THE LOWER MERION SCHOOL DISTRICT
STRATEGIC PLANNING—COMMUNITY FORUMS

LISTENING TO COMMUNITY, STUDENT, FACULTY AND STAFF
VOICES & PERSPECTIVES

Lower Merion School District
MISSION STATEMENT

“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
Lower Merion School District
MISSION STATEMENT

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.

---

Strategic Plan Purpose

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 over the next five years and beyond. 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.
Key Aspects of LMSD’s Plan

- **Bold**—"If not us, who?" (Positions us for the future, not just next step from where we are today.)

- **Simple**—"I would not give a fig for the simplicity this side of complexity, but I would give my life for the simplicity on the other side of complexity." —Oliver Wendell Holmes

- **Ours**—Specific to the needs, values and priorities of our communities, schools and students. Deeply informed by our education leaders, our teachers, our parents, our students, our community.

Key Strategic Planning Structures

### Leadership Team
- Wagner Marseille, Assistant Superintendent
- Brian Cote, Supervisor of K-12 Data, Instructional Technology and Business
- Scott Eveslage, Principal, Harriton High School
- Gerry Fitzpatrick-Dorian, Director of Elementary Education
- Chris Hall, Principal, Welsh Valley Middle School
- Dan Martino, Principal, Cynwyd Elementary
- Gwen Nartowicz, Coordinator of Professional Learning and Gifted
- ShaVon Savage, Administrator of Special Student Programs
- Megan Shafer, Senior Director of Policy, Personnel and School Program
- Joanna Wexler, Supervisor of Student Services
- Doug Young, Director of Communications and

### Steering Committee
- Key decision-making body of about 67 people
- Includes administrative leadership, and diverse representation of board, parents, faculty, staff, students, and community members
- 4 daylong+ meetings with explorations between
Overarching 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? And how do we hold on to our traditions while simultaneously embracing change/innovation?

For more information: [http://www.lmsd.org/strategic-planning](http://www.lmsd.org/strategic-planning)

LMSD Strategic Planning Process

Observe, observe, observe

Act in an instant

Retreat and reflect: Allow the inner knowing to emerge

Ongoing Communication

Ongoing Board Engagement

Strategic Plan Adoption (November)

Public Comment (October)

Leadership Team Crystallizing and Writing (summer)

Steering Committee Check-in (Fall)

Steering Committee Presencing Retreat (May 22nd)

Steering Committee Immersion, Dialogue, and Learning Journeys (May 5th & 15th)

Surveys

Data Collection

Focus Groups

Open Forums
Open Space Runs on Passion and Responsibility

• Passion
  – Motivates you to propose a topic

• Responsibility
  – Keep everyone in the conversation
  – Get to the heart of the matter
  – Makes sure there are notes

---

Agenda—Thursday, April 24th

6:00-6:30 Arrive and Mingle

6:30-7:10 Welcome & Build Our Agenda
  - Dr. Wagner Marseille, Assistant Superintendent
  - Insyte Partners: Marie McCormick and Liz Solms

7:15-8:00 Conversation Series 1

8:00-8:05 Break and Switch

8:05-8:45 Conversation Series 2

8:45-8:50 Back to Circle

8:50-9:30 Full Group Debrief

9:30 Adjourn
**Conversation Starters**

What are the most important conversations we can have to bring your voices into the strategic planning process?

- I want to talk about bringing more real world application into students’ education.
- How can we make our use of technology more impactful?
- I’d like to convene a conversation about how we can make sure we are addressing the needs of ALL learners.
- I’d like to talk about our kids’ social and emotional health.
- I want to talk about collaboration and professional development for faculty.

---

**The Four Principles of Open Space**

1. Whoever comes are the right people.
2. Whenever it starts is the right time.
3. Whatever happens is the only thing that could have.
4. When it’s over, it’s over.

Be prepared to be surprised.
The Law of Two Feet

Public Forums

- April 22, 6:30-9:30 PM, BCMS small gym
- April 24, 6:30-9:30 PM, WVMS gym
- April 27, 2:30-5:30 PM, LMHS Cafeteria