Strategic Goal Team Meeting #2
February 13, 2007

In attendance: Neil Gordon, Karen Miles, Betsy Gavron, Deede Bergeron, Brad Crozier, Foster Wright, Clea Winneg, Gary Burton, Karen Miles, Heather Pineault

At this second of four planning phase work-sessions, we refined our team's goals and began to draft the "strategic framework". Our conversation was spirited and free-flowing at points. We have reordered some of the conversation them for clearer reporting but hopefully they reflect where we ended up together.

Strategic Goal Team Objectives

Karen suggested that overall team goals include four steps:
 1. To Propose a Framework for the Strategic Plan that:
     -Is consistent with Mission and Values
     -Communicates the most important building blocks of what will keep Wayland schools great and enable it to reach the vision
     -Is simple to communicate and remember
2.   Identify issues, areas for further investigation to complete the strengths and challenges assessment for each key strategic area
3. Prioritize areas for further investigation
4. Suggest a process and timing for next steps

We discussed and clarified these objectives agreeing that we could not create an entire, detailed strategic plan. This group will focus on a high level, strategic framework. The details and implementation of a full strategic plan will require a lot more work and a process that involves more people. We also expect that the strategic framework will be a working document that guides decision-making and use of resources in the district.

Drafting a "strategic framework"

We used a draft list of strategic levers/or buckets to begin discussion that Heather and Karen created building from discussions in our first meeting and referring to the Values that the administrative team has been drafting.

We discussed the existing WPS Draft Long Range Strategic Plan and Dr. Burton explained to us how the initial goal list was created through interviews with Administrators, SC members and various other stakeholders, as well as through looking at other benchmark districts and past goals of the district. He and Jeff Dieffenbach then worked from an exhaustive list of current and possible goals and activities organized them into logical sub-domains and then again into the five domains. This strategic planning process builds on this work but has a *different starting point.* Here, we begin by our highest goals, values and what we know from research and experience about what it will take to reach them—the necessary supports. Once this is done, then we would begin to look at the questions to be asked for each area to know if we are doing our best in each "bucket".

As we started talking, the first question was whether or not every area needed to have a measurable outcome? We agreed that there would certainly be some areas that had measurable outcomes, but that there were other that were very valuable (like being life long learners), but hard to measure.

We thought about one possible visual for the structure to be a house. The roof might represent the values overarching everything, the attic the mission or goal, and the pillars holding everything up would be the "buckets" or areas.

Folks questioned whether or not "Time" was a separate bucket. We decided that a more appropriate area would be "Management of resources" and that time would be a part of this.

We spent much time discussing what the mission / goal (attic of the house) should be. We talked about balancing social skills with academic, looking at literacy, numeracy, and social competence, including clear expectations about how people treat each other. We also talked about the idea of "going beyond" in expectations and the meaning of individual attention. After much conversation, we returned to the WHS / WPS mission statement and decided this should be the goal (in the attic) to be supported by the various pillars (areas or buckets).

Finally, we talked a bit more about the pillars and whether the area is really Curriculum and Instruction or Student Learning, or whether Student Learning was the outcome, the goal of everything we are trying to do.

Finally, we ended by discussing possible visuals for the framework – the "house", the "apple", Neil's building blocks, etc. Everyone was going to spend time thinking about our areas and how to best represent our thoughts on paper before the next meeting. We did not finalize all the areas, so as folks think about the visual, they will also consider these "buckets". For now, possible areas include:
- Curriculum and Instruction that maximizes each student's learning and achievement
- Support for Knowledgeable and Skilled Educators and Leaders
- Family / Community Partnerships that support the learning and growth of every student
- Facilities and Systems that enable and empower educators (and students?)
- Management of resources that support learning

At the next meeting on March 26th, we plan to reach consensus about what the areas ("buckets") will be, review different possible visual representations, and begin brainstorming about key information we need to develop a long range strategic plan that builds on existing strengths and addresses challenges in each area.