



Strategic Planning Study

Citizens Advisory Committee

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Study Objective

Wyoming City School's current strategic plan is 8 years old. Based on the district experiencing a change in leadership along with community feedback collected over the past 18 months, it was evident that the district needed to create a better defined plan for the future of Wyoming. Our sub-committee was tasked with reaching out to districts across the state of Ohio to inquire about their strategic planning process. The committee facilitated conversations around the type of strategic plans the different districts used, best practices, key findings, and advice/recommendations. The Committee is providing the Board of Education with this information to assist the district in the process of embarking on the creation of a new strategic plan. To do this we looked at three key components:

1. What are best-practice approaches to strategic planning in a school district?
2. How can we work together to create a long-term plan for Wyoming?
3. What are the key components that should be focused on in a school district strategic-plan?

Methodology and Research

Our committee compiled a list of 17 schools that we thought would offer valuable information based on various characteristics. The majority of the schools selected were public schools and a few private schools to give varying perspectives. Several districts within Cincinnati were chosen as well as districts in other parts of the state. While many of these districts were similar in size to Wyoming with excellent academic reputations, we also looked at districts that were larger, and had more diversity, whether that be ethnicity, race or socioeconomic. 13 of the 17 schools responded. Each interview was driven from the same 10 questions. These were created to get to the heart of what/who they used to create the plan, what drove the plan and its parameters, the timeframe of the plans, along with if/how they used/measured the plan.

Findings

A full list of the reports can be found in the Appendices, but some key findings include:

1. 10 of the 13 districts used a facilitator, and were very happy with the results, and would do so again ~ 1 that did not use a facilitator attended the Ed Leader 21 Conference, put on by Battelle for Kids, for ideas and to network from around the country
2. All districts mentioned the importance of vast representation in stakeholders. Inclusivity and diversity among all groups is critical for "buy-in". Methods to drive that input ranged from focus groups to surveys.
3. Focus was a key word throughout the process, and after implementation. Focus on the Big Ideas. Create buckets, 3-5 is the magic number. Prioritization during the process and after so as to not let other issues and topics become a distraction.

4. Many discussed a backwards roadmap, or creating it bottom up. It is Admin lead, but developed within and driven from the voices of the people ~ community, staff, students. The district goals funnel to the building goals, which funnel to teacher goals ~ plan drives the goals.
5. The plan should be a working document that is actionable and transparent. The plan should be reviewed and referenced frequently. It should be actionable and measurable and this should be done by having a specified time in which updates are given... building leaders to Superintendent and Superintendent to the Board and Community.

Recommendations and Conclusions

1. We would recommend that Wyoming participates in a strategic planning process to create a new strategic plan that is actionable and a living document that creates a vision for the next 3-5 years for Wyoming City Schools.
2. We recommend using a facilitator to help guide that process, and based on conversations, level of satisfaction, and fiscal responsibility, we would recommend starting with Hamilton County Educational Service Center.
3. Make sure that a vast number of stakeholder groups are included, so all voices are heard. The method to include stakeholders can and should vary including but not limited to surveys, focus groups and open meeting sessions. In this process all voices should be heard and in some cases sought out (minority participation, empty nesters, preschool parents, community organizations, etc.).