

NORTHGATE SCHOOL DISTRICT



STRATEGIC PLAN

2023 - 2025



NORTHGATE
SCHOOL DISTRICT

WHO WE ARE

The Northgate School District is proud to serve the families of Avalon and Bellevue Boroughs. With small class sizes throughout grades K-12, we are able to get to know each student on an individual basis. Our students tell us there is a strong sense of community within our district that allows them to feel like they belong. Students are able to develop into well-rounded individuals due to the opportunities the district provides, including a variety of arts and sports programs, leadership opportunities, and a rigorous curriculum that pushes student engagement and challenges them to think creatively.

OUR VISION

Students First and Foremost.

OUR MISSION

The Northgate School District provides a challenging academic program that prepares students to value learning, think critically and creatively and embrace diverse viewpoints. With a focus on developing the whole child, the district provides experiences that encourage the development of empathy, integrity and resilience to prepare all students to meet with success.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is with great pleasure that I have had the opportunity to serve as the Superintendent of Schools for the Northgate School District for the past six years. After joining Northgate in 2016, I did not want to begin the process of developing a strategic plan right away. Instead, I wanted to address concerns within the district that were present at the time, as well as see what key points arose organically to get a better understanding of what was most important for the school community.

Preliminary discussions of a strategic plan began in 2020, but the plan was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Something as important as a district strategic plan needs to be developed with a strong team able to meet in-person.

As the impact of the pandemic began to lessen and we were able to safely begin meeting in person again, the Northgate administration began developing a plan to craft a new strategic plan to help guide the district into the future. During the Fall of 2021, district administration started reviewing plans of other schools we hold in high regard. The Grable Foundation also visited the district to conduct training for our administrators, which allowed us to identify focus areas and priorities.

During the winter months of the 2021-22 school year, we worked out what our stakeholder meetings were going to look like and set a schedule. We also administered the Pennsylvania Department of Education climate surveys to the school community.

Our strategic planning committee, composed of administrators, board members, faculty, parents, community residents and a student, met multiple times in the spring and summer to map out the plan, including a new mission, vision and set of core values for the district.

Our administrative team used the core values to draft a set of goals we will use to operationalize those values into actions. The district's Board of Directors approved the plan at its meeting Sept. 19, 2022.

We are excited to move forward with the implementation of our strategic plan with its focus on doing what is best for students. Our plan is meant to be a living and breathing document. We will continue to align our goals and revisit our plan as we keep striving for excellence at the Northgate School District.

Dr. Caroline Johns
Superintendent



CORE VALUES



CHALLENGING ACADEMICS

We believe academic success for all students begins by developing foundational skills in reading and mathematics. Through a systematic approach, we meet each student's individual learning needs, and build environments that raise the bar for all students to think critically and take ownership of their learning.

NORTHGATE WAY

We take pride in our schools and our community. We are proud to provide a high quality education in a nurturing environment, and we value the support of our community. We reflect the Northgate school culture by positively communicating and engaging in relationships that reflect our core mission and values.

EMPOWER STUDENTS AND STAFF

We value the diverse perspectives of our students and encourage them to confidently use their voice. We value the expertise of our staff and seek their input into our educational programming.

VALUE DIVERSITY

We view our diversity as an asset. We recognize that everyone brings unique, individual strengths to the school community. We develop opportunities for all stakeholders to see connections between themselves, the curriculum, and the district.

WHOLE-CHILD FOCUSED

We support the development of the physical, mental and unique talents of our student population through extra curricular opportunities (PBIS, the Chill Project, arts, athletics, clubs). We prioritize the full scope of a child's developmental needs and advance educational equity. Our whole child approach understands that students' education and life outcomes are dependent upon their access to deeper learning opportunities in and out of school, as well as their school environment and relationships.

EMPHASIS ON RELATIONSHIPS

We build healthy, strong relationships and care for each other. We strive to know each other's story and perspective. We treat others with courtesy, respect, and dignity. We view every interaction as an investment in improving relationships. We celebrate each other's successes.

WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

We strive to make everyone feel welcomed and valued in our schools. This starts with the first greeting on the phone or in the office. We listen and ask questions to seek clarity when a colleague, parent, or student expresses a need. We take ownership and accept responsibility for making sure needs are met.

COMMUNITY ALLIES

We value community partnerships and recognize that it takes a village to enact the mission of the District and collectively "We" (parents/ guardians, faculty, staff and the broader community) can help students realize their potential and become good citizens.

CHALLENGING ACADEMICS

We believe academic success for all students begins by developing foundational skills in reading and mathematics. Through a systematic approach, we meet each student's individual learning needs, and build environments that raise the bar for all students to think critically and take ownership of their learning.

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| Goal 1 | Develop a rigorous and engaging k-12 academic program that prepares students for success at the next level. |
| Action Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase and maintain CIHS course offerings • Create a system of internships and apprenticeships at the secondary level • Develop a shared vision of what teaching and learning should look like • Implement robust reading and math programs at the elementary level |
| Completion | 2023-2025 |



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| Goal 2 | Implementation of a robust MTSS system focused both on intervention and enrichment. Students who need Tier 2 or 3 services will have a plan for intervention/enrichment. |
| Action Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a written document outlining the tiered interventions as a resource for faculty • Schedule and hold regular meetings for the purpose of analyzing student data and prescribing student interventions/enrichment • Create a menu of intervention options for academic subjects and social/emotional/behavior. • Implementation of these plans during Tier 2 and Tier 3 instructional times • Continual review and modification of individual plans |
| Completion | 2023-2025 |

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| Goal 3 | Student ownership of learning. Students are able to speak about what they are learning and what they have accomplished thus far, including areas of strength and areas where they are still developing. |
| Action Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goals and objectives of every lesson are visible to the students and clearly communicated. • Each teacher will have a process of helping students evaluate their learning on a regular basis. • This plan will be communicated and agreed upon with the building principal. • Implementation of student led Parent Teacher conferences |
| Completion | 2024-2025 |

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| Goal 4 | Develop an online resource for storing curriculum outlines, assessments and identify developing areas. |
| Action Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review options available for online curriculum mapping • Enter existing curriculum into the selected platform • Identify areas that are in development and expected timeline |
| Completion | 2023-2025 |



NORTHGATE Way

We take pride in our schools and our community. We are proud to provide a high quality education in a nurturing environment, and we value the support of our community. We reflect the Northgate school culture by positively communicating and engaging in relationships that reflect our core mission and values.

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| Goal 1 | Create a common Northgate brand that includes school colors, logos and other relevant resources used to communicate and celebrate Northgate School District. |
| Action Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a committee of stakeholders to develop a recommendation for the Northgate brand, school colors and logos. • Obtain formal Board approval for official school colors and logo to be used on all uniforms, school materials, promotional materials, etc. |
| Completion | 2023 |



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| Goal 2 | Develop a plan to promote the Northgate brand in order to celebrate Northgate School District. |
| Action Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop specifications/process for approving public promotional materials that utilize the Northgate logo (i.e. uniforms). • Identify a printing business and enter into an agreement/contract for the production of Northgate gear. • Develop and implement a plan for selling Northgate gear in an effort to make it widely accessible to all stakeholders (i.e. sporting events, community events, etc.). |
| Completion | 2023 |

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| Goal 3 | Develop a Faculty/Staff Handbook that emphasizes pride in the district and profession. |
| Action Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form a committee of faculty, staff and administration with the purpose of creating a faculty handbook that includes a dress code for the administration, faculty and staff that communicates pride in the district and pride in our profession. • Formal Board approval and implementation of the faculty handbook |
| Completion | 2025 |



EMPOWER STUDENTS & STAFF

We value the diverse perspectives of our students and encourage them to confidently use their voice. We value the expertise of our staff and seek their input into our educational programming.

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| Goal 1 | Regular surveying of students, faculty, and parents to provide a voice to stakeholders. |
| Action Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a schedule for annually surveying students, faculty and parents • Customize the PA Climate Survey to fit the current needs of the district • Administer the surveys • Develop and implement a process for reviewing and discussing data with students and faculty |
| Completion | 2024-2025 |

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| Goal 2 | Create and utilize student and parent advisory groups at each level. |
| Action Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine who will be in each group • Define each group's focus (regularly update to reflect changing needs and priority areas) • Develop norms and a meeting schedule |
| Completion | 2023 |

VALUE DIVERSITY

We view our diversity as an asset. We recognize that everyone brings unique, individual strengths to the school community. We develop opportunities for all stakeholders to see connections between themselves, the curriculum, and the district.

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| Goal 1 | Create opportunities for representative volunteers in the schools. |
| Action Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create more regular parent/volunteer involvement opportunities. • Solicit volunteers to have diverse representation |
| Completion | 2023-2025 |

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| Goal 2 | Continue to be recognized for No Place for Hate participation each year. |
| Action Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund a No Place for Hate Sponsor • Three culturally relevant activities per year at each building • Apply for annual designation as No Place for Hate schools |
| Completion | 2023-2025 |

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| Goal 3 | Clearly articulate a plan for diversity training and professional development. |
| Action Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline training needs, including a survey of faculty & staff regarding their needs • Make a 3 year plan with Michelle King or other organizations • Set a schedule for regular training opportunities |
| Completion | 2023 |



WHOLE-CHILD FOCUSED

We support the development of the physical, mental and unique talents of our student population through extra curricular opportunities (PBIS, the Chill Project, arts, athletics, clubs). We prioritize the full scope of a child's developmental needs and advance educational equity. Our whole child approach understands that students' education and life outcomes are dependent upon their access to deeper learning opportunities in and out of school, as well as their school environment and relationships.

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| Goal 1 | Continue to support the Chill Project and trauma informed approach to support the social & emotional needs of all students. |
| Action Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore additional revenue streams and apply for applicable grants to continue to finance the Chill Project. • Ongoing training for faculty and staff • Serve as pilot site for new interventions in collaboration with the Chill Project and other community partners • Expand Chill Project Programming to families |
| Completion | 2023-2025 |



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| Goal 2 | Implement comprehensive after school programs intersecting arts, athletics and clubs. |
| Action Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the Community Schools Grant process. • Follow the steps to create a community school approach. • Review current extracurricular activities and modify based on student need • Develop expectations for supplemental positions that supervise extracurricular activities |
| Completion | 2023-2025 |



EMPHASIS ON RELATIONSHIPS

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| Goal 1 | Develop meeting norms for various groups that support active participation in discussions and decision making while maintaining healthy, strong relationships. |
| Action Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The following groups will develop a set of meeting norms to be displayed in their meeting spaces and implemented for all of their meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Board • Faculty in each building • Administration • PTO |
| Completion | 2023 |



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| Goal 2 | Planned times in the school day, outside of academic instruction, focused on student/teacher relationship building and mentorship. |
| Action Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In each building, every student will be provided a list of the adults in the building and will identify every adult they have a positive connection with. • In each building, the faculty will work through the activity of identifying every student they have a connection with. • Students who do not have a positive connection to an adult will be identified. For each student, an adult will be identified to serve as a mentor. • Administration and faculty will identify activities and times for those adults to connect with their mentee students. • Identified students will be surveyed at the end of the year asking if they have an adult who they have a positive connection with. |
| Completion | 2023-2025 |

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| Goal 3 | Planned times in the school day, outside of academic instruction, focused on student/teacher relationship building and mentorship. |
| Action Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly scheduled Awards Celebration recognizing both in-school accomplishments and accomplishments from outside of school • Student participation in Board Meetings • Positive Principal Referrals • Creation of a Wisdom Corridor at Suburban General Hospital |
| Completion | 2023-2025 |



WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

We strive to make everyone feel welcomed and valued in our schools. This starts with the first greeting on the phone or in the office. We listen and ask questions to seek clarity when a colleague, parent, or student expresses a need. We take ownership and accept responsibility for making sure needs are met.

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| Goal 1 | Visitors to the district will be greeted in a professional, welcoming manner. |
| Action Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A standard greeting will be developed and systemically implemented throughout the district • Student ambassadors will be identified in each building and will be trained to welcome visitors. • Priorities for welcoming visitors will be identified and implemented by any staff/student who greet visitors into the building. |
| Completion | 2023 |



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| Goal 2 | <p>Increase family-school engagement through community partnerships - We will build opportunities for teamwork between families, educators and administrators to support students' learning and wellbeing.</p> |
| Action Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The district will participate in the Parents as Allies initiative offered through Kidsburgh. • The district will host a "Great Learning Conversation" event to share about the importance of family-school engagement. • Identified team of district personnel and parents to serve as the representatives • Parent participation in coaching sessions • Parent survey at the conclusion of coaching sessions • Informal interviews with parents throughout coaching sessions • Parent participation in makerspace |
| Completion | <p>2023</p> |



COMMUNITY ALLIES

We value community partnerships and recognize that it takes a village to enact the mission of the District and collectively "We" (parents/guardians, faculty, staff and the broader community) can help students realize their potential and become good citizens.

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| Goal 1 | Growth and development of process for populating common district calendar so that parent/guardian and community events and activities are coded and communicated effectively. |
| Action Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a plan/ process for how information is populated on the district calendar. • Identify stakeholders responsible and accountable for populating and coding the district calendar. |
| Completion | 2023 |

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| Goal 2 | Develop, facilitate and communicate events and opportunities for senior citizens to connect with the District. |
| Action Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the individuals responsible for senior citizen events • Host annual Senior citizen breakfast • Create opportunities for Senior Citizens to attend events as vip guests, such as concerts and performances. |
| Completion | 2024-2025 |

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| Goal 3 | Grow and develop Suburban General as a community asset. |
| Action Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to secure partnerships that bring programs and opportunities to the District and community.• Develop opportunities for community and District to utilize the resources available at the Suburban General campus. This will be done by creating a process for utilization of district space at Suburban. |
| Completion | 2023-2025 |





Strategic Planning Committee

Dr. Michael Amick

Principal - Bellevue Elementary

Sanghee Ku

Parent

Alena Anderson

Parent

Molly Lipovsky

Faculty

Valerie Cupps

Parent

R.J. Long

Principal - Middle School

Jillian Edmondson

Parent/Borough Council Member

Bob Metz

Facility Manager

Dr. Jeffrey Evancho

Director of Partnership & Equity

Gretchen Monahan

Faculty

Stephanie Francis

Faculty

Dr. Joseph Peacock

Principal - Avalon Elementary

Christina Garczewski

Coordinator of Special Services

Michael Rajakovic

School Board Member

Justin Greenawalt

Community Member

Tricia Schink

Faculty

Julianne Griffin

Former Food Service Director

Aurora Schubert

Parent

Jodi Hause

Community Member

Dr. Nicole Smith

Principal - High School

Brandon Hogle

Faculty

Meg Straub

Parent

Dr. Caroline Johns

Superintendent

Jeremy Thieroff

Community Member

Mae Kabanda

Student

Brian Veshio

Faculty

Christine King

Former School Board Member

Michael Warren

Community Member

Rob King

Technology Director

Cindy West

Former School Board Member



Northgate School District

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