

# Strategic Planning at Minnesota West Community and Technical College

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*2017 Planning, Process and Implementation*

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## Overview

In July 2015, President Terry Gaalswyk began his tenure at Minnesota West Community and Technical College (Minnesota West). Over the course of his first year, he became acclimated to the college and listened to the internal and external constituents. In July 2016, President Gaalswyk began formulation of his strategic planning framework. He worked with college

leadership and contracted with Sertich Consulting, a higher education consulting firm, to assist with the process of defining and mapping the future for the college.

The Strategic Planning process engaged stakeholders in the spring of 2017 through several meetings with Minnesota West leadership, campus engagement sessions, a survey, and various other means including email, Talks with Terry listening sessions, and other feedback. The process sought to determine Minnesota West's strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and desired results (SOAR). This SOAR analysis then informed revisions of the college's mission, vision, and values as well as identifying strategic directions and concrete outcomes for each strategic direction.

The results of this process are summarized in the Minnesota West Strategic Plan 2017-2023. This document includes more details that informed and shaped what is shared in the Minnesota West Strategic Plan 2017-2023.

## Process Design

The process included several conversations with Minnesota West leaders including the President, Provost, and others to shape both the desired outcome of the process as well as how the college would get there. From there the President's Advisory Council was engaged to garner input from local leaders. Then the Minnesota West Leadership Council was engaged to design the final product, begin the SOAR analysis from their perspective, and determine how to best engage others in this process. Next five campus engagements sessions were held on each campus to gather general input and feedback and specifically focusing on SOAR. Based on the input thus far, a survey was developed to get more specific input and to involve even more individuals in the process. The results of the campus engagement sessions and the survey then informed drafts of revisions to the mission, vision, and values as well as the development of strategic directions and outcomes.

President Gaalswyk worked with Joe Sertich and Keith Edwards of Sertich Consulting to create a framework for engaging the college stakeholders in the process of strategic planning. Minnesota West has several work plans, such as the Master Academic Plan, that are in place and used to focus work at the college. A list of these supporting plans is included in Appendix A.

Working with Sertich Consulting and best practices, President Gaalswyk identified the following process for creating the strategic plan:

1. Meet with the President's Advisory Council
2. Meet with students, staff, faculty, and community members on each campus.
3. Survey constituents to ensure that those who could not attend a campus engagement session still had an opportunity to participate.
4. Meet with the college Leadership Council to analyze the results and draft the strategic plan. (This involved multiple working sessions.)
5. Create the strategic plan, including strategic directions.

## President's Advisory Council

The President's Advisory Council met on January 26, 2017, to discuss strategic planning, college mission, vision, and goals. Participants that day included the following:

<b>Advisory Council Members</b>	<b>Minnesota West Staff</b>
Greg Raymo, First State Bank (Chair) Paul Anderson, Ziegler Cat Joe Stefanick, Ziegler Cat Randy Simonson, Prairie Holdings Craig Bakkelund, Granite Falls Bank Jeff Busyman, JBS	Terry Gaalswyk Kayla Westra Suzanne Iverson Dawn Regnier
	<b>Facilitator</b>
	Keith Edwards, Sertich Consulting

The council worked in small groups to discuss areas of focus for the strategic plan.

**Themes**

**Industry Partnerships**

Southwest Minnesota has the need for many different labor skills. The college needs to interact with local industry and communities to develop a sustainable partnership between education, industry, and population.

**Branding/Image**

The college may have lost some of its identity/brand when merged into a comprehensive college. Campuses have areas of specialization and uniqueness. Each idea generated in this area needs to be broken down further. They all impact viability of the college.

**Changing with the Times**

Are we educating students for today’s industry needs or developing educational systems that will satisfy future needs as well?

**Student Pathways**

Intrusively engage students and parents to provide a consultative, student-based approach to finding a college/career path. Discussion around the idea that this may or may not include Minnesota West.

**Creating the College Experience**

Create a quality college experience in cost effective ways. Examples include food service and creating social capital for students.

**Additional Ideas**

- Change is needed. But what change is needed?
- Campuses of distinction. Campuses need to have their own specialization and identity, tied to the name. Minnesota West cannot be all things to all people. Specialization should be aligned with regional employment and student interests.
- Efficiencies and inefficiencies of multiple campuses needs to be examined.

## Minnesota West Leadership Council

The leadership team at Minnesota West consists of senior personnel at the college:

- Terry Gaalswyk, President
- Lori Voss, VP of Administration
- Jodi Landgaard, VP of Finance and Facilities
- Jeff Williamson, Provost
- Dawn Gordon, Dean of Nursing
- Dennis Hampel, Campus Dean, Jackson
- Suzanne Iverson, Administrative Assistant to the President
- Paul Lanoue, Dean of Management Programs
- Karen Miller, CHRO
- Jackie Otkin, Campus Dean, Pipestone/Luverne
- Dawn Regnier, Dean of CT/CE
- Dan Roos, Campus Dean, Worthington
- Rebecca Weber, Campus Dean, Canby/Granite Falls
- Kayla Westra, Dean of Technology and Distance Learning

The Minnesota West Leadership Council met on February 3, 2017 to provide input on the process, determine products resulting from the process, and their own SOAR analysis. Below is the results of the initial SOAR analysis from Leadership Council.



### Strategic Planning

#### Strengths

1. People – students, staff, faculty, talent
2. Finance – resources, reserve, stable
3. Delivery – flexible, adaptable

#### Opportunities

1. Changing Demographics
2. Resource Transitions - processes, people, succession
3. Hybrid Delivery - +enrollment, +student life
4. Breaking Down Silos – campuses, local community
5. Programs & Partnerships

#### Aspirations

1. "Employer of Choice"
2. Be Community Leaders – engagement & relationships
3. Clearer Identity – who we are, what we offer
4. "College of Choice"

#### Results

1. College Viability – finance & student enrollment
2. Being on the same MN West team
3. Stronger Community Partnerships & Relationships
4. Quality College Image – credibility, quality, excellence

## Campus Engagement Sessions

In February 2017, campus engagement sessions were held on the five campuses of Minnesota West.

- Canby (February 21)
- Granite Falls (February 21)
- Pipestone (February 21)
- Worthington (February 22)
- Jackson (February 22)

Those in the Luverne Center were invited to the session on the Pipestone Campus. President Gaalswyk invited internal and external constituents to these sessions.

- Students
- Community Members
- Business and Industry Members
- Staff
- Faculty
- Administration

President Gaalswyk sent the following email to the campus community and students.

*Through our recent conversations, I heard feedback that our college community is anxious for strategic change that will yield success for our students and communities. Strategic planning will help us chart a path to success, and for our college community, now is the time to set our direction for the next four years. We have engaged additional resources to assist us on this journey, and Joe Sertich and Keith Edwards of Sertich Consulting will assist by holding campus engagement sessions for our college community and stakeholders as we move forward with a new plan.*

*We will be holding several highly engaging sessions, one at each campus, on February 21 and 22 to kick off this process. More details will be coming from your campus deans. I am excited to hear from our staff, faculty, students, administration, and community stakeholders about the future and the vision for Minnesota West. There will also be a survey sent out in the coming weeks to gain additional feedback. I encourage you to be a part of the process and provide your thoughts throughout the formulation of our strategic plan.*

*Your president,  
Terry G. Gaalswyk*

Campus deans invited community members and members of business and industry in the respective communities.

Joe Sertich and Keith Edwards facilitated the 90-minute session on each campus. A SOAR analysis (strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results) was completed with each group. Approximately 140 people attended the 5 sessions.

### Campus Engagement Session SOAR Results

The following slides show the results of the SOAR analysis for each site. The final slide shows the consolidated results from the five campuses.



#### Strengths

##### Granite Falls

1. Faculty, staff, & student-focused
2. Online/distance
3. Programs

##### Canby

1. Passion for students
2. Dedicated and caring staff/faculty
3. Programs

##### Pipestone

1. Student focused
2. Dedicated faculty and staff
3. Technical Programs
4. Diversity

##### Worthington

1. Caring dedicated staff and faculty
2. Quality affordable education
3. Community and student focus

##### Jackson

1. Community and industry partnerships
2. Students, instructors, & staff
3. Flexibility/adaptability
4. Campus life at Jackson - unique

#### Strategic Planning

##### Consolidated

1. Dedicated faculty & staff are student-focused
2. There are distinctive programs
3. Online courses

##### Leadership Council

1. People – students, staff, faculty, talent
2. Finance – resources, reserve, stable
3. Delivery – flexible, adaptable



## Opportunities

## Strategic Planning

### Granite Falls

1. New programs
2. Marketing/recruiting
3. K-12 & industry partnerships

### Canby

1. Relationships & partnerships - K-12 & industry & health care
2. Technology/online/hybrid
3. Marketing

### Pipestone

1. Technical programs
2. Healthcare programs
3. Agriculture
4. K-12 & Industry partnerships (esp in health care)

### Worthington

1. Housing
2. Diversity
3. Increasing face to face – right match
4. Retention - PSEO

### Jackson

1. Marketing & recruitment - Communication of programs and opportunities
2. Industry and community partners
3. Emerging technologies

### Consolidated

1. Market Minnesota West
2. Strategically Manage Program Offerings
3. Partnerships – PreK-12, Industry, & Health Care
4. Enroll & Retain Underserved Populations
5. Underutilized Facilities

### Leadership Council

1. Changing Demographics
2. Resource Transitions - processes, people, succession
3. Hybrid Delivery - +enrollment, +student life
4. Breaking Down Silos – campuses, local community
5. Programs & Partnerships

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## Aspirations

## Strategic Planning

### Granite Falls

1. Full campuses
2. Online growth
3. Diversity & collaboration

### Canby

1. Cutting edge programs
2. Marketing/positive reputation
3. Enrollment – college of choice

### Pipestone

1. Increased enrollment
2. Community focus/ties
3. Try new things/programs

### Worthington

1. Enrollment growth & campus growth
2. Community respect, community for students, community partnership
3. Growth and risk taking

### Jackson

1. Growth, be the college of choice – pursue the underemployed, seamless
2. Recognized as leader in community
3. Stable but also risk taking

### Consolidated

1. Become the College of Choice
2. Positive and Credible Reputation
3. Culture of Innovation
4. College Vitality

### Leadership Council

1. "Employer of Choice"
2. Be Community Leaders – engagement & relationships
3. Clearer Identity – who we are, what we offer
4. "College of Choice"

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## Strategic Planning

### Results

#### Granite Falls

1. Increased enrollment
2. Jobs
3. Pre-K-12 Partnerships

#### Canby

1. Increased enrollment
2. Marketing - improved
3. Facilities

#### Pipestone

1. Increased enrollment – fuller campuses – additional instructors
2. Economic stability
3. Better community focus & respect

#### Worthington

1. College of choice – compete regionally
2. Culture, teamwork, energy, diversity
3. Growth in jobs and enrollment

#### Jackson

1. Full programs
2. Growth – individual programs, enrollment, community, and jobs – how much?
3. Diversity – ethnic, age, economic background, etc.

### Consolidated

1. Increased Enrollment
2. College Financial Sustainability
3. Economic Growth for Communities across the Region

### Leadership Council

1. College Viability – finance & student enrollment
2. Being on the same MN West team
3. Stronger Community Partnerships & Relationships
4. Quality College Image – credibility, quality, excellence

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## Strategic Planning

### Consolidated

#### Strengths

1. Dedicated Faculty & Staff Are Student-Focused
2. High Quality Distinctive Programs
3. Responsive Flexible Delivery
4. Financial Viability

#### Opportunities

1. Improve Branding Identity
2. Strategically Manage Program Offerings
3. Partnerships – PreK-12, Industry, & Health Care
4. Enroll & Retain Underserved Populations

#### Aspirations

1. Be the College of Choice
2. Outstanding Reputation
3. Culture of Innovation
4. College Vitality

#### Results

1. Increased Enrollment
2. College Financial Sustainability
3. Economic Development with Trained Talent for the Region
4. Stronger Partnerships & Relationships



## Survey Results

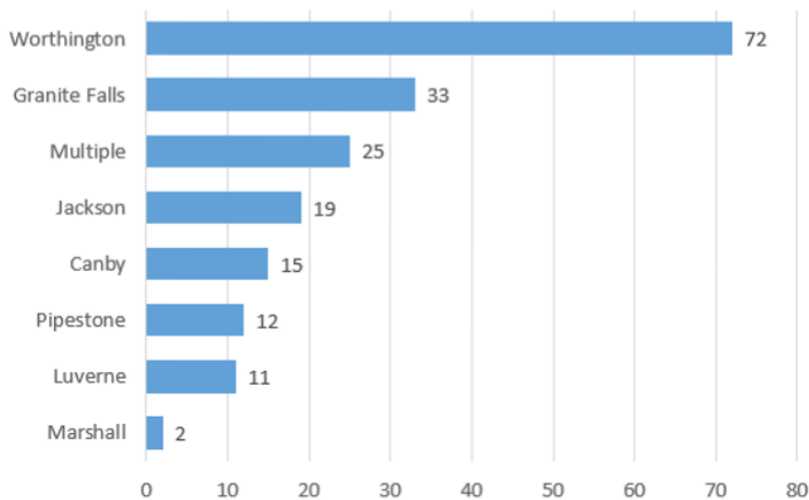
The SOAR results then informed the development of survey questions to get more specific feedback from a broader group of constituents. Surveys were sent to all stakeholders so that those who were not in attendance could also provide feedback. Note that feedback was not limited to those who had not gone to a campus engagement session. All staff, students, and faculty were invited to take the survey. Business and community leaders were also invited to take the survey. Additionally, a page was added to the college web site to allow another avenue for concerned constituents to provide feedback.

One hundred eighty-nine (189) people completed the survey and provided feedback.

- 72 students
- 49 staff/administrators
- 41 faculty
- 19 community members
- 8 alumni/other

Campus distribution is shown in the graphic below.

## What campus/site are you most familiar with?



Fifty (50) of the respondents were under the age of 25; 39 were ages 26-40, and 100 were 41 and older. Note that 77 of the 100 over the age of 41 were faculty and staff at the college.

### Vision

A **Vision Statement** expresses how Minnesota West is "seen" or "recognized" in the future. Please select the draft Vision Statement for Minnesota West that you most strongly support.

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Minnesota West will be the provider of choice for liberal arts and career and technical education in the region and beyond. **43%**

Minnesota West will create a culture of educational excellence and innovation. **31%**

Minnesota West will be recognized as a leader for enriching lives and building communities. **25%**

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### **Mission**

The **mission** is a statement of the purpose of Minnesota West and can declare what the college should be "doing." Please select the draft Mission Statement for Minnesota West that you most strongly support.

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Minnesota West inspires, educates, and prepares learners for a lifetime of work and citizenship. **56%**

Minnesota West leads with purpose to enrich lives and build communities. **26%**

Minnesota West provides education for work and life. **18%**

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### **Values**

**Values** are the beliefs or principles that guide decisions and actions taken by Minnesota West. Please identify what you consider to be the top three values for Minnesota West. (Choose 3)

<b>Educational Excellence</b>	<b>63%</b>
<b>Student-Focused</b>	<b>62%</b>
<b>Teaching &amp; Learning</b>	<b>58%</b>
Meet Community Needs	27%
Diversity & Inclusion	23%
Integrity & Ethics	21%
Innovation	20%

Collaboration	16%
Social Responsibility	7%
Civic Engagement	3%

### Strategic Directions

Prioritize, in terms of importance, the following **strategic directions** for Minnesota West.

Enrollment	45%
Program Management (what programs should be added, ended, etc.)	34%
Course Delivery (on campus, online, hybrid)	32%
Marketing	19%
Student Life & Activities	19%
Industry/Healthcare Partnerships	17%
Resource Development (people, equipment, campuses, etc.)	14%
Pre-K-12 Partnerships	13%
Facilities Management	8%

### Opportunities

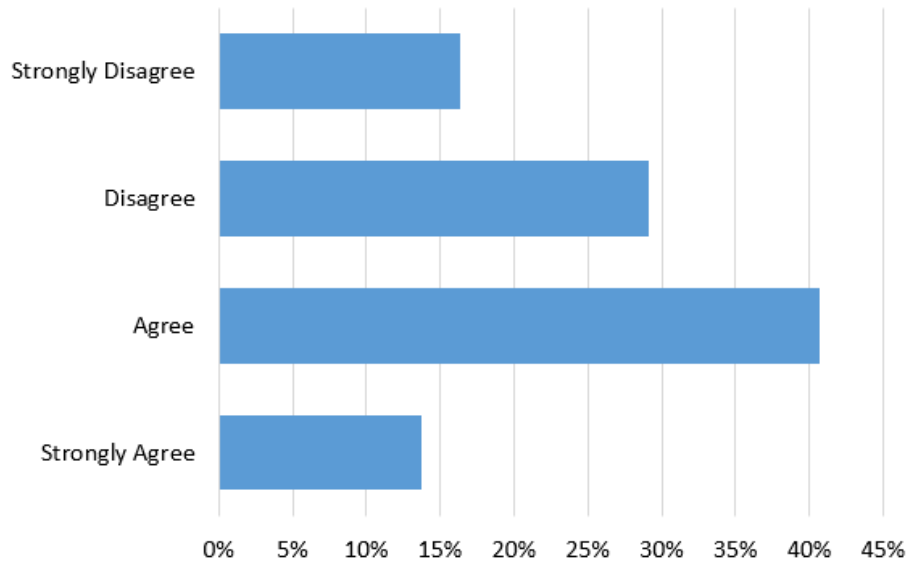
What top three **opportunities** do you believe Minnesota West should take advantage of in the next couple of years? (Choose up to three)

Re-vitalize career & technical programs	46%
Build student housing	37%
Start new innovative programs	34%
Invest more to market Minnesota West programs and campuses	31%
Strategically manage program offerings	31%

Recruit, enroll, and retain underserved populations	29%
Create new K-12 partnerships	25%
Create new industry partnerships	24%
Create new healthcare partnerships	20%
Re-design new hybrid delivery programs	17%

### Distinctive Programs

Indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following: Each campus should be known for its own group of **distinctive programs**. For example, career and technical programs on one campus, healthcare programs on another campus, and liberal arts programs on another campus.



## Analysis and Development of Strategic Plan -- Leadership Team

The leadership team met on multiple occasions both in person and via video conference to review the feedback from the campus engagement sessions, the survey, and other inputs in the process. The product of these numerous conversations was the development of a new mission, vision, and values; consolidated SOAR analysis; and strategic directions and outcomes. The outcomes will be reassessed annually and guide work plans for the college.

### Mission

Minnesota West prepares learners for a lifetime of success.

### Vision

Minnesota West is the regional college of choice.

## **Values**

- Community Engagement
- Courage
- Diversity & Inclusion
- Innovation
- Integrity
- Student Success

## **Strengths**

- Dedicated Student-Focused Faculty & Staff
- Distinctive High Quality Programs
- Flexible Responsive Delivery
- Healthy Financial Reserve

## **Opportunities**

- Improve Branding Identity
- Strategically Manage Programs
- Increase Partnerships – PreK-12, Industry, & Health Care
- Enroll & Retain Underserved Populations

## **Aspirations**

- College of Choice
- Outstanding Reputation
- Culture of Innovation
- College Vitality

## **Results**

- Increased Enrollment
- College Financial Sustainability
- Trained Talent for Regional Economic Development
- Stronger Relationships

## **Strategic Directions**

### **1. Implement Comprehensive Program Management**

1. Implement an improved comprehensive program review and process map to strategically innovate, revitalize, or eliminate programs and courses to better meet industry, student, and community needs.
2. Create a new program development process to streamline idea to implementation in 12 months or less.
3. Invest financial resources to align with distinctive high quality programs.

### **2. Improve Curriculum Delivery Options**

- a. Create 10% increase in hybrid programs and courses by May 2019.

- b. Increase foot traffic/enrollment on each campus by 10%.
- c. Increase number of online course offerings by 3%.
- d. Develop and implement competency based adult online education program.
- e. Upskill faculty and staff in use of innovative approaches through 10% increase in professional development.

### **3. Develop College Resources Beyond State Allocations**

- a. Increase employee participation in Foundation giving to 80%.
- b. Increase the Foundation endowment to \$3 million by 2019.
- c. Increase alumni giving by 10% in participation and contributions.
- d. Generate 5% of general funds through federal grant dollars annually.

### **4. Increase Partnerships**

- a. Increase overall regional/community partnerships yearly.
- b. Increase 15 new employer signed agreements for equipment or scholarships.
- c. Acquire 15 new MOUs with K-12 partners.
- d. Acquire 15 new MOUs with partners in the health care industry.

### **5. Strengthen Awareness of Minnesota West Identity**

- a. Assess awareness of brand identity using industry analytics.
- b. Bolster brand identity recognition by 20% from initial baseline.
- c. Align Minnesota West branding and identity with Minnesota State branding initiatives.
- d. Implement consistent Minnesota West identity standards.

### **6. Improve Enrollment Management**

- a. Re-engineer and implement updated enrollment management practices.
- b. Increase number of admitted students to registered students by 15% by FY19.
- c. Increase retention of current students by 1% and graduation/completion rates by 4% by FY21.
- d. Increase enrollment of under-represented populations to 25% of student body by FY21.

Unless otherwise stated, these outcomes will be revisited annually.

## **Final Document**

The above information was used to create the formal Strategic Plan 2017-2023 document, formalizing the mission, vision, values, SOAR information, and strategic directions, with specific goals. The Marketing Department assisted by creating a brochure that was informational and visually appealing. The final document is shown in Appendix B.

## **Dissemination of Strategic Plan**

The 2017-2023 Strategic Plan was officially released the second week of May 2017. Copies were distributed to all personnel, the President's Advisory Council, Foundation Board members,

and other stakeholders. Copies of the Strategic Plan are available on the college web site and at all college locations.

## Appendix A – Supporting Plans

All of these supporting plans and reports are available on the college web site.

These reports require [Acrobat Reader](#) (free download).

- [Access Advocating for College and Career Education Success in Southwest Minnesota, Implementation Plan](#)
- [2014-2016 Affirmative Action Plan](#)
- [2015-2016 Assessment Summary Report](#)
- [2015-2016 Carl D. Perkins Application](#)
- [2015-2016 Center for Teaching and Learning Report](#)
- [College Factbook, Fall 2016](#)
- [Community College Survey of Student Engagement, 2015](#)
- [Community College Survey of Student Engagement, 2015 Key Findings](#)
- [Education Center for Analysis and Research \(ECAR\) Student Survey Summary, 2016](#)
- [Environmental Scan and Space Needs Study, 2015](#)
- [Equity in Athletics, 2016](#)
- [IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction](#)
- [2016 IPEDS Data Feedback Report](#)
- [2016-2018 Master Academic and Student Services Plan](#)
- [2014-2016 Master Academic and Student Services Work Plan Results](#)
- [Program Advisory Committee Minutes](#)
- [Strategic Framework Performance Measures, 2016](#)
- [Strategic Inclusion Plan 2016-2021](#)
- [2016 Campus Security & Fire Safety Report](#)



# Appendix B – Final Document

## Minnesota West Community & Technical College

STRATEGIC PLAN  
2017-2023



### From Our President

*For over 80 years, we have proudly served the students and communities of southwestern Minnesota. We are committed to providing quality education options for our region. Our dedicated faculty and staff are committed to helping you achieve your goals.*

*Your success is our success.*



Dr. Terry Gaalswyk  
President, Minnesota West  
Community and Technical College

Minnesota West Community & Technical College is a member of Minnesota State. Minnesota State is the fourth largest system of two-year colleges and four-year universities in the nation with 30 colleges, 7 universities, and 54 campuses. The overall system directives are factored into our local strategic planning.



**MINNESOTA STATE**

*Minnesota West Community & Technical College,  
A member of Minnesota State*

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## Mission, Vision, and Values

### OUR MISSION

Minnesota West prepares learners for a lifetime of success.

### OUR VISION

Minnesota West is the regional college of choice.

### OUR VALUES

- Community Engagement
- Courage
- Diversity & Inclusion
- Innovation
- Integrity
- Student Success

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## STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND OUTCOMES

### 1. Implement Comprehensive Program Management

- Implement an improved comprehensive program review and process map to strategically innovate, revitalize, or eliminate programs and courses to better meet student, community, and industry needs.
- Create a new program development process to streamline idea to implementation in 12 months or less.
- Invest financial resources to align with distinctive high quality programs.

### 2. Improve Curriculum Delivery Options

- Create 10% increase in hybrid programs and courses by May 2019.
- Increase foot traffic/enrollment on each campus by 10%.
- Increase number of online course offerings by 3%.
- Develop and implement competency-based adult online education program.
- Upskill faculty and staff in use of innovative approaches through 10% increase in professional development.

### 3. Develop College Resources Beyond State Allocations

- Increase employee participation in Foundation giving to 80%.
- Increase the Foundation endowment to \$3 million by 2019.
- Increase alumni giving by 10% in participation and contributions.
- Generate 5% of general funds in federal grant dollars annually.



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### 4. Increase Partnerships

- Increase overall regional/community partnerships for advancing career education.
- Add 15 new employer signed agreements for equipment or scholarships.
- Acquire 15 MOUs with K-12 partners.
- Acquire 15 MOUs with partners in the health care industry.

### 5. Strengthen Awareness of Minnesota West Identity

- Assess awareness of brand identity using industry analytics.
- Bolster brand identity recognition by 20% from initial baseline.
- Align Minnesota West branding and identity with Minnesota State branding initiatives.
- Implement consistent Minnesota West identity standards.

### 6. Improve Enrollment Management

- Re-engineer and implement updated enrollment management practices.
- Increase number of admitted students to registered students by 15% for FY 19.
- Increase retention of current students by 1% and graduation/completion rates by 4% by FY 21.
- Increase enrollment of under-represented populations to 25% of student body by FY 21.



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## STRENGTHS

- Dedicated Student-Focused Faculty & Staff
- Distinctive High Quality Programs
- Flexible Responsive Delivery
- Healthy Financial Reserve

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Improve Branding Identity
- Strategically Manage Programs
- Increase Partnerships - PreK-12, Industry, & Health Care
- Enroll & Retain Underserved Populations

## ASPIRATIONS

- College of Choice
- Outstanding Reputation
- Culture of Innovation
- College Vitality

## RESULTS

- Increased Enrollment
- College Financial Sustainability
- Trained Talent for Regional Economic Development
- Stronger Relationships

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## Strategic Planning Overview

### Why a Strategic Plan?

A strategic plan is a roadmap to grow the college. It's also a document to communicate the mission, vision, values, strategic directions, and outcomes going forward. Most importantly, this process engages, motivates, and retains external and internal audiences and aligns them around the college's strategic priorities.

### Who Provided Input?

Students, faculty, staff, community members, and advisory council members were actively engaged throughout the process. Engagement sessions were held on each campus, and an online survey was offered to all stakeholders.

### How Was the Plan Drafted?

After gathering information, the leadership team at Minnesota West translated broad statements of input and synthesized data to create the key components of the plan. Ideas were shared and reviewed. The plan will be updated each year based on feedback and goal achievement.

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## Who We Are

Minnesota West offers associate degrees, diplomas, or certificates in more than 60 disciplines. There are convenient campus locations in southwest Minnesota as well as online learning opportunities. We serve 19 counties in the region, as well as students from across the United States in our online programs.

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*Minnesota West offers small class sizes and personalized attention. Our technical programs provide students with the practical skills to begin successful careers in a variety of industries. Liberal arts programs at Minnesota West are a great starting point for a pathway to a career or further study.*

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### Contact Us



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