

**STRATEGIC PLANNING MEETING  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 31, 2012  
CHERYL MILLER-PORTER STUDENT CENTER  
TEANECK HIGH SCHOOL  
7:30 PM**

***Discussion Question:***

***What is working best at the Teaneck Public Schools...What do we want to celebrate?***

**TABLE ONE**

**Participants**

1. Students, teachers, great support staff and central office administrators, school board, programs, parents, Teaneck community, diversity, Forum, Music program, wide range of courses and programs, the new spirit of the high school, the great potential to close all gaps.
2. Gives a multi-cultural experience, quality education, real world experience, school system cares about students, parental involvement, talented faculty.
3. Diversity.
4. Caring administration, great teachers, student diversity, Forum, Puffin.
5. Diversity of the students, teachers, staff and administrators, multicultural curriculum, taking the achievement gap seriously and trying to address it, some excellent teachers, very hard working board of education, well equipped schools, especially the high school.
6. Quality of the teachers and education in the school, diversity, extra-curricular activities, open communication among the teachers and parents, genuine interest in our kids education, AP classes available.

**Consensus**

1. Talented and caring faculty
2. Cross cultural exposure
3. Diversity that mirrors real world experiences
4. Embracing and celebrating differences
5. Successful academic programs with 90% of students college bound
6. Wide range of AP, Honors and extracurricular activities
7. Puffin and Forum

## **TABLE TWO**

### **Participants**

1. Community feeling, kids and parents helping each other, ethnic diversity, mutual respect for differences, teaching to different levels of ability, different skills and talents.
2. Too new to Teaneck to know, but it seems like a lovely building and facilities. I would have enjoyed being a student here.
3. Number of students going to college. Honors and AP courses, sensitivity to diversity of graduates.
4. High school graduation rate, diverse student population, academic offerings at the high school.
5. Teaneck has produced a great number of notable individuals across numerous cultures, professions and endeavors. Teaneck offers a wonderful array of programs and classes. Teaneck produces well rounded individuals. Most Teaneck graduates are proud of having gone through the Teaneck school system. Outreach.
6. Inclusive student/teacher relationships, student to student respect, faculty dedication, student ownership.

### **Consensus**

1. Ethnic diversity and multicultural respect carried through after graduation.
2. Student pride and mutual respect.
3. Breadth of academic and extracurricular offerings.
4. Graduation rate, matriculation to colleges and diversity of colleges.
5. Facilities and environment of schools.
6. Excellence and commitment of teachers.

### **TABLE THREE**

#### **Participants**

1. Teaneck unity, great teachers, great administrators, school and town pride, diversity.
2. Bucolic community, diversity, culture, mom and pop cooperation, opportunity, pride, ownership, celebrate differences, approachable, cleanliness, achievement.
3. Diversity of Teaneck schools, commitment to improvement of school system through planning processes, initiatives and community outreach. Excellent highly educated staff and graduation rates. Great community to live, learn and grow. Highly desirable to raise children.
4. Diverse student body, differentiated classes, well developed teachers.
5. Strong advocates, diverse population, aware of the strengths and challenges of diversity.
6. Personable manager and council, community involvement with township activities, community police involvement.
7. Beautiful campuses, successful alumni, vast diversity, graduation rate, college acceptance rate, concern for welfare of students.

#### **Consensus**

1. Diversity
2. Community (approachability)
3. Wealth of resources
4. Achievement (graduation rates, college rates)
5. Pride (overall town and schools)
6. Schools (innovative and instructional practices)

## **TABLE FOUR**

### **Participants**

1. Diversity of students and staff, a strong sense of community amongst student body, academic courses still being offered at the high school, preschool program, special education and support, Board of Education who has the interest of the students, willingness to reflect on strengths and shortcomings to engage in self-reflection stressed for all members of the academic community, thoughtful leadership at the top, volunteerism, physical plant.
2. Diverse, accomplished, involved student body at least at the top. Rich and varied curriculum, accomplished teaching and administrative staff, extensive extracurricular activities, alumni with great accomplishments and resumes, excellent special education programs, feeling that all are welcome, celebration of the arts, physical plant.
3. Rich and varied curriculum and extracurricular activities, high quality teachers, administrators and BOE, accomplished student body and alumni, volunteerism, good communication with the school district/community.
4. Breadth of classes offered, volunteerism, preparedness of those students attending higher education, quality of the buildings, diversity of staff and educators, open mindedness of the administration, extracurriculars offered.
5. Course offerings at the high school, our students are sophisticated and care about the world, teachers are the best anywhere, diversity – we are a microcosm of the world, people care, BOE provides great leadership, BOE leading for financial stability and responsible use of resources, creative and caring administrators.

### **Consensus**

1. Rich and varied curriculum and extracurriculars.
2. High quality teachers, administrators and BOE.
3. Accomplished student body and alumni.
4. Volunteerism.
5. Communication between the school district and community.

## **TABLE FIVE**

### **Participants**

1. Our children, our teachers, celebration of diversity (music, art, etc.) after school program through TCED/Puffin and youth programs.
2. Cultural diversity, support programs available in math and reading, honors program and AP classes, TEAMS program, teacher commitment, afterschool groups and clubs, sports programs available especially at HS level.
3. Kids and their desire to excel, teachers who work tirelessly to help their students, an environment that is diverse and accepting of diversity, parents who desire the best for their kids, rich spectrum of opportunities for academically, athletically, student clubs at high school, board of ed who work many hours for our students for free.
4. Large amount of middle school children on honor roll from the last two years, large ethnic diversity, children tend to strive for greatness, elementary schools look for parent involvement for success.
5. Great schools for the children, the children are great.
6. Diversity, youth programs, course selections at the high school, TEAMS academy, AP courses, TAG program, athletic department, sports, superintendent.

### **Consensus**

1. Diversity in schools.
2. THS academic and athletic programs (variety of clubs etc.)
3. TEAMS programs.
4. Teacher commitment.
5. Our hardworking kids.

## **TABLE SIX**

### **Participants**

1. Proud of our students, diversity is celebrated and there is an open-mindedness among students, teaching staff are knowledgeable and care about students, facilities are well cared for, curriculum is rich and lots of courses at the high school, variety of programs to help students succeed.
2. Excellent teachers, good broad curriculum, embrace and enjoy diversity, attentive special ed staff, attention to technology, well maintained facility, overall safe environment, involved BOE.
3. Diversity of culture, religion and ethnicity, enthusiastic and passionate teachers (some) non-threatening environment (safe), no report of bullying or racist incidents.
4. Diversity of culture.
5. Appreciation of Teaneck's willingness to collaborate with the community to advance the school district. In order to do this, we as parents, teachers, administrators and students give accurate account for our strengths and weaknesses. Appreciation for diversity of cultures and religions.

### **Consensus**

1. Proud of diversity of cultures and religions.
2. Proud of safe facilities, safe learning environment where bullying is not tolerated.
3. Proud of up to date special services techniques with caring, passionate and knowledgeable teachers.

## **TABLE SEVEN**

### **Participants**

1. Teachers take the time to know our children/students, opportunities for participation in performing arts with quality, celebration of multicultural community allowing for thoughtful tolerance, teachers demonstrate expertise and commitment, good facilities.
2. Emphasis on multicultural education, focus on welcoming diversity (our town continues to be more and more diverse), smart, dedicated and progressive educators at the top (McHale and Pinsak), a board who is not afraid to ask tough essential questions, an emphasis on learning styles and incorporating creative, analytical, interpersonal and mastery thinking. Families, teachers, administrators and board members who think outside of the box of No Child Left Behind limitations.
3. Diversity/tolerance, sense of community, support to families, differentiated instruction (TAG, Special Ed), resources/services (after school, counselor support, busing, arts and music, computer/technology, Spanish), project based experiential learning at the elementary schools, teachers and principals that care about the students and families, open communications.
4. Well rounded students, diverse thoughts and willingness to accept others, high school offerings, facilities, diverse student body.
5. The diversity of the student body prepares all students to go out into the world with a real understanding of various cultures other than their own. It is also a proud moment that all of those diverse students get along with each other. There is no significant gang activity in the public school district.

### **Consensus**

1. Developing human beings who are emissaries to the world.
2. Respect for diversity, diversity is an active value (active tolerance). This is crucial and undervalued partly because it is difficult to measure. Critical for success in college and career.
3. Top notch facilities that show great respect for our students. No small matter that workers, staff and students keep environment clean and well functioning. It is a manifestation of the welcoming community and inviting climate.
4. Robust, strong educational community with many wonderful course offerings, programs, support found inside and outside the classroom.

## **TABLE EIGHT**

### **Participants**

1. High quality performance by grads. Recognition of different kinds of learners. Strong character education component. Emphasis on academic excellence. Creative and dynamic teaching staff.
2. Achievement of students who graduated from the system. Variety of opportunity within the system (arts/science)
3. Student scholars, performing arts, service activities.
4. Accessibility to decision makers and educational resources, support groups, relatively safe environment, sense of community, anti-HIB enforcement.
5. Diversity, community service, special education services, student achievement beyond high school, everyone has heard of Teaneck.
6. Smart students, diversity, tolerance, excellent teachers, services for special Ed students, large variety of high school courses.
7. Raising children who judge others by content of their character, strong percentage of graduates going on to higher education, dedicated faculty, administrators and support staff, excellent extracurricular activities and athletics to enrich students' lives, strong emphasis on community service.

### **Consensus**

1. Diversity's multi-faceted impact.
2. The culture of academic excellence.
3. Community service, teaching children to engage in the world.
4. Embracing all learners.

## **TABLE NINE**

### **Participants**

1. Excellent K-12 education, academic, athletic and social opportunity, culture, diversity, suburban/urban environment, acceptance of differences, positive, safe learning environment, strong educators and administrators, great community.
2. Resources for special education, teachers able to connect with the kids, administrators go the extra step, school climate welcoming and friendly, teachers available at all times for any reason or concern, knowledgeable teachers and staff, diverse curriculum, educational and fun for kids and families, field trips.
3. The community sense of working together within the school district, the diversity of the school district, the writing curriculum in the Middle School, the Skyward communication system between teachers and parents, the desire among the district to include families in on the workings of the district, i.e. meetings with the superintendent.
4. Diversity and innovation for creativity, alumni collaboration and communication, strong academic vigor, professional freedom and academic freedom, empowerment for both students and faculty, parent involvement, village mentality when concerns arise in the community, legacy, history, strength.
5. Positive relationship with teachers, immediate feedback, AP courses, my child loves going to school and wants to be involved in everything (student council, chorus, band), molding a future leader.
6. Our mosaic array of beautiful students, our focus on student achievement, our facilities, commitment level of a cadre of students, parents, teachers, administrators (folks here), good schools.

### **Consensus**

1. Diversity.
2. Inclusive school community.
3. Strong academics.
4. Array of opportunity for all learners.
5. History and legacy.
6. Trailblazers.

## **TABLE TEN**

### **Participants**

1. Celebration of diversity, creativity, education for the sake of learning, nurturing of individual talents, high goals for academic achievement, encourage well rounded development.
2. Significant progress made by special education children at Bryant school. Decision to give individualized personalized professional development to every teacher at Bryant school for the 2011-2012 school year.
3. Bring students into the educational mainstream.
4. Community, diversity, multi talents.
5. Board, diversity in classroom, programs offered, administration of schools, quality of teachers.
6. Range of special education services available, open relationships with teachers and administrators.
7. Supportive and innovative BOE, academic variety, artistic talent, broad sports programs, highly experienced staff, modern and clean infrastructure, engaged student body, successful graduates, committed community, diverse backgrounds.
8. Quality BOE, diversity, safe, extracurriculars.

### **Consensus**

1. Diversity.
2. Academic/athletic/artistic talents.
3. Individualized student needs, progress.
4. Teachers/staff/administration and supportive BOE.
5. Clean, well maintained facilities.
6. Prepared and successful graduates.

***Dr. Ivory thanked the participants and provided a question for the next meeting to be held on February 16, 2012:***

### **Discussion Question:**

***If we are having this discussion three years from today, and you were looking back over those three years....what would have happened at Teaneck Public Schools for you to feel happy with the progress made?***