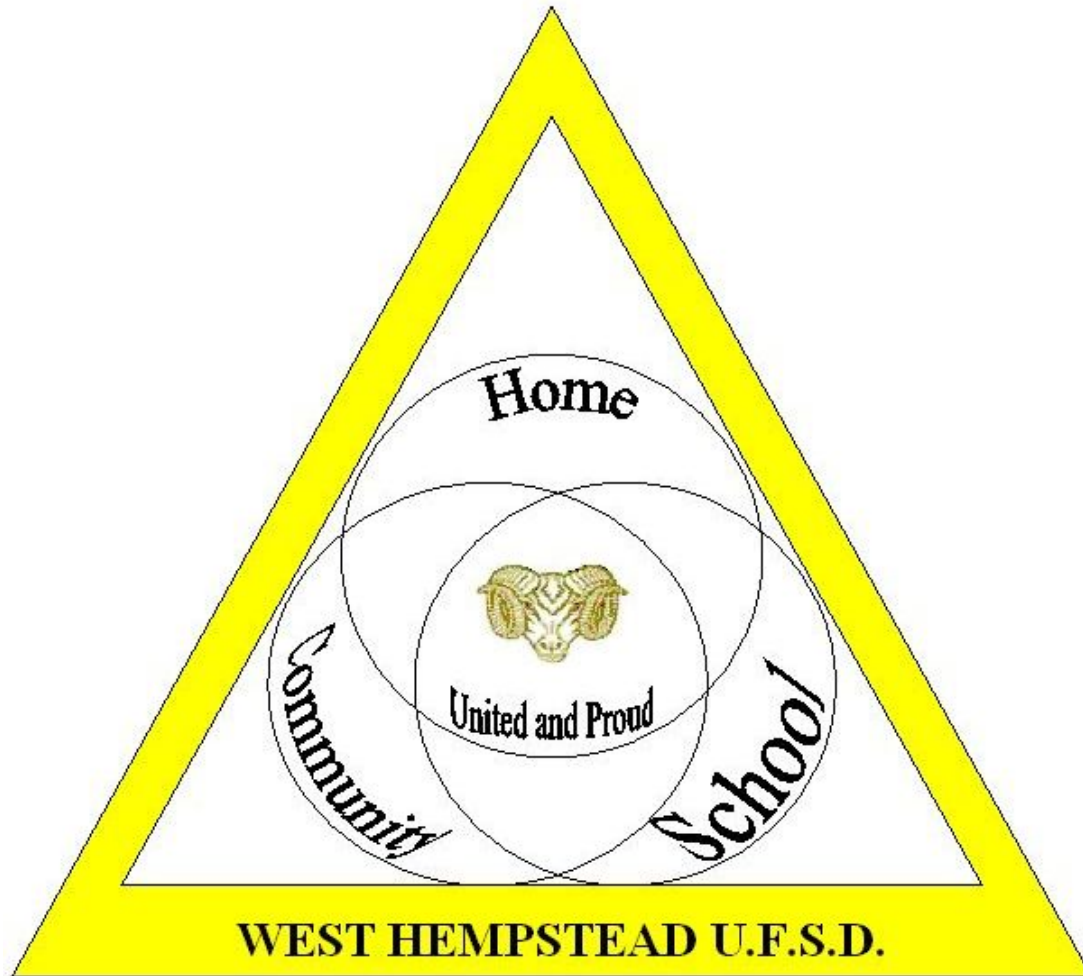


**WEST HEMPSTEAD
UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT**



THREE YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

Adopted by the Board of Education on June 17, 2008

2008 -- 2011

WEST HEMPSTEAD UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD OF EDUCATION

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ADMINISTRATION

John J. Hogan
Superintendent of Schools

Ann V. Peluso
Assistant Superintendent

Richard Cunningham
Assistant Superintendent for Business & Operations

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West Hempstead Union Free School District

Mission Statement

The West Hempstead Union Free School District recognizes the unique value of each student. It is dedicated to the success of each student based on the highest standards of excellence in education. Each student will be challenged to achieve mastery in all subject areas in an educational atmosphere that strives to build positive self-esteem, mutual respect for others, and a life-long quest for learning.

Strategic Planning Council Members 2007-2008

NAME	AFFILIATION
Abruzzo, Lynette	Assistant Director
Bernato, Richard,	Co-Facilitator
Bonasia, Joe	Teacher
Brita, Anthony	Board Member
Cali, Tony	WH Administrator
Calick, Marilyn	SEPTA
Castoro, Joe	Teacher
Caufield, Janice	WH Community
Cavaliere, Ailene	Teacher
Cirnigliaro, Joe	WH Administrator
Delphine, Bernadette	WH Administrator
DePaola, Christina	Teacher
DiMango, Augusta	Resident
DiMarco, Josephine	Resident
Eckert, Olga	WH Community
Eisen, Jeff	Teacher
Ejnes, Walter	Civic Association
Gagliano, Lorraine	Teacher
Ganley, Theresa	WH Administrator
Gould, Dina	Teacher
Hafner, Barbara	President, WHEA
Hanna, Chad	Teacher
Heckler, Wayne	Teacher
Hoffman, Aileen	SEPTA
Hume, James	Teacher
Jones, Maritza	WH Community
Keating, Mary	WH Administration
Keblish, Alexandra	Teacher
Kurs, Jeanine	WH Comm. Scholarship
Kurs, Kaitlyn	Student Gr. 9
Kurzban, Sandra	Teacher
Lee, Tom	WH Administrator
Leitch, Tim	Teacher
Li, Libo	Student/Grade 12
Loewy, Ellen	WH Administrator
Lotito, Pam	BOE Vice President
Mariano, James	Board Member
McVetty, Pat	Teacher
Menardy, Maggie	Resident
Messina, Edna	Teacher
Morales, Camille	Student Council/Grade 12
Norton, Rosalie	President, Civic Association
O'Keefe, Annette	Assistant Business Manager
Peluso, Ann	Co-Facilitator, Asst. Superintendent
Schulman, Helen	Community
Schultz, Mimi	Teacher
Schumacher, MaryBeth	Teacher
Schwartz, Stacey	Teacher
Senia, Chris	Teacher
Stone, Linda	WH Director
Trapani, Jonathan	Teacher
Uhl, Paula	Resident
VanKovics, Chris	Teacher
Vitale, Mary Jane	Pres. WH Senior Citizens
Wilson, Maria	Resident
Yanni, Richard	Teacher
Zunno, Mike	Teacher

HISTORY OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING COUNCIL

A. Need:

As a new superintendent, Mr. John Hogan wanted to engage representatives of the schools, homes and community in collaboratively setting long-term goals for the West Hempstead School District.

B. Formation of Council:

After discussing the benefits of strategic planning with all constituency groups, Superintendent Hogan recommended the formation of a District Strategic Planning Council to the Board of Education. His recommendation was adopted at the Board of Education meeting on November 20, 2007.

Mr. Hogan recruited Council members by posting a letter on the district website, writing an article for the local newspapers, and extending personal invitations to school and community leaders including, but not limited to: WHEA (the teachers' association), WHASA (the administrators' association), PTA presidents, the West Hempstead Civic Association, the Senior Citizen Association, Island Park School District, local houses of worship, private schools located within the district, and student government organizations. More than fifty people, representing all constituency groups, volunteered to serve on the Council.

Two facilitators for the Council were selected:

- Dr. Richard Bernato, educational consultant and professor at Dowling College
- Ann Peluso, Assistant Superintendent, West Hempstead School District

A planning meeting was held in December with Mr. Hogan, Dr. Bernato and Ann Peluso. The dates and location of the meetings were determined; target areas for exploration were identified.

C. Process (meeting dates and meeting overviews):

It was decided that the Council would meet on Wednesday evenings from 7:00 until 9:00 PM in the West Hempstead Middle School cafeteria. The dates for the Council meetings were:

February 6, 13, 27
March 5, 12
April 2, 9, 30
May 7, 14, 21

The meetings covered the following topics:

- **February 6, 2008:** Meet and Greet, Ice Breaker, Discussion Regarding Reactions to the Strategic Planning Process, Overview of Strategic Planning Process (roles, ground rules, communication), Overview of District Data, Training in Strategies for Group Decision Making (Decision Tree, Strategic Planning Model, SWOT Model, Goal Formation, Backward Design).
- **February 13, 2008:** Model SWOT Analysis Completion, Formulation of Tentative Goal, Six Thinking Hats, Review of District Demographic Data, Comparison of Demographic Data and Achievement Data.
- **February 27, 2008:** Practice Root Cause Skills (Five Whys, Fish Tail), Analyze Academic Report, Analyze Demographic/Economic Report, Correlate Data Reports, Relate Data Analysis to Existing West Hempstead Mission Statement.
- **March 5, 2008:** Review and Assess Additional Data (Free and Reduced Lunch data, Brookings Institute Summary), Mission Statement Subcommittee Report, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Motivational Theory, Potential Action Plan Recommendations, Potential Goals, Stakeholder Communication Update.
- **March 12, 2008:** Mission Statement Subcommittee Report and Discussion, Goals Formation Model, SWOT Analysis Completion in Small Groups Based on Technology Model, Small Group Exchange.
- **April 2, 2008:** Preference Forms Completed for Small Group Work, Mission Statement Subgroup Report and Discussion, Tentative Subgroups Assembled (Curriculum and Data Assessment, Professional Development, Community Involvement, and Technology) Based on Input from Preference Sheets (see Appendix), Goal Formation Process Reviewed.
- **April 9, 2008:** Review of Communication Strategies, Subgroup Deliberation, Action Plan Development, Exchange of Subgroup Work and Reaction to Progress of Groups, Connection of Values and Goals Identified by Subgroups and Connection to Mission Statement.

- **April 30, 2008:** Subgroup Deliberation, Action Plan Development, Subgroup Exchange and Assessment.
- **May 7, 2008:** Subgroup Deliberation, Action Plan Development, Subgroup Exchange and Assessment.
- **May 14, 2008:** Communication of Council's Work, Subgroup Deliberation, Finalization of Action Plans, Subgroup Exchange and Assessment, Review of Draft Mission Statement Logo.
- **May 21, 2008:** Summarize and Assess Proposed Action Plans, Acceptance of Strategic Plan and Recommendation to Superintendent, Review of Proposal Outline, Identification of Core Values and Beliefs Represented by Action Plans, Adoption of Logo for Strategic Plan Document, Review of Strategic Planning Process, and Completion of Feedback Forms.

For additional information regarding Strategic Planning Council Meetings see the district website at www.whufsd.com and click on the Strategic Planning Council Updates to view all meeting agendas and summaries.

All meetings of the Council and Subgroups followed the concepts of collaboration, shared decision making and consensus.

D. Action Plan Subgroups (formation and membership):

After the Council was trained in numerous strategies to support collaborative decision making and goal setting, the subgroup topics were identified through consensus: Curriculum, Data Analysis, Professional Development, Community Involvement and Educational Technology.

A preference form (see Appendix) was distributed to all members, and each person prioritized the subgroups of choice. Since few members were interested in data analysis, it was decided to combine Data Analysis and Curriculum as a single subgroup. The forms were collected; each subgroup was formed with representation from all constituencies.

A parallel subgroup worked on draft mission statements, identification of core values, and suggested logos. This group reported to the Council and gathered input for the project. It was decided that the mission statement project would involve more time than allotted. A logo was chosen by the Council to represent the work of the group and appears on the cover of the Strategic Plan.

Subgroup membership:

- **Curriculum and Data Assessment (including Special Education):** Lynette Abruzzo, Joe Bonasia, Anthony Cali, Janice Caufield, Joe Cirnigliaro, Terry Ganley, Dina Gould, Barbara Hafner, Maritza Jones, Ellen Loewy, Pam Lotito, Ann Peluso, Mimi Schultz, Chris VanKovics, Richard Yanni.
- **Educational Technology:** Tony Brita, Ailene Cavaliere, Walter Ejnes, Thomas Lee, Chris Senia, Linda Stone.
- **Professional Development:** Marilyn Calick, Christina DePaola, Jeff Eisen, Wayne Heckler, Jim Hume, Mary Keating, Edna Messina, Jim Mariano, Annette O'Keefe, Helen Schulman, Maribeth Schumacher.
- **Community Involvement (including student involvement):** Josephine DeMarco, Olga Eckert, Lorraine Gagliano, Aileen Hoffman, Jeanine Kurs, Kaitlyn Kurs, Maggie Menardy, Rosalie Norton, Stacey Schwartz, Jon Trapani, Paula Uhl, Mary Jane Vitale, Marie Wilson.

ACTION PLANS:

**Community Relations
Curriculum and Data Assessment
Educational Technology
Professional Development**

Community Involvement Action Plan

GOAL	STRATEGIES	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	TIMETABLE	OBSTACLES	RESOURCES	CRITERIA FOR SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION
To create unity and pride through communications						
	Create and conduct a survey	Administration & PTAs & community group	Fall 08-Spring 09	Language barrier.	Students, volunteers, www.zoomarang, & contact organizations representing various ethnic groups	Survey completed, analyzed, and reported to the Board of Education.
	Display & Publish students' artwork, poetry, writings & achievements. Highlight & advertise events, ie. HS play, fashion show, sporting events.	Public relations person & school district staff & students	Fall 08-Ongoing	Work schedules, child care issues, minimal parental engagement, lack of publicity in local media, and over scheduling.	Local university internship programs for public relations and grant writing, volunteers, Senior Citizens, local media, school newsletters, website & public library, local businesses, and school district communications	Increased interest & attendance in school & community events evidenced by ticket sales/sign-in sheets, video travel log of West Hempstead.
	Utilize our students toward community projects i.e.. Honor society & A.H.A. & Key Club	Each school, club advisors, troop and community, and religious leaders.	WINTER 08-09 Ongoing	Student availability	Club advisors, guidance department & admin.	Decreased attrition of students as evidence by enrollment.

GOAL	STRATEGIES	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	TIMETABLE	OBSTACLES	RESOURCES	CRITERIA FOR SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION
	Connect District & community websites	School district webmaster	SPRING 09	Lack of technology in the home	School district's technology and local real estate agencies.	Heightened awareness leading to increased attendance at events.
	Improve School Open houses, back-to-school nights, host multicultural events at the schools, and give "Ram Pride"/new logo magnets and sell WH/Ram Pride Wear. Community parents' council consisting of parochial and public school representatives.	Building administration	FALL 08 & SPRING 09	Language barriers, contractual issues & minimal parental engagement	District staff, administration & PTAS	Decreased attrition of students evidenced by higher enrollment, higher attendance & involvement at all events evidenced by written attendance.

CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS OF THE OVERALL GOALS (SHOULD BE MULTIPLE! E.G. PRE AND POST DOCUMENTATION OF COMMUNITY INPUT TO DISTRICT AND SCHOOL INITIATIVES)

- More than a 10% response to the survey.
- Measurement of annual improvement in attendance and involvement of all community members.
- A positive change of perception evidenced by greater retention and higher enrollment.
- Measured increase in usage of school district website.
- A higher percentage of community members voting in school budget elections.
- Student involvement in community beautification projects.

CURRICULUM AND DATA ASSESSMENT ACTION PLAN

GOAL	STRATEGIES	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	SUGGESTED TIMETABLE	OBSTACLES	RESOURCES	CRITERIA FOR SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION
To improve student performance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Social emotional ▪ Academic ▪ Physical Motor 	Reevaluate directors' roles	Central Administration	Fall '08	Money	Directors Principals	Written Proposal
	Create Curriculum Council to facilitate a systematic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ curriculum review ▪ program review 	Supt. /Asst. Supt.	Fall '08	Size, selection process, meeting time Time, money.	NYS Standards, Grant writing to increase funding	Productive working council exists
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Document current curriculum and programs i.e. what do we do? ▪ Curriculum and program audit/analysis i.e. Where are the gaps between current curriculum and NYS Standards? 	Teachers, Directors, Principals	Ongoing: Fall '08 through Fall '09	right mix of people	Explore and recommend Atlas, Curricuplan, etc. (electronic curriculum templates) Grant writing to increase funding	K-12 documented curriculum aligned with NYS Standards in all subject areas
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze the advantages and disadvantages of tracking 	Curriculum Council	Fall '08	Resources, History, Fear of change	Other school districts, professional organizations	Proposal to BOE: December '08

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop vehicles for interdisciplinary unit development • Encouraging communication among departments • Exchange/ access and incorporate instructional strategies 	Professional Development committee All directors and building administrators, teachers	2009-2010 school year	Man/Woman Power	Grant writing to increase funding Staff/Professional Development Roger Taylor.com	Department and staff meeting agendas
	Communication and celebration of student success					
	Incorporate students in individual goal setting					
	Ongoing review of individual progress with students					

CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS OF THE OVERALL GOALS--SHOULD BE MULTIPLE! E.G. PRE AND POST DOCUMENTATION OF COMMUNITY INPUT TO DISTRICT AND SCHOOL INITIATIVES

Assessments:

- NYS Standardized Assessments 3-12
- Regents
- AP & SAT Tests
- Increase Proficiency and Mastery on all assessments
- Decrease in referrals
- Decrease in detention
- Decrease in cutting class
- Improvement in attendance
- Decrease in suspensions
- % of students completing a 4-year college degree

- Follow graduates
- Increase extra curricular participation
- Parental involvement

Physical/Motor:

- Results of Physical Fitness/Health Assessment
- Measuring improvement Fall-Spring
- Measuring improvement of cohort – year to year
- Use of technology to compile, track, and communicate data
- BMI assessment

EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY ACTION PLAN

GOAL	STRATEGIES	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	TIMETABLE	OBSTACLES	RESOURCES	CRITERIA FOR SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION
Make Technology a Priority to all stakeholders						
	Educate stakeholders	Principals; Central Office	08/09	Resistance to Technology	Local newspapers, District website	Pre & post-surveys
	Develop strategies to fund the comprehensive technology plan	Superintendent., Board of Education, Data Director	08/09	Economic climate, voters	Grants, Bond Issue, Budget	Technology Plan is fully funded
To develop & implement a comprehensive strategic technology plan						
	Improve network infrastructure: e.g.: bandwidth, switches, servers, back up batteries, back up data recovery	Vince Fleck, ITEC	08/09	Lack of funding	Grants, bond issue, budget	Implementation; infrastructure meets new requirements
	Replacing software/PCs , and additional hardware every five years	Vince Fleck, ITEC	annual	Lack of funding, infrastructure issues	Grants, bond issue, budget	All equipment: less than 5 years old

	Improve IT support	School Board, Central Administration, ITEC	annual	Lack of funding, lack of qualified individuals	Grants, budget	Maintenance issues dealt with promptly
Upgrade hardware and software	Ceiling-mounted projectors in classrooms where needed, leading to installation of smart boards;	Vince Fleck, ITEC	09/10; 10/11 (prioritize based on need)	Lack of funding, infrastructure issues	Grants, bond issue, budget	All needed classrooms have projectors by 2011; Smart boards by 2012
	Ongoing PD re: technology & the curricula	Ann Peluso, Principals, PD Committee	annual	Fear of Technology, contractual (turnkey, etc.)	Funding, training for presenters, online training	Staff provided with ongoing PD and document training
	Excellent SD website & communications software	ITEC, Asst. Supt., Supt., Data Director	annual	Time Management, Resources, capabilities	Budget, Funding, People	# of Hits; Feedback from community, survey, awards
	Investigate & possibly pilot laptops for all teachers and HS students (& wireless access throughout district)	Vince Fleck, ITEC	11/12	Funding, security issues, maintenance, theft/loss	Budget, funding, bond issue, grants	Teachers & students have laptops by 2012
	Online/self-paced courses and/or remedial/credit recovery/courses not offered for students	Principals, Director of Guidance, Ann Peluso, interested teachers	annual	Lack of training	PD, funding	A variety of courses are available to meet students' needs throughout the district

	Investigate Smart Card technology for students and teachers.	V. Fleck ITEC	2010-11	Cost	Consult with other schools and vendors using this technology	Smart Cards in use or rejected for valid reasons
	Use technology to lower cost (ex: thin client, open source, server virtualization of servers and applications, paperless environment)	V. Fleck ITEC	11-12	Cost	Consult with other schools and vendors using this technology	Conduct a cost analysis to see if we are lowering costs
	Assess the efficacy of the new position: Director of Data & Information systems (to Liaison w/faculty: curriculum & technology)	Superintendent	9-10	Cost	District Personnel	Evaluation and recommendations completed
	Provide Admins & Bd. Members w/additional technology for safety & communication	School Board and Central Admin.	12-13	Community may not be supportive	Consult with other districts who have implemented this	New Technology in use or rejected

Issues facing the district:

I. Infrastructure-

1. Band Width (slow): we need a 50 Mega Bit pipe. We have fiber in the buildings. Price will depend on who we choose.
2. Environmental conditions (electric and power control)-we can buffer problems w/ battery power
3. Switches

II. PC's: replace every 5 years Re: Wireless-could be done, but it depends on the application.

Professional Development Subgroup

GOAL	STRATEGIES	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	TIMETABLE	OBSTACLES	RESOURCES	CRITERIA FOR SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION
To align the professional development with student needs in order to enhance student achievement.						
	Using technology through online courses and other resources to extend the flexibility and availability of PD	ITEC committee and PD committee Director of Data Services and student information	2010-11	Staff and Administrative resistance Availability of appropriate hardware and software Budget	Teacher center Grants Affiliation with local universities Budget	Online assessment through satisfaction surveys Implementation in the classroom
	In-house peer training (turn-key training)	Trained/experienced district personnel	2009-2010 (pending WHEA contract settlement)	Scheduling Time Money Contract/Negotiation Issues Staff Resistance Legal issues	Grants Highly trained school personnel	New strategies are implemented by district personnel in their area of expertise and experience.
	To make PD valuable and relevant to all district personnel.	Professional development committee (membership to be extended to support staff such as nurses, clerical)	Evaluations following Fall '08 Supt. Conf. Day Revise evaluation forms as needed for Spring '08 (ongoing)	Scheduling Time Money Contract Staff Resistance	District personnel needs assessment Student performance data analysis Grants Current research (research-based evidence)	Document through pre and post evidence the extent to which implementation of the training has occurred through staff and student feedback.
	To change the perception of the professional relationship between faculty and administration.	Central Administration Building Administration Faculty and staff	Begin at new teacher orientation Aug. '08 and ongoing	In-grained culture Morale Communication Time	Online collegial circle	Pre and post online surveys to compare the value and relevance of the PD in order to take specific action
	To allow all professional staff a varied and extensive menu of choices to fulfill both the contractual hours and staff training.	PD committee Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum	2008-09	Scheduling Time Money Contract Staff Resistance	Grants Budget Item On-going Staff Survey	Students' value-added test scores will increase by 5% on all NYS tests on a yearly basis
	To make available common planning time throughout the district "Collegial circle"	Staff and faculty Administrators	2009-10	Time Scheduling Motivation		The # of staff members that elected common planning time as staff development hours
	PD survey/assessment given to staff Evaluation forms should be upgraded as needed		Spring 2009	Personnel Time Resistance to paperwork Honesty in evaluations	PD budget line Grants University affiliations	Increase in percentage of positive remarks on evaluations Increase in responses to surveys

CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS OF THE OVERALL GOALS (SHOULD BE MULTIPLE! E.G. PRE AND POST DOCUMENTATION OF COMMUNITY INPUT TO DISTRICT AND SCHOOL INITIATIVES):

- To define and clarify professional development

Subgroup Recommendation Summaries

Community Involvement--The following are the highlighted recommendations that can be drawn from the Community Involvement Action Plan:

1. The main goal is to create unity and pride through communication.
2. A survey will be created to collect feedback from the community.
3. Student work will be displayed and published in order to celebrate achievement.
4. Student events will be highlighted and advertised.
5. Students will be encouraged to participate in community projects.
6. The school district and community websites will be linked.
7. School events will be enhanced and widely publicized.
8. A community parent council will be established consisting of parochial and public school representatives.

Curriculum and Data Assessment –The following are the highlighted recommendations that can be drawn from the Curriculum and Data Assessment Action Plan:

1. The main goal is to improve student performance in three areas—social/emotional, academic, and physical/motor.
2. A Curriculum Council will be created to facilitate a systematic curriculum review and program review.
3. Current curriculum and programs will be documented.
4. A curriculum and program analysis will identify gaps between current curriculum and New York State standards.
5. Directors' roles will be re-evaluated.
6. An analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of tracking will be conducted.
7. Vehicles for interdisciplinary unit development will be created.
8. Vertical and horizontal communication among departments and grade levels will be encouraged.
9. Effective instructional strategies will be identified and incorporated into the classrooms.
10. Student success will be communicated and celebrated.
11. Students will be involved in goal setting and an ongoing review of progress.

Educational Technology—the following are the highlighted recommendations that can be drawn from the Educational Technology Action Plan:

1. The two main goals identified by the subgroup were to make technology a priority to all stakeholders and to develop and implement a comprehensive strategic technology plan.
2. Educate all stakeholders regarding educational technology.
3. Develop strategies to fund the comprehensive technology plan.
4. Improve the network infrastructure.
5. Replace software and hardware every five years.
6. Improve IT support.
7. Install ceiling-mounted LCD projectors and Smart boards.
8. Provide ongoing professional development.
9. Upgrade the district website and communication software.
10. Investigate the expansion of laptop pilots for students and staff.

11. Explore online course offerings.
12. Investigate Smart Card technology for students and staff.
13. Use technology as a resource to lower costs.
14. Assess efficacy of new position—Director of Data and Information Services.
15. Provide additional technology for administrators and members of the Board of Education.

Professional Development-- The following are the highlighted recommendations that can be drawn from the Professional Development Action Plan:

1. The main goal is to align the professional development program with student needs in order to enhance student achievement.
2. Use technology to extend the flexibility and availability of professional development.
3. Develop a vehicle for using staff members to provide professional development for peers (turnkey training).
4. Make professional development available to all district personnel.
5. Change the perception of the professional relationship between faculty and administration.
6. Allow professional staff a menu of choices to fulfill both the contractual hours and ongoing professional growth.
7. Provide a vehicle for the creation of collegial circles.
8. Ensure common planning time throughout the district.
9. Increase and vary the number of course options offered each year.
10. Conduct a professional development survey.
11. Upgrade the course evaluation forms.

Additional Recommendations from the Facilitators:

1. It is recommended that the Strategic Planning Council remain in place and continue to meet throughout the implementation of the strategic plan with the Assistant Superintendent as the chairperson.
2. The Council should meet two times each year (October and January) to assess the progress of the plan. When the committee meets, the Assistant Superintendent will share with the Council reports of the progress of each subgroup's action plan. Suggestions for adjustments to the plan will be made at these meetings, when necessary.
3. The Assistant Superintendent will report to the Board of Education in the spring of each school year to provide an update on the progress of achieving the goals of the strategic plan.
4. A second District Strategic Planning Council should be formed during the winter of the 2010-2011 school year to assess the success of this plan and develop a subsequent plan for the school years 2011-2014.

Common Elements of All Action Plans:

At the final meeting of the council, when each subgroup shared goals, the members spent time identifying common themes among the subgroups, which included:

- students were the focus and priority of each subgroup;
- focus on the needs of ALL students;
- the use of multiple forms of assessment and data to measure the progress towards goals;
- the importance of a systematic approach to improvement;
- the importance of incorporating a culture of continuous improvement;
- a focus on the importance of communication within and among stakeholder groups;
- the importance of collaboration in realizing the goals;
- enhance student achievement;
- the need to change perceptions of West Hempstead;
- the need for a K-12 continuum of curriculum and communication;
- technology as a powerful resource to accomplish subgroup goals;
- the importance of identifying resources to support the goals of the strategic plan;
- importance of follow-up to the planning process;
- the need to communicate the results of the planning process with all stakeholders;
- the need to space out goals—too much work for too few people
- the need for ongoing updates and meetings of the council
- TEAMWORK, COMMUNITY, COLLABORATION—
WEST HEMPSTEAD UNITED AND PROUD!

Mission Statement Subcommittee:

A subcommittee of council members was formed to draft suggestions for updating the district mission statement. The subcommittee members included: Terry Ganley, Tony Brita, Chris VanKovics, Helen Schulman, Walter Ejnes, and Camille Morales. The group communicated ideas through email and shared their work with the full council periodically. It was determined that the time allotted to the council's work would not allow the development of action plans and the creation of a new mission statement.

During the development phase of this project the following essential components for inclusion in a district mission statement were identified:

- Individuality
- Diversity
- Self-confidence
- Academic Achievement
- Personal Achievement
- Risk-free Learning Environment

Four sample drafts of mission statements were compiled and shared with the Council. Feedback from the council members was integrated into four proposed mission statements:

- The West Hempstead Union Free School District, in collaboration with parents and the community, will inspire students to reach their potential, to welcome and embrace diversity, and to become independent and critical thinking adults who will contribute positively in our ever changing world.
- The West Hempstead Union Free School District, in collaboration with families, will strive to provide and create a positive, safe and supportive environment that challenges every student to grow as an individual academically, physically, socially and emotionally, so that each student can reach his/her potential as productive and responsible citizens and lifelong learners in a diverse world.
- The West Hempstead Union Free School District in collaboration with state, local, public and private entities will integrate educational, social, and human services that provide the types of prevention, treatment, and support children and families need to succeed. (Full-Service Schooling)
- The West Hempstead Union Free School District will foster an environment which motivates all students to reach their personal best. In developing true life-long learners emphasis will be placed on confidence, courage and citizenship.

A final proposal from the subcommittee to the council included:

- Core goals: nurture, develop, strengthen, prepare, inspire, empower, educate.
Mission: West Hempstead is an inclusive community that inspires students to realize their individual potential, while developing moral courage and preparing for a global world.

Many members of the council participated in the online conversation that created the drafts of the mission statement. The group also compiled several suggested logos to represent the mission of the district. Several lively conversations took place at the Council meetings focused on the drafts presented. The Board of Education may want to consider further exploration of updating the district's mission statement.

Timeline for Implementation of Recommendations

2008-2009

- **Curriculum and Data Assessment:**
 - ❖ Reevaluate directors' roles
 - ❖ Create curriculum council to facilitate a systematic program and curriculum review
 - ❖ Document current curriculum and programs
 - ❖ Analyze curriculum and program in relation to NYS standards
 - ❖ Analyze advantages and disadvantages of tracking

- **Community Involvement:**
 - ❖ Create and conduct a survey
 - ❖ Display and publish students' artwork, writing, and achievements
 - ❖ Involve students in community projects
 - ❖ Connect district and community websites
 - ❖ Improve open houses, back to school nights and other school events
 - ❖ Create a community parents' council of parochial and public school representatives

- **Educational Technology:**
 - ❖ Educate stakeholders
 - ❖ Develop strategies to fund the comprehensive technology plan
 - ❖ Improve network infrastructure
 - ❖ Replace software and hardware
 - ❖ Improve IT support
 - ❖ Provide ongoing professional development
 - ❖ Enhance district website
 - ❖ Explore online course offerings

- **Professional Development:**
 - ❖ Make professional development valuable and relevant to all district personnel
 - ❖ Revise evaluation forms and review following workshops and conference days
 - ❖ Change the perception of the professional relationship between faculty and administration
 - ❖ Allow all professional staff a varied and extensive menu of choices to fulfill both the contractual hours and staff training
 - ❖ Conduct a professional development survey

2009-2010

- **Curriculum and Data Assessment:**
 - ❖ Develop vehicles for interdisciplinary unit development
 - ❖ Encourage communication among departments
 - ❖ Exchange, access and incorporate instructional strategies/best practices
 - ❖ Continue to document and analyze curriculum and programs

- **Community Involvement:**
 - ❖ Display and publish students' artwork, writing, and achievements
 - ❖ Involve students in community projects

- **Educational Technology:**
 - ❖ Install ceiling-mounted LCD projectors and/or smart boards in classrooms
 - ❖ Assess efficacy of new position—Director of Data and Student Information
 - ❖ Replace software and hardware
 - ❖ Improve IT support
 - ❖ Provide ongoing professional development
 - ❖ Enhance district website
 - ❖ Explore online course offerings

- **Professional Development:**
 - ❖ Make common planning time available throughout the district
 - ❖ Offer the option of teachers participating in collegial circle
 - ❖ Create a structure for turnkey training (in-house peer training)—pending WHEA contract settlement

2010-2011

- **Curriculum and Data Assessment:**
 - ❖ Continue to document and analyze curriculum and programs

- **Community Involvement:**
 - ❖ Display and publish students' artwork, writing, and achievements
 - ❖ Involve students in community projects

- **Educational Technology:**
 - ❖ Investigate smartcard technology for students and teachers
 - ❖ Replace software and hardware
 - ❖ Improve IT support
 - ❖ Provide ongoing professional development
 - ❖ Enhance district website
 - ❖ Explore online course offerings
 - ❖ Investigate laptop pilot for students and teachers (2011-12)
 - ❖ Use technology to lower cost (2011-12)
 - ❖ Provide administrators and board members with additional technology for safety and communication (2012-13)

- **Professional Development:**
 - ❖ Use technology through on-line courses and other resource to extend the flexibility and availability of professional development

Council Feedback and Reflection

At the last meeting of the Council on May 21st, a survey (see Appendix) was distributed to gather feedback from members regarding the planning process. Dr. Bernato completed an extensive quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data, excerpts of which are included in this section.

The purpose of this survey was to synthesize themes and perspectives that council members may have developed over the several months the group worked together to create the strategic plan. A twelve question Likert Scale questionnaire was developed. Respondents were asked to identify their stakeholder group. Three areas were assessed: plan quality, school/community expectations, and skills upgrade needs. Dr. Bernato noted the consistency of agreement among respondents. He felt that this suggested that the group's cohesion was solid and that their task focus was well grounded. The results also indicated that the group recognized the need for further training and upgrading of skills. He indicated that this was a positive sign in that the group realized that the plan's quality will be enhanced by continued engagement of the planning process across the coming years.

Results indicated that the entire group truly appreciated the opportunity for dialogue. This above all seemed to be the recurrent theme among all groups. It was clear that the Strategic Plan process fostered great group cohesion and a sense of educational community relationships among all stakeholders. Focusing all plans towards supporting or re-working district subsystems in order to meet the evolving needs of West Hempstead students is the key goal of the recommended plan. The group indicated some reservations as to whether the goals of the subgroup action plans would be accomplished in the recommended timeframe. The highest agreement among the groups was that the Council should continue to meet and they recognized the connection between the plans and budgetary capacity.

Following an analysis of the data collected, Dr. Bernato made several recommendations including:

- Formalize the council with regular meetings.
- Link Strategic Planning Council operations with the Site Based Teams for alignment and coordination.
- Emphasize data as evidence.
- Gather data regularly and present it to council members.
- Support the Council and Site Based Teams so everyone is not only speaking the same language but also using the same tools to foster shared vision and consistent collaboration.

Communication Strategies

Electronic communication was used throughout the process. At the first meeting, a contact list including email addresses was distributed to all members. An agenda was developed by the facilitators and distributed at each meeting. Within two days of each meeting, a summary was distributed electronically to all members for their review. Once reviewed, the agenda and summary for each meeting were posted on the district website.

In order to ensure transparency and open communication of the Council's work with the wider community, a Strategic Planning link was created on the homepage of the district website. All agendas and summaries continue to be available in order to keep all members of the community informed of the work of the Council.

Technology was utilized in the creation of the Action Plans. At the meetings, each subgroup worked with a laptop and LCD projector as the action plans were created. Updates were saved on flash drives and attached to the minutes of each meeting for the members to review. Between meetings, subgroups used emails and wikis to communicate and continue the dialogue started at each meeting. The district newsletter (The Educator) and local news articles also provided updates of the council's work. Council members shared the work of the Council with their constituency groups. The Board of Education adopted the Strategic Plan on June 17, 2008; it will be available on the district website and in hard copy to all members of the West Hempstead Community.

APPENDIX

WEST HEMPSTEAD SCHOOL DISTRICT

Strategic Planning Council

Small Group Preference Form

Please list your top three preferences for small group work from the list below:

- Curriculum (to include Special Education)
- Professional Development
- Community Involvement (to include Student Involvement)
- Educational Technology
- Data Assessment

Tentative groups will be created with representation from each constituency group.

1st Choice: _____

2nd Choice: _____

3rd Choice: _____

Name: _____

Affiliation: * _____

*Please note student, parent, community member, teacher, or administrator.

West Hempstead School District

Strategic Planning Council Feedback

When You Stop Trying to Get Better You Stop Being Good

Thank you for participating in a process that really doesn't end; the effort to use the collective good will intelligence, and creativity of the West Hempstead School Community to develop a road map toward ever increasing excellence in your school district for the sake of its children and community.

Feedback re your participation will help us diagnose and prescribe the expected success of this process and enable us to adjust how we will approach our planning in the future.

Please circle your stakeholder status in this process:

Parent Student Community Member Teacher Administrator

Please circle your response to each item with:

**1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Somewhat Disagree; 3 = No Opinion; 4 = Somewhat Agree;
5 = Strongly Agree.**

1. The skills we learned helped us to make effective action plans.

1 2 3 4 5

2. I believe that our planning has enabled us to pinpoint most of West Hempstead Schools' future needs.

1 2 3 4 5

3. The quality of our action plans is excellent.

1 2 3 4 5

4. We will need to continue to meet to upgrade all or some of these plans as appropriate.

1 2 3 4 5

5. Skills mastery of root cause identification and data analysis will need continuous upgrading.

1 2 3 4 5

6. Our sub-group's cohesion improved over time.

1 2 3 4 5

7. I expect the implementation of our plans will result in increased positive community involvement.

1 2 3 4 5

8. I recognize the interconnection between our efforts and other systems or parts of West Hempstead Schools' successful operation.

1 2 3 4 5

9. I expect the implementation of our plans will result in improved student achievement for all West Hempstead students as defined by our Curriculum and Assessment subcommittee.

1 2 3 4 5

10. I can see how the skills we have mastered thus far will enable us to identify future needs that we may not have recognized at this point.

1 2 3 4 5

11. I can see how the plans we recommend will need to be coordinated with the budgetary and resource capacity of the West Hempstead School District.

1 2 3 4 5

12. I would do it again.

1 2 3 4 5

Please share any additional thoughts about your involvement in this process:

THANK YOU!

Acknowledgements:

The West Hempstead Board of Education, Superintendent John Hogan, and co-facilitators (Dr. Richard Bernato and Ann Peluso) wish to extend our deepest appreciation to the members of the Strategic Planning Council for all your hard work, dedication, and sacrifice of time for the benefit of the students in the West Hempstead community. We would also like to recognize the district office clerical staff for assisting in the duplication of documents for the Council's work binder. Finally, our appreciation to Mr. Joseph Cirnigliaro and the custodial staff of the West Hempstead Middle School for hosting the Council's meetings these past four months. It has been an honor and a privilege to work with you.