



Creating a Strategic Plan for the Island Heights School District

Mission Statement

The mission of the Island Heights Grade School is to provide a safe and nurturing community where diversity is celebrated, mutual respect among adults and children is practiced, and where parents and caregivers are seen as valued partners in layering the foundation of life-long learning.

Island Heights Grade School creates an environment supportive of courageous endeavors and committed to helping all children achieve academic excellence through intellectual, creative, and physical challenges, enabling them to function as productive and successful citizens in a changing society.

Session 3

Developing Strategic Planning Goals & Objectives for the Island Heights School District

On December 18, 2024, Island Heights District administrators, Board of Education members, staff, parents, and community members, fourteen (14) in all, came together to continue the strategic planning process. The meeting began with a welcome and introduction by Ms. Lisa Royer, Principal. Mary Ann Friedman and Dr. Laurie Bandlow, from New Jersey School Boards Association (NJSBA) were introduced and explained the strategic planning process.

We reviewed the consensus process utilized in strategic planning. The topic for the third evening focused on developing goal statements and objectives for each of the five goal areas identified at the second meeting. Participants gathered in self-selected groups, five in all, to work on the goal area(s) of their choice. The five goal areas identified at the conclusion of the second meeting were: Student Growth & Success, Facilities & Finance, Community Engagement / Involvement, School Culture & Climate, and Safety & Security.

Each 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 small groups. As discussed with the meeting participants, all consensus points are recorded and posted on the district website to share the group work during the course of the strategic planning process.

Group Consensus: Vision & Initiatives

Development of Goal Statements and Objectives

Five goal areas emerged from the common themes identified by the group at large at the end of the second meeting and are listed below:

1. Student Growth & Success
2. Facilities & Finance
3. Community Engagement / Involvement
4. School Culture & Climate
5. Safety & Security

Goal 1: Student Growth & Success

Goal Statement: To enhance student growth and success in order to optimize learning outcomes.

Objectives:

- Lower teacher to student ratio.
- Provide specialized instruction / staff trainings.
- Maintain teacher retention to provide traditions / community connections to support student growth and success.
- Offer good balance of technology and hands on.

Goal 2: Facilities & Finance

Goal Statement: Continue to enhance facilities to meet the future.

Objectives:

- Provide adequate facilities to meet the educational goals of our students.
- Use state data to determine anticipated enrollment for the next 5 years.
- Investigate the purchase of a van / small bus for transportation of special ed students and small class trips.
- Investigate the option of self-insuring employee health benefits as the State Health Benefits Plan increases dramatically.
- Continue to support the Island Heights Education Foundation.

Goal 3: Community Engagement / Involvement

Goal Statement: Increase community involvement through greater engagement with new “Sea Devil” parents and others in the community and through close interactive relationships with the town’s cultural institutions, business and public service providers.

Objectives:

- Increase community involvement through outreach using multimedia outlets.
- Cultivate parent / community involvement with new “Sea Devil” families.
- Establish a relationship with cultural institutions such as: Peto Museum, Artist Guild.
- Establish a relationship with service organizations such as the PD, FD, municipal government, First Aid and Post Office.
- Establish a relationship with local businesses.

Goal 4: School Culture & Climate

Goal Statement: Encourage our students to be good and productive citizens.

Objectives:

- Expand our Character Strong and LEAD programs.
- Develop a new reading buddies program.
- Incorporate innovative STEAM opportunities.

Goal 5: Safety & Security

Goal Statement: To create the most secure environment.

Objectives:

- Increase active daily monitoring in and outside school grounds.
- Create an HQ for SRO at main entrance to best maximize supervision.
- See best practices for safety and security through obtaining feedback, examples, and education through outside resources.
- Educate and encourage community to develop a townwide walking and biking route to promote safety, community, and fitness (led by parents).

Thank you to everyone who has contributed their time, talent, and perspectives during any or all of the Strategic Planning meetings. This plan will guide the district and board of education in moving forward over the next 3 – 5 years. We appreciate your thoughtful participation!

Please watch the district website for the exact date and time when the final plan will be presented to the Board of Education. We hope you will attend and be recognized for your participation.