshops to foster a deeper understanding of school and educational topics.
 - iii. Maintain a feedback system for parents and guardians to share their experiences and suggestions, ensuring their voices are heard and considered in school decision-making processes.
 - iv. Increase access and awareness of educational services and resources for families experiencing hardship.
3. Family and community education programs are developed to offer training and resources related to their children's and family's success.
 - a. Actions:
 - i. Develop and implement comprehensive family and community education programs in collaboration with local organizations and

- experts focused on key areas such as parenting skills, student academic support, and personal development.
- ii. Provide online access to educational materials, tutorials, and support tools at their convenience, enhancing learning opportunities beyond the classroom.
 - iii. Regularly evaluate and update the education programs based on feedback from participants and changing community needs, ensuring the programs remain effective and aligned with the LCAP priorities.
4. School and extracurricular events or programs are created through partnerships and collaborations with local community organizations.
- a. Actions:
 - i. Foster relationships with community organizations to partner on special events and extracurricular activities that benefit both schools and community.
 - ii. Forge partnerships with organizations that can enrich the cultural experiences of our students and their diverse backgrounds.

Quotes from the community:

"Increasing parental involvement through special days; functions; parties; events, etc., which will hopefully drive them to be more invested in the school district in other more academic or important ways."

"The district does a strong job of communicating overall; improving prompt site-based communication would be beneficial."

Focus Area #5: Facility & Learning Environments

Goal Statement:

Create positive, safe, and welcoming spaces accessible to students, staff, and community while upholding our financial responsibilities.

Commitments:

1. Maintain campuses that are safe, secure, inclusive, and accessible to all by implementing comprehensive safety measures and accounting for the needs of all.
 - a. Actions:
 - i. Standardize procedures for community organizations to utilize school facilities, fostering community engagement and collaboration.
 - ii. Strengthen safety measures in key areas within school facilities, including common spaces, corridors, and entry points.
 - iii. Increase access to safety training for staff to ensure a shared understanding of safety protocols and procedures.
 - iv. Continue to conduct regular safety walkthroughs of campuses involving key stakeholders to evaluate safety measures, identify areas for improvement, and gather feedback.
 - v. Continue to conduct accessibility audits of school facilities to ensure inclusivity for all students and staff, addressing identified barriers and implementing modifications for an accessible environment.
2. Pursue and effectively allocate funds and resources to consistently enhance and develop our facilities, making sure they are not just practical and conducive to learning, but also contemporary and well-maintained.
 - a. Actions:
 - i. Create and execute a Master Facility Plan that maps out potential growth and focuses on developing versatile spaces in line with contemporary educational approaches and projected student requirements.
 - ii. Actively pursue alternative funding streams, including school bonds, modernization funds, grant opportunities, and supplementary funding sources. Establish a dedicated team to identify, apply for, and secure these funding opportunities to support facility enhancements.
 - iii. Continue to conduct quarterly financial audits on expenditures and proposed purchases related to facility improvements.

- iv. Evaluate financial trends in facility expenditures to guarantee they are in alignment with the strategic objectives of the school and district.

Quotes from the community:

"I believe the school is inclusive and respectful between cultures that other students have because they are aware that not everyone celebrates Christmas, so they made it the holiday grams and dance."

"Education starts with a safe and welcoming classroom environment. All teachers should be able to have their own classrooms. We have students jumping around from class to class, which creates confusion for the students."