

Superintendent Update:

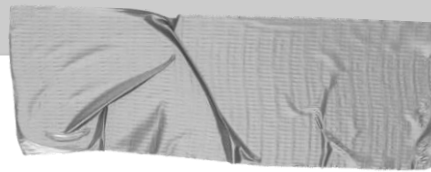
Entry Interview TakeAways

The most basic of all human needs is the need to understand and be understood. The best way to understand people is to listen.

~ Ralph Nichols



**We started
with a
Mission &
Goals...**



**The Herricks School District,
a Community of Learners,
through its educational
programs, promotes
intellectual curiosity and
creative expression, values
diversity, and measures
success by one's personal
development and
contributions to society.**



GOALS

District Goal #1:


Intentional Entry Plan

Successfully implement my Entry Plan to learn as much as possible about the district and community. Ultimately the goal is to use the data collected to:

- 1. Better understand the school community's priorities and goals moving forward*
- 1. Develop a Strategic Plan for the district that will anchor our work for the next 3 - 5 years*

Interviewed the Following Groups...

- *Each Board of Education Trustee*
- *Focus Groups of our Parents/Guardians*
- *Each member of the Leadership Team*
- *Focus Groups of Faculty at each building*
- *Focus Groups of Staff across the district*
- *Focus Groups of Coaches*
- *Focus Groups of Students from each school/program (Gr. 4 - 12)*



After speaking
with each group
or person, I
looked for the
strongest
recurring
themes

The ***STRONGEST*** themes emerged because...

- Topics came up repeatedly across multiple meetings of the same constituent group
- Topics were discussed by multiple members from the same constituent groups
- Topics are most closely connected to our daily work of supporting students

What I Learned From Our Students



Students: What Makes Us Special

- We feel comfortable, safe & seen in our school community
- Value our diversity
- We have access to an abundance of resources to support our learning
- We are ambitious & we work hard to get good grades; we also uplift each other

- We feel like we have a voice in our school community; even the BOE hears us
- We feel like we can advocate for ourselves and each other
- School and community spirit are strong
- Students are welcoming & supportive of each other

Students: What Makes Us Special

- Our teachers are passionate, knowledgeable, & trustworthy
- The staff care about us, care about our mental health & make us feel safe
- The staff support us & give us confidence
- We have a supportive & involved PTA

- There is a strong sense of community in our schools; there are always people you can connect with & feel seen
- There are a lot of options & choices, especially at the secondary level - electives, clubs, music, athletics, etc.
- We have the most incredible music program

Students: Specific Highlights

- Design/STEM challenges in the elementary school years (*ex. Marshmallow Challenge*)
- Field trips like Old Bethpage, the Bronx Zoo, Six Flags & the Cradle of Aviation were great experiences
- PARP was fun
- Our Thanksgiving Potluck celebration was awesome

- Challenge Day at HMS
- Peer Leadership & Peer Communication
- FACS class has been great
- Fitness Center is amazing
- Gemini program & Language Immersion program
- Battle of the Classes
- Homecoming
- Project Lead The Way

Students: One Thing I Would Change

- More consistency in following the testing schedule & space out tests
- More passing time between classes
- Continue to improve bathrooms
- More options for lunch
- More field trips

- More flexible seating options in class (*ES*)
- Continue to improve & add to our playgrounds (*ES*)
- Bring back the snack bar (*ES*)
- Buses can get crowded (*MS*)
- Backpacks are heavy; maybe we need less supplies? (*MS*)
- Tough to get to our lockers (*MS*)

Students: One Thing I Would Change

- Cell service could improve; WiFi is better (*HS*)
- Fitness Center staying open longer for students (*HS*)
- External & internal pressure (*HS*)
- Stigma around SRA (*HS*)
- Additional school counselor (*HS*)



What I Learned From Our Families



Families: What Makes Us Effective

- Diversity in our community enriches our students
- Strong sense of community & belonging in Herricks
- We are a family oriented community with strong support from our PTA
- Families & Faculty/Staff work together for every child
- Space for every learner

- Strong instruction & strong academic program
- Teachers are engaged, thoughtful & dedicated to students
- Educators focus on supporting the whole child
- Educators help inspire a love for learning
- Curriculum is enriched

Families: What Makes Us Effective

- Students who need support get it early
- Kids feel safe because there is a strong connection between teachers & students
- Kids come from strong families who are engaged
- Teachers have the child's best interest at heart
- Robust elective program

- Strong music program
- Strong systems of support
- Strong special education continuum of services
- Diversity is celebrated in schools (i.e. Heritage Day)
- Our kids develop “soft skills” in school, too
- Student voice is important
- Feels like a family

Families: Opportunities for Growth

- **Communication:** *Should be consistent, strategic & intentional; curate to avoid too many blast emails about outside events; establish expectations for communication between staff & families*
- **District Vision:** *Where are we going as a district? What can we expect in the future?*
- **Learning:** *Provide access to curriculum, develop STEM opportunities, diversify district grading & assessment practices*

Families: Opportunities for Growth

- **Technology Integration:** *Establish baseline expectations for Google Classroom, the Portal, etc. use across K - 12*
- **Organizational Skills:** *Executive Functioning; our kids would benefit from explicit instruction & modeling*
- **Supporting All Students:** *Concerned about everyone's mental health; don't want "average" students to get lost*

Families: Opportunities for Growth

- **Transportation:** *Our community would benefit from more busing, including “Late Buses” at the secondary level*
- **Lunch:** *More options (ex. vegetarian, Halal, etc.) would be welcomed*
- **Connections:** *Consider creating a “Buddy Program” for new families in partnership with the PTA; more culturally responsive practices in our schools; considering challenges of a diverse community*

What I Learned From Our Staff



Staff: What Makes Us Effective

- Our kids are the best
- Love working here; proud to tell people we work in Herricks
- Strong connections among staff; support each other
- Lots of collaboration among the staff
- Dedicated to providing a strong academic program

- Strong home/school connections
- Our families are engaged & supportive of the learning
- Active & engaged PTA that supports our programs
- Strong sense of community
- Diverse community enriches the school experience

Staff: What Makes Us Effective

- We value the opportunity to innovate & employ progressive techniques in our learning spaces
- Our students are enthusiastic & love learning
- **Strong connections between staff & students; we educate the whole child**

- Strong music program that enriches the experiences our students have in school
- TAs have the opportunity to grow here & at times get the chance to teach
- **We have a beautiful community where there is a strong sense of connection**

Staff: Opportunities for Growth

- **Communication:** *Should be consistent & clear; transparency in decision making; open communication will help strengthen connections*
- **Culture:** *Nurture positive culture by building relationships & trust; nurture emotionally safe spaces; flatten the organization (to an extent); nurture a sense of belonging & connection; prioritize mental health of students & staff*
- **District Vision:** *What is the trajectory of our district? What can we expect in the future? What/Who will inform our path?*

Staff: Opportunities for Growth

- **Teaching & Learning:** *Increased opportunities for collaboration (within our buildings & beyond); limit the number of new initiatives at any time; nurture more opportunities for autonomy & creativity; time to build student organization skills*
- **Teacher/Staff Leadership:** *Increased voice & choice in professional learning opportunities (differentiated PD); create additional avenues for staff voice in decision making*
- **Organizational Structures:** *recruit more subs (nurses & teachers); opportunities to diversify staff; APs at elementary schools; HS needs an increase in school counselors; Math AIS teacher (elem.); HUDL*



**Where do we
go from
here?**

Next Steps For Us In Herricks

1. Shifts have been made in the area of **communication** (*both internal & external*); how else can we enhance & focus on communication?
1. Certain **systems & structures** are being developed in response to entry interview takeaways (*ex. providing families IEP Student Profile Draft, establishing partnerships for recruitment, intentional PD, etc.*)
 1. Continue finding ways to amplify student and staff **voice & choice** in learning & decision making

Next Steps For Us In Herricks

1. Building on the *Portrait of a Graduate* by embarking on the *Strategic Planning* process to help us identify specific priorities for the next 3 - 5 years & also develop a shared vision we can all own
1. Developing the *Herricks Compact* (*hub for our priorities*)
 1. Deepen our community partnerships & professional learning to ensure our learning spaces are inclusive & **culturally responsive**

A 3D rectangular box with a white interior and a dark blue border. The box is shown from a perspective view, with the top and bottom surfaces shaded in light gray. The text "Thank You!" is written in a dark blue, bold, cursive font, centered on the white interior of the box.

Thank You!