



**Creating a Strategic Plan for the
Watchung Borough School District
Meeting# 3**

March 26, 2025

Watchung Borough Schools Vision Statement

The Watchung Borough School District is committed to inspiring learners to explore, inquire, and collaborate on their joyful journey toward discovery, independent thinking, and creative problem solving. Our culture of acceptance and inclusion provides the foundation for learning and social and emotional growth. Through reflection and ethical decision-making, we continue to learn and grow, embrace differences, and prepare for an increasingly complex, ever-changing world

Developing Strategic Planning Goals & Objectives

On March 26, Watchung Borough School District administrators, Board of Education members, staff, students and parents, 17 in all, came together for Meeting #3 of the strategic planning process. The meeting began with a welcome and introduction by Superintendent, Dr. Julie Glazer. Facilitators Patti Rees, along with Gwen Thornton, from NJSBA provided an overview of the strategic planning process and the focus for the evening's activity.

The topic for the third meeting focused on developing goal statements and objectives for each of the four goal areas identified at the second meeting. Participants gathered in self-selected groups to work on the goal area of their choice. Participants were able to move from one goal area to another if desired.

The group was asked to identify a recorder to enter their consensus points on the large post it boards, and a spokesperson who would report their work. The group reviewed the outcomes from meeting 1, Strengths & Challenges, and meeting 2, Vision and



Initiatives, to identify strategies, group those strategies, develop objectives, and then develop an overarching goal statement for their goal area.

The information that follows is a summary of the work of the group. As discussed with the meeting participants, all consensus points are recorded and posted on the district website to share the group work during the strategic planning process.

Strategic Planning Goals & Objectives

Goal #1: Student Learning and Achievement

Sample Goal Statement: All students will achieve individual growth and measured results that help them reach their full potential

Sample Objectives:

- Demonstrate a holistic approach to learning
- Challenge students at their appropriate/individualized level
- Integrate project-based learning into curriculum
- Add staffing that improves curriculum and instruction
- Enhance (STEAM) opportunities and co-curricular activities....science labs, arts, competitions
- Language immersion
- Experiential learning and integrate arts, nature, agriculture, culinary arts, AI, beginning in the early grades

Goal #2: Professional Development Capacity Building

Sample Goal Statement: Invest in providing staff with ongoing job embedded professional development/learning and high-quality resources to accelerate student achievement and success.

Sample Objectives:

- Explore opportunities for peer-to-peer learning exchange
- Invest in procurement and maintenance of tech infrastructure (hardware and software) for staff and students
- Invest in 1:1 coaching (high impact tutoring)
- PD for innovative teaching strategies – preparing them to transfer to the HS and succeed
- Ask students what they do when they work/study?
 - Quiet
 - Background noise
 - Fidget tool
- Offer ideas to help students determine their “best practices” so they have basic tools to succeed
- Transitions between buildings

Goal #3: Communication Community Engagement



Sample Goal Statement: More 2-way communication from schools to the entire public residents with/without children in the schools

Sample Objectives:

- Bring communication from schools to the entire public (communicate – collaborate – celebrate)
- Determine avenues for the communication path
 - Social media
 - mailers
 - email
 - news/reporters
 - broader messaging on meetings
- joint community events
- seniors volunteer
- invite volunteers for food sales
- engage community members and businesses to contribute to the educational experience through exposure to diverse skills, trades, etc. (throughout the year)
- Parent University – transparency to school structure and tools to understand/support

Goal #4: School Culture and Climate

Sample Goal Statement: To create opportunities and environment for creative/collaborative brainstorming and thinking to foster teamwork where students feel connected, valued, heard and safe.

Sample Objectives:

- New clubs outside of traditional options.
- Group projects that foster teamwork to achieve a goal
- Community outreach ideas to give back within the community
- Address needs of community in/outside of school
 - Senior community
 - Younger age groups
 - People in need
- Service club
- Young leaders' group
- Promote a culture of recognition and respect for teachers
- Foster independent, critical thinkers with grit, persistence, confidence, and agency
- To promote a climate of kindness and empathy



Next Steps

The next step in the process is the development of finalized Goals and Objectives. The Superintendent and the Administrative team will develop the action plans for the Strategic Plan based on these. The timelines will be developed for a 3–5-year plan.

The action plans will include:

- Major activities for each objective
- Who is responsible for the activity
- The resources to be deployed
- Due dates for completion
- Indicators of Success (how we will know the activity has been accomplished)

The plan will be printed in document form by the New Jersey School Boards Association and will be delivered to the Watchung Borough Board of Education for formal acceptance and vote at a BOE meeting, date to be announced.

It has been a pleasure to work with such a dedicated group of individuals who so willingly support the students and staff of the Watchung Borough School District. Certainly, the unique plan that results from all your good work will productively guide the district in alignment with the community's vision for its students. We look forward to seeing the Watchung Borough School continue to flourish, under this new, five-year Strategic Plan.

Please watch the district website for final plan delivery to the Watchung Borough Board of Education.

All will be invited to celebrate the final plan delivery.

