



## **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 3 Developing Strategic Planning Goals & Objectives**

On April 6, 2021, Monroe Township School District administrators, Board of Education members, staff, parents and community members, thirty-seven (37) in all, came together virtually for the third strategic planning meeting. Originally, the third meeting was scheduled for March 2020 but was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the closure of schools for in-person teaching, learning and any activities.

The meeting began with a welcome and introduction by Dr. Dori Alvich, Superintendent. Facilitator, Mary Ann Friedman, from New Jersey School Boards Association (NJSBA), was introduced and provided an overview of the strategic planning process.

We began the evening with a review of the strategic planning process and consensus building. Copies of the outcomes from meetings 1 & 2, along with goal areas were electronically provided for each participant.

The activity for the April 6, 2021 meeting was to develop goal statements and objectives for each of the four goal areas identified at the second meeting. Each participant, upon registration for the virtual meeting, had selected a goal area of interest and choosing. Each participant was given their first or second choice with regard to the small group for the goal area they had selected. The initiatives from the previous two strategic planning sessions were utilized to develop the goal statements and objectives by the attendees.

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.

## Goal Area 1: Facilities / Finance

Strengths	Challenges
Funding / Material	Overcrowding / Unhoused students
Fiscally responsible	Transportation
Efficient transportation (in-house)	Lack of adequate facilities; aging facilities
Well maintained facilities	Insufficient State funding / Budget
Transportation - efficient	Increased transportation needs
Safe environment	Limitations on financial resources
Security	Overdevelopment
Technology	Lack of infrastructure within the town, i.e., roads, sidewalks, traffic
Safety	Class sizes
Resources	Space – physical space, class size
Curriculum – all levels	Outdated / unrepairable AG (Applegarth School)
Highly rated district	Building constraints
Service learning programs	Continue fight for fair funding
Low % of out of district special ed	Communication / BOE / Council / Planning / Zoning
Levels of special ed offered	Budget Cap
Faculty	Geographic size - \$ transp., time on bus
Co-Curricular offerings (sports, clubs, etc.)	Student growth
Staff Development	Growth / Referendum
Cluster classes / opportunity	Resources
Unified sports / programs	Funding Partnerships
Quality education	Township infrastructure is insufficient to handle growth of housing
Strong academics / schools	
Programs and course offerings: TAG, SPED, athletics, music, STEM	
Good people and good place	
Whole child; promoting well-roundedness, mindfulness	
Extensive PD training	

### Vision & Initiatives

Vision	Initiatives
<p>The vision of the MTSD is to cultivate an environment in which ALL students are inspired to strive for their personal best.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expanded programming                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gifted and Talented</li> <li>- Technical / Career skills</li> <li>- Full-day K</li> <li>- Arts &amp; Music</li> <li>- Option 2</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**Monroe Township School District Strategic Planning Meeting #3 Outcomes**

<b>Vision</b>	<b>Initiatives</b>
<p>Every child meets their highest potential in a safe and adequate environment incorporating social and emotional wellness while being instructed by highly qualified and educated professionals in an organization that incorporates the entire community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hire and retain highly qualified staff</li> <li>• Pass referendum for expansion of facility</li> <li>• Keep open and transparent communication with community</li> </ul>
<b>Vision</b>	<b>Initiatives</b>
<p>We imagine a world in which . . .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At school, students feel safe, welcome and supported by everyone else and feel empowered to be themselves and make a positive impact</li> <li>• Where students try, learn and experience the world with a balance of tools, content, and instruction that challenge them, allow them to fail, and prepare them for their future as well-adjusted, responsible and prepared adults</li> </ul> <p>This is the world we imagine for the school district of Monroe.</p>	
<b>Vision</b>	<b>Initiatives</b>
<p>The vision of the MTSD is to enhance curriculum through the infusion of technology to include all grades (K-12) and advance curriculum to support the Whole Child in life skills, vocational trades, and year round enrichment and advancement courses in a safe and secure environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Top 10 in rankings</li> <li>• 1:1 tech PreK-12 (grade 4 &amp; up take home)</li> <li>• Summer enrichment (academic and fine arts, athletics)</li> <li>• Vocational trades (modern day)</li> </ul>
<b>Vision</b>	<b>Initiatives</b>
<p>The MTSD accepts the challenge of preparing the whole child for a rapidly changing world by collaborating with the community to develop skills necessary to succeed as a productive citizen.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community: parents, businesses, colleges / tech schools</li> <li>• Full-day Kindergarten</li> <li>• Whole Child focus</li> <li>• Life skills (Gen &amp; SpEd)</li> <li>• Career readiness</li> <li>• Technology</li> </ul>
<b>Vision</b>	<b>Initiatives</b>
<p>To create infrastructure and facilities to maximize students potential.</p>	<p>Expand facilities</p>
<p>Satisfy market and professional needs</p>	<p>Curriculum includes technology AI, Robotics, Supply Chain, etc.</p>
<p>Challenge every student to maximize their potential</p>	<p>Quality faculty and support staff along with materials and programs that address needs of the student</p>
<p>Prepare students with special needs to have meaningful futures</p>	<p>Close monitoring, proper support, instructional strategies and materials</p>

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<b>Vision</b>	<b>Initiatives</b>
<p>Monroe is like a strong oak tree. We have deep roots with many new leaves. We want to continue to create a well-rooted learning community.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. District wide based activities (students and/or community members)</li> <li>2. Facilities expansion</li> <li>3. Recruiting and retaining quality staff</li> <li>4. Culture of professionalism, with collaboration and open minds</li> <li>5. Continuum of education for all students (targeted PD)</li> </ol>
<b>Vision</b>	<b>Initiatives</b>
<p><u>Personalized Programs</u></p>	<p>Addresses needs of Special Ed, G/T and students “in the middle”, curricular experiences and extracurricular opportunities</p>
<p><u>Collaboration between Stakeholders</u></p>	<p>Students, staff, families, community members. Engagement by all stakeholders</p>
<p><u>Construction to support Growth</u></p>	<p>Provide safe facilities, cost-effective use of facilities</p>

## Goal Area 2: Educational Excellence

Strengths	Challenges
Character / Kindness	Overcrowding / unhoused students / referendum
Funding / Material	Gifted support
Technology	Bullying @ MS
Respect for teachers/dedicated staff and admin	K-12 Supervisors stretched too thin
Administrative support/Highly qualified leadership	Lack of challenge opportunities in K-1
Clubs / Extra-Curriculars @ MTHS / MS	Lack of adequate facilities; aging facilities
Qualified and committed staff / faculty	Cultural awareness
Strong, quality academic programs (i.e., AVID; AP)	Space – physical space, class size
Extensive PD training	Being able to maintain high level of success with challenges
Students / Diverse population	Remaining an attractive place for teaching and administrative candidates
Special Education programs / Levels of Special Ed offered	Developing resiliency in students
Strong community support	Funding / state aid
Diversity of programs for many careers	Better career/post HS planning/exploration
Good people and good place	Staff turnover
Programs and course offerings: TAG, SPED, athletics, music, STEM	Cell phone distractions
Parents/parental involvement	Need more competitive academic Olympiads
Whole child; promoting well-roundedness, mindfulness	Expansion of special ed program (self-contained) to include all schools
Programs – music/art, special ed, unified programs, college placement, sports	Diverse needs
Safe environment/security	Communication
Anti-bullying culture/environment	Increase parent / community involvement
Cluster classes / opportunity	Full day Kindergarten
Facilities	Demographics
Positive culture	Parent pressure
Resources	Professional Development offerings
High Achievement / AP	Transportation
HS graduation rate	Resources
Highly rated district	Funding Partnerships
Service learning programs	BOE for children
Low % of out of district special ed	Balancing needs of the community
	Communication / BOE / Council Planning / Zoning
	Competitive salaries to retain and recruit staff

## Vision & Initiatives

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<p>The vision of the MTSD is to cultivate an environment in which ALL students are inspired to strive for their personal best.</p>	<p align="center"><u>Initiatives to Achieve the Vision</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expanded programming                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gifted and Talented</li> <li>- Technical / Career skills</li> <li>- Full-day K</li> <li>- Arts &amp; Music</li> <li>- Option 2</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Formal goal-setting program/reflection                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Write own vision statement</li> <li>- Evaluate/reflect on quality of courses and own effort</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Character Ed                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Integrated (infuse in lessons) / spiraling through <u>all</u> grade levels</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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## Goal Area 3: Health & Wellness

Strengths	Challenges
Character / Kindness	Overcrowding / Unhoused students
Funding / Material	Bullying @ MS
Respect for teachers	K-12 Supervisors stretched too thin
Administrative support	Lack of challenge opportunities in K-1
Clubs / Extra-Curriculars @ MTHS/MS	Increasing student growth
Extensive Professional Development (PD) training	Lack of adequate facilities; aging infrastructure
Students / Diverse population	Insufficient state funding
Strong community support & parent involvement	Overdevelopment
Highly qualified leadership	Class sizes
Diversity of programs	Cultural awareness
Programs and course offerings: TAG, SPED, athletics, music, arts	Developing resiliency in students
Good people and good place	Outdated/unrepairable Applegarth School
Whole child; promoting well-roundedness, mindfulness	Staff turnover
Well maintained facilities	Communication
Safe environment / safety	Parent pressure
Dedicated staff/administration; committed	Diverse needs
Strong academics / schools	Demographics
Quality education	Professional Development (PD) offerings
Anti-bullying culture environment; positive culture	Transportation
Unified sports / programs	Resources
Resources	Funding partnerships
Co-Curricular offerings (sports, clubs, etc.)	BOE for children
Security	Increase parent and community involvement
Technology	Competitive salaries to retain and recruit staff
Food service	Expansion of special ed program (self-contained) to include all schools
Transportation	Proper training for all staff to support spec. ed students
Highly rated district	
Service learning programs	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technology</li> </ul>
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## Goal Area 4: Community Engagement

Strengths	Challenges
Students / diverse population	Community
Strong community support/involvement	Insufficient State funding
Highly qualified leadership	Cultural awareness
Diversity of programs	Being able to maintain high level of success with challenges
Good people and good place	Developing resiliency in students
Parents / Parent involvement	Communication
Whole child; promoting well-roundedness, mindfulness	Increase parent / community involvement
Quality programs / education	Overcrowding / unhoused students
Anti-bullying culture environment	Funding / state aid; continue fight for fair funding
Exposure to diverse programs for many careers	Resources
Unified sports / programs	Township infrastructure is insufficient to handle growth of housing
Positive culture	Student growth
Committed staff	Parent pressure
Resources	Diverse needs
Highly rated district	Demographics
Service learning programs	Growth / referendum
Diversity	Funding partnerships
	BOE for children
	Balancing needs of the community
	Communication / BOE / Council / Planning / Zoning

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# **Common Themes Identified by Large Group**

## **Meeting #1 Strengths & Challenges**

- 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

## **Meeting #2 Vision & Initiatives**

- Community involvement
- Hire and retain highly qualified staff
- Afterschool activities & summer programs
- Educational Excellence
  - challenging curriculum
  - meet individual child's needs and potential
- The Whole Child – SEL
- Meeting the Markets' Professional Needs
- Pass Referendum for adequate facilities
- Life Skills
- Collaboration
- Build upon a culture of professionalism

## ***Monroe Township School District Strategic Planning Meeting #3 Outcomes***

Utilizing the information from Meetings 1 and 2, the following goal statements and objectives were developed by the small groups. Consensus was achieved in the individual groups. Each small group then reported out and consensus was achieved by the larger group.

# **Monroe Township School District Strategic Planning Goals**

## **I. Facilities & Finance**

**Goal: Demonstrate and address the current facility needs as well as the need for additional facilities to safely house our students for a comprehensive education.**

### **Objectives:**

- To create a referendum to increase our current facilities as well as strengthen existing facilities to meet the needs to expand our programs due to increased enrollment.
- To create a referendum to increase our current facilities as well as strengthen existing facilities to ensure facilities that are in a state of good repair.
- To develop a priority needs list of the existing infrastructure as well as a timeline for which they are to be addressed and to be communicated to the community.
- To finance each as efficiently as possible utilizing shared services, public and private partnerships, grant funding and potentially set a priority of stages for completion.

## **II. Educational Excellence**

**Goal: Provide ALL students with access and opportunities to develop the necessary skills to become career- and college-ready through inclusive and diverse learning opportunities with highly qualified, well-trained staff.**

### **Objectives:**

- Provide curricula, learning opportunities, and professional development (PD) that is representative of our staff, students, and our community's diverse needs.
- Expand educational opportunities and course offerings in Elementary, Middle, and High School including expanding partnerships with colleges for dual enrollment courses, summer enrichment opportunities (K-12), after school activities (K-12).
- Develop and expand career preparation partnerships with vocational schools and within the private sector.
- Provide ALL students 1:1 access to technology on all platforms through the integration of technology as a teaching and learning tool within all content areas.

### **III. Health & Wellness**

**Goal:** To provide resources and promote an environment that enhances and supports the health and wellness of students, staff, and families.

**Objectives:**

- Focus on meeting the needs of the Whole Child through social-emotional curriculum, increased cultural awareness and acceptance, staff training, counseling programs, after-school and summer activities, and community building events.
- Focus on meeting the social-emotional needs of staff through professional development, mental health support, and wellness programs.
- Focus on building strong community support and family involvement for all of our stakeholders.
- Focus on creating infrastructure and facilities to maximize student and staff well-being and potential.

### **IV. Community Engagement**

**Goal:** The Monroe Township School District strives to create strong partnerships with our diverse community through authentic communication and accessibility.

**Objectives:**

- To improve our ability to share information in the community both internally and externally (social media presence, in-person at community events, and during school events).
- Embrace community-based steering committees comprised of industry professionals, teachers, administrators, students and community members.
- Design a community-based needs assessment, within the 21<sup>st</sup> Century context, to address the district's ability to be culturally responsive and leverage the opportunity that Monroe Township's diverse community has to offer.
- Leverage the benefits of the virtual learning environment to expand community engagement / communication through a variety of venues.



## **Next Steps**

The Superintendent / Administrative Team will develop action plans to implement the vision and goals developed in the 3D Strategic Plan. The action plans will include:

1. The actions necessary to accomplish the goals and objectives
2. Select measures for accountability
3. Resources required
4. A timeline for implementation
5. Indicators of success

All participants will be invited to attend the board meeting, date to be determined, when the final strategic plan will be presented to the Board of Education by Mary Ann Friedman, NJSBA, Field Service Representative.

Thank you to all of the participants who gave of their time, energy and talents to contribute to the strategic plan for the Monroe Township School District! It has been a pleasure to work with you.