



Creating a Strategic Plan for the Hamilton Township School District

Mission Statement

The Hamilton Township School District is dedicated to creating a safe, secure, and welcoming educational environment for all. We will inspire our diverse community in realizing their optimal potential as lifelong learners and responsible members of our community.

Vision Statement

Believe we can...Together.

Session 1

What are the Strengths, Achievements and Challenges of the Hamilton Township School District?

On September 28, 2023, Hamilton Township School District administrators, Board of Education members, staff, parents, and community members, twenty-two (22) total, came together to initiate the strategic planning for the school district. The meeting began with a welcome and introduction by Superintendent Dr. Jeffrey Zito. Dr. Zito and district administrators presented the current "State of the Schools" report. Michelle Kennedy from the New Jersey School Boards Association (NJSBA) explained 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 self-assigned groups, four groups in total, and engaged in brainstorming the district's strengths and challenges. After group discussion, each group identified their consensus points, "Top 10" strengths and challenges. Each group's outcomes were shared with the entire group, while the group's spokesperson reported out. All participants participated in the reporting and then, as a large group, identified "Common Themes" that had occurred throughout the small group outcomes.

The following information 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 strategic planning process.

Small Group Consensus: Strengths/Achievements & Challenges/Opportunities

Table 1

Strengths	Challenges
Parent support	Academic deficit
Parent/community outreach	Student home support/opportunities
Overall communication	Staffing/funding
Increased curriculum efforts to support student achievement	Sub shortage (all areas)
Warm/welcoming environment in the schools	Space in the schools
Changes in leadership	Transportation
Safety measures in the buildings	Unpaid balances (Food Services)/ free lunch
Before & afterschool student support	At risk family participation
Student Input/Voice	Homeless family supports (parent center)
Board support	Building relationships with students from teachers
	CTE Expansion
	Expanding Clubs at Elementary level
	Clear communications of policies

Table 2

Strengths	Challenges
Resources within the school for students	How do parents know if their children utilize the resources?
Great Support Staff	Communication - parents don't have phone numbers
Resource Fair	Expanding preschool
Mentors/Tutoring	More STEM projects
Communication - Remind Email Phone Calls	Few responses to surveys/meetings (BOE, Strategic Planning)
Meals are great	Mentoring program at Davies
Free breakfast program	Time management - teachers are overwhelmed- kids don't understand how to be prepared
Preschool program	Solar for heating and air conditioning
Staff helps students identify goals and reach them	Upgraded technology
PBIS - tickets	Staffing/Substitutes
Transportation is provided for extracurricular activities	
Sports	
Access to parent portal - grades	
PTA	
Band/Shows in Community	
Mental Health Initiative	
School supplies are provided	

Table 3

Strengths	Challenges
Programs that meet all needs and more.	Clarity on policies that seem to impact the minority disproportionately.
Parent involvement (lower grade level)	Visibility of all (administration specifically)
Growth mindset!	Open lines of communication
Security	Parent opportunities (food and stuff)
Student support services (SEL)	Clear communication of offerings (all media blast)
Facilities	Updated and uniform procedures
Early childhood program	Community connections
Accommodating community needs.	Bad experiences (past and present) not resolved

Table 4

Strengths	Challenges
PTA	Competitive Salary/Benefits Paraprofessionals
Supportive Board	Filling openings
Administration	Meeting academic need for students
Opportunities for Family Engagement	Space/expansion at Shaner
Great Facilities	With any enrollment increase, buildings are maxed out
Great Facilities Staff	Transportation - Consortium, in-house, other options? Creative options
Teaching & Support Staff	Cont. expansion of career exploration CTE (exposure at all levels)
Security	Expansion of clubs/activities at elementary
Provide start up supplies	Free lunch
Social Emotional Support & Programs	Additional support for coping and life skills
Best BA Ever!!!	

Following each group reporting out on their consensus points, identifiable through the large group discussion were the following **common themes**:

Common Theme Strengths	Common Theme Challenges
PTA	Academic deficit
Supportive Board	Staffing/funding
Administration	Sub shortage (all areas)
Opportunities for Family Engagement	Space in the schools
Great Facilities	Transportation
Teaching & Support Staff	Unpaid balances (Food Services)/ free lunch
Security	At risk family participation
Provide start up supplies	Homeless family supports (parent center)
Social Emotional Support & Programs	Building relationships with students from teachers
Clubs, Activities, and Sports	CTE Expansion
Before and After Programs	Expanding Clubs at Elementary level
	Clear communications of policies
	Aligning procedures
	Consistent access of technology amongst students at home/ keeping up with current practices/ maintenance upgrade
	Communication back & forth from home to school

The second strategic planning session is scheduled for: Tuesday, October 24, 2023, at 5:00 pm, William Davies Middle School

Meetings #2 and #3 are scheduled for 1.5 hours. Meetings start and end promptly.

During the October 24th meeting we will create a shared vision together for the future of the Hamilton Township School District . . . we will talk about our aspirations and expectations for our students and 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, or if you receive an email, click on the RSVP link.

Thank you!