

Little Silver's Strategic Plan Final Report

The following summary reflects the results of the district's Strategic Plan that spanned the 2008-2009 school year through the 2012-2013 school year.

Most objectives cycle through three phases: *Research*, *Development*, and *Assessment*.

Goal Area #1

Curriculum and Instruction

Obj. #1 – Explore alternatives to the current middle school schedule.

Research

- Create a committee of parents, staff and administrators to research best practices for middle school:
 1. Contact the National Middle School Association for resources and assistance
 2. Determine if there is a need to hire a consultant from NMSA
 3. Explore the possibility of using the Toolkit Evaluation
- Gather examples of other middle school schedules from comparable districts (size, economic factor group) including academics and other areas such as G&T, orchestra, band, extra curricular activities
 1. Highlight outstanding facets
 2. Re-envision the current schedule without being limited to STI in an effort to explore viable options
- Visit other school districts
- Review staffing needs based on model
- Explore budgetary implications of staffing
- Research current schedule of extra activities such as DEAR, FISH, Cultural Arts, school play, peer leaders, school concerts, book fair, election, etc. and the effect on academic programming
- Elicit staff input for curricular tie-ins for cultural arts assemblies

Development

- Organize the MPS schedule to delete or re-envision the elective block, i.e. a shift from non-academic to more academic offerings
- Develop a survey for the students, parents, and staff regarding the use of the elective block
- Distribute survey and tally results
- Analyze data from district-wide PD survey to generate list of staff needs such as:
 - vertical articulation K-12
 - subject articulation K-12
 - Revisions NJCCCS
- Develop a schedule based on this selected model for the year 2009-2010
- Include *Action Research* and *Professional Learning Communities*

Assessment

- Create a report of what a best model for MP would be as a 5-8 school
- Implement new schedule

Results

The middle school schedule underwent two changes during the five year period. [Changes for the 2009-2010 schedule included the following:](#)

- The day began with a 20-minute Circle of Power and Respect meeting
(This is part of the *Developmental Designs for Middle School* program that is designed to meet the social, emotional, physical, and intellectual needs of young adolescents. It is grounded in the belief that healthy, enjoyable relationships are the foundation for success in school. The cost for the program was very generously donated by a LS family).
- We added a 6th grade Social Studies teacher.
(This was part of the 2009-2010 budgetary planning process. Previously, 6th grade Social Studies was taught by a variety of different individuals.)
- A full time Health/PE teacher was hired.
- Physical Education was pulled out of Language Arts during one of the two double periods of Language Arts, two of the six days of the cycle as it had been in the past.
- The “elective period” changed to an “enrichment period” whereby students cycled through various enrichment classes. In addition, the following were offered during the enrichment period:
 - ✓ Band
 - ✓ Chorus
 - ✓ Orchestra
 - ✓ Math and Literacy labs
 - ✓ Gifted and Talented independent projects

[Changes for the 2012-2013 schedule included the following additions:](#)

- Health and Physical education was no longer taken out of the Language Arts block. Students received an uninterrupted block of language arts every day.
- In order to have uninterrupted blocks of Language Arts every day, Health & PE was backed up to Spanish (each was offered 3 of 6 days in a cycle). This resulted in an increase in Spanish instruction in 5th and 6th grade but a decrease in 7th and 8th grade. Overall there was a marginal decrease in Spanish over a four year period.

Obj. #2 – Research the benefits of half versus full-day Kindergarten programs

Research

- Form a committee of teachers, administrators, and parents to explore various Kindergarten models:
 1. Full day
 2. ½ day
 3. Staggered
 4. ¾ day extended
 5. Subscription
- Research best practices (pros and cons) including social and emotional research to determine what constitutes a developmentally appropriate kindergarten program
- Survey current kindergarten teachers, first grade teachers, and administrators to determine the strengths and challenges of the current LS model

- Survey parents of incoming 1st grade students (from other programs) about why they opted to not send their child to LS
- Develop a questionnaire based on research to be used during site visitations to other districts
- Visit existing programs in districts similar to LS
 - ✓ Full day
 - ✓ Staggered
 - ✓ ¾ day extended
 - ✓ Subscription
- During the visitations...
 - ✓ Obtain schedules
 - ✓ Answer questionnaire
 - ✓ Complete rubric
- Compare and contrast completed questionnaires and school schedules to determine pros and cons

Development

- The committee selects a model that best addresses the research and meets the needs of Little Silver students
- The committee researches the budgetary ramifications and logistics of the committee-recommended model including what additional facilities and staffing would be needed to support the selected model
- They compare ongoing financial costs of the proposed model as compared to our existing half-day model
- In May 2011, a presentation was made to the BOE regarding possible options for a full-day Kindergarten program in Little Silver. The BOE requested additional information before making a decision. Another presentation was made in September 2011 addressing the Board's questions.

Assessment

- Full-day Kindergarten will open in September 2013.

Results

- All of the aforementioned steps were completed between the 2008-2009 and 2011-2012 school years
- As noted above, the BOE requested additional information after the May 2011 presentation.
- There was an additional presentation to the BOE before they agreed to pursue a referendum
- There were two presentations at PTO meetings.
- A Community Action Team (CAT Team) was created that helped promote the passage of the referendum
- A referendum was passed in March 2012
- A timeline of events for opening full day K was created.

Construction timeline:

1. Design Development Documents

- ✓ Meeting to review design; soil boring completion and preparation of updated budget all completed by August 10, 2012

2. Contract Documents

- ✓ Design reviews; final submission to DOE, Freehold Soils Conservation, and Red Bank code review; as well as courtesy Planning Board Presentation all completed by October 2, 2012
- 3. **Bidding**
 - ✓ Bid advertisement, bid opening, bid award (Dec. 13th BOE meeting), and Notice to proceed were all completed by December 14, 2012 (Rampart Construction)
- 4. **Construction Schedule**
 - ✓ January 15, 2013 Submit all Shop Drawings
 - ✓ March 25-June 20, 2013 Work in Existing Building
 - ✓ March 25-31, 2013 Mobilization of Site Fencing
 - ✓ June 21, 2013 Tentative last day for students
 - ✓ August 17, 2013 Completion Date
 - ✓ August 17-29, 2013 Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment
 - ✓ September 2013 Occupancy

Obj. #3 – Incorporate global perspectives and modern day issues in the curricula and beyond

Research

- As part of the math curriculum revision, correlate the concept of money to current economic issues and utilize Type 2 writing
- Review existing Social Studies curriculum K-8 to determine if there is a global perspective
- Review existing literature collections in the media center, classrooms, and anthologies to look for global perspectives
- Research the feasibility of shifting the instructional sequence of the current Social Studies curriculum to start with the modern world and move to a historical perspective
- Gather examples of global offerings from other middle schools
- Explore the use of building objectives to promote a global perspective
- Research the possibility of future building objectives to have a theme such as: Central America, Asia, Africa, and Europe
- Explore the use of technology to assist in the delivery of instruction

Development

- Determine ways to deliver instruction with a global perspective
- Have revised curricula reflect global perspectives
- Reflect activities pertaining to global perspective in Rubicon Atlas Curriculum Mapping Program
- Based on research completed during the 2010-2011 school year, determine if an integrated, thematically-based approach to incorporating a global perspective is appropriate
- Incorporate on-line global projects
- Provide on-line access to news magazines, etc.

Assessment

- Integrate a global perspective into the revised curricula
- Implementation of new curricula that integrates global perspectives

Results

- The revision of K-8 math curricula included instructional objectives that call for students to recognize, understand, and apply concepts related to currency and the structure of the global financial system. Support of these concepts begins on a very basic level in Kindergarten and graduates to an advanced level by Eighth Grade so that students are effectively prepared to enter high school with requisite knowledge and skills to be successful during their secondary education career.
- The timeline for implementing some of these research objectives was influenced by the fact that on June 16, 2010, the State Board of Education adopted a resolution calling for New Jersey’s curriculum standards to be aligned with national Common Core Standards. The Common Core Standards is a state-led initiative that aims to establish basic, uniform education requirements across the country. The standards were (and are) being phased in over time as reflected below:

Revised Core Curriculum Content Standards (K-12)	Adoption of Revised Standards	Implementation of Revised Curricula
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language Arts Literacy • Mathematics 	2010	September 1, 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science 	June 17, 2009	September 1, 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual and Performing Arts • Comprehensive Health and Physical Education • Technology • 21st Century Life and Careers • World Languages 	June 17, 2009	September 1, 2012
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Studies 	Fall 2009	September 1, 2012

Additional information is provided at www.corestandards.org

- All Little Silver curricula has been aligned to the new standards. All curricula is visible to the community at <http://www.littleschools.org/lss/Departments/Curriculum>
- Since the time we created our strategic plan, the requirement to have building objectives changed. We no longer have them. While our current district initiatives do not specifically speak to “global perspectives”, there are global perspectives tied to the new Common Core Standards in Language Arts. We have been incorporating global perspectives into our Balanced Literacy workshops including using mentor books that support global issues. In addition, the Technology Plan incorporates global issues with 21st Century tools. Also, teachers were required to develop SMART (**S**pecific **M**easureable **A**ttainable **R**ealistic **T**imely) goals as part of their PLCs (**P**rofessional **L**earning **C**ommunities). Some of the teachers have goals that incorporate global perspectives.
- We currently use technology to assist in the delivery of instruction. The technology and/or G&T teachers are incorporating activities that address global perspective into their lessons. At Point Road, 4th grade G&T students participated in a Global Gallery Walkthrough. In terms of the walkthrough...Once the students had completed all aspects of their Glogs, they were provided the opportunity to practice presenting their information with the other students involved in the project in preparation for the Global Gallery Walkthrough. This entailed students setting up a “station” (school desk) with a laptop and small trinkets they had either

found or had purchased about their country and then having their peers and families visit the countries as students presented their findings and displayed their Glogs. Some students were even more industrious and they created their own find-a-words or crossword puzzles about their countries as handouts to their “visitors”.

- Many of the computer-related projects at Markham Place have a global perspective including things such as: Google Earth projects and Geocaching <http://www.geocaching.com/> Geocaching is a real-world, outdoor treasure hunting game. Players try to locate hidden containers, called geocaches, using GPS enabled devices and then share their experiences on-line. Geocaching is a cross-curricular activity.

Obj. #4 – Explore alternatives to better suit academic, social, and developmental needs of gifted and talented students

Research

- Form a committee of teachers, administrators, and parents to:
 1. Explore various G&T models such as differentiation, pull-out, enrichment
 2. Explore various curricular options
 3. Explore various identification procedures
 4. Develop visitation protocol based on research to be used during visitations, i.e.
 - * Develop questionnaire
 - * Develop rubric
 5. Visit and analyze existing programs in districts similar to LS and obtain schedule
- Survey and/or interview students, parents and teachers about the existing Challenge program, the identification process and what they would like to see included in a revised program.
- Work with scheduling committee at MP to determine possible solutions to address some of the concerns expressed during the strategic planning process
- Teachers to review existing programs such as accelerated math in 5+ and advanced math in 6+
- Research possibilities of accelerated courses or advanced placement in other curricular areas
- Research curriculum options for selected challenge model focusing on curriculum that reflects adaptations in content, product, process and learning environment
- Review the existing identification process and identify ways that this would need to be revised based on the model selected by the committee
- Research multiple measures of identification of potential G&T students for inclusion into the program K-8
- Research technology options that would embellish our existing program and other possibilities that should be considered as this process unfolds such as video conferencing, pod casting and Renzulli’s online learning tools
- Research plan for using multiple measures of identification for students in grades K-2

Development

- Committee will select a model that best addresses the research and meets the needs of LS
- Conduct a cost analysis of current program versus selected model to determine budget required to implement new program
- Schedule a yearly parent/student meeting to communicate with parents important components of the LS Challenge program, options, requirements, etc.
- Market Challenge opportunities via the LS website, brochures, press coverage of current events, parent meetings, etc.
- Develop a plan for using multiple measures of identification in grades K-8

- Implementation of professional development to the staff in tiered opportunities:
 - ✓ Differentiation
 - ✓ Characteristics of gifted students
 - ✓ Curricular models
 - ✓ Identification
- Provide parent workshops and opportunities for ongoing conversations on the education of gifted and talented students. For example, collaboration between Friends of Different Learners and school district to provide parent workshops specifically on topics pertinent to gifted education, meeting to discuss challenge report card, guest speakers, gifted child identification, etc.
- Develop a procedure for student identification into advanced programs that is consistent with the district philosophy and clearly articulate this procedure to parents and students
- Implement the revised challenge program as well as the new G&T program in grades 3-8 in September 2011

Assessment

- Track the progress of the new program

Results

- The committee of teachers and administrators met to establish meeting and site visitation dates.
- The second formal meeting included a review of the literature on gifted and talented programs. Most of the research reviewed was generated from the University of Connecticut's Neag Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development. During this review period, a survey of parents and faculty was developed and implemented by the committee.
- Survey data were collected and discussed by the committee. The data trended toward making the program more selective. The committee continued its review of the research in light of the survey data. The committee established a preliminary vision for the Little Silver program.
- Four school districts were visited over a two-month span. The school districts were: East Brunswick, Warren Township, District of the Chathams, and Westfield Township. Districts were chosen because they were similar in demographic and socioeconomic makeup.
- Site visit information was shared among the members of the committee. Two school districts supported a highly selective, "pull-out" program. The other two districts supported embedded project-based programs that were relatively inclusive.
- The committee crafted a final program plan and presented the plan to a small group of parents who were invited to comment on the committee's ideas. The revised program resulted after input from these parents was considered.
- The selection process for the program was revised to be founded on multiple, objective measures (NJASK scores, TCS scores, GPA for previous grade, essay scores using the NJASK Holistic Scoring Rubric). A scale was devised to account for ranges of test, grade, and essay scores.
- The resulting recommended program was project-based. As per the recommendation, students will be required to "check in" with the gifted and talented coordinator once per week. Projects will be presented by the students to a small faculty group. The students will be assessed periodically throughout the marking period and will be based on timeline criteria and the resulting product of his/her research and development. A culminating convocation at which the community will be able to view the students' work will serve as a celebration and recognition of their hard work.
- On February 12, 2010, the Grades 6-8 staff received a workshop on Differentiation.

- On January 29, 2010 a parent meeting was held to discuss program concerns.
- Initial timelines were postponed - We “piloted” a program in 3rd & 4th for the 2010-11 school year with full implementation the following year. This pushed the “research” objective for K-2 back one year.
- Differentiation in the content areas is a district initiative. The May 2010 Superintendent’s meeting was used for Professional Development for all teachers. At that time, Grades 6-8 began focusing on Differentiation for the Gifted Learners.
- During the 2010-11 school year, significant changes were made regarding identification procedures and program implementation:

IDENTIFICATION

- We eliminated the administration of the Test of Cognitive Skills (TCS) at grades 3 & 6. It was an old assessment and was not meeting our needs.
- We began administering the **CogATS** (Cognitive Abilities Test) to all 2nd and 3rd grade students as well as all 4th, 5th, 6th & 7th grade students who qualified to be in the Challenge Program even if they opted not to participate. The CogATS is a test of cognitive abilities. For those students who score in the top 12-15% of their class (the approximate percentage of current Challenge students) they will also take the **SAGES** (Screening Assessment for Gifted Students). This is a screening assessment for gifted elementary and middle school students. This will help us identify our true “gifted” population (top 2-3%) of each class. Then, the parents of the students who are taking the SAGES will complete the **SIG** (Scales for Identifying Gifted Students) inventory. The teacher will complete one as well.
- During the 2011-12 school year each of the aforementioned assessments were only administered in grades 2 & 5.

PROGRAM DELIVERY CHANGES

- **3rd – 4th Grade** – The top 2-5% of students are identified as G&T. Students receive a combination of push-in and pull-out services. For all other students, teachers differentiate instruction.
- **5th-8th Grade** – The 15% of students who qualified for the Challenge Program are clustered together during period 9. Their enrichment class is differentiated to meet the needs of these bright students. They could be in an enrichment class during any one of the following times, depending upon their music schedule: Days 1,2,3; Days 4,5,6; Days 1,2,3,4,5,6. The top 2-5% of those students will be in the enrichment class for three days and get pulled during 9th period to work on independent projects three days. If, however, they are in a music program, they will not participate in the enrichment cluster, they will only get pulled 9th period. In addition, depending upon how the schedule plays out, there will also be a push-in program for those top 2-5% of students. The G&T teacher will likely be pushing in 4 out of 6 days for the G&T students, and 2 out of 6 days to support the top 15% of students.
- In the fall of 2011, surveys were administered to the parents of both G&T and Challenge students as well as the G&T students themselves in grades 5-8. Survey results provided feedback to further tweak the programs.

Goal Area #2

Community Engagement

Obj. #1 – Expand articulation with Red Bank Regional HS and sending districts

Development

- Invite RBR students to participate in advising Little Silver students during play rehearsals (students from performing arts program and/or after-school activities)
- Expand the day that RBR students come to Markham Place School to talk to 8th graders about Academy programs available at RBR
- Expand frequency of articulation opportunities between LS & RBR
- Consult other districts to explore the feasibility of collaborating activities for surrounding school districts

Assessment

- Review articulation extension opportunities

Results

- The RBR students were not needed for play rehearsals this year
- The principal from RBR brought RBR students over to MP to talk about the Academy programs
- The frequency of articulation between LS and RBR was relatively status quo. However, we did have increased articulation with the World Language Departments.
- February 12, 2010 Professional Development Day: consultants from other districts came in. PE workshop generated income from other districts. In addition, the Peninsula Schools are exploring additional ways to collaborate.
- Articulation efforts are ongoing. We have increased the number of articulation sessions for each content area from one to two annually and it seems to be working well.

Obj. #2 – Implement community service projects for students and foster community involvement

Research

- Survey community members to assess areas of interest, expertise, and availability to share their areas of expertise with Little Silver students
- Consult with the Volunteer Center of Monmouth County for volunteer opportunities for our students

Development

- Create a community directory of “experts”
- Plan a Community Day and/or Career Day to bring in citizens of Little Silver into the schools to share knowledge of skills, professions, careers.
- Provide community participation (within LS Schools) workshops/classes whereby students (with an adult supervisor) teach community members various skills (i.e. computers).
- Provide additional opportunities for community members to attend concerts, plays etc.
- Add a community volunteer link on the district website as well as list volunteer opportunities in the Little Silver Newsletter.

Assessment

- Survey staff members to list the types of projects that involved the community
- Evaluate the level of success of the Career Day Program at Markham Place (Career Day is scheduled for April 25, 2013)

Results

- In October 2011, a letter was sent home explaining that we were in the third year of our five-year Strategic Plan and that one of our four goal areas focuses on *Community Engagement*. The letter explained the survey that followed which surveyed parents to assess areas of interest, expertise, and availability to share with Little Silver students with the intent of creating a community directory of “experts” as we were looking to involve non-parent community members as well. Specifically, we were looking for individuals who were willing to devote any level of time to the school or district for such purposes as, but not limited to: 1. Participating in Career Fairs; 2. Mentoring middle school students in science/engineering, research-related projects; and 3. Providing assistance and/or sharing expertise regarding buildings and grounds-related issues, such as green initiatives, etc. We received some responses and began to create a data base.
- There was a Technology Showcase on February 28, 2012 whereby over 200 students and parents circulated through nine different classrooms with numerous different applications. The night was a success.
- We currently have numerous ways for community members to attend school functions.
- We decided not to add a community link to the district website. We have numerous volunteers. In addition, laws pertaining to volunteerism continue to change as per the law. The BOE members adopted Policy #9180 – School Volunteers on January 26th which added some new parameters to volunteerism.
- Staff will be surveyed in the spring of 2013 regarding community involvement in their programs.
- The Career Day Program at Markham Place is scheduled for April 25, 2013. It will be evaluated afterwards.

Obj. #3 – Provide opportunities for informal social interactions for middle school students in the community (after school/evenings)

Research

- Survey Little Silver students and families concerning prospective activities and events for after school/evenings.
- Explore the possibility of additional afterschool clubs in Little Silver manned by volunteers and paid staff (i.e. Odyssey of the Mind club, etc.).
- Explore community interest and the possibility of providing after school care/activities for middle school students.

Development

- Offer extra-curricular opportunities for middle school students
- Arrange for co-curricular opportunities for Red Bank, Shrewsbury, and Little Silver students to interact prior to attending RBR

Assessment

- Evaluate social opportunities offered

Results

- Since the time the Strategic Plan was written (spring 2008 for first year implementation during the 2008-2009 school year), many additional events/activities have been added such as: Interact Club, Sportsmanship club; 5/6 Game Night, Family Fitness Night, Book Lovers Ball;

Technology Integration Night. It was decided that it would be difficult to manage more than what we are currently doing. Therefore, we did forgo the survey.

- There are aftercare options for Markham Place students, but they must be transported to Point Road because the numbers of students needing this service are too few for the YMCA to provide a separate service at Markham Place.
- Little Silver hosted the first Inter-district event on October 5, 2012 with all of the sending districts and some RBR students.

Obj. #4 – Improve communication between and within Markham Place and Point Road

Development

- Provide time during curricular committee meetings to articulate between schools
- Provide articulation “period” during district meetings and during district professional development days
- Provide time during curricular committee meetings to articulate between schools
- Provide articulation “period” during district meetings and during district professional development days

Assessment

- Review communication opportunities provided

Results

- Teachers were offered the opportunity to place “articulation” on a Superintendent’s Meeting Agenda
- PLC’s were incorporated into professional development days allowing for articulation
- Curriculum committee meetings allowed for articulation across grade levels
- Both the Principals’ Meetings and the Superintendent’s Meetings provided opportunities for articulation
- There was some time built into some professional development days for articulation
- We have afforded teachers more articulation time. Also, as mentioned in objective 3, teachers were required to develop SMART (**S**pecific **M**easurable **A**ttainable **R**ealistic **T**imely) goals as part of their PLCs (**P**rofessional **L**earning **C**ommunities). Teachers have been given time at Superintendent’s meetings to meet with their PLC groups. They also have Common Planning time in their schedules.

Goal Area #3

Safety, Security, and Facilities

Obj. #1 – Create and implement a comprehensive plan for the maintenance and enhancement of the physical facilities for the benefit of the students.

Research

- Review our current needs and compare to the existing 5 year maintenance plan: classrooms, inside, outside
- Research ways other districts manage and maintain their physical plant (inconsistent heating, windows without locks, etc.)

- Research what other, similar districts have put in place for security (student ID cards, security personnel, security equipment, etc.)
- Assess security needs around the exterior and interior of both buildings

Development

- Develop a timeframe for addressing the current needs
- Evaluate current firewalls and internet controls and continue to work with staff in an effort to use firewalls productively
- Take inventory of current security equipment

Assessment

- Implementation of new safety protocols (for technological safety and physical safety)

Results

- Long Range Facility Plan identifies approximately \$3.3 million in projects for all 3 buildings **regarding safety and security**. The LRFPP includes additional money for non-safety related issues. With regards to **safety and security**, the BOE has addressed a number of issues including, but not limited to the following:
 - ✓ Replaced roofs at MP & PR
 - ✓ Installed carpet in MP media center & technology lab (people were tripping on it)
 - ✓ Installed automatic temperature controls at PR & MP
 - ✓ Installed draft inducer at MP
 - ✓ Replaced playground equipment at PR (that was out of compliance)
 - ✓ Installed new fire alarm panel at MP
 - ✓ Made upgrades to PR HVAC system
 - ✓ Replaced exterior doors at both PR & MP
 - ✓ Replaced boiler at MP
 - ✓ Placed additional parking lot lighting in the MP lower lot
 - ✓ Installed a new firewall (SonicWall NSA 4500) in December of 2009 and upgraded it in the fall of 2012. We have budgeted to replace the firewall in 2013-14 school year
 - ✓ Installed swipe card system allowing doors to be locked 24/7
 - ✓ Established additional protocols for after school facility use.
 - ✓ Installed one set of double doors and one gate at Markham Place in January 2011 and two sets of double doors at Point Road in January 2011 to limit the mobility throughout the building for people using the gyms, etc.
 - ✓ Completed phase 1 of a multi-phase window replacement project at MP to address unsafe windows
 - ✓ Upgraded and/or replaced chair lifts at MP
 - ✓ Replaced gym floor at Point Road that was literally splitting and had a crack that was taped
 - ✓ Replaced damaged sidewalks and ramps at PR
- Other districts manage & maintain their physical plant similarly to LSBOE
 - ✓ Work order systems
 - We moved from clip board system to the automated School Dude in 09-10
 - ✓ Budget priorities with BOE
 - Admin team and Finance Committee review during budget process
 - ✓ Emergencies addressed as needed
 - ✓ Internal staff

- Safety and Security drills are practiced monthly in conjunction with the Little Silver Police including (Lock Down, Active Shooter, Bomb Threat, Evacuation Other Than Fire, Reverse Evacuations, Shelter in Place, Weather drills – i.e. tornado, hurricane).
- Changes to visitor protocols were implemented
- Changes to aftercare pick-up were implemented

Goal Area #4

Finance

Obj. #1 – Investigate opportunities to generate additional revenue.

Facility rental

Research

- Form a committee of school district personnel and community members to explore models used by other school districts to generate revenue through facility rentals. Additional revenue would support the operating budget of the district
- Committee responsibility to include:
 1. Review of district’s current facility usage policy
 2. Obtain and review facility usage policies from other school districts, focusing on those that have a goal of generating revenue from facility rentals
 3. Identify areas to change in our current policy to make it more accommodating to generate revenue
 4. Consider impact of any changes in policy on current groups utilizing district facilities (e.g. students, PTO, recreation, community groups)

Development

- Modify current facility usage policy to maximize revenue generating opportunities
- Develop marketing plan to attract new facility users on a fee basis
- Discuss with stakeholders new policy

Assessment

- Assess implementation of marketing plan that makes available the renting of our facilities to maximize revenue generating opportunities
- Conduct a stakeholder review to discuss methods to improve upon our marketing plan and policy

Results

- BOE policy committee met to revise policy that limited our ability to generate revenue. We now have policy that differentiates between different classes of users and different levels of fees for usage.
- Between Recreation and Travel teams, our gyms are in use most of the time. We examined the possibility of renting the cafeterias. We had interest from one outside group, but the Board did not feel it was a good match for Little Silver.
- We have rented our gyms during summer months to outside groups who ran sports clinics

Fee-based programs/camps

Research

- Establish a committee of administrators, faculty and community members to explore opportunities for fee-based, after-school or summer programs
- Programs could include summer camps (academic or sports-oriented), after / before-care programs, after-school Challenge program and / or after-school academic programs
- Committee to research best practices of other districts and review current programs run in the district

Development

- Develop survey for parents and community members to evaluate current programs available in each school and identify desirable future programs
- Determine community expectations of potential programs and willingness to pay
- Discuss with local districts the possibility to partner to develop revenue generating programs and share in costs/profits
- Determine costs associated with developing programs

Assessment

- Implement new fee-based programs (i.e. summer enrichment)
- Conduct a stakeholder review to assess the programs and potential enhancements to improve the programs and/or program offerings
- Examination of realized increase in overall revenue generated

Results

- A team of staff members met to discuss possible options
- The Administrative team reviewed options and made recommendations to the BOE
- Summer enrichment was instituted in August 2010. We generated \$6,600 in revenue. A survey was sent to those parents whose children participated in order to get feedback. It was very positive feedback
- Changes were made to the Summer Enrichment 2011 program – offering additional programs for students in the early elementary grades
- Annual revenue generated from Summer Enrichment programs from 2010-2012 averages \$6,000.

Athletic Team/Co-curricular fundraisers

Research

- Create a committee of administrators, teachers and community members to investigate fund raising opportunities to offset costs of operating athletics and co-curricular programs
- Committee to investigate best practices of other school districts and recreation organizations
- Research to include data on most viable organization through which to operate fundraisers (i.e. district, PTO, Foundation, Booster Club, etc.)
- Programs could include 3 on 3 basketball tournament, development of annual golf outing, etc. with revenues generated from entrance fees and concessions

Development

- Determine cost/revenue analysis of committee's actionable ideas (this relates to the proposed programs and/or organizations to potentially bring in)
- Create committee(s) to develop an action plan to run the most cost effective ideas
- Committee(s) plans to be worked into district's, or other operating entity's, budget

- Consider working with other districts or organizations (e.g. Recreation, Borough of Little Silver, other athletic clubs, etc.)

Assessment

- The intended objectives for 2010-2011 were to implement athletic team/co-curricular fundraisers and assess them. In light of the difficult economy, it has been decided to not include any additional fundraising activities at this time.

Results

- See assessment comments
- There have been car washes to support the music program and the Camp Bernie trip

Grant Writing

Research

- Research and bookmark credible sites for locating grant opportunities
- Identify websites
- Create vehicle to communicate grant opportunities within the district/community (i.e. district email; Little Silver Newsletter, etc.)
- Subscribe to State, Federal, Foundation, Nonprofit, and Corporate grant notification alerts

Development

- Create a centralized data base/archive to serve as a resource for grant writing development
- Create a grant writing outline that can serve as a template for grant applications
- Consider most effective options for grant writing (i.e. assign to a staff member, utilize parent volunteers, share the responsibility with other districts, establish a committee, etc.).

Assessment

- Increase in overall grant revenue

Results

- We've had a few parents who have offered to write grants. One has been actively developing a data base of grant opportunities including the time of year they are offered and eligibility requirements. The Point Road Principal has also worked with the parent volunteers to write a few grants for the district.
- We have explored some matching grant options through the Curriculum Office, but the products and the capital layout were not worth it for the district.
- The district has received an annual safety grant from our insurance carrier due to compliance and enforcement of safety protocols
- The School Business Administrator subscribed to a grant opportunity website

Alternative Energy

Research

- Determine cost effectiveness of implementing a solar/alternative energy program
 1. Investigate effectiveness of solar / alternative energy programs and its ability to generate revenue or reduce costs for the district
 2. Contact school districts or municipalities that have implemented solar / alternative energy programs
 3. Explore alternatives to implementing a solar / alternative energy

- program
- 4. Determine estimated cost to implement program
- 5. Explore financing options
- 6. Cost-benefit analysis

Development

- Consider investing resources with design professionals with experience in implementing solar/alternative energy
- Determine the best financial option
- Consider community outreach program to market the costs and benefits of implementing a solar/alternative energy program
- Determine if an alternative energy agreement is beneficial for Little Silver

Assessment

- If the district pursues an alternative energy option, assess total revenue generated/cost savings to the district
- Savings in energy costs

Results

- Business Administrator researched solar energy initiatives by other districts
 - ✓ BA worked with a contractor to obtain cost / benefit analysis to implement system in Little Silver
 - ✓ BA contacted other districts that have or will be implementing solar energy programs
 - Most districts became involved when BPU was offering rebates or the State funding was available (construction funds or debt service aid, the latter of which Little Silver does not receive)
 - ✓ Business Administrator to explore other options
 - Energy audits sponsored by State with funding from BPU
- Business Administrator had a company come out to provide the district with an estimate for installing solar panels and provide a cost-benefit analysis
- We put out an RFP for alternative energy companies. It was not particularly successful because we weren't specific enough in stating our needs and the proposals contained widely scattered information. We hired P.W. Moss and Associates to complete an economic analysis including options for solar installation and/or a Power Purchase Agreement and it was determined that it was not economically feasible to purchase solar panels.
- School Business Administrator worked with the other BAs on the peninsula to explore options for a joint Power Purchase Agreement to potentially increase our rate options.
- The Board of Education agreed to pursue a Power Purchase agreement for solar energy with the Monmouth County Improvement Authority. We would have been one of several school districts and municipalities to participate. However, the Little Silver Borough Councilmen had to agree to pass an ordinance to guarantee the debt should the solar provider default. They did not pass the ordinance because of some concerns they had. The project had to be abandoned, and SREC values dropped, therefore making the project less profitable.
- Due to large trees and shade, coupled with roof design and HVAC unit layouts, the district has little available rooftop space for solar panels. Therefore, we also investigated canopies and ground panels but we were ultimately concerned about the maintenance aspect of those options.

Obj. #2 – Evaluate and optimize current allocation of resources

Research

- Identify influences on school operation
 1. Mandates – specifically quantifiable legal requirements (i.e. financial audit report, transportation of students living greater than 2 miles from school, etc.)
 2. Obligations – contracts and agreements currently in effect (i.e. labor agreements, service contracts, etc.)
 3. Essential Programs and Services - costs associated with providing required outcomes (i.e. new Common Core State Standards implementation, QSAC [Quality Single Accountability Continuum] requirements, health and safety requirements, etc.)
 4. Other Programs and Services – cost associated with programs and services expected by the community (i.e. athletics and co-curricular)

Development

- Utilize cost/benefit model to evaluate current operations
- Evaluate best-practices in relevant industries – consider community outreach to leverage their expertise

Assessment

- Implement best practices
- Evaluate “return on investments” to determine if budgetary practices are the most efficient

Results

- With the property tax cap of 2%, our budget cannot exceed that % unless we apply “banked cap” which the Board has not opted to do since the property tax cap was instituted.
- All accounts are interest bearing and we don’t pay any bank fees. We examined our debt obligations to determine if we could refinance anything. Two of three debt serve obligations were eligible, but our interest rate was already lower than current market value. The third debt obligation was not eligible for re-financing because it was refinanced in 2002 and it did not meet the legal number of required years for refinancing a school bond.
- Programs and practices are continuously monitored in order to achieve maximum results and reduce costs.

Obj. #3 – Investigate opportunities to partner with other districts to realize cost savings and/or generate revenue

Shared Services

Research

- Identify current shared service partnerships and cost savings / revenue generated by district
- Investigate other opportunities to share services with other districts to reduce costs / generate revenue at a local, county and state level

Development

- Form a local/county task force to create a shared service strategic plan
- Prioritize opportunities based upon cost/benefit analysis

Assessment

- Board of Education takes appropriate action to implement cost sharing agreements (i.e. shared personnel, shared service agreements, etc.)

Results

- District's complete list of shared service arrangements can be found on district website under "Budget Information" and then under "User Friendly Budget"
 - ✓ New items include joint garbage bid with surrounding districts
 - Will save the district several thousand dollars over the next 2 years
 - Social worker shared with Atlantic Highlands
- Examination of potential Shared Service Agreements is ongoing, particularly with the other schools on the peninsula. As noted earlier, the School Business Administrator worked with the other BAs on the peninsula to explore options for a joint Power Purchase Agreement to potentially increase our rate options. That did not come to fruition.
- The Business Administrators on the peninsula examined options to share costs and combine resources. The group joined a cooperative purchasing commission in Middlesex.
- Little Silver joined a banking cooperative.
- The peninsula schools created a joint bid for trash services.
- Several districts on the peninsula (RBR, Shrewsbury, RFH, and Little Silver) embarked on a shared professional development service agreement to train members of the District Evaluation Advisory Committee on the new teacher evaluation tool.
- The district joined a G&T consortium.
- We have a shared service agreement with RBR for our lunch program.
- The district also shares our Network Administrator with RBR.

Tuition

Research

- Research policies from other districts, especially those that are generating significant revenue from tuition students and compare to Little Silver's policy
- Review current and projected enrollment for the regular and special education populations
- Identify those programs (i.e. LLD or Preschool) or grade levels that are below an acceptable class size (i.e. approximately 20)
- Identify the needs of other districts for private placements for programs offered in Little Silver
- Review opportunities to enhance special education programs to attract additional tuition students, including a formal partnership with an existing private school

Development

- Create a policy regarding non-resident tuition students
- Develop a plan to attract non-resident tuition students
- Consider allocating budgetary resources to enhance existing programs (i.e. LLD special education programs) to meet the needs of students from other districts to attract tuition students. Enhancements may also be used to prevent Little Silver students from requiring out-of-district placements.

Assessment

- Determine effectiveness of application process and acceptance of non-resident tuition students
- Evaluate total revenue generated

Results

- Policies from other districts were reviewed
- We analyzed enrollment trends
- A new Board of Education policy was created for non-resident tuition students. The application and policy were placed on the BOE webpage
- Pre-school tuition students for in-district students began during the 2009-2010 school year
- Non-resident students were accepted in grades K-8 beginning the 2010-2011 school year

In addition to the Strategic Plan

Since the time the Strategic Plan was created, we have also begun to pursue other revenue generating opportunities. On February 23, 2012, a representative from Advantage 3 conducted a presentation to the Board regarding the use of advertising as a means to generate revenue. The Board is further investigating this opportunity.