



Creating a Strategic Plan for the Bethlehem Township School District

Mission Statement

The mission of the Bethlehem Township School District, in partnership with the community, is to provide a safe, nurturing child-centered environment that challenges each child to maximize his/her potential. Our students will acquire the skills and knowledge to enable them to become independent, respectful, responsible citizens who strive for excellence and embrace learning as fundamental to successfully adapt to our ever-changing global community.

Session 2

Creating a Vision & Initiatives for the Bethlehem Township School District

On April 19 ,2023, Bethlehem Township School District administrators, Board of Education members, staff, parents, and community members, twenty (20) in all, came together to continue the strategic planning initiative. The meeting began with a welcome and introduction by Mr. Edward Abato, Superintendent. Facilitator Gwen Thornton, from New Jersey School Boards Association (NJSBA), was introduced and reviewed the strategic planning process.

The consensus process utilized in strategic planning was reviewed. The topic for the evening focused on creating a shared vision for the Bethlehem Township School District. Participants were asked to create a podcast on their school district for the web. The podcast was about Schools that Succeed. In addition to the current programs already in place in the School District, what programs/services/curriculum/student outcomes/best practices/facilities would you expect to see in your schools that are succeeding? Participants were encouraged to think “big picture.”

Participants gathered in randomly assigned groups, four (4) in total, to develop a shared vision and initiatives. The small groups reviewed the outcomes from Meeting #1, strengths, and challenges, and then began brainstorming on their vision for the district. After group discussion, each group identified their consensus points and presented those to the full group of meeting participants.

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 strategic planning process.

Group Consensus: Vision & Initiatives

Group 1: Blue Dot Group

Podcast Title: “Initiating Innovation that Inspires and Ignites a Passion for Learning”

Initiatives:

1. Expanding programming, i.e., STEAM, music/artis, band, chorus, plays, foreign languages, trades, wood working, metal.
2. Foster building 21st century skills i.e., working in teams, collaboration, data driven decision making through the analysis of data and development of SMART goals
3. Continuous and consistent strategic plans that are in line with our school’s mission and vision
4. Increase community engagement through events and authentic learning experiences
5. Our 5-year goal- students will graduate as well-rounded individuals and productive members of our global society

Group 2: Red Dot Group

Podcast Title: “Garden Spot in the Garden State”

Initiatives:

1. A state of the art facility that meets the needs of all students
2. Timeless traditions
3. State of the art grounds that extend the educational experience
4. Continuously evolving curriculum that celebrates diverse learning styles and promotes independent thinking.
5. There’s an app for that! – Community communication
6. Community service across all grades
7. Community involvement-opening doors to alumni, seniors, and families
8. Experiential learning, diversity, and inclusion
9. We are more than just a school; we are a family!

Group 3: Black Dot Group

Podcast Title “Lion’s Main”

Initiatives:

1. Co-curricular community service projects
2. Academic leaders thorough independent and innovative thinking
3. Modern, open space campus with integrated technology(robotics lab and state of the art media center)
4. Top notch staff through recruitment and retention through support and development
5. Peer Leadership- program encouraging inclusiveness and exposure to diversity
6. Advanced level class opportunities that support all learning needs.

Group 4: Green Dot Group

Podcast Title: “Small School, Big Results

Initiatives:

1. Learning across grades and subjects
2. Real world readiness
3. Student driven learning climate
4. Differentiated learning for all learners
5. Resilient, empathetic learners
6. Innovative STEAM and tech offerings
7. Experiential learning beyond the classroom
8. Family and community involvement in learning
9. Inclusive curriculum

Following each small group’s reporting out to the larger group, and a discussion of the common themes the following five (5) **Goal Areas** were identified by the large group:

- 1. Facilities: Indoors/Outdoors**
- 2. Communication, Community Engagement and Outreach**
- 3. Student Learning Experience**
- 4. Recruiting and Retaining Staff**
- 5. Supporting a positive school climate and culture**

Bethlehem Township School District Strategic Planning Meeting #2 Outcomes

During May 25, 2023, meeting participants will develop goals and objectives, for each goal area, which will guide the Bethlehem Township School District for the next several years.

The third strategic planning session is scheduled for:

**Thursday
June 1, 2023 at 6:30 pm**

Meetings start and end promptly.

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