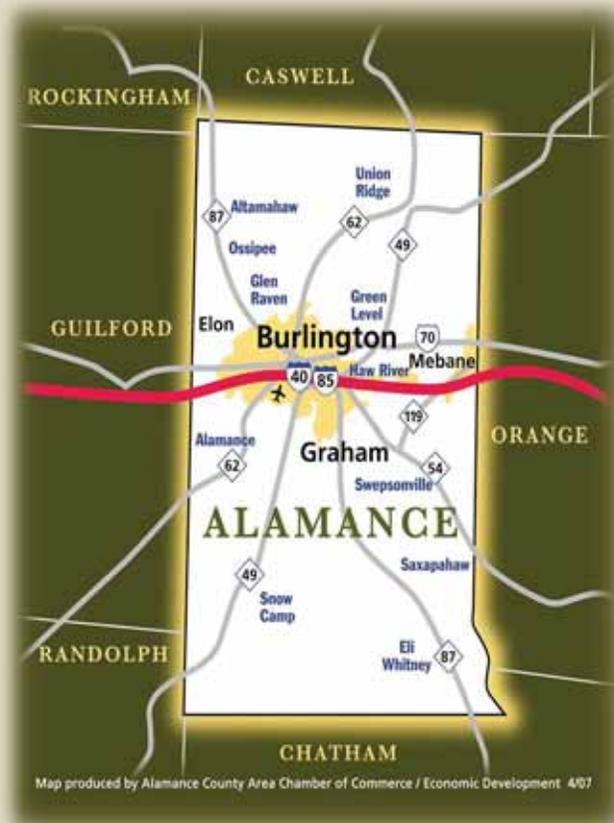


A VISION FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION IN ALAMANCE COUNTY



We envision a public school system that is a national model for its curriculum and community engagement to empower all Alamance County students with equal opportunity for civic engagement, a meaningful quality of life and skills for economic success -- for themselves and our community.

A CONVERSATION BY THE COMMUNITY – FOR THE COMMUNITY

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Executive Summary

From September 2012 through April 2013, a diverse group of citizens from Alamance County, members of our community and representatives of our educational system, came together through an in-depth process of open dialogue, engaged learning, individual reflection and constructive discussion to develop and document a vision for public education in Alamance County.

We believe

We believe that education is the foundation for individual success, economic prosperity, improved quality of life and perpetuation of our democratic society.

We envision

We envision a public school system that is a national model for its curriculum and community engagement to empower all Alamance County students with equal opportunity for civic engagement, a meaningful quality of life and skills for economic success -- for themselves and our community.

We envision Alamance County public school students actively engaged in learning that enables each child to achieve their highest potential. All Alamance County students will learn in safe, modern facilities with exceptional teachers utilizing curriculum that will be a national model for core academic subjects, arts, communication, critical thinking, social skill development, service to others, and enriching extracurricular activities. Our public schools will be led by elected officials, administrators, teachers, parents, students and community leaders dedicated to achieving excellence through open discussion and constant improvement of our children's educations.

We recognize

We recognize that our public schools need community support to be successful. The community members who helped develop this Vision for Public Education in Alamance County support our elected officials, students, teachers and administrators in their mission to educate all students to meet high academic standards and become responsible citizens in a rapidly changing world. No less should be expected of us and we stand ready to serve.

We expect

We expect that the Alamance-Burlington Board of Education and school administration will utilize this Community Vision for Public Education in Alamance County to develop a detailed, practical, strategic plan that will be implemented in our public schools. Effective implementation will require strong community involvement. We expect the ABSS leadership to create excellence in our public schools by working together as a team, being strong advocates for education and building connections to the community. The children of Alamance County deserve no less.

Beliefs

We believe in our children.

We believe that education is the foundation for individual success, and that education should provide the knowledge, experiences and skills for future careers, further educational opportunities and continued and constructive participation in our democratic society.

We believe that all Alamance County children, regardless of circumstances, must have equal opportunity to realize their full potential and to prepare themselves to successfully face the challenges of the future and be productive members of society. For this to happen, we must invest in safe learning environments and a challenging, dynamic, analytical, practical and flexible system of education. Students should have the opportunity to develop strong creative and innovative thinking, problem solving, life skills and leadership skills.

We believe that the children of Alamance County, when educated by exceptional teachers, using the best methods, in great facilities with commensurate support and expectations from families, community leaders, and the community-at-large, can achieve exceptional post high school successes.

We believe that the children of Alamance County deserve our investment in public education.

We believe in Alamance County.

We believe that educating Alamance County children will prepare good citizens, a talented workforce and strong leaders. By developing critical thinking and leadership skills in our children, we can create a dynamic, creative and diverse workforce in order to allow Alamance County to be competitive in an evolving and constantly changing global economy. Education improves the quality of life for our citizens by enabling financial independence, promoting individual health, sharing our cultural talents and heritage, encouraging commonly held values, and instilling an appreciation for our community - its past, present and future.

We believe that Alamance County, bolstered by an excellent public school system that helps its students reach their greatest potential, can become one of the most desired destinations for new business and industry, and the most desired place to live, work and raise a family.

We believe that investing in public education is an investment that provides a foundation for the economic success of Alamance County and the improvement of the quality of life for all its residents.

We believe that Alamance County deserves our investment in public education.

We believe in our democratic society.

We believe that education provides the foundation for a sustainable democratic society. A democratic society requires an informed citizenry that will fully participate in decision-making and public discourse while promoting its values. Public education in Alamance County can convey our history and culture to future generations by preparing them to be responsible, engaged, productive members of our society.

We believe our democratic society deserves our investment in public education.

Vision Statements

Alamance County will be led and served by a public education system that is recognized as best-in-class and whose growth is driven by broad community support.

- We will treat the business of educating our students with the utmost respect, and we will be known for our uncompromising commitment to rigor and excellence in our every endeavor.
- We will be recognized as a preferred place to live, raise families and build businesses, specifically because of the quality of our public education system.
- We will be recognized as a national model for best-in-class public education, emulated by other school systems across the country.
- Driven by the community itself, our schools will be respected within the County. We value a school system interwoven with the community fabric so as to:
 - command the support of our citizenry in both participation and financial commitment, and
 - enrich and strengthen our community with a quality educational foundation, active arts and healthy lifestyles.
- Our students will be well-prepared to live, work, lead and govern in our local, national and global communities through their pursuit of higher education, careers and community service.
- Our school system will be preferred by high quality teachers as a result of our respect for and trust in them, our community and professional support, and competitive compensation.
- Our school system will produce well-rounded students. We value:
 - The natural, physical and social sciences and mathematics
 - The humanities, including language (English and foreign) and the visual and performing arts
 - Critical thinking skills
 - Career/vocational skills and technology literacy
 - Extracurricular activities, such as sports and clubs
 - Life skills, including health, financial literacy, communication and other social skills
 - Character development, including ethics, morality, respect, honesty and compassion
 - Citizenship and service
- Our schools and related facilities will be safe and well-maintained, and they will support our commitment to provide best-in-class educational opportunities for our students.
- All of our students will be appropriately supported and challenged to meet their highest potential.

Fulfilling the Vision

We recommend and expect the Alamance-Burlington Board of Education, the Alamance-Burlington School System, and the people of Alamance County to address the following priority areas:

For the Community:

It is expected that all the people from all sectors of Alamance County will know and understand this Vision. The more the community understands and keeps the Vision alive, the greater the likelihood that the Board of Education will find the support necessary to fully implement a strategic plan built upon our Vision. With greater community involvement will come greater community understanding and with greater understanding will come the community support necessary for the Board of Education to successfully implement its strategic plan.

For the Parents:

It is expected that parents will come to understand the importance of their “voice” to the success of their children. Parents must be involved in the education of their children. Parents need to seek and gain understanding on why, what and how their students are being taught and not just enter the schools when there is a problem. The schools’ administrators need to develop strategies to get parents more involved in the learning process. Teachers need to understand the importance of this relationship to the success of their students and work with parents to understand and engage accordingly.

For the Board of Education:

It is expected that the Board of Education will publicly commit to this community developed Vision for Public Education in Alamance County and will develop a thorough strategic plan containing clear and measureable goals necessary to achieve this Vision. The Board of Education should continue to engage all individuals and organizations for support as they develop their strategic plan. Once developed, it is imperative that the plan be regularly monitored and reassessed for effectiveness using community input to do so. Engaging the community on a regular basis can increase community commitment and support and together the Board of Education and the community will create a new and more improved system of public education.

For Our Local Leaders:

We expect to hold accountable the Board of Education, the Alamance County Board of Commissioners, and the Alamance-Burlington School System for the development and implementation of an Alamance-Burlington Schools strategic plan resulting from this Vision. All must come together to develop, implement and measure our progress towards achieving our Vision. Goals and strategies should have clear benchmarks. Deadlines set for each benchmark should be realistic and attainable. Progress in reaching these benchmarks should be shared on a regular basis to assure the community that progress is being made towards our Vision. We expect the Board of Education, County Commissioners and Alamance-Burlington School System to work together to find ways to fund the work necessary to achieve this Vision from federal, state and local sources.

Appendix A: Issues Presented by the Public

As a result of our hours of discussion and analysis, several issues surfaced that we recommend the Alamance County Board of Education consider as part of their strategic planning process. These issues are not the consensus of the Stakeholder Group, but are issues presented to and by the stakeholders as part of our vision planning process.

- Increasing parental involvement and engagement with their child's education.
- Addressing the potential that children may become too internet dependent.
- Determining the adequacy and matrix for appropriate measurements of financial investment in education.
- Addressing concerns relating to the drop-out age.
- Assessing how best to address concerns that society may place too much of a burden on schools to raise children.
- Analyzing and implementing solutions for the problems of gangs in the schools, including such issues as:
 - Where are gang members being educated?
 - What is the purpose of the Ray Street Academy?
 - How can the school administration be responsive to the public about this issue?
- How to enable the highest level of success for students without limits in order to allow constant personal improvement.
- Implementing rigor in the learning process.
- Assessing whether we have what our students and teachers need by way of state of the art facilities.
- Recruiting and retaining the best teachers and administration.
- Addressing a belief recited by multiple sources that too much money is spent on administration and not enough on classrooms compared to the belief by other sources that the amount of expenditures on administration is adequate.
- Best defining "Equal Access" to education for all children.
- Best defining what resources are needed to provide the best education for our students.
- Some of the only meals and health care that kids get is in the schools.
- Ascertaining the appropriate level of discipline in the schools.

A Vision for Public Education in Alamance County

- Addressing a sense of community dissatisfaction with the quality of the school system as compared to other school systems, including schools systems in our neighboring counties.
- Creating guidelines of what constitutes good “preparedness” for students to enter the workforce or to further their education beyond high school.
- Determining the best methodology and location for educating children who display a lack of desire to learn and who disrupt the learning process for others.
- How to stay politically unbiased in the education of our children.
- The creation of an environmental education center.
- Establish “train the trainer” programs to allow and encourage successful school staff to share their techniques and passion for success.
- Employ and empower excellent principals.
- Identify and address best practices to motivate apathetic employers, community, children and parents.
- Better educate the community about how the public school system is operated and funded.
- Engage public officials by inviting them to the schools to remind them how they were educated and whom they serve.
- Better counseling for college access.
- Increased and improved engagement by the County Commissioners in public education and collaboration with the Board of Education.
- Consider requiring parent involvement in public education where legally permitted.

Appendix B: Overview of Process

Purpose of this Initiative

The Alamance-Burlington Board of Education in its September 7, 2011 Strategic Planning Retreat identified a number of forces shaping the face and future of public education in the Alamance-Burlington School System. As the representative body elected to govern public schools on behalf of Alamance County, the Board of Education recognizes its legal, moral and political obligation to respond to these forces constructively in order to provide the best possible education system for all residents.

The forces shaping the school system that the Board of Education identified include changes in leadership and administration, maintaining local flexibility when responding to state requirements and national standardization, balancing equity and consistency throughout the school system, addressing socioeconomic differences that impact educational and economic opportunity, helping students develop healthy lifestyles during and beyond schooling, and responding appropriately to changing political and economic conditions. The Board of Education, as an outcome of its retreat, proposed a strategic initiative to engage the community in planning for how best to enhance the capacity of the school system to prepare students to live in a changing world.

As partners in this effort, the Alamance County Area Chamber of Commerce, recognizing that the full spectrum of education is vital to the success of Alamance County, both as a place to live and as a place to do business; and the Alamance-Burlington Board of Education, recognizing the importance of community engagement and the benefit of community input to inform their deliberation and decision-making with regard to public education in Alamance County, agreed to form a public-private partnership to jointly develop a community vision for the future of public education in Alamance County.

Support for this initiative was provided by the Alamance-Burlington School System and by a grant from the Alamance County Economic Development Foundation. Leading and Governing Associates, Inc. of Carrboro, NC was contracted with to provide planning assistance and facilitation to the steering committee and the stakeholder group.

Public Values Framework

“What’s public about public schools? What is public about public education other than its funding?Every society educates its children. But why, how and towards what ends? Why, in educating children, do public schools give rise to so many controversial issues? What is it that drives our common purposes in educating children and at the same time divides us so passionately about how to educate them?”

*– Preserving the Public in Public Schools: Visions, Values, Conflicts, and Choices
By Phil Boyle and Del Burns (2012)*

The process through which a representative group of Alamance stakeholders was identified and called together to engage one another in creating a community vision for public education in Alamance County was designed using the public values framework laid out in the Boyle and Burns 2012 book. As individuals, each citizen has answers to the above questions. The charge of this initiative was to explore our answers to those questions and create a *community* vision and build *community* support for public education in Alamance County. What is it in this time and this place that unites the citizens of Alamance County in regard to public education and its public school system?

Organization and Structure

As initially discussed at the Board of Education's September 7, 2011 planning retreat, two groups were convened to carry out this effort on behalf of the Greater Alamance County Community.

To oversee the effort, a steering committee representing the Alamance-Burlington School System, the Alamance County community, and the Alamance County Area Chamber of Commerce was created. (See list of participants in Appendix D.) The Steering Committee began meeting in May 2012 to more fully develop its charge and identify and recruit a larger, broad-based stakeholder group, composed of representatives from a variety of sectors from across the county, to carry out this initiative. To facilitate coordination and implementation of the initiative, two members of the Steering Committee, the Co-Chairs, served as members of both the Steering Committee and the Stakeholder Group.

The Stakeholder Group was charged with preparing a written Vision for Public Education in Alamance County, NC that reflects the goals and aspirations of the entire Alamance community. In its charge, the Stakeholder Group was to develop a vision that provides guidance to the ongoing efforts of the Board of Education and school system, identifies key issues facing the district, explains the Stakeholder Group's recommendations and how they were reached, and proposes principles and criteria to help guide the school system's educational priorities and funding decisions.

The Steering Committee and the Stakeholder Group provided opportunities for the entire Alamance County community to have input and buy-in into this Vision and accepts shared ownership and responsibility for supporting the identified goals and directions.

The final Vision and Community Engagement Report was completed and shared with the Alamance-Burlington Board of Education and the Alamance County Area Chamber of Commerce at a Community Reception held May 23, 2013 prior to the Board of Education meeting.

Appendix C: Timeline of Process

September 7, 2011	Board of Education Strategic Planning and Community Engagement Retreat
October 31, 2011	Board of Education Board Governance Retreat The Board of Education and the Chamber Board of Directors formally adopted the strategic initiative and recruited members for the Steering Committee.
March 15, 2012	The Alamance County Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and Alamance County Economic Development Foundation announce unanimous support for the project in a joint press release with the Alamance-Burlington School System.
June 11, 2012	Board of Education unanimously approves proceeding with the visioning and community engagement process as presented.

Stakeholder Group Meetings

These meetings were held approximately every three weeks from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Alamance-Burlington School System's Professional Library.

September 19, 2012	Stakeholder Group Kick-off Meeting
October 3, 2012	Overview of the Alamance-Burlington School System
October 24, 2012	Presentation of a "Public Values Framework"
October 25, 2012 to December 5, 2012	Stakeholders' Assignment Read Preserving the Public in Public Schools and then interview 10 members of the Alamance Community. Approximately 350 Alamance County residents were interviewed through this process. Like the stakeholders themselves, people interviewed were geographically and demographically diverse.
December 5, 2012	Processing and sharing what was learned and heard in completing the October 24 assignment
December 19, 2012	Processing what was heard, reviewing draft vision
January 16, 2013	Processing what was heard, reviewing draft vision
February 6, 2013	Processing what was heard, reviewing draft vision
February 27, 2013	Processing what was heard, reviewing draft vision
March 20, 2013	Analyzing Vision; SWOT Analysis and Next Steps
April 10, 2013	Review Final Draft; Seek Consensus; Develop Next Steps
April 24, 2013	"Rollout" Planning Meeting

Steering Committee Meetings

The Steering Committee met several times prior to the Stakeholder meetings to more fully develop the scope of work of the initiative and recruit stakeholders from the community. It then met between the Stakeholder meetings to review and adjust the process as needed. The Co-Chairs of the Steering Committee also met with the Board of Education to update the Board of Education on the progress of the initiative and to answer any questions.

May 9, 2012	Initial Meeting
May 23, 2012	Developed charges and identified potential Stakeholders
June 13, 2012	Developed charges and identified potential Stakeholders
July 24, 2012	Developed charges and identified potential Stakeholders
August 2, 2012	Reviewed Stakeholder Invitations and Commitments
August 13, 2012	Met with Board of Education
August 30, 2012	Stakeholder Invitations and Commitments
September 18, 2012	Conference Call
September 25, 2012	Reviewed Kick-off Meeting; Planned 2 nd Stakeholder Meeting
October 31, 2012	Reviewed 2 nd Stakeholder Meeting; Planned 3 rd Stakeholder Meeting
December 6, 2012	Reviewed, planned and prepared revised draft vision based on Stakeholder input
January 2, 2013	Reviewed, planned and prepared revised draft vision
January 14, 2013	Met with Board of Education
January 23, 2013	Reviewed, planned and prepared revised draft vision
February 13, 2013	Reviewed, planned and prepared revised draft vision
March 6, 2013	Reviewed, planned and prepared revised draft vision
March 11, 2013	Met with Board of Education during Board of Education Work Session; SWOT Analysis of Vision
March 28, 2013	Convened Editorial Committee to review and create the final draft of the vision
April 17, 2013	Reviewed, planned and finalized vision document
May 1, 2013	Reviewed plans for Board of Education Meeting and Stakeholder Reception

Vision Rollout and Community Celebration

Steering Committee finalizes rollout plan and coordinates responsibilities and tasks involving Alamance-Burlington School System and community stakeholders in its implementation.

May 23, 2013	Board of Education Meeting with Reception for Stakeholder Group
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Appendix D: Stakeholder Group and Steering Committee Members

Stakeholder Group

Humberto Anzaldo

Student, Ray Street Academy

Jill Auditori

Mebane City Council

Small Business Owner; ABSS Parent

Barry Bass

Health Director, Department of Public Health

Project LAUNCH Administrator; Parent; Grandparent; Graham Resident

Abby Bates

Student, Eastern Alamance High School

Buddy Boggs

Mayor, Town of Haw River

Brian Boylston

Parent; Resident of the Town of Elon

Bob Byrd

Senior Vice President, Alamance Regional Medical Center

Active in the Alamance County Arts Community; Member of the Children's Executive Oversight Committee; Serves on and provides leadership for many community human services agencies

Chris Clemmons

Vice President, Carolina Bank

Village of Alamance Board of Alderman; Parent

Paul Cobb, Jr.

Retired Managing Partner, Cobb Ezekiel Loy PA

Burlington Resident; Chairman, Alamance County Crime Stoppers

Roger Cobb

Director, Alamance County Cooperative Extension

NC State University Outreach

Rev. Dr. Larry E. Covington

Senior Pastor, Ebenezer United Church of Christ

Graham Resident

Linda Dale

Client Services Director, Atlantic Security & Telecom Systems
Southern Alamance County Resident; ABSS Graduate; Parent of two ABSS graduates and parent of a current ABSS student; Leadership Team member at Southern Alamance High School; Past VOICE Chair and current member of VOICE

Neal Dickens

Chief of Police, Town of Haw River

Ndongoi (Don) Evans

Student, Graham High School

Dr. Gerry Francis

Executive Vice President, Elon University
Parent; University Educator; Alamance County Employer; Believer in the need for excellence in education

Allison Gant

Executive Director, Alamance Citizens for Education
AYLA Advisory Board Chair; Co-founder of VOICE; Former ABSS parent; Dance Instructor with Burlington Academy of Dance and Arts

Sharon Glasgow

Human Resources Director, School of Education, UNC-Chapel Hill
Parent; Member of SEPTA (Special Education Parent Teacher Association); Lives in Snow Camp

Grayson Goldstein

Student, ABSS Middle College

Carissa Graves

Green Level Town Council
Former ABSS Teacher; Owner of Document Express and Tax Service; Continuing Education Instructor at Alamance Community College

Craig Honeycutt

Alamance County, County Manager
Father of elementary, middle and high school boys in ABSS

Lynn Inman

Community Relations Manager, Cardinal Innovations Healthcare Solutions

Linda Jones

System of Care Coordinator, Alamance County Department of Social Services
Juvenile Crime Prevention Council; Focused on building collaboration among systems that serve children

Paul Koonts

Partner, Oertel, Koonts, Oertel, PLLC
Attorney; Father of three public school students; Resident of Gibsonville

Ernestine Lewis

President, Alamance Branch of the NAACP; Founder and Director of the E. Bynum Educational Center; Alamance County Senior Democrats President

Dr. Deborah Long

Professor of Education and Director of the Elon Academy, Elon University
Teacher and educator for more than 40 years; Parent of an ABSS graduate

Ernest Mangum

Executive Director, Burlington Housing Authority

Tom Manning

Business Banker, Randolph Bank
Chair, Alamance County Board of Commissioners; Former Chair, Alamance-Burlington School Board

Dr. Terry McNeill

College Academic Dean, Alamance Community College
Parent of two ABSS graduates; Graham Rotary Club Member; Junior Achievement Participant

Marcus Mintz

Student, Walter M. Williams High School

Heidi Norwick

Director of Community Impact, United Way
20+ Year Resident; Non-profit Leader; Parent; Education Council Member

Grant Orton

Student, Western Alamance High School

Susan Osborne

Director, Alamance County Department of Social Services
40+ Year Resident; Parent; Grandparent; Chair of the Children's Executive Oversight Committee

Dale Page*

Vice President, Wells Fargo
Chair, Alamance County Recreation and Parks Commission; Treasurer of Burlington DARE; Lakeview Civitan President; Alamance County Arts Council Past President; Former Chamber Board Member; ABSS Graduate; Parent of an ABSS graduate; Spouse of an ABSS teacher

Cliff Parker

Chief of Police, Town of Elon
Parent of three ABSS graduates; Spouse of an ABSS teacher

Jerry Peterman

Mayor, City of Graham

Jeff Prichard

Chief of Police, City of Graham

Ann Raycroft

Vice President, Office of the CEO, LabCorp
Parent; Grandparent; United Way Board Member; Former Teacher Assistant

Sue Rich

Corporate Vice President, Human Resources, Glen Raven, Inc.
Alamance Community College Foundation Board Chair; Alamance Jazz Band; Elon University Board of Visitors; Parent

William Richardson

Student, Cummings High School

Karen Slade

Exceptional Children's Teacher, Southern Alamance High School
Alamance-Burlington Association of Educators; Grandparent; Advocate; Active Voice; Burlington Resident

Derek Steed*

Vice President and General Counsel, Glen Raven, Inc.
Parent; Burlington Resident; Community Volunteer

Carrie Theall

Executive Director, Alamance Partnership for Children

Katie Way

Student, Southern Alamance High School

Mike Williams

Chief of Police, City of Burlington
Husband; Father; Educator; Lifelong Resident of Alamance County

Mike Woznick

Chief of Police, Town of Gibsonville

*Co-Chairs of the Stakeholder Group

Steering Committee

Dr. Lillie Cox - Superintendent, Alamance-Burlington School System

Barbara Massey – Alamance County Area Chamber of Commerce Staff Liaison

Dale Page - Alamance County Area Chamber of Commerce Representative

Scottie Seawell - Consultant and Facilitator, Leading and Governing Associates

Derek Steed - Alamance County Economic Development Foundation Representative

Steve Van Pelt – Alamance-Burlington School System Board Member

APPENDIX E: Supporting Information

Stakeholder Meeting Agendas

AGENDA

Vision Plan for Public Education in Alamance County
Stakeholder Group Kick-Off Meeting
ABSS Professional Library
September 19, 2012
8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

- 8:15 a.m. Coffee and Mingle
- 8:30 a.m. Welcome and Overview of Initiative – Derek Steed and Dale Page
- 8:45 a.m. Introductions and Community Building Exercise
- 9:30 a.m. Process Expectations -- Scottie Seawell, Leading and Governing Associates
- 9:40 a.m. Break
- 9:50 a.m. Hearing from Stakeholders – Brainstorming and Prioritizing Your Questions
- 11:05 a.m. Meeting Wrap-up
- 11:15 a.m. Before the next meeting – Wednesday, October 3, 2012 at 8:30 a.m.
- 11:30 a.m. Adjourn

AGENDA

Vision Plan for Public Education in Alamance County
Stakeholder Group Meeting
ABSS Professional Library
October 3, 2012
8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

- 8:15 a.m. Coffee and Mingle
- Community Building Exercise
- 8:50 a.m. Formally Open Meeting – Derek and Dale
- Recap of Kick-off Meeting -- Derek and Dale
- 9:05 a.m. Your Priority Questions and the Vision Planning Process
- 9:15 a.m. Alamance-Burlington School System – Yesterday to Today
- 10:15 a.m. Break
- 10:30 a.m. “Take Aways”
- 11:15 a.m. What Worked Well/What Can We Improve?
- 11:25 a.m. Before the next meeting – Wednesday, October 24, 2012 at 8:30 a.m.
- 11:30 a.m. Adjourn

AGENDA

Vision Plan for Public Education in Alamance County
Stakeholder Group Meeting
ABSS Professional Library
October 24, 2012
8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

- 8:15 a.m. Coffee and Mingle
- 8:30 a.m. Welcome and Announcements - Dale Page
Introductions - Derek Steed
- 8:35 a.m. Exploring the *Public* in Public Schools - Phil Boyle
Values...Whose Values? - Leading and Governing Associates
- 9:50 a.m. Break
- 10:05 a.m. Exploring the *Public* in Public Schools - Phil Boyle
Visions...What Visions?
- 11:05 a.m. Before the next meeting on:
Wednesday, December 5, 2012; 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Assignment and Books - Scottie Seawell
- 11:25 a.m. What Worked Well/What Can We Improve?
- 11:30 a.m. Adjourn

AGENDA

Vision Plan for Public Education in Alamance County
Stakeholder Group Meeting
ABSS Professional Library
December 5, 2012
10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

- 10:00 a.m. Welcome and Announcements - Dale Page and Derek Steed
- 10:05 a.m. Reading Assignment Discussion
– *Preserving the Public in Public Schools*
- 10:50 a.m. Break
- 11:00 a.m. Interview Assignment Discussion
– Key Visioning Questions
- 12:30 p.m. Break for Lunch
- 12:45 p.m. Before the next meeting:
Meetings Moving Forward -- Timeline
Wednesday, December 19, 2012; 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.
- 12: 50 p.m. What worked well/What could we improve?
- 1:00 p.m. Adjourn

AGENDA

**Vision Plan for Public Education in Alamance County
Stakeholder Group Meeting
ABSS Professional Library
December 19, 2012
8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.**

- 8:30 a.m. Welcome and Announcements - Dale Page and Derek Steed
- 8:35 a.m. Share Sample Vision Plans
- 8:45 a.m. Overview of "All on the Wall" Process
Use of Issues Log
- 8:55 a.m. All on the Wall
Question 1
- 9:55 a.m. Break
- 10:10 a.m. All on the Wall
Question 2
- 11:10 a.m. Before the next meeting:
Timeline Moving Forward
Wednesday, January 16, 2013; 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.
Tentative Agenda:
Review Draft Themes from Questions 1 and 2
All on the Wall Question 3
- 11:20 a.m. What worked well/What could we improve?
- 11:30 a.m. Adjourn

AGENDA

**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.**

- 8:30 a.m. Welcome and Announcements - Dale Page and Derek Steed
- 8:35 a.m. Smarter than a 5th Grader?
- 8:45 a.m. Draft Themes/Statements from December 19 Meeting -- Review
- 9:30 a.m. Break
- 9:45 a.m. Overview of "All on the Wall" Process
- 9:50 a.m. All on the Wall: Question 3 – "What purposes should public schools serve?"
- 10:50 a.m. Issues Log -- Review and Additions
- 11:10 a.m. Before the next meeting:

Timeline Moving Forward

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

Tentative Agenda:

Review Draft Themes/Statements from Question 3

All on the Wall Question 4:

“What should we teach children, who should teach them, and how?”

11:20 a.m. What worked well/What could we improve?

11:30 a.m. Adjourn

AGENDA

Vision Plan for Public Education in Alamance County

Stakeholder Group Meeting

ABSS Professional Library

February 6, 2013

8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

8:30 a.m. Welcome and Announcements - Dale Page and Derek Steed

8:35 a.m. Draft Themes/Statements from January 16 Meeting -- Review

9:30 a.m. Break

9:45 a.m. Overview of “All on the Wall” Process

9:50 a.m. All on the Wall: Question 4 – “What should we teach children, who should teach them, and how?”

10:50 a.m. Issues Log -- Review and Additions

11:10 a.m. Before the next meeting:

Timeline Moving Forward

Wednesday, February 27, 2013; 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Tentative Agenda:

Review Draft Themes/Statements from Question 4

All on the Wall Question 5:

“What role should public schools play in our children’s lives and in our communities?”

11:20 a.m. What worked well/What could we improve?

11:30 a.m. Adjourn

AGENDA

**Vision Plan for Public Education in Alamance County
Stakeholder Group Meeting
ABSS Professional Library
February 27, 2013
8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.**

- 8:30 a.m. Welcome and Announcements - Dale Page and Derek Steed
- 8:35 a.m. A Few of My Favorite Things – The Stakeholder Group and Vision Process
- 8:45 a.m. Draft Themes/Statements from February 6, 2013 Meeting -- Review
- 9:30 a.m. Break
- 9:45 a.m. Overview of “All on the Wall” Process
- 9:50 a.m. All on the Wall: Question 5 –
“What role should public schools play in our children’s lives and in our communities?”
- 11:05 a.m. Discussion – Review of Draft Vision
- 11:20 a.m. Before the next meeting:
Timeline Moving Forward
Monday, March 11, 2013; Work Session BOE
Wednesday, March 20, 2013; 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.
Wednesday, April 10, 2013; 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.
Wednesday, April 24, 2012; 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.
Tentative Agenda for March 20 Meeting
Review Draft Vision Plan/SWOT
- 11: 25 a.m. What worked well/What could we improve?
- 11:30 a.m. Adjourn

AGENDA

**Vision Plan for Public Education in Alamance County
Stakeholder Group Meeting
ABSS Professional Library
March 20, 2013
8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.**

- 8:30 a.m. Welcome and Announcements - Dale Page and Derek Steed
- 8:35 a.m. Review and Small Group Conversations
Draft Document and Notes from February 27, 2013 Meeting
BOE SWOT from March 11, 2013
- 9:05 a.m. Overview of S-W-O-T Process
- 9:10 a.m. Strategic Analysis – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
(With a Break)

- 9:40 a.m. Organize Themes
- 10:10 a.m. Review and Prioritize Themes
- 10:55 a.m. Ideas and Suggestions for Prioritized Themes -- Small Group Discussions
- 11:20 a.m. Before the next meeting:
Timeline Moving Forward
Thursday March 28, 2013; 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. – Steering Committee and Editorial Board Meet
Wednesday, April 10, 2013; 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.
Wednesday, April 24, 2012; 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.
Tentative Agenda for April 10 Meeting
Review Draft Vision Document – Reaching Consensus
- 11: 25 a.m. What worked well/What could we improve?
- 11:30 a.m. Adjourn
-

AGENDA

Vision for Public Education in Alamance County
Stakeholders Group's Editorial Committee Meeting
Chamber of Commerce
March 28, 2013
3:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Overview and Editorial Committee Purpose

To Do:

- Big Picture Considerations: Compelling Narrative; Back to "Why?" and For Whom?
Encompassing Vision Statement – Value of Community
- Executive Summary: Incorporating Stakeholder Feedback
Being Explicit: A little more historical background re: Alamance County Community, Businesses and Public Schools
Add some process background
- Beliefs: Incorporating Stakeholder Feedback from March 20, 2013
- Vision: Incorporating Stakeholder Feedback from March 20, 2013
Ordering of Bullets
Consolidation/Synthesis
- Fulfilling the Vision: Incorporating Stakeholder Input from March 20, 2013
Call to Action; Compelling Language
- Appendices: Overview of Process
Timeline
Issues Presented by the Public

Supporting Documentation
Stakeholders Listing (“undersigned”)

Action Plan: Who will do what and by when?

Timeline Moving Forward

- Stakeholders Group Meetings:
 - Wednesday, April 10, 2013; 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.
 - Tentative Agenda for April 10 Meeting: Review Draft Vision/Reaching Consensus
 - Wednesday, April 24, 2013; 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.
 - Tentative Agenda for April 24 Meeting: Vision Rollout Planning
- Chamber of Commerce Board Meeting: Thursday, April 11, 2013, Share Vision
- Board of Education Meeting: Monday, May 20, 2013, Present Vision and Recognize Stakeholders

AGENDA

**Vision Plan for Public Education in Alamance County
Stakeholder Group Meeting
ABSS Professional Library
April 10, 2013
8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.**

- 8:30 a.m. Welcome and Announcements - Dale Page and Derek Steed
- 8:35 a.m. Process Update - Scottie Seawell
- 8:40 a.m. Review Final Draft of Vision
- 9:10 a.m. Small Group Discussion
- 9:40 a.m. Report Out and Capture Themes
- 10:10 a.m. Break
- 10:25 a.m. Synthesis and Consensus – Large Group Discussion
- 10:55 a.m. Next Steps
- 11:15 a.m. Timeline Moving Forward:
 - Wednesday, April 24, 2013, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.
 - Tentative Agenda for April 24 Meeting
 - Final Document
 - Plans for Rollout and Keeping the Vision Alive
- 11:20 a.m. What worked well/What could we improve?
- 11:30 a.m. Adjourn

AGENDA

**Vision Plan for Public Education in Alamance County
Stakeholder Group Meeting
ABSS Professional Library
April 24, 2013
8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.**

- 8:30 a.m. Welcome and Process Update - Dale Page, Derek Steed and Scottie Seawell
- 8:35 a.m. Back to Our Questions → Remembering “Why?”
- 9:05 a.m. Small Group Conversations
Rolling Out Our Vision
Keeping Our Vision Present
- 9:35 a.m. Report Out
- 10:00 a.m. Break
- 10:15 a.m. Action Planning
Who needs to do what and by when?
- 10:45 a.m. Report Out and Next Steps
- 11:00 a.m. Timeline Moving Forward:
May Board of Education Meeting
ABSS Professional Library – Reception
ABSS Auditorium – Presentation
Date to be Announced
- 11:05 a.m. What worked well/What could we improve? – Last Thoughts?
- 11:15 a.m. Adjourn

Stakeholder Meeting Notes

Stakeholder Group Kick-off Meeting Notes September 19, 2012

Types of Priority Questions in the Context of Creating a Vision Plan

Questions of Purpose – The “Why” of the Vision Plan

Questions of Ends – The “What” of the Vision Plan

Key

O=Open Ended Question

C=Closed Ended Question

X=Priority Question

- T2-16) What headline would you like to have in 2020 about ABSS? O X
- T6-6) What are the desired outcomes of the strategic plan? O X
- T2-12) What are the 5-10 game changing ideas that will bring excellence to the ABSS system? What are the game changers? O X
- T7-7) What does the vision plan entail for the schools in the county? O X
- T8-3) What can we do to increase the graduation rate? O X
- T4-3) What are we doing to promote school readiness? O X
- T1-9) Can we integrate early childhood education into this discussion? C X
- T3-2) Where are we today? O X
- T3-9) What are best practices? O X
- T3-8) Specifically, what are our goals? O X
- T6-6) What are the desired outcomes of the strategic plan? O X

Questions of Means – The “How” of the Vision Plan

- T1-12) How do we position ABSS for better local funding? O X
- How do we make ABSS more accountable for funds? O
- T2-17) How do we attract and retain the best faculty and staff? O X
- T7-4) How do we centralize education to be inclusive of the community? O X
- T7-9) How do we balance the use of technology with good basic skills development? O X
- Changed to → Can we balance the use of technology with good basic skills development? C
- T8-5) How do we keep our highly qualified teachers? O X
- Changed to → Are we doing a good job at keeping teachers? C
- T4-5) Is our teacher turnover rate an issue? C What incentives are being offered? O X

A Vision for Public Education in Alamance County

- T5-14) How do we make a plan to cover all the cultural differences; by seeking input from people outside this room? X
- T6-4) Will this plan become implemented? X
Changed to → How will this plan become implemented? O
- T8-5) How do we keep our highly qualified teachers? X
Changed to → Are we doing a good job at keeping teachers? C
- T5-20) How do we plan to measure ourselves? X
- T4-10) How do we engage the community as a whole? X
- T8-16) How can local government get involved and help with the school system X
- T5-17) How can community institutions, organizations, etc. be involved in this vision? X
- T1-2) What will it take to engage this community? X
Changed to → Is it possible to engage this community? C
- T2-12) What are the 5-10 game changing ideas that will bring excellence to the ABSS system?
What are the game changers? X
- T6-11) What are the best evidence based learning environments with respect to facilities, class size, technology parental involvement, teacher qualifications, and security/safety for students and teachers? X

Stakeholder Group Kick-off Meeting Notes
September 19, 2012
Summary of Priority Questions

Key

O=Open Ended Question

C=Closed Ended Question

X=Priority Question

Table 1

- 2) What will it take to engage this community? O X
Changed to → Is it possible to engage this community? C
- 9) Can we integrate early childhood education into this discussion? C X
- 12) How do we position ABSS for better local funding? O X
How do we make ABSS more accountable for funds? O
-

Table 2

- 12) What are the 5-10 game changing ideas that will bring excellence to the ABSS system? What are the game changers? O X
- 16) What headline would you like to have in 2020 about ABSS? O X
- 17) How do we attract and retain the best faculty and staff? O X
-

Table 3

- 2) Where are we today? O X
- 8) Specifically, what are our goals? O X
- 9) What are best practices? O X
-

Table 4

- 3) What are we doing to promote school readiness? O X
- 5) Is our teacher turnover rate an issue? C What incentives are being offered? O X
- 10) How do we engage the community as a whole? O X
-

Table 5

- 14) How do we make a plan to cover all the cultural differences; by seeking input from people outside this room? O X
- 17) How can community institutions, organizations, etc. be involved in this vision? O X
- 20) How do we plan to measure ourselves? O X
-

A Vision for Public Education in Alamance County

Table 6

- 4) Will this plan become implemented? C X
Changed to → How will this plan become implemented? O
- 6) What are the desired outcomes of the strategic plan? O X
- 11) What are the best evidence based learning environments with respect to facilities, class size, technology parental involvement, teacher qualifications, and security/safety for students and teachers? O X
-

Table 7

- 4) How do we centralize education to be inclusive of the community? O X
- 7) What does the vision plan entail for the schools in the county? O X
- 9) How do we balance the use of technology with good basic skills development? O X
Changed to → Can we balance the use of technology with good basic skills development? C
-

Table 8

- 3) What can we do to increase the graduation rate? O X
- 5) How do we keep our highly qualified teachers? O X
Changed to → Are we doing a good job at keeping teachers? C
- 16) How can local government get involved and help with the school system O X

Stakeholder Group Kick-off Meeting
September 19, 2012
Questions by Table

Key

O=Open Ended Question

C=Closed Ended Question

X=Priority Question

Table 1

- 1) Why can't Alamance County have the best school system in the State? O
 - 2) What will it take to engage this community? O X
Changed to → Is it possible to engage this community? C
 - 3) What is the biggest problem the school system experiences? C/O
 - 4) What does the school system want resolved permanently? O
 - 5) What is the public's perception of the biggest problem with the school system? O
 - 6) With as many backgrounds in the room, can we really create a vision plan that will satisfy everyone? C
Changed to → With as many backgrounds in the room, how can we really create a vision plan that will satisfy everyone? O
 - 7) How can we attract and retain the very best teachers? O
And increase parent involvement? O
 - 8) How can we get students to find full satisfaction in their classes? O
 - 9) Can we integrate early childhood education into this discussion? C X
 - 10) How much leeway with curriculum does the system have? O
 - 11) How do we identify good teachers and grow them to excellent? O
 - 12) How do we position ABSS for better local funding? O X
How do we make ABSS more accountable for funds? O
 - 13) How do we get students more involved in their education? O
 - 14) Why does ABSS always chase the "next" great learning program? O
-

Table 2

- 1) What is the focus of our questions? O
- 2) Are we talking a 10-year vision or a 20-year vision? C
- 3) Is everybody here that needs to be here? C
- 4) Are we coming up with a list of objectives and directions since we aren't the planning committee? C
- 5) Are we graduating students that are competitive in a global economy whether that is going into higher ED or entering the workforce? C
- 6) Are we doing enough to prepare children to enter school – (0-5)? C
Changed to → What are we doing to prepare children to enter school (0-5)? O

A Vision for Public Education in Alamance County

Table 4

- 1) Are there regulations pertaining to the state versus the county/city education systems? C
 - 2) Can we look at other state education systems with a better education ranking? How about other countries? How about private schools? C
 - 3) What are we doing to promote school readiness? O X
 - 4) What issues is our school system encountering? O
 - 5) Is our teacher turnover rate an issue? C What incentives are being offered? O X
 - 6) Will we be covering health issues associated with cafeteria food? C
Changed to → How will we be covering health issues associated with cafeteria food? O
 - 7) What can we do to improve low performance of students? O
 - 8) How do we increase parent involvement? O
 - 9) How can we get teachers/counselors/social workers to visit the homes of children with problems? O
Changed to → Are we getting teachers/counselors/social workers to visit the homes of children with problems? C
 - 10) How do we engage the community as a whole? O X
-

Table 5

- 1) What is the ultimate goal for this? O
Changed to → Is there an ultimate goal for this? C
- 2) Where do we begin? O
- 3) What are the top 3 issues? O
- 4) How do we prioritize? O
- 5) Do we have the experts in the room? C
Changed to → How do we ensure we have experts in the room? O
- 6) Can we seek input from people outside the room? C
- 7) Can we get input from our student councils at our schools? C
- 8) How can our teachers and students inform our vision? O
- 9) What makes a good vision plan? O
- 10) What will be our involvement beyond the vision plan? Will there be opportunities to see the results of our work? O
- 11) How much do we allow fiscal issues to impact our vision? O
- 12) Will these issues be publicized? C
- 13) How do we get parents to want to be involved? O
- 14) How do we make a plan to cover all the cultural differences; by seeking input from people outside this room? O X
- 15) How do we make it a community effort? O
- 16) How can school administration help the plan? And PTOs? O
- 17) How can community institutions, organizations, etc. be involved in this vision? O X

A Vision for Public Education in Alamance County

- 18) How do we get people to see that it takes a village to raise a child? O
 - 19) How can municipalities be incorporated into the plan? O
 - 20) How do we plan to measure ourselves? O X
 - 21) What resources are we not tapping into? O
-

Table 6

- 1) How long is the vision plan? C
 - 2) How will we make the plan successful? O
 - 3) Is the school system adequately funded? C
 - 4) Will this plan become implemented? C X
Changed to → How will this plan become implemented? O
 - 5) Is there a current strategic plan in place? C
 - 6) What are the desired outcomes of the strategic plan? O X
 - 7) Are there adequate safety measures in place to ensure student and staff safety? C
 - 8) Is there a commitment from the board of education to implement the plan once completed? C
 - 9) What is the basis of our vision plan for public education? O
 - 10) Will the plan include both regular ed. and Exception Children? C
 - 11) What are the best evidence based learning environments with respect to facilities, class size, technology parental involvement, teacher qualifications, and security/safety for students and teachers? O X
 - 12) What is the teacher turnover rate? C
 - 13) How do we provoke family involvement in public education? O
 - 14) How do we differentiate the impact of teacher effectiveness from the impact of family? O
 - 15) How is success defined and measured? O
Changed to → Will success be defined and measured? C
 - 16) Will the teachers be committed to bringing the plan to fruition? O
 - 17) How in-depth will the strategic plan be? O
 - 18) What is the best balance in the curriculum between science, language arts, social studies, math, and the arts and that also produces critical thinking skills? O
 - 19) Is all student time in school effectively used? O
-

Table 7

- 1) How will a vision plan create improvement in the classroom? O
- 2) How do you equalize diversity among the schools in the county? O
- 3) How do we create an environment in our communities where parents of children feel that their child's education is also their responsibility? O
- 4) How do we centralize education to be inclusive of the community? O X
- 5) Does our community desire to equalize diversity among the schools in the county? C
- 6) Is it feasible to convert to iPads/laptops instead of textbooks? C

A Vision for Public Education in Alamance County

- 7) What does the vision plan entail for the schools in the county? O X
 - 8) Does centralized education need to begin earlier in the lives of children? C
 - 9) How do we balance the use of technology with good basic skills development? O X
Changed to → Can we balance the use of technology with good basic skills development? C
 - 10) Does the vision plan deal with funding? C
 - 11) Should we close Graham High School? C
Changed to → Why should we close Graham High School? O
 - 12) Is there any way for students to have smaller class sizes with the schools overpopulated? C
 - 13) Is money really the issue? C
 - 14) Redistricting? C
-

Table 8

- 1) What is the difference between a Stakeholder and an Ex Officio? O
- 2) How do we get the most recent technology to the students? O
- 3) What can we do to increase the graduation rate? O X
- 4) What can we do to decrease violence in the schools? O
- 5) How do we keep our highly qualified teachers? O X
Changed to → Are we doing a good job at keeping teachers? C
- 6) Why don't we hire more teachers locally to promote as principals? O
- 7) How far down the road are we looking for our vision plan? O
- 8) Why are our high schools so overcrowded? O
Changed to → Are our high schools overcrowded? C
- 9) How can we increase access to mental health services for students? O
- 10) How do we get parents involved? O
- 11) How do we get local business involved in our schools? O
- 12) How will we close the gaps between groups of students in their performance? O
- 13) How do we get the school administration to make the best use of the funding they receive? O
- 14) How will we ensure consistency between schools? O
- 15) How do we make sure each student reaches his/her potential? O
- 16) How can local government get involved and help with the school system O X
- 17) How do we decrease drug use in schools? O
- 18) How do we improve student safety? O
- 19) How do we make our county care more about our schools? O
- 20) How do we get more people to attend school board meetings? O
- 21) How do we get Marcus to the FBI? O
- 22) How do we get more classrooms offered in schools? O

Stakeholder Group Kick-off Meeting Notes
September 19, 2012
Meeting Wrap-up

Worked Well

- + On schedule
- + Communication – small groups, getting to know some people
- + Variety of thoughts
- + Like the process a lot
- + Group work went well
- + Very productive
- + Having the high school students here
- + High school students invited to have a voice
- + Coffee
- + Sausage biscuit
- + PowerPoint slides helpful to understanding the process/instructions
- + Sometimes good to not be prepared
- + Good variety of people in the room
- + Good to have a reminder of the meeting/communication ahead of the meeting

Do Better/Improve

- Δ More details about the tools, speakers, etc. ahead of time so we can prepare
- Δ Quality of output based on thought prior to the meeting
- Δ Less pork
- Δ More time to get to know each other/mix it up again
- Δ Spent time at our tables grouping questions and developing bigger categories
- Δ Post presentation
- Δ Room temperature
- Δ Contact information for Derek and Dale
- Δ Clip on name tags

Notes
Vision Plan for Public Education in Alamance County
Stakeholder Group Meeting
ABSS Professional Library
October 3, 2012
8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

In response to many of the questions stakeholders developed at the kick-off meeting, Board of Education Members Steve Van Pelt and Brad Evans, and Superintendent Lillie Cox presented, "Historical and Future Perspectives of the Alamance-Burlington School System." (See slide show posted to the ABSS website for more details of that presentation as well as other meeting materials discussed at this meeting.)

Following the presentation, stakeholders met in their small groups to discuss what they heard and would take away from the presentation. Specifically they were prompted with three questions:

What stood out for you?

What did you learn?

What will you take away from the presentation?

"Take Aways"

- + We are not going to be perfect, but we have to strive for perfection
- + Tremendous expansion of school's involvement in day-to-day lives of families; focus on social and life skills proliferated + +
- + Number of times mentioned that the schools were leaders in the 1940s and 1950s and leaders in textiles internationally at that time too; great support from businesses and community; longevity of the superintendent 1936 to 1964 + +
- + Impressed with REACH goals and being partners going forward; good framework for helping our young people + +
- + Newly introduced concepts and skills (writing, critical thinking, analysis, group learning) Dr. Cox promoted; need to get deeper with them like in the classroom
- + What a mammoth undertaking the schools have, particularly when children aren't coming from an equal playing field
- + Disparity that exists among students; academic achievement, diverse group of students and needs; even keel to work with all +
- + Broader issue of perception; Perception = Reality; we are wedded to the county → like it or not
- + Like that schools are community based and want them to maintain their identity
- + Changes in society: Burlington City v. Alamance County; In-transfers; vibrant industries and communities; Increased Social Requirements + + +
- + Complexity of society and complexity of school's to do list; longer and longer list + +

- + Once including programs like DARE which have been done away with; not enough time in the day to do it all
- + Alamance County Schools' principals allowed to be flexible, independent; not as stable with goals; values passed from principal → teachers → students
- + Historically didn't have impacts of community college/university presence that we have today → can take classes there now
- + Shift from fact-based learning to skill-based learning → how do teachers teach and how do students learn those skills?

End of Meeting Check-in:

What Worked Well/What Can We Improve?

Worked Well

- + Bingo worked well
- + Presentation covered a lot of questions we had
- + Shuffling of tables and people (small group/table assignments from last meeting)
- + Learning about history of the community and schools

What Can We Improve/Suggestions?

- △ Have a pig pickin' at the end? With chicken too?
- △ What is the Common Core? Post on website.
- △ Big ? – What is the problem we are trying to solve?
- △ Want to hear from teacher(s), principal(s), regular and special education

Notes
Vision Plan for Public Education in Alamance County
Stakeholder Group Meeting
Alamance-Burlington School System Professional Library
October 24, 2012
8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

End of Meeting Check-in:

What Worked Well/What Can We Improve?

Worked Well

- + Moving around the room activity
- + Can see where people stand; their opinions
- + Hearing from people about their choices
- + Questions that made us think; use of three choices by which to answer the questions

What Can We Improve/Suggestions?

- △ Early Childhood Providers included in Stakeholder Group?
- △ Where are we going?
- △ Outline? Road map? Timeline? For this process....

Vision Plan for Public Education in Alamance County
Stakeholder Group Assignment
October 24, 2012

Assignment:

1. First read your copy of Preserving the *Public* in Public Schools by Phil Boyle and Del Burns.
2. Then one-on-one, talk to ten people about the visioning process, your role as a stakeholder in this process and ask each person to answer the question below. There is no wrong answer to this question. We want to hear from a variety of people who live, work, and go to school in Alamance County, NC. Please let the people you speak with know that you will share the answer with the Stakeholder Group, which you are a member of, but that you will not associate their name with their answer.
3. Finally, come to the December 5th Stakeholder Group meeting with your ten answers on the index cards provided. You should have one index card for each person interviewed. Record answers as stated. Please try not to paraphrase the answers. We will delve deeper into the answers you hear in small groups at the December 5th meeting.

Information to share:

- I am participating as a stakeholder representative in a community engagement initiative to develop a vision plan for public education in Alamance County, NC.
- Together, the Board of Education and the Alamance County Area Chamber of Commerce have committed to gathering thoughts and ideas from across our community to inform the Board of Education's deliberation and decision-making with regards to public education in Alamance County.
- Through this process we hope to both develop a Vision Plan for our public schools and also build broad community understanding and support for the Board of Education's work as it makes vital decisions entrusted to it by our community.
- To inform this process, I would like to ask you, as a member of the Alamance County Community, a question. There is no wrong answer to this question. I will share your answer with the Stakeholder Group, but will not associate your name with your answer to this question.
- Would you like to participate?

Questions: (Each stakeholder participant was given one of the five questions below to use for this assignment. Contact Scottie Seawell if you need to know which question was assigned to you.)

1. Why educate the next generation?
 2. Why invest in public education?
 3. What purposes should public schools serve?
 4. What should we teach children, who should teach them, and how?
 5. What role should public schools play in our children's lives and in our communities?
- **Thank you** for your time and thoughtful response to my question. You can find more information about this initiative and follow our progress on the Alamance-Burlington School System's website:
<http://www.abss.k12.nc.us>

Developed by Scottie Seawell, Leading and Governing Associates, Inc.
Questions? Email: fseawell@leadingandgoverning.com or Call: 919.918.7067

Notes
Vision Plan for Public Education in Alamance County
Stakeholder Group Meeting
Alamance-Burlington School System Professional Library
December 5, 2012
10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Reading Assignment – *Preserving the Public in Public Schools* by Phil Boyle and Del Burns

In small, well-mixed groups, stakeholders shared and discussed:

- **How did you read the book, e.g., a chapter every few days, a section each week, the whole book last night?**
Chunks; sections; downloaded on Kindle; jumped around; bits and pieces; longest short book – dense; started it, didn't finish it; didn't read it; read it this week
- **What struck you most, what were your "a-ha's," your "take-a-ways?"**
 - + No one solution or right thing
 - + Society is really reflected in public schools
 - + These discussions have been on-going since first public schools
 - + Loved the four value model
 - + Making sure we understand the issue before we try to create a solution using the four values
 - + Exercise (done in 3rd meeting) made the book more understandable
 - + It is very complicated
 - + If the issue only touches one value then there really is no issue
 - + Recognizing the importance of schools in preserving the democratic standpoint of our nation
 - + Similarities between Crestwich and ABSS; ABSS faces many of the same of similar challenges
 - + Does the book provide ways to or reasons for keeping the "public" in public schools?
 - Citizen/parent engagement/participation
 - Can't maintain our democracy without public in public schools
 - Doesn't have the answers, but the framework
 - Need a foundation to have productive discussions
 - + Review Part IV and V; page 185 test for School Boards
 - + Does ABSS self-check? Consistent re: public good/democracy
 - + Why are board members serving? For themselves

- **What does your reading of the book suggest for this visioning process?**
 - + Aristotle quote – we must entertain all points of view/values and different dimensions of each without necessarily accepting each
 - + Vision of schools may conflict with personal values
 - + Sets the stage for discussion with public
 - + Need to figure out how to put a plan together that is most workable for our community
 - + The book suggests that we should respect others values and viewpoints, and be open minded
 - + In the political process how people with such a narrow agenda can cause so much change
 - + How do we achieve balance and still meet the goals?
 - + How do we find common ground?
 - + How do we get “politics” out of it?
 - + We have to serve all students
 - + Keeping governance in public schools
 - + Need to keep public in the conversation; keep asking
 - + This needs to be shared by everyone
 - + If we had the time we would collect as much community input as possible
 - + Find where we do agree and focus on that as we tackle those areas where we don’t agree
 - + Leadership is a huge piece
 - + Book is a tool for leaders
 - + Need a vision statement, goals to get buy-in, focus
 - + Don’t want to spin wheels too much focusing on wordsmithing
 - + Public input on target – community/diversity; this is allowing for community effort
 - + Vision to help share that learning is everybody’s responsibility
 - + Prepare kids for real-life scenarios
 - + Sometimes the “stuff” taught is not helpful or necessary?
 - + Generalize too much

Interview Assignment – Key Visioning Questions

Grouped according to their assigned interview question (5 groups), stakeholders shared and discussed:

- **Who did you interview, what kinds of folks did you talk with?**

Leadership team; administrators; teachers; parents; business leaders; non-parents; legislator; therapist; students; private school teacher; college professor; human services staff person; retired school teacher; citizens with no children; senior citizens; special needs teachers/parents/grandparents; family and friends; professionals; students; co-workers; retirees with no kids in school; variety of backgrounds

- **How easy or difficult was it to get folks to talk about your question, and what did you do to help them if they had difficulty?**
 - Emailed questions and gave time to return; thoughtful
 - With face-to-face interviews had to help stay on topic
 - Easy to get people to talk but not necessarily about the question
 - Some weren't sure how to answer it
 - More difficult to get feedback when requiring to write it down
 - Basic themes easy, difficulty when getting people to explain the themes
- **What public values did you hear expressed?**
 - Community and Prosperity – seem to be the predominant values expressed, but heard all of them in some way or another.
 - Community – involve parents and others; who should teach? → Community Members; how? → experiential and off campus
 - Liberty – Freedom, Responsibility
 - Equality -- inclusion; Give every student an opportunity
 - Prosperity – workforce concept; self-sufficiency

Summaries of the key points and messages heard in response to each interview question:

1. **Why educate the next generation?**
 - Next generation of leaders
 - We need to educate because they are the future
 - So they are able to be self-sustaining; employed
 - Supporting the economy
 - Concerns expressed about the U.S.'s global position
 - Appreciation for the significance of history
2. **Why invest in public education?**
 - Our responsibility; invest in education – impacts future generations
 - Evolutionary learning- impacts jobs, global economy
 - Invest – what are we willing to invest? “pay it forward”
 - Education = hope
 - Promote development of responsible, educated empowered citizens capable of contributing positively to community
 - Key to success → individual, business, community
 - Expands minds so that we do not become a society that depends on government
3. **What purposes should public schools serve?**
 - Prepare children for the future
 - Make well-rounded students
 - Values; we are all different but all in it together
 - Safety
 - Provide students with resources they need to be successful

- Work with parents and help parents
- Develop a commitment to lifelong learning
- Give everybody the attention they need → Middle part of class doesn't get the proper amount of attention (special programs for top end and lower end, but not the middle); lots of equality issues expressed → Every student gets an opportunity

4. What should we teach children, who should teach them, and how?

- What Should We Teach:
 - Good citizenship
 - Basic skills
 - Specialized education, broader
 - Things that will make a student prepared for jobs
 - Decision-making skills
 - Respect
 - Responsibility
 - Teach kids to want to learn
 - Don't teach to the test
 - Common sense classes
- Who Should Teach:
 - Teachers
 - Community member
 - Parents
 - Role-model like teachers
 - Higher level of educated teachers
- How should we teach:
 - Less busy work
 - Hands-on experiences; first hand experiences and outside of school experiences
 - Seeing children's abilities at young age
 - Creatively
 - Knowing how the child learns and teach them that way
 - Teachers understanding students
 - Teachers should develop relationship
 - Don't focus on just testing

5. What role should public schools play in our children's lives and in our communities?

- Predominant value expressed → Community → Safety, morals, values, the "basics"
- Some tension around extracurriculars; i.e. sports, wanting a back-to-basics focus

Suggestions for this visioning process based on your interview findings:

- Predominant Value(s) change over time with Prosperity currently getting more emphasis in our society.

A Vision for Public Education in Alamance County

- Question: Are there people or perspectives that we've missed? If we thought so and we wanted to collect other opinions, how could we do so?
- By question and as a whole group, can we explore the answers to begin to shape or form the vision?
- "Investing"
 - Education = success; economic, personal, community
 - Village – whole community ownership
 - Price to pay if we do or don't; Invest in +? Invest in - ?
 - Abe Lincoln: "The philosophy of the school room in one generation will be the philosophy of government in the next."
- "Purpose"
 - Create a culture of community
 - Support and develop families of students and neighborhoods surrounding schools
 - "Equality"
 - Administration of school needs to be more open to the public
 - Have more discipline; include parents in disciplinary problems
 - Teach the basics (reading, writing, math, etc.)
 - Providing a free education
 - Provide nutrition and basic food needs

Themes/Ideas suggested from across all five groups/questions for the process of creating a vision plan moving forward:

- Value of Community – common across the answers to all five questions
- Value of Prosperity also prominent; perhaps given today's economy and emphasis on schools setting our kids in position to be prosperous; economically successful
- Are there samples of vision plans we could look at? Examples?
- Can we code all the cards and give them back to the Stakeholder Group?
- Need to create a meaningful and relevant vision plan for the community, students; all groups
- Are there questions the school board wants answered?
- School Board is asking us what we want; where we want to go; to be. Book depicts this very well. The "where" depends on where the community places its values.
- The devil is in the details → how do we define community?
- The five questions lend themselves to community type of answers; not liberty or individual type answers. Should we ask other questions about public education?
- How will/does the school system focus on the middle group of students?
- How to be more open to the community; more public friendly; schools open to the community

End of Meeting Check-in:

What Worked Well/What Can We Improve?

Worked Well

- + Going out into the community and getting the response → community's involvement

What Can We Improve?

- △ Technique for getting response to the questions → allowing the respondents to have time to reflect and respond in writing worked well for some
- △ Meeting in the morning and not after another meeting; better when we meet first thing in the morning. (Note: the time of this meeting started later in the morning due to another event that several stakeholders were invited to attend.)

NOTES
Vision Plan for Public Education in Alamance County
Stakeholder Group Meeting
ABSS Professional Library
December 19, 2012
8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

All on the Wall -- Question 1 -- "Why educate the next generation?"

Critical Thinking: "Analytical, flexible and sustainable education leads to knowledge which results in power and prosperity."

- Education leads to knowledge and knowledge is power to all development and growth of all creatures; Knowledge = Power
- We should educate the next generation in order to continue improvement of leadership and life skills through the development of creative thinking and inclusive being
- Overall improvement of life skills
- Increase adaptability to academic and social development
- Critical thinking
- We have to educate the next generation because these are the people who are going to be determining our fates late in life. We want to arm them with the ability to think beyond the immediate consequences of their decisions and analyze the "Big Picture." Creating a sustainable and effective educational system is the only way to have a sustainable and successful future – for this generation's children and for the generation of adults who will be reliant on their decisions.

Individual Success: "Education is the foundation for individual success. Education provides the opportunity for each individual to reach their full potential."

- Education is the foundation to the individual's future – their life and possible success
- Opportunity to reach full potential; dreams
- Education helps us grow to realize our full selves and is what is needed to make our dreams a reality
- Individual success
- Individual financial independence
- Help ground them in their future – college, community college, self-employment; to help them become active community members and have the ability to be independent and financially stable; parents always want the best for their children
- Want the best for our children
- We must teach the next generation; personal growth and development helps one to realize that we can and we must create impact beyond ourselves and our personal lives
- Those who come before us made sacrifices and thought with the future in mind
- The world is constantly changing and advancing as time goes on including education
- Education is the easiest way to change the world
- Education is the building blocks for our kids to be functioning adults

A Vision for Public Education in Alamance County

Quality of Life: “Individuals – personal growth/development” “Society – peace, prosperity, liberty, equality, mobility, opportunity”

- To continue to build a society that has a high quality of life, which includes the following elements: Peace, Tranquility, Prosperity, Liberty, Equality
- Key words: High Quality of Life

Leaders: “We should educate the next generation in order to prepare good citizens and tomorrow’s leaders.”

- Prepare good citizens
- Prepare leaders
- Future leaders

Equal Access: “Because they will be our local, national and state leaders in the future; because we were given the opportunity and it is a right; because our economy, survival depends on it.”

- Equality of Access

Economic Community Success: “To promote a cohesive community for economic and personal success”

- Education of the individual helps develop a positive and productive community
- So that the citizens of Alamance County will continue to be educated and employable; having our citizens educated will help our county be competitive and will allow more industries to want to relocate and grow here.
- They will become the leaders in the community and we need strong leadership in Alamance County to move forward and be progressive if we want to be competitive.
- Alamance County students are truly at a disadvantage compared to neighboring counties. We are lacking in math, science and the arts. As we are now, even if we started today, it would take years for our system to progress to, for example, Chapel Hill School System standards. Clearly Alamance County is in the dark ages. We have continued to elect/employee individuals who clearly feel our tax rate is sufficient to just keep us at standard. This standard is now less than acceptable. If we do not INVEST and sacrifice for education now, this vicious cycle will continue for our grandchildren. Our children will struggle in college and beyond. In the future, bachelor’s degrees will be minimally acceptable. Trades are lost. What does our system do to encourage kids who do not go to college? It’s time to take serious responsibility for all students at every level.
- This is paramount to the health of the community; health of community is economic, safety, wholesomeness, individual health, ...; an educated community sets the tone of the community; provides opportunity to grow beyond.
- We can’t give up or America will fail; to not fall behind; to compete for jobs, internationally
- To enhance our society; to produce competent, global thinking, bilingual adults that will be able to compete and “catch up” with the rest of the world that is getting smaller and smaller
- Strong Individual, strong community
- Accountable to society; responsible

A Vision for Public Education in Alamance County

Future: “To prepare themselves to successfully face the challenges of the future.”

- To pass on our culture and heritage to future generations, and prepare them to be productive members of our society
- Sustain educated workforce; take intellectual knowledge to higher levels; learn from historical research to acquire factual knowledge
- Build and sustain for the future
- Educating our generation would brighten dreams for the world
- Opportunity for next generation
- To sustain our existence
- Preparing minds for the challenges of the future

Sustaining a Democratic Society: “A democratic society requires an informed citizenship that can fully participate in decision-making and public discourse while promoting liberty, equality, prosperity and community.”

- Success of society
- Learn from history
- Sustainability of our community, state, nation, world: Informed Citizenship
- A democratic society requires an informed citizenship who can fully participate in decision making and public discourse
- Themes of sustaining a free, democratic republic
 - To create a sustainable republic (community)
 - To create citizens who have the framework to understand how a republic that promotes liberty, equality, prosperity and community

All on the Wall -- Question 2 -- "Why invest in public education?"

Workforce Investment: "To create a dynamic, creative and diverse workforce by developing critical thinking and leadership skills which can quickly adapt to our ever changing work environment and improve the quality of life in our community."

Reaching Potential for the Future: "Investment in quality public education will prepare the next generation to successfully face the challenges of the future."

- By investing money in our public education system, we can provide better teachers and equipment for our students. These improvements will help the students learn so they can go to college and get a good job, helping both their futures and our economy.
- Investing in public education is an investment in our children and the future of our cities, counties, states and America! The most important investment is non-financial through the quality influences by our families, churches, and their surrounding neighborhood communities on each child's development...The second type of investment is monetary in order to purchase school resources (classroom space, textbooks, equipment, technology, teaching supplies, supporting logistics) and most importantly, the best teaching talent money can buy in a highly competitive market....an average of 28% of registered voters have children enrolled in public schools...the majority of almost any electorate will most likely be opposed to any increase in taxes to educate "other people's" children...In summary, if a community cannot control or trust every family to send "teachable children" to our public schools, the best investment by elected officials is to financially provide substantive teaching salary supplements and increased benefits to attract and retain the best talent possible to remain competitive with school systems of surrounding counties/cities.
- Education is the key to our success; we have to educate our children for the betterment of our future.
- Future of children and community
- We should invest in public education because it affects the future of the United States. This also affects the well-being of America today.
- Our future depends on it.
- The future of America is in our public schools.
- To provide adequate resources to educate students for future success
- It is the most important investment we can make to ensure the success and prosperity of future generations.
- The children are our future. Public schools are to be the place all children should feel safe and be able to learn the skills to be productive citizens.
- Without people and adequate resources including qualified and adequately paid teachers we can't educate students properly and be competitive on a local, state, national and global level.
- Because it is our future – future leaders, future doctors, future lawyers, etc.
- You must invest in public education. There's the practical, necessary education of our children; there's the responsibility of shaping our own future.

A Vision for Public Education in Alamance County

Return on Investment: “To improve the quality of life for all people by providing skills for individual financial independence that improves economic growth and global competitiveness.”

- This is an opportunity to “pay forward” the investments that others have made in our lives. With resources stretched to the breaking point, we need to unselfishly step forward to offer not only assistance, but direction. “To pay forward” what others have invested in our lives.
- To stay competitive and prepare for the future
- Because private education would end up being more costly with no guarantee that it would be better
- We should invest in public education to not only provide good education (quality teachers, resources...) for students, but to provide jobs for people. This would be another way to help boost the economy.
- To be a viable nation, state, local economy; stay globally competitive
- Education is a foundation for an individual to succeed. Investing in public education now gives us a good return later (the return being the student giving back to the community).
- A good education is the apprenticeship for life. A child well educated will be more likely to succeed in life and be a blessing to others. A child who receives a failing education is more likely to end up struggling in life and end up in a sad way. We wisely invest in public education because that is the education choice of the vast majority of parents in our country and state. Local public schools, locally controlled, provide the opportunity for a child to receive a careful, purposeful education and become a means of blessing to their family and community.
- To prepare the most young people to find success as adults and improve lives and our community
- Our investment in public education provides better returns than does the stock market. The productivity of any society (and all sorts of other societal indicators...) can be directly tied to the education level of its citizens. The primary way our children learn to interact and become friends with those of other cultures and backgrounds is through their contacts with them at school, and this is especially true of the public schools.
- Safe environment
- We should invest in public education in order to enjoy a tremendous return on that investment, ultimately resulting in a high quality of life for our society.
- Everyone has a stake in education; all people, in all places at all times – it is critical that the public invest in empowering, engaging, and educating students because society depends on it.

Equal Opportunity: “To ensure that every child, regardless of circumstances, has the opportunity to realize their full potential.”

- To ensure that a diverse population has high quality educational opportunity
- Children are our future. They are the leaders of tomorrow. The families of today are not as stable as they used to be thus leaving the schools to “do it all.” Teachers work very hard but with the vast array of needs in a classroom they cannot possibly meet them all. They need help and support. We, as responsible adults, should do everything we can to help the teachers educate the children and help to give them hope for the future. Education is hope.

A Vision for Public Education in Alamance County

- To keep a sound learning environment; to provide more accessible classes/courses; to better student learning
- To assure all children have the opportunity to learn in a positive and safe environment
- Investing in public education is important because not all children are afforded the opportunity to have a private education. Public education allows students to experience a variety of subjects, clubs, and life experiences. Teachers in public education value the importance of teaching each child regardless of gender, race, or economic situation.
- It provides better opportunity for our children and their futures: In retrospect, without an education, it limits their scope of success in life. Public education is a wise investment for the mass of people versus the class of people.
- Every child should have a right to receive an education from a public institution, paid for by us, the public. To invest in that public institution ensures that an education will be available to all legally authorized; that it will not cost students to receive it. Investing in that education is investing in the future of our country, our heritage. If we do not invest we are putting our children at a disadvantage. The public needs our educated children to insure we continue our advance forward.
- Good public education is essential for the individual's future and for a healthy community.
- It sets the foundation for the community now and the future; a healthy community has good public and private schools; Public is big word – all students should have same opportunities.
- It is important to invest in public education because 55.3 million students nationwide are enrolled in public schools. On the other hand, only around 6,000(?) students nationwide are enrolled in private schools; this, according to the U.S. Department of Education. If we are going to reach the majority of our young people and make the largest difference, the choice is clear.
- To make sure all children have a chance for a good education...public education gives all children an opportunity to thrive to achieve in all areas of education.
- Equality opportunity regardless of circumstances
- To give everyone the opportunity to make it fair for everyone
- Reaches majority; make the biggest difference; well-rounded group
- We complain about our leaders and the decisions they make. Our future leaders are our children. We should make sure that they have all the education and information they will need to be leaders that we are proud of and will lead our nation and communities.
- “Public” education means for all. Funds should represent all levels of taxpayers. But we need more practical and technical education so no one is left without a trade to feed themselves.

Good Citizens: “Invest to succeed”

- Good citizens improve community.
- Social skills
- Good morals
- The kids in the school system will one day be citizens of this country.
- To create a venue to impart positive societal values
- Without a strong educational system we will not be successful as a community.
- To help mold responsible citizens and to ensure a strong and vibrant community for the future

A Vision for Public Education in Alamance County

- It will help our community, hopefully.
- The public/community benefit from educated individuals through productive citizens. In order to obtain this benefit the public must invest capital in the education system.
- To build citizenry that supports the community with informed responsibility for its progress, prosperity, and exceptional quality of life.
- To provide adequate resources to ensure all children have the opportunity to learn critical skills and information to become productive and engaged members of our democratic society.
- Community leaders
- To build a citizenry with high morals and values that is knowledgeable and engaged in building a prosperous and high quality society.

Founding Principles: “We should invest in public education so that we can instill a common set of values that will bind the citizens of the republic together.”

- Our students are the future – they are tomorrow’s leaders and citizens and we must prepare them as best we can!
- Public education is the most efficient way to instill the citizenry into the principles on which the republic is founded and bind our nation together; instill principles on which republic is founded.
- To promote the development of responsible, educated, empowered citizens capable of contributing positively to society.

Issues Log

- Parental involvement/engagement
- Too internet dependent
- Financial investment
- Drop-out age
- Schools expected to raise children
- Gang issue

End of Meeting Check-in:

What Worked Well/What Can We Improve?

Worked Well

- + Challenge of coming together and summarizing all the answers and ideas to the questions
- + Good process for visual learners

What Can We Improve/Suggestions?

- Δ Cohesiveness of large group somewhat scattered during the process/perhaps not so much herding of cats if developing statements ahead of time?
- Δ Absenteeism causing some of the drift or lack of cohesiveness

- △ Attendance Issue needs to be dealt with; we should encourage folks to participate/honor their commitment to this process
- △ Be present!/No phones or sidebar conversations

Before the next meeting:

Review Website Links, Our work together so far

Next Meeting is: Wednesday, January 16, 2013; 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Tentative Agenda:

- Review Draft Themes from Questions 1 and 2
- “All on the Wall” with Question 3 – “What purposes should public schools serve?”

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 Long 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’s school system.
- Provide opportunities to learn and develop; grow as an 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.

A Vision for Public Education in Alamance County

- 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 teachers, 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.”

A Vision for Public Education in Alamance County

- 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 as 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 21st 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, i.e., 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 our 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 becoming 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

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- 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?
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 - 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.

End of Meeting Check-in:

What Worked Well/What Can We Improve?

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 Can We Improve/Suggestions?

- Δ Can we get draft before the next meeting?
- Δ More statements of where we’d like school system to be
- Δ 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?”

Notes
Vision Plan for Public Education in Alamance County
Stakeholder Group Meeting
ABSS Professional Library
February 6, 2013
8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

These Are a Few of My Favorite Things

Valentines that the Stakeholders created were to be shared with ABSS staff and students

Comments re: January 16, 2013 Draft Vision Plan Statement

What works:

- + Issues Log
- + We like the bulleted points – easier to read
- + No major issues with first page → too much information on that page which could be included in a different part of the document. Shorten the opening statements.
- +Comments well done

What could be improved:

- △ Quite wordy → How to condense? Parts we are passionate about may want longer; we each may have different viewpoints on what to emphasize and what to cut.
- △ Long; will anyone sit down and read completely or only skim?
- △ Too broad; what about the specifics around special needs? Where is that in our vision?
- △ One page Executive Summary to give the gist of the Vision plan to most people
- △ 1st sentence or 2 of the 1st section and other details moved to different section of document/more streamlined
- △ If too broad, do we prioritize at some point?
- △ Do we create strategies? Limited resources?
- △ Have specific measures → “State of the School” specifics
- △ Need enough words to convey the nuances of the plan
- △ “Given limited time and resources” → should this be part of a vision plan? A constraint?
- △ Not all subjects are listed; what about the arts?
- △ Are we representing the collective value of our community? Can we reflect a particular balance of values that is Alamance County?
- △ Whose responsibility to prioritize? Does this group want to do some prioritizing?
- △ Hard to digest all of it; maybe have a visual piece to the vision plan to help “digest” it.
- △ Collective health of the community seems to be missing. Individually focused.
- △ Don’t think we’ve thrown the hat far enough; 75% better than US; Aim for the best programs in the US; highest outcomes
- △ Look where we are having success and how to get it out to the whole school system

All on the Wall: Question 4 – “What should we teach children, who should teach them, and how?”

What:

The Basics

- Basics should be taught early in the educational process. Later grades should focus more on specific areas that appeal to the individual student
- A basic education should start at home when a child starts exploring his world, such as picking up objects and attempting to write on everything.
- Parents and educators should be on the same page when it comes to the education of our children being that their education begins at home. Reading, writing, mathematics and communication skills are needed before a child walks into a classroom.
- Be sure that foundational skills are taught and students are capable with those skills
- Three Rs
- Taught basics: reading, writing and arithmetic along with “basic” skills for survival.
- Core (math, science, language)
- How to read, write, reason and communicate with others verbally
- Basics in reading, math, language
- Basic core subjects
- The three Rs early in education
- Teach cursive writing/cursive handwriting
- How to sign their names in cursive
- I think we could benefit a lot by getting back to basics – math, reading science, history; stick to facts
- Grammar

Critical Thinking

- Teach children how to be critical thinkers and writers
- We need to be teaching critical thinking skills, not teaching to the test
- We should emphasize and teach critical thinking skills taught by people who are passionate in how they care for the students in a way that is tailored to their individual learning styles
- Children should be taught and led to be critical, thoughtful and insightful thinkers.
- To critically think, be able to gather/sort data, and “connect the dots” in a logical pattern
- Critical thinking, decision making, analytical skills, problem-solving
- Decision making skills
- Analysis and data interpretation
- Problem solving
- Critical thinking, problem solving
- Problem solving skills
- How to think and learn
- Teach facts not opinions

Social Skills

- Teachers and parents alike should teach students how to respect one another.
- Teach compassion and how to be compassionate.
- Honesty
- Relational skills
- Respect for authority
- Moral values, STOP BULLYING, and respect their classmates
- Encourage children to participate in extracurricular activities
- We should teach them how to treat one another. More than anything they should be taught how respect is earned. To be taught who is worthy of respect.
- We need to teach children how not to discriminate, how to function in community/social skills
- Character and social norms
- Leadership, community involvement, social skills
- Students should learn needed information to become well rounded individuals and the skills they need to reach their goals whether that be college or trade school or other
- Values, ethics, citizenship
- Respect, values, work ethics
- Social skills
- All students should be exposed to life skills such as finance and parenting taught by professionals in this area.
- Citizenship, life skills
- Respect/responsibility
- The social skills needed to survive in their community
- Common sense
- Excellent communication (written, oral)
- Morals and compassion
- Social skills
- Character traits; social skills
- General → specific life skills
- Social skills of communication and getting along with others
- Independence
- Respect and understanding
- Emphasize character development

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math)

- Teach them STEM
- Teach them how to relate to the environment
- Technology is very important to our kids these days
- Math
- Science
- Computer and technology training
- Physical sciences
- Medical technology
- Math is so important

Language Arts

- Reading
- English
- Writing skills
- Communication
- Excellent communication (written, oral)
- Teach cursive writing/cursive handwriting
- How to sign their names in cursive
- Grammar
- Literature

Health and Physical Education

- Healthy behaviors
- Physical Education

History

- The true history of America. The whole reason that colonists came to America and founded America.
- History
- History, literature

Job Skills/Career Readiness

- For students like my daughter, who doesn't fit in the traditional school model, more trade and skill courses should be available for more than the basic reading, writing and arithmetic
- Job skills, career readiness including technology
- Prepare them for life after school
- Teach courses in trades; some people not going to college
- Vocational training

Religion

- Teach all children God's Truth
- Christianity
- Biblical foundations
- Morals
- Moral responsibility
- Compassion
- Teachers should have prayer or at least Pledge of Allegiance every day.

The Arts

- Electives
- Humanities and the Arts
- Core Subjects and the Arts

- The Arts

Second Language

- In the fluent authentic languages
- Foreign Languages
- Second Languages such as Spanish
- Given the large Hispanic population, Spanish should be taught in Kindergarten
- Spanish in middle school is great

Entrepreneurship

- Entrepreneurship

Who:

Parents

- It starts with engaged parents
- Parents
- Parents first
- Parent primarily responsible for teaching and making educational choices for children
- Parents should teach our kids general good people skills
- Engaged families
- Parents could also help teachers because they play a big role in children's lives
- Teachers and parents alike

Home School Parent

- Parents in a home school environment

Certified/Qualified Teachers

- Qualified and caring teachers
- Certified teachers
- Competent, qualified
- Passionate/dynamic teachers
- Well paid, creative, innovated educators; those with high expectations
- Experienced, qualified teachers; who have command of the subject; not next person in line to teach Chemistry even though he/she comes from Math Department
- Teachers who are held accountable
- Their teachers should be educated people that care about the future of our children
- Teachers that love to teach and know what they are doing
- Qualified teachers
- Don't let teachers be bullies
- Motivated teachers
- Proficient teachers in age appropriate subject matter

A Vision for Public Education in Alamance County

- Qualified teachers
- Teachers and parent alike
- Teachers should act as facilitators of this process. Our teachers should be well qualified; more importantly they should value education at its highest level.

Community

- Community
- Parents, teachers and community as a whole
- Community engagement via experiential learning
- The entire community with parents taking the lead
- All of us, but primarily our teachers
- Community. Primarily ABSS
- Community partners who are thinkers and problem solvers
- Those with Biblical foundations and practice what they preach
- Mentors
- Community members
- Leaders from the community

The Best

- Not retired folks with no zeal
- Teachers who are qualified, not straight out of college and who can't deal with them
- Competent qualified teachers who receive proper professional development and support with parental input
- Those with abilities, skills and passion
- Well educated; we should be pouring our resources into our teachers
- Teachers who are fluent in the Spanish language
- The best teachers who inspire
- Teachers with great subject knowledge and great interpersonal skills
- Teachers – they are properly trained
- By highly motivated teachers with the support of the family when possible
- Trained teacher should teach students in our schools in addition to other trained human service providers can add to the teaching process in helping students become well rounded.
- Those equipped with the education and knowledge. A successful teacher MUST be able to identify needs of every child.

Passionate

- A person has to have a special knowledge of the subject through education or experience and training on how to teach it and are not otherwise disqualified , such as having a felony conviction
- Educators with a desire to succeed at their mission
- People who care; highly qualified teachers with ability to teach; passion for teaching

A Vision for Public Education in Alamance County

- Teachers who are motivated in teaching the kids should be the one. Some teens may not have motivators at home so it is good to have teachers who want to see teens actually succeed.
- Passionate, driven, happy, caring, highly motivated and innovative individuals
- Educators that are passionate and knowledgeable in their area of instruction.
- Those who keep the student engaged
- Teachers who are excited about teaching and love children, engaged parents and accept parental involvement.
- Love of learning; teachers must have the academic skills and passion to motivate students.

Peers

- Peers
- Good role models

How:

On-line

- Colleges are now offering online classes and so should high schools. Like most industries, brick and mortar has gotten expensive, so “education outside the walls” must be part of future education
- Use of technology; computers
- Use of World Wide Web for expanding ones exposure to a subject
- Homework on computer is awesome; using technology while they learn

Experiential

- Field trips; seeing things first-hand
- Field trips
- When teachers give contracts to the kids to help kids focus and be able to learn how to be organized and for the future; in college and work life
- Customized methods according to what students relate to
- Hands-on; children learn differently
- By example
- Be interactive
- They should be educated in classrooms and beyond – in the community with hands-on learning
- Intellectually, emotionally, experientially with modern technology/resources
- With hands-on real world experiences; thought provoking interactive learning
- I think hands-on and visual learning may keep kids interested and that teachers should get the training to know how to better teach future leaders
- Experiential teaching
- Experiential learning as much as possible
- Hands-on/practical; first hand experiences, shadowing, internships, afterschool activities
- More labs, field trips, speakers, projects
- Engaged methodology

Flexible

- “Flexible methods” as opposed to traditional classroom.
- Focus only on important, meaningful work; not busy work
- Broad scoped; offering multiple options for learning any and all subjects
- Challenging content in all subjects
- Don’t teach to a test
- Flexible for new environments and techniques
- Children should be taught with compassion, understanding, discipline and with resources that are appropriate to students skills
- In a way that is personally tailored to each student’s needs; i.e., teach more visually for kids who learn visually
- Flexible
- A variety of methods should be available to reach students with different learning styles.
- Give teachers freedom to decide

Creative Strategies

- Creativity! Rather than focusing on end of year test scores, I think that each individual should be focused on, as each individual will learn differently. Much easier said than done.
- Based on creative strategies to engage kids, not teaching to the test
- Creative!
- Setting high goals; belief in achievement; can do attitude
- Multiple pedagogies; lecture, experiential, case studies, in and out of classroom

Community Involvement

- What it takes to be prepared for higher education, so they will be a successful part of society.
Teachers along with us all, get Involved

In the Classroom

- Exposure to actual classroom instruction
- They should be educated in classrooms and beyond – in the community with hands-on learning

Small Class Size

- Small class size with regular homework with feedback from teachers.

Student Directed

- How we should teach them requires different methods because each child learns differently
- On the child’s level whether reading books or computer
- Individualized to student’s needs
- Teaching should be taught with the individual in mind. Each person responds differently to different methods.
- Give choices
- Keep individual in mind
- Require students to express their learning verbally, written

Theory/Evidence-Based

- Theory-based: A. Classroom instruction, B. Repetition, C. Core subjects
- Use evidence-based; explore what works! Don't do something because we've always done it that way.

Practical

- Traditional learning, open forums
- Purposeful activity; repetition and exactness

Best Resources

- Taught with the best resources available
- Using all of the tools at our disposal
- Provide substantive supplement for those with Masters degrees
- Well paid, creative, innovative educators

Mentors and Role Models

- Role modeling
- By example; if teachers show respect to kids, kids in turn show respect to the teacher
- Lead and teach by example
- Learn by example; actively seeing
- By example

Home School/At Home

- Home School
- Respect and understanding; decision making and independence need to be taught at home and school for consistency; by example, by praise; most kids are ready to mimic
- A basic education should start at home when a child starts exploring his world.
- There are many tools available such as objects in the home, research on the internet, iPhones, Facebook, Google search engine, the public library...many of these tools are available in the home.

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Additions as of February 7, 2013

- “Train-the-trainer” programs to allow and encourage successful colleagues to share their techniques, passion, etc.
- Excellent/empowered principals
- How do we motivate kids/parents who don’t really care?
- How do we motivate employers to care?
- How do we get community understanding of how ABSS works? What does it do, why → greater understanding of system’s requirements
- Invite public officials in and remind them how they were educated and who they serve.

Before the next meeting:

Review Website Links, Review out work together so far.

Next meeting is: Wednesday, February 27, 2013; 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Tentative Agenda:

Review Draft Themes/Statements from Question 4

All on the Wall Question 5:

“What role should public schools play in our children’s lives and in our communities?”

What Worked Well/What Can We Improve?

Worked Well

- + Direct feedback that is being given to Vision Plan Draft from everyone/small groups
- + Closer to the Vision Plan → can see it/getting a picture of it in my mind
- + With cards we are hearing from the entire community; from people all over the county; not just the squeaky wheels at school board meetings
- + Very representative of the county
- + Not just the few

What Can We Improve/Suggestions?

- Δ Too little input from the school board about the vision plan and process?
- Δ Concerns expressed by stakeholders about newspaper article on the School Board’s upcoming Public Forum and question raised regarding how representative this Vision Plan process is of the Alamance community
- Δ We want to encourage School Board to continue to seek input from the public; just wish the Public Forum could wait until after this process is completed; don’t want to cause confusion in the public’s mind about these efforts

NOTES
Vision for Public Education in Alamance County
Stakeholder Group Meeting
ABSS Professional Library
February 27, 2013
8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

A Few of My Favorite Things – The Stakeholders Group and Vision Process

Highlights, notable aspects want to reflect in the Vision Document...

- It is a rather simple process that helps us come up with a product for a complex issue.
- I hope that our work will reflect issues the community cares about and help the community address these issues.
- Learning about the model of “4 values” in evaluating optional approaches to setting a vision for the public school system
- The thoroughness of ideas
- The diversity of the committee and the inclusiveness of others in the community
- The diverse group of people who contributed
- Learning about (public) values that go into public education
- The involvement of students has been great. They have insightful comments and different points of view. One student that was at my table came up to me at a YMCA basketball game and re-introduced himself. That is an interaction that would never have taken place and speaks to the community building process that is part of this project
- It strikes me that the schools have become one of, if not the largest, social services providers to children. Health care, nutrition, basic needs, school supplies and education as well.
- One of my favorite things has been meeting other stakeholders. Specifically, I have enjoyed hearing others points of view and ideas for ABSS.
- Invariably it seems that when you come together with such a wide variety of backgrounds and life experience, the work group as a whole benefits.
- I believe the work being done here will help the police department achieve our mission for the community.
- Personal Wonder: Concern of how far to go to accommodate individual passions; Are we giving the whole community valid consideration? Is buy-in likely, accepting the squeaky-wheels?
- Pro: Wide section of community; Enthusiasm – concern/care for what’s best; Building from “ground-up”
- Witnessing and benefitting from the commitment of dozens of volunteers to help make our public education system better
- Hearing the input of our high school students who dedicated time to improving our schools
- Having school board members and ABSS staff present and listening
- Opportunity to meet other stakeholders, including our students and interacting with each one
- The diversity of the stakeholders group

A Vision for Public Education in Alamance County

- Getting to know how people from different backgrounds think
- Meeting new people and learning their point of view has been memorable
- The diversity of people and occupations in this group
- The insight the students brought to the group
- Something I have really enjoyed through this project is the group activities held. Mainly the joining of the community to share their ideas
- Something else I like is how we get to speak out while Dr. Cox is here to listen to our ideas.
- Enjoyed the session where questions were asked of the whole group and we were asked to join the “yes, no, I don’t know” groups depending on how we would answer the question. This was a great visual exercise to help everyone see just how different our beliefs and how we need to accept other beliefs but come together as a group – great team builder.
- Enjoyed getting the different answers/responses from within our community; liked this and hearing different collective responses which gave an expanded coverage within Alamance County.
- Conversations which illustrate sincere desire to improve education
- A willingness to work in partnership
- Discussion about passionate areas of education and in some cases particular schools or youth groups
- Information gained that will be helpful to other agencies
- Partnership development
- Cross section of stakeholders represented
- Requirement to get input from 10 people; allowed for more community voice from differing backgrounds and perspectives, allowed for good discussions, made stakeholders somewhat like “ambassadors”
- Meeting new people
- Hearing others’ perceptions of ABSS
- Asking the questions passed to the public, has as many answers as people asked, making “our” answers wrong to many of the people asked. I did enjoy the “process” used and will try to put some of it into my dealings with the city.
- Enjoyed historical lesson on public education
- Meeting all of the stakeholders and learning about the different viewpoints/perspectives that are represented
- The committed student participation is impressive
- I found the book and the session with Phil (Boyle) to be very thought-provoking.
- The session on the history of public education in Alamance County was informative.
- I feel like this all has been a learning process for me and I feel that we can make a change.
- With all the work that we have done, I feel that it should be used to change a couple things in ABSS.
- The ideas that we have are very good and should be used.

A Vision for Public Education in Alamance County

- The exercise that dealt with specific issues – where we moved around the room – made me realize the great challenges we face in bringing people to some commonality.
- When we asked the community for input, how eager they were to have their voices heard
- History of the Alamance-Burlington School System presented by Dr. Cox, Mr. Van Pelt and Mr. Evans
- When we moved around as groups to answer questions and see how the dynamics of the groups changed
- Table interactions
- The fact that some children would not have a meal that day if school were closed
- I have been impressed by the commitment on the part of ABSS and school board to attend and listen
- I have been impressed by how many community members (who have very busy schedules) have continued to participate in the process. It shows a real commitment to education in this county
- I've been impressed with the diversity and length of time everyone has dedicated to this plan. I'm excited that the school system will be implementing the community's thoughts and ideas. I'm not aware of a process like this before (this in depth).
- I feel privileged to have been a part of this process along with a very varied group of people. I appreciate how well thought out the selection of stakeholders was.
- In my work with community non-profits, I have been able to share the work we have been doing and look forward to using this information for my work, particularly the next community needs assessment (which we will begin working on in the spring of 2014).

Comments re: February 27, 2013 Draft Vision Document:

- △ Put the process piece of the document in a supplemental section after the vision and executive summary pieces with the timeline in an appendix.
- △ Page 3: Left out most important group → “students” See the last paragraph
- △ Page 9: the order of this list is really important; need to give some thought to this; prioritizing the bullets?
- △ Page 9: Under “We envision...” need to change some of the bulleted points given our discussion; don't we want more than “possible?” Glad we are taking out “given limits of time and resources”
- △ Narrowing too much to Alamance County; much discussion on the word “society” which is broad; maybe need to use both - for example, we are developing students not just for Alamance County, but also for participation in “society”
- △ Page 3: Change the wording of “We believe... that life-long learning is the foundation for individual success...” to “We believe that education is the foundation...” Our focus is on “education” so needs to be stated before “life-long learning.”
- △ Nothing as stated is truly bold. Why doesn't the document say “We want to the best...” or “Recognized as the best...” or “One of the best in the state...” etc.

- △ Page 8: Beliefs Section: Do we really want to change “society” to “Alamance County?” It is appropriate to believe in Alamance County, so don’t change every place that we used the word “society” to “Alamance County.”
- △ How will we know if we have achieved any of these?
- △ Page 11: Fulfilling the Vision; what should go here? School Board will take the vision and develop its goals, achievable outcomes and then do it, right?
- △ Odd wording/style for pagination
- △ Four Areas of Curriculum → History needs to move up as priority given changes in number of history classes high school students will now be required to complete
- △ Move up on the list the bullet point which states “Seeks to hire and retain (highly) qualified, motivated...”
- △ Bullet point: “Maintain safe, state of the art facilities.” Need to work on this statement which is a core function of the school system/vision. Funding for facilities is responsibility of the county; need to give this some real weight/priority.
- △ Add: “We will provide many paths to success, particularly for students who are dropping out or need alternative paths than college; we need to engage other groups; homeless students and their families, alternative student/program groups.
- △ Bullets are not particularly visionary; achieving this list doesn’t/won’t set us apart. Example of a visionary point: “every student will graduate speaking a foreign language.”

All on the Wall: Question 5: “What role should public schools play in our children’s lives and in our communities?”

Prepare Students for Careers and College

- Prepare them to be competitive in the open job market
- Prepare “strong candidates for the college entrance requirements”
- Help get them headed into the right direction for the future
- Provide children with the opportunity to learn life skills which they can apply to be successful in achieving their life goals
- Public schools should prepare our children for life after high school, whether that is the challenge of higher education or preparation to enter the workforce.
- Real world education; schools should prepare children to face the “real” world when they finish. Part of this may include volunteerism and helping others which helps build stronger community.
- Public schools should be a place where children can learn academically, socially and athletically to create solid foundation for further personal growth.
- A place where students expect to be educated and equipped with the right information to compete nationally
- Train them for work or higher education
- Public education should provide a safe place to educate our children in preparing them for the future, advocating for our children, provide them with a vision and teach them to give back to our community.

A Vision for Public Education in Alamance County

- The school system should provide each student with the knowledge to be successful in whatever area the individual has chosen as his/her path in life
- Education; Teaching a sense of community; providing avenues to develop creative skills; identify areas that will help focus on future jobs for study in college
- To educate at the highest level all students to create a well-rounded, productive citizen. One who understands education is the path to success.
- Public schools should provide an education for our students to be able to prosper in life. Provide them with the skills they need for the future
- For children: Prepare for future success, independence, educate, teach critical thinking v. simple memory/retention
- For community: Prepare for employment
- Educate children to prepare them to be self-sufficient adults
- Provide a quality education

Students: Community Involvement/Citizenship

- Help the students and the community by teaching and preparing the students to be good citizens and to have financial literacy. Some parents are unable to teach these skills to their children and exposure to these traits on a daily basis at school may give them the opportunity they need to improve the world.
- Community involvement
- Responsible citizens
- Teach the responsibilities of being a citizen from K-12; include history of the founding of the US, where and how our laws came about; how government works: fed, state, county, city; election process: parties, local, state, and national election board (local and state); Offices held: local, state, fed and appointed offices
- Teach them to support their community
- Introduce them to giving back to their community
- Public schools are a big part of what shapes young minds to be leaders of tomorrow. This is where children not only learn reading, writing and arithmetic, but where they also learn about friendship, problem solving, and most importantly community.
- The public schools should play a vital role in children's lives and in our communities. The schools are in a position to educate our children and teach them how to be responsible citizens and good role models.
- To give them true confidence to participate in community life to make community life better
- Enable and equip our students to take the initiative to work in the community to improve the community
- To think through a problem and find the right answer; all problems – social, financial, structural.

In Our Community: Role Models of Excellence and Leadership

- Schools should take on, and be viewed as, leadership institutions in our community.
- Provide role models for our children: teachers, coaches, and administrators all set examples as all students watch them and learn from what they see

A Vision for Public Education in Alamance County

- Working with citizens to enhance community learning
- Advocate – they need a voice and someone to talk to whom they trust
- Utilizing intake from community to improve education
- Public schools should be a resource that strengthens the health of the community
- Schools should be a resource to recruit economic development
- Education resource center for community
- Heart of community as a resource
- Focal point for learning
- Public schools should strive to be community partners, so that the community is more likely to be a supporter of the public schools.
- Socially appropriate setting
- Provide mentors/teachers that are great role models
- In the community → ABSS needs to work on its attractiveness system-wide to help the county grow. This will in turn help ABSS. Just a quick glance at the system can show people where ABSS puts its focus and where they don't. Schools are what help growth. Where is this county growing and where is it not?

Greater Community Involvement in Schools

- Places for citizen involvement and family improvement
- Our community would be well served in the schools. Let the community feel that they have a vested interest in the schools; there should be one.
- Public schools should be a resource for the community and encourage community involvement
- Education
- A place where every citizen values education and engages for everyone's success
- Preparing all children equally for a career and community involvement
- They should let the communities know what is going on and ask questions to see what the public thinks.
- Education resource for community; community involvement imperative; more
- Open to community and open to families → be more of the center of the community instead of M-F 8-3
- Should be a vital priority for all stakeholders (citizens); should value as it is what made our community great and is our future. If everyone saw the value of education and engagement in public education, everyone would succeed!

Creatively Engaging Students and Parents

- Encourage/require creativity to engage students and parents
- Idea: Have high school students who need community service credits mentor, but more importantly, tutor elementary (maybe middle school) children who are struggling academically – to help with homework – they get what is being taught. This helps the student, helps the parent and helps the high school student; win, win, win situation.
- They play a huge role. Our success is based off of our upbringing. Our upbringing usually tells the type of person we are. If parents dedicate time to their children's education at a young age the

child will be more dedicated and willing to succeed in school. Public schools come in play after the parents have done their job. Schools should go past the limits of educating students. Education is the basis of life nowadays. Teachers need to become more sociable with students in order to give them better understanding. They play the role of a parent while the child is in school so they should do whatever it takes to make each student successful!

- They should play a vital and essential role in children's lives and the community. They should be a place where a child can receive a quality education, a good meal (since for some kids that's their only meal) and a healthy social life; quality education; healthy social life.
- Schools should be supportive in children's lives including education, role models, development of character. Schools should be involved in community to know what needs children may have. How they live; what they are up against - positive and negative.
- In our children's lives, public schools should supplement* the social and academic skills necessary to be successful and contribute to our community. (*The challenge is that many children have little other support.)
- Theme of parental, community involvement consistently
- How much should the school become the parent and less the educator?
- Children that want to learn should be provided that opportunity instead of trying to force kids to learn that will not and are promoted anyway.
- Don't be the parents
- Partner with parents to be primary educators
- They should welcome parent involvement
- Don't expect that schools can be all things to all children
- While current responsibilities tend to assign traditional family value rearing to the schools, I believe that is inappropriate.
- Schools should be able to provide a structure that all kids can click into and be successful. Each child has an area of interest if it can be identified and the child can be connected to these opportunities.

Holistic Approach: Schools as a Referral Agency

- Basic nutrition
- To be a nurturing environment for children to get away from everyday life
- The public schools should serve as the hub for student engagement in learning activities; safe place that nurtures, supports and encourages students to achieve their highest potential
- Community hub for nurturing, supporting, encouraging
- In our communities, public schools should work in partnership to identify gaps/deficiencies in education and develops ways to address/remedy those issues.
- Holistic approach; provide and refer to all resources needed
- The public schools should provide comprehensive services/referrals to ensure that all students have the academic, social, emotional, physical, and financial resources necessary to reach their fullest potential. Academic achievement requires a comprehensive, holistic approach.

A Vision for Public Education in Alamance County

- Provide basic nutrition, health education and basic health review, teach students to be involved in their community (adopt-a-street, civic clubs, etc.)
- Heart of community as a resource
- Education resource center for community
- It is vital that the schools support family values and competent strong moral and educational values lacking in certain homes.
- I think if educators were more familiar with the home life of a child, they could be a better voice to the child when teaching basic learning skills as well as life lessons.
- Public schools need not only to educate but to nurture and encourage growth, both academically and emotionally. The role of public schools has changed over the years, in great part to the breakdown of the family nucleus. Public schools are now dealing with issues that haven't been seen in the past. Our community truly benefits only when public schools invest in the growth of our children, thereby producing successful, productive adults.
- To prepare these children to be self-sufficient adults, including life skills

Academic Excellence

- Schools' primary purpose and mission should be academic excellence. We know schools play a larger social role with our students and communities, but core academics should be the top priority.
- I believe that the role that public schools should play in the lives of our children is to provide children with the best educational opportunities available. Currently, in my opinion, schools are trying to fill too many roles. Schools are similar to police in that they tend to be a place/entity that is often asked to do more than they are equipped to do.
- Provide kids with a vision
- Education should be the top priority of the community. As such, it should be taken seriously, rigorously executed, and shown the respect that it deserves.
- Schools should provide the structure for children to be successful, explore their interests and connect to opportunities.
- The role our schools should play in our children's lives is one of challenging/engaging/supportive education. It should be a place where they build a solid base for future success.

Teach the Basics

- I think if educators were more familiar with the home life of a child, they could be a better voice to the child when teaching basic learning skills as well as life lessons.
- Public education should play the role of educator. The school should teach our kids the basics – reading, writing, and arithmetic. They should also expose our kids to fitness, history, and culture.
- Centers for knowledge-building, critical thinking skills and social interaction
- Basic education
- Provide students with training in the basic skills such as math, reading, and writing.
- Our schools are more concerned about extra activities than they are providing basic educational training

Discipline

- Teachers should not be expected to raise children for the parent and should not have to be subjected to uncontrolled abuse by children. If school administration can't provide discipline, the administration needs to change.
- The school should reflect a place to acquire knowledge and discipline first. But also a place where pride and unity is developed.

Provide a Safe Environment

- Safe environment
- Protect our kids → serve as a safe place
- Our schools are central in providing a safe learning environment and a place for positive social interaction during and after school hours
- Serve as a safe environment; public schools should provide our children with a safe learning environment
- Provide a safe environment for students and teachers
- Schools should provide quality education in a healthy and safe environment. Schools are often a very important piece in building local communities as educational facilities are often deciding factors for parents deciding where to live. Schools are an absolutely essential piece of building successful communities and productive humans

Safe Place to Express Ideas/Cultural Competency

- Convey and promote common values
- Promote democracy and teach principles that include freedom and justice
- Teach cultural competency (race, religion, ethnicity, political, and social)
- Provide an environment that supports a safe, challenging experience
- Challenge students
- Free to learn/education
- Foster a learning environment while providing child with the extra-curricular/elective options to expand his/her understanding of the world.
- Provide an environment that supports a safe, challenging experience

Discussion with regards to next steps in the review of the draft vision:

- ✓ March 6th -- Steering Committee Meeting
- ✓ March 11th -- BOE SWOT Analysis:
Consensus of Stakeholder Group is to provide a copy of the draft vision document from today, February 27, 2013, and the notes from today for the BOE's use in their SWOT analysis of the draft. We will provide both documents ahead of time for the BOE's review to maximize their time doing the SWOT analysis.
- ✓ March 20th -- Stakeholder Group Meeting: SWOT Analysis of Draft Vision and BOE SWOT

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- ✓ March 28th -- Meeting of Steering Committee with Editorial Subgroup: Paul Koonts, Marcus Mintz, Brian Boylston, Carissa Graves, Bob Byrd – March 28th from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. (change meeting time from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m.?)
- ✓ April 10th—Stakeholder Group Meeting -- Review and Consensus Building
- ✓ April 17th -- Steering Committee Meeting
- ✓ April 24th – Stakeholder Group Meeting – “Rollout” Planning
- ✓ May 20th – BOE Meeting -- Vision Presented to Board of Education – TBD
- ✓ Presentation to Chamber of Commerce Board – TBD

What Worked Well/What Can We Improve?

- + Seeing the light at the end of the tunnel
- △ Stakeholders show up
- △ Note: Comment made during the session with regard to writing the vision in a way that challenges us rather than promotes the status quo.

Notes
Vision for Public Education in Alamance County
Board of Education Work Session
Alamance Community College
March 11, 2013
11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Request from the Stakeholders Group for the Board of Education to provide feedback and direction on their work and the draft documents before this visioning effort goes into its final stretch; before their work is completed and shared in final with the BOE, the Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Alamance Community. Stakeholders Group wants to hear from you about this effort to date. What would be helpful to you? Where do they need to focus their remaining time together? Broaden the scope? Hone the focus?

Documents for Review:

Provided in an email from Steering Committee on Thursday, March 7, 2013

Draft Vision Document and Report

Notes from February 6 and 27, 2013 Stakeholder Group Meetings

Overview SWOT Process:

To provide feedback, BOE members utilized a SWOT process facilitated by Scottie Seawell, Leading and Governing Associates, to capture their feedback as quickly and efficiently as possible. Once the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats were generated, BOE members formed pairs, organized each category into key themes and summarized the board's message to the Stakeholders Group for consideration and incorporation in the Vision for Public Education in Alamance County.

Strengths -- Identify Strengths in the document and the process

- What stands out for you?
- What should be highlighted, honed, more details provided, etc.

Community Collaboration and Beliefs

Beliefs are crucial to success

Strong Belief Statement

I like the BOLD suggestions. We do want to be the Best!

Thorough with respect to values which represent the entire community

Collaboration, research in the community, leadership-combined, effective timeline

Community involvement to help guide the Board in long term planning

Life-long learning at the foundation of what's important

Acknowledges the need for a unified effort on behalf of children's education

Great community input! Student input as well as interview questions.

Broad and thoughtful Stakeholder Group

How it is written

Strong and specific vision statement

Transparent/clear goals

Like the Vision use of “We”

Like bullet points rather than text

Well written and organized

Positive yet frank!

Like “Issues” Section

Appreciative of visionary statements like “We want all to speak a foreign language”

Who will prioritize? Clarity

Outcomes

Safe environment for all students and staff members

Would like more on what can be done about discipline

Parental involvement!

Support for teachers and expectations for excellence

Diversity

Discipline

Job skills

Good focus on flexible teaching and engaged learning

Creative and flexible curriculum

Parental involvement

Equal access

Educational Outcomes

Document is comprehensive with regard to expectations for what our students need to be taught

Document is comprehensive as to who is responsible for educating our students

The document addresses expectations for educating the whole child

Addresses the educational needs of all students

Specific regarding educational outcomes

Comprehensive

Weaknesses -- Identify Weaknesses in the document and the process

- What stands out for you?
- What should be considered, mitigated, balanced, etc.

How to Motivate Community More

How can the system get more input from community and not just same squeaky wheels?

The “How’s” to get things done, i.e., engage the parents in focusing on life time learning

Question: Do we need suggestions for specific issues... e.g., How to get parents more involved

More input on How to change community image of schools. What is missing that people would like to see?

Document Organization

Should there be a priority order for the vision?

Some items in “Overview” should be in appendix

Too general in some statements

Lack of understanding how the Vision Plan is different from the strategic plan

Leadership

Ability to accomplish—excellent information

More needs to be said about hiring and retaining leadership

Who attends Schools? What Kind?

Would like more input by public on building a high school, crowded problem, redistrict?

Socio-economic imbalance in schools

Document does not address where our children should be educated – community schools, magnet, combo...

What is Taught? For How Long?

Would like to consider the role of STEM

Document does not address issues such as school schedule, calendar – more year-round?, length of school day...

Opportunities -- Identify opportunities external to the vision document and the process

- Are there opportunities that you hope to capitalize on or consider as the BOE and that you want the Stakeholders Group to be aware of?

Education/Curriculum

New ways to look at “how we teach” and “who we teaches”

Explore ways to integrate technology into engaged learning (*See General Assembly proposal re: technology/digital text books by 2017*)

Magnet School concept

Build and support of teachers with all of the changes due to Common Core. Reassure them!

Better Pre-K Education

Requiring more credits therefore preparing students better for college, work or service

How should we go about evaluating student learning and growth? More tests?...

Safety

Improved Law Enforcement relations

More security and safety models for schools

How Should Our Schools Look?

The desire of our community as to the “where” should our students be educated (zoning? transfer policies?)

Rezoning or changing attendance zones

Resources: Funding

Suggestions for funding and changing our priorities as it pertains to education – locally and statewide

Technology legislation

Continued budget cuts on the federal and state level will result in greater student teacher ratio

Redistricting or get funding for new high school

How should we continue to support teachers and staff with limited resources?

Non-traditional funding

Community

Help to create change for the positive for all public education in more than just Alamance County

Provides other elected bodies with a clear vision by the community for public education

Generating more conversation about public education

How should we evaluate teachers – based on student performance?

Provides a long term conversation with our community

Working with County Commissioners as a team NOT an enemy; Repairing relationships!

Improved County Commissioner relations

New partnerships with external groups and community members

System Direction

How creative can we be in all aspects of schooling?

Nothing of specific issues that BOE can focus on

Threats - Identify threats external to the vision document and the process

- Are there threats that you will need to manage or consider as the BOE and that you want the Stakeholders Group aware of?

Legislative Mandates

Need incentives to attract businesses to increase tax base revenues; not in ABSS control

Lack of acceptance by all BOE members(?)

Decisions regarding education often made by non-educators

Legislation contrary to local vision

Values and the philosophy of elected officials toward public education

Community

Firm consequences of crime by students in and on school property

Parents becoming complacent about the value of education

Not enough parental involvement
Lack of public understanding of document
Not wanting to make change; “let things stay the way they are”
Community schools
Public perception of public education
Community not buying in on the long range plan
“Buy-in” by community and especially leaders

\$ Resources

Increase in charters or decline in enrollment
Vouchers for parental choice
A misunderstanding of how funding works for public education
Funding for professional development, decreased class size, teacher pay as professionals, and longer school year/school day
Curriculum and funding – not controlled locally
Lack of resources needed for public education
Funding battles that are more about power and control rather than about what our kids/teachers really need
Funding - state, local and federal
\$\$\$ Cuts

Miscellaneous

Gathering Dust
A,B,C,D,F Grading of Schools
3rd Grade retention for not passing reading assessment
Too much emphasis on the schools role beyond education

Report Out and Summarize Board’s Message:

Given what you’ve organized, how would you summarize the board’s message to the stakeholder group?

Strengths:

Proud of the community and collaboration
Concern for parental support and discipline

Weaknesses:

How to motivate the community and get input – dominant category
Ability to accomplish excellent ideas
Community reaction (parents) to issues of equal access

Opportunities:

System direction

How schools should look

Curriculum

Communicating budget cuts; reaching larger community about funding issues

Less money/More expected

Generating impact for education in the broader sense – beyond our county

Threats:

Community – Will we get buy-in? Do they understand plan? Enough parental involvement?

Funding Resources – constraints; how to dream and implement with limited resources; helping community understand budget cuts

Mandates – helping public understand mandates

Additional Comments:

Board could use more local control

Building and strengthening partnerships to improve public education

Importance of Community Involvement

Thank you and Timeline Moving Forward:

Wednesday, March 20, 2013; 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. Stakeholders Group Meeting

Thursday March 28, 2013; 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. – Steering Committee and Editorial Board Meet

Wednesday, April 10, 2013; 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. Stakeholders Group Meeting

Wednesday, April 24, 2012; 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. Stakeholders Group Meeting

Vision Presented at May Board Meeting -- TBD

Notes
Vision for Public Education in Alamance County
Stakeholder Group Meeting
ABSS Professional Library
March 20, 2013
8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Review and Small Group Conversations

Draft Vision Document and Notes from February 27, 2013 Meeting
BOE SWOT from March 11, 2013

Strategic Analysis – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

To strategically analyze draft vision document and process, the Stakeholders Group utilized a SWOT Analysis process facilitated by Scottie Seawell, Leading and Governing Associates. Through the SWOT, Stakeholders generated Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of the plan and the visioning process. Once generated, the Stakeholders formed four groups, organized each SWOT category into key themes and reported out those key themes to the large group. The large group then consolidated like themes and multi-voted (1/3+1) with star stickers in order to gain a general sense of priority of the themes for further discussion and reflection in the Vision for Public Education in Alamance County. The notes below start with the priority themes and the ideas developed by small groups of stakeholders for capitalizing on these identified priorities.

Ideas and Suggestions for Capitalizing on Top Priorities -- Small Group Discussions

Community Involvement = 23 stars

- Use of technology and other media to get messages to the community
- Success of the system is dependent on the community. It is bigger than the parents.
- How are other communities tackling this issue?
- Opportunity for community to rally behind a concrete plan
- School system needs a social marketing campaign to educate the community on the value of education (economics of the county; jobs, etc.) People think they pay too much in taxes; not informed about the impact on ability to attract industry, etc.

Parent Involvement = 20 stars

- Meet the parents where they are; i.e., what if no computer for the parents to check students' grades
- Offer open houses with corresponding middle/high schools for convenience in attending
- Get teachers to offer extra credit to get parents in the door; some kind of incentive
- Help teachers understand how important it is to discuss how important their (parents') voice is to success of children
- Schools need to make parents welcome

Board of Education/Governance/Accountability = 14 stars

Perception that BOE will not use document – concern

BOE support and publicly address above concern

Highlight ABSS and Chamber partnership for this process

Highlight the broad community input

Help BOE have tools for how to use this document for strategic planning (a) tools to help BOE move forward with opposition (to funding, “ ____ organization”) → Develop tool box, with “facts” from Stakeholder Group’s work

Stop politicking and start doing what is right!

Find commonality – address differences but find agreement; talk about what we can, not what we can’t

Local Politics = 13 stars

- Encourage pro-business and pro-education candidates for County Commissioners
- Advocacy – Community-wide on: Funding, information, candidates, return on investment, metrics/accountability
- Information spread to community of actual funding levels, relative funding levels
- Compare performance metrics, e.g., percent of budget that goes to administration compared to other systems

Funding = 12 stars

- Highlight local business giving → not just at BOE meeting
- Communication → simple, yet broad where funding comes from – break down all areas (admin, teachers, building) help clear up misperceptions! Compare like systems and where we fall
- Change the political seats

Consolidated Themes and their ranking

1	Student Content (s)	= 4 Stars
2	Community Input (s)	
2	Community (o)	
2	Community (t)	= 23 Stars
3	Broad Content (s)	= 2 Stars
4	Format (s)	
4	Language Editorial Concerns (w)	= 5 Stars
5	Accountability with BOE (w)	
5	BOE/Gov (o)	
5	Board of Education (t)	= 14 Stars
6	Stakeholders Concerns about the Process (w)	

A Vision for Public Education in Alamance County

6	Process (t)	= 1 Star
7	Parental Involvement (w)	
7	Parents/Family (o)	= 20 Stars
8	Technology (o)	= 2 Stars
9	Scope of Vision (w)	= 1 Star
10	Missing Items (w)	= 0 Star
11	Best Practices (o)	= 12 Stars
12	Diversity and equality (o)	= 0 Stars
13	Local Politics (t)	= 13 Stars
14	State Politics (t)	= 4 Stars
15	Funding (t)	= 12 Stars

SWOT Categories by Theme with Supporting Details

STRENGTHS

Community Input

Input from citizens

Issues presented by community that need to be addressed

Represents a broad diverse group of Alamance County citizens committed to improving public education in Alamance County

Reasonable consensus on values across the community

ABSS/BOE/Chamber partnership in this effort

Derived from community input

Community involvement along with student involvement

View Alamance County as a place businesses want to come

Community led process

Community support and input

of people involved in this vision process

Diverse group of citizens from Alamance County

Gathering many different perspectives -- mind opening to new ideas/thoughts

Diverse group of stakeholders working collaboratively

Committee is diverse
Includes input from many
Vision plan involved diverse stakeholders
Collaboration of a diverse group of stakeholders
Provided Alamance County to have input into the vision process
Exposure to diverse perspectives and points of view

Broad Content

Inclusive of all areas of concern from education, care of children, care of educators, and future of system
Group's beliefs spelled out
Virtually all important concepts captured
The Vision Section
Is very ambitious
High expectations
Comprehensive
Expansive
A broad vision

Student Content

Provides opportunities for families to encourage engagement with children
21st Century technology
Impart values of ethics, morality, citizenship, respect, social skills, honesty and compassion
Success
We believe education is the foundation for individual success
Education is the foundation for individual success
Providing an appropriate education for special needs children
Well-rounded students – sports and extra-curricular
Envision: Impart values to our children of ethics, morality, citizenship, respect, social skills, honesty and compassion
The commitment to include all of our children in this process
Consideration given to the health and safety of our children in this process
Health and safety of children priority
Seek to hire motivated, caring teachers and support them
Real concern for the education of our students and their futures
Helping open dialogue of ABSS needs
Challenging our kids in the school system
Education provides the foundation for democratic society

Format

In-depth process to engage community to improve ABSS
Finished document will/could have multiple purposes for the community
True desire of members to produce a document that is useable

The document is comprehensive and well-organized
Format of document: Executive Summary, Beliefs, Vision
Bullet Points for clarity
Bullet points make easier to use

WEAKNESSES

Parental Involvement

Open dialogue with parents and teachers
Communication: How to communicate with parents to get them more engaged, involved with the education of their children
Parental involvement is identified as a weakness in many of the schools by the group
How to get parents involved

Accountability

Perception by some of the group that this will not be used by BOE
How to hold ABSS, Commissioners, and BOE accountable

Stakeholder Concerns about Process

Decrease in numbers
Public is largely unaware of this document
Misinformed or misinformation was frustrating
After all this, still waiting...
Members wanting to move ahead faster than process (no patience)
Members dropping out of the process
Some important stakeholders dropped out

Scope of Vision

Expansiveness identified as strength
But also may be weakness as this may be too overwhelming
Low expectations
Document is a summary, no synthesis
Vision should be clear that it is fluid and adaptable to changing conditions
Sometimes perceived a lack of clarity of direction

Language Editorial Concerns

Doesn't address how to reach the vision
The ordering of the bullet points under "vision"
Some overlap of ideas in document
Bullet points repeat some of the same themes
Language is non-committal
Language is vague e.g. "committed to" vs. "will/shall"

Too broad?

Some statements are repetitive in nature

Very lengthy but not a complete layout on how to arrive at the vision

Repetitive comments

Over wordy; too much fluff

Vision Plan is somewhat redundant

Missing Items

No mention of the importance of preschool impact

Does not include all socio-economic perspectives

Emphasis on the word “character” missing throughout document; elements present, but not word

The ability, slowing down the curriculum so that slower kids can keep up

Discipline in the classroom

What is the 21st Century technology to be used?

OPPORTUNITIES

BOE/GOV

Fulfilling the Vision – Next steps need to be a focus

The commissioners are hearing concrete evidence of support for education

Chance to hear and identify issues not previously addressed

Opportunity for BOE to change the perception by some that they don’t listen to the community by incorporating the Vision Plan into the Strategic Plan

BOE has been given a mandate to improve our schools tremendously

For BOE to engage in meaningful discussion with Administration and Community to develop strategic plan and implement

To set a clear course and direction for the BOE

Community

Define the purpose of public education

Change perspectives – for better relationships across board

Stakeholders can return to agencies/businesses with an added insight into school system

Making other people in the community AWARE!

The public has something to rally behind

Build communication across Alamance County

To see what the community is made of. To know that we do aspire to be successful

To spotlight education in the county

Increase community buy-in

To improve community engagement

Opportunity to go beyond the initial focus group to engage broader community for further discussion on improving ABSS

Use document because of community involvement

Parents

Provide opportunities and resources for family involvement with child's education
Parent/community outreach programs created by the school system
Parental Involvement

Best Practices

Opportunity for critical thinking skills
The chance to produce more outstanding students
Create a more friendly learning environment
Should improve schools
Change the way education is taught to students
The goal of being the "best"
Replication of Best Practices/Evidence-based from other places
Alamance County Schools will have the framework in place to become an exemplary system
Focus on what we "can" do...not what we "can't" do
Use evidence-based practices (interventions that work)
Adopt proven practices that are working in other districts

Technology

Major move toward technology use
Increase the use of technology in the classroom

Diversity and Equality

Strategies for all; Equal access
Focus on the diversity of the group that worked on the project

THREATS

Community

Not looking at the big picture
Lack of support from community due to lack of knowledge. Need buy-in
Buy-in from general community
Lack of understanding by Alamance County in general to the value of a high quality education system in our community
Lack of support for innovative ideas
People who do not value public education
Systems do not want to change
People do not want to change
Community apathy
Narrow minded views of some community leaders/parents
Lack of community involvement

Board of Education

Unwillingness of BOE/County Commissioners to adopt Vision
The BOE not feeling like they can use our plan
BOE/County Commissioners dysfunction
School Board conflict
School Board ignores/dismisses input
Lack of support from BOE, Commissioners, public
Certain members of BOE – stop micromanaging! And squabbling

State Politics

Legislation that sets limits/restrictions
Legislative mandates that undermine local efforts
State mandates for education
Governmental mandates
Legislation
State and Federal mandates that don't reflect local values and needs

Local Politics

Apathy of: BOE? Commissioners? Parents?
Local politics (BOE)
Politics: getting re-elected as opposed to doing the right thing
County Commissioners taking control

Funding

Lack of funding from Commissioners
Opposition to increased funding to achieve vision(s)
Money issue or issues
Don't let lack of resources stop movement of vision
Funding
Lack of funding

Process

That the document will be intimidating and will get lost in the development and implementation
This process should not be a one and done deal; must be continued on periodic basis
People leaving the process
All of our efforts not acknowledged

Miscellaneous

Equal access
Nature of vision plan is 50,000' and allows for groups to spin the language to meet their own purposes – not in the spirit of the document
Without a strategic plan and implementation these are just good ideas

Finding qualified teachers in this economy

Bullying

Timeline Moving Forward

Thursday, March 28, 2013; 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Editorial and Steering Committees Meeting

Wednesday, April 10, 2013; 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Tentative Agenda: Review Draft Vision Document, Reach Stakeholder Consensus

Wednesday, April 24, 2013; 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Tentative Agenda: Plan Rollout

Notes
Vision for Public Education in Alamance County
Stakeholder Group Meeting
ABSS Professional Library
April 24, 2013
8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Welcome and Process Update

-- Dale Page, Derek Steed and Scottie Seawell

Back to Our Questions → Remembering “Why?” → “We Believe”

-- Simon Sinek TEDTalk: “Golden Circle -- How Great Leaders Inspire Action”

Small Group Conversations to generate ideas and possible action steps for:

Rolling-Out Our Vision

- + Be clear about what our goal was/the message needs to be clear; Vision development
- + Distribute the Vision Plan to schools, community groups and all the key stakeholders
- + Challenge “everyone” to understand and take ownership of the Vision Plan, then pass it on (rollout). Support the plan by showing your support for Vision, beliefs and publicly bring it up to the people in charge (our leaders), the School Board.
- + Communicate back to our organizations and boards (Individual Action Item)
- + Communicate back to folks we gathered information from (Individual Action Item)
- + Rollout to Chamber Membership
- + Give to all schools in Alamance County and have students share with all parents and challenge all to take ownership; invite them to read and believe.
- + Give a Vision Plan to all parents. Have us go out and talk to schools and try to get them to roll with “us.”
- + Present at PTO meetings
- + Present to principals
- + Create common slide deck for viewing
- + Press conferences/Press release
- + At back-to-school events and Chamber Expo
- + Identify our champions:
 - ➔ People who carry weight
 - ➔ Business leaders and others
 - ➔ Faith-based organizations and leaders
- + Media/Public relations campaign
- + Sound bites and slogans to repeat
- + Chamber Legislative Committee
- + Share with Board of Education

- + Rollout by Stakeholders to schools:
 - ➔ Administration
 - ➔ Students
 - ➔ Teachers
- + Make the community aware and understand the Vision; make them believe
- + Key groups need to include elements of this document in their vision
- + Stress the belief

Keeping Our Vision Present

- + Need someone accountable beyond us; Who? Chamber, Foundation of Chamber, Education Council
- + Communicate with Stakeholder Group quarterly
- + Inspiring
 - ➔ Folks to take on this cause/excellence in education
 - ➔ Who do we need to get in front of? Teachers, ACE
 - ➔ Get community more engaged and informed on Vision and things school system is doing and why
- + Voluntary group review; to keep relevant and not on shelf
- + Community engaged and informed with the Vision ➔ Everybody
- + Daily positive comments/Highlights
 - ➔ Public Information Officer should have daily positive comments for the media and include the “why”
 - ➔ Include comments from more students
 - ➔ Highlight examples that the Vision works
- + Keep alive in community
 - ➔ Show up and speak up
 - ➔ Keep education part of the conversation @ the belief level
 - ➔ Be a consistent voice in our organizations
- + Building structure going forward with regular meetings; continue to hold all accountable to Vision
- + Celebrate our successes
- + Knowing what our implementation will be
 - ➔ The “what”
 - ➔ The “how”
- + Roundtable Discussions throughout the year
 - ➔ Update where BOE/ABSS is in creating and implementing Strategic Plan
- + Check ABSS website re: BOE Meetings
 - ➔ public comment period
 - ➔ check on Vision and its use
- + BOE hear from us quarterly
 - ➔ How can we help you?

➔ Positive: Champions

- + Concerns that it will have a similar fate to County's 20/20 Plan; It will fall about without structure/process to continue
- + Attend more school meetings
- + Remember Vision during elections
- + Serve on committees, boards
- + Become an advocate of the Vision; speak it out loud; keep the why in the forefront of the thought process

Small Group Action Planning around:

Rolling-out Our Vision:

- Board of Education Presentation
 - Message, who, what, how; to do
- Messaging Campaign and Public Relations
 - Clear, focus, timeline
- Roll-out to the Community
 - Schools, parents, leaders, group

Keeping Our Vision Present:

- Creating structure/Process to keep people engaged and active
- Messaging/Public relations campaign
- Advocacy ➔ Building partners within the community

Report Out and Next Steps

See Draft Action Plan Documents for more details on plans to "Rollout the Vision" and to "Keep the Vision Present."

Timeline Moving Forward:

Thursday, May 23, 2013 @5:30 p.m.
Board of Education Meeting
ABSS Professional Library – Reception
ABSS Auditorium – Presentation

+ What worked well/What could we improve – Last Thoughts?

- Δ Need a person designated and paid to move this forward; afraid it won't happen otherwise.
- Δ Make an "Ask" to the Board of Education that they involve folks from the Stakeholders Group on some of their committees; planning efforts going forward
- Δ Board of Education needs to have/use/hire someone to guide them through the strategic planning process; help them be successful

A Vision for Public Education in Alamance County

- + Thank you to all the Stakeholders for giving of your time and energy, and especially to the high school students who participated.
- + Wake up every morning knowing you can change the world.

Adjourn