



Blairstown Elementary School District Is Creating a New Three-Year Strategic Plan

MISSION STATEMENT

In partnership with home and community, Blairstown Elementary School is dedicated to the mission of providing an engaging and comprehensive education.

A passion for learning is ignited through an enriched learning environment. While celebrating individuality, our students develop confidence, competence, and character.

All students have the opportunity to achieve their highest potential on a quest of lifelong learning to succeed in a global, 21st century.

The 3D Strategic Planning Process: Dream, Determination, and Destiny by Design

Session 1: What Are the Strengths, Achievements, and Challenges of the Blairstown Elementary School District?

On **January 18, 2018**, community members, school district staff, and Board of Education members came together to initiate strategic planning. The first evening's topic was focused on the current strengths, achievements of, and challenges facing, the Blairstown Elementary School District.

We began the process with an overview of the State of the School as presented by Superintendent Mark Saalfield. We then gathered in three randomly assigned groups to identify the strengths and points of pride in our district, and to brainstorm what challenges for the school and school district face in the immediate future.



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We worked in small groups, first recording our individual thinking and then sharing our thinking with other members of our small groups. After group discussion, each group identified their “top 10” (or thereabouts) list of strengths and challenges for the district.

The information that follows is the work of the small groups. As discussed with the meeting participants, we will record and post all meeting outcomes for the wider community.

Blue & Green Group

Strengths/Accomplishments

- STEM and GATE programs
- Having a Curriculum Director
dissemination of info/ liaison between staff
intervention & problem solver
- Feelings about staff and administration:
kids are happy; feel staff is kind and happy to be at BES
- Sustainable School / Garden Green Team
- There have been many improvements over the last 5 years—impressive list!
- Professional Development – book club, etc.
staff voluntary
additional
- Aides

Challenges/Opportunities

- After school clubs (i.e., STEM club)
- Include community groups in programs
support / running
- Increase access to technology – especially in the upper grades (Chromebooks
– transition to middle school
- Update/streamline record-keeping – online!
- Communication – increased use of Facebook – email notes – TEXT
- Streamline newsletter
- Resources for student support growing population



Orange & Yellow Group

Strengths/Accomplishments

- Community / parental support
- Family atmosphere
- Supportive administrators & school board
- School safety
- Quality staff
- Performing Arts
- Building upkeep
- Student achievement / accomplishments
- Character development
- Strong attendance rates

Challenges/Opportunities

- Heating the building
- Financial constraints
- Reaching every child according to his/her need
- Parental involvement in academics/homework
- Student use of leisure technology
- Balancing academics and activities
- Conferences
- Remote location
- Scope – Are we reaching all families?

Red & Black Group

Strengths/Challenges

- Safety and security
- Climate and culture
- School / Community
- Clubs
- Academics and schedule
- Professional development
- STEM enrichment
- K-6 school



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Challenges/Opportunities

- State funding
- Declining Enrollment
- Character education
- Technology
- Language arts/math – parental support

After sharing our small group results with all the evening's participants, all were thanked for their wide-ranging contributions and collaborative work.

Our next meeting is set for **Tuesday evening, February 20, at 7pm in the Media Center.** (Inclement weather date is February 22.) We will engage in a **Visioning Activity** to help refine our collective vision for the Blairstown Elementary School District, which promises to be a truly *fun* exercise! We strongly encourage all to **bring at least one additional friend** to our next meeting.

The Blairstown Elementary School District Board of Education greatly appreciates your participation in helping to help create a roadmap for our wonderful district for the next three years. We look forward to seeing you on February 20!

We look forward to seeing you for our next Strategic Planning meeting, February 20, at 7pm in the Media Center. Please bring a friend!