



DISTRICT News

WEST SHORE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Spring 2012

Comprehensive Strategic Planning Process

All Districts in Pennsylvania are required to participate in cyclic strategic planning. There are requirements for strategic planning embedded in the *No Child Left Behind Act* of 2001 and the current version of the Pennsylvania School Code of 1949. This planning process is a rigorous one, designed with the intent of helping every child succeed as well as meet the Pennsylvania's academic standards.

The District's Comprehensive Strategic Planning Committee and its eight subcommittees have been working since August to develop the new Comprehensive Strategic Plan by following Pennsylvania's scripted planning process. In August, three goal areas were identified for the new Plan. These goals were Student Achievement, Community Involvement, and Technology Literacy Among Students and Staff. As part of the planning process, the following three goal areas were defined more clearly and aligned with the prioritized results of the systemic needs assessment completed by the committee.

- Students will demonstrate at least grade/course level proficiency as measured by individually personalized, locally standardized, or required state assessments.
- The District will foster student involvement with community partners and seek active community support for instructional and extracurricular student success.
- The District will provide students and staff the skills necessary to establish and maintain technological literacy.

In March, the subcommittees started developing action plans designed to make progress toward the three goals. The action plans being developed by the subcommittees will be shared, as part of the draft Plan, with the Comprehensive Strategic

Planning Committee near the end of the 2011-2012 school year. Work will continue on the draft Plan during the summer.

Following Pennsylvania's planning process, the Plan will be submitted to the School Board as a proposal and shared with the community in October 2012, with formal District approval scheduled for November 2012. After approval by the School Board, the Plan will be submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Education for implementation on July 1, 2013. The final Plan will provide direction to guide the District's mission, vision, and actions through June 30, 2016.

For periodic updates on the status of the Comprehensive Strategic Planning Process, please view the materials which have been posted to Comprehensive Strategic Planning under the Community tab on our website.



Thank
You...

to the
Phillips
Group
(\$5,000)
and Wells
Fargo
Advisors
(\$2,500)
for their
generous
donations
to the
West Shore
Foundation.



Graduate Survey

As part of the District's ongoing commitment to educational improvement and research-based teaching practices, the District has turned to its graduating students to help assess how effective we, as a District, are doing.

The survey administered last May garnered information from Cedar Cliff and Red Land Senior Classes of 2011. The overarching goals of the study were:

- To obtain important and meaningful information from graduates regarding the quality of high school programs.
- To provide district and building level administrators with a clear perspective of the high schools' strengths and weaknesses, thus enabling them to effectively focus their efforts on those areas that most need improvement.

A formal survey summary has been presented to the administration with a breakdown of the following issues.

Quality of Preparation

LEARNING SKILLS	GRADUATES THAT FELT ADEQUATELY PREPARED
Appreciation of Arts	79%
Computer/Technology Skills	82%
Grammar Skills	95%
Listening Skills	95%
Mathematics Skills	90%
Oral Presentation Skills	94%
Problem Solving/Thinking Skills	93%
Reading Skills	96%
Research Skills	94%
Science Skills	96%
Study Skills	82%
Teamwork Skills	95%
World Language Skills	82%
Writing Skills	92%



Guidance Services

Respondents rated the overall quality of the guidance department's services favorably with the strongest areas including schedule adjustment services, course planning services, help with academic concerns, help with personal concerns, and post-graduate school planning.

Miscellaneous Issues

Other noteworthy items that were gathered from the survey results include:

- Extra-curricular activities were rated favorably.
- Possible areas of concern were drugs, alcohol, theft, and cheating.
- A majority indicated they were treated with respect by administration, teachers, fellow students, and support staff.
- Respondents rated the overall quality of both high schools as very favorable with the largest percentage of respondents assessing the overall quality as generally positive.
- 76% of students indicated they worked at a part-time job during the school year.

HOURS WORKED DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR

1-10 hours per week	15%
11-20 hours per week	32%
21-30 hours per week	17%
30 or more hours per week	7%

REASONS FOR WORKING

Other	27%
Car / Car Insurance	26%
Personal Expenses	20%
Saving for College	20%
Gain Work Experience	8%
Family's Financial Need	1%

Where Do We Go From Here?

In order to continue to move forward, the District needs to continue to evaluate academic programs, instructional methods, extra-curricular activities, and culture and climate to ensure all West Shore students are getting the best all-around education.

For more detailed information, a copy of the study can be viewed in the office of the Director of Secondary Education, Dr. Tammi Jones.

Congratulations to the Class of 2012

Please plan to join us at the following commencement ceremonies to be held at the West Shore Stadium, weather permitting.

- **Cedar Cliff High School**

June 4, 6:30 p.m.

- **Red Land High School**

June 5, 6:30 p.m.

Best wishes to those students graduating this year!

Common Core Standards for Pennsylvania

The Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association, with participation of the overwhelming majority of states, set a goal to create standards that are, "research and evidence-based, aligned with college and work expectations, include rigorous content and skills and are internationally benchmarked." Pennsylvania has chosen to adopt the PA Common Core Standards which encompasses these national standards with approved Pennsylvania additions. Additional information can be found on Pennsylvania Department of Education's (PDE's) Standards Aligned System (SAS) website at www.pdesas.org.

What this means for our District, as well as districts across the Commonwealth, is the District must realign our Mathematics and English/Language Arts curriculum from the Pennsylvania State Standards to the PA Common Core Standards. A comparison between the two sets of standards has been conducted at PDE, and our local intermediate unit (Capital Area Unit #15) is providing training for our teacher leaders and administrators to make the successful transition to the implementation and assessment of the PA Common Core Standards.

A PDE-proposed schedule is as noted below.

2012-2013

Transition to PA Common Core Standards in Math and Language Arts in grades K-5; Begin transition in grades 6-12.

2013-2014

Grades 3-5 Math and English Language Arts PSSAs based on PA Common Core Standards. *(No separate writing assessment)*

2014-2015

Grades 3-8 PSSAs based on PA Common Core Standards. *(No separate writing assessment)*



West Shore School District

Mission Statement

The West Shore School District is committed to providing all students with a quality education to prepare them to be responsible and successful citizens.

Board of School Directors

M. Todd Ambrose, President
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Administration

Jemry L. Small, Ed.D.
Superintendent
David M. Zuilkoski, Ed.D.
Assistant Superintendent

The West Shore School District shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, marital status, or disability, in accordance with Title VI-VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Act Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation of the Handicapped Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, in its educational and vocational programs and in its recruitment and employment practices. Inquiries concerning the application of Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, Section 504, the ADA and the implementing regulations may be referred to the Director of Human Resources, 507 Fishing Creek Road, P. O. Box 803, New Cumberland, PA 17070-0803, telephone (717) 938-9577.



Share Your THOUGHTS

If you have a concern, question, suggestion, or solution, please share it with me.

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New District Committees Formed

Community Advisory Committee

The Board and Administration continue to look for ways to increase opportunities for community members to have a voice in an advisory capacity. We are pleased to announce the creation of a Community Advisory Committee (CAC). The Community Advisory Committee members consist of parents, community representatives, and school district employees. Members of CAC support the West Shore School District's mission statement – excellence in education and acknowledge the difficult task of balancing student needs with community resources. To learn more about this committee or to obtain an application form, please go to the Community Advisory Committee link of the Community tab on the District website. Applications are being accepted until April 23.

Revenue Generating Committee

A committee comprised of District staff and community members has been working to consider alternative revenue sources for the District. The focus of this committee's work is to identify potential sources of revenue that do not conflict with the mission and efforts of the West Shore Foundation or booster organizations currently supporting a variety of student activities and programs. The work done by this committee is found on the sponsorship link of the Community tab on the District website.

As part of the work by the committee, the District expanded opportunities for advertising at the District level. In addition to advertising in the West Shore stadium, which has been possible since 2010, businesses now have the option of advertising in several District level publications.

On Board is the first District level publication to contain business advertising. This electronic publication is produced each month, October through May, after the study sessions and Board meetings have been held. *On Board* provides a summary of Board discussions and actions as well as previews upcoming meeting dates. *On Board* began including business advertisements in February 2012. Past and future issues of *On Board* may be found on the District's website.

The *Shore Light* is published one time each semester, featuring articles that spotlight student achievements, classroom activities, and school-wide initiatives. Beginning in May, *Shore Light* will also contain business advertising. For more information about this and other advertising opportunities, please go to our website or contact Dr. Ryan Argot (rargot@wssd.k12.pa.us).