



Creating a Strategic Plan Renewal for the Mendham Borough School District

Session 1 of 3 – Foundational Statements

On October 9, 2018 Mendham Borough School District administrators, staff, Board members, parents, and community members came together to initiate the strategic planning process. The first evening's topic focused on a discussion of district belief statements and a review of the district's mission statement. The meeting began with welcoming remarks by Beth Cocuzza, President of the Board of Education. Dr. Mitzi Morillo, Superintendent, provided an informative overview of the district that highlighted the district's accomplishments guided by the expiring strategic plan. Charlene Peterson, from New Jersey School Boards Association, facilitated the strategic planning process.

The participants worked in four balanced stakeholder groups to brainstorm ideas that would contribute toward the formation of district belief statements and a review of the district's current mission statement. Each group came to a consensus and presented their ideas to the full group. All group consensus points are recorded and posted on the district's website (www.mendhamboro.org) during the course of the strategic planning process.

Belief Statements

The full group reviewed the definition/characteristics of belief statements and commitments currently included in the staff handbook. Each small stakeholder group was assigned one area to discuss - students, parents, community, and staff. This work should be used in the development of overall district belief statements.

Work of each of the Small Groups for District Consideration – Belief Statements

Students

We believe all students will have the opportunity to:

1. Be challenged academically.
2. Learn from and contribute to the school and larger community.
3. Develop and nurture a love of learning.
4. Learn in a safe and secure environment.

Parents

We believe the role of parents is to:

1. Be active participants and collaborative partners, providing support to students' educational and personal growth.
2. Understand and reinforce the District's mission, policies, and organization.
3. Continue involvement through the middle school years.

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Community

We believe the role of the community is:

1. Active participation and partnerships.
2. To provide feedback and communication.
3. Being positive role models.
4. Utilizing/sharing resources to enhance student opportunities and well-being.
5. Sharing diverse capabilities and experiences.

Staff

We believe the role of the staff is to:

1. Be flexible and open-minded.
2. Be supportive and set realistic expectations.
3. Guide and educate, the whole child (socially, emotionally and academically).
4. Always put all children as our primary focus. Children should come first.
5. Be role models.
6. Be lifelong learners like our students, and stay current and engage in professional learning.
7. Provide a safe, secure environment for the entire school community.
8. Continue open communications with students and their families.
9. Have a balance between state-mandated requirements and opportunities for creative exploration.
10. Recognize that all students are entitled to differentiated instruction.
11. Care for (support) each other as well as our students.

District Mission Statement Review

The full group engaged in a review of the district's mission statement to ensure that it represents a current depiction of the district's overall purpose.

- Looked at district mission statement and Mountain View's mission statement
- Components of mission statement: what you do, for whom you do it, and the benefit.
- Guiding principles – succinct, memorable, unique, realistic, current

Current District Mission Statement:

The mission of the Mendham Borough Public School District is to prepare all of our students for their future roles in society. We strive to provide an educational program that enables all students to acquire knowledge and to assume constructive self-direction to their fullest potential. The district is committed to education of the highest quality, aligned with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards, and continuous improvement of programs and teaching strategies.

Small stakeholder group assignment:

- Identify 5 words that best describe the district
- What does Mendham Borough School District do best?
- What makes the Mendham Borough School District unique?

This work should be helpful in reviewing the current mission statement.

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5 Words that Best Describe the District

Table 2	Table 3	Table 4	Table 5
Involved/engaged (community)	Community centric		Close-knit educated community
Personalized	Personalized		
Progressive	Innovative	Progressive	Adaptive-current-innovative
Quality	High performers	High achieving	
	Collaborative	Collaborative	Collaborative
Committed	Well prepared	Dynamic	Supportive
	Intimate	Inspiring	Responsive

Note: Table 1 members were spread among the other 4 groups due to absences in their original group.

What Does Mendham Borough School District Do Best?

Table 2	Introduction of social, emotional and academic development
Table 3	Provide top-quality education. Provide safe and comfortable environment.
Table 4	Creating a balanced approach to educating, social/emotional growth, ultimately developing lifelong learners.
Table 5	We are leaders in staying current and adapting to the needs of our ever-changing world.

What Makes the Mendham Borough School District Unique?

Table 2	Ability to communicate and collaborate about students.
Table 3	Sidewalk community Neighborhood-based Hometown feel
Table 4	Cultivating ethical, creative thinkers and problem solvers. Productive citizens in a global society.
Table 5	Many varied opportunities for all.

Proposed revision to the District Mission Statement – Table 4:

Respect, support, celebrate the diverse needs and accomplishment of the students and faculty.

Upcoming Meetings

The second strategic planning session is scheduled for: Tuesday, November 13 from 7:00 – 8:30 pm at Mountain View Middle School. During the November 13 meeting, using a similar brainstorming process, we will identify our visions for the Mendham Borough School District five years from now. Then we will focus on identifying district strengths, opportunities, and challenges. The final meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 4 at 7:00 pm to identify main ideas and sub-main ideas that will result in goal statements.

Mendham Borough Strategic Planning Meeting #1 Outcomes

Please join us. Everyone is welcome, even if you were not able to attend the first meeting. We look forward to seeing you! Please rsvp to Mrs. Liz Juliano at juliano@mendhamboroschools.org