

A strengths, opportunities, aspirations, results (SOAR) (asset model) analysis is a strategic planning tool that focuses an organization on its current strengths and vision of the future for developing its strategic goals.

**Clayton Municipal
School District
Strengths,
Opportunities,
Aspirations, Results**

**LEADERSHIP TEAM: SOAR
DOCUMENT**

Cooperative Educational Services

CLAYTON MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DISTRICT STRENGTHS, OPPORTUNITIES, ASPIRATIONS, RESULTS (SOAR) ANALYSIS

Thursday, February 7, 2019

Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results (SOAR) analysis

Description

A strengths, opportunities, aspirations, results (SOAR) (asset model) analysis is a strategic planning tool that focuses an organization on its current strengths and vision of the future for developing its strategic goals.

This tool differs from the commonly used [SWOT \(deficit model\) \(strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats\) analysis](#). SOAR engages all levels and functional areas of an organization, while SWOT is typically a top-down approach. With SOAR, the focus is on the organization and enhancing what is currently done well, rather than concentrating on perceived threats and/or weaknesses.

When conducting a SOAR analysis, the basic questions to be answered are:

1. What are our greatest strengths?
2. What are our best opportunities?
3. What is our preferred future?
4. What are the measurable results that will tell us we've achieved that vision of the future?

Benefits

- Engages representatives from every level of the organization to have shared conversations and input on strategy and strategic planning. Resistance to change is minimized and employees are more likely to commit to goals and objectives they helped create.
- Flexible and scalable, so planning and decision making can be adjusted to fit an organization's needs and culture.
- Building on the organization's strengths produces greater results than spending time trying to correct weaknesses.

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How to Use

- **Step 1.** Identify stakeholders who will participate, and determine the format and frequency of meetings (One large summit? A series of shorter meetings?). Participants should represent all levels of the organization and all functional areas.
- **Step 2.** Create an interview questionnaire or guide for gathering information about strengths, perspectives, and aspirations of employees and key stakeholders.
- **Step 3.** Engage employees and other stakeholders—including clients, vendors, and partners, if appropriate—to discover the conditions that created the organization’s greatest successes. Ask powerful, positive questions to generate images of possibility and potential.
- **Step 4.** Threats, weaknesses, or problems should not be ignored, but rather should be reframed. Discussion should focus on “what we want” rather than “what we don’t want.”
- **Step 5.** Summarize the organization’s positive core, which is its total of unique strengths, resources, capabilities, and assets.
- **Step 6.** Identify aspirations and desired results that create a compelling vision of the future using the best of the past and that also inspire and challenge the status quo.
- **Step 7.** Decide which opportunities have the most potential.
- **Step 8.** Write goal statements for each of these strategic opportunities and identify measures that will help track the organization’s success.
- **Step 9.** Plan actions and implement the plan for each identified goal.

Relevant Definitions

S = Strengths: What an organization is doing really well, including its assets, capabilities, and greatest accomplishments.

What do we excel at?

What are our greatest accomplishments?

What are we most proud of?

What makes us unique?

What do we provide that is world class?

What strengths are most valuable in our organization?

What do we do or have that’s better than anyone else?

O= Opportunities: External circumstances that could improve profits, unmet customer needs, threats or weakness reframed into possibilities.

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- What partnerships would lead to greater success?
- What changes and trends in education align with our strengths?
- What threats do we see that we could reframe as opportunities?
- What needs and wants are we currently not fulfilling for our internal and external stakeholders?
- Are there gaps in the market that we could fill?

A= Aspirations: What the organization can be; what the organization desires to be known for.

- What do we want to achieve in the future? How can we make a difference?
- What are we passionate about?
- What strategies and actions support our perfect future self?

R=Results: The tangible, measurable items that will indicate when the goals and aspirations have been achieved.

- What measures will tell us we are on track to achieve success?
- How do we translate our vision of success into tangible outcomes?
- How do we know when we've achieved our goals?

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Strengths	Opportunities
Good People/Dedicated Staff	Parent Support/Community Support
Strong Leadership	Volunteers for Extra-Curricular Activities
Businesses supportive of district	Community Partnerships
Quality Students	Fiscal Management
Recognition by Media	Strengthen School Business Partnerships
Technology/Chrome Books/One to One Devices	Develop technological programs for students and teachers
Opportunities for Professional Development	Educate Community of Clayton's education purpose for life
Strong Focus on Student Learning	Community Mentality
Varied Opportunities for students, ie: dual credit classes, online classes, course selection	Recruitment of Quality of Staff
Strength in size (midsize school)	Continued accountability/opportunities for students
Good Communication to the community	Educate Community on career opportunities for kids
Tutoring Opportunities almost every night	Strengthen Student Social Skills, Work Ethic
6-8 Honor Society (21 nomination packages)	Improved Community Commitment to education/academics
Students enjoy coming to school	Parental Involvement in improving academics
After School Programs	Explore strategies in communicating with parents and community
Multiple Communications/Community	More opportunities for teachers to learn/PD
Facilities improvement	Strengthen PD at the local and regional level
Security	
School Grades/District Grade	
Opportunities for student in extracurricular areas	

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Aspirations	Results
Staff Stability with continued growth	Attendance Rate
Community Appreciation of Staff	Graduation Follow up
Staff Diversity	Discipline rate way down
Grow your own	School and District Report Cards/School Grades
Increase parent/community support	iReady K-8
Students to become successful adults	Statewide Assessment
Student Engagement in meaningful activities	NAEP
Market the district (specific to Clayton)	I-Station
Improve Staff onboarding: Marketing, Mentoring, REAP, PD, support	Graduation Rate
Staff attitude that excites students learning/teaching	Next Step Plan
Consistency with discipline in school and home	School and District Report Cards/School Grades
Transition Rate	