



## **Creating a Strategic Plan for the Monroe Township School District**

### **Mission Statement**

The Monroe Public Schools, in collaboration with the members of the community, shall ensure that all children receive an exemplary education by well-trained, committed staff in a safe and orderly environment.

### **Session 1**

#### **What are the Strengths, Achievements and Challenges of the Monroe Township School District?**

On January 14, 2020, Monroe Township School District administrators, Board of Education members, staff, parents, and community members, forty-eight (48) in all, came together to initiate strategic planning. The topic for the first evening focused on the strengths, achievements, and challenges of the Monroe Township School District. The meeting began with a welcome and introduction by Board President, Steven Riback. Dr. Dori Alvich, Superintendent, presented the current “State of the Schools” report. Facilitators Mary Ann Friedman and Charlene Peterson, from New Jersey School Boards Association (NJSBA), were introduced and provided an introduction to the strategic planning process.

We reviewed the consensus process utilized in strategic planning. The topic for the evening focused on identifying district strengths and challenges. Participants gathered in randomly assigned groups, nine groups in total, and engaged in brainstorming the districts strengths and challenges. After group discussion, each group identified their consensus points, “Top 10” strengths and challenges, and presented those to the full group of meeting participants. The larger group then identified “Common Themes” that had occurred throughout the smaller groups.

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.

*Monroe Township School District Strategic Planning Meeting #1 Outcomes*

**Group Consensus: Strengths, Achievements & Challenges**

**Fuchsia Dot Team:**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
Character / Kindness	Overcrowding
Funding / Material	Gifted support
Special Education	Bullying @ MS
Technology	K - 12 Supervisors stretched too thin
Respect for teachers	Lack of challenge opportunities in K - 1
Administrative support	Transportation
Clubs / Extra-Curriculars @ MTHS / MS	

**Purple Dot Team:**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
Qualified staff	Increasing student growth
Strong academic programs (i.e., AVID – Advancement Via Individual Determination; AP - Advanced Placement)	Lack of adequate facilities
Extensive PD training	Insufficient State funding
Students / Diverse population	Increased transportation needs
Strong community support	Aged infrastructure
Highly qualified leadership	Limitations on financial resources
Special Education programs	Community
Diversity of programs	Overdevelopment
Fiscally responsible	Class sizes
Efficient transportation (in-house)	Lack of infrastructure within the town, i.e., roads, sidewalks, traffic

**Black Dot Team:**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
Programs and course offerings: TAG (Talented and Gifted), SPED (Special Ed), athletics, music	Space – physical space, class size
Good people and good place	Cultural awareness
Parents	Being able to maintain high level of success with challenges
Whole child; promoting well-roundedness - mindfulness	Remaining an attractive place for teaching and administrative candidates
	Developing resiliency in students

**Monroe Township School District Strategic Planning Meeting #1 Outcomes**

**Dark Blue Dot Team:**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Music / Art</li> <li>- Special Ed</li> <li>- Unified programs</li> <li>- College placement</li> </ul>	Overcrowded
Well maintained facilities	Outdated / unrepairable AG (Applegarth School)
Transportation - efficient	Better career / post HS planning / exploration
Safe environment	Staff turnover
Dedicated staff / administration	

**Light Green Dot Team:**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
Special Needs program	Cell phone distractions
Quality education	Need more competitive academic Olympiads
Strong academics / schools	Building constraints
Anti-bullying culture environment	Continue fight for fair funding
Exposure to diverse programs for many careers	Township infrastructure is insufficient to handle growth of housing
Unified sports / programs	
Cluster classes / opportunity	
Music / Arts programs	

**Light Blue Dot Team:**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
Faculty	Overcrowding / Unhoused students
Curriculum	Funding / State Aid
Levels of Special Ed offered	Communication
Facilities	Parent / Community Involvement
Co-Curricular offerings (sports, clubs, etc.)	Geographic size - \$ transp., time on bus
Staff Development	Full Day Kindergarten
Technology	Aging facilities
Security	
Food service	
Diversity	

**Monroe Township School District Strategic Planning Meeting #1 Outcomes**

**Dark Green Dot Team:**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
Students	Student growth
Staff	Parent pressure
Parent involvement	Aging facilities
Diversity	Unhoused students
Programs	Diverse needs
Community Involvement	Budget Cap
Special Ed Program	Demographics
Technology	PD offerings (Professional Development)
Professional Development	Transportation
Curriculum	

**Yellow Dot Team:**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
Positive culture	Growth / Referendum
Committed staff	Budget / State funding
Resources ↔	Resources
Curricula - STEM	Funding Partnerships
Programs – Co / Extra	BOE for children
Special Education	Balancing needs of the community
Professional Development	Communication / BOE / Council / Planning / Zoning
Transportation	Increase Community involvement
Safety	
High Achievement / AP	

**Brown Dot Team:**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
HS graduation rate	Funding
Unified program	Overcrowding
Curriculum → all levels	Aging facilities
Staff → teachers, paras, admin	Competitive salaries to retain and recruit staff
Highly rated district	Expansion of special ed program (self-contained) to include all schools
Service learning programs	Referendum
Diversity	Proper training for all staff to support spec. ed students
Low % of out of district special ed	Increased community involvement

## ***Monroe Township School District Strategic Planning Meeting #1 Outcomes***

Following each group reporting out on their consensus points, the large group identified the following **common themes**:

- Highly qualified staff
- Diverse community
- Good people – good culture
- Special Needs programs
- Course offerings
- Strong administration
- Fiscal responsibility
- Overcrowding / increased enrollment
- Lack of township infrastructure
- Lack of sufficient State Aid
- Full Day Kindergarten
- Need for transportation
- Attention to Whole Child,
- Character, Kindness
- STEM, Elementary and up
- Aging infrastructure
- Facilities – strength & challenge
- Facilities – clean and inviting

**The second strategic planning session is scheduled for:**

**Monday, February 24, 2020 at 7:00 pm, Monroe Twp. HS, Media Center.**  
**Sign-in begins at 6:30 pm.**

Meetings are scheduled for 1.5 hours. Meetings start and end promptly.

During the February 24<sup>th</sup> meeting we will create a shared vision together for the future of the Monroe Township School District . . . we will talk about our aspirations and expectations for our students and our school district.

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

**Please RSVP by calling *the Superintendent's Office.***