

## NOTES

Vision Plan for Public Education in Alamance County  
Stakeholder Group Meeting  
ABSS Professional Library  
January 16, 2013  
8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

### Comments Re: December 19, 2012 Draft Vision Plan Statement

#### What works:

- + Like 3 headings
- + We like it
- + We agree with the draft and felt it all really summarized and all we came together when we brainstormed ideas about our vision.

#### What could be improved?

- △ “Investment”? → Clarify
- △ Democratic Society → Clarify Values; Define?
- △ Make specific to Alamance County
- △ Emphasize Life Long Learning
- △ What is the scope of “community”? Global? Local?
- △ Is “Quality of Life” receiving enough emphasis compared with “Economic Success”/
- △ Clarify our purpose → Beliefs, Values or Strategies to “combat” those?
- △ Tad more hands on to framework than just beliefs and values/action oriented
- △ Too wordy; repetitive language
- △ Where are we going? Vision? Strategic?
- △ One word that is missing: “Challenge.” Where is the challenge to the community to take responsibility?
- △ The bar is set too low; where is the challenge
- △ Not enough community responsibility
- △ Wishy Washy
- △ Final product needs to reflect work of group and this process (details of our work)
- △ Is set of beliefs enough? More than a vision
- △ What is the bottom line? What do we want? When will we have met it? Completed it?
- △ Behaviors that are not necessarily academic → Life skills not being stressed enough → Knowledge and softer skills
- △ Not a vision → A vision will be “We want...and how we’ll make that happen”
- △ Define vision and up to school board to make it happen
- △ Define “equal access”; What does it mean in a system with specific districts and attendance zones; funding challenges

- △ Clarify “Investment”; how do we include the theme of investment? This needs to address funding; what are “its values?”
- △ A community member needs to be able to read this and say, “They are talking to me.”
- △ With regards to the “children” section ; Life Lon Learning
- △ With regards to the “community” section, what scope are we trying to address? Question emphasis on “global”
- △ Quality of Life seems to be a tag-a-long to economic success
- △ Needs to be more action oriented; bottom line, what do we want?
- △ You can have a strong democracy without high test scores
- △ The behaviors for college or career → time management, etc. life skills are not being stressed. We don’t test/stress life skills
- △ Need the total package

### **All on the Wall – Question 3 – “What purposes should public schools serve?”**

Life Preparedness: “The public schools in Alamance County strive to provide options, experiences and opportunities so that each child can best be prepared for life (job, higher education, social skills) at their learning level or interest.”

- To educate our children and challenge them in core areas like math, science and literature. It’d be nice if they could read and write when they got to high school
- A preparatory process for students to enter continuing education in a vocational path or a collegiate path.
- To expose students to the vast array of learning paths available and life skills in pursuing these paths.
- To educate our children and prepare them for life – college. Kids are at a disadvantage when entering college after going through Alamance County School System.
- Provide opportunities to learn and develop; grow as a individual and as a community
- Foundation for future individual and community
- Draw the best out of an individual; to challenge
- Prepare students for successful careers in a competitive and complex work environment; e.g. content knowledge, critical thinking, emotional intelligence
- Provide students with knowledge, values, discipline, structure
- To be successful citizens
- Prepare students for higher education in science, engineering, and professional occupations.
- Prepare students for technical service careers; give all students basic literacy and living skills
- Assess aptitude to meet the highest and best capability of every student
- Ensure students have skills to develop relationships
- Educate and prepare students to enter the workforce and or foster their talents to serve and contribute to the quality of life in the community
- Help them do well at college
- To be prepared for career or college and beyond. Education should include academic and life skills and be local, national and global in scope.
- Provide students with knowledge and skills they might not get from their households.
- Provide and develop knowledge and life skills

- To support students in setting personal goals
- Develop skills and abilities
- Produce productive citizens
- Prepare for future success
- I think that the purpose of public schools is to educate students for life and further education without a cost
- Career ready with critical thinking and skills for success in jobs/careers
- To encourage students to want more out of life and know what is available to them after high school
- Prepare our youth for tomorrow

Equal Opportunity and access for all: “Provide equal access to a high quality education for all children regardless of circumstances.”

- Provide education for less fortunate kids. Also give everyone an opportunity to succeed.
- To make education accessible
- To prepare and educate students for the real world despite their circumstances.
- Appropriate education for special needs children.
- Equal learning opportunities
- To provide education for all, to meet the standards of the law which mandates the attendance and education of all minors in the United States?
- To help educate all young people no matter what color or situation. And to provide a free education.
- Enable every student to reach their maximum potential
- The purpose of public schools is to give everyone a chance to be educated no matter where you come from.
- To get the kids in other neighborhoods with kids in other neighborhoods to mix up things. The public is open to the public. If it was private then everyone wouldn't be able to get in.
- Public schools should provide an accessible, safe and challenging educational experience for all children in the community.
- To provide free an appropriate public education to all children.
- Accept all children no matter what differences the child may have (or disabilities)
- Provide any additional resources for students with disabilities to access school and curriculum
- Prepare students for life after school (transition services) inform students of options
- We must continue to strive to provide appropriate programs for Exceptional Children

Provide Adequate Resources: “Provide Adequate resources that enhance learning for all students to include motivated teacher, cutting edge technology, state of the art facilities, opportunities and resources for families to encourage engagement; professional development for all staff, strong interaction between staff, teachers, students and families.”

- Provide adequate staff with materials, training, curriculum, programs, law...provide families with information and resources

- I feel that we are to work together with parents/grandparents to provide the best learning environment possible for our children. They provide role models for our children and should be held to the highest standards. Making learning as interesting as possible while making it a challenge to the children should be a real goal for them as well. I do feel that they should have more ability to discipline but I know that isn't up to them but they should use a firm a hand as possible and include the parents in disciplinary problems. Keeping the parents informed of the children's progress and their problems should also be a top priority as well as helping to provide the tools for their parents to help the child at home. So in a nutshell, I suppose the purpose would be to provide the best education possible for the children while encouraging the parents to help by keeping in touch and providing necessary tools (books, instructions, etc.) for the parents to use at home with their child.
- Educate; parents not accepting responsibility; parents not supporting teachers; too much pc training
- The purpose of public schools is to provide the resources (teachers, schools, equipment, tools, etc.) and systems/processes to educate all willing students to prepare them to be successful in life and to build a community that has a high quality of life.

Academic Achievement for All: "To provide opportunities so that all students will be successful and excel based upon their abilities.

- Teach students to think critically
- Teach students to full utilize 21<sup>st</sup> Century technology
- Identify strengths and weaknesses of all students, help them all achieve their highest level of success, including high achievers who need to have no limits placed on their advancement
- More emphasis placed on helping students with college applications and educating students early on as to what colleges are looking for in applicants
- Help all students achieve their highest level of success without putting limits on student achievement including high achievers
- Give students opportunity to excel and discover their dreams
- Educating Students; academics, responsibility, interacting with others
- Better themselves
- Deliver knowledge to the masses
- To give our students equal access to a learning experience and environment that will enhance their self-understanding that will promote interacting with others and to enrich them with the skills to be successful in life.
- To provide families that have low income or do not want to send their child to a private school with education needed for their child's success
- An equal education should be prepared and offered to all levels of students – not simply those with special needs, those challenged by a language barrier, or those who are advanced learners. The "middle of the road child" is so often overlooked and "lost in the shuffle" ...Ironically this group is probably the majority of our students, and these also tend to be the students who could so easily be stretched and cultivated with proper enrichment and motivation. Our public schools should be able to offer a quality and balanced education to all levels of learners, not just select, entitled groups.

Create a Sense of Community: "Prepare students to live, work and participate in diverse local, national and global communities."

- To prepare the future leaders to assume responsibilities of adulthood 1e) support themselves and their families in a job ; and to be informed citizens of their community
- To educate students in the basics; reading, writing, arithmetic, etc., and prepare students in social skills
- Provide a social experience for students
- To not only provide you with an education but to help you build a social life and give you a chance to interact with your peers
- To expose students to a variety of people and give them an opportunity to learn as much as they can
- Contribution to society
- Strong education focusing on building strong foundation in character development, reading, writing, math, history then moving to technology and technical skills; provide extracurricular activities, sports, clubs, service ; encourage build rather than consume
- Preparation for society
- To build a skill set within all out your people that will enable them to build a productive life. To constructively participate in society
- Expose children to as many arenas as possible in studies, sports and extracurricular activities so they are able to determine their interest, aiding them in moving forward in their careers and become well rounded individuals.
- Provide children the best education possible given limits of time and resources to enable them to lead productive lives, improve their quality of life and to be active, engage participants in our society – politically, economically and socially.
- Teach values and character traits
- To create a sense of community; to foster working with diverse groups; positive learning environment
- Teach democratic and life values
- Teach cultural literacy, citizenship skills, social skills, critical thinking
- Instill democratic values
- To see how different everyone learns
- To educate the public's youth; to enrich the public of the future
- Prepare students to be knowledgeable and productive members of the community
- Prepare students to be good neighbors, i.e.; tolerant, appreciative of differences, able to get along with others.
- Public schools should provide the foundation of preparing the public to lead productive and healthy lives
- Create a culture of care and community where students learn to support one another

Healthy and Safe Environment: “To provide a positive, safe and nurturing learning environment that promotes healthy lifestyles and academic success.”

- Provide safe environment
- Provide food, assure basic needs met
- To grow intellectually in a safe and supportive environment
- To make basic education available to all people. It provides baseline skills that we need to be successful (or at least somewhat prepared) for the world or to prepare us for further education.
- To make sure children are safe and healthy
- Safe haven; free from violence and negative influences
- Provide safe environment

Better themselves: (No statement developed; many may fit under other headings)

- Give students what they need to succeed; help them be thinkers
- To have an educated public who have the ability to read for themselves to make informed decisions for themselves and their community
- To empower our students with the knowledge and wisdom to be productive and competitive
- The public school system offers opportunities for students to better themselves and their community
- Public schools should create an environment of support and encouragement that inspires students toward self-betterment in a variety of disciplines. Public schools should focus on growth rather than grades, and this growth should be measured by a variety of resources (methods) including formal assessments and educator-made resources. Public schools should be an organization that values all stakeholders and aggressively seeks input and feedback from students, parents, community, staff, and faculty. Public schools should be a place where classroom educators are empowered to make decisions and develop creative learning experiences that are supported by student-demonstrated evidence. Public schools should work toward creating a culture where equity of support and resources is a priority, but with the understanding that equity does not necessarily mean “treating all schools and students the same.”

## Issues Log

- Parental Involvement/Engagement
- Too Internet Dependent
- Financial Investment. Measurement of Investment or Return on Investment
- Drop-out Age
- Schools expected to raise children
- Gang Issue
  - Where are gang members being educated?
  - What is purpose of Ray Street School
  - School Administration needs to be more responsive to public
- Highest level of success without limits – constant improvement
- Rigorous learning
- State of the art facilities
- Recruit and Retain best teachers and administration
- Perception v. Truth → lack of knowledge?; Too much spent on Administration and not enough on classroom. Could we get the numbers?
- Define “Equal Access”
- Define “Resources”
- Some of the only meals and health care that kids get is in the schools
- Discipline
- Community dissatisfaction with quality of school system as compared to other school systems
- Define “Preparedness”
- To do: talk to your friends, neighbors and co-workers → communicate about this effort, get more community feedback
- Facts; education; orientation to school administration → can we get more information about these things?
- Rant: (compiled from responses to framing questions)

- Educate: This is the only purpose
- Discipline
- Children that don't want to learn should be placed elsewhere
- No tenure
- To stay politically unbiased in educating our children
- Administration get out of politics
- To teach our children. I think they made a mistake when they consolidated the school systems. Children have no respect for teachers.

### **What worked well/What could we improve**

+ What worked well:

- + Keep the original purpose in front of us
- + Different views and yet keep working well together to find common ground
- + Having initial draft of vision to discuss

△ What could we improve:

- △ Can we get draft before the next meeting?
- △ More statements of where we'd like school system to be
- △ Sense of priority of the issues

### **Before the next meeting:**

Review Website Links, review our work together so far.

Next Meeting is: Wednesday, February 6, 2013; 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Tentative Agenda:

- Review Draft Themes from Question 3
- "All on the Wall" with Question 4 – "What should we teach children, who should teach them and how?"