**SOMSD’s Strategic Planning Process Update**

With the arrival of new Superintendent Dr. John J. Ramos, Sr., SOMSD embarked on a journey to develop a new Strategic Plan which will serve as a blueprint for the future of our schools.

From his first day in SOMSD, Superintendent Ramos has worked to create a context for administrators, teaching staff, families and students to think more broadly about the purpose and process of education, including by sharing the work of Tony Wagner in *Creating Innovators* and by engaging the full community in a dialogue about the future of our schools.

Rather than trying to adapt an old educational system designed for the needs of the industrial era to be more relevant to the needs of today, the goal of the Strategic Plan is to create a new system which prepares students for a future that we have yet to imagine. This process will be a collaborative effort so that the plan ultimately represents the values of our community and the needs of our students.

The Strategic Planning process has multiple phases, and we are striving to ensure that a wide variety of perspectives are included in every step along the way. This began with the Superintendent’s Listening Tour in which the Superintendent met with community groups and individuals; then continued on to the Education Summit, where the Superintendent invited the full community to share their ideas, recommendations, and concerns on the issues most important to them. The Summit conversations continued online through the month of December, and the community has been invited to share input in other ways including the KIVA on Mathematics in December and our 24/7 communications tool *Let’s Talk!*

The next phase of the process is the development of a Strategic Directions document. A committee of about 25 people from across the community will engage in a 3-day facilitated process to co-create a document which sets the vision and direction for the district’s new Strategic Plan. They are using data from a wide variety of sources, including notes from the topic rooms at the Education Summit, notes from the Math KIVA, the new Board policy on Access and Equity, the revised Board policy on Academic Placement, and documents from other educational institutions.

SOMSD’s Strategic Planning process is being facilitated by Rocco Rainone, Jr., and Marilyn Gounaris from SoarPoint Associates, thanks to a generous $15,000 contribution from the Achieve Foundation. Mr. Rainone and Ms. Gounaris attended SOMSD’s November 2015 Education Summit and the data synthesized from that event is being incorporated into the next phase of developing the Strategic Direction document. Mr. Rainone and Ms. Gounaris have a wealth of experience in guiding both school districts and individual schools through comprehensive strategic planning processes, including serving for 10 years as senior staff consultants with the Rhode Island State Department of Education, and 10 years as private consultants working with schools throughout the Northeast including Albany, NY and Bridgeport, CT.

**Strategic Planning Timeline**

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| **Phase** | **Task** | **Timeframe** |
| **Data Collection** | Collect feedback from the community about ideas, suggestions, hopes and concerns in a variety of ways including:   * Community-wide Education Summit, * KIVA on Mathematics, * Town hall meetings with the Superintendent, * Student forum, * Individual dialogues using *Let’s Talk!* and other communication tools. | October 2015 – January 2016 |
| **Data Synthesis** | Incorporate all feedback collected by January 4th into synthesis of the data to serve as foundation for Strategic Plan. | December 2015 – January 2016 |
| **Strategic Direction** | Committee of stakeholders develops a Strategic Direction document stating our mission for the next 3-5 years, the values which will guide our work, the objectives for students’ performance, and the strategies that adults are committing to in order to support students in reaching these objectives. The final document will be submitted to the Board of Education for review and approval. | January 2016 |
| **Action Planning** | Working committees create specific, concrete plans for each strategy, including who will be responsible for what, by when. | February – August 2016 |
| **Implementation and Monitoring** | The Strategic Plan will serve as the blueprint to guide the District’s work for the next 3-5 years. The Superintendent will update the Board and community monthly on progress in implementation. | August 2016 and beyond |
| **Formal Reassessment of Strategic Plan** | After 3 years of implementation and fine tuning, the entire plan will be reviewed and adjusted, if necessary, to account for progress made and any changed circumstances. | 2019-2020 School Year |