

Lewis Central Community School District

Strategic Plan 2026-2031



LEWIS CENTRAL COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
INSPIRING EXCELLENCE



Table Of Contents

District Fast Facts.....	1
Process Overview.....	2
Community Engagement.....	3
Mission and Vision.....	4
Theory of Action.....	5
Priority Areas.....	6
Priority 1: Opportunity & Access.....	7
Priority 2: Culture & Climate.....	8
Priority 3: Finance & Facilities.....	9-10
District Leadership Team.....	11
SIAC Members.....	12
Areas of Strength.....	13

District Fast Facts

SY2024-2025



3,054 Students

- 79.3% White
- 12.6% Hispanic/Latino
- 1.8% Black/African American
- 0.7% Asian
- 0.2% Native American
- 5.4% Multi-Racial



4 Schools

Student enrollment (by school level)

- 413 at Kreft (Pre-K)
- 901 at Titan Hill (2-5)
- 720 at Middle School (6-8)
- 1,020 at High School (9-12)



94.8% Graduation Rate



217

Classroom Teachers



16 to 1

Student to Teacher Ratio

Process Overview



April 2025

School Board Work Session

The School Board met with IASB during a Work Session to identify three main priority buckets.

June 2025

Stakeholder Survey

A survey was sent out to collect feedback from staff, parents, community members, and students.

July 2025

School Board Work Session

The School Board held a Work Session to identify district-wide priorities and key indicators.

Fall 2025

Engage District Leadership

Lewis Central's District Leadership Team (DLT) met to identify specific and measurable goals for each priority.

Spring 2026

Continued Work with District Leadership

Lewis Central's District Leadership Team (DLT) met to develop strategies and indicators of success to reach the priority goals.

Summer 2026

SIAC Review and Final School Board Approval

SIAC met to review and provide feedback before the Strategic Plan was finalized and approved by the School Board.

Fall 2026

Implementation

Work began to implement and communicate the Strategic Plan.

Community Engagement



Feedback and Surveys

Prior to building the new strategic plan, the Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB) conducted a productive work session with the Lewis Central School Board to identify three main priority buckets for the district. Following this collaboration, IASB worked with Lewis Central leadership to solicit comprehensive feedback through a district-wide survey. This survey engaged various stakeholders—including staff, parents, community members, and students—to understand the district’s strengths and priority areas, ensuring the final plan serves all members of our community.

Community Engagement Survey

May/June 2025

- **497** responses
- **336** parents
- **90** staff members
- **64** students
- **7** resident community members

Mission + Vision



The mission and vision represent the long-term goals of the district.

Mission

Inspiring Excellence!

Vision

We develop **passionate, innovative, adaptable** learners prepared to embrace the challenges of the future and make a positive difference in the community.



Theory of Action



Lewis Central's Theory of Action reflects the beliefs of the district around what will lead to long term success.

If district leadership supports our schools by prioritizing high-quality instruction, clear behavior expectations, smart budgeting, and well-maintained buildings, including:

- Providing teachers with proven, research-backed tools and strategies to help every student succeed in reading and writing;
- Scaling effective classroom behavior practices by supporting educators through collaborative teams, targeted coaching, and data-driven improvement cycles;
- Managing taxpayer dollars responsibly through careful long-term budgeting, tracking enrollment trends, and winning outside grants;
- Checking and maintaining our school buildings regularly while using community feedback to plan for future modernizations;

Then our schools will be safe, welcoming, and financially stable places to learn, and our students will achieve greater success both academically and personally.

Priority Areas



Through the completion of a robust needs assessment and with the mission, vision, and theory of action as the foundational guide, three priority areas were identified as areas of focus for the Lewis Central Community School District over the next five years. By clearly identifying these three areas of focus, the district will be able to pursue an intentional and targeted approach to meeting the district's needs and allocating resources to meet those needs.

1 Opportunity and Access

2 Climate and Culture

3 Finance and Facilities



Priority 1:

Opportunity and Access



Goal: By the end of May 2031, Lewis Central Community School District will increase state/district literacy assessment proficiencies to at least 80% at each grade level.

Strong literacy skills are the foundation for success in every subject area and are essential for students' future academic, career, and life opportunities. Reading, writing, speaking, and critical thinking skills impact a student's ability to learn across all content areas, making literacy one of the most important predictors of long-term success.

By establishing a goal of achieving at least 80% literacy proficiency at every grade level by May 2031, Lewis Central is committing to ensuring that all students have the skills necessary to thrive both inside and outside the classroom. This goal reflects our belief that every student deserves access to high-quality instruction, targeted support, and learning experiences that build strong literacy skills over time.

Improving literacy outcomes will require a continued focus on effective instructional practices, early intervention, data-informed decision making, and collaboration among students, staff, families, and the community. Through this work, Lewis Central will continue its commitment to Inspiring Excellence and preparing students for success in an ever-changing world.

Action Step: The district will support this goal by utilizing the district literacy framework and High Leverage Literacy Practices as a planning and decision-support tool for building literacy leadership teams to identify and strengthen Tier 1 literacy practices.

How We Will Measure Success:

Lag Measures: ISASP literacy proficiency, FastBridge literacy proficiency (spring)

Lead Measures:

- Fast literacy growth data (fall, winter, spring)
- District literacy plan building scoring (annual)
- Walkthrough patterns aligned to Tier 1 literacy focus areas
- Evidence of job-embedded PD aligned to selected focus area (initial PD and responsive PD & PD connected to curriculum)

Priority 2:

Climate and Culture



Goal: By the end of May 2031, Lewis Central Community School District will have decreased Major Referrals at each attendance center by 20%.

A positive, predictable, and supportive learning environment is essential for both academic success and student well-being. When students feel safe, connected, and engaged, they are more likely to attend school regularly, participate in learning, build positive relationships, and achieve at higher levels.

Behavior data, attendance trends, and staff feedback highlight the importance of continuing to strengthen schoolwide systems that support student behavior and social-emotional development. Research consistently demonstrates that effective behavioral supports not only reduce disruptions and disciplinary incidents but also increase instructional time and improve academic outcomes.

By implementing and strengthening evidence-based behavioral practices, Lewis Central will create learning environments where expectations are clear, positive behaviors are taught and reinforced, and students receive the support they need to thrive. This work reflects the district's commitment to fostering safe, inclusive, and engaging schools where every student can reach their full potential.

Action Step: The district will support this goal by using district-aligned Tier 1 behavior expectations and look-fors (aligned to STOIC) consistently in walkthroughs and feedback cycles.

How We Will Measure Success:

Lag Measures: Number of major referrals (compared to May 2026 baseline)

Lead Measures:

- District-wide walkthrough STOIC data (2d)
- Climate survey data
- Positive communication data

Priority 3:

Finance and Facilities



Goal 1: By June 30, 2031, Lewis Central Community School District will ensure long-term financial stability by maintaining a General Fund solvency ratio and Unspent Authorized Budget at or above 15%.

Lewis Central's Strategic Plan includes a finance goal to maintain its Unspent Authorized Budget (UAB) and a General Fund solvency ratio of at least 15% to ensure long-term financial sustainability. While balanced annual budgets are vital, these adequate financial reserves provide the flexibility needed to navigate changing enrollment trends, state funding fluctuations, and unforeseen expenses without impacting student programs.

Ultimately, increasing the UAB and maintaining this 15% ratio secures sufficient cash flow to meet daily obligations, protects against revenue shortfalls, and allows for strategic investments in student achievement, staff retention, safety, and facilities.

Together, these measures demonstrate responsible stewardship of taxpayer resources while preserving the district's ability to continue delivering high-quality educational opportunities for current and future generations of Lewis Central students, and focusing on the core mission of Inspiring Excellence.

Action Step: The district will support this goal through monthly financial reviews, five-year financial projections, proactive enrollment monitoring, responsible budget management across all departments, and the pursuit of grants and other external funding sources.

How We Will Measure Success:

Lag Measures: Unspent authorized budget ratio and general fund solvency ratio

Lead Measures:

- Monthly financial board reports
- Yearly completion of a Five-Year Financial Forecasting Tool
- Quarterly review of enrollment projections and staffing
- Quarterly department budget review
- Obtain a minimum of \$200,000 annually in grants, partnerships, donations, or alternative revenue streams

Priority 3:

Finance and Facilities



Goal 2: By June 30, 2031, Lewis Central Community School District will improve the quality, safety, and functionality of district facilities while planning for the future.

Lewis Central's Strategic Plan includes a facilities goal focused on improving the quality, safety, and functionality of district buildings while thoughtfully planning for future needs. Because the physical learning environment plays a critical role in student success, staff effectiveness, and community pride, providing safe, modern, and well-maintained spaces is essential to support collaboration, creativity, and overall well-being.

As Lewis Central continues to grow and evolve, the district must proactively address facility needs rather than simply reacting to them. This involves upgrading security measures, modernizing learning environments, and ensuring spaces remain highly functional for both academic and extracurricular programs while anticipating future enrollment trends and community expectations.

Ultimately, this goal reflects a deep commitment to responsible stewardship of taxpayer resources, ensuring the district's infrastructure continues to support its core mission of Inspiring Excellence for current and future generations of students to thrive.

Action Step: The district will support this goal by conducting annual facility reviews, gathering stakeholder feedback, completing preventative maintenance, and developing a long-range facilities plan.

How We Will Measure Success:

Lag Measures: Biannual school improvement needs assessment survey results and completion of 5-10-20 year long-range facilities plan

Lead Measures:

- Annual facility review
- Stakeholder feedback (SIAC, surveys, committees, etc.)
- Continual update of LC facility spreadsheet
- Completion of annual maintenance
- Scheduled building walkthrough reviews with staff and board

District Leadership Team



School Board + DLT

The School Board and District Leadership Team (listed below) worked diligently to ensure our new five-year strategic plan directly serves the entire Lewis Central community.

- **Tim Wright** - School Board President
- **Greg Sturm** - School Board Vice President
- **Amie Adkins** - School Board Director
- **Jeremy Bach** - School Board Director
- **Erin Peterson** - School Board Director
- **Jenni Sandau** - School Board Director
- **Alec Sorenson** - School Board Director
- **Dr. Brent Hoelsing** - Superintendent
- **Dr. Lisa Hartman** - Director of Teaching & Learning
- **Joe Vinchattle** - High School Principal
- **Dr. Mandie Reynolds** - Middle School Principal
- **Dana Barker** - Titan Hill Principal
- **Desiree Jensen** - Kreft Principal
- **Lora Kester** - School Improvement Coordinator
- **Laurie Thies** - Special Education Coordinator
- **Jill Heller** - Preschool Teacher
- **Gina Johnson** - Instructional Coach
- **Lisa Scieszinski** - Instructional Coach
- **Sandy Williams** - Preschool Teacher
- **Darla Dixon** - 2nd Grade Teacher
- **Christine Kane** - 5th Grade Teacher
- **Kayla Smith** - 5th Grade Teacher
- **Dani Wagaman** - 2nd Grade Teacher
- **Kelly Carr** - 7th Grade Science Teacher
- **Jen Dekker** - 8th Grade Language Arts Teacher
- **Deanne Dunphy** - 6th Grade Math Teacher
- **Jen Stroup** - 8th Grade Language Arts Teacher
- **Dave Bergman** - High School Science Teacher
- **Ted Duitsman** - High School Language Arts Teacher
- **Amy Shannon** - Instructional Coach
- **Christina Woodward** - Instructional Coach

SIAC Members



School Improvement Advisory Committee

The Lewis Central SIAC (School Improvement Advisory Committee) team carefully reviewed the strategic plan and provided valuable feedback to help guide its direction.

- **Travis Houseton** - Parent
- **Tim Wright** - Parent
- **Marsha Wright** - Parent
- **Tabatha Durfey** - Parent
- **Jessica Rosenberg** - Parent
- **Lyndsay Schaben** - Parent
- **Jessica O'Dell** - Parent
- **Jessica McCool** - Parent
- **Luke Norville** - Parent
- **Natalie Norville** - Parent
- **Marie Miller** - Parent
- **Jennifer Durfey** - Parent
- **Lindy Larsen** - Parent
- **Mandy Sanders** - Parent
- **Chad Nation** - Parent
- **Tiffany Nation** - Parent
- **Callie Durfey** - Student
- **Rylyn Hoelsing** - Student
- **Ray Nation** - Student
- **Emerson Recher** - Student
- **Sarah Lighthipe** - Student
- **Abigail Lighthipe** - Student
- **Grayson Wright** - Student
- **Nathan Allely** - Student
- **James Schmit** - LC Staff
- **Amanda Clanton** - LC Staff
- **Jen Lighthipe** - LC Staff
- **Carrie Recher** - LC Staff
- **Kelli Hall** - LC Staff
- **Amberly Schechinger** - LC Staff
- **Kate White** - LC Staff
- **Tyler Friedrichsen** - LC Staff
- **Molly Pettit** - LC Staff
- **Tracey Wohlers** - LC Staff
- **Tara Whittington** - LC Staff
- **Dani Wagaman** - LC Staff
- **Angie Aldrich** - LC Staff
- **Lora Kester** - LC Staff
- **Laurie Thies** - LC Staff
- **Dr. Brent Hoelsing** - LC Admin
- **Dr. Lisa Hartman** - LC Admin
- **Andrea Raes** - LC Admin
- **Joe Vinchattle** - LC Admin
- **Dr. Mandie Reynolds** - LC Admin
- **Dana Barker** - LC Admin
- **Desiree Jensen** - LC Admin

Areas of Strength



In pursuit of identifying the most pressing areas of focus for the district, several areas of strength emerged. Lewis Central Community School District is proud of the work that has been done to contribute to these strengths and is dedicated to ensuring they continue to be strengths for the district.

High Student Achievement

Diverse Student Activities and Offerings

Commitment to Transparency

Future-Ready College and Career Preparation

Strong Staff Support





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