Creating a Strategic Plan for the Mahwah Public Schools

Session #3 of 3
Developing a Broad Goal Statement and Supporting Objectives for Each Goal Area

On April 9, 2025, Mahwah Public Schools administration, staff, parents, board members and community members came together to continue the strategic planning process. The third and final meeting's topic focused on developing a broad goal statement and 4-7 supporting objectives for each of the four goal areas suggested by the work done at the conclusion of the March 12, 2025, meeting. These goals will represent a shared vision for the Mahwah Public Schools over the next five years.

Matt Lee from the New Jersey School Boards Association facilitated the strategic planning process. The group was provided with an overview of the December 16 and March 12 meetings and then the goal writing process was introduced that included definitions, the connection to the work from the first two meetings, and the components of a goal statement. Participants were able to self-select a goal area of interest to them – Soaring Scholars: Intellectual Curiosity and Lifelong Learning; Wings of Wellness: Social-Emotional and Personal Growth; Launching Leaders: College, Career, and Future-Ready Skills; Future-Ready Flight: World-Class Learning Environments.

Each goal area group was tasked with writing a broad goal statement and developing four to seven accompanying objectives that reflected the strengths, challenges, and visions relative to their goal area as determined in Meetings 1 and 2.

Group Work

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 school's website to share the group work during the course of the strategic planning process.

Goal Area	**Soaring Scholars: Intellectual Curiosity and Lifelong Learning #1**
Goal Statement	Develop programs and instructional experiences that challenge learners at all levels to develop 21st century skills.
Objectives	1. Fostering an academic environment that encourages risk-taking. 2. Increase connections with trade/vocational schools. 3. Create opportunities to cultivate empathetic global citizens. 4. Increase K-5 extracurricular opportunities. 5. Effectively and thoughtfully use data to address learning gaps.

Goal Area	**Soaring Scholars: Intellectual Curiosity and Lifelong Learning #2**
Goal Statement	Develop a differentiated curriculum to support, challenge and raise achievement for students at all learning levels.
Objectives	1. Encourage intellectual curiosity by teaching students independently and by making learning fun & interesting. 2. To use technology and other tools such as AI in hands on demonstrations. 3. Implement tutoring/supplemental instructions to help raise students to next level.

	4. Start in K-3 level at each subject area. 5. Make parents and students aware of all course offerings & resources available district-wide.

Goal Area	**Wings of Wellness: Social-Emotional and Personal Growth**
Goal Statement	Facilitate a growth mindset that empowers student success in a complex and ambiguous future.
Objectives	1. Create stretch opportunities to develop grit, resiliency, and perseverance. 2. Continue to bolster SEL experiences 3. Engage and partner with our parents on the SEL journey of all our students. 4. Foster an environment where students are comfortable taking risks and stepping out of their comfort zones. 5. Integrate the CASEL competencies to build self and social capacity (Self Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills and Responsible Decision-making).

Goal Area	**Launching Leaders: College, Career, and Future-Ready Skills #1**
Goal Statement	To further enhance problem-based learning opportunities for all grade levels so that our students can come of their understanding to real world/future-ready skills.
Objectives	1. Expand the types of leadership opportunities available to our diverse group of learners. 2. Create opportunities for learners to develop self-awareness that they will need to master autonomy, executive functioning and SEL competencies.

	3. Support students in exploring an interest that is personally motivating and self-directed at various developmental stages (3rd, 5th, 8th, 12th grades) (i.e., capstone project/Pathway Passion Project 4. Teach students to maintain ethical and integrity-based behavior in their pursuit of higher learning.

Goal Area	**Launching Leaders: College, Career, and Future-Ready Skills #2**
Goal Statement	To expose students earlier with intentional entry points for increased opportunities for Career Pathway Program.
Objectives	1. Thunderbird partnership job fair kick-off in 7th or 8th grade. 2. Create roadmap digital document highlighting post-secondary path for each pathway. 3. Expanding communication across diverse mediums earlier in process. 4. Additional focus on vocational training programs and partnerships with trade schools. 5. Creating good citizens by fostering relationships that connect students to the global multi-cultural community. 6. Develop profile of a graduate – flight of the T-Bird.

Goal Area	**Future-Ready Flight: World-Class Learning Environments**
Goal Statement	To build innovative spaces that impact student learning so that students are future ready.
Objectives	1. Enhance collaboration (flexible furniture/tech) (lab tables/electricity)

	2. Updating outdated spaces (science/performing arts/visual arts) so learning is not restricted (RR media space) 3. Ensure all spaces are safe and secure & efficient (AC/heat) (cameras, locks) 4. Maintain/improve technology Infrastructure 5. Athletic & arts spaces/facilities that support confidence, leadership expression and creativity. 6. RR library/media center work - Light/glass - open pavilion 7. Performing Arts Center - lighting improvements (zone) - sound enhancement 8. Upgrade visual arts spaces - move sculpture room - 2D art room 9. culinary arts program (6-12) - chronic disease - Knowledge – healthy meals - Shopping - nutrition – cooking - career pathway/cycle/elective 10. Athletic areas - size/gyms - maximize space - cardio equipment under-utilize - showers not using, why? water not available

Next Steps

A final report summarizing the work and input from the three strategic planning meetings will be generated by New Jersey School Boards and presented at a Mahwah board meeting to be determined by the board's 2025 meeting schedule.

The administration is tasked with writing action plans for the objectives developed under each goal statement, that will identify the specific tasks needed to accomplish the objective, who is responsible, the resources needed, the timeline over a 5-year time span, and the indicators of success. These action plans should be shared with all the strategic planning meeting participants.

It is recommended that an annual review of the strategic plan take place and that the strategic plan will serve as the basis for the development of the annual district goals.

Thank You

Thank you to everyone who participated in the strategic planning process! The outcome of the plan has been shaped by the input of every participating member. You have provided the district with the information they need to formulate a 5-year roadmap that reflects the aspirations of the various stakeholders for your students.