

Verbatim Responses

Recorded on worksheets as a result of the small group work activity
Community Engagement Session #3 • March 29, 2022

On March 29, 2022 Vision Forward held its third small-group work session to discuss Improving Student Performance for students in Pre-K through Grade 5. Approximately 80 community members attended in person and another 24 participated virtually. After a presentation on the topic, participants, both in person and via Zoom prepared responses to the following activity and tasks:

Table #1

Task 1:

If you were sharing information with a friend, what are two positive things about the St. Joseph School District, its students or staff you could share?

Positive News to Share	Positive News to Share
Grow Your Own Program for Teachers	Teachers who care about students

Task 2:

What are 3 priorities to be addressed in the area of improving PreK and Elementary academic achievement?

List your top priorities on the chart on the next page. Prioritize your top 3 priorities from 1-3 – 1 being the highest and 3 being the lowest priority.

What recommendations does your group have to address these priorities in the next 5 years?

Top Priorities	Ranking 1-3 (1=highest 3=lowest)	Recommendations
Classroom management issues	1	Program to bring back retired teachers to assist young teachers
Reading on grade level	2	Teacher mentorship & classroom management & behavior management

Table #2

Task 1:

If you were sharing information with a friend, what are two positive things about the St. Joseph School District, its students or staff you could share?

Positive News to Share	Positive News to Share
Allow families, teachers and volunteers return to the classrooms (have not allowed due to COVID-19)	

Task 2:

What are 3 priorities to be addressed in the area of improving PreK and Elementary academic achievement? List your top priorities on the chart on the next page. Prioritize your top 3 priorities from 1-3 – 1 being the highest and 3 being the lowest priority.

What recommendations does your group have to address these priorities in the next 5 years?

Top Priorities	Ranking 1-3 (1=highest 3=lowest)	Recommendations
Increase academic achievement	1	More support to Handle behaviors
Equitable staff	2	Lower class size Provide equal size classes throughout the district
Expand Early Childhood programs	3	Identify students early with needs through intervention

Table #3

Task 1:

If you were sharing information with a friend, what are two positive things about the St. Joseph School District, its students or staff you could share?

Positive News to Share	Positive News to Share
Grow Your Own program	ESOL and changing/adapting to the needs of students

Task 2:

What are 3 priorities to be addressed in the area of improving PreK and Elementary academic achievement? List your top priorities on the chart on the next page. Prioritize your top 3 priorities from 1-3 – 1 being the highest and 3 being the lowest priority.

What recommendations does your group have to address these priorities in the next 5 years?

Top Priorities	Ranking 1-3 (1=highest 3=lowest)	Recommendations
On-going mentoring and coaching for all staff including principals (not just new staff members)		
Behavior Issues – Adult supports in the classrooms		Behavior interventionist, reading and math specialists in every building.
Meaningful partnerships in the community		

Table #4

Task 1:

If you were sharing information with a friend, what are two positive things about the St. Joseph School District, its students or staff you could share?

Positive News to Share	Positive News to Share
Resiliency of students returning to classroom/buildings from COVID	Veteran (high quality) teachers that have chosen to stay with the district

Task 2:

What are 3 priorities to be addressed in the area of improving PreK and Elementary academic achievement? List your top priorities on the chart of the next page. Prioritize your top 3 priorities from 1-3 – 1 being the highest and 3 being the lowest priority.

What recommendations does your group have to address these priorities in the next 5 years?

Top Priorities	Ranking 1-3 (1=highest 3=lowest)	Recommendations
Family engagement and communication		Communications should be two-way and going out from district and coming back from parents
Address challenging classroom behavior		
Expanded Pre-K		Centers not in just one part of the district, but throughout the district

Table #5

Task 1:

If you were sharing information with a friend, what are two positive things about the St. Joseph School District, its students or staff you could share?

Positive News to Share	Positive News to Share
All students have the opportunity to connect and excel in a wide variety of extra-curricular activities and this helps keep students connected to their schools and interested in going to school	Vision Forward process and involving the community in decision-making

Task 2:

What are 3 priorities to be addressed in the area of improving PreK and Elementary academic achievement? List your top priorities on the chart on the next page. Prioritize your top 3 priorities from 1-3 – 1 being the highest and 3 being the lowest priority.

What recommendations does your group have to address these priorities in the next 5 years?

Top Priorities	Ranking 1-3 (1=highest 3=lowest)	Recommendations
Attract and retain quality elementary teachers and principals		Provide good wages to teachers and principals. Improve the culture and provide the quality of professional development they need.
Improve literacy throughout all the years of school. Focus a lot on literacy.		Bring volunteers back into the buildings, better diagnostics but with reading teachers in every school and ongoing professional development
Ongoing parent connections to education.		Have a pilot at Robidoux parent group and Parents as Teachers not just to be up to Kindergarten because parents need help in grade school, junior high and high school. Continue program thru HS

Table #6

Task 1:

If you were sharing information with a friend, what are two positive things about the St. Joseph School District, its students or staff you could share?

Positive News to Share	Positive News to Share
Dedication of teachers and staff is so evident when what we have been through over the past several years.	

Task 2:

What are 3 priorities to be addressed in the area of improving PreK and Elementary academic achievement? List your top priorities on the chart on the next page. Prioritize your top 3 priorities from 1-3 – 1 being the highest and 3 being the lowest priority.

What recommendations does your group have to address these priorities in the next 5 years?

Top Priorities	Ranking 1-3 (1=highest 3=lowest)	Recommendations
More access to Early Childhood Education. Good start but looks like more needs to be done.		
Smaller class sizes to allow more individual instruction at the lower elementary levels		
Additional supports		Paras, interventionists, staffing for the future think out of the box what can be done to bring more assistance to teachers and the classrooms

Table #7

Task 1:

If you were sharing information with a friend, what are two positive things about the St. Joseph School District, its students or staff you could share?

Positive News to Share	Positive News to Share
A lot of passion within our system wanting to do what is best for our kids	Opportunities we provide our students in a traditional setting, virtual academy and tech school.

Task 2:

What are 3 priorities to be addressed in the area of improving PreK and Elementary academic achievement? List your top priorities on the chart on the next page. Prioritize your top 3 priorities from 1-3 – 1 being the highest and 3 being the lowest priority.

What recommendations does your group have to address these priorities in the next 5 years?

Top Priorities	Ranking 1-3 (1=highest 3=lowest)	Recommendations
Resources in all buildings regardless of Title status		
Family support		
Behavior side systemic approach with structures and fidelity across our district which we are working on		

Table #8

Task 1:

If you were sharing information with a friend, what are two positive things about the St. Joseph School District, its students or staff you could share?

Positive News to Share	Positive News to Share
Quality teachers who care	Neighborhood school structure

Task 2:

What are 3 priorities to be addressed in the area of improving PreK and Elementary academic achievement? List your top priorities on the chart on the next page. Prioritize your top 3 priorities from 1-3 – 1 being the highest and 3 being the lowest priority.

What recommendations does your group have to address these priorities in the next 5 years?

Top Priorities	Ranking 1-3 (1=highest 3=lowest)	Recommendations
Behavior interventions needed More aggressive response from administration		More support and resources
Address attendance		Family business, community support for attendance program recently started again in the district
Develop a new Early Childhood Center in north side of town		

Teachers need support from leadership. Make sure they feel valued and have the support they need to do their jobs.

Table #9

Task 1:

If you were sharing information with a friend, what are two positive things about the St. Joseph School District, its students or staff you could share?

Positive News to Share	Positive News to Share
Vision Forward process and buy-in from the community with people attending sessions Positive comments on Facebook and social media	Family moved from one elementary school to another in the district and felt at home and welcomed in both places. Providing sense of caring in every elementary.

Task 2:

What are 3 priorities to be addressed in the area of improving PreK and Elementary academic achievement? List your top priorities on the chart on the next page. Prioritize your top 3 priorities from 1-3 – 1 being the highest and 3 being the lowest priority.

What recommendations does your group have to address these priorities in the next 5 years?

Top Priorities	Ranking 1-3 (1=highest 3=lowest)	Recommendations
Highly qualified staff		Opportunities for leadership and growth, mentoring programs, professional development, ongoing training and onboarding for everyone and continuous positive support
Increase Early Childhood program and increase visibility of PAT in the community		
Consistent elementary alignment and class sizes, instruction in the district		

Table #10

Task 1:

If you were sharing information with a friend, what are two positive things about the St. Joseph School District, its students or staff you could share?

Positive News to Share	Positive News to Share
Early Childhood Learning Center	Vision Forward Process and how supportive the district is and how much we appreciate it

Task 2:

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What recommendations does your group have to address these priorities in the next 5 years?

Top Priorities	Ranking 1-3 (1=highest 3=lowest)	Recommendations
Greater accountability for student behaviors		Open up a center like we used to have for problematic students where they can go to learn how to learn again and be in a school, social skills, and somewhere they be removed and can learn how to transition back into the regular classroom
Better communications between parents, teachers and admin so parents know what is going on in the classroom and feel a part of the classroom and just better discourse there		
Acknowledgement of teachers that are showing good leadership skills and given more responsibility, support admin, be groomed to become an administrator and remove barriers. Like a Grow Your Own Program for teachers to become administrators		

Table #11

Task 1:

If you were sharing information with a friend, what are two positive things about the St. Joseph School District, its students or staff you could share?

Positive News to Share	Positive News to Share
Teachers are compassionate with what they have to work with with the children	

Task 2:

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What recommendations does your group have to address these priorities in the next 5 years?

Top Priorities	Ranking 1-3 (1=highest 3=lowest)	Recommendations
More support for behavior issues and that meant family support		
More support for parents through social workers and communications		
Lower classroom sizes		

Table #12

Task #1

If you were sharing information with a friend, what are two positive things about the St. Joseph School District, its students or staff you could share?

Positive News to Share	Positive News to Share
Lot of community involvement from the teachers – they live here, work here and are involved	Wide variety of student backgrounds

Task 2:

What are 3 priorities to be addressed in the area of improving PreK and Elementary academic achievement? List your top priorities on the chart on the next page. Prioritize your top 3 priorities from 1-3 – 1 being the highest and 3 being the lowest priority.

What recommendations does your group have to address these priorities in the next 5 years?

Top Priorities	Ranking 1-3 (1=highest 3=lowest)	Recommendations
Adequate staff support		Increasing interventionists and staff responsible for supervision
More availability to pre-school		
Increase support for behavior issues, lowering class sizes and focusing on how facilities can alleviate stress on classroom teachers		

Table #13

Task 1:

If you were sharing information with a friend, what are two positive things about the St. Joseph School District, its students or staff you could share?

Positive News to Share	Positive News to Share
Committed teachers, many of them raised in the district	Academic and extra-curricular success

Bonus: Opportunities for many different tracks for our students – 4-yr college, trades, kids at all levels – a lot of different tracks within the district.

Task 2:

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What recommendations does your group have to address these priorities in the next 5 years?

Top Priorities	Ranking 1-3 (1=highest 3=lowest)	Recommendations
Expand Early Childhood Center		
Expand Kindergarten readiness		Better equip parents for the years leading up to Pre-K
Support teachers		Mentoring, expand throughout the community engage business and community leaders.

Continue to focus on the positives and lift up success because they are out there, folks.

Table #14

Task 1:

If you were sharing information with a friend, what are two positive things about the St. Joseph School District, its students or staff you could share?

Positive News to Share	Positive News to Share
Data-driven efforts	Acknowledging our deficiencies and moving forward to address them. Move past the blemish that happened a couple of years ago and unanimous effort by the district to move past it and set up a whole new legacy for the district

Task 2:

What are 3 priorities to be addressed in the area of improving PreK and Elementary academic achievement? List your top priorities on the chart on the next page. Prioritize your top 3 priorities from 1-3 – 1 being the highest and 3 being the lowest priority.

What recommendations does your group have to address these priorities in the next 5 years?

Top Priorities	Ranking 1-3 (1=highest 3=lowest)	Recommendations
Reading, math, and fixing deficiencies in those areas and getting test scores up.		
Class sizes		
Professional development. Everything from the principals on down. And building a healthy culture.		

Online – Zoom Group #1

Task #1

If you were sharing information with a friend, what are two positive things about the St. Joseph School District, its students or staff you could share?

Positive News to Share	Positive News to Share
Positive student and teacher relationships. A lot of teachers in the district who really care and are very passionate about the work they do. They want to continue learning themselves in order to teach and help kids continue to learn.	The different programs offered through the school district including the Early Learning Center. Learning has been great for those utilizing that. Bridging the gap for good outcomes for students who need to be in place like that. Grow Your Own Program

Task 2:

What are 3 priorities to be addressed in the area of improving PreK and Elementary academic achievement? List your top priorities on the chart on the next page. Prioritize your top 3 priorities from 1-3 – 1 being the highest and 3 being the lowest priority.

What recommendations does your group have to address these priorities in the next 5 years?

Top Priorities	Ranking 1-3 (1=highest 3=lowest)	Recommendations
Expanding Pre-K because it has so many benefits to the community – helps the students academically, in the long-term help them financially, helping them grow and build community as well. Helps get them ready for Kindergarten, socially and emotionally		
Have a childcare option allow a lot more parents to have access to the programs available in the school district and within the Early Learning Center		
Have effective professional development, not just top down but let more feedback come from teachers and staff what would be effective and efficient PD for them		

Online Zoom Group #2

Task #1

If you were sharing information with a friend, what are two positive things about the St. Joseph School District, its students or staff you could share?

Positive News to Share	Positive News to Share
Excellent pre-school program and Parents as Teachers Program	Weekly student shout-outs sponsored by Suddenlink. Very positive program for the students

Task 2:

What are 3 priorities to be addressed in the area of improving PreK and Elementary academic achievement? List your top priorities on the chart on the next page. Prioritize your top 3 priorities from 1-3 – 1 being the highest and 3 being the lowest priority.

What recommendations does your group have to address these priorities in the next 5 years?

Top Priorities	Ranking 1-3 (1=highest 3=lowest)	Recommendations
More teacher supports		including more supports working with students with developmental disorders, social emotional challenges as well as more recruiting more paras
More parental engagement with the children’s education such as understanding the importance of Kindergarten readiness as well as ensuring children’s homework is completed on time, etc.		
Smaller class sizes to increase academic and decrease behavior challenges.		