



West Milford School District

Creating a Strategic Plan For West Milford

Mission Statement

Meeting # 1

What Are the Strengths, Achievements, and Challenges or opportunities of the West Milford School District?

On March 6, 2014, West Milford School District Administration, Board of Education Members, staff, parents and community members came together to initiate strategic planning. The evening topic was focused on the strengths, achievements, and challenges or opportunities of the West Milford School District. The meeting began with a welcome and introduction by Dr. James McLaughlin, CSA. The meeting was opened by board President, Mr. Dave Richards, Field Services Representatives, Robynn Meehan and Al Annunziata from NJSBA, presented an introduction to strategic planning. Dr. McLaughlin presented the current "State of the Schools." Participants then gathered in randomly assigned groups to identify the strengths and challenges of the West Milford School District.

Small groups of participants brainstormed and shared ideas together. After discussion, each group identified their consensus points and presented those to all 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 web to share the group work during the course of the strategic planning process.

Group Consensus

Strengths, Accomplishments and Challenges or opportunities

Purple Team:

Strengths:

- **School community knowledge of district**
- **Diversity of programs**
- **Rich extra-curricular activities**
- **Teacher commitment**
- **Expand project adventure**
- **Drug testing**
- **Surplus funding**

Challenges/Opportunities:

- **Lack of involvement outside of school community**
- **Limited time to take all desired programs**
- **Increase critical thinking abilities**
- **Refresher course in math for parents**
- **Poor social skills**
- **Drug testing awareness to “opt-in”**
- **Use outside groups for educational purpose**

Red Team

Strengths:

- **Pride in AP/Honors courses**
- **Full Day Kindergarten**
- **Extended school year program**

West Milford Strategic Planning Meeting #1 Outcomes

- **Neighborhood schools**
- **High participation in athletics and extra-curricular**
- **Arts provided in district**
- **PTA involvement**
- **Dedicated and committed staff**
- **Staff retention is good**
- **Special education programs in district**
- **Safety throughout schools (bus, school, ID's, drills)**
- **Promote nurture and safety in the classroom**
- **Having mental health providers (social workers available)**
- **All inclusive district**
- **Facilities have a great deal to offer**
- **Technology**

Challenges/opportunities:

- **Earlier intervention for post secondary planning**
- **Ensure students are college and career readiness**
- **Meeting the needs of a diverse student population (needs, socio-economic)**
- **Support programs without compromising others**
- **Budget and funds to support programs**
- **State mandates**
- **Geography-challenge of a large area, more structure for real experiences in Phys. Ed and extending the school day**
- **Differentiated instruction**
- **Keyboarding and electronic portfolio**
- **Focus on fundamentals**

Green Team:

Strengths:

- **Supportive community**
- **Emerging sense of vision**
- **Music/Arts**
- **Patriotic community**
- **Diverse program offerings**
- **Outstanding media center**
- **Productive employment of technology**
- **Emphasis on character**
- **Innovative programs-PSAT/FT Kindergarten/Special Education**

Challenges/opportunities:

- **Not enough time (in many respects)**
- **Money (budget vs. tax levy cap)**
- **Unfunded mandates**
- **Enrollment concerns**
- **Preparing for 21st Century careers**
- **Maintain facilities**
- **Pre-school (resource adequacy)**

Blue Team:

Strengths:

- We have GREAT KIDS!!
- Strong community
- Solid curriculum
- District values input
- Teachers of the year!
- Parent access via parent portal, active PTO
- Student safety and welfare, working closely with police
- Supportive community organizations
- Excellent Band/Music and Arts
- Strong special Education
- Wide range of academic and extra-curricular

Challenges/opportunities:

- Diverse economically
- Substance use/abuse
- Challenge to keep up with technology
- Time management-limits to school day
- District size-travel
- Issues that interfere with learning
- Balance busy vs. time off
- Transportation-family issues
- Increase service learning, Interact, rotary
- State mandates and funding

Yellow Team:

Strengths:

- **Community involvement**
- **Commitment of staff-dedication/professional development**
- **Quality of students**
- **Atmosphere and school setting**
- **Economic status**
- **High quality/research based programs**
- **Emphasis of the arts**
- **Committed parents/parent organizations**
- **Organization of supervisor-instruction**
- **Encore - new basic skills**

Challenges/opportunities:

- **Need teacher assistance before and after school**
- **Access to technology**
- **Diversity-socioeconomic/size**
- **State/federal government/change of direction/common core**
- **Parental supervision-working parents**
- **Internship/mentoring-limited due to business issues**
- **Student perception of themselves**
- **Students are not challenged enough-teaching to teach**
- **Drugs**
- **Facilities-deteriorating**

Orange Team

Strengths:

- **Communication avenues**
- **Dedicated BOE/Administration**
- **Academics/sports/arts**
- **Wireless**
- **Nature**
- **WMEF support**
- **Parent portal**
- **Technology vision**
- **Parents**

Challenges/opportunities:

- **Communication-paperless**
- **Who do you call?**
- **Differentiated learning**
- **Parental involvement**
- **Common core-math**
- **Guidance/financial aid**
- **Student achievement recognition**
- **State and Federal mandates**
- **Geography**
- **Facilities**

West Milford Strategic Planning Meeting #1 Outcomes

The second strategic planning session is scheduled for:

Thursday, April 10, 2014, 7pm-8:30pm

Meetings are scheduled for 1.5 hours and end promptly.

During the next meeting we will create a shared vision together for the future of West Milford... we will talk about our aspirations and expectations for our students and school district.

Please join us!

RSVP by contacting the district office at to RSVP.

We look forward to seeing you!