

Strategic Planning Committee – 12-12-17

Welcome: Jay Litwiki, Principal, Jr. High -

Opening: Don Groves – District Enrollment Ethnic breakdown of all students. 47% of our students are Hispanic. 47% are Anglo, 6% are other groups. This is why it is so important for us to get your views tonight. Because we can improve our school district as we go forward with information in these forums. Also, 47% of the population is Hispanic and should have input as the School District selects a brand new Superintendent to lead us all forward in the future. This is why it is important that we make a special effort to gain your input and advice. These forums are all about elevating student success, we want our students to be successful in the future. That is what the Strategic Plan is all about. As a part of the welcome this evening, I would like to ask the Board President, Mr. Randy Hawley, to bring special greetings.

Randy Hawley – Welcome, I would like to point out that we have two other Board Members here tonight, Karen McClellan and Wiseman. We believe that it is important to get opinions from all parts of the community. One of the things I want is to open communication with the Hispanic community so that as we set goals for the district, you will have a large part of those goals. We would like to know what are the best types of communication to reach the community and how do you feel comfortable communicating with the Board? Phone calls, email, we are open to hearing from you in any way. We want to know what you like about the District, your concerns and what you would like to see change, and hear any ideas you may have to make the District better. Thank you all, for taking the time to come here this evening.

Don Groves – Before we continue and we formally open this meeting, we have pizza for everyone. Please take a moment to serve yourself.

Since this is a formal meeting, I would like to formally call this meeting to order. No need for formal roll-call. I would like to have a formal motion to approve the minutes of the last meeting. It has been formally approved and seconded that we approve the minutes, Aye, or nay – the minutes are approved.

This evening we are going through a process called Strategic Planning. The idea of this process is to think through, as a group, the best way we can prepare our students to live and thrive in the future that is not only changing rapidly but is unknown to us at this point in time. We are going to have an activity where we ask you what you think are the strengths, weakness, opportunities, threats that face our school district – Strengths could be, staff, families, etc. Weakness could be – teacher salaries are not as good as other states. Opportunities – if we could pay our teachers well, we could keep the good teachers we have and attract outstanding teachers to join our district. Threat – we are losing students to other schools, charter. If you have questions, please ask Maria, Alejandra, Heather and Mrs. Workman. You see the notes and pens on the table and we would like for you to write down what you

think are our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that face our school. Please take as much time as you need, give it a lot of thought, and when you are ready, put the note on the appropriate category. After, we will have a general discussion about the notes. It is for all schools in this district, which includes this school, but we want to know about your thoughts for all schools. Each person can include their idea, even if it is already on the board.

Time for making notes – 15 min.

Please take your seats. Tonight we are going to operate differently because we are operating in 2 different languages. So instead of having a person here typing responses in English, we will be having the posters translated for us, they will write their individual notes, hand them to Maria and she will type them up and send them to Sallie. They will be an official part of our minutes. Let's start with – last time we started with the Opportunities and Threats – let's start with Threats.

Threats – ICE aggression, DACA, population is decreasing, expensive living in Sedona. Cuts in funding, losing the good teachers, lack of affordable housing. Losing students because other schools have better academic achievement. Cost of living. Losing more students. Keeping both schools open just to be separate.

Opportunities – More cultural activities for students and families, more individual help in the area of studies they need help in. STEM offers more opportunities, bilingual school. Cooperative parents, parents want more information in Spanish. More after school activities.

Weakness – Need more communication than just Maria, another interpreter. Math tutoring, inequity in funding for Hispanics, lack of a general financial education – how to handle money properly. Teachers speak English, not Spanish. Outdated curricular expectations. Higher salaries to attract good teachers. After school study groups. Need teachers who can speak/translate Spanish. Healthier lunches, low salaries, poor communications between parents/teachers. More support for students. More after school sport activities. Good salaries.

Strengths – Good teachers, Reading program, Maria, parent support, good facilities for students, services for ELL, good staff, caring Admin focused on student growth and teacher capacity, keep good teachers, safe campus, translator,

Now that you have heard this input, we would like to engage in a general discussion.

1. I'm a HS student at RRHS, I've noticed that we need English teachers, but our Hispanic students are struggling and are not able to graduate. We need to support them.
2. In regards to what she said sometimes kids are sick, it's not just the teacher. They are not allowed at the Jr. High to walk to the office, they must be escorted, and

we need more people to be able to do that. Teachers need to be teaching, support staff need to be doing that.

3. I second that – they need more support staff.

4. AW – In Colombia the private school, students had to pay, to get the same education your students are receiving. She is in culture shock. But some kids don't care about education. It breaks my heart. They are so smart, but they are not putting effort. Not everyone, but the parents need to have consequences for the students. Lots of opportunities here, and bi-lingual is a good thing.

5. Many are for the bilingual education.

6. That has always been one of our suggestions, state laws state you cannot provide instruction in Spanish for students, but teaching the English speakers Spanish would strengthen the community. Good for bonding because our children who speak Spanish, they would not be embarrassed to speak – it would benefit everyone.

7.. AW – Her daughter is totally bilingual, but is forgetting already. But we need to read and write in Spanish.

8. NCLB feels marginalized.

9. DG – it could distinguish our district from all the others if we teach bilingual.

10. The only problem I see with that is that we have so much to do in class. Then we take away time from Math and Reading.

11. JL – When I was administrator at the High School. I did research, most European schools teach a foreign language from 1st grade. The thought is that you teach Spanish speakers how to read and write, and English speakers how to speak Spanish, then they learn and become the same class.

12. AW – I just did a persuasive essay with my students, but it said it increases their vocabulary, it improves critical thinking, aware of their surroundings, and are more logical and rational.

13. It should not necessarily be formal – maybe a Spanish reading buddy. They can teach each other.

14. It may be a difficult transition, but would be very worth it. Creating a community.

15. We need to improve our community. 47% are Hispanic but look at how few are here.

16. That's because of communication. People know about the meetings, but we need to support each other. The school doesn't even ask for anything of us.
 17. What is our next steps, how can we work to fix this? Communication, Lot of different ways, phone, email, flyer.
 18. Improve participation, have the kids lose points, mandatory meetings.
 19. The students could have a form requiring a signature, but they don't always give it. Require a signature, it may help.
 20. We've tried to get information out in a variety of ways. How did you hear about this? Phone call - 9, email - 4, text message - 5 (might be best) flyer - 5, social media - 5.
 21. Incentives for attending - raffle?
 22. Flyer to follow Facebook, most current information
 23. Some people feel intimidated - what can I bring to the table? Give us jobs to do at school. What was this meeting about, not clear.
 24. Even from an English standpoint, we need more information.
 25. There is time for everything, parents should allow themselves time to attend. Check your student's backpack.
 26. The food is important - let's have a pot luck.
 27. An integration at the beginning of the year, where the students meet with teachers and have a pot luck.
 28. Parent involvement - come up with things for parents to do who may not want to work in a classroom. Include them in activities.
 29. Parents drop students off and don't think about the school.
 30. Need to get to know the teachers better, not just at teacher conferences.
 31. We want you here.
- DG - This is all so very practical. How can you come to school if you don't speak English, meet the teacher, help out, if you are not comfortable.

Social events are important. Events to support parents for Math, English, Reading, etc.

32. CC – Last year my son spoke about a student and I asked him her name, and he did not know. Classroom community building,

DG - This has been so productive, I have been watching, teachers, administrators, parents and I've been watching their faces and they are sincerely affected by what you are saying. Let's not let this stop tonight. The next step is for the Strategic Development Team to take all the information that was said today and the other 3 Forums and study what the themes and ideas are. Another group will be looking at General Data, Demographic, Financial, Political, Environmental, Social, Legal. Another group will be studying the future of education. There are groups in US and Europe that are actively studying what kind of jobs our sons and daughters will need to be prepared for. and Forecasting how education needs to be changed to prepare them. These groups, Forums, will report their findings to our team – we will then develop goals and objectives for a strategic plan and meet with the governing board in a work session. Everyone will roll up their sleeves, look at the information presented and develop the first stage of the plan. The goals and objectives will inform the governing board as to the skills and experiences required of the new Superintendent. They will implement these goals. They will, along with the governing board lead the district. When the new Superintendent arrives, he/she will work with the different stakeholder groups in our district to develop action plans. This is a very energetic plan that can move the district along, engage our students in the classroom. And, judging from tonight, our parents, all parents, including the 47% in this plan. This goes to say that your comments tonight are going somewhere. They are not going to be forgotten. This group takes seriously what you said, and may not every idea because that may be impossible, but to take the general ideas and put them in action.

KC – I remember in our initial meeting, we wanted to extend our reach. Would it be time to ask if any parents want to join our group.

DG - That's a timely idea. We want to recruit more people from the Hispanic community to be on this team. If anyone would have an interest and would like to participate on this team, we welcome you with open arms, and with all of our hearts. I think the way to do this is to communicate through Maria and let her know you would like to be on the team, including students, and she will inform you as to when our meetings will be.

When do we meet?

DG – The next meeting is Dec. 19 at Jr. High Library. at 4:00
The next meeting will be Jan 16 at WSS Library. at 4
The next January 31 at BP Library 4.

After that we hope to have the work session with the Governing Board. That date has not been set yet.

How long do the meetings last. . . 2 hours.

There is one staff member, community member and administrator from each school.

We did want to have an additional Hispanic community member attend.

Marianna from Big Park has volunteered.