



Rahway Public School District

A community built on diversity, learning, and leadership.

3D Strategic Planning

“Determination, Dream and Destiny by Design”

RAHWAY PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

November 19, 2024 - Meeting #1 - Outcomes

Mission Statement

With diversity, equity, and inclusion as our strength, the Rahway Public School community shall implement culturally sustaining, student-centered programs to address the unique needs of all students. Students are empowered to take ownership of their learning in order to become successful global citizens who are inspired to achieve their highest potential.

What are the Strengths, Achievements and Challenges of the Rahway School District?

On November 19, 2024, Rahway Public Schools District administrators, staff, parents/guardians, and community members, forty-seven (47) in all, came together to initiate strategic planning. The meeting began with Dr. Aleya Shoieb, Superintendent, presenting the current “State of the Schools” report. Jeanne Cleary from the New Jersey School Boards Association (NJSBA) was present and reviewed the strategic planning process for the group.

We then gathered in nine small groups to identify the strengths and points of pride in our district and community, and to brainstorm what opportunities and challenges the school district faces. Each group identified their “top 10” (or thereabouts) list of strengths and challenges for the district, which were then shared with the large group of all participants. Underlying all our work is the District’s Mission Statement.

The information that follows is the work of the small groups. As discussed with the meeting participants, all meeting outcomes will be listed in this memo and will be posted on the district website for the wider community.

Strengths

Challenges



TABLE 1

• Communication • Recognition of need for growth • Staff willing to work for students • Parent forums • Staff collaboration • Technology • Focus on Professional Development	• Parent involvement • Recognition of positive efforts • Creating a culture of community/ teams • Academic rigor / student achievement • Community investment in quality of district
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TABLE 2

• Genuine relationships amongst educators • Better communication this school year • 2024-25 school year goal of increasing ELA and Math scores by 5-10% • Rutgers Future Scholars Program and its opportunities • Our Arts Program: We Are the Arts! • Consistent changes for the betterment of the school district	• Overcrowded classrooms – teacher to student ratio • Lack of communication with changes in classroom • Space for extracurricular activities • Parent and community attendance at strategic planning events • Teachers basing grades off state mandated testing • Limited opportunities for students outside of sports and arts
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Strengths**Challenges****TABLE 3**

• District is responsive to concerns and feedback	• Rapid change of curriculum – allow teachers to stabilize (maintain changes)
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• Great teachers and staff • Title 1 opportunity • Sports programs • High school arts • Diversity • Transparency	• No homework: stronger parent / teacher communication; more time for athletes • Increase support for teachers to differentiate • Art program in elementary • Equity across schools: facilities and programs • Class sizes • Lack of space • Immersive and experiential learning opportunities
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TABLE 4

• Budget • Newline boards • Good faculty • Genesis for conferences • Discipline in the academy • Effort put in by staff and students • Stronger leadership	• Communication outside of emails (more phone calls) • Curriculum • Online privacy and communication literacy • Use Genesis to potential • Parent involvement in classrooms • Multiple modes of learning
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Strengths**Challenges****TABLE 5**

• Diversity • Committed staff • Continuous improvement in standard tests • Updated curriculum • Warm, involved community • Inclusivity in curriculum and activities • Commitment to the arts • Increased resources to support learning, specifically technology • Focus on safety and security • Transparent communication	• Staff retention • Absenteeism • Continuous improvement of standardized tests • Parental involvement • Increase student attention spans (tech vs. hands-on) • Mental health • Technology advancements • Facility upgrades • Content specific professional development • Nutrition for staff and students district-wide
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TABLE 6

• Diversity • Support • Dedicated staff • Better communication • Technology • Changes / new programs • Movement to student-centered learning • Equity focused • Access to resources • Leadership and governance	• Staff retention • Student engagement • Home / School connection • Parent involvement • Maintaining and building student achievement • Technology best practices • Changes / new programming • Lack of appreciation for the full demands of staff • Student independence • Class sizes, enrollment space
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Strengths**Challenges****TABLE 7**

• <u>Recruitment of diverse staff:</u> MLL support	• Bilingual only Grade 3, need more resources
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Representation Role models • <u>Community Resources:</u> Before / After Care ROTC / JAG Tomorrow's Teachers • Performing / Visual Arts programs • <u>Technology:</u> VILS Effective electronic communications Newline boards District website Genesis Renaissance / i-Ready • Universal Preschool for 3- and 4-year-olds	• Gifted and Talented Gr. 3-6 – reassessment opportunities for improvement • Classroom and building space are limited • Shift in professional development mindset – growth/ change = progress • PreK transition support to kindergarten
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TABLE 8

• Educators are passionate about what they do • Community • Diversity • Sports / athletics / performing arts • Commitment to strengthening programming • Pride • Rigorous curriculum • Proactively keeping schools safe • Good upkeep of facilities • Commitment to excellence (common language) • Tomorrow's Teachers / intern opportunities	• Parental Involvement • Curriculum (in development) • School / district ranking (scores) • Keeping students in public schools • Advertising accelerated programming; make district attractive with programming • Filtering needs to prepare student transition from middle to high school • Showcase middle school • District events – more community base, less separation • Extracurricular activities • Lack of space
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TABLE 9 & 10 (combined)

• Mission was revised – expand to goals and clearly communicate • Academy in Special Education Department • Math curriculum	• Communication needs improvement: - Down the pyramid – calendar updates - Lack of individual school information - Information re: progress reports, report cards - Important dates are hard to find - All info should be provided in English and Spanish (written and spoken) • Academic concerns: - Lack of information on ELA curriculum - How the pacing guide is being monitored / lacking consistency of work - HW relating to standards and report cards - ICS in all subjects in elementary schools • DEI – more follow up and training
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	• More parent training for Genesis
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SUMMARY

Each group reported to the large group their list of strengths and challenges. The following common themes were determined.

Commitment and Dedication of Staff	Class Size
Diversity	Lack of Space
Technology Upgrades	Parental and Community Involvement
Improved Communication	Staff retention
Focus on Academics	Professional Development to support Curriculum changes
Commitment to Strengthening Programming	Proactive Communication with Stakeholders

Next Meeting: January 16, 2025

Thank you for your commitment to Rahway Public Schools!

We hope to see you there—attend with a friend!

