

## Strategic Planning

ASBA facilitated and board study session on October 5, 2019. The purpose of the session was to begin the process of establishing a strategic plan. The team and facilitator reviewed the district's current mission, vision, district data, and conducted a Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat (SWOT) analysis of the district. This allowed the team to identify key themes around which they could create goals and action steps. All board members and the superintendent were present. Below is a summary of what was discussed.

The purpose of vision, mission and core beliefs was reviewed with the board and superintendent. The team and facilitator reviewed the district's mission and vision. All participants agreed there needs to be work on the mission and the board set a date to begin that work.

The board and superintendent reviewed data compiled from the AZ Report Card for Morristown ESD including AZ Merit results in math, English language arts and science. The challenges and opportunities to improve those scores were discussed as was the concept of academic growth and formative assessments as a tool to improve student outcomes. Suspension rates, expulsion and chronic absenteeism data was also examined.

The superintendent gave a brief overview of the last school year and the changes/initiatives that have been implemented.

A SWOT analysis was completed by the team and the results of the can be found in the attached document titled "Morristown SWOT Exercise." The board and superintendent recognized the many strengths the district possesses and the opportunities for improvement. One significant threat (a factor outside the district's control) to the district is the instability of the town's water source. The well in Morristown that feeds the school, the fire house and residential housing is failing and that is a constant concern for the district.

The board and superintendent were asked to envision the district's future state and they noted the following characteristics that are summarized in the following statement:

- A beautifully landscaped, safe school with a welcome, pleasant front office staff committed to excellent customer service.
- A school where students are the sole focus, programs are provided for students (STEAM programs referenced) and teachers are engaging students in meaningful lessons that will help students reach their full potential.
- The district will honor their rich past and look to the future to ensure success for students.
- The district will be an "A" district with the staff, administration and board working as team in a structured framework that promotes community involvement and a love of learning.
- The district will utilize leadership development, teacher professional development, team building, collaboration, fiscal responsibility and community engagement to reach its "ideal state."
- Data driven decisions, community input, board development and training, teacher development and advertising the district's strengths are a few items that will help the district in their quest to be the best district they can be.

Each member of the team was asked to write down their top five priorities which were grouped into three main focus areas for strategic plan development and goal setting. The three areas are identified below with the priorities of the team:

**Professional Development:**

- Ongoing educational opportunities for improvement, both professional development and collaboration with other districts
- Great customer service
- Leadership
- Team building
- More teacher development
- Strong team across all personnel
- Staff development
- More collaboration with other districts for staff development and resources
- Budget to complete goals

**Student Achievement:**

- Academic achievement and appropriate student growth
- Improved performance rating on students
- Appropriate STEAM related activities in all classrooms
- "A" school rating
- Increased community, parent and volunteer engagement

**Safety:**

- Water
- Safety
- Landscape and building in top shape
- Counseling and support services

The board will develop goals and action plans around the above three areas. The importance of SMART goals was reviewed as was the difference between board goals and district goals.

The ASBA Online Board Self-Evaluation tool was discussed and the options for results were presented to the board and superintendent. The board president asked that the board be sent a link for the online survey and a basic report will be provided to the board once all have completed the tool.

**Considerations:**

1. The development of a strategic plan should be multi-layered with input from a variety of sources, including the superintendent, board, staff, students and community members/parents.
2. A volunteer program utilizing community members would help in a variety of ways including tutoring with students who need remediation, providing an opportunity for all the positive things happening at the school to be shared and supporting classroom teachers with a variety of skill levels in the classroom.

3. Forming collaborative relationships with nearby school districts for professional development and staffing resources would be beneficial.
4. A new mission statement will be developed and may include input from district stakeholders.

If ASBA can help in any of the following ways, please let us know:

- Customer Service training
- Facilitated discussion around board self-evaluation results