



Hawthorne Public School District Is Creating a New Three-Year Strategic Plan

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Hawthorne Public School District is to provide a safe and challenging learning environment that fosters a love of learning. In doing so, pupils shall be able to reach their maximum potential in accordance with their specific individual needs, abilities and talents. By providing meaningful experiences, Hawthorne students will develop heightened communication skills, acquire knowledge of citizenship and economic responsibility, make meaningful connections and function successfully as active participants in a complex, changing global world community.

The 3D Strategic Planning Process: Dream, Determination, and Destiny by Design

Session 1: What Are the Strengths, Achievements, and Challenges of the Hawthorne Public School District?

On **January 29, 2018**, community members, school district administration & staff, and Board of Education members came together to initiate strategic planning. The first evening's topic was on the current strengths and achievements of, and challenges and opportunities facing, the Hawthorne School District.

We began the process with an overview of the State of the District as presented by Superintendent Richard Spirito. The contents of that comprehensive presentation, like this report, are available on the District website. We then gathered in four randomly assigned groups to identify the strengths and points of pride in our district, and to brainstorm what opportunities and challenges the school district faces in the immediate future.



New Jersey School Boards Association

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We worked in small groups, first recording our individual brainstorming and then sharing our thoughts with other members of our small groups. After group discussion, each group identified their “top 10” (or thereabouts) list of strengths and challenges for the district.

The information that follows is the work of the small groups. As discussed with the meeting participants, we will record and post all meeting outcomes for the wider community.

Black Dot Group

Strengths/Accomplishments

- Staff (communication, building community)
- LMS Teaming
- Security updates
- Parental involvement with fundraising
- Bringing back out-of-district programs back into our district
- Mental health and wellness
- Reading / Writing Workshop

Challenges/Opportunities

- Parental involvement (more diversity of parents—same parents involved)
 - inclusiveness (?) / exclusiveness
 - purpose?
- Extend mental health & wellness to school
- Alternative offerings of World Language
 - expanding frequency of instruction
 - there was a question about certification of teacher at elementary level
- Balancing student population across schools
- Facilities to support special education classes
- Elementary science – needs to be more hands-on
- Media services / library elementary
- Career cluster / experiences / partnership for high school (all grades 9-12)
- Homework guidelines (purposeful, difference across all three grade bands: elementary, middle school, high school)
- Staff communication – bringing in parents
- Possibly bring in students from other districts
- Look into outside entities for teaching / equipment



Red Dot Group

Strengths/Accomplishments

- Communication
- Good environment
- Safety
- Strong special education program
- School app – increase
- Survey students; get ideas

Challenges/Opportunities

- PCTI
- More course offerings
- Environment—keep students here
- Bring back electives
- Moving away from outsourcing
- Classroom size
- PARCC scores – up/down
- Taxes / State aid
- More choices
- Hear more about the opportunities we offer
- Possibly bring in students from other districts
- Look into outside entities for teaching / equipment

Orange Dot Group

Strengths/Accomplishments

- Increase in communication
- Caring administration
- Increase in transparency
- New workshops are needed
- Bear Cave
- Forward vision from the top down
- Good plans / targets in place
- Teachers know students
- Improved curriculum
- Appropriate supports in place
- New energy / creativity of staff
- Emphasis on mental health



(Orange Dot Group work, continued)

Challenges/Opportunities

- Class size
- Culture of academic achievement in the CP classes
- Getting more engagement/ involvement from families
- Transition supports for the 5th graders to address social issues at LMS (besides Leadership Camp)
- Social skills group at elementary level

Green Dot Group

Strengths/Accomplishments

- Technology
- Parent / community commitment
- Newer curriculum
- Committed teachers
- Strong relationships
- 6th / 7th Teaming

Challenges/Opportunities

- Keep progressing
 - technology
 - programs
 - professional development
 - parent training
 - STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math)
 - Consistent instructional practices
- \$\$
- 8th grade Teaming
- Televised Board meetings
- Growing population?
- Prepare kids for the future



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After sharing our small group results with all the evening's participants, all were thanked for their wide-ranging contributions and collaborative work.

Our next meeting is set for **Tuesday evening, Wednesday, February 21, at 7pm in Hawthorne High School Room 123, the New Cafeteria.** (Inclement weather date is February 26.) We will engage in a **Visioning Activity** to help refine our collective vision for the Hawthorne Public School District, which promises to be a truly *fun* exercise! We strongly encourage all to **bring at least one additional friend** to our next meeting.

The Hawthorne Public School District Board of Education and Administration greatly appreciate your highly interactive participation in helping to help create a roadmap for our wonderful district for the next three years. We look forward to working with you at our future sessions!

We look forward to seeing you for our next Strategic Planning meeting, February 21, at 7pm in the High School Cafeteria, room 123. Bring a friend!

