



Creating a Strategic Plan For the South Harrison Township School District

Session 1 Defining the Strengths/Achievements and Challenges Of the South Harrison Township School District

On January 10 ,2019, South Harrison Township School District administrators, board of education members, education staff, parents and community members, twenty-three (23) in all, came together to initiate the strategic planning process for the school district. The first evening's topic focused on the strengths, achievements, and challenges facing the South Harrison Township School District. The meeting began with a welcome and introduction by the District Superintendent, Dr. James Lavender. Dr. Lavender presented the current "State of the District" outlining some foundational information about the school district. School Principal, Dr. Corinne Sannino, provided some student achievement highlights and additional district specific information. Facilitators Jesse Adams Jr. and Terri Lewis, from New Jersey School Boards Association (NJSBA), were introduced and Mrs. Lewis outlined the strategic planning process.

After the review of the consensus process utilized in strategic planning, participants were placed in three randomly assigned small groups ensuring a cross-section of stakeholders. The groups brainstormed the strengths/achievements and challenges of the district. After small group discussion, each group identified through consensus the "Top 10" strengths/achievements and "Top Ten" challenges of the South Harrison Township School District and presented those to the full group of meeting participants.

As discussed with the meeting participants, all group consensus points are recorded and available to share during the course of the strategic planning process. The following is a summary of the work of the small groups.

Group Consensus: Strengths/Achievements & Challenges

Team One:

Strengths/Achievements	Challenges
Small community/family	Communication (community)
Small class size	Community Involvement
Great educational environment	Fund raising
Curriculum articulation	Budget
Student achievement	Technology
Communication (school to parent)	Funding
Use of assessments	Training
After school activities and clubs	Small enrollment
Decrease in special education	Student transition (add more joint events)
Reading specialist	Long range facility plan
Discipline	Social emotional learning
Stokes	Staffing
Shared services	Shared services

Team Two:

Strengths/Achievements	Challenges
Community support/including financially	Being small
Positive discipline	Budget constraints
Responsive to community needs/facilities	Room for student achievement growth
Responsive administration	Tech – use appropriately
Curricular alignment	S.T.E.M.
High attendance rates	Time/schedule constraints
Reading specialist and instructional coach	Small group instruction
Communication	Consistent world language
Alignment to Kingsway	Testing amount
Student achievement improvement	Interpretation of Standards Based report Cards

Team Three:

Strengths/Achievements	Challenges
Class size	Parent involvement varies
Board provides for teacher appreciation opportunities	Keeping up with technology
Community support: HAS, Police Dept. Lead, Vote for security system	Budget concerns \$\$\$
Traditions and programs	Discipline challenge
Fall break (increased attendance)	Adjustment to change
Preventative services (including EI services) Excellent high school options	Rumor control (lack of facts)
Choice school	Substitute coverage
Shared services	Boundaries
Increased inclusive practices	Communication (outside of school environment)

South Harrison Township School District Strategic Planning Meeting #1 Outcomes

After reviewing the small groups' consensus points, the large group identified the following common themes that emerged from the small group work.

Common Themes:

Strengths/Achievements	Challenges
Small community	Budget/Funding
Discipline	Communication
Shared services	Technology
Class size	
Community support	
High attendance rate	
Curriculum articulation	
Communication	

The second strategic planning session is scheduled for:

Saturday, January 26, 2019

9:00 - 10:30 AM in the South Harrison Township School Cafeteria.

Sign-in begins at 8:30 AM.

Meetings are scheduled for 1.5 hours and end promptly.

During the January 26th meeting we will create a shared vision together for the future of the South Harrison Township School District . . . We will talk about our aspirations and expectations for our students and district.

Please join us. Everyone is welcome! We look forward to seeing you!