

# CROSBY-IRONTON STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Led by Mark Larson, PhD

## Approach to the planning process

There are basic steps with almost all strategic planning processes--identify the mission, create a future oriented vision statement, identify priorities, create actionable steps with accountability all while involving the relevant stakeholders. And that is where things can be a little complicated. If you have too many stakeholders an aggressive timeline cannot be achieved. If you have too few, the perspective will be limited. And group think is always a possibility.

Therefore, the process I use is to

- Individually interview a handful of stakeholders to get a sense of the organization, some of the strengths and weaknesses, and aspirations for what it can be. This also helps determine the non-negotiables.
- Bring diverse groups together and assign tasks
  - Mission
  - Organizational priorities
  - Values and beliefs
- Findings are shared, feedback provided, and the groups improve their original work
- Finalized drafts are shared and the large group collectively works to craft a vision
- Upon approval of the drafts we set to work on creating strategies and plans for achieving the organization's priorities

It is very important that the facilitator is involved in each of the groups. This will keep the groups on task and focused. An additional benefit is that while the smaller groups may not know the details of the other groups, the facilitator can keep them from going too far off course. The facilitator and some senior leaders will help refine the strategies and plans focusing on timelines and accountability.

## General Proposed Steps and Timeline

December 1, 2025 begin individual interviews with selected members of the organization

December 1-6 compile findings from individual interviews

December 7 share findings with senior leadership and determine make-up and chairs of the subcommittees. The subcommittees are Mission, Values and Beliefs, and Organizational Priorities.

December 8-12 contact subcommittee chairs and assign tasks

December 15 to January 9, 2026 facilitator and subcommittees meet and create drafts

January 12-16 feedback is provided and finalized drafts are shared with senior leadership

January 19-23 the large group, comprised of the members on the subcommittees, is provided with finalized drafts and crafts a vision

January 26-February 6 Subcommittees are tasked with creating strategies and plans which are based on their previous work

February 9-13 Strategies and plans are reviewed and finalized with senior leadership

February 16 or a mutually agreed upon date Strategic plan is presented to organization for approval

This is a very aggressive timeline with the members of the organization having multiple responsibilities. However, if this is a priority, it can be accomplished.

#### Deliverables

An actionable strategic plan that includes the vision, mission, values and beliefs, organizational priorities and the plans to accomplish it.

#### Detailed Budget

My consultant rate is \$125 per hour and the entire process will require at least 120 hours.

However, my suggestion would be to submit monthly invoices with the total cost not to exceed \$15,000. Some expenses may be incurred like mileage and if overnight accommodations are required. These cannot exceed \$1,500.

This is not detailed, but approximate:

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|---|----------|
| Interviews with selected members of the organization                | 15 hours |
| Zoom meeting with participants                                      | 15 hours |
| Compile findings from interviews and research of like organizations | 20 hours |
| Work with subcommittees on mission, priorities, and values          | 25 hours |
| Review of subcommittee work and share with senior leadership        | 10 hours |
| Work with committees on strategies and plans                        | 25 hours |
| Review and finalize strategies and plans                            | 10 hours |
| Present findings and recommendations to organization for approval   | 5 hours  |

#### Description of Previous Work

As a high school principal I worked with an outside consultant (Doug Thomas) to create a strategic plan for Glencoe-Silver Lake school district in which school district consolidation was one very successful outcome and product of the work.

As a middle school principal I was part of the small core team that worked on a strategic plan for the Minnetonka school district in which a focus and shift to the middle school model was the signature outcome.

As an executive director of teaching and learning in Minnetonka I was part of the core team that used the Cambridge model (Bill Koch) that helped propel Minnetonka to outstanding student achievement including a language immersion program, gifted and talented magnet, embedded high school health, and an elementary fine arts program

As superintendent of Mahtomedi public schools we worked with MSBA to craft our strategic plan. The resulted in financial stability, increased student achievement, a world class engineering program and more.

#### References

Pete Dymit--Minnetonka principal 612-760-1670

Dave Adney--Executive Director of MASSP 952-917-9339

Bob Indihar--Executive Director of MREA 320-762-6574

Mike Neubeck--Superintendent Jackson County Central Schools 651-724-1782