

STRATEGIC PLANNING TASK FORCE

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**Diane Morris &
Kathy Winecoff**

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HOWELL TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

STRATEGIC PLAN 2008



INTRODUCTION

Strategic Planning is the process by which an organization develops a new vision and plan. It does so by examining its current status and determining where it would like to be in the near and distant future. The Howell Township Board of Education originally embarked on such a plan in 1995, with its central mission to educate and challenge students. Since 1995, the Howell Township Board of Education approved the Strategic Plan 2000, which helped set priorities for school years 2000 through 2005, and the Strategic Plan 2005, for school years 2005 through 2010.

The district's strategic plan outlines the goals and strategies to achieve educational success in our district. Under the previous plan, we were still focused on the action items and priorities of the 2005 plan. Since the inception of the plan, the district has seen consistent gains in student achievement. This has been a result of the highly qualified staff and strong instructional programs provided for At Risk students, English Language Learners, Gifted and Talented students, and a differentiated approach to instruction that helps all children reach their full potential. In addition, there have been numerous advances, achievements and awards for the use of technology in the district. Significant safety and security upgrades have been made to the schools, and shared service agreements that have improved financial efficiencies.

However, due to legislative changes, state mandates, and funding requirements, the Board of Education deemed it necessary to reconvene a Strategic Planning Committee a year earlier than originally planned. The committee's goal was to reaffirm the values set forth in the previous strategic plan, as well as developing a new plan for the years 2008 through 2013, entitled Strategic Plan 2008.

Once again, the team worked closely with New Jersey School Boards Association Consultants Diane Morris and Kathy Winecoff, who facilitated the strategic planning process. The plan was developed by a 58-member committee, consisting of teachers, parents, administrators, senior citizens, students, and other community members who worked tirelessly, and dedicated themselves to establishing new goals and strategies through committee work and consensus for the future of the school district.

The committee was confident, as in years past, that their contributions and efforts would help chart a dynamic course that will assist the district in continuing to provide the exceptional education that has been a hallmark of the Howell Township Community.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Howell Township Public School District is to educate students at all grade levels to achieve the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards and challenge them to become skillful communicators, independent thinkers, and life-long learners. In reaching their full potential, our children will develop individual, social, and civic responsibility, as well as, respect for themselves and their environment.

We Believe

- Learning is a life-long process.
- Technology will continue to be a driving force in education, business, and life.
- Students should learn to be risk-takers, problem solvers, active learners, and skillful communicators.
- Students learn best in a safe, secure environment.
- Self-esteem and education success are interdependent.
- Students should be challenged to reach their full potential.
- The community must work together to provide student educational resources in a fiscally responsible manner.

GOAL

Student Achievement

Provide a learning environment, which inspires and challenges students to reach their full potential

Strategies:

- Provide support for all curricular areas through supervisors/vice principals
- Increase inter/intra-school articulation
- Base instructional strategies upon best practices
- Decrease class size at primary level (PreK-2)
- Provide staff with NJCCC aligned curriculum resources
- Develop and promote inquiry-based learning
- Promote the development of teacher/student developed goals through the use of multiple assessments
- Continue to develop and assess curriculum regularly based upon educational research, diverse student needs, technology, and changing times*
- Utilize various assessments to tailor instructional strategies to meet the needs of all learners
- Employ strategies to eliminate the achievement gaps for at-risk students
- Provide hands-on experience in conjunction with technological advancement*
- Expand programs that support students' emotional, social, physical and civic development
- Develop programs that foster appreciation and respect among students of various cultures and abilities*
- Expand the educational program to include full-day Pre-K and Kindergarten

*Carried over from the previous Strategic Plan

GOAL

Community Relations

Increase community support, awareness and engagement

Strategies:

- Expand partnerships with businesses, government, colleges, preschools and community groups*
- Redesign position of a community relations officer*
- Continue key community contacts for dissemination of information*
- Create venues to present vital information to new audiences
- Build relationships between Board of Education, Administration and Community
- Create a Parent Academy

GOAL

Technology

Achieve efficiency in operations and instructional processes to prepare our students to participate globally

Strategies:

- Incorporate leading edge infrastructure and applications to enhance productivity and learning capability
- Integrate existing systems in order to realize opportunities to maximize efficiency and reduce duplicity
- Explore opportunities to decrease operational costs [and promote environmental responsibility] through emerging technologies
- Explore opportunities to facilitate and streamline data collection, containment, and retrieval for analysis
- Identify opportunities to apply emerging technologies for the delivery of electronic content/information, for the purpose of professional development, classroom instruction, and community relations

GOAL

Professional Staff

Attract, develop and retain an exceptional professional staff

Strategies:

- Foster a collaborative environment recognizing outstanding professional practices*
- Enhance partnerships with universities and other resources to develop specific programs*
- Encourage and support all staff to broaden certification and highly qualified status
- Foster teacher leadership and turn-key opportunities to enhance professional development
- Expand professional development opportunities for all staff
- Expand the availability of staff development, district resources and support programs
- Actively pursue talented and diverse professionals

GOAL

School Facilities/Safety

Provide the necessary school facilities to ensure that members of the school community have a safe environment, which effectively and efficiently supports the educational program

Strategies:

- Establish partnerships, both public and private, as they pertain to facilities*
- Evaluate, maintain and improve the infrastructure (buildings, grounds and facilities) of our district*
- Investigate the use of existing facilities to generate revenue

- Examine the necessary school requirements based on trends (i.e., demographics, shrinking financial support, mandated programs) to maximize cost efficient use of school facilities and stabilize class size
- Investigate “green” resources and energy alternatives to reduce financial impact in the district and to promote a healthy, safe school environment
- Regularly evaluate, update and expand security measures and training for all staff, students and parents

GOAL

Finance / Funding State Mandates

Utilize all available resources in the most effective and efficient manner

Strategies:

- Explore alternate ways of providing services in a more cost-effective manner*
- Use existing facilities and technology infrastructure as a means of generating incremental revenue*
- Develop alternative funding sources such as grants, business partnerships and corporate sponsorships*
- Expand cost-effectiveness by sharing services with township, county and other school districts
- Investigate effective and efficient use of revenue assets, [including facilities] to meet state efficiency and adequacy mandates and implement as appropriate
- Explore alternative energy projects with an eye on “green” and long term cost reductions