



Marie Reynolds, Director of Communication Services
330 Mount Laurel Road • Mount Laurel, NJ 08054
Phone: 856-235-3387 • Fax: 856-235-1837
mreynolds@mtlaurelschools.org • www.mtlaurelschools.org

December 7, 2017 - A Path to Success 2030 Creating an Action Plan Complete Minutes

During this final session, participants worked in carousel brainstorming groups, focusing on eight categories identified by the previous two Strategic Planning Sessions. Those categories were: Students, Special Needs, Curriculum and Instruction, Teachers and Staff, Full-Day Kindergarten, Community, Facilities and Communications. Below are the actionable ideas generated on each topic within the groups. Items that appear in bold and bulleted represent the Consensus Items selected for Action in each category. Items italicized in bold represent Action Items that would cost money to implement.

Community

- **Service projects embedded into curriculum and field trips**
- **Parent Academies - Pre-K through 8**
- **Increase parent education on current teaching practices (i.e. Investigations) - optional but well-advertised, Instructional videos for parents to assist with student learning**
- **Project-based learning opportunities - allow students and teachers to work with parents and other community members/ businesses**
- **Service learning projects - recycling**
- **More media exposure - Twitter - of all community events and school functions**
- **\$ Leverage Philadelphia and surrounding area businesses to set up: Enhanced career days, mini-internships**

Math education night for parents - teach strategies and concepts

Career fair from local businesses (K-4 and 5-8) with early exposure to international opportunities

Partnership with RCBC (Rowan College of Burlington County)

Parent education on curriculum/learning

Orientation for new families

Community Kindness Day - Help students build character by giving back to community

Partnerships with senior living/nursing homes

Increase communication between HMS and Lenape

Expand Grandparents'/Parents' Day

More opportunities to be involved in visiting classes and volunteering at any time through the school year all the way through Grade 8

More advertising opportunities for local businesses to increase funding - i.e. ads on back of Tuesday folders, signs on chain-link fences

More open events for community to participate

Project oriented and ownership community service - i.e. maintain a playground

Volunteer day for all Mount Laurel Schools

True Interactive Parent Portal (build upon PowerSchool)

Career Day - outreach with parents and community

Parent workshop for new teaching/learning concepts or handouts, web-based training or tech-learning

Project T.I.M.E. Mentor Program

Teach Character Development

Increase parent education on current teaching practices (i.e. Investigations) - optional but well-advertised

Instructional videos for parents to assist with student learning

Expand lunchtime mentor program (T.I.M.E.)

Build and investigate - example: Home Depot STEM Lab

Enhance partnerships where synergies exist between corporations and schools - develop plan and set meetings to form engagement, find ways to enhance curriculum through cooperation

Increase free family events and parent involvement

Community fair days

Parent workshops (academic/grade level, technology, anti-bullying)

Exposure to vocations in community
More connection/investment between two-year schools (HF, HMS) and families
Apprenticeships with local businesses/career seminars by community members/shadow local professionals
Develop partnerships between school districts and local businesses (Create community of practice.)

Curriculum and Instruction

- **Collaboration time – building-to-building, grade-to-grade, special-to-special, cross-curricular**
- **Curriculum decisions made by committee (administrators, teachers, supervisors, CST, etc.) that are research-based, developmentally appropriate and meet needs of learners**
- **Interventions for classroom teachers; list of available programs as a resource**
- **Bring Back Summer PD**
- **EdCamp Style**

\$ Ongoing Professional Development

Review and evaluate current curriculum to meet career pathways for 2030. Determine best practices at all elementary schools to ensure equal instruction

Create/design new instruction/curriculum to include 21st-Century learning skills

Invest in NEW Calkins writing curriculum for ALL elementary schools

Skills and strategies driven by student need and interest

Authentic literature

Create innovative PD for teachers

Secure more funding to sustain programs

Create opportunities for shared services

Design more extension activities

Focus on preparing kids for citizenry and teaching how to learn (these careers may not yet exist)

Engage teachers and parents to gain “real-time” feedback on student learning

Test scores are important, but not everything

Articulation between schools to ensure elementary schools is aligned to meet Hartford to Harrington, Harrington to Lenape!

NJDOE recommends Universal Design for Learning: benefits all types of learners, we should explore and adopt!

More buses or switch K-4 start time with HF and HMS

Institute/extend GAP program fully into 5-8

More outdoor time, free play, center-based learning

Set aside space for outdoor classroom and give teachers PD time and resources on how to use it

Uniformity – SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses Opportunities, Threats) analysis at each school – build and share best practices in school district

Life skills learning – growth mindset

Professional development – independent supplemental learning (e.g. video-based repository)

Invite professional writers to share and inspire students

Play in elementary schools

Co-teaching/inclusion in all schools and grades

Authentic, performance-based assessment in P-3

Depth over breadth

Evaluate curriculum implementation and effectiveness

Play opportunities for all levels, K-8

Increase STEM activities to the average and lower-level students

Consistency in curriculum between HF and HMS – vertical articulation between math teachers

Teach original propaganda techniques plus updated forms from the Internet

More tutoring opportunities during school

More opportunities for parents to understand what students are being taught, examples of methods being used – parent tutoring night

Have more assemblies – oversight from BOE to ensure all schools have several assemblies

Need to keep up with global challenges relating to economics and intellectual capabilities

STEM/Tech – Ongoing PD to remain current, sustainable financing, periodic refreshment of plan, infrastructure review

21st-Century Learning – Ongoing PD, develop community partnerships, Maker Space areas in each school, project-based student learning

Whole child focus – schedule changes, mindfulness in curriculum, cultural competency in curriculum

Frequency of updates of curriculum

Bring back summer PD – Ed Camp style

More opportunities for teachers to present

More PD on available technology

How to implement PD – condense and categorize opportunities for PD, identify best methodology to implement

More optional teacher-led specific PD – (i.e. writing, mindfulness)

K-3 focus on at-risk students and support; 3-4 reading and math support: one initiative at a time until we “do it well”

Developmentally appropriate curriculum across levels

Summer PD to increase credits

Grade-level meetings across district – regularly

Teachers and Staff

- **Continual PD on classroom management, mental health/mindfulness to support challenging students and prevent teacher burnout**
- **Teacher Club once per month for same grade-level to help with common issues**
- **Continue Responsive Classroom in Grades 5-8**
- **Professional Development – specific and useful! Teacher-led (Ed Camps); survey results lead to training committee to create and monitor - use online videos**
- **More district-wide grade-level trainings to all be “on the same page”**

\$ ***Mental health training for all staff***

\$ ***More trained mental health professionals in the schools throughout the district***

More optional PD awareness – techstock, Google, Boot Camp; optional summer PD; online workshops

Recruiting – find candidates who more accurately reflect community (without forsaking expertise)

More time for staff collaboration

More PD time in calendar

Differentiated PD for staff

Sensitivity training (Responsive Classroom/special needs/autistic, other disorders and syndromes)

A contract

More recognition for positive changes, ideas, effort ... good job

More equity among buildings (staff – special ed support, supplies, resources, technology accountability for all)

Establish five-year tenure review process so that tenure is earned continually – makes for better teachers overall

Increase appropriate use of technology

Provide more modeling of instruction by supervisors at ALL levels

Appropriate-staffing based on needs of each individual class from year to year

Follow-up with new teachers!

Administration intentionally bring in diverse applicants for open positions

Framework to handle differentiated learning in classrooms

Consolidate and constantly update on tools and technology that teachers can use in classrooms

Continue Responsive Classroom in Grades 5-8

Expanded services from behavior specialists to support all students – regardless of classification

Make the school desirable to attract the best candidate

Improve culture – Mount Laurel Schools are a place where staff is happy and supported; then our kids will be happy and supported; twice yearly survey to identify opportunities, results tabulated and communicated by unbiased source.

Improvement tied to compensation

Increased training on inclusive education – academics, behavior, awareness of trauma

Communication/technology Curriculum: Instruction consistency – state district expectations, train staff, communicate with parents

Diversity recruitment best practices

Best practices shared across schools

Grade-level collaboration across elementary schools – consistency

Training for teachers so they are comfortable integrating technology

More diversity among new hires

P-3 certified teachers in elementary

SEL in P-8 – more training for staff

Staff sensitivity to family types and cultures

Training for teachers to handle controversial issues (not avoid them)

Brain-based research training to be the foundation for all curricula

Recruit more student teachers from local colleges to have more staff in each room and have most up-to-date methods

More aides for non-curriculum activities, such as recess in hallways

More staff and parent interaction

Advertise more jobs in more places to attract more people

Full-Day Kindergarten

- **Increase special ed as needed to service full-day K with mock schedule**
- **Balance between developmentally appropriate practice and curriculum**

- **Increased curriculum for full-day – increase social/play – vertical articulation to revise 1-3**
- \$ **Space – classrooms, bathrooms, lunchrooms**
- \$ **Staffing – teachers, aides, bus drivers, special services**

Obtain funding for facilities, staff and curriculum

Repurpose/build/modify local property for early learning center

Cost analysis: Population study and potential redistricting, SWOT analysis – is this a priority in the face of other priorities?

5th and 6th-grade placement – analyze emotional needs of 4th-graders – Are they ready?

Analyze emotional needs of 5th-graders – Can the 5-6 school sustain their emotional needs?

Social skills – develop mentally-appropriate and academic curriculum (research-based) and with input from specialists in district

More time for play; center-based learning and provide training for teachers with realistic ways to implement

Facilities – need to add bathrooms to future kindergarten rooms (seems impractical to add both kindergartners and 5th-grades back to elementary schools)

Possible to add one new school – pre-K and kindergarten (early childhood learning center)? Would this be an issue in terms of separating them from rest of the school community – accessing resources (ESL, specials, reading, CST, etc.)?

Study population growth of town to assess needs

May have to include after-school day care

Facilities updates – raise money, assess facilities and added staffing

Build social skills – social – emotional supports and supplies

Rich, hands-on classroom materials

Professional development for teachers and aides and specialists

Alignment of preschool through 3rd-grade curricula

Focus on developmentally appropriate practice

Allows for outside play and instruction

Focus on learning through play – dramatic play centers, puppets, dress-up, blocks, Lego, workbench

Preserve playtime for all students

Provide opportunities to rest/ evaluate ways to rest

Planning and vertical articulation

More staff in each classroom to ensure proper care and learning opportunities all day

More parent inclusion – keeps parents engaged

Integrate technology for kindergarten (iPads, Chromebooks)

Equipment – technology, desks/tables, supplies

Teacher-training to understand developmentally appropriate teaching and assessment

Transportation – buses

Scheduling – Specials, lunch, recess, CPT, GAP, Special Services, ESL

Re-implement specific handwriting program (Foundations) consistent district use

Phonics- phonemic awareness

New families and those who have gone out for full-day K program will be back. Let families know about availability of full-day K

Lunch – purchases/demand – support for 5-year-olds ordering lunch – parent pre-order?

EDC impact (am and pm)

Pilot a full-day class

Facilities

- **Evaluate facilities to see what needs to be done – Interiors (Labs, cafeterias, gyms, etc.) for 21st-Century applicability and curriculum (STEM, STEAM)**
- **Ensure equal facilities in all buildings**
- **Appropriate equipment to address extreme needs (to adhere to IEPs)**
- **Outdoor learning spaces need to be offered and evaluated**
- \$ **Remodel classrooms for 21st-Century learning environments (tables/high tops)**

Incorporate eastern philosophies by requiring students to engage in ownership of the facilities by maintaining a physically clean and safe environment

Modular, flexible, ergonomic, modern furnishings

New cleaning protocols to meet student and staff needs (Health and Safety Committee with Union Rep for support)

Brain-based aesthetic interior and exterior environments

Develop two 6-8 buildings

Dedicated spaces for hands-on learning – Maker Spaces, STEM Labs

Recycling
 HEPA Filters/air cleaners
 Hand sanitizers in hallways – esp. for lunchtime
 Alternative to water fountains – touch-free fountains
 Update playground equipment
 Improve specials classrooms and dedicated space for instrumental instruction
 Bathrooms in all kindergartens
 Enough classrooms for full-day K!
 Set-up vocational activities-based labs for elementary and middle school
 Fund through referendum: a second gym at Hartford, a universal maintenance plan for all schools/playgrounds with a goal to equalize elementary schools' recreational opportunities; add classrooms to accommodate full-day K, small class sizes and vocational opportunities, labs, another all-purpose room in elementary schools
 Surrounding landscapes of schools should not be treated with pesticides, herbicides, and fungicides
 STEM Labs – prioritize space within each building
 Water testing periodically to test for known carcinogens and contaminants
 Prioritize funding, in order of necessity, allocate the most money to the schools in need of most updates and more quickly to bring all schools to the same level - add schools where necessary
 Inspection crew appointed by BOE with set expectations that have to be met; write list of what each school needs, use list to prioritize.
 Safety and security
 Seating for students during assemblies
 Bathrooms in all K and preschool classrooms
 Clean spaces for all
 Regulate air temps in all areas
 Evaluate reinstatement of vocational shop classes (grad HS with Votech Degree)
 Upgrade preschool facilities to adhere to state requirements!
 Redistrict to ensure diversity
 Bathrooms in all Pre-K and Kindergarten classrooms
 Rigorous space to handle rigorous curriculum
 Rooms with bathrooms for full-day K
 Create a training center
 Mold checks
 Maker Space at all schools
 Décor – give buildings the freedom to express their own themes/ideas, rather than standard blue and brown paint
 Evaluate safety measures

Special Needs

- **Provide more resources for special needs students in order to expand their participation in extra-curricular activities**
- **Provide opportunities for teachers to collaborate throughout the district in order to increase consistency with inclusion programming**
- **Consistent and appropriate co-teaching in each grade level K-8; more support for emotional and mental needs at each building**
- **Allow homogeneous grouping (i.e switching classes) for more targeted RTI/higher level instruction**
- **Ensure that Special Needs students are meaningfully included and not merely tolerated.**
- § ***Review service delivery model for social/emotional needs of students i.e. hiring of behavioral consultants, psychologists, social workers and RBT aides***

Increased training for Gen. Ed. teachers and support staff for inclusion of students with special needs
 Increase co-teaching for all – provide training with appropriately certified staff (i.e. special ed. cert.)
 Availability of materials/resources for all teachers
 Classroom management training
 Adopt school-wide positive behavior support programs for special ed and general ed (Research-based PBIs), hire BCBAs, Develop program, train staff (train, train, train!)
 Use clubs as way to teach social skills – expand use of clubs (add to curriculum class schedules, part of school day)
 Make accommodations available for students during extracurricular (i.e. aides)
 Early intervention/ summer programs
 Awareness of community programs offered to special needs kids
 Aides for every classroom – three hours daily
 Consider homogeneous grouping at middle school level – may help better address special needs.
 Well-trained para-professionals
 Make sure playground equipment is special needs-appropriate

Open lines of communication between parents, specialists, teachers
 Professional Development to support co-teaching models
 School psychologists (BCBA) in the district supporting student needs
 More staff for one-to-one interaction
 Safe rooms for students when they need to go to a quiet area away from class
 Better assessment of the needs of each student- what they require and how they impact the rest of the class
 Re-evaluate methods currently used – make sure they are up to date
 More extracurricular activities – need staff to support students as they participate
 Awareness of how to be mindful and at ease and help anyone – special needs certification for all staff for inclusive teaching
 Teachers who work with special needs students meet to review IEP, how it's being met – what works; what doesn't
 Get rid of preschool autism classes – include these students with typically developing peers
 Training for special education support staff
 Resources needed to support students
 Training for regular-ed teachers when they have high level students with variety of challenges
 Co-teaching PD and appropriate teams that make a good match (not just throwing random support staff to cover special needs students_

Option for children who struggle, but do not fit the discrepancy model
 Provide more support for parents of special needs kids – help adjust, learn more about their needs, and how to best help. Provide resources, support, workshops and peer and parent support
 Needs assessment to determine knowledge of resources for students with mental health issues as well as other special needs.
 Task force, which is school specific to determine professional development, needs of the building staff
 Survey parents as to what they feel students need
 Provide more PD for teacher aides
 Smaller class sizes would allow the opportunity to offer more and individualized differentiated instruction
 Evaluate staffing needs to determine what specialists can best meet needs of students (who do we have and what do we need)
 Assess schedules to ensure we are able to meet student/staff needs

Students

- **Direct instruction in social skills, such as language to use in compromise, mediation, and coming to mutual agreements; practice in these skills (Example: Group project – pre-teach how to accomplish above skills.)**
 - **Instruct students at “developmentally appropriate levels”! It affects their confidence and social being**
 - **Students want different things – prompt language to use to accomplish goals.**
 - **Enhance opportunities for community service projects – recycling**
 - **Provide students strategies and opportunities to improve mental health and reduce stress (i.e. mindfulness)**
- § ***Increase staff in the classroom to support all students; keep class sizes small, engage all learners, offer after-school educational opportunities***

Student accountability plan – revise discipline code and enforce; revision by cross-functional team of parents and students
 Accountability for students to adhere to behavioral expectations; discipline in accordance to plan; implementation of positive and negative logical consequences
 Developmentally appropriate coordination between elementary schools; with Lenape at middle school level
 Mentoring programs for all levels; soft skills workshop for all student levels
 School psychologist
 PBSIS (research-based, system wide) it is a process, not just a program
 Utilize community resources to enhance 21st-Century skills
 Embrace cultural diversity and learner diversity; student-centered learning, recognize need for play and movement, outdoors too and in upper and lower grades
 PBSIS – students that need higher levels of intervention (discipline) need to have FBAs (functional behavior analysis) and behavior plans
 Unity Family and 4th-grade buddies reflected in an age appropriate way through other schools and at higher grades
 “House” system at Hartford does not allow kids to preserve earlier relationships – consider letting kids stay connected with peers
 Review and revise discipline code to address consistency throughout the district
 Provide programs to increase cultural diversity awareness
 Restorative practices to be adopted
 Students need to own their learning and take advantage of opportunities presented to them

Provide students a block of time to explore a topic that interests them (i.e. Genius Hour)
 School ownership/pride
 Address mental health/social issues – revise curriculum to include mindfulness
 Teach appropriate social media skills
 BCBA in each building in the district
 Social/emotional learning – Mindfulness training for parents, students, staff
 Clear transitions between grades to promote independence and ease anxieties in students, esp. 5th and 7th grade – provide more freedoms
 More leadership and mentoring opportunities – student council in all schools
 Recess and or phys ed for every student – assess schedules for additional times
 Re-write curriculum to support student-driven learning, rethink learning spaces, PD in SDL, assess model programs, choosing programs that support SDL, growth mindset, provide more hands-on activities, include all learners in project-based learning
 Project-based learning that supports increased opportunities; more real-world experiences and cultural awareness, start school later, snack breaks, and teach empathy and citizenship
 More real-life training (i.e. holiday shop during school hours); field trips for out of school learning
 BOE oversees, reviews each school to ensure each school provides equal opportunities

Communications

- **One day a month where all grade level/subject areas meet for intracollaboration**
- **More Harrington/Lenape collaboration**
- **Use technology to connect with other classrooms, districts (i.e. connected classroom, Google Hangouts)**
- **School pride – Sparks, Unity Families**
- **Schoology or Edmodo Platform – Assess all communication systems for accessibility for all people with/without disabilities**
- **Unified district-wide way of communication (i.e. Remind, Seesaw, Bloomz)**
- § ***Collaborate with other nearby districts – training, visitation***
- § ***Opportunities for teacher and student voices to be heard***

Make communications uniform across all classes/teachers (i.e. use same app – SeeSaw, Google Suite) – choose app, train staff, purchase technology if needed, issue guidelines/expectation to staff, students and parents.
 Inter-school communications – Use G-Suite for internal group discussions, resources, sharing, student portfolios, professional development and training, supervisor responsible for creation, management and staff training
 School Pride – each school establish service organization to promote unity and pride
 Parent orientation and peer mentors for transition to middle school (i.e. have rising 5th-graders shadow a middle-schooler for a school day to decrease anxiety)
 Send out info late 4th-grade about transitioning to 5th about the existing “Hello Day”; many don’t know you can come during summer to try lockers
 Create a framework for better transitions between school levels – elementary – middle – high. More teacher/student interactions/group meetings in different subject areas.
 Communication to staff in a timely manner
 Training on e-mail and other confidential communications
 Formulate communication flowpath
 Analyze opportunities for improvement
 Communicate areas of excellence and improvement
 Teach parents how to use technology – collaborate student/parent tech training (BTS Night, Parents Workshops)
 School pride – Sparks, Unity Families
 More Pride Grant knowledge
 New student orientation – assess and revise to meet parent/student needs
 Unify communication tools/apps
 True interactive Parent Portal/realtime updates/readily available homework assignments (students can work assignments from home)
 Update websites and online social media outlets
 Mount Laurel School – Lenape curriculum collaboration monthly/quarterly (e.g. Scranton)
 Transition meetings between K-4, 5-6, 7-8 buildings for each grade level
 Provide opportunities for students to communicate authentically and globally – reconsidering current policies
 Using technology to connect with other classrooms/districts (i.e. System to determine what should be shared and how/when to disseminate the info (ex. school-wide texting and e-mails) Social media
 Reconsider sending flyers home in folders – access electronic flyers
 Webpage/Hub – where daily updates are posted and parents can check what’s going on each day

Texts and e-mails – use block texting system already in place to share important updates (ex. An incident that occurs)
– eliminates rumors and misinformation

Schools with LED signs – needs to be more accessible for sign-programming for up-to-date information

Push REMIND app instead of paper usage – remind people to check the info hub daily