



**MOUNT HOLLY TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT'S
EDUCATIONAL STRATEGY**

**VISION 2021
THE FUTURE IS NOW**

JULY 2016 to JUNE 2021

Today the Mount Holly Township Public School District is better positioned to seize the opportunities set before us and to improve its position in the local, regional, and global educational arena as a high performing school district. The strategic planning panel declares that:

- ★ We are a Board of Education that pledges to serve the community and make a difference in the lives of every student that enters our schools,
- ★ We are innovative leaders who pursue excellence through research-based best practices,
- ★ We are dedicated and highly qualified educators,
- ★ We are passionate and committed parents,
- ★ We ensure that school security is a top priority, and
- ★ We continue to maintain a fiscally responsible and educationally rich budget.

Any successful strategy to ensure that students and their families possess the college mindset and the career skill set to meet the demands of the next few decades must begin with an undeniable truth - the Mount Holly Public School District needs to position itself to be a model school district of achievement in the 21st century. The question is never whether we must improve, but how we lead the improvement effort.

The strategic panel identified several areas to improve over the next five years. To provide every student with an excellent educational experience, the panel has taken action to develop:

- ★ An academic environment that supports the whole child and promotes the long-term development and success of all children,
- ★ A positive and inclusive learning environment that promotes acceptance and tolerance;
- ★ A stronger communication and connection to the home and the community,
- ★ A collaborative focus and articulation among the three district schools, and between the school district and its regional high school, vocational school, colleges, and universities, and
- ★ A strategy to promote sustainable practices for a healthy student body, a cleaner planet, and a prosperous community.

The socio-economic and 21st century challenges we face require strategic patience and persistence. They require us to take our responsibility seriously and make the smart investments in the foundations of instruction, program, and facilities. We will continue to pursue a comprehensive agenda that draws on all elements of the school community - students, parents, educators, and local partners - that is attuned to the strategic risks and opportunities we face, and that is guided by the principles and priorities set out in this strategy.

To succeed, we must draw upon the power of our example by committing to our vision, cultivating our mission, and acting in line with our values. We need to embrace our exceptional roles and responsibilities as leaders in the community at a time when our unique contributions and capabilities are needed most, and when the choices we make today can mean greater prosperity for our children and their families for generations to come. The future is now. Let us make our mark.

James E. DiDonato
Superintendent

Mount Holly Township
Board of Education

I: INTRODUCTION

Strategic Planning is one of the most important processes that any organization undergoes. The ***Mount Holly Township School District Educational Strategy*** positions the district to safeguard the school community's interests. It establishes a vision for the future and a pathway to achieve the vision. It sets out the principles and priorities with clear goals and objectives. And, it serves as a compass for how this Administration, in partnership with the Board, will lead the school community through an ever changing educational landscape.

The Educational Strategy builds on the last five years, in which there has been considerable progress across many domains. A major part of this is building community: parents, educators, and leaders working together. Our progress includes substantive program development which has produced adequate growth in reading, writing, mathematics, as well as increased proficiency in the sciences. Mount Holly Township Public Schools has placed itself in a good position regarding technology for education: 100% WiFi, Google Apps for Education, interactive whiteboards, professional STEM software with a 3-D printer, and inching closer to a 1:1 device learning environment. The Office of School Innovation inducted Mount Holly Township Schools as a member of the Innovate NJ Community for recognizing the district's Gifted and Talented programs, service learning projects, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) programs, technology capacity, and Project Lead The Way program. The district was accepted into the Sustainable Jersey for Schools cohort, a certification program for New Jersey public schools to go green, conserve resources and take steps to create a brighter future, one school at a time. Mount Holly Schools continue to take the necessary strides to upgrade the facilities, improve security, and meet the demands of a fiscally responsible and child-centered budget.

Still, there is no shortage of challenges that demand continued leadership and community commitment. Even as we have improved across many facets, challenges like low standardized test scores, chronic student absenteeism, and overall student engagement continue to affect district advancement. There is room for considerable programmatic change in all subject areas, including improvement in the arts. We need to pursue opportunities to build upon community, engaging parents, and then empowering all parents to be a central part of this educational strategy. We need to continue to cultivate new relationships in the community to lead alongside capable partners. We need to invest in the lives of each and every child through character development and promoting an environment that motivates students to explore both college and career opportunities. We need to deepen our movement to provide a safe, positive, and innovative place to learn.

To accomplish this educational strategy, first and foremost, we must lead with purpose. We must uphold our enduring commitment to the advancement of democratic principles, civic responsibility, and respect for universal values. We must hire and maintain the most qualified personnel, pursue the best programs, allocate resources judiciously, and cultivate new relationships with our educational partners and local community. These interests will continue to guide all we do in the Mount Holly Township Public School District. We must build upon our interests and capitalize on the potential to shape the future for our children and their families.

II. CORE TENETS

The strategic panel defined purpose through vision, mission, and core value statements. These statements are the foundation of the strategic plan and the strategic context for decisions and actions that will grow the organization.

OUR VISION ... is that ...

Every student will have an excellent educational experience.

OUR MISSION ... is we ...

Cultivate the capacity for lifelong learning, the creativity for innovation, and the curiosity for exploration.

OUR CORE VALUES ... are we ...

Pursue Excellence through Perseverance, Integrity, Collaboration, and Inspiration.

III. STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES

The strategic panel also defined five focus areas (imperatives) that will serve as the backbone of this plan. The imperatives are the categories in education that have been determined to drive educational progress, instructional growth, and academic achievement. The five imperatives identified have definitive goals and objectives to drive the plan in a set direction. The following pages highlight these priority focus areas and the intent for successful implementation over the next five years.



ONE DISTRICT, ONE COMMUNITY

The intent of One District, One Community is to unite one district through curriculum, spirit, and support, to connect school and community by building relationships, and to embrace diversity by creating a positive environment that fosters acceptance for all.

STRATEGIC GOAL:

In 2021, the MHTPSD community is united through collaboration, cohesive articulation, and a shared identity.

<i>Objectives to achieve goal</i>	<i>Actions to meet objective(s)</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
I. Improve community partnerships through the establishment of a Local Education Foundation (LEF).	Present strategy and rationale for MHTPSD LEF to BOE, soliciting active supporters/volunteers; solicit issues and concerns to address.	6/28/2017
	Get Board Of Education approval to form a LEF.	6/1/2018
	Target LEF activities that result or align with other strategic goals and objectives.	4/1/2019
	Establish mutually beneficial relationships with local industry for a service focus.	6/30/2019
	Establish mutually beneficial relationships with local industry for a career focus.	6/30/2019
II. Connect instructional programs preschool to grade 8.	Tightly link standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment across and within all grades and subjects.	8/27/2018
	Professional development to support educators in aligning curriculum, instruction, and assessment, preschool to grade 8.	6/3/2019
	Parent development on vertical alignment and age/grade-appropriate expectations	11/1/2019
III. Unite the school community through common activities.	Organize multiple family, service, academic, cultural, or fundraising events that are district-wide.	8/1/2017
	Double number of district events between 2017-2018 school year and 2019-2020 school year	6/1/2020
IV. Unite the school community through a common identity.	Organize multiple district-wide events that engage all stakeholders in identifying a common identity (i.e., mascot, color set, and logo)	10/1/2018
	Implement a common identity (mascot, color set, and logo)	9/1/2020

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

The intent of College and Career Readiness is to use data to facilitate a student’s individualized plan for academic success, to encourage positive future developments in a college and/or career setting, and to connect educational experience, individual passion, and real world careers.

STRATEGIC GOAL:

In 2021, MHTPSD students are immersed in student-driven learning and individual goal setting in preparation for college and careers.

<i>Objectives to achieve goal</i>	<i>Actions to meet objective(s)</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
I. Ensure every student, grades 1 to 8, has an individual performance plan with academic and career centered goals.	Research career and academic goals template.	12/1/2017
	Finalize a career and academic goals template that is technology-based and interactive for students, parents, and professionals.	6/1/2018
	Professional development for educators to implement goals into academic and counseling programs.	3/1/2019
	Integrate goals into academic and counseling programs and evaluate progress.	8/15/2019
	Parent development to incorporate goals into future planning.	12/2/2019
II. Integrate real world experiential learning plan in every grade, preschool to grade 8.	Research learning objectives connected to industry that can be integrated into curriculum, preschool to grade 8.	3/1/18
	Establish learning objectives connected to industry to integrate into preschool to grade 8.	8/15/2018
	Direct visit to/from college or career mentor(s), preschool to grade 8, to further enhance experiential learning.	6/3/2019
	Evaluate experiential learning plan.	6/3/2020
III. Ensure 90% of 3rd grade students are reading at or above grade level.	Professional development (research based) for analyzing data and differentiating reading instruction.	6/1/2018
	Implement a common reading assessment (grades 1-5).	10/15/2018
	Establish common baseline data for every student grades 1-5.	12/3/2018
	Ensure reading intervention funding in early childhood programs.	3/2019
	Develop growth objectives that increase expectations to meet the objective (90% at or above reading level).	11/2021

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The intent of Learning Environment is to incorporate a growth mindset and establish a framework for 21st century learning to promote independent, self-motivated, and productive learners.

STRATEGIC GOAL:

In 2021, the MHTPSD growth mindset ensures high expectations, creative thinking, and differentiated practices in every learning environment.

<i>Objectives to achieve goal</i>	<i>Actions to meet objective(s)</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
I. Ensure a growth mindset framework is integrated into every aspect of the school culture.	Growth mindset professional development for every MHTPSD employee.	8/1/2018
	Develop a district-approved growth mindset framework for each school.	8/15/2018
	Organize growth mindset parent development District-wide to support the school to home connection.	6/1/2019
	Conduct a growth mindset audit (3Xs a year) to evaluate the growth mindset practices in every department District-wide.	6/30/2019
II. Ensure a 21st century learning framework is integrated into every classroom.	Design the MHTPSD 21st century classroom, specific for grade and/or content.	6/1/2019
	21st century professional development for every educational professional.	5/1/2020
	Deploy the district approved 21st century learning framework for each school.	9/1/2020
	Conduct 21st century learning framework audit (3Xs a year) to evaluate research based practices in every classroom.	6/1/2021
III. Ensure the classroom scheme meets the 21st century learner.	Design the MH 21st century classroom, specific for grade and/or content.	6/1/2019
	Evaluate alignment of each classroom scheme to 21st century framework/handbook via walkthrough data.	9/1/2021

CHARACTER EDUCATION

The intent of Character Education is to eliminate bullying, teach tolerance, embrace diversity, and provide the tools and resources to be upstanding students and citizens.

STRATEGIC GOAL:

In 2021, the MHTPSD students take responsibility for their behaviors, contributing to a positive and respectful school community.

<i>Objectives to achieve goal</i>	<i>Actions to meet objective(s)</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
I. Institute a district-wide positive behavior plan.	Create and adopt a school-wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) plan in school/staff handbook that aligns vertically among the three schools.	9/1/2017
	Conduct building-based PBIS professional development for all professionals and support staff.	11/1/2017
	Organize building-based PBIS parent development to support the school to home connection.	2/1/2018
	Evaluate the district-approved PBIS framework for each school via walkthrough data.	6/1/2018
II. Celebrate those who serve the community through student-led appreciation events.	Form event committee at each school using student leaders.	5/31/2019
	Organize one student-led appreciation event at each school that incorporates most to all of the student body.	10/1/2019
	Establish annual appreciation events by grade/topic that incorporates both tradition and innovation.	10/1/2020
III. Decrease chronic student detentions and suspensions in each school by half through the use of restorative practices.	Research and develop school-wide objectives to successfully implement restorative practices.	8/15/2019
	School based professional development on restorative practices.	6/1/2020
	School based parent development on restorative practices.	6/1/2020
	Evaluate restorative practices school-wide via discipline data and surveys.	6/30/2021

SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

The intent of Sustainable Practices is to improve the health and wellness of students and staff, reduce the carbon footprint, raise awareness of sustainability issues, and contribute to a more sustainable society.

STRATEGIC GOAL:

In 2021, MHTPSD students contribute to sustainability as a standard curriculum component to achieve health, well-being, and savings.

<i>Objectives to achieve goal</i>	<i>Actions to meet objective(s)</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
I. Students problem solve sustainable issues for the betterment of people and planet.	Update the science, physical education, and social studies curriculum to incorporate sustainable practices and projects.	8/15/2018
	Launch the full deployment of sustainable infused curriculum in all grades, 1-8, that focus on people, planet, prosperity.	8/15/2019
	Conduct a district-wide Community Green Fair, focusing on student problem solving and collaboration around sustainability.	6/1/2020
II. Improve health and wellness of students through choices (food and activity).	Students grades 4-8 develop individual health and wellness plans in PE/Health.	11/15/2018
	Develop Mount Holly standards for school supplied food/menus.	1/28/2019
	Choose food services vendor that meets the expectations of established standards.	6/28/2019
III. MHTPSD is recognized for successes in sustainable practices.	Research Sustainable Jersey Bronze certification process and LEEDs Certification process (district-level, school-level).	12/3/2018
	Select the sustainable actions and paths in order to achieve the certification(s).	3/1/2019
	Complete all actions to achieve certification.	6/30/2020
	Explore facility and curricular modifications to achieve future certifications.	10/1/2020

ACTION PLAN TIMELINE

2017-2018

- Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (CE, Obj 1)

2018-2019

- Growth Mindset (LE, Obj 1)
- Local Education Foundation (ODOC, Obj 1)
- Health/Wellness (Food and Activities) (SP, Obj 2)

2019-2020

- Connect/Align Programs (ODOC, Obj 2)
- Academic and Career Goals (CCR, Obj 1)
- Sustainable Curriculum (SP, Obj 1)
- Real World Experiences (CCR, Obj 2)
- Shared Activities (ODOC, Obj 3)

2020-2021

- Shared Identity (ODOC, Obj 3)
- Appreciation Events (CE, Obj 2)
- 21st Century Learning (LE, Obj 2)
- Restorative Practices (CE, Obj 3)
- Sustainable Certification (SP, Obj 2)

2021-2022

- 21st Century Classroom (LE, Obj 3)
- Reading by Grade 3 (CCR, Obj 3)