



## **Creating a Strategic Plan for the Norwood Public School District**

### **Mission Statement**

Our district's mission is to engage our students  
in an exceptional educational experience  
That will prepare them for high school, college, career, and life.  
We will guide our students toward opportunities  
to demonstrate innovation, global leadership, and 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills.  
We are committed to the education of the whole child  
and preparing lifelong learners,  
balancing robust academic programs and related arts.

### **Session 3 Developing Strategic Planning Goals for the Norwood Public School District?**

On November 17, 2025, Norwood School District administrators, Board of Education members, staff, parents, and community members, twenty-one (21) in all, came together for the third strategic planning meeting. The meeting began with a welcome by Dr. Timothy Gouraige, Superintendent. Mary Ann Friedman and Melissa Del Rosso, from New Jersey School Boards Association (NJSBA) were introduced and explained the strategic planning process.

We reviewed the consensus process utilized in strategic planning. The topic for the third evening focused on developing goal statements and objectives for each of the four goal areas identified at the second meeting. Participants gathered in self-selected groups, four in all, to work on the goal area of their choice.

Each group reviewed the outcomes from meeting 1, strengths & challenges, and meeting 2, vision and initiatives, to identify strategies, group those strategies, develop objectives, and then develop an overarching goal statement for the goal areas. The four goal areas identified at the conclusion of the second meeting were: Student Growth, Facilities & Finance, Culture & Climate, and Staff Recruitment & Retention. Communication will be addressed in each of the four goal areas.

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 website to share the group work during the course of the strategic planning process.

## **Development of Goal Statements and Objectives**

**Four goal areas emerged from the common themes identified by the group at large at the end of the second meeting and are listed below:**

1. Student Growth
2. Facilities & Finance
3. Culture & Climate
4. Staff Recruitment & Retention

Communication will be addressed in each of the four goal areas.

### **Goal 1: Student Growth**

**Goal Statement: Increase student growth in academics through differentiation.**

#### **Objectives:**

1. Students will broaden their knowledge in AI to effectively utilize the technology to enhance overall through ethical practices.
2. Provide students with opportunities to develop executive functioning skills to prepare them with overall readiness across all courses.
3. Continue to effectively communicate student learning initiatives to parents/school community.
4. Explore ways to include advanced ELA/Math courses including electives, i.e., World Language, Arts, Music.

### **Goal 2: Facilities & Finance**

**Goal Statement: Investigate alternative budgeting resources and enhance facilities.**

#### **Objectives:**

1. Facilities – Referendum – enhance facilities – Special Ed
2. Develop Special Ed Program – tuition based incoming students from out of district
3. Back filed fixed – partner with Borough and Rec to repair field
4. Electives/Art Programs – Expand Music/Art programs
5. Enrichment Program – After School – 45 – 60 mins, expand to lower grades

### **Goal 3: Culture & Climate**

**Goal Statement:** Create a positive school community with a growth mindset where students, staff and families feel equally valued and supported and all students learn and grow.

#### **Objectives:**

1. Foster a sense of community that celebrates group and individual interests through engaging opportunities and initiatives.
2. Promote positive and respectful behavior through empathy and character education.
3. Provide communication that is clear, consistent, transparent, and centralized and brings in feedback from the greater community.
4. Promote team building through social gatherings and activities to place a value on work/life balance.
5. Promote student empowerment and agency.

### **Goal 4: Staff Recruitment & Retention**

**Goal Statement:** The NPS district will attract, develop, and retain highly qualified and passionate educators.

#### **Objectives:**

1. Develop pipelines to attract educators from local universities and educator prep programs.
2. Implement a robust induction and onboarding program that includes mentorship and is communicated through a guide.
3. Offer personalized professional development opportunities that include teacher selected options.
4. Investigate ways to enhance staff voice including feedback mechanisms.

**Next Steps:**

The next step in the process is the development of the action plans. The Superintendent and the Administrative team will develop the action plans for the strategic plan. The timelines will be developed for a 3-5 year plan.

The action plans will include:

- Major activities for each objective
- Who is responsible for the activity
- The resources to be deployed
- Due dates for completion
- Indicators of Success (how we will know the activity has been accomplished)

Thank you to everyone who has contributed their time, talent, and perspectives during any or all of the Strategic Planning meetings. We appreciate your participation!

**The final plan will be presented to the Board of Education at an upcoming meeting in February / March. Please watch the district website for further information. We hope you will attend and be recognized for your participation.**

Thank you again for your contributions in developing the plan that will guide the board and district in moving forward over the next 3 – 5 years.