



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 21st Century skills.
We are committed to the education of the whole child and preparing lifelong learners,
Balancing robust academic programs and related arts.

Session 2

Developing a vision for the Norwood Public School District

On October 15, 2025, Norwood Public School District administrators, Board of Education members, staff, parents, and community members, twenty-one (21) in all, came together to continue the strategic planning process. The meeting began with a welcome and introduction by the Board President, Ms. Heather Garcia. Mary Ann Friedman and Melissa Del Rosso, Field Service Representatives, 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 evening focused on creating a shared vision for the Norwood Public School District. Participants were asked to picture themselves, having been away from the district for 5 years, returning to the Norwood area and seeing their school on the cover of TIME magazine. The article is about Schools that Succeed. In addition to the current programs already in place in Norwood Public Schools, what programs/services/curriculum/student outcomes/best practices/facilities would you expect to see in your schools that are succeeding? Participants were encouraged to think "big picture."

Participants gathered in randomly assigned groups, three groups, to develop a shared vision and initiatives. The small groups reviewed the outcomes from Meeting #1, strengths and challenges, and then began brainstorming on their vision for the district. After group discussion, each group identified their consensus points and presented those to the full group of meeting participants. The large group then identified "Common Themes" that had occurred throughout the small group outcomes.

Group Consensus: Vision & Initiatives

Group 1:

Title of Article: “NPS Culture of Excellence”

Initiatives:

- Staff retention solutions
- Streamlined clear communication – better use of school website
- Smaller class size and smaller student / teacher ratio, more and larger space including auditorium and classes
- Strengthening instructional functioning, advanced courses (ELA, Math, Art, Music), executive functioning skills development

Group 2:

Title of Article: “Norwood Public School . . . Era of Solutions”

Initiatives:

- Expanded ELA educational opportunities
- AI opportunities
- Space issues resolved
- Communication directly from teachers, increase # of parent/teacher conferences
- Competitive pay and other incentives

Group 3:

Title of Article: “Find Your Future at NPS”

Initiatives:

- Providing parents with information about all of the programs/curriculum and budget available at NPS
- Families will be informed of student progress consistently throughout the school year
- Find solutions to retain staff
- Accelerate student achievement and communicate it
- More diversity of electives through shared resources

Following each small group reporting out their consensus points, the large group identified the following **common themes**:

- ELA and increase in instructional programs
- Space issues resolved
- Communication – courses, student progress and budget
- Staff retention resolved

Following each group identifying common themes, the larger group identified the following emerging goal areas:

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

Following a discussion, it was agreed that Communication would be a part of each of the four goals and not be a separate goal.

Four goal areas:

1. Student Growth (will include communication)
2. Facilities & Finance (will include communication)
3. Culture & Climate (will include communication)
4. Staff Recruitment & Retention (will include communication)

The third strategic planning session is scheduled for:

Monday, November 17, 2025, at 6:00 pm

Sign-in begins at 5:45 pm.

Norwood Public School, All-Purpose Room

Meeting #3 is scheduled for 1.5 hours. Meetings start and end promptly.

During the November 17th meeting, participants will review the outcomes from meetings 1 and 2 and develop broad goal statements, objectives, and strategies for the goal areas identified above. These strategic planning goals will guide the board and district over the next 3 – 5 years.

Please join us. Bring a friend! Everyone is welcome! We look forward to seeing you!

Please RSVP by using the Google RSVP form on the district website.