

## **WRVS Strategic Planning Brainstorming Session Summary**

**Method** - Through unbiased AI tools we collated community survey input into broad categories, to then create a skeleton of 'buckets' and pre-populated or "seeded" ideas from the community survey results. We'll start by discussing these buckets, adding / editing / subtracting as necessary and then broke into brainstorming groups dividing our time between the categories and a broad general brainstorming concept.

### **Thematic Grouping / Buckets:**

The survey response and brainstorming discussion items can be broadly categorized into four thematic categories:

1. Community and Engagement:
  - Many responses highlight the importance of improving community engagement within the school and its surroundings.
  - Suggestions include stronger involvement in community resources, utilizing the school as a community hub, and more inclusive family events.
2. Facilities and Infrastructure:
  - Respondents frequently mention the need for better infrastructure and facilities.
  - Various responses suggest improvements like playground facilities, school safety enhancements, better air filtration systems, and an addition to the gym for community use.
3. Educational and Extracurricular Opportunities:
  - There's a strong emphasis on expanding academic and extracurricular options.
  - Ideas include introducing foreign languages, enhancing extracurricular activities such as a band or drama club, aligning middle school curriculum with high school, and integrating more STEM or arts programs.
4. Behavioral and Social Development:
  - Concerns about student behavior and social-emotional learning are prevalent.
  - Responses suggest implementing zero-tolerance policies for disruptive behavior, enhancing support for bullying protocols, and focusing on social-emotional growth.

These categories encapsulate the main themes from the survey responses, reflecting on community involvement, infrastructural needs, academic opportunities, and behavior management within the WRVS school community.

### **Community Summary / Vision Statement**

Once all of the manual brainstorming ideas were added, categorized and summarized, I parsed the entirety of the raw and summarized data and asked for an unbiased summary vision statement from all of the WRVS strategic planning community responses:

“At Waits River Valley School, we aspire to cultivate a nurturing and inclusive community where each student is valued and empowered. We are dedicated to excellence in education, fostering a love of learning, and promoting the holistic development of every child. Our vision is to create a vibrant learning environment that embraces diversity, encourages innovative thinking, and strengthens community bonds. We strive to prepare our students with the skills, compassion, and resilience to thrive in a rapidly changing world, while ensuring that our school serves as a welcoming hub of community engagement, collaboration, and enrichment for all.”

**SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat) Analysis** - Many of the suggestions were opportunities for growth or areas of strength, most also included weaknesses in or threats to either the idea itself or barriers the school community must overcome, the SWOT visual analysis method breaks those concerns down concisely.

## SWOT Analysis - WRVS Survey

<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>WEAKNESSES</b>
<p><b>Community and Engagement:</b> Strong sense of community and involvement in events such as Grandparents Day and school-wide celebrations. A community-based atmosphere that promotes inclusion and participation.</p> <p><b>Dedicated Staff:</b> Teachers and staff are caring, committed, and know students personally. Leadership is seen as compassionate and focused on transparency and collaboration.</p> <p><b>Small School Benefits:</b> The small size allows for individualized attention to students' needs. Parents appreciate the intimate community feel and the school's knowledge of its students.</p> <p><b>Positive Traditions and Cultural Aspects:</b> Traditions such as "Muffins for Moms" and inclusivity are valued. Focus on kindness and empathy within the school culture.</p>	<p><b>Infrastructure and Facilities:</b> Concerns about outdated facilities and needs for improvements like air filtration and playground updates. Infrastructure limitations may impact growth and expansion of programs.</p> <p><b>Academic Alignment:</b> A desire for better curriculum alignment with higher education standards, like high school readiness. Some responses indicate a need for improved academic performance, particularly in math and reading.</p> <p><b>Behavioral Issues:</b> Disruptive behavior in classrooms and ineffective discipline policies are noted concerns. Zero-tolerance behavior policies are suggested by some respondents.</p> <p><b>Communication:</b> Difficulties in communication between teachers, parents, and students. Insufficient updates or feedback regarding student progress.</p>
<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>THREATS</b>
<p><b>Enhanced Extracurricular Programs:</b> Opportunities to introduce or expand programs like extracurricular clubs, music, arts, and sports. Utilizing grants and resources to introduce more activities such as archery or STEM programs.</p> <p><b>Community Hub Development:</b> Future growth in using the school as a community center for various events and services. Potential for expanded community health access and additional community-related resources.</p> <p><b>Innovation in Education:</b> Integration of more hands-on and outdoor learning experiences. Adopting more technology and innovative teaching approaches in the curriculum.</p> <p><b>Greater Community Involvement:</b> Strengthening bonds with local organizations for support and enrichment. Encouraging family and community involvement in school initiatives and planning.</p>	<p><b>Resource Constraints:</b> Financial constraints may limit facility upgrades and program expansions. Dependence on community tax funding and grants for new initiatives.</p> <p><b>Staff Retention:</b> Concerns about retaining skilled educators and staff due to dissatisfaction or burnout. Competitive compensation as a challenge to maintaining staff levels.</p> <p><b>Demographic Changes:</b> Potential declines in student population impacting class sizes and school funding. External pressures from state education departments regarding small school viability.</p> <p><b>Behavioral and Social Challenges:</b> Ongoing issues with student behavior and social dynamics may affect the school's environment. Need for improved protocols and support systems for managing behavioral concerns.</p>

## **SWOT Analysis - Raw Text:**

Based on the survey responses, here is a SWOT analysis of the Waits River Valley School:

### **Strengths:**

#### 1. Community and Engagement:

- Strong sense of community and involvement in events such as Grandparents Day and school-wide celebrations.
- A community-based atmosphere that promotes inclusion and participation.

#### 2. Dedicated Staff:

- Teachers and staff are caring, committed, and know students personally.
- Leadership is seen as compassionate and focused on transparency and collaboration.

#### 3. Small School Benefits:

- The small size allows for individualized attention to students' needs.
- Parents appreciate the intimate community feel and the school's knowledge of its students.

#### 4. Positive Traditions and Cultural Aspects:

- Traditions such as "Muffins for Moms" and inclusivity are valued.
- Focus on kindness and empathy within the school culture.

### **Weaknesses:**

#### 1. Infrastructure and Facilities:

- Concerns about outdated facilities and needs for improvements like air filtration and playground updates.
- Infrastructure limitations may impact growth and expansion of programs.

#### 2. Academic Alignment:

- A desire for better curriculum alignment with higher education standards, like high school readiness.
- Some responses indicate a need for improved academic performance, particularly in math and reading.

#### 3. Behavioral Issues:

- Disruptive behavior in classrooms and ineffective discipline policies are noted concerns.
- Zero-tolerance behavior policies are suggested by some respondents.

#### 4. Communication:

- Difficulties in communication between teachers, parents, and students.
- Insufficient updates or feedback regarding student progress.

### **Opportunities:**

#### 1. Enhanced Extracurricular Programs:

- Opportunities to introduce or expand programs like extracurricular clubs, music, arts, and sports.
- Utilizing grants and resources to introduce more activities such as archery or STEM programs.

#### 2. Community Hub Development:

- Future growth in using the school as a community center for various events and services.
- Potential for expanded community health access and additional community-related resources.

#### 3. Innovation in Education:

- Integration of more hands-on and outdoor learning experiences.
- Adopting more technology and innovative teaching approaches in the curriculum.

#### 4. Greater Community Involvement:

- Strengthening bonds with local organizations for support and enrichment.
- Encouraging family and community involvement in school initiatives and planning.

### **Threats:**

#### 1. Resource Constraints:

- Financial constraints may limit facility upgrades and program expansions.
- Dependence on community tax funding and grants for new initiatives.

#### 2. Staff Retention:

- Concerns about retaining skilled educators and staff due to dissatisfaction or burnout.
- Competitive compensation as a challenge to maintaining staff levels.

#### 3. Demographic Changes:

- Potential declines in student population impacting class sizes and school funding.
- External pressures from state education departments regarding small school viability.

4. Behavioral and Social Challenges:

- Ongoing issues with student behavior and social dynamics may affect the school's environment.
- Need for improved protocols and support systems for managing behavioral concerns.

**Categorized brainstorming ideas:**

<b>Community and Engagement</b>	<b>Facilities and Infrastructure</b>	<b>Educational and Extracurricular Opportunities</b>	<b>Behavioral and Social Development</b>
Organize neighborhood cleanup events to foster community spirit.	Introduce a fitness area accessible to community members.	After-school tutoring programs to enhance academic performance	Promote cooperative play activities to enhance teamwork skills.
Create a local book club to encourage reading and discussion among residents.	Update and maintain school facilities to benefit the entire community.	Clubs focused on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) activities	Encourage regular social interactions through group projects.
Host a monthly potluck dinner to promote cultural exchange and fellowship.	Enhance air filtration and ventilation systems for improved infection control.	Workshops for creative writing and poetry	Implement programs that teach conflict resolution techniques.
Establish a community garden where residents can grow vegetables together.	Develop an archery program as part of extracurricular or P.E. options.	Leadership training programs for students	Develop mentorship opportunities between older and younger peers.
Develop a volunteer program for residents to assist local non-profits.	Improve playground facilities for better outdoor learning experiences.	Start a gardening club to promote environmental education	Facilitate workshops on emotional intelligence and empathy.
Start a mentorship program connecting youth with local leaders and professionals.	Build an addition to the gym for community events and better accessibility.	Peer mentoring programs to support new students	Introduce community service projects to build a sense of responsibility.
Implement a community art project to beautify public spaces and involve local artists.	Create opportunities for more family-friendly events using school facilities.	Art and music classes for creative expression	Organize regular team-building exercises and games.

Conduct regular town hall meetings to discuss community needs and gather feedback.	Increase community access to medical care at the school.	Field trips to local museums and historical sites	Include role-playing scenarios in classrooms to practice social skills.
Create a digital platform for residents to share resources and connect with each other.	Expand afterschool clubs and programs that focus on various interests.	Volunteer opportunities in the community to foster civic engagement	Host parent workshops on supporting behavioral development at home.
Initiate workshops on diverse topics to educate and empower community members.	Enhance safety measures and improve school security.	Sports teams and leagues to encourage physical fitness and teamwork	Create safe spaces for students to express their feelings and concerns.
Establish a local sports league to encourage physical activity and teamwork.	Foster greater community engagement through school events and activities.	Book clubs to promote reading and discussion skills	Integrate storytelling as a tool for understanding diverse perspectives.
Offer classes on topics like cooking, crafting, or technology to engage residents.	Upgrade lunch program quality, ensuring healthier and more diverse options.	Cultural exchange programs to broaden perspectives	Implement peer feedback sessions to encourage constructive criticism.
Promote local businesses through community markets and fairs.	Invest in energy efficiency improvements and necessary building upgrades.	Science fairs to inspire interest in research and experimentation	Utilize technology for virtual meet-ups to enhance social engagement.
Engage youth through after-school programs and outdoor activities.	Enhance outdoor learning spaces for year-round usage.	Debate clubs to develop public speaking and critical thinking	Encourage participation in clubs and extracurricular activities for social networking.
Facilitate neighborhood watch programs to enhance safety and cooperation.	Implement structured physical education curriculum focusing on various sports.	Coding clubs to introduce students to programming	Establish clear behavior expectations and model positive interactions.
More collaboration with local libraries (Blake Specifically) offer bussing for after school access to the library	Expand extracurricular activities to include music, art, and drama.	Nature hikes and outdoor education experiences	More staff to help with social emotional behavioral issues
Shared programs with the library like Lego club, language, etc.	Develop a strong athletic program with more competitive opportunities.	Internships and job shadowing opportunities in various fields	Collaboration between Healthcare, community, and education to address the crossover of all three
Expand communication reach and use the school communication tools as	Create safe bike paths for middle school students to encourage self-transportation.	Work-study programs to gain real-world experience	Mentorship program - Upper valley mentorship program partnership

better community communication tools			
Sending paper letters home with kids	Improve communication channels between school and community to enhance engagement.	Guest speaker series featuring professionals from diverse backgrounds	Celebrate successes more by communicating widely the good things
Expanding weekly newsletter to the whole community so they see the great work going on at school	Recondition or replace the gymnasium floor	Skill-building workshops in areas like cooking, sewing, or woodworking	Teen apprentice Program - Upper Valley Mentorship program is expanding, engage Catherine Beaton as a contact and become early adopters of this style of learning
Collaborate with towns / selectboards to develop means of broad consistent communication	Enhance building security	Less computer time / more outside time, using screens only to enhance learning	Community building days for local trails, ballfield, NES, etc
Be able to use the messenger system both community wide and within the school community	Improve the air handling system	Accessing hobbies and activities outside of school like dance or karate, ride sharing, advertising, cost sharing	
Quarterly newsletter collaboration with both towns	More resilient heating system including new and innovate fuels like wood pellets, solar, heat pumps, etc.	Expand cultural programming with things like cultural themed months, exchange program, food options	
Collaborate with the Corinth Conservation Commission	Playground improvements to expand outdoor learning opportunities and fitness options for all grade levels, seek broad input from the students and community, encourage community playground access	Consider ways to keep some out of district special education locally, expand the capabilities of local special education	
Expand spring sports and off-season opportunities with ideas like dance, archery, nordic skiing, mountain biking; use the unique nature areas around the school	Improve parking situation, fixing potholes, perhaps parking up at the field or extending the existing parking lot or adding a second driveway	Offer alternative enrichment programs like algebra or advanced math, creative writing, online course access	
Access and utilize the offerings from VSBIT		Expand music to include band instrument, string instruments and access to rental instruments	



Seek out more volunteers and make the process of volunteering as streamlined as possible		Expand theatre arts to the lower grades	
		Encourage teachers to attend state and national conference and return with ideas	
		Efficiently allocate title 11 funds for professional development and program expansion	