



Hardyston Township School District Is Creating a New Five-Year Strategic Plan

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

Session 2: What Are Our Vision for the Hardyston Township School District?

On the evening of **November 10, 2021**, members of the Board of Education, parents, community members, school district administrators, and educational professionals came together to continue strategic planning for the District. The evening's topic was our unfettered aspirations for the Hardyston Township School District and its students.

After warm welcoming remarks from Board President Ron Hoffman, Kathleen Helewa of NJSBA recapped for the group the purpose and methodology of creating a new Strategic Plan for the District. We then were asked to imagine: what if, in five years' time, at the maturation of the strategic plan we are creating, Hardyston Township was a nationally-recognized school district for providing an outstanding education for its students? What if the national media was writing about Hardyston so public school districts nationwide could emulate what happens *here*?

We discussed the literacies of 21st-century learning (financial literacy, social-emotional wellness, civics, technology, et al.), and the "4Cs" – Critical thinking (problem solving), Communication (understanding and communicating ideas), Collaboration (working effectively with others), and Creating (producing high-quality work). We also re-iterated the importance of the District's Mission Statement, which underscores all of our work.

We then gathered in four small groups to "write" a news article that would detail our hypothetical success. The groups were asked to come up with a title for the article and determine key points for the article. In this exercise, we were asked to disregard any real-life restrictions that could be barriers to achieving our visions for Hardyston Township School District. Groups used a consent process, and were randomly assigned and adjusted for a balance of stakeholder viewpoints.

The information that follows is the work of the small groups. As discussed with the meeting participants, all meeting outcomes are listed in this memo and will be posted on the District website for the wider community.



Group 1

Title: "Hardyston eliminates boundaries and opens schools to community educators."

Key Visions:

- Advancement based on success, ability and development
- Fosters pride and responsibility
- Standards based grading
- Limited technology
- Involves community members
- Pursue special interests

Group 2

Title: "Shaping a sense of learning."

Key Visions:

Sense Of

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- Self
 - Community
 - Belonging
 - Ownership for learning
 - Career paths

Group 3 work is on the next page



Group 3

Title: “Hardyston Students: Real world education, the future is now.”

Key Visions:

- Maker spaces
- More frequent and diverse elective options
 - Languages
 - The Arts
 - Civics /model un/model government
 - STEM
 - Life skills (cooking, financial literacy, business)
 - Shops
- Smaller class sizes
- Careers/community businesses and involvement
- Re-evaluate middle school schedule
- Quality not quantity in Language, Arts and Math (i.e.: Math workshop)
- Start electives in early elementary

Group 4

Title: “Hardyston Hornets build a hive of learners.”

Key Visions:

- Authentic application of learning success in early intervention programs
- Identifying strengths and building on them through modification of individual
- Academic mentors – students and community
- Dual enrollment in high school

Recap continues on the next page



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After the small groups shared their work with the large group of all participants, discussion ensued about shared visions and the common themes that were emerging in conjunction with the work from meeting #1. We agreed that the following themes would be appropriate goal areas for the Hardyston Township Public School District's new five-year strategic plan:

- Individual students and accountability
- Community involvement and outreach
- Parental investment
- Access and equity

Superintendent Michael Ryder gave closing remarks, and all present were thanked for the excellent work and frank conversations, which will serve to push Hardyston Township Public School District and its students into a successful future.

Our next step is to use the work from our previous two meetings to write draft goal statements and supporting objectives for Hardyston's new strategic plan. Participants will self-select the group and goal area in which they would like to work. Our third and final meeting will take place on **Wednesday, December 15, in the middle school cafeteria**. Pre-registration will not be necessary. **Check in will begin at 6:45pm, and the program will begin at 7pm.**

The Hardyston Township School District Board of Education and Administration greatly appreciate your participation and good work in this crucial endeavor. We look forward to seeing you at our final meeting.

Please plan on joining us for our final meeting on December 15, beginning at 7pm in the middle school cafeteria. Attend with a friend!

