

### **Section 11: Education**

#### **Background**

The Region is served by the Manheim Central School District, but the relationship between the District and municipalities goes beyond educational services. Manheim Central serves as an organizing entity for the Region as a whole. Residents are proud of their school district, and appreciate its ability to provide high-quality services for a relatively low millage rate. The District enjoys the fourth lowest millage rate among the 16 school districts in Lancaster County. Residents often identify themselves as living in “Manheim,” not necessarily referring to the Borough, but to the broader Region.

The District is governed by a nine member School Board, which is comprised of a number of committees to conduct the business of the District. The draft Community Facilities Map displays school locations in the 78 square mile School District. The existing schools are as follows:

- Doe Run Elementary School
- H.C. Burgard Elementary School
- Stiegel Elementary School
- Manheim Central Middle School
- Manheim Central High School

Public school enrollment is projected to stay the same or slightly decrease over the next five years. In 2009-2010 the enrollment is approximately 2,990 students. Three elementary schools were closed in 2008 – Mastersonville Elementary, Elm Tree Elementary and Sporting Hill Elementary. The elementary schools were consolidated into three existing schools – Doe Run, H.C. Burgard, and Stiegel elementary schools. A new middle school was built in 2008, just outside the Borough near to the high school. The former middle school is now being used as School District offices and community space.

The School District sold or was in the process of selling the three elementary school properties during the comprehensive planning process. Sporting Hill was sold to a private religious school. Elm Tree was sold to a tractor supply company, and the property is planned to be rezoned for commercial use. The Mastersonville property was for sale at the time this document was written. The School District does not plan to reuse the former middle school for educational uses and intends to sell it by 2015. The Manheim Central School District is preparing a Master Plan for school properties located in the Borough which is expected to be completed during 2010.

In addition to the public school district students, the number of students attending private schools and home school in the Region make up a significant percentage of school enrollments. In 2009, 215 students were being home-schooled and 561 were attending private school for a total of 776 students not attending Manheim Central School District, or 21 percent of students in the Region.

## **Education Recommendations**

### **Goal 11.1: Provide high-quality, cost effective educational opportunities to all children and adults in the Region.**

#### **Objectives**

- Create a more campus-like atmosphere between school facilities through pedestrian and design connections
- Continue the School District's role in supporting community initiatives and activities
- Support transition of existing outdated District-owned facilities to new and regionally beneficial uses

#### **Strategies**

##### **11.1.1. Ensure that future school development is designed so that it becomes an integral part of the surrounding physical community fabric**

The design of educational facilities has a profound impact upon how students learn and on how well they serve the communities in which they are located. Facilities that strengthen these relationships are often the most successful. Manheim Central School District will work with the Region's municipalities to ensure that new school facilities are well-integrated into the surrounding community, maximizing opportunities for students to walk to school and for the surrounding residents to enjoy school facilities outside of school hours.

##### **11.1.2. Create continuing education opportunities for the Region's residents to meet adult education needs**

The Region's educational patterns differ significantly from state and national averages. The Manheim Central Region has a higher than average percentage of high school graduates and a lower percentage of people who have attended or graduated from college. To address the relatively low levels of post-secondary education, as well as potential changes in the local job market, the Manheim Central School District should work to expand continuing education opportunities in the Region. Programs could include traditional types of classroom lectures and laboratories; however, distance learning options, including independent study, videotaped/CD-ROM material, broadcast programming, online/internet delivery and online interactive courses should be explored.

### **Goal 11.2: Educate the Region's residents and decision makers about the Comprehensive Plan and the importance of their actions related land use, transportation, economic development, infrastructure and natural resource protection.**

Education goes beyond what is offered in the Region's schools. Sometimes termed "lifelong learning," education can be an important tool in encouraging everyone to be a part of the community, to participate and respect those that do. Specific examples include new residents learning about the importance of farming to the Region and all residents gaining an understanding of the vulnerability of the area's natural resources. Lessons can be learned in settings as varied as organized sports, experience gained through volunteering, as well as in more traditional educational settings.

### **Strategies**

#### **11.2.1. Improve communication between the Region's partners and with the general public about the Comprehensive Plan's role and importance of meeting its objectives.**

##### **Specific issues and audiences to include in this initiative include:**

- Helping governing bodies, planning commissions and the general public understand the impacts of land use decisions, particularly on the Region's transportation network and agricultural industry
- Continued public education about the economic and environmental benefits of the Region's agricultural industry
- Outreach to major employers as to their impacts on local and regional transportation conditions – Commuter Services of Pennsylvania can be an important partner in this task.
- Improve public education relative to water and wastewater systems; noting how individuals' actions impact the systems
- Provide forums and opportunities for continuous planning and discussion of issues on a regional basis
- Utilize the municipal and School District's websites to inform the public of upcoming meetings, projects and other ways to get involved and support the implementation of the Plan. The Region's Partners should consider starting a blog about the Plan and web chats to discuss Plan issues and projects.
- Provide annual updates on the implementation of the Plan and ways in which the Plan has been utilized over the year to shape the Region's development and activities.

#### **11.2.2. Educate local students on issues affecting the Region**

The Manheim Central Region is a dynamic place and the School District does an excellent job of preparing students for life in the Region and beyond. Many of the economic, environmental and community issues discussed in the Comprehensive Plan offer interesting and relevant learning opportunities for the Region's young people.