

## **Acknowledgements**

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### **West Orange Public Schools Board of Education**

Laura Lab, President

Mark Robertson, Vice-President

Ronald Charles

Sandra Mordecai

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Jeffrey Rutzky, Superintendent

John Calavano, Business Administrator/Board Secretary

### **Staff, Parents, Students, and Community Members**

Too many to list individually. Thank you for your support.

### **New Jersey School Boards Association**

Charlene Peterson, Al Annunziata, and Mary Gassman  
Field Services Representatives



# 3D Strategic Planning Process

## Executive Summary

### **A. Educating the Board to make an informed decision**

New Jersey School Boards Association made a presentation to the district on the 3D Strategic Planning Services available through the Association.

The information included a review of the following information and requirements:

- commitment of time and resources
- school and community level involvement
- strategic planning to meet the needs of the district
- the Board's role in the process
- potential participants to be included in the process

In September 2015, the Board contracted with NJSBA for these services.

### **B. 3 D Strategic Plan Meetings**

On November 2, and December 3, 2015 and February 18, 2016, Charlene Peterson, Al Annunziata, and Mary Gassman, Field Service Representatives, facilitated 3 Strategic Planning meetings. Outcomes of these meetings include:

1. Strengths/Accomplishments and Challenges/Opportunities,
2. The vision of the future for your district,
3. Goals and Objectives

Outcomes in the Strategic Planning Notebook are from all 3 of the Strategic Planning Meetings.

### **C. Developing the Action Plans**

The Superintendent and Administrative Team will develop action plans to implement the 3D Strategic Plan. The action plans will include:

1. The actions needed to accomplish the goals and objective
2. Select measures for accountability
3. Resources required
4. A timeline for implementation



# *MISSION STATEMENT*

The mission of the West Orange Public Schools is to engage in an energetic partnership with all components of this culturally-diverse community, to marshal resources to assist all students to reach their full potential through an academic emphasis on the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards, to promote the highest quality intellectual and human relations development of our pupils, and to instill in all students the knowledge and decision-making skills essential to make appropriate choices and successfully meet the challenges they will encounter as productive members of society.



# GOALS

The four goal areas that emerged from the group work are:

- 1. Facilities and Program Accessibility**
- 2. 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning and Readiness for Future Success**
- 3. Holistic Health and Wellness**
- 4. Parent and Community Engagement**



# GOAL AREA # 1

## Facilities and Program Accessibility

### Goal Statement:

**Create a safe and secure learning environment to deliver 21<sup>st</sup> century programs and to ensure safe access to sufficient and modern facilities.**

### Objectives:

1. Improve safety district-wide to ensure safe routes to school for all students, regardless of transportation mode.
2. Modernize facilities to support current and future technological needs, with special focus on elementary schools.
3. Expand facilities to alleviate overcrowding and remove trailers from all schools, with special focus on elementary schools.



# **GOAL AREA # 2**

## **21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning and Readiness for Future Success**

### **Goal Statement:**

**To prepare all students with 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and knowledge for future success.**

### **Objectives:**

1. Create a student-centered school counseling environment with clear communication about courses and college and career planning, including a physical space conducive to relationship building and information sharing.
2. Continued expansion of STEAM curriculum K-12 that provides student-centered active learning opportunities to prepare students for 21<sup>st</sup> century learning.
3. Ensure access to technology for every student.
4. Encourage an individualized approach to student development including the Arts, athletics, community service, and global citizenship.



# GOAL AREA # 3

## Holistic Health and Wellness

### Goal Statement:

To elevate the commitment to wellness of West Orange students, attending to both body and mind, recognizing the direct correlation between student daily experiences and their mental and physical health.

### Objectives:

1. Provide for multiple opportunities for children to move during the day. Recognize that kids need to move and physical breaks improve academic performance.
2. Encourage healthy food choices through the elimination of processed snacks and increasing the offerings of whole fruits and vegetables.
3. Make allowance for increased curricular flexibility to foster enriching learning environments for all students.
4. Create experiences in the classroom that encourage intrinsic motivation through engagement, project-based learning, joy/love of learning, and reduce stress and anxiety among students.



# **GOAL AREA # 4**

## **Parent and Community Engagement**

### **Goal Statement:**

**Maximize two-way communication through inclusiveness and optimal transparency.**

### **Objectives:**

1. Create a Public Relations Committee comprised of multi-lingual parents/teachers to effectively communicate all school matters (pamphlet/handout of school offerings).
2. Create an outreach/recruitment program for graduates and working parents to expose students to various career paths and options.
3. Improve perceptions of the middle and high school by holding more open houses, Q&A sessions, exit interviews, and parent roundtables.
4. Streamline communication using all avenues of communication with full commitment of transparency.





# **Appendix “A”**

## **District Overview presented by the Superintendent**



# **Appendix “B”**

## **Outcomes of Meetings 1 and 2**

**Strengths/Accomplishments**

**Challenges/Opportunities**

**and**

**Visions**

**by**

**Goal Area**



## Goal Area: Facilities and Program Accessibility

STRENGTHS	CHALLENGES
High school facilities	Logistics/safety with drop-offs – ice & snow
Safety in schools - vigilance	Library access after school
Building and fiscal improvements	Lower schools facilities – room for movement/play
	Infrastructure improvements – space, age
	Buses/Transportation – safety, late bus
	Parking
	Election Day security
	Upgrade facilities at elementary level
	Fiscal constraints limit advancement opportunities

VISIONS	VISIONS
Building and facilities should be updated to support academics	At least 1 more building and sufficient space for all students and teachers
Standing desks	Space for technology education
Physical space of Guidance office in HS should be student friendly and interactive	Update physical classroom to support 21 <sup>st</sup> century learning – outlets, water, HVAC, heat, layout, etc.
Small class size – 15 to 20 students	More activity time and space
More time for younger children to play – better facilities at elementary schools	



## Goal Area: Parent and Community Engagement

VISIONS	VISIONS
Tap into parent career networks to expose students to different career paths	Strong parental involvement
Increased community engagement, especially parents and non-English speakers.	Sound communication ability (including new medium)

STRENGTHS	CHALLENGES
Parents/PTA at elementary level	Outreach to non-English speaking parents and caretakers.
Diversity	Diversity – cultural understanding and preschool readiness
Re-registration	Transitions from elementary to middle school and from middle school to high school
Strategic Planning	Public relations
Central 6/Positive perception	Socioeconomic challenges with technology
	More celebration of accomplishments
	How to reach our community who do not have computers as district moves toward paperless. Overcoming digital divide
	Marketing of offerings/opportunities
	Perceptions of concerns at Liberty
	HAP - communication
	Students leaving district
	Library access after school
	Involvement of seniors and recent graduates into this strategic planning process



## Goal Area: Holistic Health and Wellness

VISIONS	VISIONS
Survival skills/life skills	Improved food service – fresh foods – chef (farm to table)
Encourage Entrepreneurship – nurture gifts identified in children and match careers to gifts	Increase value of social development through play and active engagement as opposed to paper and pencil seated tasks. More time for younger children to play
Intrinsic motivation – joy, enthusiasm, curiosity or wonder, resilience, and resourcefulness	Offer support to ALL sports played in town and at the high school. Don't focus on football only.
Have 1 high school, not 2. All students accepted equally	Standing desks
Later start time. Empower HS students to start school day later.	Restructure school days/calendar
Systems to make sure all students are valued	Expectations of students : hard working, problem solver, flexible, well rounded, not driven by standardized tests
More block scheduling of creative art/Phys. Ed.	

STRENGTHS	CHALLENGES
Anti-bullying initiatives	Finding more creative & joyful materials
Sports activities (like the variety) and national sports teams/clubs (recognitions/achievements)	Weight of students' backpacks
Extra-curricular clubs (many different ones) and offerings (music, Fine Arts)	More integrative extracurricular opportunities for Special Education students
Arts/Music/Drama programs	Boys (engagement) – post elementary
Summer enrichment program	Need for support/programs for older students (middle school/high school) for vocational training and self sufficiency
Authentic hands-on teaching and learning experiences; skills based	Less homework at elementary levels



## Goal Area: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning & Readiness for Future Success

VISIONS	VISIONS
Expand opportunities for ALL students to visit colleges	Less standardized testing/No PARCC
Develop vocational programs for students as an alternative to college	Team oriented classrooms. Let teachers be more creative in the classroom
Lower student-to-teacher ratio. Small class sized (15-20). TA if more	Middle school efficacy
Hands-on learning including field trips and assemblies; skills based	Individualized approach to student education
Computer literacy and available technology for all students. Develop spaces for learning with technology	Strong Language Arts program – no teaching to test
Career awareness options including tapping into parent networks	Strong public PreK program
STEAM opportunities	Systems to make sure all students are valued
Encourage entrepreneurship – nurture gifts identified in children and match careers to gifts	More block scheduling of creative art/Phys. Ed.
A project-based district that is student centric that support inquiry and exploration-based learning using all available tools including technology (cloud-based) and other hands-on material	Open requirements to take AP and Honors classes and a strict standard that has to be maintained (i.e. B and up). Have a class established into which students can transfer when they do not maintain the required grade
Use technology to interact with students all over the county and world (virtual classrooms)	Increase frequency of contact and consistency of input between students and Guidance. Revamp: training, specialization, curriculum. Student friendly physical space
Survival skills/life skills	Increase the value of social development through play and active engagement, as opposed to paper and pencil seated tasks
Expectations: global citizen, self-motivated, hard working, problem solver, flexible, well-rounded, not driven by standardized test	Update the physical aspects of the classroom to 21 <sup>st</sup> century learning (electrical, water, HVAC, class layout). Standing desks.
Intrinsic motivation: joy, enthusiasm, curiosity or wonder, resilience, resourcefulness	Restructure school days and year. Later start time for high school students



<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>CHALLENGES</b>
Diversity – racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, learning abilities, and programs	Improvement in guidance career counseling and communication of course requirements
High school course offerings	Making diversity of staff reflect the served community
Staff – many teachers with higher degrees	Too much time, expense, and content on test prep
Special Education/Basic Skills/ESL	Vocational education/opportunities
Extracurricular offerings and the arts - fine arts, Music department	Need more Math at high school. Requirements completed prior to senior year. Concerns with Math – ineffective teaching & inflexibility
Staff salary – attract and retain good staff	Differentiation in instruction lacking
Authentic hands-on teaching and learning experiences	More rigorous work versus worksheets in elementary
Honors implementation	College Prep (SAT Prep, writing from 9 <sup>th</sup> grade)
Professional Development offerings for teachers	Need to develop strong writing program
Maintain class size ratio	Stagnant curriculum at lower grades. Rapidly changing curriculum. Consistent follow through. on curriculum. Follow state mandates but still maintain rich curriculum
HAP Program	Honors for Art students
Passionate staff who are advocates for students	Low performing teachers – how is this handled?
Block schedule	Honors program - access
Comprehensive school district	Spanish curriculum (elementary). More foreign language options accessible to all.
Strategic planning	Middle school honors – still more work needed
Goal toward digital frontier	Too much administration.
Technology – wireless, Chromebooks, infrastructure, Smartboards, etc.	Prior to implementing new programs, consider widespread implications and impact. Get away from top down initiatives. Solicit staff input
	Quality of teacher/student interaction – student input
	Disaggregate the data to reflect diversity and educational special services
	Advanced degrees - staff
	Class size (some schools)
	Communication/consistency between elementary schools. Interschool meetings so that multiple buildings can communicate and hear the same information
	Advocacy for inclusion – staff support
	Science in elementary grades. STEM integration
	Teachers resistant to change (technology). Training for staff in use of technology
	Make technology more accessible to disadvantaged children. Overcome digital divide
	Need for support/programs for older (Middle/high school) for vocational training and self-sufficiency. Not everyone is college ready
	Learning outside the classroom



# **Appendix "C"**

## **Action Plans**

