



**Institute for Education Leadership, Research and Renewal**

**Proposal for Comprehensive Strategic Planning for the Lyndhurst School District**

**Introduction**

As the Lyndhurst School District pursues its goal of improving every aspect of its educational community, including but not limited to its:

- reputation as a high performing system,
- efficient utilization of the school finances , facilities, technology, capital and human resources,
- quality of district and building-level leadership, teacher effectiveness and student learning ,

we cannot exaggerate the significance of strong determination to achieve these common, shared goals.

As Max DePree said, “the first task of leadership is to help define reality”. The primary function of the consulting team is to guide school district leadership to focus on “what is” and “what ought to be”. The Board of Education, Superintendent of Schools, and school administrators must lead in such a way that ownership is created on every level of the school community. Developing a unity of purpose is crucial to the success of this initiative.

Leaders must generate and sustain trust. Trust and team building will engender commitment and promote action necessary to produce results. Respect and openness will result in optimism which, in turn, will lead to cooperative, professional endeavors. According to Bennis and Goldsmith, empowerment is at the heart of all successful organizations.

This proposal challenges leaders at every level of the Lyndhurst School District to be reflective professionals and to engage in a collaborative discovery process. The following proposal is a framework of strategies to:

- engage in a process of inquiry and reflection
- build on awareness and accountability
- identify and reinforce district strengths and areas in need of improvement
- define and achieve district and professional goals
- align values to the work of educating children
- focus on decision making for the best interest of students
- improve working relations, teamwork, organizational strength and productivity
- improve the quality of leadership, teacher effectiveness and student learning

The Institute for Education Leadership, Research and Renewal, under the direction of Dr. Michael J. Osnato, has a demonstrated history of guiding school districts to achieve successful reform. The following is a proposal for comprehensive strategic planning for the Lyndhurst School District.

# **Institute for Education Leadership, Research and Renewal**

## **Two –Year Proposal for Comprehensive Strategic Planning for the Lyndhurst School District**

**Start Date: December 1, 2013**

### **I. Data Gathering for Board of Education Retreat in January**

#### **Topics**

- Academics
- Financial
- Capital and Operations

#### **Strategies**

- Development of Comparative Statistics Based on NJ Department of Education Data
- Interviews with individual board members
- Selected Focus Groups
- All materials to be placed in a data base for the Board of Education and Superintendent for the Goal Setting Session

January-February 2014

**II. Two day Board of Education Retreat preceded by 2 prior meetings between the BOE President and the Superintendent of Schools.**

Establishment of Three (3) Long-Term Strategic Goals, involving:

- Academics
- Perception and Communication
- Financial Operations

March 2014

**III. Board of Education and Superintendent to Identify Key Objectives under each Goal**

**Goal #1: Academic Improvement for all Lyndhurst School District students**

Objectives:

- Increase number of Advanced Placement Courses
- Increase number of A.P. students scoring 3 or better
- Assess student progress in these courses by marking period

Strategy:

- Superintendent and Administrative Team (with the assistance of the consultants) will develop a 'Responsibility Chart', 'Timelines', and a 'Quarterly Progress Chart' for the Board of Education on each objective

**Goal #2: Maintain Financial Stability and Planning for the School District**

Objective:

- Monitor 5-Year Facilities Plan (Responsibility-Business Administrator)
  - Timeline: Quarterly Reports, first of which to be completed by March 1, 2014

**May 2014**

**IV. Integration of Board of Education-Superintendent Goals and Objectives at the Building Level**

Strategies:

- Each building will develop a 'Planning Team' of 5-7 members (including the principal)
- Teams will be trained by consultants
- The entire administrative team will receive training by the consultants
- Each building level team will develop a plan that is aligned to the Board's Goals and Objectives
- Each building will also have its own unique objectives.
- These plans will be presented to the Superintendent and Board of Education at a Public Meeting in May 2014

**June 2014**

- V. A. Based on building reports and additional data from each goal, the Board will modify Goals and Objectives for the 2014-15 school year (by June 2014)**
- B. Building Teams will modify their plans based on any new data and have their facilities adopt them for 2014-15 by June 30, 2014.**

## **School Year 2014-15**

Consultants will work with the Board of Education and Superintendent to monitor progress, produce quality reports and provide additional training. This will involve the consultants sitting in on Central Office and Building Level meetings at least twice. Consultants will produce a comprehensive Status Report on the Strategic Planning efforts at the District and Building Levels with recommendations.



## Summary

Over the course of the next two academic years, the consulting team will facilitate a Retreat for the Board of Education and Strategic Planning forums, engage school administrators in the analysis and disaggregation of data and the development of district and school goals, and moderate conversations with focus groups. There is a distinct possibility that as a result of the outcomes of these activities, a specific set of Professional Development Initiatives will be established. The emergence of identified needs and desired outcomes will necessitate the expansion of administrative coaching and the enhancement of teacher pedagogical skills. This will lead to a climate and culture of continuous improvement of the teaching-learning-assessment process.

According to the Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC), ensuring effective district leadership begins with the following questions:

- What do our P-12 students need to know, understand, and do?
- What do teachers and related certified staff need to know, understand, and do to increase student learning?
- What do school principals and supervisors of instruction need to know, understand, and do to support teachers and building-level personnel to increase student learning?
- What do district leaders need to know, understand, and do to support principals and building-level personnel to increase student learning and achieve highly effective school environments?

The foundation of accountability is the educator's understanding of the learning standards and deep understanding of what mastery looks like. The potential value of analyzing and disaggregating student performance data is only as good as one's understanding of the learning what data represents.

Seton Hall University Institute for Education Leadership, Research and Renewal embark on this leadership journey with the Lyndhurst Board of Education it's Superintendent and the professional staff.

**Consulting Team:**

Dr. Michael J. Osnato

Dr. Jan Furman

Dr. Daniel Gutmore

Dr. Frank Auriemma

Dr. James A. Corino

Respectfully submitted,

Michael J. Osnato, Ed. D.

James A. Corino, Ed. D.