

# **Creating a Strategic Plan For the Alexandria School District**

*The mission of the Alexandria Township School District is to build the academic, social/emotional and physical foundation our students need to thrive in high school and beyond.*

## **Session 1 of 3**

### **What Are the Strengths, Achievements, and Challenges of the Alexandria School District?**

On November 13, 2017, Alexandria School District administration, Board of Education members, staff, parents and community members came together to initiate strategic planning. The first evening's topic was focused on the strengths, achievements, and challenges of the Alexandria School District. The meeting began with a welcome and introductions by Board of Education Vice-President, Beth Kelly, and Dr. Matthew Jennings, Superintendent, presented an excellent overview of the current "state of the schools." Gwen Thornton, assisted by Maryann Friedman New Jersey School Boards representatives, reviewed the strategic planning process the group would be undertaking.

Thirty-eight participants then gathered in four randomly assigned groups to identify the strengths/achievements and challenges of the Alexandria School District through brainstorming and the sharing of ideas. After discussion, each group came to a consensus of its top 10 strengths/achievements and top 10 challenges and presented those to all meeting participants.

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's website to share the work of the groups during the course of the strategic planning process.

## **Group Consensus**

### **Strengths/Accomplishments and Challenges**

#### **Orange Dot Group:**

##### **Strengths/Accomplishments (Top Ten)**

- PD
- Team meeting time
- Technology
- District crisis plan
- Curriculum / Common Assessments
- Full Day Pre-K & K
- BYOC (Build Your Own Curriculum)
- Resources
- Standards based curriculum
- Teachers
- IFE

##### **Challenges (Top Ten)**

- PD
- Increased demand in early education, i.e. balance of social / emotional
- Language Arts Curriculum - deeper into standards
- Absenteeism / Student Attendance
- School Year / Day – learning time
- IFE especially for higher achievers
- Managing two buildings
- Differentiation
- Lack of guidance counselor at elementary level
- Overall assessment of district

#### **Green Dot Team**

##### **Strengths/Accomplishments (Top Ten)**

- Arts
- Technology infrastructure
- Team time / common planning cross-curricular
- Assessments /SB grading
- Resources available
- Staff/teacher dedication

## *Alexandria School District Strategic Planning Meeting #1 Outcomes*

### **Challenges (Top Ten)**

- Communication – consistency, media use, website clarity – too many calendars
- Grading / report cards
- Integration of arts – limited team time / no leader
- LDW facilities
- Sharing staff LDW & AMS

### **Red Dot Team:**

#### **Strengths/Accomplishments (Top Ten)**

- Commitment of teachers
- Resources and support for teachers
- BYOC & curriculum
- Team time for K-8 classroom teachers
- Diversity of programs: arts, PE, coding, core, PK Program
- Time for PD, quality of PD
- Students and school spirit
- Art, music, theater, dance

#### **Challenges:**

- Time to effectively cover curriculum
- Parent involvement
- PT school psych and increased social / emotional problems
- Training for resources and new programs
- Rate of change
- Team time for arts, PE, health, Spanish
- STEAM
- Schedule and personnel – 2 schools
- Differentiation
- \$
- Lack of cultural diversity

### **Yellow Dot Team**

#### **Strengths/Accomplishments (Top 10)**

- Class size
- Grade level team time
- Specials (arts/library)
- Professional Development
- Strength of CST

## *Alexandria School District Strategic Planning Meeting #1 Outcomes*

- Technology (use of 3D printer, coding)
- School Choice
- All School Meeting / School Community
- Website with grades

### **Challenges (Top 10)**

- Staff based on enrollment growth
- Develop team time for specials
- Multiple staff PD – differentiation
- Social emotional curriculum development
- Breakfast program
- Parent education
- Sports programs
- Public relations problem / communication and transparency problems

Following each group reporting out on their consensus points, the following **common themes emerged from multiple groups:**

### **Strengths:**

- Appreciate teachers commitment to students and district - excellent
- The Arts - Technology
- Media Center – Library (specialist)
- Collaboration / team time
- BYOC

### **Challenges**

- Communication
- Social emotional
- Team time / specials
- 2 schools – personnel, back & forth, running between two schools
- Parent engagement

*Alexandria School District Strategic Planning Meeting #1 Outcomes*

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

Monday, November 27, 2017 from 7:00 – 8:30 PM

Meetings are scheduled for 1.5 hours. Meetings start and end promptly.

During the November 27<sup>th</sup> meeting we will create a shared vision together for the future of the Alexandria School District . . . we will talk about our aspirations and expectations for our students and school district.

We look forward to seeing you!