Montgomery Township School District

Creating a Five-Year Strategic Plan
For Montgomery Township

Mission Statement

To empower every student to succeed in a diverse, dynamic, global society by providing quality educational experiences in a caring environment.

Session #2
What is our "Vision"? What expectations and initiatives do we believe in? What challenges do we anticipate?

On Wednesday, January 31, 2024, Montgomery Township School District Administration, staff, Board of Education members, parents, and community members, seventy-two (72) in total, came together to continue strategic planning. The second evening topic focused on creating a shared vision for the Montgomery School District. The meeting began with an overview of the first meeting. We then moved forward with a visioning exercise to develop a podcast that highlighted the extraordinary successes that had occurred as a result of the District's strategic plan created though this process that led Montgomery to being recognized as a lighthouse district for other districts across the state to emulate. We discussed the idea of what would have to happen in the school system to enable the district to garner such accolades Participants then gathered in randomly assigned groups to develop a podcast title and the initiatives, changes and/or programs that would need to be in place for this to happen.

Small groups of participants brainstormed and shared ideas together. After group discussion, each group identified their consensus points and presented those to the full group of meeting participants. We discussed the common themes from all of the work presented and identified goals areas for our next meeting.

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 web to share the group work during the course of the strategic planning process.

Group Consensus

Group Podcast Title and Initiatives

Group-1 Podcast Title: Monty Bridges to the Future

Group-1 Initiatives
1. Technology pathway program to prepare students for future careers
2. Provide opportunities for students to have more healthy collaborative communication across content areas
3. Alumni/community partnerships
4. Support sustainable growth that reduces teacher burnout
5. Develop resilient students with health work/life balance and healthy peer/family relationships
6. Pathways for careers in trade
7. Build skill sets in students needed to be competitive in a global market
8. An environment that fosters Inclusivity and cultural competency

Group- 2 Podcast Title: The Full Monty Vision

Group 2 Initiatives

1. Mental Health Initiatives
a. Decrease stress
b. Increase confidence
c. Appreciate diversity
2. Environmental Sustainability
a. Increase Recycling opportunities & responsibility
b. Composting
3. Increase Pathways to Achieve Higher Levels Classes
a. Appropriately challenge
4. Critical Literacy
a. Interdisciplinary critical thinking (Arts/STEM/Etc.)
b. Understanding the essence of the purpose of the source
5. Communication Skills
a. Writing and speaking skills
b. Public speaking and presentation skills
6. Leadership Skills
a. Opportunities to take on leadership roles
7. Teacher Professional Development
a. Promote sustainability in staff
b. Promote creative teaching
c. Decrease Burnout
8. Embodying Inclusion
a. Build upon the Unified Program to integrate neurodiverse and neurotypical students

b. Diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging
9. Diversity in Extracurricular Activities
a. Athletics, team sports at earlier grade levels
b. Enhance current diversity of activities
10. Artificial Intelligence
a. Using it appropriately to enhance learning and teaching

Group-3 Podcast Title: Transforming Education Together

Group-3 Initiatives
1. Montgomery schools are the center of the community
2. Many pathways for parent and community involvement in the schools
3. Prioritize a dual focus on SEL and Academic achievement
4. Learning environment is student centered with differentiated instruction that allows for all students to be successful
5. Programs are in place at all levels to expose and prepare students to have successful careers
6. State of the art facilities that meet students' needs during and after the school day
7. A place where teachers are inspired to teach, and students are excited to learn

Group-4 Podcast Title: Exploring Greatness Together

Group-4 Initiatives
1. Connecting Schools
2. Communications-building relations to support transparency
3. Inclusivity
4. Broader access to course (AP at HS)
5. Continually prepare students for lifelong learning
6. More experiential learning beginning in middle school
7. Welcoming community while prioritizing safety
8. Destigmatizing/normalizing mental health issues
9. Celebrating the beauty of our diverse community
10. State of the art facilities
11. More sidewalks

Group 5- Podcast Title: Growing Great Humans through the Power of Community

Group-5 Initiatives

1. Individual opportunities where students are empowered by their strengths
2. Communication and alignment between stakeholders
3. Developing a nurturing community for life
4. Empowered Educators
5. Current Flexible and relevant curriculum
6. Happy and resilient life-long learners

Group- 6 Podcast Title: Creating Tomorrow's Leaders Through Connection and Communication

Group 6 Initiatives
1. A district rooted in trust, transparency, and respect
2. Community connections
3. Parents partnerships
4. Focus on wellness- developing balanced and well-rounded citizens
5. Flexible program options to meet the needs of all students
6. Developing effective and responsible digital citizens

Group-7 Podcast Title: Building Lifetime Learners

Group-7 Initiatives
1. Increase opportunities for all students(more pilot programs)
2. Meaningful access for all students- personalized learning-keeping parents and students informed
3. Evidence based practices (curriculum staffing, programs)
4. Connecting with the community to bridge relationships and mentorship
5. Interdisciplinary experimentations and teacher empowerment-bring the world to the school.
6. Authentic learning experiences
7. Mental health access while building (happy) students' capacity (outside counselors)
8. Culturally responsive and relevant curriculum
9. Diversifying staff

Group-8 Podcast Title: Diversity, Creativity, Technology, and Academics - A Model for an Educational Community

Group-8 Initiatives
1. Increase diversity of CTE offerings
2. Balance between technology and interpersonal opportunities
3. Build a staff that represents the student body
4. Foster leadership and communication skills
5. Address all types of learners
6. Expose students to multiple career paths
7. Focus on SEL skills and mental health
8. Build capacity for creativity and expression
9. Empower ALL students to feel empowered
10. View diversity as a strength

Group-9 Podcast Title: Serving the Whole Child Towards Personal and Social Excellence

Group-9 Initiatives
1. We engaged in a strategic planning process to set goals
2. We value trade schools and STEM
3. Good pressure vs. unhealthy pressure-know the difference
4. Our students are known and valued by counselors and teacher
5. We prioritized professional development and Professional Learning Communities for Staff
6. We moved tech-utilized AI to individualize the student experience
7. We value consistency of instruction across grade levels
8. We emphasized the importance of real- life skills K-12
9. We saw our district as part of a global community and celebrate our diversity

The goal areas identified from our work over the last two meetings for our next meeting are:

1.The Student Experience: Student achievement, teaching and learning
2. Communication, Community Engagement, and Outreach
3. Culture and Climate (SEL- cultural sensitivity, health and wellness, resilience)

The third and final strategic planning session is scheduled for:

Thursday, February 22, 2024, at 5:30 pm

The challenge for the meeting will be to:

- Develop objectives under the three goal areas based on the common threads from all previous group work.
- Identify strategies needed to reach those objectives.

Each participant will be asked to select a "goal area" of their interest and choice. Participants may want to prepare ideas ahead of time by reviewing all of the outcomes from meetings 1 and 2, prior to the meeting.

We look forward to seeing you!