

**Oyster River Cooperative School District
REGULAR MEETING**

October 23, 2013

Oyster River High School, C-124

6:30 PM

- o. CALL TO ORDER (6:30 PM)**
- I. 6:30 – 7:00 PM MANIFEST REVIEW/APPROVAL AT EACH SCHOOL BOARD MEETING**
- II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE (7:00 pm)**
- III. PUBLIC COMMENTS**
- IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
- V. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMENDATIONS**
 - A. District**
 - B. Board**
- VI. DISTRICT REPORTS**
 - A. Assistant Superintendent/Curriculum & Instruction Report(s)**
 - B. Superintendent's Report**
 - Strategic Plan update
 - C. Business Administrator**
 - D. Student Senate Report**
 - E. Other:**
 - Moharimet Cafeteria Update – Steve Blatt, Architect
- VII. DISCUSSION ITEMS**
 - First Draft of Broad Goals for the Strategic Plan
- VIII. ACTIONS**
 - A. Superintendent Actions**
 - B. Board Action Items**
 - Motion to approve First Draft of Broad Goals for the Strategic Plan
- IX. SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES**
- X. PUBLIC COMMENTS**
- XI. CLOSING ACTIONS**
 - A. Future meeting dates:** 10/24/13, 10/30/13, 11/19/13 Board Budget Workshops
11/6/13, 11/20/13 Regular Meeting
- XII. ADJOURNMENT**
- XIII. NON-PUBLIC SESSION: RSA 91-A:3 {If Needed}**
NON-MEETING SESSION: RSA 91-A:2 {If Needed}

The School Board reserves the right to take action on any item on the agenda.

Respectfully submitted,

Superintendent

**If you require special
communication aids, please
notify us 48 hours in
advance.**

**Oyster River Cooperative School District
SAU #5**

Welcome to the School Board meeting. If you wish to be heard by the Board, please note "Public Comment" at the beginning of the agenda (reverse side). The comment section of the agenda should not exceed three (3) minutes unless extended by the Chair. Occasionally, the Board may "suspend its rules" to allow visitor participation at the time an issue of specific interest is being addressed.

Visitors should not expect a Board response to their comments or questions under the above since the Board may not have discussed or taken a position on the matter. The Superintendent, without speaking for the Board, may offer clarification as appropriate.

Agendas and background information are available on the district website prior to meetings. Agendas and additional information are generally available at the entrance to the meeting room or distributed at the time the item is introduced for discussion.

The ORCSD School Board will meet in regular session on the first and third Wednesdays of the month with special meetings when necessary. The School Board appreciates your attendance at these meetings and invites your continued interest in its work on behalf of the children and residents of the District.

Oyster River Cooperative School District Members:

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Maria S. Barth, | Term on Board: 2012 –2015 |
| • Thomas Newkirk, | Term on Board: 2013 - 2016 |
| • Kenneth Rotner, | Term on Board: 2013 - 2016 |
| • Megan Turnbull | Term on Board: 2011 - 2014 |
| • Ann Lamborghini Lane | Term on Board: 2011 - 2014 |
| • Allan Howland | Term on Board: 2012 - 2015 |
| • Edwin Charle | Term on Board: 2012– 2015 |

Information Regarding Nonpublic Session

On occasion, the Board agenda may include (or be adjusted to include) a Nonpublic Session. When a motion is made to do so, it will be done under the provisions of the NH State Law RSA 91-A:3 II, and one or more of the following reasons will be claimed for entering Nonpublic Session:

- a. The dismissal, promotion or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a meeting and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request will be granted.
- b. The hiring of any person as a public employee.
- c. Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting.
- d. Consideration of the acquisition, sale or lease of real property or personal property which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community.
- e. Consideration or negotiation of pending claims or litigation which has been threatened in writing or filed against the body or agency of any sub-division thereof, or against any member thereof because of his membership in such body or agency, until the claim or litigation has been fully adjudicated or otherwise settled.

Oyster River Cooperative School District Strategic Plan Academic Engagement

“Engagement has to do with the extent to which an activity has meaning and significance to the student.” – Phillip C. Schlechty

The overarching goal for academic engagement at ORCSD is to ensure that every student develops the critical skills and body of knowledge they need to thrive in our ever changing and increasingly global community.

The academic committee examined information created at the 2013 Future Search event, the adopted vision statement, and on-going curriculum work in the district to inform their goals for Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, Technology and Data Management and Reporting.

We believe in creating safe, stimulating environments where all students are challenged and excited about their opportunities to learn. At the heart of our educational philosophy is the firm belief that all of our students have talents, skills and abilities. It is up to all of us in the ORCSD community to provide individual learning experiences that engage all our learners.

We take pride in our capacity to provide innovative practices in our curriculum, which includes the effective use of technology in the hands of our students.

We have committed dynamic and stimulating faculty members who continuously reflect on their instruction and assessment to implement the best instructional practices for our students. They reach out and partner with each other and the community on behalf of advancing student learning throughout ORCSD.

Key Focus Area: Student Engagement & Achievement

Overarching Goal:

ORCSD is committed to creating an environment where all students become both independent learners and knowledgeable critical thinkers who live ethically and make a difference in their world.

Broad Goals:

Goal # 1 Personal Excellence

ORCSD inspires all learners to pursue personal excellence, academic challenge and success.

The Student Achievement Work Group recommends ORCSD initiate or strengthen Full Day Kindergarten, STEM, World Languages, Arts, Habits of Mind and Early College offerings for strong consideration for action in the strategic plan

Goal # 2 College and Career Ready

ORCSD students are encouraged to be critical thinkers, creative problem-solvers, effective communicators, and socially responsible citizens who are college and career ready, prepared to pursue the paths they choose.

Goal #3 Innovative Personalized Instruction

Innovative, student-centered instructional practices will support personalized learning for all ORCSD students.

Goal # 4 Assessment for Learning

ORCSD will develop & implement a systemic approach to assessment that:

- Monitors and documents learner progress toward achievement of ORCSD's common set of learner expectations
- Informs instruction for each learner
- Includes frequent feedback specific to learning goals
- Incorporates multiple diverse & authentic ways to demonstrate learning

Goal # 5 Reporting Learner Progress

ORCSD will develop & support an evidence based system that:

- Uses a technology platform that allows students information to be shared among ORCSD staff to inform instruction
- Provides a clear, accurate record of achievement, & communicates progress of all learners
- Is user friendly, easily accessible to all learners, parents & staff
- Collects evidence of learning using creative & varied strategies
- Is supported by quality training for all users, esp. staff

Oyster River Cooperative School District Strategic Planning
Finance and Operations Workgroup Goals

Operations and finance will ensure that facilities and operations support educational goals through a sustainable education system.

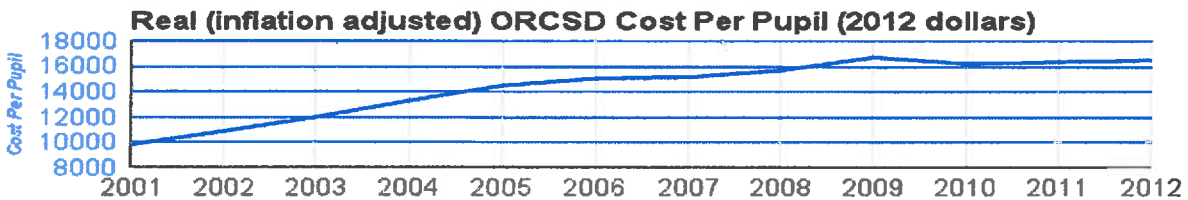
1. The education, health, and safety of our children are our top priorities. Decisions made regarding transportation, food service, technology & facilities shall support this priority.
2. Oyster River Schools will maintain and increase sustainability through food, gardens, transportation and energy and incorporate these into the curriculum.
3. Financial prudence should guide all decisions to be among the best performing schools in New Hampshire.

Goal 3: Financial prudence should guide all of our decisions to be among the best performing schools in NH

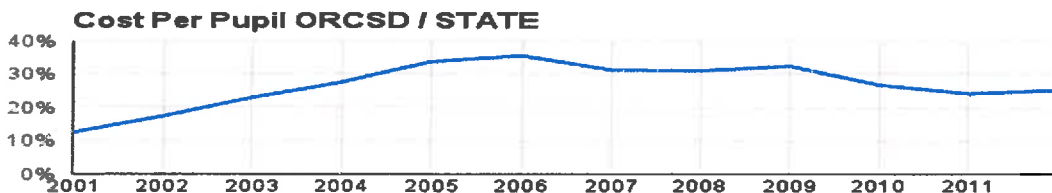
A community holds no greater responsibility than the education of its children. Given we have New Hampshire's flagship public university within our borders, it's no surprise that there is broad community support for public schools in Oyster River. Consistent with the community's aspirations, this support has systematically led to high achievement from our students. For example, ORHS boasts a miniscule dropout rate, sends graduates to four-year college one third more often than the state average and scores 12% above the national average on the SAT.

No one should be surprised that achieving these results comes at a higher than average price. The major financial burden for funding the school system falls on local property owners. Every effort must be made to optimize the use of each tax dollar collected. We owe it to the taxpayers to maintain and improve our great outcomes for the least possible cost. In order to do that we have to measure both outcomes and costs, and compare ourselves to other districts in the state.

Objective measures of our performance (NECAP, SAT, AP, college attendance rates, awards, national rankings, etc.) while not everything, are necessary to assure us that we are indeed achieving outcomes among the best in the state. We must prioritize projects that improve outcomes. The entire community benefits from maintaining Oyster River's status as an excellent school district.



We must also compare our costs to common metrics such as the CPI. As you can see, our real cost per pupil has decreased slightly since the peak of 2009. We agree with the administration's proposed FY15 goal of zero real growth, a continuation of our belt-tightening trend.



Our achievement is even more impressive when you consider that school costs generally climb much faster than the broader CPI. Compared to the state average, we have been declining since our peak in 2006. We encourage the board and administration to continue to grow at a rate substantially below the state average.

Cost Per Pupil (as defined by the state) does not reflect transportation costs and debt service costs, which nonetheless we should of course attempt to minimize, nor does it account for non-tax revenue, which we should attempt to maximize. This plan does not recommend actual targets for cost controls as

the committee feels the board needs flexibility so it can make the judgements not to sacrifice education or capital improvements in pursuit of reducing the taxpayers' burden.

Financial prudence means spending the taxpayers' money wisely. The ORCSD can be commended for bending the cost curve down recently through implementing a retirement incentive program resulting in a savings of \$565,000; an energy savings program yielding \$92,000 and a reduction in health insurance costs in FY 2014. To their great credit, all unions agreed to some form of reduction in benefits, most recently the union representing the custodians and secretaries. Economies were realized in the Transportation Department which now operates with fewer staff, consolidated routes and common pick-up points. We encourage the administration and board to continue to seek cost reductions. Increasing non-tax revenue is also encouraged, including facility rental fees, aggressively seeking grants and tuitioning.

Attracting and retaining a high quality teaching staff, which now includes about a third more masters-qualified teachers than the state average, results in an average teacher salary about that much higher than the state average. Our current (unofficial) policy is to hire the best possible person without regard to price. If we want our staffing costs to rise at the nominal rates in the various contracts, we need to hire staff at the lower rungs of the seniority ladder as more experienced staff retires, in an effort to keep the average seniority constant. We recommend a focus on the *potential* of new hires and leveraging our current staff's experience by having them mentor new staff.

Prudence also dictates we attempt to maximize class size up to the limit of our policy (generally 22 per class). We made some strides with the retirement incentives. If we carefully determine the correct staffing needs, tuitioning offers an opportunity to get closer to the upper limits without morale-sapping layoffs and elimination of programming.

Declining enrollment, if it happens as predicted, should lower the burden on taxpayers, as there are fewer students to educate. Tuitioning is an opportunity to gain revenue from unused seats, lowering the burden on taxpayers and increasing the efficiency of the schools all while enhancing the educational opportunities for our students. The necessary hiring for an increased student load already allows us to expand educational opportunities for students. We encourage the board to use any revenue above these costs to help reduce the burden on taxpayers.

Our local community is an incredible source of volunteer labor and expertise. We endorse efforts to encourage more volunteer participation. Our talented neighbors, including those at the university, are wonderfully willing to donate services and skills many of which we could never reasonably hope to purchase. An extra bonus accrues when the students get involved. By graciously accepting the community's generosity, we can save money and maybe learn a few things too.

Particular recommendations from the detailed plan include goals-based budgeting, multi-year budgeting, prioritizing important items in the CIP, adding transportation and food service in the CIP and encouraging students to use the food service and bus transportation, the latter by increasing the parking rate, which simultaneously leads to increased sustainability.

We need to trumpet our accomplishments and to make efforts to involve the greater community in the schools, through theater, concerts, lectures and so on. These make the district a more enjoyable place to live and have the serendipitous effect of increasing property values.

Health and Wellness

The ORCSD recognizes that the health of our community of learners is both a prerequisite to their education and a part of that education. Beyond keeping our students healthy, we aspire to teach them how to stay healthy throughout life. Recognizing that “problem free is not fully prepared,” we will develop in our students the skills that will help them resist risky behaviors in the future. Our goals are:

1. Healthy students, families and school community.
2. Students with the knowledge and habits of a healthy lifestyle.
3. Students equipped with the information and the skills avoid behaviors that pose health risks.

Safety

Students are most likely to engage in learning if they are safe and feel secure at school, at home and in transit. The Strategic Plan addresses a variety of safety issues, some of which also overlap with health.

Freedom from environmental hazards is an important concern. The ORCSD will test all buildings regularly for indoor air quality, specifically with respect to radon, asbestos and lead. We will test drinking water in all schools and document the use of pesticides, cleaning fluids and other chemicals in school buildings in conjunction with the sustainability committee. Longer term, we may make environmental health risks a part of the curriculum and involve students in the testing, if appropriate.

School security is an area where the ORCSD has taken many recent actions, including the installation of cameras and secure entry procedures. The district has a detailed policy on school building safety, including fire safety. Mindful of the tradeoff between security and a welcoming atmosphere, all of the measures implemented to enhance safety and security in the buildings have not compromised the welcoming atmosphere, which is maintained by friendly front office personnel. Longer term, we plan to monitor best practices with respect to school security, gathering input from teachers and administrators as well as Aramark and our insurers. We will update security procedures periodically to coincide with best practices and make sure that security procedures and emergency response plans are coordinated.

Food safety is a small but obviously necessary piece of the larger plan for food service in the schools. It involves making sure that food coming into the school is safe and that once it arrives, it is stored, prepared and handled safely so that it is safe to eat when it reaches the students. The Food Services Director is certified in safe food handling and can teach the Safe Food Handling course offered by the National Restaurant Association. All managers and most of the non-management employees in the District’s food services have the certification. Our goals include obtaining certification for all food handling employees and offering the course on Teacher’s workshop days to also benefit interested High School students and members of the community. In addition, the ORCSD will explore how to ensure the safety of more locally grown and sourced foods so that they can be included in the school lunch menu.

Playground/ Fields/ Outdoor Safety is another concern that the ORCSD takes seriously. Any playground equipment purchased meets or exceeds current safety standards. The District’s liability insurer, Peerless Insurance, has the buildings and grounds inspected by third party experts and meets with administrators

annually to suggest safety-related improvements. Goals are to establish procedures for monitoring best practices with respect to outdoor areas, consider prohibiting the use of herbicides, fertilizers or other chemicals that can be harmful to those who use the outdoor areas, balance risk of pesticides with risk of insect borne diseases, address the issue of reducing children's exposure to Ultraviolet radiation, and make sure that outdoor safety rules and procedures are communicated to teachers, parents, maintenance personnel, coaches and students.

Student transportation safety is a subject on which the ORCSD has established policies. All bus drivers, after participating in drug screening and finger printing, are trained and must pass a test administered by the state Department of Transportation. They also must complete required training annually. Bus stops are established with student safety in mind. Standards for student conduct on buses are laid out in a School Board policy and principals can suspend riding privileges if rules are not followed. Our goals are to monitor best practices for student transportation safety (including the ongoing seat belt debate) and update policies regularly. We will ensure that the buses and other equipment, as well as rules and procedures, are in compliance with policies, communicate regularly with parents regarding safety procedures and behavior expectations of riders, conduct drills and safety training for students on a regular schedule, and establish a click count or other system so that drivers will know the number of students on board at all times. Shorter term, we will include school bus ridership rules in parent/student handbooks for all schools.

Emergency response plans include preparedness and response to any emergency, such as but not limited to fires, storms and other severe weather, loss of power, heating system failure, structural collapse, loss of water supply, health emergencies, general public emergencies, intruders, violent incidents, exposure to toxins, etc. Emergencies may indicate lockdown, sheltering on site, sheltering off site and/or evacuation. The ORCSD Emergency Response Plan is directly linked to the individual building emergency response plans for each of the four schools. Our goals are to review the district-level and school-level emergency response plans regularly to make sure they are up to date with current best practices, establish schedules for training new and existing employees and conducting drills, with particular attention to the more likely types of emergencies, gather input from teachers, administrators and first responders on how to improve emergency response plans and procedures, make sure that infrastructure exists to support emergency response plans (such as classroom door locks for lock downs), and include procedures for notifying parents and keeping them informed.

Programs to deter bullying and promote inclusion are high priorities at Oyster River. The ORCSD has designed policies to deal with sexual harassment and violence, bullying and cyber-bullying. The policies deal with defining the offensive behaviors, reporting offenses, handling and investigating reports and training. Although these policies exist, the ORCSD actually takes a much more positive, preventative approach by encouraging a culture of inclusion and respect within the community of learners. The concepts of respect and inclusion are central to the mission and philosophy of each school. The school district provides age-appropriate education/ prevention programs for students and parents, including many that are part of curriculum. The strategic plan emphasizes these positive actions, prevention programs and culture of respect rather than the handling of occasional infractions.

SUSTAINABILITY SUMMARY

GOAL: ORCSD will insure that facilities and operations support educational goals through a sustainable education system. Oyster River Schools will maintain and increase sustainability through food, gardens, transportation and energy, and incorporate these into the curriculum.

The governing characteristics of sustainability, as accepted by the ORCSD Sustainability Committee, are: renewability, substitution, interdependence, adaptability, and institutional commitment. Deference should be paid to the recommendations of the Green Teams situated at each of the schools, and to the findings and suggestions of the ORCSD Sustainability Committee, in all matters related to questions of sustainability. The Oyster River Cooperative School District Sustainability Policy is, in all cases, the guiding policy document in these matters.

The School Green Teams functioning at each of the four district schools, under the coordination of the Green Teams Coordinator at the SAU, will serve as the front line for implementation of improvements toward sustainability on the ground at each of the District schools.

Focus areas for operational sustainability include: Gardens and Food, Energy and Facilities, and Transportation. There is, additionally, the role of sustainability principles in curriculum.

The short-term and long-term goals for Sustainability, and with respect to Gardens and Food, with respect to Energy and Facilities, and with respect to Transportation, are provided on the following pages.

Sustainability and Gardens and Food

Short-Term Goals

Long-Term Goals

Sustainability and Energy and Facilities

Short-Term Goals

Long-Term Goals

Sustainability and Transportation

Short-Term Goals

Long-Term Goals

STRATEGIC PLAN OUTLINE (9/12 Draft)

GOAL #1: SUSTAINABILITY

SUMMARY: Over the course of two years, the Sustainability Committee of the Oyster River School District, initially an Advisory Committee to the District by Citizen Petition and today an Advisory Committee to the Oyster River School Board, has developed a Sustainability Policy for the District and a Program of Activity related to a series of short-term and long-term goals relative to Food and Gardens, to Energy and Facilities, and to Sustainability and Transportation. The details of each of those goals and their implementation are to be found in five pages of text following this Summary. The four established Green Teams, at Mast Way and Moharimet elementary schools, at the Oyster River Middle School, and at Oyster River High School, the Green Team Coordinator at the SAU, and the Sustainability Committee itself, all of which were established by vote of District residents at the School District meeting, are tasked with the responsibility to carry out the District Policy on Sustainability and the Short-Term and Long-Term Goals, as described in the pages following.

DRAFT ORCSD Strategic Plan for Finance and Operations, Sustainability Section:

ORCSD will insure that facilities and operations support educational goals through a sustainable education system.

Goal #1: Oyster River Schools will maintain and increase sustainability through food, gardens, transportation and energy, and incorporate these into the curriculum.

The ORCSD, with the assistance of the Oyster River Sustainability Committee, has supported and completed over two years of research on the application of principles of sustainability in the conduct and operations of Oyster River Schools.

As decided at the June 27, 2013 Finance and Operations Subcommittee meeting, and in keeping with the findings of the ORCSD Sustainability Committee, the following is a DRAFT of the Sustainability Section of the Strategic Plan. This draft is based on the research and findings of the ORCSD Sustainability Committee.

As accepted by the ORCSD Sustainability Committee, the governing characteristics of sustainability are: renewability, substitution, interdependence, adaptability, and institutional commitment . Deference should be paid to the recommendations of the Green Teams situated at each of the schools, and to the findings and suggestions of the ORCSD Sustainability Committee in all matters related to questions of sustainability. In all cases, the Oyster River Cooperative School District (ORCSD) Sustainability Policy is the guiding policy document in these matters.

Each School has a Green Team Leader who works under the coordination of the Green Team Coordinator at the SAU. The Green Team Leaders and Coordinator will serve as the front line for the implementation of improvements toward sustainability on the ground at each of the District schools.

Focus areas for operational sustainability include: Food and Gardens, Energy and Facilities, and Transportation. There is, additionally, the role of folding sustainability principles into curriculum expectations where appropriate or required.

Sustainability and Food and Gardens:

Short-Term Goals

1. Continue financial support of "Kids Eat Local";
2. Upgrade and/or expand kitchen equipment to allow for onsite processing and storage;
3. Initiate the training of staff on processing raw local foods and exploring leasing kitchens for food-processing needs of local farmers;
4. Integrate school gardens more formally into the curriculum at all levels and across curricular subjects;
5. Use the current Garden Project with high school students as a model curriculum development and a base for grant applications.

Long-Term Goals

1. Explore swapping property in the District for arable/fertile agricultural land that can be leased to start-up farmers;
2. Reduce the carbon footprint of our food sourcing and food processing operations;
3. Financially and philosophically support with pride our ORCSD Food Service, local foods and local farmers;
4. Form alliances with other school districts, educational institutions, non-profits, and corporations to provide political support for small and mid-sized farmers to survive and prosper;
5. Work collaboratively with the Lee and Durham Town Agricultural Commissions, and the Madbury Town Government, on school food and garden matters to achieve mutual goals of supporting a healthy agrarian economy and healthy food availability in the School District.

It shall be the Strategic Plan of Oyster River Consolidated School District to clearly institutionalize the school gardens at each of the schools, establish their scope and borders, guarantee their future stability in their locations, and insure their ability to expand to meet future needs. In addition, the Plan must insure that there is at least a modest monetary source of donations to support garden infrastructure (e.g., gro-tunnels, remay, and other forms of season extension, etc.), and insure summer maintenance (ideally with the assistance of the parents of students, as well as their daughters and sons). It is understood that the School Gardens have a two part mission of growing and providing nutritious and

healthy food for the four cafeteria kitchens, while also integrating a wide range of curricular skills and concepts into instruction.

As per the ORCSD's prior Strategic Plan, we must continue to strive toward healthier food options; integrate our Food Services program with our curriculum; reach out to the community to address childhood obesity and family education for healthier eating; establish cooking classes for parents and children; and publicize the progress of the Food Services program toward healthy eating goals, all of which has been previously endorsed by the Oyster River Consolidated School District.

Likewise, we must protect and insure the maintenance and growth of local food supply sources. Our Food Service Director is developing a procedure to collect and distribute local foods to the schools and support the infrastructure for food preparation. An active food composting program in all four schools serves as a necessary part of our school food system. This composting program also provides fertility to school grounds/gardens and educational opportunities to the curriculum. It also keeps the heavy food waste out of the landfill which carries substantial budgetary benefit to the taxpayers. A contracted compost business provides the necessary service that can be expanded as more compost is collected. (With the nation's largest city in the lead in mandatory food composting, and with many local municipalities and school districts around New England and the nation following suit, our Oyster River students need to be prepared for the role of composting in our society.) It is a goal of this Strategic Plan that the heaviest component in the school waste stream be food waste that is coming back to the school to be used as compost. The lightest component of the waste stream would be non-recyclable garbage, with recyclables falling in between.

To help reach these objectives, the School District will specifically:

1. Develop a capital plan for replacing kitchen and cafeteria equipment (evaluating condition of current equipment, deciding what equipment is no longer functioning, and creating a time-line for replacement);
2. Develop a marketing strategy for the Food Service Program (including communicating program goals to parents and the community and developing other marketing tools to strengthen participation in the program);
3. Integrate the NH Farm-to-School Program, Kids Eat Local, and School Gardens to support consumption of local foods (including having school gardening groups work with the cafeteria to plan crops that can be utilized in the cafeteria, scheduling crops for each season that will work with the school schedule, and planning the processing of summer crops for school year usage);
4. Evaluate cafeteria environment, culture, time and space (e.g., soliciting proposals for redecorating cafeterias that need upgrading, and working with Facilities to create work teams to carry out changes);
5. Develop a UNH Intern Program to help Oyster River students to make good choices (including meeting UNH Program Directors to discuss availability of interns, scheduling interns for work in each school's cafeteria and school gardens).

Since there is a direct relationship between nutrition and academic performance, school personnel should make every effort to identify and report suspected hunger in members of the student body. Teachers should be given guidance to recognize possible symptoms of hunger and report same to the appropriate officer of the school.

Sustainability and Energy and Facilities:

Short-Term Goals

1. Institute a comprehensive energy conservation plan through the Green Teams to address the “low-hanging fruit” in each building – behavioral adjustments that staff and students can make are next;
2. Develop fuel-sourcing strategies that reduce our carbon footprint and minimize environmental impact from select fuel producers;
3. Replace all water-using fixtures with low- flow units through a capital improvement schedule;
4. Continue with landscaping projects like rain gardens that reduce our storm water flow and overall water discharge;
5. Explore Lee’s District Heating proposal for consideration of hook-up at Mast Way School.

Long-Term Goals

1. Convert non-athletic grass areas to native plants through xeriscaping projects;
2. Begin to draft a plan to introduce alternative energy/fuel sources over the next decade or so;
3. Develop screening procedures for all major vendors that promote sound environmental policies and social equity practices;
4. Explore institutional and corporate alliances with groups that promote sustainable practices.
5. Convert the District’s energy supply as much as possible to renewable sources, particularly solar. ORCSD should follow the lead of the Town of Durham, and perhaps collaborate with the Town of Durham, in contracting for solar technology with Revision Energy. Given the foundation of solar energy now developing all around us in Durham, this should be a relatively easy task, outfitting all four schools with roof-top and possibly ground level solar technology (photovoltaics).
6. Follow the guidance of the energy audits that have been completed in the District, as appropriate and in a timely manner.

The district should accept the objectives of the Energy and Facilities Procurement Subcommittee of the Oyster River Sustainability Committee, through the following:

1. By Becoming more energy effective and efficient by reducing ORCSD reliance on fossil fuels;
2. By Minimizing the ORCSD ecological footprint; and
3. By Incurring future ORCSD cost savings and a return on investment (ROI) on sustainability initiatives.

Additionally, assessment of District practices, policies, and future initiatives and their impact should occur on an annual basis.

Further, the Oyster River Cooperative School District (ORCSD) seeks to work with suppliers and service providers that offer products and services that improve the health of our students and faculty, and our environment, without sacrificing quality. These criteria include products that contain recycled materials, are themselves recyclable, are non-toxic or biodegradable, contain minimum packaging, cost less to transport, have high performance, are extremely durable, Energy Star-qualified, or that consume fewer natural resources over their useful life. We prefer to work with vendors and suppliers who address their environmental/sustainability practices, offer take-back programs, including shipping materials, and responsibly dispose of all waste. We seek products and services that help us reduce, reuse and recycle, while lessening our ecological footprint. When possible, we prefer to work with local vendors and suppliers in order to keep our purchases invested in the local community. The ORCSD is committed to sustainability with an emphasis on renewability, substitution, adaptability, interdependence, and an institutional commitment in the areas of Food and Nutrition, Facilities and Energy, Transportation, and Educational Outreach.

Since Mast Way School is a part of the community of Lee, and geographically situated next to the proposed town district heating loop, Mast Way School should accept every opportunity to become a node on that proposed Town of Lee District Heating Loop, if such District Heating Loop is established.

Should any new school building be constructed in the Oyster River District during the life of this Strategic Plan, serious consideration should be given by the District to seeking LEED certification for such building.

Sustainability and Transportation:

Short-Term Goals

1. Keep our Transportation Department independent and do not lease the service of transporting students;
2. Maintain control of our Transportation Department and preserve our options to work toward sustainable transportation alternatives;
3. Create a campaign to reduce the amount of private transportation used to and from our schools by adults/parents and students;
4. Campaign to reduce the transportation footprint for all vehicles that travel to and from our schools;
5. Create a campaign, with incentives, for students to ride the buses;
6. Explore introducing alternatively-fueled vehicles into the van fleet first (e.g., perhaps hybrids).

Long-Term Goals

1. Explore alternative fuels (beyond B20) for the larger buses;
2. Select fuels with the lowest carbon footprint and the least environmental impact in sourcing;
3. Develop ORCSD policies in fuel-sourcing practices by eliminating carbon-sourced fuels;
4. Develop alternative forms of transportation to and from school (e.g., bike routes, walking routes);

5. Explore effective use of online delivery of selective curriculum.

Every incentive should thus be provided to encourage ridership on the school buses, to encourage bicycling to school, and walking to school, the latter including the involvement of parents of younger students to answer any security concerns. Every existing incentive that supports students' driving to school should be eliminated, including the enabling of the very visible parking of student vehicles near the high school. (Any encouragement to students to drive to school is in clear violation of any consideration of sustainability. Likewise also is any encouragement to parents to drive their students to school – in the latter case, incentive should be provided for car-pooling.) Likewise, the district should introduce the concept of the "walking school bus", a route that involves younger students walking to school with a trained volunteer in place of riding the bus – the group moves through neighborhoods walking together and "picking up" students along the way.

Every incentive and encouragement should be provided District teachers and administrators to use the AMTRAK Downeaster and its attractive school group fares when field trips are planned to Boston, Portland, Freeport, Brunswick, or any other stops along the line, north or south. Use of passenger rail is a far better fit to the principles of sustainability than is the chartering of buses and the wasted value of all the "in-between" time of the bus and driver, not to mention the substantial carbon emissions. And riding passenger trains is itself a good educational value for the students, as ORMS' Fifth Grade and their teachers and accompanying parents have learned from their experience.

Other issues that might be considered under sustainability but are also very appropriate under health and wellness include the use of chemicals and of toxic or moderately toxic substances applied to the school grounds (grass fields, etc.) and in use as cleaning and other products within school buildings. This subject is treated under Goal #2, "Safety and Wellness".

Updated 9/30/13

Oyster River Cooperative School District Strategic Plan: Communication Section

“The newest computer can merely compound, at speed, the oldest problem in relations between human beings, and in the end the communicator will be confronted with the old problem of what to say and how to say it.” Edward R. Murrow

The reason that communication has its own section in the Oyster River Cooperative School District Strategic Plan is evidenced in the heart of Mr. Murrow’s quote, “...what to say and how to say it.” As with any complex organization attempting to communicate its vision and its goals, the key in doing so effectively is to do so as clearly and comprehensively as possible.

Fundamental to the communication plan is the adopted Vision of ORCSD as the principle driver is quality, *“We create a safe, stimulating learning environments where all students are challenged and excited by the opportunities to learn; where students and teachers alike feel it is safe to take creative risks; and where every member of our community is known and valued.”*

The broad goal of this section of the ORCSD strategic plan is to communicate comprehensively with the Oyster River students, and employees who educate and support in their education and the larger external Oyster River communities that finance and support ORCSD.

Referring once again to the OR Vision statement, *“...we engage all students in developing skills and knowledge they need to further their education; participate as citizens, succeed in the workplace; live healthy lives, and thrive in the 21st century.”* This section of the vision statement implies accountability. In order to communicate effectiveness, the District must measure student outcomes and report results to the community. Metrics such as graduate rates, dropouts rates, SAT and ACT scores, NECAPs and other quantifiable measures should be communicated, but not exclusively as they measure finite outcomes. Other measures of success to report that are harder to measure include, but are not limited to awards and recognitions, experiences in the arts, and service to the community.

To that end, the District must be in constant communication with its intended audience and be cognizant of the needs of the larger Oyster River communities. The following examples are not intended to represent the complete range of communication tools at District disposal but are indicative of some ways to effectively communicate with traditional means of communicating such as meetings and newsletters, as well as harnessing the power of technology using texts, emails, and Oyster River television.

Those responsible for communicating must be mindful that it is an exhaustive exercise and that there will always be someone who did not get the message, and yet, every effort must be made to constantly communicate. As George Bernard Shaw stated, “The single biggest problem with communication is the illusion it has taken place.”

Work Group Name: FS Strategic Plan – Communication - Updated 9/30/13

Overarching Goal:

ORCSD will enhance communications to accurately report District performance to engender a culture of trust, respect and support.

Internal Goal:

ORCSD will communicate with and engage the school community consistently and in an on-going manner.

External Goal:

ORCSD will communicate with and engage the member communities of Durham, Lee and Madbury in a consistent and an on-going manner.

Future Search – New Elements

THEMES IN THE DATA:

This data was much more varied...many different ideas thrown out...so format is a little different. I just tried to categorize the ideas.

1. Stronger connection to post secondary

- ✓Early college (bring professors here)
- ✓Adult Education program (maybe with UNH)
- ✓Survey 1st semester college students...how'd we do?
- ✓Alternative Education learning - GBCC, UH
- ✓Community Service

2. Rethink, innovate school structures, schedules, instructional practices

- ✓Real world experiences for all grads
- ✓Service learning, grad requirement
- ✓ELO's.. community based learning..with businesses, no-profits
- ✓Internships
- ✓Project-based learning
- ✓Mentors from community, volunteers
- ✓Competency-based learning...several
- ✓Differentiated instruction
- ✓E-learning - on line - at all levels elem-HS
- ✓Calendars, schedules, start times, extended school hours

3. Curriculum elements

- ✓Full day K
- ✓World languages @ all levels
- ✓Add Adult Education program
- ✓Music at elementary
- ✓Increase STEM

4. Assessment elements

- ✓Portfolio assessment
- ✓Senior/capstone project
- ✓New/innovative ways to measure student progress
- ✓competency-based assessment

5. Teacher collaboration, support, evaluation

- ✓Education Innovation Academy or OREW - Education Workshop for staff learning about 21st Century learning systems/practices...exchanges
- ✓Collaboration time for staff to work together, observe, improve practice
- ✓Helpful constructive feedback system for growth

6. Enhancements to communication with parents/community

- ✓Clear about what ORCSD is “known for”
- ✓Clear about what “working in partnership” is...how to measure that
- ✓Fall and Spring parent conferences

7. Resource Management elements

- ✓Re-examine school building designs - efficiency
- ✓Do long-term planning for budget, tech infrastructure et.
- ✓Pursue creative revenue sources
- ✓Sustainability planning
- ✓Facilities improvements
- ✓Tuition students

RAW DATA

- Early College (1st one in NH)
- Full Day Kindergarten & Preschool (funded by HS “move on when ready” system)
- Expand learning environment to competency bases blended system (classroom/online/community) that follows and fuels individual student passions
 1. Include explicitly in mission/vision
 2. Expand staff/faculty roles (with training) to be facilitator to community volunteers/mentors, bridging to academic goals, supporting behavior management
 3. Schools as intermediaries for community/biz resources
 4. Competency-based assessments
- Community communication and open data
- Foreign Language at elementary level – high school
- Add adult education program (community (economic) capacity)
 - In partnership with UNH
 - Mini classes
- Educator Innovation Academy to prepare educators for innovative 21st century learning system
- Re-invent school day longer for kindergarten
- Competency based learning
- Re-examine design of school building to accommodate new methods
- Avoid complacency
- Long term planning for use and application of technology
- More connections of students to community, service-learning opportunities
- Balance technology use with need for human contact, interaction
- Survey ORHS grads in 1st semester college – How’d we do?
- String instrument program at elementary level
- Compare ORCSD to other NH districts – strategic plan, finance, other practices
- Enhance communication and promotion of alternative education learning opportunities and collaboration with GBCC, UNH and other businesses
- Pursue creative revenue sources for the district
- Increase STEM and world language offerings with practical application.