



Creating a Strategic Plan for the Upper Township School District

Mission Statement

To prepare all learners for 21st Century challenges via comprehensive curricular and instructional programs, aligned with New Jersey Student Learning Standards, and to create an academic infrastructure which fosters and nurtures a love of learning; enabling each stakeholder to actualize his/her individual potential.

Session 3

Developing Strategic Planning Goals for the Upper Township School District

On March 20, 2024, Upper Township School District administrators, Board of Education members, staff, parents, and community members, a total of seventeen (17), came together for the third and final strategic planning meeting. The topic for the third meeting focused on developing a broad goal statement and supporting objectives for each of the four goal areas identified at the second meeting. Two goal areas merged to allow for participation in all goal areas.

Participants self-selected their small group goal area:

- Public Relationships
- Student Experiences/School Culture and Climate
- Health and Wellness

The meeting began with welcoming remarks from Superintendent Ms. Allison Pessolano and an introduction of Facilitator Michelle Kennedy from the New Jersey School Boards Association (NJSBA), who provided an overview of the strategic planning process and the focus of the evening's activity.

The small groups reviewed the outcomes from meeting 1, strengths & challenges, and meeting 2, vision and initiatives. They began writing a broad goal statement and developing accompanying objectives that reflected their respective goal area's strengths, challenges, and visions.

Small Group Work - The information that follows is a summary of the work of the small groups.

Goal Area	Public Relationships
Goal Statement	To create or further develop resources that will foster increased reciprocal communication between all school district stakeholders.
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create more family and community engagement opportunities. 2. Continually evaluate effectiveness of district communication to the community. 3. Create an environment that harnesses the power of the community by encouraging members to share their knowledge and resources.

Goal Area	Student Experiences/School Culture and Climate
Goal Statement	To foster a thriving school community where all staff and students feel valued, welcomed, and appreciated. Which will create a student-centered learning environment that empowers students, maximizes teacher effectiveness, and leads to the highest levels of student achievement.
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To cultivate a culture of professional growth for educators by providing dedicated time and resources for personalized learning, collaboration, and reflection, ultimately enhancing their effectiveness and student achievement. 2. Create programs and initiatives to increase feelings of connection and belonging among staff and students. 3. To create a student-centered learning environment where students take ownership of their learning.

Goal Area	Health and Wellness
Goal Statement	To foster an environment that supports social and emotional health and well-being.
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase opportunities for students to strengthen their competence in self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision making. 2. Address the social and emotional needs of our staff. 3. Create a space for students for emotional regulation. 4. Provide services to families & community to assist in the support of overall health & well-being.

Next Steps

The administration will create action plans that will identify the specific tasks needed to accomplish the goals/objectives, who is responsible, the resources required, the timeline over five years, and the indicators of success.

A final report summarizing the work and input from the three strategic planning meetings and the action plans will be generated by New Jersey School Boards and presented at an upcoming Board of Education meeting for consideration by the Board. We invite all participants and interested stakeholders to attend.

Thank you

Thank you to everyone who participated in the strategic planning process. The input of every participating member has shaped the outcome of the plan. The district now has a five-year roadmap that reflects the aspirations of the various stakeholders for Upper Township School District's students.