**River Valley School District Strategic Plan**

**SUPPORT STAFF WORKSHOP**

**River Valley High School**

**February 16, 2018**

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****Approximately 40 support staff participated in this workshop. The purpose was to gain input on strategic issues that participants believed the River Valley School District (RVSD) is and will be confronting over the next two to five years, and potential strategies to address those issues. Participants were divided into small groups, who were asked to respond to four questions, which was followed by large group discussion.

The following participant-identified strategic issues are listed below in the form of questions after the solid bullets (•). Participant-identified strategies for addressing each issue are listed after the open bullets (o). Following the meeting the District’s consultant divided issue and strategy identification into the six categories expected to be covered in the strategic plan: student achievement, student engagement, curriculum and instruction, facilities, community communications and engagement, and finance and operations.

**Student Achievement**

**Student Engagement**

* How can District provide for a positive transition for Arena students?
  + Tap Lone Rock parents for positive stories about transition
  + Train / help parents with transition
  + Make sure staff moving feels welcome
* How can we maintain quality co-curriculars and provide transportation?

**Curriculum and Instruction**

* Can the District promote STEM in all grade levels, including high school? How?
* How can we improve internet coverage?

**Facilities**

* How can we upgrade our schools?
  + Building maintenance is an issue
  + Condition of Middle School is a concern
  + Bring all students into a central – state of the art facility that includes community use as well
  + Reorganize at elementary level so that youngest students do not need to travel the farthest. Would take less manpower too.
  + Possibility of consolidating schools further may compound enrollment problem

**Community Communications and Engagement**

* How should we slow or reverse the decline in student enrollment?
  + Community needs to grow – offer opportunities for people to come here
  + Increase employment opportunities in our District
  + Work towards changing the mindset of people in the community – towards investing in the schools and community for growth and change and development. Money needs to be spent to get growth.
  + Engage with municipalities. Villages need to promote our schools too.
  + Think about how we create an appeal for young people to want to come here and stay here
  + Need to rebuild trust and engage in collaborative promotion to draw more population
* How can we rebuild trust in the community for positive change?
  + Improve on engaging all stakeholders
  + Improve community involvement
  + Generational differences – how do we close the gap?
  + Improve the mentality of congregating and changing, beginning with boards of townships, villages, and schools. The same people run the same things.
  + Overcome peoples’ fear of even wanting or getting chance to head something up or for change
  + Communicate using cell phone and e-mail
  + Counterpoint: communication between school / community is covered well – people can connect if they choose
  + More social events aside from at a church or bar. Ideas: square dancing, gaming / TVs together, dueling pianos, music – bands brought to parks, Farmers.com – need this, FFA - Farm kids, fitness.
  + Open house event to bring families / students together
  + Seek parents with positive attitudes with changes
  + Keep positive comments on social media
  + Provide staff / teacher training on answers to questions District is facing
  + Staff should help influencing students/public opinions
  + An appeal: R. Valley should feel free to walk freely up town to get a snack. Because they can here.

**Finance and Operations**

* What creative solutions may be considered, like four day school weeks?
* How does fracture in trust affect future referendum passage?

Each small group was then asked to arrive at just one thing within their group they hoped would come out of this process, either from among the above responses, or otherwise. While some groups did not have time for this question, here were the responses:

* School and community need to work together and invest in growth and change.
* Make our community attractive to growth!!
* Unification, collaboration
* Better communication
* Better engagement of community stakeholders

Finally, the consultant asked a representative from each group to share one thing from their discussion that each group wanted him and others in attendance to hear. Results are as follows:

* Appeal for young people to stay is needed. Make community more dynamic / connected.
* How do we get more jobs here? Need mindset shift.
* Fitness / aquatic center
* Focus on parents – make sure they model positivity. (Kids are doing a great job. What about the parents?)
* Middle school condition is a concern, but don’t want the debate to turn negative
* Address busing challenges. 4-day week?
* Will consolidation compound enrollment problems?
* How do we move forward given loss of trust – e.g. with improved / improvements to middle school
* School Board / administration should talk to Village and Town boards
* Internet coverage needs to improve
* Need to reorganize at elementary level so that youngest do not need to travel farthest