

## Strategic plan in ACTION, part 1: Student Development

Last summer we brought a group of local people together for a strategic planning session. Strategic planning is an organizational management activity that is used to set priorities, focus energy and resources, strengthen operations, ensure that everyone is working toward common goals, establish agreement around intended outcomes/results, and assess and adjust the organization's direction in response to a changing environment. It is a disciplined effort that produces fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, who it serves, what it does, and why it does it, with a focus on the future.

Once the local group identified the direction our community wanted its schools to go, administrators then developed a strategic plan that covers five major goals. The resulting document includes the actions/activities/performances needed to achieve those goals and allows us to track our progress along the way.

One of the five main goals is *Student Development* - the continual improvement of student learning and productivity to prepare students to excel in an ever-changing world.

An action goal under Student Development is developing and implementing a support structure focused on behavior and life skills. In a recent front-page feature, the Abilene Reflector Chronicle's interview with Assistant Superintendent Chris Cooper, explained in detail the Positive Action curriculum that will be interacted in the coming year. Progress is being made.

Our district is also making progress on the development and implementation of a structure for reading, and making plans for doing the same in math. AHS added an Algebra lab course and a personal finance requirement as we prepare to work on building a support structure for math.

As a result of another action goal (provide extra-curricular activities to extend learning opportunities), last year we increased debate and forensics student participation at AHS and added after school debate at AMS.

The final ongoing action goal under Student Development is to provide or coordinate comprehensive curriculum at all levels and all content areas. In the past year we've adopted new curriculum for K-5 English Language Arts, 6-12 Math, and AHS Auto Tech classes.

During the next weeks I'll provide an overview of the remaining strategic planning goals and report on the progress being made in each area.