



Inspiring a Standard of Excellence For All Students

Dear Pelham Community:

Guided by the mission of the Pelham Public Schools, "Inspiring a Standard of Excellence for All Students," the Board of Education and I began forming a process to develop a new five-year Strategic Plan for our schools last summer. As we talked, it was important to us that any new Strategic Plan reflects the voices and collective values of our community. Almost a year later, more than 3,000 school and community members joined us in this endeavor. They included approximately 100 students, staff, parents, community leaders and residents who attended 18 focus groups and 25 residents and staff members who attended our community forum. In addition, 2,848 school and community members completed surveys, including 634 parents, 532 students in grades 3-5, 1,409 students in grades 6-12, 235 staff members and 38 community leaders/residents. Another 90 school and community members also helped us sort through and prioritize the responses and eventually identify four goals and their action plans.

The Goals

A Strategic Plan must be designed to significantly advance all operations of the District while reflecting the hopes, dreams and core values of the community. Our plan focuses on four goals that address the common themes we heard over and over again throughout our information-gathering phase. Collectively, they represent a systemic restructuring of how we think about teaching and learning. The goals are:

1. Systemically integrate the principles and content of 21st Century learning into academic and co-curricular programs to prepare all students to meet current and future challenges,
2. Provide well-articulated, coordinated networks of support as well as targeted instruction for every K-12 learner,
3. Foster the social-emotional development of all students to promote wellness of the "whole child" and to support every learner's growth and success, and
4. Build a professional culture of learning, effective feedback and growth for every employee, inspiring a standard of excellence for all.

These four goals will serve to unify our work, strengthen our agenda for teaching and learning, and propel us forward in a focused, deliberate manner. Each goal is rooted in the need for effective feedback for both students and staff as well as in meaningful content that is relevant, challenging and personally engaging to all students and staff. Accountability is inherent in the plan as the action plans clearly articulate our projected measures of success.

Gloria Steinem once said, "Without leaps of imagination or dreaming, we lose the excitement of possibilities. Dreaming, after all, is a form of planning." It is with both excitement and the anticipation of great success that the Board of Education, faculty, staff, and administration embark on implementing this Strategic Plan as it so powerfully reflects the core values of Pelham in such meaningful ways.

Very truly yours,

Peter Giarrizzo
Superintendent of Schools

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The complete Strategic Plan is available
at pelhamschools.org. Click **District Info**.

Approximately three thousand voices contributed to the ideas and discussions that formed the basis for the final four goal statements, which will guide District work through 2019. In addition to the parents, students, employees, board members and community members who completed surveys, attended a community forum and/or participated in focus groups, the following volunteers devoted many hours to the thoughtful crafting of the goals and the supporting action plans:

CONTRIBUTORS

Strategic Planning Leadership Team

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Action Planning Committees

21st Century Learning

Systemically integrate the principles and content of 21st Century learning into academic and co-curricular programs to prepare all students to meet current and future challenges.

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Networks of Support

Provide well-articulated coordinated networks of support as well as targeted instruction for every K-12 learner.

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Social-Emotional Development

Foster the social-emotional development of all students to promote wellness of the "whole child" and to support every learner's growth and success.

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Professional Development

Build a professional culture of learning, effective feedback and growth for every employee, inspiring a standard of excellence for all.

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Special thanks to staff members Maria Carovillano, Stephanie Pollock and Svetlana Zhadanova who contributed to the completion of this plan.

Inspiring a Standard of Excellence for All Students

Vision Statement

The Pelham school community, comprising The Board of Education, administrators, teachers, school staff, parents, students and community members, has high expectations and standards for all students.

The Pelham school community challenges and inspires its students to become creative and critical thinkers who make ethical choices, to work both independently and collaboratively to solve problems, to become life-long learners and responsible citizens in a democratic society, and to be prepared for the demands of a highly technological and global community.

The Pelham school community celebrates diversity, fosters a sense of belonging for all children and emphasizes the importance of contributing to the greater community.

The Board of Education, administrators, teachers, school staff, parents, students and community members all share the responsibility for public education in Pelham.

The Pelham school community is dedicated to continuous improvement and is committed to maintaining the flexibility necessary to anticipate and respond to a changing world.

BOARD OF EDUCATION 2014-15

Mrs. Lisa E. Kiernan, *President*
 Mrs. Marianne L. Gilland, *Vice President*
 Mr. Thomas F. Imperato
 Ms. Peggy O'Leary
 Mr. Lonnie H. Phillips
 Mr. Michael Recca
 Ms. Madeline Smith

How the Pelham Public Schools' Strategic Plan Works

PILLAR 1

21st Century Learning

Systemically integrate the principles and content of 21st Century learning into academic and co-curricular programs to prepare all students to meet current and future challenges.

In order to meet current and future challenges of the 21st Century, all Pelham students will:

- ★ Think critically and creatively to solve problems with multiple literacies
- ★ Collaborate and communicate effectively as self-directed learners
- ★ Integrate technologies seamlessly to enhance excellence in learning
- ★ Become productive members of a diverse global community

PILLAR 2

Networks of Support

Provide well-articulated coordinated networks of support as well as targeted instruction for every K-12 learner.

The Pelham Public Schools are committed to knowing, understanding and serving the needs of every student in the district. We are committed to the personalization and differentiation of instruction, to the creation of support services to maximize opportunity and learning for every child, and to the planning and communications structures that enhance students' continuous growth throughout the district.

PILLAR 3

Social-Emotional Development

Foster the social-emotional development of all students to promote wellness of the "whole child" and to support every learner's growth and success.

The Pelham Public Schools are committed to a culture that promotes, nurtures and fosters:

- ★ Self-awareness
- ★ Social awareness
- ★ Relational skills
- ★ Responsible decision-making
- ★ Management and understanding of emotions and behaviors

PILLAR 4

Professional Development

Build a professional culture of learning, effective feedback and growth for every employee, inspiring a standard of excellence for all.

The Pelham Public Schools can only meet its mission of inspiring a standard of excellence for all students when all employees, as life-long learners, are also inspired to a standard of excellence. Through its commitment to a high standard of professional learning opportunities for all employees, the district will plan for the best use of talent, time and content in order to maximize the capacity of all adults who serve our pupils.

Strategic Goals 2014-2019

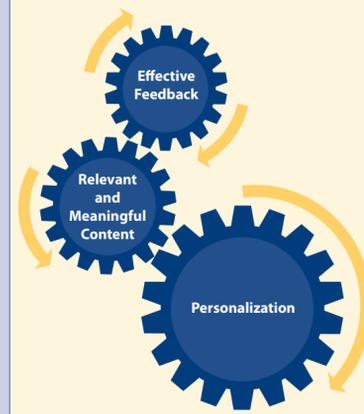
Systemically integrate the principles and content of 21st Century learning into academic and co-curricular programs to prepare all students to meet current and future challenges.

Provide well-articulated coordinated networks of support as well as targeted instruction for every K-12 learner.

Foster the social-emotional development of all students to promote wellness of the "whole child" and to support every learner's growth and success.

Build a professional culture of learning, effective feedback and growth for every employee, inspiring a standard of excellence for all.

Connecting Themes



Action Steps to Achieve our Strategic Plan

Principles and content of 21st Century learning

1. **Establish a K-12 Innovation and Creativity Steering Committee**
2. **Foster a culture where growth is at the center of learning**
3. **Expand secondary course offerings to include programming and at least one Asian language**
4. **Promote flexibility among students' academic groupings at the secondary level****
5. **Investigate IB Program for Middle School**
6. **Implement 1:1 Chromebook initiative**
7. Determine viability of world language studies at the elementary level K-6
8. **Integrate STEAM strand K-12**
9. **Provide effective feedback and effective questions to students to foster critical and creative thinking**
10. Create an electronic bank of best practices and resources for K-12 educators
11. Expand authentic learning experiences
12. Create field experiences that are culturally rich and diverse and which open new doors to the practices of 21st Century work and problem solving
13. Partner with global organizations
14. Create systems and venues for collaborative work for teachers and for students; internally and beyond district borders

15. Study/create K-5 learning opportunities available to students across all four elementary schools**
16. Develop capstone performance-based assessments for grades 5, 8, and 12
17. Implement student mentoring programs
18. Design curriculum content that activates an emotional connection and commitment to the use of critical thinking with multiple literacies

Coordinated networks of support and targeted instruction

1. **Define and align staff members' roles and responsibilities**
2. **Build strong networks of support for all major points of students' transitions**
3. **Mobilize and enhance resources to focus on supports for development of early learning (Kindergarten screening through grade 2)**
4. **Enhance professional expertise in providing effective feedback to learners in order to maximize their engagement and success**
5. **Provide seamless support systems to meet students' needs****
6. Enhance parental partnerships in students' learning**
7. Increase partnerships with community organizations and agencies, colleges and universities, and state organizations and agencies in order to maximize services for pupils

Social-emotional development and wellness of the whole child

1. **Establish a Wellness Committee Task Force that is multi-disciplinary, represents K-12 and focuses on social-emotional wellness**
2. **Develop systemic and systematic K-12 social-emotional wellness standards and curriculum**
3. **Promote school environments that are healthy, safe, supportive, engaging and inspiring**
4. **Host District-wide celebrations which showcase diversity, acceptance, appreciation and understanding of peers****
5. Create curriculum-based opportunities that foster relationships beyond the school day and the school boundaries**
6. Implement K-12 systemic programs and experiences designed to foster social emotional growth
7. Create systems for mentoring of pupils: adult to student and peer to peer; every student to have a trusted adult in the Pelham Public Schools
8. Create an electronic resource bank of information, research and services made available for employees and families

Professional culture of learning, effective feedback and growth

1. **Define and align staff members' roles and**

responsibilities in order to strengthen K-12 coordination and collaboration

2. **Form a Professional Learning Advisory Council (PLAC)**
3. **Adopt principles through which all professional learning in the district will be framed and evaluated; create learning framework for consistency and focus**
4. Create and implement feedback loops in order to strengthen quality of learning experiences, foster reflective practice and identify needs for next levels of learning
5. Communicate long term plans (annual) for professional learning opportunities
6. Develop system for archiving and distributing best resources for all employees to reference/utilize
7. Develop alternate and multiple forms of professional development models for employees' learning and growth, including flexible use of school calendar time and extended time
8. Customize/personalize job-embedded learning opportunities for professional learning communities and individuals when applicable; choice and differentiation when possible
9. Expand the use of technology: Pelham You, webinars, Google groups, on-line learning, tutorials, etc.

*** Denotes recommendation also made by Diversity Task Force*

Action steps in bold print will be the first priority steps in 2014

