



Creating a Strategic Plan for the Bergenfield Public School

Session 2 of 3

Developing a Vision for the Bergenfield School District in the Next 5 Years

On January 27, 2021 Bergenfield School District administration, staff, parents, and community members came together to continue the strategic planning process. The second meeting's topic focused on creating a shared vision for the Bergenfield School District in the next five years.

The meeting, facilitated by Matt Lee from New Jersey School Boards Association, began with an overview of the Strategic Planning process and the steps taken at the January 13, 2021 meeting.

To begin the visioning process, participants were asked to picture themselves at an award presentation for the Bergenfield School District's recently awarded recognitions for Excellence in Advancing Student Achievement. The participants were asked to envision what an article on the award that was discovered via a Google search would describe about the district that warranted such high recognition – what programs / services / curriculum / student outcomes / best practices / facilities would you expect to see in your school that are succeeding?

The various stakeholders then gathered in virtual groups to brainstorm their visions of how the district achieved this remarkable success. Each group was asked to write a title for the article and come to a consensus on up to 5-8 key visions. Each group's outcomes were shared with all meeting participants.

The session concluded with the identification of common threads from the work of the first two meetings. At meeting #3 participants will develop goal statements that will form the basis for the strategic plan.

Group Work

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 district's website (<https://www.bergenfield.org>) to share the group work during the course of the strategic planning process. Individual responses for those who were unable to attend this session can be shared via the district's website.

Bergenfield School District Strategic Planning Meeting #2 Outcomes

Group #1 Inclusive Education in Bergenfield

Key Visions – Year 2026:

- Artificial turf on the football field and lower field at BHS/upgrade all athletic facilities/shared services with Bergenfield Recreation
- All schools ADA compliant (elevators)
- Monitoring alumni for success/challenges in their future endeavors - focus on ELL student success
- Financial literacy programs - learning about the stock market/creating a mock trading floor
- Internship programs/apprenticeships/work-study programs with alumni
- National Honor Society at elementary schools - grades 4 & 5
- Extended extracurricular activities and clubs at elementary schools
- Community service/volunteerism requirements throughout all grade levels
- Junior ROTC program/American Red Cross Club
- Character traits - 7 pillars of character - character education
- Upward Bound Program/Gear Up
- Outward Bound Program/Project Adventure
- Diversifying the staff and administration

Group #2 The Future Can Be Seen Today @ Bergenfield

Key Visions – Year 2026:

- Technology: Online courses available via partnerships with colleges/universities for credit, 1-1 laptop campus, providing each student with a laptop to meet each of their individual academic and technological needs
- CTE/Pathways: To have an established CTE pathways program utilizing SLE and community partnerships for Post-Secondary Success, Individualized learning pathways where all students can follow their passion, Increasing exposure to electives in Middle School, learning about careers from professionals K-12, career partnerships/internships
- SEL: Social-emotional supports, educating whole child- reinstitute social gatherings after covid with more after school activities, Evening/weekend enrichment classes, Balanced safety and security based on needs, not over-reactions, providing non-traditional student supports to meet students' individual needs, empowering students to make decisions, creating safe, supportive spaces for students to engage with each other
- Equity: Bilingual co-teachers and representative staff to reach the social-emotional needs of students; stem, arts, and civics in the curriculum from kindergarten - all students have the same foundation, electives starting at 5th grade as a transition to middle school
- Parental Involvement: Consistent parental and community involvement and engagement with school community, learning about careers from our own community members
- STEM: Preparing students for careers of the future with a cohesive K-12 STEM program, creating learners who are fluent in all forms of communication

Bergenfield School District Strategic Planning Meeting #2 Outcomes

Group #3 Meeting the challenge of preparedness for 2026

Key Visions – Year 2026:

- Each student has a Chromebook, access to the internet, and uses technology infused with daily learning. Continuous improvement of technology - using modern tools, beta tools for new applications, obtains financial support from Apple/Gates
- Reviewed course offerings from K-12 to increase course offerings to focus on preparedness for vocational employment. Bergenfield graduates scholars, plumbers and electricians, and the like. We service the needs of all learners in the community.
- Social-Emotional Learning K-12, to accept others given their diversity, abilities, challenges and to learn how to communicate effectively to work in collaborative teams.
 - Character Development as a thread in every classroom and every course
 - i. Not as a separate course, hour, monthly activity, but just part of the culture in the district/community
 - ii. When we discuss curriculum we include terms such as differently abled, transgendered, same sex marriages, autistic, female, African American, Jewish; the message everyone can succeed
 - Remain current with publishers to have access to materials to support the ideas in ii.
- Critical thinking, problem solving, from K-12; Today's students will have to solve new problems that we are not even aware of.
- Using Zoom to assist parents to connect to meetings when in person is difficult. Parents and students are providing feedback about the School's programs to drive continuous improvement plans. Parent groups across schools and across the entire district. Distinct parent groups cross pollinate to become a district parent advisory group.

Group #4 Bergenfield Achieving Excellence for all Children: Diversity is Their Key Ingredient

Key Visions – Year 2026:

- Utilizing Technology to Meet the Needs of All Students
- Reduced the Achievement Gap through Adaptability of Ever Changing Needs
- Embracing Diversity
- Expanding Curriculum and Co-Curricular Offerings & Career Explorations PreK-12
- Development of the Whole Person -Academically, Socially, Emotionally & Physically
- State of the Art Facilities Inside and Outside the Buildings
- Creating a Competitive Environment for All Students
- Attracting and Retaining High Quality, Diverse Staff
- Community Outreach (law enforcement, local small businesses, etc...)
- Musical Excellence Across all Grades

Group #5 Bergenfield Uses its Diversity to Redefine Education

Through:

- social emotional learning to focus on the whole student
- creation of global awareness for the future citizens of the world
- instill desire for lifelong learning for all community members
- teach creative problem solving skills to tackle difficult issues
- develop empathy and an understanding that different opinions and thoughts are good
- encourage students to seeking challenges
- develop new ways to use physical building and space in light of the COVID crisis

Our vision is to eliminate any barriers to get everyone involved from the community. To get people involved, you have to go where they are; how do we reflect their values in the curriculum?

Partnering with different groups within the community

Student Ownership Allows Bergenfield Students to Reach New Heights Through

- Focusing on a whole child approach to education
- Providing Opportunities for students to
- Technology advancements
- Students learning in the physical environment that is most conducive to their learning
- Social Emotional...focus on whole child approach to learning; mental health, wellness
- Preparedness for the workplace: more internships
- Diversity: students have understanding of diversity race, gender, etc
- Working in the new global economy
- Cultural competency within the staff

Student ownership over their learning: more voice, more choice, less limited opportunities

- Self-directed learning
- Students as agents of
- Bergenfield Schools Enables Students to take ownership over their learning by providing opportunities for flourishing for lifelong learning and global citizenship

Grooming students to be stakeholders of their learning

Students investing in their own future

How about Bergenfield offering language classes to the staff?

Group #6 The Future is Bergenfield!" - Future Ready, Innovative, well-rounded/holistic, community centered

Key Visions – Year 2026:

- Raising the well-rounded individual

Bergenfield School District Strategic Planning Meeting #2 Outcomes

- Critical thinkers and problem-solvers
- Inclusive and sensitive to all differences
- Resiliency and grit
- Strong interpersonal skills
- Communication and collaboration through technology and face to face
- Efficiency through use of community resources
- Innovative and energy efficient spaces for student learning

Group #7

Key Visions – Year 2026:

- Metacognition and how they think - strengths and weaknesses
- SEL learning - whole child
- Teaching Finance from an early age
- Teaching metacognition in real-life scenarios (e.g. finance and money making- stock market game) - PBL or real life simulation learning
- Executive functioning skills - piloting power program of executive functioning program Dr. Kanhane
- Creating environments where it is safe to learn and willing to take a risk to learn
- Finding commonality among peers - having empathy for others and appreciating diversity and embracing differences - teach empathy through simulation
- Valuing each other - embracing each other
- Independent thinkers - strive
- Broader focus beyond STEM
- School safety - security measures - protocols, technology and steps that are top notch
- ELL and IDEA support for their learners - bridging the gap and providing opportunities and access - more opportunities for everyone across the board
- Non-academic, recreational opportunities for extracurricular activities and experiences for elementary students

Next Meeting:

The third strategic planning session is scheduled for:

Wednesday, February 10 at 6:00 pm

During the February 10 meeting we will review the outcomes from Sessions 1 & 2 (Strengths & Challenges, Visions) and develop broad goal statements for each of the goal areas that emerged from Sessions 1&2, and develop related objectives for each goal area.

We look forward to seeing you!