



## **Creating a Strategic Plan for the Keansburg School District**

### **Mission Statement**

The Keansburg School District shall graduate students with educational opportunities in college and career readiness. All stakeholders will set rigorous expectations for all students in the classroom, including co-curricular activities, attendance, tardiness, and discipline.

### **Vision**

The Keansburg School District shall prepare students for life's abundant opportunities in college or careers in a safe, rigorous, and nurturing educational environment.

### **Session 1**

#### **What are the Strengths, Achievements and Challenges of the Keansburg School District?**

On April 27, 2023, Keansburg School District administrators, Board of Education members, staff, parents, the Mayor, students, and community members, forty-one (41) in all, came together to initiate strategic planning. The meeting began with a welcome and introduction by Board President, Mr. Matthew Kitchen. Ms. Kathleen O'Hare, Superintendent and Ms. Christine Formica, Director of Curriculum & Instruction, presented the current "State of the Schools" report. Mary Ann Friedman from New Jersey School Boards Association (NJSBA) was introduced and explained the strategic planning process. Translators were available for non-English speaking parents and community members. Childcare was also provided by the district.

We reviewed the consensus process utilized in strategic planning. The topic for the evening focused on identifying district strengths and challenges. Participants gathered in randomly assigned groups, seven groups in all, and engaged in brainstorming the districts strengths and challenges. After group discussion, each group identified their consensus points, "Top 10" strengths and challenges. All participants engaged in a Gallery Walk to review the small group outcomes. The large group then identified "Common Themes" that had occurred throughout the small group outcomes.

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.

## Small Group Consensus: Strengths, Achievements & Challenges

### Group 1:

Strengths	Challenges
Curriculum	Transient population: effects learning gaps, sense of belonging, pride / identity, social norms
Support services expanding for family, mental health	Growing population concerns
Staff & professional development (PD)	Parent involvement: low turn out parent conferences, communication, BOE meetings, PTA meetings
Modern facilities	Current staff shortages
More High School clubs / activities coming soon	Discipline & accountability
Small community "close knit potential"	Social media
Security in these violent times	

### Group 2:

Strengths	Challenges
Services	Discipline
Positive supports	Communication
Individual learning opportunities	Funding
Small community	Parental involvement
Nice facilities	Transience
Great staff	Attendance
Technology	Rising mental health issues (students, staff, parents)
	Issues affecting low-income families
	Social media

### Group 3:

Strengths	Challenges
Committed staff – to students, to fellow school staff	Parent involvement
Small community	\$\$\$
Titan strong	Social media
Newer building facilities – cleanliness, mechanics	Tardies / Absences
Diverse students	Discipline
Resilient students	Diverse staff
Resources – ESS, Coaching	Staff shortages / diversity
Class size small	Transiency
Supportive & stable Administration	Small town – too close for comfort
Newer tech	Tech – does it always work?

**Group 4:**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
Collaboration between staff members	Parental involvement
Small community – lots of support	Accountability
Many administrators were previously teachers in the district	Issues in Cafeteria during lunches
Staff members who work and live / grew up in Keansburg	Cell phones
Involvement with Police and community programs	Bullying
	Staff shortages
	Higher class sizes
	Bathroom supervision
	Attendance

**Group 5:**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
Community pride	Parental involvement
Dedicated staff & board	District leadership turnover
Strong Guidance Department	Access to personal tech in school
Activities for students	Focus on sports, but next to focus on extra-curriculars
State of Art Schools (new)	Alumni network needs to be stronger
	Dress code (PJ's?)

**Group 6:**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
Excellent support from administration	Tardiness / Attendance
Mental health assistance for students	Parent involvement and concern for academic performance
Holding students accountable and incentives available (Positive reinforcers)	Staff shortage
Good and caring teachers along with secretaries and other staff members	Implementing RTI (Response to Intervention)
Mentoring and college readiness	Behaviors
	Social Media
	Substance abuse
	Positive role models

**Group 7:**

Strengths	Challenges
Security system for picking up students is admirable	Quality of lunch
Spanish workshops “Titan Academy”	Need translation for important documents like IEP’s and 504’s and medical, etc.
Students are provided with computers	Need Interpreter / Translator
Happy with teachers	Drug and violence prevention programs / conflict resolution
Administrative support (Staff)	More staff that represent the Spanish-speaking community
	More resources and supports for parents
	More bilingual / English-learning classes
	Expand arts program – music, dance, etc.
	Take student intimidation more seriously, sometimes things happen and unless “there’s evidence” nothing happens
	More after-school programs that are bilingual
	Translation stipends
	Teachers should identify what students require additional support (students who are non-English speaking)
	More diversity

Following the Gallery Walk, the large group identified the following **common themes**:

Common Themes - Strengths	Common Themes - Challenges
Staff	Attendance
School Based Youth Services	Parent involvement
Guidance Coordinator	Behaviors
Security	Funding
Small Town	
Pride	Staff shortage
Administrative supports	Mental health
Small class sizes	Social media
Facilities	
Technology	
Diversity in students	Communication
Sports	Large class sizes
Curriculum	Diversity in staff
	Transiency
	Alumni network

**The second strategic planning session is scheduled for:**

**Tuesday, May 23, 2023 at 6:00 pm,  
Joseph R. Bolger Middle School, Media Center  
Sign-in begins at 5:45 pm.**

Meetings #2 and #3 are scheduled for 1.5 hours. Meetings start and end promptly.

During the May 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting participants will create a shared vision and initiatives together for the future of the Keansburg School District . . . we will talk about our aspirations and expectations for our students and school district.

Please join us. Bring a friend! Everyone is welcome! We look forward to seeing you!

**Please RSVP by using the RSVP form on the district's website. Thank you!**