

Schools Update: Strategic Planning Process

By Aaron Miller

Where are we? Where do we want to be? How do we get there? These are the basic questions and elements involved in developing an organization's strategic plan.

The Vernonia School District (VSD) will undertake formal Strategic Planning beginning in January of 2016. The Strategic Planning process will lead to development of short and long term goals and priorities for the VSD. The District intends to gather input from as many community members as possible and will share more specific timelines for surveys and meetings in the next

issue of *Vernonia Voice*, as well as on the VSD website at www.vernonia.k12.or.us.

Students, staff, parents, VSD School Board members, other community members, current District business partners and parents accessing education for their students outside of the VSD will be among the targeted audiences throughout all aspects of this formal input gathering. This input will be used by the District to develop one-year, five-year and ten-year strategic goals in the categories of Curriculum and Instruction, Facilities, and Parent/Community Partnerships.

Phase One of the process will

provide targeted surveys for each of the groups mentioned above. We are working to develop specific questions that will give us a strong picture of what each of these community groups would like to see from the educational programs within the VSD.

Phase Two of this project will consist of a series of focus groups and town hall meetings. Information compiled from the surveys will be utilized during phase two, helping focus discussions toward more specific goal development. We will be looking for input from all community perspectives to give us the best understanding of what is needed and what is desired for our

children's educational needs.

Following Phase Two the District will compile all of this information for use in developing three to five specific goals that will strategically guide the district in decision making over the short and long term. We hope this process will be collaborative, informative and productive toward developing long term goals to ensure the continued success of our students and our school district.

Surveys will be available soon, and information regarding input meetings will be shared as soon as they are officially scheduled.

Better Parenting: Turning Your Words into Gold

**“Setting Limits”
“Enforceable Statements”
and “Giving Choices”
you can live with**

By Jim Fay and Foster Cline
of *Love & Logic*,
Presented by Sonia Spackman MA,
MFT

Don't our kids sometimes have the ability to pull us into trying to control what we can't? Powerful Love & Logic parents are able to recognize and avoid this trap by setting limits, using enforceable statements and giving our kids choices

When we set Love & Logic limits by saying what we will do or what we will allow it looks like this:

- We avoid looking like a fool when we can't get our kids to do what we say.
- We share some control with our children. As a result, they are much less likely to resist in order to gain control.
- We avoid getting sucked into trying to control something we can't.

Setting limits effectively:

Fighting Words:

1. Telling your child what he/she won't do.
2. Telling what you won't do.
3. Telling your child what he/she has to do.

Thinking Words:

1. Telling a child when they can do something.
2. Describing the conditions under which you will do something.
3. Describing the limits under which you will allow something.

4. Describing two choices your child has to choose from.

Enforceable statements tell our kids what we will do or allow rather than telling them what to do. Examples of Love & Logic enforceable statements:

- I give treats to kids who brush their teeth.
- Breakfast is served until 7:30. Get all you need to hold you until lunch.
- I'll listen as soon as your voice is as calm as mine.
- I'll take you guys to the places you want to go in the car when I don't have to worry about fighting in the back seat.
- I give allowance to those who finish their chores.
- I'll provide TV and Video games when the chores are done.
- I keep the toys I have to pick up. You can keep the toys you pick up.
- I'll be happy to buy you the clothes I feel are appropriate for school.
- I'll be happy to listen to you as soon as your father and I are finished talking.

Brainstorming enforceable statements:

Unenforceable: Don't you talk to me in that tone of voice!

Enforceable: I will be glad to talk to you when your voice is as calm as mine.

Unenforceable: Stop arguing with me!
Enforceable: I will be glad to discuss this with you as soon as the arguing stops.

Unenforceable: Get this room cleaned right now!

Enforceable: You are welcome to join us for _____ as soon as your room is clean.

Change your fighting words into statements with thinking words.

Brainstorm your specific problems here:

Unenforceable: _____

Enforceable: _____

Unenforceable: _____

Enforceable: _____

Brainstorming choices you can live with:

Use only one of these phrases. The one that fits your personality or that feels most comfortable to you. Then complete the sentence by giving two choices that either one will make YOU happy. Then write the same sentences in the other two slots. Do you see how you can interchange them?

1. Would you rather _____ or _____?

2. What would be best for you _____ or _____?

3. Feel free to _____ or _____.

In closing, I would like to remind you that by saying what WE will do or what WE will allow helps us gain control with our children. When we share the control with our kids they are much less likely to resist in order to gain control. It helps us not to get sucked into needless battles.

If this brief lesson needs more clarification for you, e-mail me with questions. I would be glad to answer them for you. Or I can cover it more thoroughly in another column for you. Feel free to contact me at soniaspackman@msn.com with your requests.

Vernonia Students of the Month

November 2015



Paige Cowles Grade 3

Paige consistently follows the school rules, everyday, all day no matter where she is in the building. She sets a really great example for other students. Paige says her favorite subject is math. She is part of the junior cheer squad. She says she helps out at home taking care of the dog, cat and two fish.

Emma Hahn Grade 7



Emma is a good student who always does her best. She says her favorite subject is math. She runs track and is part of the Robotics team. In her spare time Emma says she likes to hunt and hang out with family and friends.

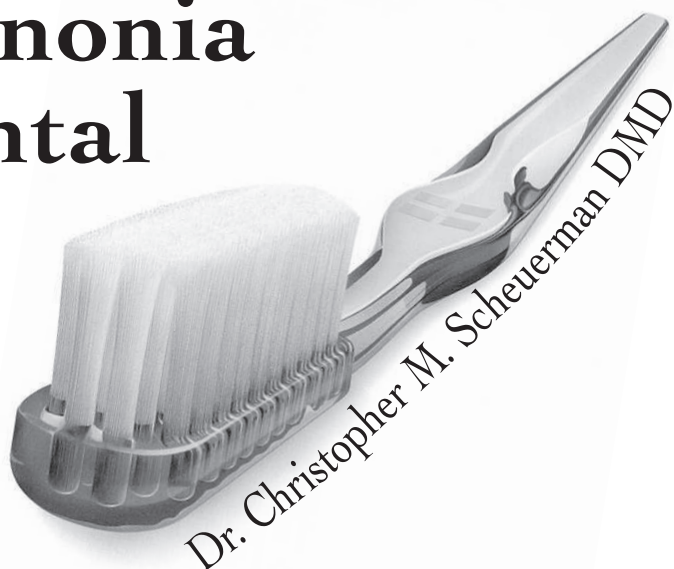
Amanda Rose Sicard Grade 11



Amanda Rose is part of the leadership class and helps with public relations. She regularly attends School Board meetings and City Council meetings to provide student update reports. She plays the flute and the piccolo and is a drum major in the school band and is on the wrestling team. She is a volunteer Fire Cadet with the Vernonia Fire District. She also spends time working with mules.

Sponsored by State Senator Betsy Johnson

Vernonia Dental



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