Strategic Thinking: Sinek’s Golden Circle

Why do we need to do this?

How will we do this?

What will we do?

Why = The Purpose
What is your cause? What do you believe?

How = The Process
Specific actions taken to realize the Why.

What = The Result
What: 6 Habits of Strategic Thinkers

1. Anticipate—“peripheral vision”; 3+ moves ahead
2. Challenge—question, reframe, dig to roots
3. Interpret—steady amidst ambiguity; patterns from multiple data sources
4. Decide—take a stand; balance speed and quality
5. Align—engage stakeholders and divergent views
6. Learn—failures and successes as resources; debrief; adjust

Source: http://www.inc.com/paul-schoemaker/6-Habits-of-Strategic-Thinkers.html
Strategic Planning: Resources
Committed to excellence and continuous improvement, the Lower Merion School District strives to ensure that all students achieve their highest level of critical thinking and creativity, that they value themselves and the diversity of others, and that they are knowledgeable, contributing citizens capable of excelling in a rapidly changing world.

This is accomplished by individuals engaging in innovative, active experiences tailored to the myriad ways of learning and in partnership with our community.
The purpose of LMSD’s strategic planning effort is to set the course for education in our community for the next five years and beyond.

By November 2014, the school community will have a living, breathing, actionable plan that will serve as our strategic compass. The goal is to create a clear, concise, accessible set of priorities for Lower Merion School District.

Our vision will guide decisions about curriculum, teaching, programs, operations and staffing.
One Mission, One Vision
Two Documents

Strategic Plan, *All Forward*

Comprehensive Plan (PDE)
“It takes a village to raise a child”
– African Proverb

“Do not confine your children to your own learning for they were born in a different time” – Hebrew Proverb

“If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go with others ”
– African Proverb

“Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success” – Henry Ford
Key Questions

What should high school look like ten years from now?

What should a Lower Merion School District graduate look like (What are the skills, attitudes, and dispositions that we want for all students?)?

What do we value as a district? How do we hold on to our traditions while simultaneously embracing change?
Strategic Planning Process
Convening the LMSD Community
Strategic Planning Process
Affirming the Bold Statements
Bold Statements of Strategic Intent

1. Redefining Success
2. Transformative Curriculum
3. Commitment to Professional Learning
4. Student-Driven Schools
5. Spirit of Community
Bold Statement 1: Redefining Success

Why do we need to do this?

• We are committed to supporting the needs of every child and eliminating achievement gaps
• Success is more than an answer on a test; We need to develop a holistic system of assessments aligned to our values and goals
• There are important outcomes worth measuring that state assessments aren’t designed or intended to reveal

Click here to hear from Steering Committee member, Russ Loue
Bold Statement 1: Redefining Success

How will we do this?

• Create protocols to more comprehensively measure growth
• Reexamine how we currently report growth
• Balance a variety of assessment practices
• Transform graduation requirements and the distribution of courses and experiences
Bold Statement 1: Redefining Success

What is the big idea?

We will transform how we define, measure and report student achievement with a focus on each student’s individualized growth and mastery in areas that extend beyond traditional academic indicators.
Bold Statement 2: Transformative Curriculum

Why do we need to do this?

• The world is interconnected
• We want our students to understand the people, places and systems around them
• We want to maximize opportunities for students
• We want our students to thoughtfully, passionately embrace the pursuit of knowledge

Click here to hear from Steering Committee member, Dan Imaizumi
Bold Statement 2: Transformative Curriculum

How will we do this?

• Expand curricular experiences
• Embed an inquiry-based/thinking process approach
• Apply culturally proficient teaching and learning practices
• Apply a social justice lens to themes in the curriculum
• Apply an interdisciplinary framework to the curriculum
• Create incremental service learning opportunities
• Create opportunities to learn with students from other cultures
• Create more flexible, fluid scheduling and calendar
Bold Statement 2:
Transformative Curriculum

What is the big idea?

We will shift from content area silos to a connected curriculum that prepares students to transfer knowledge and thinking strategies across disciplines. Our commitment to this will drive scheduling at elementary and secondary levels. We will shift traditional structures in the school day and school year to flexible and fluid time periods that allow students to explore relevant content and interests without the barriers of class periods, walls or buildings.
Bold Statement 3: Commitment to Professional Learning

Why do we need to do this?

- We trust our professionals
- We value continuous learning and improvement
- We learn best by doing
- The best educators learn with and from their colleagues and students
- Self-reflection, inquiry and collaboration make innovation more likely
Bold Statement 3: Commitment to Professional Learning

How will we do this?

• Develop a coordinated professional learning plan
• Embed professional learning opportunities during the school day
• Build the capacity of educator-leaders
• Revise the professional learning calendar and its scheduling
• Provide opportunities for educators and parents and guardians to learn together to ensure positive outcomes for each student
Bold Statement 3: Commitment to Professional Learning

What is the big idea?

We will transform our approach to professional learning from a top-down model to one that honors and harnesses our educators’ collective wisdom. We will provide venues across disciplines and buildings for professionals to collaborate, explore and innovate in order to sustain their continual growth and support the intended outcomes of this plan.
Bold Statement 4: Student-Driven Schools

Why do we need to do this?

• When engaged and motivated in developmentally-appropriate ways, students are more likely to persevere, growth is more lasting and learning transfers

• A school culture that is individualized, makes learning relevant and helps students develop a genuine sense of agency is more likely to engage students

Click here to hear from Steering Committee member, Amy Boutselis
Bold Statement 4: Student-Driven Schools

How will we do this?

- Foster a growth mindset
- Develop a protocol for student goal-setting and self-reflection
- Provide students with developmentally-appropriate opportunities to pursue differentiated areas of interest within a framework
- Provide opportunities for more student voice
- Expand enrichment opportunities for students
- Create schedules that increase opportunities for students to be flexibly grouped
Bold Statement 4: Student-Driven Schools

What is the big idea?

We will adjust our system from one characterized by heavily-prescribed requirements to one that affords more self-directed goal setting and positive risk taking within safe learning environments across the K-12 continuum.
Why do we need to do this?

- Lower Merion is characterized by a deep sense of civic pride and involvement and a passion for public education.
- Our community deeply values the ability of our schools to transform lives, develop life-long learners and affect positive change in the world.

Click here to hear from Education Foundation of LM Co-President, Judy Vietri
How will we do this?

• Create a strategic alumni development program
• Create revenue-producing learning opportunities
• Build reciprocal school-community partnerships
• Audit our current communication practices and identify opportunities to strengthen practices moving forward
• Create opportunities for families to successfully transition into our schools
• Engage a broader audience for District events and activities
What is the big idea?

We will transform our approach to community outreach from one that is less coordinated to one that strategically leverages and maximizes community resources to strengthen our schools.
Next Steps

2014-2015 School Year

• Communicate the plan
• Socialize the plan with students, parents, faculty and community
  • Identify bright spots
  • Identify potential learning journeys
• Identify promising prototypes
  • Identify systemic barriers
• Reconvene the Steering Committee
Click here to hear what students are saying about the plan