

**Canton School Committee
Strategic Planning Focus Group
Tuesday, March 28th, 2023
Minutes**

- A. **Call to Order:** As the meeting was virtual, Ms. Merenda asked for verbal attendance with a yea:

Kendall O'Halloran	yea
Maureen Moran	yea
Nichola Gallagher	yea
Kristian Merenda	yea

Chair Merenda called for a motion to open the Tuesday, March 28th, Canton School Committee 2023 Strategic Planning Focus Group at 5:03 pm. Kendall O'Halloran made the motion; Maureen Moran seconded. A roll call vote was unanimous at 4-0 and recorded as follows:

Kendall O'Halloran	yea
Maureen Moran	yea
Nichola Gallagher	yea
Kristian Merenda	yea
4 yeas	0 nays

Attendees:

Kendall O'Halloran
Maureen Moran
Nichola Gallagher
Kristian Merenda
Laura Arboleda (arrived at 5:05 pm)
Superintendent Derk Folan
Joanne Campbell, Recording Secretary

Guests:

Gary Maestras, Facilitator, Teaching and Learning Alliance
Zeffro Gianetti, Facilitator, Teaching and Learning Alliance

- B. **Topic:**

1. **Strategic Planning Focus Group:** Mr. Maestras and Mr. Gianetti introduced themselves, chronicling their professional course and expertise. Mr. Maestras explained the makeup of the Canton Strategic Planning Committee followed by a brief description of the three phase approach of the strategic planning process:
 1. Phase 1-Building a foundation where goals and a plan will be developed;
 2. Phase 2-Building the Plan—identify key features of the district plan and collect data-quantitative data from surveys and qualitative data from forums;
 3. Phase 3-Implementation of the Strategic Plan. The final plan is expected to be presented at the Thursday, June 8th, 2023 School Committee meeting.

Mr. Maestras launched a discussion by asking the group to think about the strengths, challenges (what needs improvement), and opportunities (things that could be capitalized upon) and share their thoughts. Considerations are divided by category in the table below:

STRENGTHS	CHALLENGES	OPPORTUNITIES
CHS AP courses opened up to 10th grade students (MM)		
Community Engagement/CAPT engagement; Sense of community across all schools		
PACE Program (Program or Academic and Curriculum Excelsior) at the elementary level	No PACE at the Middle School level; Lack of leveling at 6th grade leads to less challenging classes for some	
Continuum of education-GMS and CHS teachers communicating with each other	GMS is the weak link—need more focus/communication. Start clubs in the middle school	New Middle School building—an opportunity to look at “optimal learning” and its impact on culture and community
Many and varied class options available to CHS students	Bring similar agency in choice to the middle school	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adding world languages in earlier grades and continuing all of them through high school 2. add more English and History electives to CHS programs. (current program requires 3 American History classes) 3. student driven curriculum
	Increase in students with higher needs. More resources are needed; behavior challenges and how they impact entire class	Create environments designed to support these students;
	Class size	
	Outside funding? Supply chain issues and rising costs are concerning	Resolutions-local gardens; locally sourced and sustainable food supplies?
	Social-Emotional learning—Support of every student—concern was voiced over transgender support. Emotional support from teachers is hard to accomplish for every student—connections and relationships should grow	District goals and PD opportunities to help develop teacher/student 1:1 relationships

	naturally.	
STRENGTHS	CHALLENGES	OPPORTUNITIES
		<p>Earlier introduction and exploration of career-planning. Community based partnership in combination with Guidance; more deliberate connections that give “awareness of pathways”</p> <p>Junior Achievement-address through high school and include in curriculum-particularly financial literacy.</p> <p>Considerations: MBAE (MAss Business Alliance for Education) or dual enrollment (high school/college) as seen in surrounding towns (Mansfield)</p>
		Curriculum-more breadth and depth of curriculum choices to challenge students
		What have other towns done to improve gaps? ie-Blue Ribbon schools
	Necessary to hire a Director of Communications?	Improve outgoing communications in the district. Must be two-way and monitored for socially responsible conversation in order to be successful.
	Serious consideration should be given to hiring a DEI Diretor	

- C. **Adjournment:** Chair Merenda thanked all for their time and thoughtful comments, then called for a motion to adjourn the Tuesday, March 28th, Canton School Committee 2023 Strategic Planning Focus Group at 6:25 pm. Kendall O’Halloran made the motion; Maureen Moran seconded. A roll call vote was unanimous at 5-0 and recorded as follows:

Kendall O’Halloran	yea
Maureen Moran	yea
Nichola Gallagher	yea

Kristian Merenda	yea
Laura Arboleda	yea
5 yeas	0 nays