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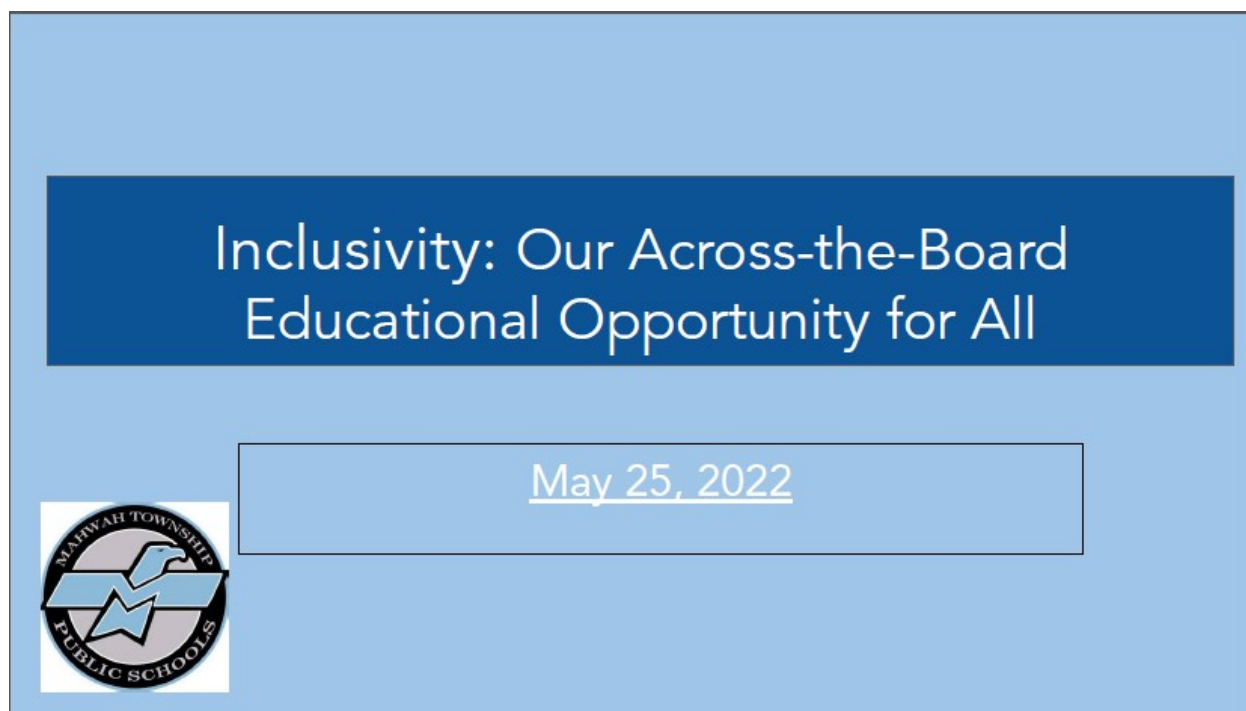
Linda A. Bovino-Romeo, Ph.D.
Director of Curriculum & Instruction

May 31, 2022

Dear Mahwah Community:

At our most recent Board of Education meeting, on May 25, 2022, our team introduced a consultant with whom we plan to recommend to our Board of Education in pursuing equity and inclusivity work in the upcoming 2022-2023 school year. Below, please find our 7-slide presentation, which can also be found on our strategic planning website through the following link: [Introduction to Our Future Equity Work](#)

Since the launch of our strategic plan and as outlined in this plan, we are making consistent strides in our inclusivity efforts for **all** of Mahwah's students, in order to create an education that is rife with opportunity, collaboration, celebration, along with individual and collective purpose. We believe our cognizant efforts in the coming 2022-2023 school year will be part of the continuation of a successful build on an already-thoughtful foundation. As you review the slides, you can note that our work for the 2022-2023 school year is centered around administrator professional development and gathering a full spectrum of community input.



As we shared with our school community in previous presentations, based on our community's thoughtful participation, our strategic plan is made up of four frames, two of which are focused on Curriculum and Instruction and Social Emotional Learning. While standards are the framework, our curriculum writers and teachers align this framework with the needs of our students, connecting content across curricular areas, all while personalizing instruction. Our teachers are able to deliver lessons and create experiences for all. Through these specific frames, too, in-class learning activities and mindful practices are utilized to ensure that students are responsible for their own emotional well-being, while also preparing our students to be active members and contributors to a global community.

As Connected to Our Strategic Plan



<p>Curriculum and Instruction</p>	<p>Regularly evaluate our curricula to ensure that our students are immersed in a well-balanced and diverse educational experience.</p> <p>Continually invests in our educators and provide professional development opportunities to increase their capacity in developing and implementing 21st century pedagogy, as well as diversity training to ensure that all staff are comfortable discussing race, equity, and equality as appropriate by grade level.</p>
<p>Social Emotional Learning</p>	<p>Cultivate a learning environment that creates empathetic learners, appreciative of our diverse community and communities at large, are eager to understand the individual experiences of their peers, and recognize and value the human rights of all people.</p>

A great deal of our work over the course of the past school year has already focused on Community Connections and Facilities. In launching our Thunderbird Partnership Program throughout all six of our school buildings, we have been able to move beyond guest visits and incorporate the expertise within our community into the classroom in a transcending way, as we plan to make even more purposeful relationships through mentorships, internships, and externships for our students. We can say, already, that we are excited about the expansion of our high school's [Career Pathways Program](#) that provides a potential road ahead for all of our diverse learners. We have been able to partner with a variety of trades and post-secondary programs, also, that provide our students with real-world application and further opportunity in the years ahead, even beyond their graduation from our program!

As Connected to Our Strategic Plan




<p>Community Connections</p>	<p>Explore how our schools support our diverse population and identify how to serve all groups more effectively.</p>
<p>Facilities</p>	<p>Regularly update innovative learning spaces (inside and outside of the school building) to reflect updated curriculum, technological needs, and the diverse learning styles of all students.</p>

In interviewing 16 consultants, we found Us² Consulting to assist our work in advising us on better equipping our program and to provide even more expansive opportunities for all students within our school district. Us² has worked with over 70 other school districts, and, during our last Board of Education meeting (May 25, 2022), we were able to ask our potential consultant some

questions - specifically - about how this work can take shape within our district over the course of the next school year. As was representative in our strategic planning process, a great deal of our road forward will be rooted in stakeholder voice.

Us² Consulting: An Introduction

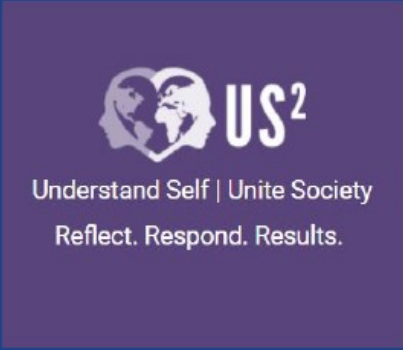


Who is Us² Consulting, and how will they contribute to our work?

Starting in 2020, a team of district administrators interviewed 16 consulting agencies. Our goal was to identify advisors who best matched the vision and plan for this initiative.

2022-2023: Year One Goals:


- Administrator training
- Communication and coaching support
- Audit of policy and curriculum
- Town hall hosting
- Focus group guidance
- Survey analysis with administration
- Reporting of findings



Primarily, our first year of this work will be spent educating our leadership team across the district, while also gaining insights from our community at large. Through multiple virtual town halls, our school community will be invited to hear all stakeholders' perspectives, inclusive of our staff, our parents, and our students. Our road forward will be crafted using information gained from those individual and collective voices.


Year One Timeline: From End of June 2022

Administrator Meetings and Trainings



Using our administrative retreat time for:

- Educating administrators and supervisors about the equity and inclusion process.
- Focusing the lens of inclusivity.
 - What does inclusivity mean to us and our district?
- Developing this road forward for the 2022-2023 school year.



Town halls will be conducted to invite all community members' perspectives and voices. Selected focus groups will also assist in framing input from a range of our stakeholders. Our consultant, too, will be able to review our curriculum, policies, procedures, and

gain a sense of our culture and climate to ultimately draft an equity audit, which will be reflective of our current community. This audit will essentially, then, inform our roadmap ahead.

2022-2023 School Year




Understanding and Movement Forward

- Town Halls
 - Our town halls serve as listening tours as an open forum for the whole school community to share their thoughts around topics of equity and inclusion within Mahwah.
 - Town halls will be the opportunity for our community to talk and share their perspective on what our district needs and how to move forward.
- Equity Audit - review of curriculum, policies, procedures, culture, and climate
 - Self-assessments will allow for individual district and schools to assess where they believe they are with regards to equity and inclusion.
 - Surveys to the parent/student community to gain a sense of stakeholder views.
 - Focus groups will take place to hear participant voices on their individual experiences and perceptions.
- Crafting the roadmap
 - Using our data, working with our team, a personalized and district-specific plan and approach will be developed.



We invite you to join us, as our consultant needs to hear from all voices connected to our schools, to get a sense of who we are as a community, including our strengths and our areas in need of improvement. **Your voice is an essential part of this very important process.**

Community Involvement



All parents, students, and staff are essential to our process.

- We need you to join us in our town hall meetings, focus groups, and survey participation.
- You will be part of this review of our identity as a district.

You can join us confidently, knowing that:

- Us² will never post or disclose to anyone outside of the district our data gathered during the town hall meetings, focus groups, or survey analysis.
- Steps in the process will be readily shared via BOE meetings, and written communication.
- During the 2022-2023 school year there will be no changes made to the educational programs for children related to this initiative.

As we near town hall experiences, we will send out communication with dates and times so that you are fully informed on how to get involved. We will also provide you with a Mahwah e-mail address that will go directly to our consultant so if you are unable to attend a town hall, you can still share your ideas and experiences and let your voice be heard.

We look forward to our work together - strengthening our community, our schools, and our town.

Respectfully,

The Mahwah Administrative Team

