



# District 86 Toastmasters Meeting

Located in Southwestern and Central Ontario Canada

## District 86 Mid-Year Progress Report

District 86 is making real progress this year, but the March 31 dashboard shows that retention, renewal pace, and club support must remain front and center if we are to finish the year strongly. The district has the structure, the talent, and the plan to improve outcomes by June 30, but that will require focused attention from clubs, Areas, Divisions, and the district leadership team.

This report is intended for approval and information. It is written for the full membership, but it is also designed to support district council members as they review progress, assess risks, and understand where the district is headed next.

District 86 Performance							
<b>Paid Clubs</b>		<b>Payments</b>				<b>Distinguished Clubs</b>	
Base	To Date	Base	To Date	Base	To Date		
<b>100</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>4,197</b>	<b>3,926</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>0</b>		
<b>Goals</b>		<b>Goals</b>				<b>Goals</b>	
Distinguished		Distinguished		Distinguished			
<b>101</b>		<b>4,239</b>		<b>45</b>			
Select Distinguished		Select Distinguished		Select Distinguished			
<b>103</b>		<b>4,323</b>		<b>50</b>			
President's Distinguished		President's Distinguished		President's Distinguished			
<b>105</b>		<b>4,407</b>		<b>56</b>			
Smedley Distinguished		Smedley Distinguished		Smedley Distinguished			
<b>108</b>		<b>4,533</b>		<b>60</b>			
<b>Membership Payments</b>							
Late	Oct	Apr	Total	New	Charter	Total	Active Clubs
6	1,581	1,659	3,246	614	66	3,926	103

## Purpose of This Report

The purpose of this report is to provide a clear, district-wide view of progress against the District 86 Success Plan and the current dashboard results as of March 31, 2026. It explains what the numbers mean, how they relate to the district's goals, where the district is doing well, where attention is needed, and what actions should be taken between now and June 30.

District 86 exists to build new clubs and support all clubs in achieving excellence, while also helping members benefit from the Toastmasters education program through stronger club performance, leadership development, and member engagement. The district's success depends not only on attracting members, but on retaining them, developing them, and giving them meaningful reasons to stay involved.

## Why March 31 Matters

The March 31 checkpoint is an important point in the district year because it shows whether current trends are strong enough to support year-end goals. At this stage, leaders can still adjust course, reinforce weak areas, and accelerate support before the final quarter closes.

This matters because district goals are not measured only by effort; they are measured by results. By March 31, the district should be able to see whether membership payments are on track, whether new clubs are being created, and whether existing clubs are being supported well enough to remain healthy through June 30.

## District Goal Framework

District 86's Success Plan sets specific targets for the year. The plan uses a starting membership payments base of 4,197 and establishes the following goal levels: Distinguished at 4,239, Select Distinguished at 4,323, Presidents Distinguished at 4,407, and Smedley Distinguished at 4,533.

The plan also emphasizes club growth, distinguished club performance, onboarding, Pathways support, mentorship, leadership development, and better service to members. These are not separate goals competing with each other; they are connected parts of one overall strategy to strengthen the district.

## Definitions For Clarity

To make the report easier to follow, the following terms are used in plain language:

- **Membership payments** are the total paid member transactions recorded in the district dashboard, including new members and renewals.
- **New members** are members who joined during the year and brought fresh energy and growth to clubs.
- **Renewals** are members who continued their membership into a new term. The dashboard separates these into October renewals, April renewals, and late renewals.
- **Total membership payments** means all new member payments and renewal payments combined. This is one of the key district performance measures.
- **Distinguished status** means a club has met recognized performance thresholds in Toastmasters education, membership, and administration. The Success Plan uses Distinguished, Select Distinguished, Presidents Distinguished, and Smedley Distinguished as district-level goal markers.

- **Pathways** is the Toastmasters educational program that helps members learn communication and leadership skills.
- **Charter** means a new club has officially been launched.
- **Suspension** means a club has become inactive or temporarily not in good standing.

These definitions matter because district performance is only meaningful when members understand what the numbers represent and why they matter to club life.

### **Current Dashboard Snapshot**

The current dashboard file provides a view of district-wide activity as of March 31, 2026. It shows 103 clubs in the dataset, 614 new members, 6 late renewals, 1,581 October renewals, 1,659 April renewals, 3,246 total renewals, 66 total chart contributions, 3 chartered clubs, and 2 suspended clubs .

The dashboard also shows 3,926 total membership payments to date. That is a meaningful amount of activity and evidence that clubs across the district continue to attract and retain members. At the same time, the district still needs a stronger finish if it is to reach the higher success plan targets by June 30.

### **What The Numbers Tell Us**

The numbers tell a mixed but workable story. District 86 is not standing still. Members are joining, renewals are being processed, new clubs are being formed, and district operations are continuing across a broad geographic area .

At the same time, the pace of growth and retention needs to improve if the district is going to move from good activity to stronger district distinction. Renewals matter because every retained member strengthens a club's meeting quality, financial stability, leadership bench, and educational momentum. A district can recruit well, but if members leave early, clubs lose energy and the district loses momentum.

The presence of 2 suspensions also reminds us that some clubs need more timely intervention than others . That does not mean failure; it means the district must continue to spot trouble early, offer practical support, and use every available tool to help clubs recover.

### **Progress Toward District Targets**

District 86's membership payment targets were built to stretch the district beyond last year's baseline while still keeping the goals realistic and measurable. The current dashboard snapshot shows that the district is moving forward, but not yet at a pace that would make the higher levels easy to reach without deliberate action.

Goal Level	Target Membership Payments	Current Position
Distinguished	4,239	92% of goal achieved, tracking well for this goal
Select Distinguished	4,323	90.8% of goal achieved, will require stronger renewals plus new member growth
Presidents Distinguished	4,407	89.% of goal achieved, attention and coordinated district-wide action make this possible
Smedley Distinguished	4,533	86.6% of goal achieved, stretch target; requires exceptional execution across all clubs

The district also has club growth and distinguished club objectives that depend on the same underlying behaviors: stronger club health, better onboarding, improved member experience, and more consistent use of proven club practices. In other words, retention is not only a membership issue. It is a district achievement issue. Based on the current dashboard, growth is occurring at a pace not seen since 2019, sustained effort would make the highest goal levels achievable. The Club Growth and Program Quality teams recognize their goals overlap and have coordinated efforts related to retention, growth, and pathways, leading to stronger more successful clubs across the district.

### What the Numbers Mean

The strongest positive sign is that clubs are still adding members and chartering new activity, which shows that the district remains attractive and active. At the same time, the presence of 2 suspensions and 3 charters in the current dashboard suggests that retention and club stabilization deserve as much attention as recruitment. In practical terms, the district’s goal is not just to bring people in, but to keep them engaged long enough to benefit from the Toastmasters program and become future leaders. Retention for the membership period beginning April 1 is at 74% which is well above the international average of 52%. Average number of members per club is 19.5, almost charter strength average.

Retention matters because a club that keeps members is more likely to maintain meeting quality, maintain officer stability, and build an effective leadership pipeline. When members are well onboarded, supported in Pathways, and welcomed into a club culture of belonging, they are more likely to stay active and grow into roles at the club, area, division,

and district levels. That is why member retention is not a side issue; it is central to district success. Initiatives supporting retention are a district onboarding team for new clubs and onboarding training for existing clubs. Strong club mentoring program. Club coaching program has faltered due to lack of coaches.

### **Retention And Why It Matters**

Retention is one of the strongest indicators of club health. When members stay, clubs gain continuity, meeting quality improves, officers have more help, and the next generation of leaders has a better chance to emerge.

The Success Plan correctly identifies that some clubs onboard new members well while others do not. The first few weeks after joining are critical. If a member feels lost, unneeded, or unsupported, the likelihood of early dropout increases. If a member feels welcomed, included, and guided into Pathways and club participation, the chances of long-term engagement rise sharply.

Retention also affects leadership development. When membership is stable, people are more likely to take on roles, learn leadership skills, and build confidence through service. When membership is volatile, the same few people end up carrying the workload over and over, which creates burnout and weakens the club over time.

### **Successes Worth Recognizing**

District 86 should not overlook its successes. The district has a comprehensive success plan, an organized leadership team, and a clear commitment to accountability, communication, and collaboration. Those are important strengths, because district results improve when structure and follow-through are strong.

The dashboard also shows continued member activity across the district, including new memberships, renewals, and charter activity. That indicates there is still energy in the system and that clubs are not simply holding steady; they are continuing to move. The task now is to make that movement more consistent, more strategic, and more retention focused.

### **Successes And Risks**

District 86 can point to several successes. The district has a functioning structure of Division Directors, Area Directors, and the core district team, which gives us a solid network for coaching and accountability. The dashboard also shows a healthy level of overall activity, with member payments flowing throughout the year rather than no movement at all. Strong area and division director training opportunities as well as monthly training events coordinated with PQD team in support of district needs and goals. An educated district is a strong district.

The main risk is pace. If renewals and onboarding slow down, the district may fall short of the higher distinguished targets even if new member recruitment continues. Another risk is uneven club health, where some clubs onboard well and others lose members early because new members do not receive enough support in their first weeks. The success plan explicitly notes that weak onboarding, limited leadership interest, and burnout among the same volunteers can harm retention and long-term performance. (Use to support of the district onboarding team)

Another big risk is that the district will continue to add members without retaining enough of them long enough to reach the higher success thresholds. Renewals arriving late can create pressure and reduce the district's ability to manage clubs proactively. If the district waits too long to address weak retention, the result is often avoidable loss. (Use the support of the club retention team)

The issue of uneven club experience. Some clubs are strong, well organized, and engaging. Others need support in onboarding, meeting quality, leadership development, or Pathways engagement. When support is uneven, district outcomes become uneven too. (use the support of the moments of truth team and program quality team)

There is also a leadership risk. The success plan notes that the same people often take on leadership roles repeatedly, which can lead to burnout. District 86 needs a broader leadership pipeline so that more members step up, learn, and contribute over time. (Talk to the trio and the DLC chair about how to build leadership depth)

### **District Strategies Underway**

The Success Plan already identifies a strong set of strategies that should guide the final quarter of the year. These include improving onboarding, promoting Pathways, developing more leaders, strengthening the district website and calendar, using incentives more effectively, and creating best practices that can be shared across clubs.

The plan also emphasizes workshops on member retention, better resources for club executives and members, and stronger use of Area Directors and Division Directors to identify clubs needing support. These are practical strategies because they focus on the behaviors that drive results, not just the results themselves.

The district should continue using clear goals, regular updates, and peer accountability to keep the team aligned. Weekly or recurring check-ins are especially important in the final quarter because the district cannot afford to rely on end-of-year urgency alone.

### **Strategic Actions for District Success**

District 86 members and leaders can take concrete steps to improve key areas of the member experience.

<b>Focus Area</b>	<b>Member Action</b>	<b>District Leadership Action</b>
Quality of meetings	Conduct a simple meeting quality check quarterly with a club officer to review agendas, timing, and roles.	Standardize a district meeting evaluation template for consistent use across all clubs and areas.
Support available to clubs	Request help from Area Directors within 48 hours of identifying a club need.	Establish a "rapid support" pathway connecting club requests to the right Area, Division, or district resource.
Health of the membership experience	Welcome every new member personally and check in after their first meeting.	Require clubs to assign a member mentor or buddy to each new member for the first 30 days.
Future leadership pool	Identify one member monthly who shows initiative and encourage them toward a club role.	Build a leadership talent tracker for Area and Division Directors to spot and nurture potential leaders early.
Better support for new members	Share a welcome checklist with every new member, covering roles, Pathways, and next steps.	Launch a district-approved 30-day onboarding checklist for universal use across all clubs.
Stronger retention	Review attendance monthly and follow up personally with any at-risk members.	Track one retention metric per club monthly and provide targeted coaching where drop-off appears.
Less churn for club officers	Use a shared transition template when handing off officer responsibilities to the next team.	Introduce a district officer transition template to ensure smooth handoffs and reduce confusion.

Focus Area	Member Action	District Leadership Action
More stable clubs for Area and Division Directors	Report club health trends to Area Directors at every check-in meeting.	Maintain area-level club health snapshots to spot weak trends early and direct support proactively.
Healthier path to distinguished status	Track club progress toward DCP goals weekly and celebrate small wins.	Conduct area-level "distinguished readiness" reviews focusing on membership, education, and administration.
Improved onboarding	Assign roles and Pathways guidance to new members at their first or second meeting.	Distribute a standardized new member welcome package to every club for consistent first impressions.
Improved leadership development	Offer short-term leadership tasks to members before they take larger roles.	Promote low-risk leadership opportunities at club and area levels to build confidence gradually.
Improved educational support	Connect stalled Pathways members to club mentors for one-on-one guidance.	Host monthly Pathways help sessions with practical tips for members facing educational hurdles.

**What Members Need To Know**

For members, the district’s success plan is not an abstract administrative document. It affects the quality of meetings, the support available to clubs, the health of the membership experience, and the future leadership pool.

When clubs retain members, everyone benefits. New members get better support. Existing members experience stronger meetings. Club officers face less churn. Area and Division Directors have more stable clubs to work with. The district has a healthier path to distinguished status.

That is why this report is not only about numbers. It is about the member journey. If the district improves onboarding, retention, leadership development, and educational support, members will feel the difference directly in their clubs.

### **Roles And Support Needed**

Club officers should be responsible for early welcome, consistent follow-up, and clear member integration into club life. They should make sure new members understand Pathways, meeting roles, and how to stay active.

Area Directors should identify clubs that are seeing signs of member drop-off, weak engagement, or attendance instability. Their role is to coach, encourage, and connect those clubs to support before problems become crises.

Division Directors should reinforce best practices across multiple areas and make sure successful clubs are sharing what works. Strong district performance depends on multiplying success, not just solving problems one club at a time.

The district leadership team should continue promoting the website, calendar, resources, and leadership opportunities so that clubs can find help quickly and members can see a path forward. Support should be visible, easy to access, and practical.

### **Recommended Focus Through June 30**

To give the district the best possible chance of improving results by June 30, the focus should remain on the following priorities:

- Strengthen retention by identifying clubs with early warning signs and intervening sooner rather than later.
- Support onboarding by making sure every new member receives a welcome, a role, and clear Pathways guidance.
- Track renewals more actively so that the district can avoid last-minute pressure and improve pacing.
- Recognize clubs and leaders who demonstrate strong member engagement and renewal performance.
- Expand leadership opportunities so that the same small group is not carrying all district service.
- Continue promoting club best practices, especially in clubs that have solved retention or onboarding challenges effectively.
- Use district-level reporting to keep the membership informed and aware of where help is needed.

These recommendations are not separate from the district goals. They are the operational path to reaching them.

### **District Council Context**

Because this report is being posted ahead of the April 28 District Council meeting, it should help council members and the membership see the same picture clearly. The district is progressing, but it is also at a point where progress must become more deliberate if the June 30 objectives are to be reached.

Council members should understand that the district is not being asked to approve a vague aspiration. It is being asked to support a focused and realistic strategy: retain more members, onboard them better, strengthen clubs, and keep pushing toward the annual targets established in the success plan. That strategy is sound because it aligns with the district mission and with the practical realities shown in the dashboard.

### **Closing View**

District 86 has a strong foundation and a clear roadmap. The March 31 dashboard shows activity, commitment, and opportunity, but it also shows that retention and pacing must improve if the district is to finish the year at a distinguished level.

The good news is that the district does not need a new mission. It needs disciplined execution of the mission it already has; build new clubs, support all clubs, strengthen member experience, and create the leadership pipeline that keeps Toastmasters healthy for the long term. With clear focus between now and June 30, District 86 can still improve its results, strengthen its clubs, and give members a better Toastmasters experience.

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