

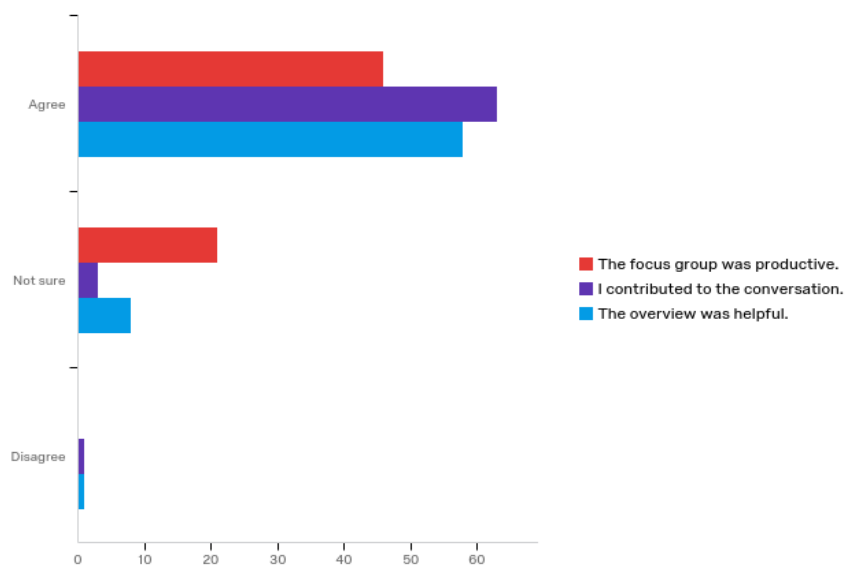
Visioning and Strategic Planning Advisory Committee process and outcomes

March 7, 2017

The first meeting of the Stamford Public Schools' Advisory Committee for Visioning and Strategic Planning occurred March 7, 2017. The Advisory Committee will meet three times over the course of this project. The next meeting will be in May and a final meeting will be held in June.

At this first meeting, there were over 150 members in attendance. After an introductory plenary, members of the Steering Committee led small focus groups of Advisory Committee members to gather input and feedback on draft Vision and Core Values statements. Advisory Committee groups were designed as "like-groups" and local elected officials were spread throughout groups. Notes were collected, collated and reviewed by the Project Board and Steering Committee to revise and refine the Vision, Mission, and Core Values.

In addition to the notes from the Advisory Committee meeting, attendees were provided with an opportunity to respond to a survey. The survey was designed to gather feedback on the process used to collect input during the meeting, as well as to gather additional thoughts and reflections on the Vision and Core Values. About 50% of the participants responded to the survey.



The Advisory Committee survey revealed that the majority of attendees believed the process employed was productive, the overview was helpful, and that everyone had an opportunity to contribute. Some of the themes from the survey feedback included that the small group work was productive, and that everyone participated with enthusiasm. Many Advisory Committee members noted, however, that more time should have been allowed for discussion.

Advisory Committee members believe that the statements should be clear and direct, and free of jargon. It is important that all stakeholders should be able to understand and embrace the statements, and that they can be easily communicated.

Through focus group discussions, the Advisory Committee captured their thoughts on the most important ideas and messages SPS should convey. Some of these include that Stamford is an incredibly diverse group of people living in a very dynamic community. Many groups discussed the idea that Stamford Public Schools should nurture, support, and prepare all children to lead a successful life in this changing world. To do so, SPS must provide individualized student support and a rigorous and challenging school experience for the children of the community.

Session notes and survey responses were collated and compiled by Cambridge Education. The notes were reviewed by the SPS Project Board and by the Steering Committee at their March 23 meeting.

The Steering Committee used feedback and reflections to draft the next iteration of Mission, Vision, and Core Values statements. The finalized statements will be distributed to stakeholders in Stamford Public Schools, including all public schools' staff members and Board of Education members. Other community members will be provided with the final statements through several channels, including the SPS web site and media outlets.

In the upcoming meeting of the Advisory Committee in May, members will be asked to react to the identified goals for strategic planning and reflect on ways to communicate and support these goals within the broader community.