

Florida Board of Education

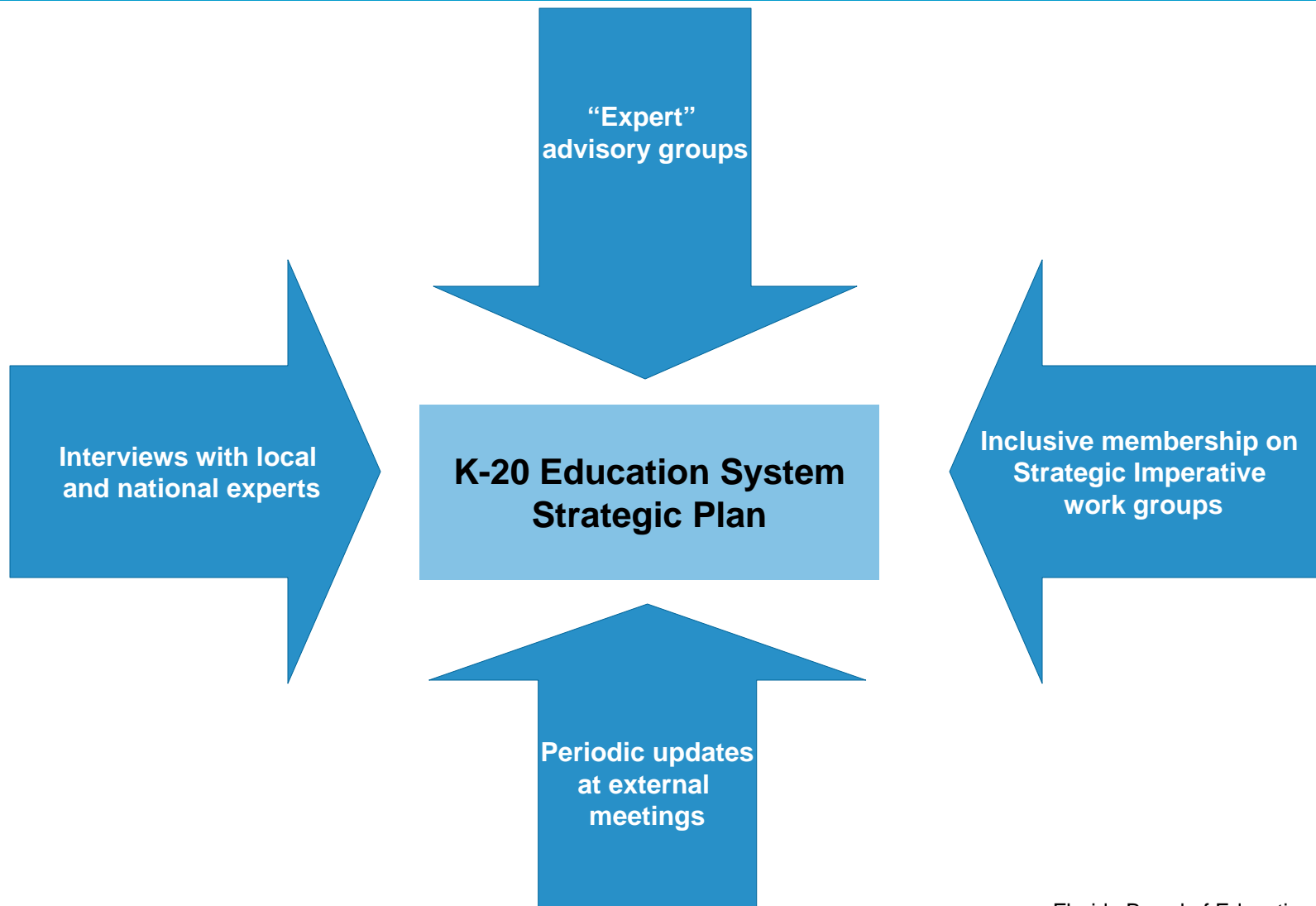
Strategic Planning

*Stakeholder Focus Groups: Responses to the
Secretary's Recommended Management Objectives*

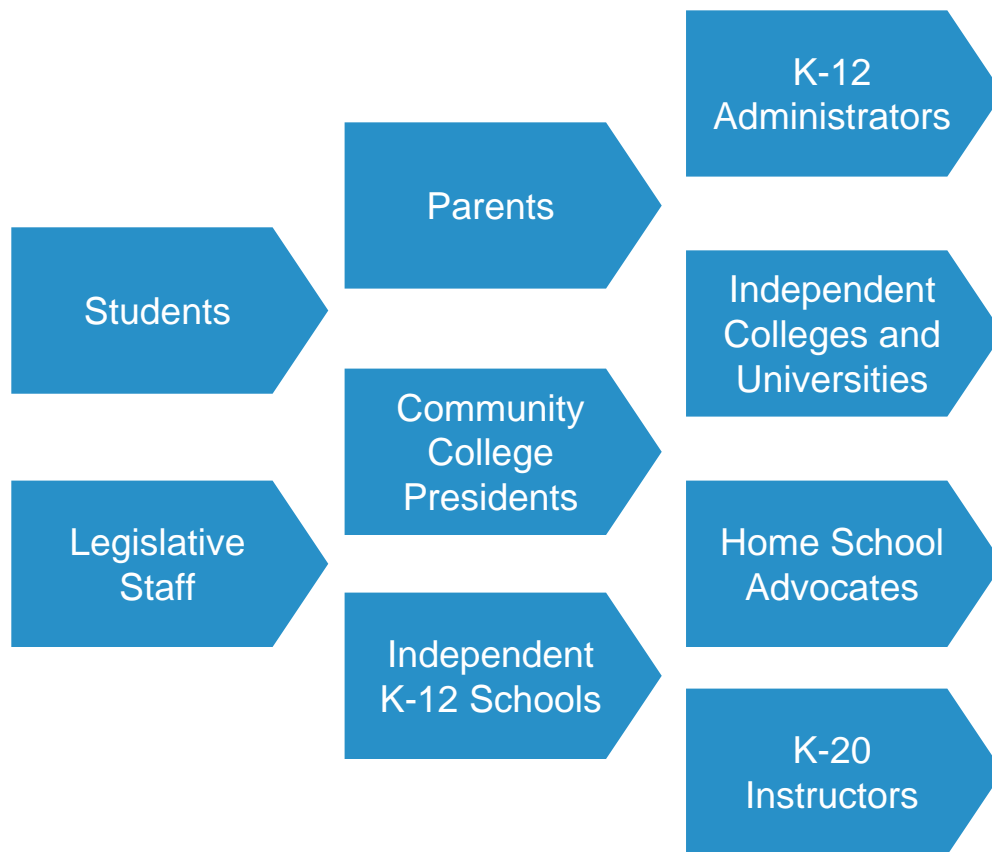
May 14, 2002



Throughout the strategic planning process, the Department has solicited input and participation from numerous stakeholder groups and advisors.



On May 9th, the Secretary invited over 100 individuals representing diverse K-20 constituencies to Tallahassee for a day of focus groups.



Focus Groups

- **Thirty-five separate sessions were held throughout the day**
- **Stakeholder groups rotated among sessions on each Strategic Imperative**
- **Strategic planning Team Leaders presented work to date and facilitated discussion**

The Secretary and his strategic planning team leaders sought to achieve three principal goals through the focus groups.

Goal One

Gather comments on the Secretary's recommended management objectives and obtain input on the type of projects that will enable the K-20 system to achieve them

Goal Two

Create a structured environment for the exchange of information and ideas on critical issues facing the K-20 education system

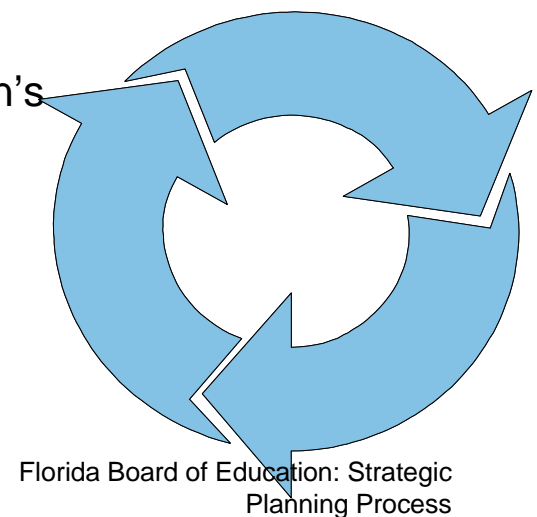
Goal Three

Establish a foundation for an ongoing communication strategy between the Secretary and critical stakeholder groups regarding strategic planning

Overall, stakeholder groups responded well to the strategic planning approach and the plan's emphasis on outreach and high expectations.

Perceived Strong Points and Positive Aspects of the Strategic Plan to Date

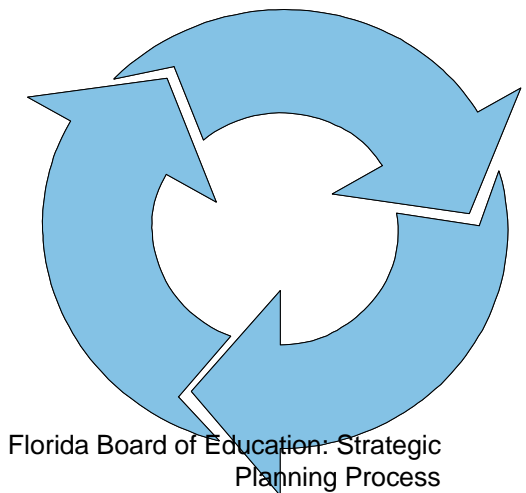
- ↑ **Extensive cross-system coordination and K-20 focus:** stakeholders were excited by the implications of the new K-20 approach and the opportunity for coordination that it provides
- ↑ **Data-based planning process:** quantitative data generated lively discussion, and stakeholders expressed appreciation for the use of data to identify and justify priorities
- ↑ **Early intervention and identification:** stakeholders responded positively to the plan's focus on "moving up" targeted interventions—in particular college guidance counseling and intervention with at risk students—to elementary and middle school
- ↑ **Focus on marketing and communication:** groups thought that the plan's focus on aggressive outreach and communication with "customers" via multiple venues was well-conceived
- ↑ **High expectations:** stakeholders agreed with the Secretary that setting high expectations for students, teachers, and administrators is critical to the success of the K-20 system



Patterns emerged regarding several areas of concern that the strategic planning team will take into account as it develops the final product.

Points of Concern and Questions for Additional Research

- ❓ **High standards demand a strong “safety net:”** while stakeholders were receptive to setting high expectations for students, they consistently reported a need to provide more focused support for students at risk of academic failure
- ❓ **Current assessment practices must be fine-tuned:** focus group participants were receptive to efforts focused on aligning current tests; however they questioned whether the current testing mechanisms at all levels are adequate measures of student achievement
- ❓ **Non-college bound students need more options:** given the high percentage of students who do not pursue postsecondary study immediately following high school, stakeholders expressed an interest in more viable alternatives for these students, including rigorous workforce programs in 11th and 12th grade
- ❓ **“Eliminating” social promotion will have significant consequences:** In general, stakeholders were not receptive to the concept of strict standards-based promotion policies, citing the needs of ESOL and disabled students, and a concern for an increase in drop out rates



The Secretary, the stakeholder participants, and members of the strategic planning team all found the day to be an extremely valuable component of the strategic planning process.

Next Steps:

- **Incorporate stakeholder input into the current process underway to develop projects to achieve the Secretary’s recommended management objectives**
- **Continue efforts to gather comments and feedback from K-20 “customers”**
- **Build on momentum to establish a coordinated, ongoing communication plan with K-20 education system stakeholders regarding the Board’s strategic priorities**