

Your Question:

You wanted to know about state strategic goals for K-12 education.

Our Response:

Many states have developed strategic plans for their education systems. The plans frequently offer an overarching mission for the direction of K-12 education for the state, and often include several core areas to be addressed accompanied by a theory of action.

States vary in who is tasked with leading the strategic planning process, the timelines for accomplishing goals, and the scope of the action items. We are unaware of a resource that provides an overview of all 50 states' strategic goals; however, we have compiled a list of examples below to demonstrate the frameworks for, and scope of information included in, state strategic plans for K-12 education.

The process for creating a strategic plan can be complex. For more information on how the process of strategic planning may be conducted and why it is important, please refer to our recent analysis, "[ESSA Thinkers Meeting Insights: Process is key to developing state plans.](#)"

State Examples

TENNESSEE

Tennessee's five-year strategic plan, "[Tennessee Succeeds](#)," lays out three goals:

- Tennessee will rank in the top half of states on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) by 2019.
- The average [ACT composite score](#) in Tennessee will be a 21 by 2020.
- Most high school graduates from the class of 2020 will earn a postsecondary certificate, diploma, or degree.

Although the goals established in the plan are framed in terms of college degree attainment, the action items primarily emphasize issues in K-12 education, such as rigorous standards, aligned assessments, and strong accountability, and focus on five priority areas:

- Early foundations and literacy
- High school and bridge postsecondary – Preparing significantly more students for postsecondary completion.

- All means all – Providing individualized support and opportunities for all students with a focus on those who are furthest behind.
- Educator support
- District empowerment

The plan provides tangible action items for each priority area.

MICHIGAN

Like Tennessee, **Michigan** has also adopted a [strategic plan](#) with longer-term goals. The state’s “Top 10 in 10 Years” plan was created through a process of stakeholder engagement, led by the state’s department of education, that included input from representatives in key educational roles throughout the state. The outcome produced seven goals and 44 strategies that were made actionable by framing the plan around the following four focus areas:

- Learner-centered supports
- Effective education workforce
- Strategic partnerships
- Systemic infrastructure

FLORIDA

Florida uses its strategic [plan](#) to specify state education goals, which include:

- Higher student achievement
- Seamless articulation and maximum access
- Skilled workforce and economic development
- Quality, efficient services

The strategic plan in Florida complements the [mission](#) outlined by its department of education to “increase the proficiency of all students within one seamless efficient system, by allowing [students] the opportunity to expand their knowledge and skills through learning opportunities and research valued by students, parents, and communities.”

HAWAII

Hawaii’s [strategic plan](#) identifies three overarching goals that are “intended to set a common direction statewide for schools and community partners.” The overarching goals are:

- Student success – All students demonstrate they are on a path toward success in college, career, and citizenship
- Staff success – Public schools have a high-performing culture where employees have the training, support, and professional development to contribute effectively to student success.

- Successful systems of support – The system and culture of public education work to effectively organize financial, human, and community resources in support of student success.

Like Tennessee, Hawaii’s state goals frame the mission of education as preparing students for college or career, but identify core areas of action and support that reside within the K-12 schools.

NEBRASKA

In **Nebraska**, pursuant to [L.B. 1103](#) (2014), the legislature’s Education Committee conducted a strategic planning process to define the vision for education in Nebraska. To engage the public, the committee conducted an electronic survey, organized roundtable discussions, and held public hearings. The resulting report, “[Every Nebraskan Educated for Success](#),” identifies three overarching goals:

- Providing quality educational opportunities that engage and prepare Nebraskans for success in learning.
- Establishing high expectations for all educators, parents, students, and educational institutions.
- Creating positive, safe, and successful learning environments.

NORTH CAROLINA

Some states adopt strategic plans that focus less on overarching goals and instead seek to address more concrete practices within K-12 education. For instance, **North Carolina’s** [strategic plan](#) provides five goals framed around the mission of “us[ing] its constitutional authority to lead and uphold the system of public education in North Carolina.”

The goals are:

- Every student in the NC public school system graduates from high school prepared for work, further education and citizenship.
- Every student has a personalized education.
- Every student, every day has excellent educators.
- Every school district has up-to-date financial, business, and technology systems to serve its students, parents and educators.
- Every student is healthy, safe, and responsible.

Each goal is connected to a set of concrete objectives. Like Florida, Hawaii, and Michigan, North Carolina’s strategic plan acknowledges that achieving these goals includes adequate support services for students, teachers, and administrators. North Carolina also includes wireless coverage (statewide internet access) as a priority in the delivery of education services.