

Implementation team guides the strategic planning project

The district's ten-year strategic planning process continues with a 37-member implementation team guiding the plan.

Developed by a core team and six task forces of district staff, students, and community and business members, the ten-year plan was approved by the Board of Education in December of 2009.

Today the implementation team oversees the plan, providing direction to teams and individuals who carry out the action plans in the strategic plan.

Comprised of staff, students, parents, business and community members, the team began meeting in March of this year. The team meets monthly.

"The implementation team's responsibility is to make sure the plan is broken down into doable chunks of work to make sure the implementation is successful," said Alice Learn, assistant superintendent and one of two co-leaders of the implementation team.

The work is going well so far, reports Learn and Kim Malone, Gardner Road first-grade teacher and co-leader of the team.

"The committee has really come together as a team to move forward," Malone said. "Everyone has offered help, suggestions, and made important decisions to begin the implementation process."

Each school's shared decision-making team has formulated its action plans to work toward the goals of the plan in addition to building goals and initiatives. The Board of Education has also aligned its annual goals with the strategic plan.

"The district has consistent expectations and guidelines that align with the plan, which helps the implementation run smoothly," said Malone.

The strategic plan includes action plans in six key areas: character education and wellness, student achievement, community relations and partnerships, facilities, financial planning and development, and professional development and district culture.

Each of the areas has "year one targets," which are measurable goals the implementation team hopes to accomplish this first year of the strategic plan's implementation. Key staff and others will work on these targets throughout the year.

One of the first priorities for the implementation team is to administer a student survey for students

in grades 4-12. Two years ago, the core strategic planning team administered surveys to community members and staff. This student survey will get the student's point of view.

The team also plans to re-administer the staff survey and eventually the community survey, to gauge how the strategic plan is progressing.

Additionally, the team has formed three working groups: the Character Education and Wellness Study Group, the 21st Century Learning Study Group, and the Green Task Force. These teams will gather additional data and work on their specific areas.

Strategic planning takes both time and resources, and Learn explains that the district is looking to current resources. "We're looking at how we can do the work with what we have by maximizing our resources--federal grants, state aid, and BOCES aid."

She also said the implementation team and administration continue to look at grant opportunities to help bring more resources to the implementation of the plan.

Learn more about the strategic plan and the implementation team by visiting the district's web site at www.horseheadsdistrict.com. Click on the blue Ten-Year Strategic Plan button on the right side of the main page. Or go to this address: www.horseheadsdistrict.com/strategicplan.cfm.

Making suds and raising funds

Ridge Road fourth-graders raised more than \$2,500 for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF) at the Grade 4 Car Wash September 25.

The students chose to give all proceeds to JDRF because so many children, including fourth-grader Josie Fell, have diabetes.

At right is Josie, and at left is fourth-grader Abbie Gillette.

The school's fourth-graders have been holding charity car washes for the last ten years.

