



Creating a Five Year Strategic Plan For the Township of Ocean School District

Mission Statement

“Meeting the needs of all students with a proud tradition of academic excellence.”

Meeting # 1

Strengths & Challenges

On November 30, 2016, Township of Ocean School administrators, staff, board of education members, parents, and community members, 80 in total, came together for Meeting #1 of the strategic planning process. We began with a welcome and introductions by Board President, Joseph Hadden. Dr. James Stefankiewicz, Superintendent, presented the State of the School report. Kathy Winecoff then gave a review of New Jersey School Board Association’s (NJSBA) strategic planning process.

We reviewed the consensus process utilized in strategic planning. The topic for the first evening focused on identifying district strengths and challenges. Participants were asked to brainstorm on the strengths and challenges for the Township of Ocean School District. Participants gathered in randomly assigned groups, eight groups in total, engaged in brainstorming the strengths and challenges. After group discussion, each group identified their consensus points and presented those to the full group of meeting participants.

Following the reporting out from the small groups, we were able to identify common themes from the activity. Those common themes will be consolidated into possible goal areas to be further developed at Meeting #3.

The information that follows is a summary of the work of the small groups. As discussed with the meeting participants, all consensus points are recorded and posted on the district website to share the group work during the course of the strategic planning process.

Township of Ocean Strategic Planning Meeting #1 Outcomes

Group Consensus District Strengths & Challenges

“Yellow Dot” Group

Strengths	Challenges
Strong staff	Student stress
Supportive community	Family dynamics
Leadership	Technology
Unified Board of Education	Increased student needs
Technology	Career mentoring
Student opportunities	Substance abuse

“Green Dot” Group

Strengths	Challenges
Small class size	“Extras” don’t start until 6 th grade
Great teachers	Keeping balance among elementary schools
High academic quality at a value	Lack of orientation – need for all schools; emphasize on what is going on in / out of school
Physical infrastructure	Communication: among admin. / teachers & parents; throughout the community
Diverse community regarding ethnicities & social class	Use of social media in a proactive way
Community-based activities through school	Trouble reaching all diverse families
Use of tech	Increasing overall academics
Extra programs: teams, clubs, project extend	Lack of recess

“Red Dot” Group

Strengths	Challenges
Commitment to supporting the whole child	Closing gaps
1:1 technology ratio	Budgeting / funding
Tight-knit, supportive community	Making the transition from traditional to transformational
Facility upgrades – ALL schools	Meeting the needs of our diverse population
Progressive – ahead of the curve	Preparing students with the skills for their future
Strong tradition of building legacies	Providing faculty with the support and training they need
Extra / co-curricular opportunities – community & school based	Striking the balance between technology and developing students’ interpersonal skills
Community & school based support services	Educating our preschoolers
Expanding programs (ex: Career Pathways, Elem. Maker Spaces)	
Diverse population	
Wonderful Special Ed Department	

Township of Ocean Strategic Planning Meeting #1 Outcomes

“Light Blue Dot” Group

Strengths	Challenges
Great teachers	Funding
Programs for up to 21 years	Uncontrollable costs
Extracurricular – clubs, sports	Test scores
Technology – Google	ELL (English Language Learners) population
Community investment	Lack of respect – behavior
	Enrichment (Elementary level)

Brown Dot” Group

Strengths	Challenges
Facilities	Technology
Community & staff dedication	Staying up to date with software
Student body – dedicated	Training of staff
Student diversity	Professional development (quality in-house)
1 to 1 computer ratio	Diversity
Athletics	Funding
Expanding curriculum	Federal & State mandates
Special Education program	Communication with community / parents (different languages)

Fuchsia Dot” Group

Strengths	Challenges
Dedicated educators	Utilizing technology in a meaningful way
Caring staff	Losing strong students to magnet school
Technology tools	Vastness of curriculum
Concerned community	Homework
Diverse population	Motivation / engagement of students
Improved facilities	Lack of respect for authority (students)
Evolving class & curricular offerings	Measurement of programs
Visionary ideas	Indoor recess
CTE Grant	Effective communication with all stakeholders
Elementary clubs	Language barrier with students and parents

Purple Dot” Group

Strengths	Challenges
Devoted faculty	Vocational
Engaged, supportive administration	Fundraising
Science & Social Studies (well-rounded education)	Innovative teaching methods – i.e., “traditional to transformational”, getting out of textbook / worksheet approach (too much deskwork), methods that address all learner’s needs
Tradition / community	Non-diversity of staff
Technology	Economic segregation through tracking
	Technology

Township of Ocean Strategic Planning Meeting #1 Outcomes

Black Dot” Group

Strengths	Challenges
Strong supervisory team who are content specialists that collaborate	Decrease in population
Commitment to technology	Students attending academies & private HS
Current instructional programs – Envision, Wonders	Changing demographics
Diversity of students & community	Caring but struggling parents
Engaged students allow administration to focus on instructional leadership rather than discipline	Increase in Special Education
Energized central office staff	Articulation
Students prepared to compete	Parents accepting an emphasis on learning vs. grades
Staff prepared to meet new challenges	Mastery learning
Emerging programs to meet needs of students (Finance, Performing Arts)	Encourage residential learning
Rigorous program	Pressure of standardized testing (SGP scores)

Based on the information gathered from the majority of the groups that participated in this meeting, the following items were identified as common themes that the Township of Ocean School District may consider in future goal setting:

- Strong staff
- Technology as a strength and challenge
- Diversity (throughout all areas of the district)
- Supportive community & staff
- Funding challenges
- Declining enrollment
- Effective communication throughout the district with all parents/stakeholders
- ELL (English Language Learner) population – communication, closing gaps
- Curriculum concerns
- Standardized test scores

There was additional information brought up by some of the groups, but not the majority, that may be considered in the goal areas. That information includes:

- Recess
- Interpersonal skills
- Student behavior
- Student stress

Township of Ocean Strategic Planning Meeting #1 Outcomes

- Emerging initiatives
- Substance abuse
- Engagement of diverse community
- Vocational careers
- Risk from private, magnet schools
- Strong athletics

The second strategic planning session is scheduled for:

Thursday, January 19, 2017

Location to be Determined – Please watch the website

Meetings are scheduled to begin promptly at 7:00 pm
(6:45 pm Sign-In)

The topic / activity for the 2nd meeting will be to:

- Review the outcomes from Meetings 1
- Develop a Vision for the Township of Ocean School District

Bring a friend / colleague to our next meeting!

We look forward to seeing you!