



Creating a Strategic Plan for the Netcong School District

Mission Statement

Netcong, a tradition to nurture, inspire, empower, and achieve by all, for all.

Session 1 of 3 - What are the Strengths and Challenges/Opportunities of the Netcong School District?

On April 22, 2021 Netcong administrators, staff, Board members, parents, and community members came together to initiate strategic planning. The first evening's topic focused on the strengths and challenges/opportunities of the Netcong School District to address the question of where the district is now.

The meeting began with welcoming remarks by Bernadette Dalesandro, President of the Board of Education. Kate Walsh, Superintendent, provided an informative overview of the district. Facilitator Charlene Peterson, from New Jersey School Boards Association, introduced the strategic planning process and assisted throughout the process.

The participants gathered into three mixed stakeholder small groups to brainstorm the strengths and challenges/opportunities of the Netcong School District. After discussion,

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each group came to a consensus on up to top 10 strengths and top 10 challenges/opportunities and presented those to the full group of meeting participants.

The information that follows is a summary of the work of the small groups. All consensus points will be posted on the district’s website (www.netcongschool.org).

Group Consensus: Strengths & Challenges/Opportunities

Group 1

District Strengths	Challenges/Opportunities
Quality of administration and increased administrative staff	Classroom space/building capacity
Improved facilities (annex)	Facilities – air conditions/standby power
Small class sizes	Continuing to meet increasing ELL needs
Improved school safety and security (street speed control, building security, Covid measures)	Community development/population growth
Improved finances	Maintaining strength of RTI program moving forward
Curriculum development	Maintaining and retention of paraprofessionals
Consistent investment in tech hardware/software and bandwidth/hotspots	Grounds
Improvement on communication with community	Maintain technology
Robust, progressing ELL program	Continued investment in extracurricular growth
Increased student interest elective - opportunities	K-12 district
Community partnerships	Grant opportunities

Group 2:

District Strengths	Challenges/Opportunities
Small school feel/small class sizes	Time throughout the course of the year for elementary and middle school staff to collaborate (different grade level collaboration)
Small community feel	Engage and embrace diversity more
PLC meetings paramount (time for staff and administration to collaborate)	Address changing demographics
RTI program (creation of early intervention program)	Space (expansion is needed). Referendum is needed – maybe this should be #1.
More proficient assessments/institution of benchmark assessments and data analysis	Climate control (air conditioning)

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Motivated student body	Condition of the other grounds (pavement, basketball courts, fences)
District response to COVID (communications and collaboration within the district)	Creation of grant coordinator/public relations officer
	Parent involvement
	Partnerships with community and community organizations – opportunities for students to become more involved in the community – community outreach and events.
	More middle school opportunities

Group 3

District Strengths	Challenges/Opportunities
Science Fair with Drew University	Policies on website, post backup information online
Professional Development	Improving absenteeism
Curriculum Coordinator	Community engagement/outreach – NEF, PTA, SEPAG
Small class sizes	Building & Grounds – space, need for AC, exterior appearance, soccer field
Strong staff	Staff turnover
Students thriving	Equity and equality
Readers/Writers Workshop	More inclusion for students with disabilities
Technology – Chromebooks for students, Google Classroom	Resource Room – additional classes for middle school students (Social Studies, Science)
Social/emotional classes on Monday	

The second strategic planning session is scheduled for: Friday, April 23 from 6:30 – 8:00 pm. During the April 23rd meeting, using a similar brainstorming process, we will identify our visions for the Netcong School District five years from now. The final meeting will be held on Friday, April 30 at 6:30 pm to write goal statements using the input from the two previous sessions.

Please join us. We look forward to seeing you and welcome your input.