

Voorhees Township Public Schools District Strategic Plan

Overview

The purpose of a strategic plan is to develop a roadmap to the future for an organization, in this case the Voorhees School District. The inspiration and underlying philosophy for the development of the strategic plan for the Voorhees School District is best represented by a quote from John F. Kennedy when he stated, “effort and courage are not enough without direction and purpose.”

In addition to establishing a desired direction, an effective strategic plan also reinforces the culture and fundamental tenets of the district, unifies efforts within the district, maximizes organizational efficiency, and establishes locally developed organizational assessment. The strategic plan takes into consideration the district’s mission statement, core beliefs, strengths and opportunities, and the needs of the community.

Strategic Planning

The strategic plan was developed through a collaborative effort of all stakeholders. The collaboration included input from the Board of Education, District Administration, District Staff Members, Students, Parents and Members of the Community. The goal of this process was the development of a practical and usable plan that can be effectively communicated to all stakeholders. The plan outlines beliefs, priorities, initiatives and assessments in a number of key areas that will guide the district over the next five years.

Mission Statement of the Voorhees School District

The Voorhees Public School community values the varied and unique contributions, needs and experiences of its members. While promoting an environment of respect among all people, it provides instructional delivery systems that nurture the potential of all students, giving them the ability to become successful adults. The Board of Education strongly upholds the expectation that all students will achieve the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards (NJCCCS) at all grade levels.

Core Beliefs of the Voorhees School District

The goal of an effective learning program as defined by the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards is to provide every student with the basic skills to become a productive and functional member of society and compete in a global economy. However, educators must also recognize that the higher levels of learning must never be neglected.

An excellent education system must embrace all four elements of the educational experience. They are academics, activities, arts and athletics (the four A's). An excellent academic program must be the foundation. However, students must feel ownership of their educational environment and be able to express their special abilities through various activities and experiences.

Each student should be afforded the opportunity to broaden their understanding of the world in which they live and the people with whom they are surrounded. These goals can only be achieved, by operating within the economic parameters set by the constituency served by the school district.

We believe that:

- All students possess individual talents and needs with unique physical, social, emotional and intellectual characteristics.
- By acknowledging that all students can learn and do so in different ways, the district provides a variety of instructional approaches, resources and appropriate assessments to support learning.
- Our students need to be equipped with communication, technology and problem solving skills that will allow them to foster adaptability, flexibility and resiliency in our rapidly changing world.
- Students feel comfortable in a safe, nurturing environment that is established through mutual respect and acceptance.
- A safe and supportive learning environment is fundamental to student achievement.
- Our educational and extra curriculum programs provide a foundation that leads to productive, well-rounded contributing member of society
- Parents, schools and the community share the responsibility for advancing the school district's mission, beliefs and goals for the care and education of its children.
- Effective communication is vital to the partnership between home, school and the community.
- The district has the responsibility to be committed to sound fiscal management to meet the challenges of the future and to be a good steward of the financial resources provided by the community.

Strategic Plan of the Voorhees School District

Priorities

The strategic priorities of the 2013-2018 District Strategic Plan are:

1. Ensure achievement of high academic standards by all students
2. Develop a professional learning environment for our students to enable them to successfully compete in the global economy
3. Actively engage family and community members to become our partners in raising and maintaining high student achievement
4. Ensure business practices promote efficiency, effectiveness and high ethical standards
5. Recruit, develop and retain high-performing, diverse and motivated faculty and staff
6. Ensure the safety and security of all students
7. Reduce energy usage and preserve natural resources by reducing the carbon footprint of the Voorhees school district.
8. Provide technology resources and programs that reflect 21st Century skills and student outcomes.

Initiatives

The specific initiatives of the 2013-2018 District Strategic Plan are:

1. Review curriculum, instructional materials and strategies according to the district review cycle. Over the next five years, priorities will be to reduce the achievement gap in literacy and math with interventions for partially proficient students. The goal will be to increase the number of students scoring in the advanced proficient range will continue.
2. Utilize the Danielson Framework for Teaching evaluation tool to allow teachers and administrators to engage in professional dialogue about teaching and learning. Provide continued professional development on the framework to improve the evaluation process for teachers and administrators.
3. Annually review and update comprehensive professional development for novice and veteran staff that is reflective, collaborative, and research based. Annual intervention will focus on areas of need as determined by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and district assessments as well as curricular needs and staff interests. The following areas are priorities:
 - a. content knowledge in all NJCCCS and Common Core Standards

- b. technology integrations
 - c. cross-curricular integration
 - d. formative assessment
 - e. achievement gap
 - f. differentiated instruction
 - g. response to intervention
 - h. data analysis
4. Annually review and update purchasing procedures, standard business operating procedures and the internal control structure.
 5. Annually review and evaluate the "The Safety, Security and Rehabilitation Program" which is an on-going program to ensure the safety and security of all students and staff through facility upgrades and improvements, review and revise Board policies and procedures and the evaluation and implementation of innovations in security and facility services and equipment.
 6. Annually review and evaluate the district's "Go Green Initiative" which is an on-going program to reduce energy cost, preserve natural resources and reduce the carbon footprint of the Voorhees School District in its entirety.
 7. Annually utilize creative management methods to reduce subsidies from the general fund to the food service program.
 8. Continue to foster an effective and open communication process that values all stakeholders and creates a positive relationship with the community. Ongoing evaluation of current communication practices for effectiveness and integration of new technological advances that will enhance the connection between home and school.
 9. Maximize the integration of technology resources for students, staff and community stakeholders.
 10. Integrate 21st Century themes and skills required in all academic areas so that student learning outcomes evolve to be more global, authentic and have real world significance.

Assessment

The assessment of the 2013-2018 District Strategic Plan will be implemented as follows:

1. Multiple measures will be used to evaluate curriculum, instruction, and achievement such as: Quality Annual Assurance Report (QAAR), Quality Single Accountability Continuum (QSAC), New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJASK) results, district/classroom assessments (formative and summative), teacher, student, staff surveys and/or interviews.
2. The Professional Development Plan will document identifications of needs, planning, implementation and evaluation of training practices. Additional documentation will include: personnel records such as retention lists, course completion, achievement data such as district and state assessment, work samples, and observations/interviews/surveys.
3. The Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) and the Auditor's Management Report on Administrative Findings-Financial, Compliance and Performance will demonstrate compliance with all laws, regulations, generally accepted accounting principles and the State of New Jersey Code of Ethics.
4. The financial reports in the CAFR will demonstrate the amount of funds utilized from the general fund to subsidies the Food Service Program and savings from the "Go Green Initiative". Third party consultants will be secured to evaluate energy saving initiatives and recommend future initiatives.
5. The Long Range Facility Plan and the District's Comprehensive Maintenance Plan will be revised and submitted to the Board for approval as required by the State of New Jersey Department of Education.
6. The Educational Technology Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis so that it can be changed and modified as technologies and practices evolve.
7. A parent/community survey will be conducted to identify attitudes and opinions in the following areas: Quality of Curriculum and Instruction; Communication between school and parent; future programs and public comment. Review current communication practices: school and district websites, e-news, parent notification system, parent portal, local news papers, and local access television.

Summation

The 2013-2018 District Strategic Plan lays out the path that the Voorhees School District will take to accomplish its mission, advance its vision, integrate its core values and continue to evolve as a learning organization. A learning organization as described by Peter Senge, a scholar in creating effective educational organizations, “where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free and where people are continually learning to see the whole together.”