



## **Tewksbury Township School District**

### **Creating a Five-Year Strategic Plan For Tewksbury Township**

#### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Tewksbury School District is the continual development of each child's intellectual, artistic, social, and physical abilities in a positive environment, which fosters self-esteem and a love of learning while meeting the district expectation that they will achieve the New Jersey Student Learning Standards at all grade levels. Pupils in the Tewksbury Township Public Schools will be confident, productive members of a changing society.

#### **Session #2**

#### **What is our "Vision"? What expectations and initiatives do we believe in? What challenges do we anticipate?**

On Wednesday, March 13, 2024, Tewksbury Township School District Administration, staff, Board of Education members, parents, and community members, twenty-five (25) in total, came together to continue strategic planning. The second evening topic focused on creating a shared vision for the Tewksbury School District. The meeting began with an overview of the first meeting. We then moved forward with a visioning exercise to develop a podcast that highlighted the extraordinary successes that had occurred as a result of the District's strategic plan created through this process that led Tewksbury to being recognized as a lighthouse district for other districts across the state to emulate. We discussed the idea of what would have to happen in the school system to enable the district to garner such accolades. Participants then gathered in randomly assigned groups to develop a podcast title and the initiatives, changes and/or programs that would need to be in place for this to happen.

Small groups of participants brainstormed and shared ideas together. After group discussion, each group identified their consensus points and presented those to the full group of meeting participants. We discussed the common themes from all of the work presented and identified goals areas for our next meeting.

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**

### **Group Podcast Title and Initiatives**

**Group-1 Podcast Title:** The Pinnacle of Learning... That Lights a Fire... To infinity and beyond-Where it Begins

#### **Group-1 Initiatives**

1. A robust and well thought out gifted and talented programs for grades K-8 that complies with state law and recognizes the difference between gifted education and enrichment. Focuses on math and science too-including honors math like surrounding towns.
2. Classical education philosophy with high standards for all students and attention to life skills, civics, and financial literacy.
3. Prioritization of creatively keeping as much control as possible at the local district level/Established protocols to collaboratively assess state mandates and guidelines.
4. Science fairs, spelling bees, debate teams, model congress/UN, and other interactive and interdistrict engagement opportunities, guest speakers and field trips.
5. Less tech, more books! Encourage technology learning but not reliance on it as a replacement for teaching traditional practices.
6. Tewksbury has a reputation now for producing students with stellar critical thinking skills.
7. Recess every day and longer lunch!
8. Curriculum, resources, and facilities do not hinder student development and success.
9. Take advantage of rural culture and natural resources to give students hands-on nature and farming exposure.

**Group- 2 Podcast Title:** From Apples to Zebras

#### **Group 2 Initiatives**

- 1, Gifted and Talented dedicated teach at each school with a background in gifted education
2. Dedicated staff for special education
3. Career Fair and Exploration at OTS- exposure to career paths, utilize former students
4. More than one foreign language
5. Dedicated all weather outdoor learning spaces at both schools; i.e., ropes course
6. Improved athletic fields (a track and turf)
7. Foster a culture/space that supports teachers
8. Increased exposure to Science, STEM. History, (field trips)
9. Dedicated theater department and programs
- 10.Science fairs at both schools

**Group-3 Podcast Title:** Connections

#### **Group-3 Initiatives**

- 1.Parent/student activities, more holistic involvement

**Tewksbury Strategic Planning Meeting #2 Outcomes**

- 2. Retain small Call sizes
- 3. Curriculum including life skills, financial literacy
- 4. Integrate or cross connections between subjects- i.e., Arts and science-finding the connection, utilizing hands on skills for shop/cooking; Community services- hands on rather than donations
- 5. Public speaking
- 6. Build a more inclusive special education program that includes sports and clubs
- 7. Transitions- PreK-K, 4-5, 8-HS
- 8. Facilities- Outdoor learning spaces

**Group-4 Podcast Title: The Eye of the Tiger**

**Group-4 Initiatives**

- 1. State of the art learning spaces-revitalize, modernize, rethink
- 2. Move from special education to “Diverse Learners Program”- student led 504 and IEP meetings
- 3. Expanded education programming that includes, trades, languages, latest technology, AI and health for life
- 4. Immersive experiences- travel field trips, AR for each student and trips linked to curriculum
- 5. We learn from the best- teacher development and professional learning opportunities
- 6. Capstone Projects- student choice, self-advocacy, another source of data beyond test scores
- 7. True differentiated classroom by level; organic, fluid differentiation in reading and math

**Group 5- Podcast Title:**

**Group-5 Initiatives**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

**Group- 6 Podcast Title:**

**Group 6 Initiatives**

- 1.

**Group-7 Podcast Title:**

**Group-7 Initiatives**

- 1.
- 2.

*Tewksbury Strategic Planning Meeting #2 Outcomes*

3.

**Group-8 Podcast Title:**

**Group-8 Initiatives**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

The goal areas identified from our work over the last two meetings for our next meeting are:

- 1.**
- 2.**
- 3.**
- 4.**

**The third and final strategic planning session is scheduled for:**

**Tuesday, April 16, 2024**

The challenge for the meeting will be to:

- Develop objectives under each of the goal areas based on the common threads from all previous group work.
- Identify strategies needed to reach those objectives.

Each participant will be asked to select a “goal area” of their interest and choice. Participants may want to prepare ideas ahead of time by reviewing all of the outcomes from meetings 1 and 2, prior to the meeting.

We look forward to seeing you!