



# **Norwich Public Schools**

## STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2025

July 2020

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Charting a course from where we are now to where we want to be...

“I am hard-pressed to think of any organization that has sustained some measure of greatness in the absence of goals, values, and missions that become deeply shared throughout the organization.”

Peter Senge, *The Fifth Discipline*

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## VISION

To enable each child to reach their full potential

## MISSION

The Norwich Public Schools will provide each student a rigorous, effective teaching and learning environment where equity is the norm; excellence is the goal, student health and safety are assured.

### [Norwich Public Schools Portrait of a Graduate](#)

Equity  
Diversity  
Preparedness  
Support  
Personalization  
Safety

Vision for Student Success  
Strategic Plan Research  
Listening Tour Outcomes

## Guiding Beliefs

Every decision the Norwich Public Schools makes, and every policy created, is grounded in these guiding beliefs. We believe that ALL children can and will learn when:

- Every student has highly effective teachers
- Every school has highly effective leaders
- Students are ensured a safe, personalized, and differentiated learning environment that is intentionally universally designed.
- Multiple pathways are provided for students to access instruction
- Multiple opportunities are offered for all students to demonstrate their learning
- Educators successfully partner with families
- There are high expectations for all students
- All students are actively engaged in their learning
- Relevant, timely, and practical data systems, and the outputs of those systems, such as assessments and data analysis, drive continuous improvement

## PRIORITIES

The eight priority areas are a framework for specific, measurable outcomes and actions that will focus and organize the Strategic Plan for public education in Norwich over the next five years.

1. Narrowing and closing of equity and opportunity gaps
2. Globally Competent Graduates
3. Climate and Social Emotional Learning
4. Family and Community Engagement
5. Teacher and Leader Support
6. Personalized Learning District-wide
7. Informed Instructional Decision-Making
8. Student-Centered Resource Investment

## Student Learning Goals

All Norwich Public School students will be challenged to develop, embrace and attain learning goals that encapsulate the following essential elements to prepare them to be independent thinkers and collaborative team players invested in building a better future.

- ✦ **Inquiry:** Students show intellectual curiosity and wonder about the world. Students ask thoughtful questions and seek out answers.
- ✦ **Expression:** Students communicate what they know and what they need to know. Students construct arguments with evidence and critique the reasoning of others.
- ✦ **Critical Thinking:** Students analyze, synthesize, and draw conclusions from information. Students generate solutions to problems using both creative and critical thought. Students keep an open mind to different viewpoints.
- ✦ **Collaboration:** Students contribute to the overall effort of the group. Students work with diverse individuals in various situations. Students initiate and cultivate community partnerships.
- ✦ **Organization:** Students sift through ideas and data, arranging them wisely and make sense of them. Students set manageable goals, plan, and monitor time to achieve them.
- ✦ **Attentiveness:** Students focus on the task at hand and focus on details of their work.
- ✦ **Perseverance:** We demonstrate and model for our students' tenacity in tackling tasks despite difficulty or delay in achieving success and recognizing the learning opportunities inherent in mistakes and the value of taking risks.
- ✦ **Reflection:** We review and think about our actions and work with the purpose of learning more about ourselves.

## PRIORITIES

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# 1. NARROWING/CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT & OPPORTUNITY GAP

## Ensuring All Students Succeed

Narrow and ultimately Close the Achievement and Opportunity Gap for all students.

All education stakeholders need to collaborate in an effort to close the gaps for children. Leading education researchers have identified opportunity gaps in education drivers, including early childhood education, socio-economic influences, resource inequities, assessment, diversity and equity, school culture, and educator and school quality (recruitment, retention, and training). Opportunity and achievement, while inextricably connected, are very different concerns (or issues). We need to provide the crucial resources and opportunities that students need if they are to reach their potential in college, career, and the future (Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education).

- Create an Equity Policy and Equity Plan
- Train educators and community member is what matters for gap closing
- Determine what the Gaps are, and what success looks like
- Increase Attendance and Decrease Chronic Absenteeism and Chronic Truancy
- Create Systems of Support (RtI, EL, PLP, PMP, BSP, ELO)
- Create a High Leverage Grading Policy

### **Create an Equity Policy and Equity Plan**

- Train educators and community member is what matters for gap closing
- Determine what the gaps are, and what success looks like
- Create high leverage policies that give all children a fair chance to thrive.
- Where are the gaps? Poverty, Race, Special Education, EL, Gender
- Set targets for gap closing

- We aspire to expand opportunities for ALL children to successfully access the general education curriculum by increasing access to high-level coursework, training teachers, and supporting students and families.
- In Closing the Opportunity Gap, first highlight the discrepancies that exist in our schools, focusing on how policy decisions and life circumstances conspire to create the "opportunity gap" that leads inexorably to stark achievement gaps.
- Examine the Coaching structure to ensure equitably and working within their area of expertise
- Ensure content area reading is at the student's readability level
- Teacher training on Mathematics (Pk-5) and Reading (Pk-12), explicit instruction, special needs, universal design, growth mindset, differentiated instruction, executive functioning, personalized learning, blended learning, project-based learning
- Coaching students on setting high expectations and self-advocacy
- Create toolkits for teachers (structures, supports, and materials)
- Training or minimal hours of training on gap reducing strategies
- Gap closing training for administrators and teachers
- Create position of Equity officer and equity coaches
- Achievement Acceleration plan and training for administrators and teacher leaders
- Investigate if we have the right expertise in the right location by exploring the concept of a staffing audit
- High Expectations and Acceleration of Opportunity
- Prioritize coursework plans based on ILP (Individualized learning plans)
- Ensure that all children are taught by highly qualified, certified educators (with a focus on educators of color), prioritizing the highest need students with the highest qualified educators.
- Investigate the concept of students accessing the curriculum of other grade levels when ready and at their preference and pace
- Create a High Leverage Student Success Policy

### **Increase Attendance and Decrease Chronic Absenteeism and Chronic Truancy**

- Increase attendance in each school and decrease chronic absenteeism. If students are not present in school, they cannot learn and achieve. If they are consistently late and leaving early from school, there is more of a chance that they will struggle
- Implement Attendance Works Strategies
- Determine measures of success. What will success look like? Increase the number of students with special needs graduating from middle school on grade level, increase the number of students exiting EL and Special Education, increase standardized test scores. Decrease the course failure

rate, decrease the number of students in ISS, suspension, and expulsion. Increase the number of students with special needs closing their achievement gaps and truly exiting from their IEP supports.

### **Create Systems of Support (Rtl, EL, PLP, PMP, BSP, ELO)**

Rtl (Response to Intervention), EL (English Learner), PLP (Personal Literacy Plan), PMP (Personal Math Plan), BSP (Behavioral support plan), ELO (Extended learning opportunities)

- Create EL Plans for every child
- Create Rtl Plans for every learner in need of support
- Increase reading teachers, EL teachers, certified math interventionists
- Create PLPs, PMPs, Behavioral support plans
- Move/restructure reading teacher support and interventions accordingly.
- Explore opportunities for extended time
- Investigate a fully student-centered schedule
- Consider extending the learning day and year in ELO opportunities for students.
- Consider more time for adult professional learning
- Add BCBA and RBT (Registered behavioral staff) to each school
- Examine the data day structure
- Examine the Rtl block structure
- Create a Rtl Coordinator to monitor Rtl practices and supports
- Establish Progress Monitoring Measures

### **Create a High Leverage Grading Policy**

- Training on Grading (Guskey and Wormeli)
- Community Conversations on the reasons for grading
- Staff committees on the reasons for grading
- Establish practices and procedures for all students to thrive

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## 2. GLOBALLY COMPETENT STUDENTS

### Creating Citizens of the World

We aspire to become a district in which all of our students are globally competent and prepared to be competitive in a global labor market. Our graduates will be ready to investigate the world, to recognize the perspective of others, to communicate their idea to diverse audiences, and to take actions to improve conditions in our world. Preparing our students to be global citizens entails investing in building the cultural competence of students and educators, and expanding student access to world language instruction. The diversity of Norwich is an asset that will help us prepare our graduates to enter an increasingly competitive and global society.

- Increase Cultural Competency of all members of the Educational Community
- Increase access to World Language Instruction
- Increase Equitable Practice throughout the District

#### **Increase Cultural Competency of all members of the Educational Community**

#### GOAL: Cultural Competent Educational Community

#### **Strategies**

- Increase the number of students and families who describe their school and their educators as welcoming and culturally respectful.
- Develop a survey or assessment, start tracking indicators and support staff in this effort.
- Use data on school climate to improve the culture of schools
- Create cultural competency standards for educators and students
- Partner with community and municipal partners to support the social and emotional needs of students Cultural Competency Outcomes
- Provide professional development for educators and leaders on cultural competency
- Provide direct instruction in cultural competency
- Provide students opportunities to demonstrate and practice cultural competency skills
- Provide or expand student access to activities that promote healthy cultural identity and rich peer-based experiences

- Welcome and engage with all families, especially those with diverse ethnic, linguistic and cultural backgrounds

## **Increase access to World Language Instruction**

**GOAL:** ALL students will have equitable access to world language instruction

### **Strategies:**

- Increase the number of students that have access to high quality, proficiency based world language programs
- Ensure that students at all Norwich schools have the same access to world language classes
- Increase the number of Norwich students who have access to honors level world language courses
- Increase community understanding and support for the importance of world language programs for all students

## **Increase Equitable Practice throughout the District**

**GOAL:** Fully implemented Equity Plan and Policy

### **Strategies:**

- Provide professional development for educators on equity
- Write a high leverage equity policy
- Write an equity plan
- Start a community conversations about equity
- Engage an equity officer and equity coaches to ensure that the work in the equity plan is followed and that decisions are made with an equity lens

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## 3. CLIMATE & SOCIAL EMOTIONAL WELLNESS

### Ensure Student's Social Emotional Wellness

Social and emotional learning (SEL) enhances students' capacity to integrate skills, attitudes, and behaviors to deal effectively and ethically with daily tasks and challenges. Like many similar frameworks, CASEL's (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning) integrated framework promotes intrapersonal, interpersonal, and cognitive competence. The five core competencies can be taught in many ways across many settings. Many educators and researchers are also exploring how best to assess these competencies. The ability to accurately recognize one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior. The ability to accurately assess one's strengths and limitations, with a well-grounded sense of confidence, optimism, and a "growth mindset."

- ❖ **Self-Awareness:** The abilities to understand one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behaviors across contexts.
- ❖ **Self-management:** The abilities to manage one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations and to achieve goals and aspirations.
- ❖ **Responsible decision making:** The abilities to make caring and constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions across diverse situations
- ❖ **Relationship skills:** The abilities to establish and maintain healthy and supportive relationships and to effectively navigate settings with diverse individuals and groups
- ❖ **Social awareness:** The abilities to understand the perspectives of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and contexts

**GOAL:** Students will regularly practice all five components of the CASEL standards

#### **Strategies:**

- Graduates have the social and emotional skills necessary to persevere through challenging circumstances, work in partnership with others, and develop a "growth mindset."
- Provide Growth Mindset training to educators

- Develop a social emotional assessment to start tracking indicators and ensure that staff supports students to gain competency in this area.
- Develop district SEL standards
- Conduct a SEL audit of each school's SEL program against the SEL standards and develop a plan to augment so that each student has a full SEL curriculum regardless of the school they attend.
- Provide professional development for support professionals, educators, and school leaders on the development of social and emotional skills
- Provide opportunities for students to demonstrate and practice skills related to social and emotional learning.
- Collaborate with public and private mental health and behavioral health providers to expand the quality and quantity of in-school mental and behavioral health services beyond school staff
- Partner with community and municipal partners to support the social and emotional needs of students
- SEL coaches
- SEL Coordinator
- Create SEL centers in each school where students can practice mindfulness

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## 4. FAMILY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### Family and Community Engagement Matter to Children

Ongoing research shows that **family engagement** in **schools** improves student achievement, reduces absenteeism, and restores parents' confidence in their children's education. Students with involved parents or other caregivers earn higher grades and test scores, have better social skills, and show improved behavior (NEA, 2014).

Family engagement plan based on Epstein's Framework of 6 types of involvement

- Create a Parent Engagement Plan
- Explore the concept of a district PTO as recommended by current Norwich PTO parents so that there is more centralized support and greater equity.
- Create a Parent Communication Plan
- Engage families in the education system and remove all barriers to engagement

#### **Family engagement plan**

Create a Family Engagement Plan involving Epstein's Framework of Six Types of Involvement (Johns Hopkins University) This framework assists educators in developing school and family partnership programs and meeting the family where they are.

- I am planning with the family, not for the family.
- Setting mutually acceptable goals.
- Provide services that the families view as relevant and beneficial
- Parenting-Help all families establish home environments to support children as students
- Parent education and other courses or training for parents (e.g., GED, college credits, ESL, family literacy)
- Family support programs to assist families with health, nutrition, and other services.
- Home visits at transition points to elementary, middle school, and beyond.
- Assist with their parenting skills by providing information and support on children's developmental stages

## **Communicating**

Design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications about school programs and children's progress.

- Conferences with every parent on a consistent basis
- Language translator services to assist families as needed
- Regular schedule of useful notices, memos, phone calls, newsletters, and other communications
- Educate families about their children's programming and school services

## **Volunteering**

Recruit and organize parent help and support.

- School/classroom volunteer programs to help teachers, administrators, students, and other parents
- Parent room or family center for volunteer work meetings and resources for families
- Annual survey to identify all available talents, times, and locations of volunteers.
- Offer parents opportunities to visit their children's school and find ways to recruit and train parents to work in the schools.

## **Learning at Home**

Provide information and ideas to families about how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning.

- Information for families on skills required for students in all subjects at each grade.
- Information on homework policies and how to monitor and discuss schoolwork at home
- Share ideas to promote at-home learning so parents can monitor and help with homework, projects, and distance learning

## **Decision Making**

Include families as partners and participants in school decisions and develop parent leaders and representatives

- Active parent organizations, advisory councils, or committees (e.g., curriculum, assessment, grading, safety) for full participation and parent leadership.
- District and school-level advisory councils and committees

## Community Collaboration

Coordinate resources and services from the community for families, students, and the school, and provide services to the community.

- **Provide information for students and families on community health, cultural, recreational, social support, and other programs or services**
- **Provide information on community activities that link to learning skills and talents, including summer programs for students**
- **Involve community and business groups in education and schools to encourage family participation in the school and community**
- **Explore the concept of a district PTO as recommended by current Norwich PTO parents so that there is more centralized support and greater equity.**

National Parent Teacher Associations National Standards for Family-School Partnerships

- **STANDARD 1** - Welcoming all families into the school community helps families feel welcomed, valued, and connected
- **STANDARD 2** - Communicating effectively helps families and staff engage in regular, two-way, meaningful communication
- **STANDARD 3** - Supporting student success helps families and staff to collaborate to support students' learning and healthy development
- **STANDARD 4** - Speaking up for every child helps empower families to be advocates for children
- **STANDARD 5** - Sharing power helps families and staff be equal partners in creating policies, practices, and programs
- **STANDARD 6** - Collaborating with the community helps families and staff collaborate with community members

### **Create a Parent Communication Plan**

- Ensure two-way communication systems
- Build trusting relationships between educators and families
- Demonstrating respect, genuineness, and empathy for all family members, as identified by the family
- Provide early outreach to parents
- Establishing the purpose for involvement with each family

- Being consistent reliable and honest with families
- Listen actively with each family member
- Develop an understanding of families' past experiences, current situations, concerns, strengths, and potential
- Responding quickly to families' concrete needs
- Validating the significant role of families in planning and making decisions for their children.
- Thinking broadly about culture, race, and ethnicity in planning
- Honoring and respecting the cultural, racial, ethnic, linguistic, religious, or spiritual backgrounds of children of children and families
- honoring and respecting differences in sexual orientation and gender expression of children and families
- Supporting older youth in developing decision-making skills and achieving goals, as well as celebrating success with them
- Engaging kinship families
- Asset and strength-based assessment that engages children, youth, and families through the lens of family strengths, capacity, cultural heritage, and extended family resources (e.g., eco-mapping, genogram, family connections chart)
- Motivational interviewing and solution focused-interventions
- Family-centered support planning and management
- Use a trauma-informed approach
- Provide trauma-informed professional development to educators
- Build on parents' desires to be effective in keeping their children safe and reducing their children's sometimes challenging behaviors
- Help Parents anticipate the possible reactions to stress and trauma triggers and help them develop different ways to respond.
- Become knowledgeable about evidence-supported trauma interventions to support parents in acquiring supportive services

### **Engage families in the education system and remove all barriers to engagement**

- Ensure engagement begins at the initial contact with the family
- Explore the concept of Family and Community Engagement Officers in each school
- Recognize and respond to the perceptions of parents and families regarding their barriers (identify those barriers and come up with solutions)

- Offer services at flexible times, provide meals, and arrange for or provide childcare to support participation in family-focused interventions
- Direct the initial conversations with caregivers to what they perceive as their children's needs
- Use “we” language and allow families to tell their own stories to facilitate collaboration
- Direct resources to solutions to practical concerns, as identified by the family, that will have an immediate impact.

### **Provide practical skills training**

Support families in accessing adult education supports for themselves and other family members (ESL, GED, HS Diploma, and other educational supports for adults)

### **Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Parent Involvement Standards**

Parental involvement is one of the founding principles of the Federal IDEA. Parents have the right to participate in all decisions regarding the education of their children with disabilities, including participating in the following as partners:

- Meetings related to the evaluation and identification of needs and the educational placement of their children
- Meetings related to the provision of free, appropriate public education to their children
- The team that develops, reviews, and revises the Individualized Education Programs for their children
- Any group that makes placement decisions for their children

### **Culturally Responsive Engagement**

Successful culturally responsive practices for family engagement must acknowledge the diversity of cultural backgrounds and language, including the engagement practices that are most effective with diverse families.

Traditional methods of family engagement within schools (e.g., parent-teacher associations, volunteering in classrooms, sending written communication home in backpacks) may not successfully engage families from all cultures.

When traditional forms of engagement fail to reach parents from different cultural backgrounds, school personnel may mistakenly presume that parents are not interested in being engaged. These mistaken assumptions may lead to parents feeling unwelcome in schools.

Families from lower socio-economic status may have additional barriers to engage with the school, such as limited time to engage in day and evening events because they are working, inability to pay items or fees that schools consider nominal, transportation barriers and child care barriers.

For school personnel to recognize the various ways that culturally diverse families may already engage in their children's education, they should undertake the following:

- Build trust and empathize with families
- Provide adequate resources and participate in adequate training to carry out culturally aware family engagement practices
- Recognize and acknowledge practices of "life engagement," such as maintaining knowledge of friends and life events and modeling expected behavior
- Utilize the expertise of a cultural insider advisor. This person goes beyond the traditional role of translator and also helps to bridge cultural gaps in communication.
- Embrace families' individual narratives by creating opportunities for families to share their stories and experiences with various audiences within the school.

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## 5. TEACHER & LEADER SUPPORT

### Growing our Great Educators

We aspire to support and grow our current educators and leaders through relevant, personalized, and job-embedded professional learning for all educators and leaders focused on students in classrooms and in ways that build collegiality and collaborative decision-making. We will support great teaching by strengthening the recruitment and retention of high-quality educators and leaders. We aim to encourage the most talented professionals to apply to and stay in Norwich.

- Effective Practices in Personnel Recruitment (focus on educators of color), Management and Retention
- High-Quality, relevant professional development with a focus on Equity
- Focused training for educators working in or aspiring to work with Multi-Language Learners

#### **Effective Practices in Personnel Recruitment (focus on educators of color), Management and Retention**

**GOAL:** Recruit and retain the best educators with a focus on recruitment and retention of educators of color

#### **Strategies:**

- Our most talented teachers and leaders will support student teachers
- All new educators and leaders should be supported in their first years of teaching or leading by a mentor, induction coach, or critical friend's partnership to help them master their practice.
- We will more greatly develop our student teaching and mentoring programs by interviewing all student teachers before accepting them, matching mentees with highly qualified mentors (when feasible), and matching student teachers ONLY with highly qualified supervisors (when feasible)
- Create a new hiring process
- Maintain the PDEC process
- Provide administrators with legal training on employee due process

- We will more greatly develop our recruitment strategies by establishing partnerships with historically black colleges and teacher/leader preparation programs with a focus on educators of color
- We will more greatly develop our retention strategies by continuing to explore retention strategies and best practices of other districts.
- We will develop an exit survey for educators leaving Norwich and create solutions for greater retention.

## High Quality, Relevant Professional Development with a Focus on Equity

**GOAL:** All professional development for educators and leaders is aligned with the most important needs of students, educators, and leaders as identified through data and research.

### Strategies:

- Principals will track areas of need for each educator and will strategically support with PD in areas not yet successful. Reports will be submitted to the Assistant Superintendent.
- Educators provide feedback and support for one another in professional learning communities.
- Identify data-informed, high-priority areas, and support professional learning in these areas in a way that is research-based, of extended duration, and deeply connected to the day-to-day work of teaching and learning.
- Providing relevant, job-embedded, personalized, professional development opportunities for all educators that promote continuous growth
- Provide training and support for evaluators
- Provide hiring and management training for administrators
- Provide calibration exercises regularly for evaluators
- Focus training on Equity Practice, Teachers College, Reading Writing Project, Math, Science, Social Emotional Learning, Project-Based Learning, Growth Mindset, Culturally Responsive Teaching, Trauma-Informed Practice, and Restorative Circles

## Focused training for educators working in or aspiring to work with Multi-Language Learners

GOAL: To grow our EL and Bi-Lingual Teachers

### Strategies:

- Work with local colleges to recruit bilingual educators
- Provide coursework and training opportunities for Norwich educators to become EL certified
- Create EL grade-level cohorts of TESOL certified teachers in each school so that EL students will receive universally designed EL instructional all day every day PK-8
  - Co-teaching pilot
  - Co-teaching model professional development
  - SIOP training for all
  - Elevation training for all
  - Elevation individualized plans for all EL learners

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## 6. PERSONALIZED LEARNING DISTRICT-WIDE

### Creating Experiences and Pathways that Meet Students' Individual Needs

We aspire to an educational system in which every child is enrolled in rigorous learning environments that meet their individual needs and through which students' progress upon their demonstrated mastery of essential, aligned, and agreed-upon rigorous academic and 21st-century skills. Starting in early childhood, students should have access to personalized learning experiences that are experiential, blended, flexible, and differentiated; as a result of these experiences, students will be able to control the pace, place, and content of their learning experience while meeting state and local requirements. Middle and high school students will have access to a wide range of high-quality early college and early career training programs that enable them to earn high-value portable credits and credentials. Students will have opportunities that expand their access to personalized learning, and teachers will have the skills needed to enhance personalization in and outside of the classroom.

- Building Capacity to Personalized Learning
- Blended and Digital Learning in a 1:1 Technology Environment
- Career Readiness and Pathways to High School Pathways, College and Career

#### **Building Capacity to Personalized Learning**

**GOAL:** To Create Personalized Learning Environments in every school

#### **Strategies:**

- Provide proficiency-based instruction professional development to educators
- Provide problem-based learning (PBL) professional development to educators
- Provide PBL opportunities to students
- Develop a high leverage student grading policy that is equitable for all students so that students can have more control over their own learning and achievement
- Create PBL lab classrooms for teachers to see PBL
- Promote the utilization of Individualized student Learning Plans (ILPs) to best support every learner in meeting their personalized learning needs and goals

## **Blended and Digital Learning in a 1:1 Technology Environment**

**GOAL:** To Develop a 1:1 PK-8 Technology Learning Plan

### **Strategies:**

- Provide digital citizenship training to students
- Provide digital curation of curriculum and online learning training to educators
- Expand and improve professional development in blended and proficiency-based learning
- Support teachers with 1-3 Technology coaches
- In order to fully embrace this concept, explore hiring an elementary and MS technology coach to support teachers.
- Expand K-8 access to high-quality digital and blended learning opportunities that provide students with the ability to control the pace, space, and content of their learning
- Explore adopting an online platform learning management system to manage student work and promote efficient personalization and proficiency-based advancement
- Implement an annual assessment that will afford teachers the information that will assist them in differentiating and personalizing instruction
- Develop and maintain a multi-year technology plan aligned with the district and school plans for blended and digital learning
- Increase prudent technology planning and infrastructure and device investments designed to dramatically improve student access and outcomes

## **Career Readiness and Pathways to High School, College, and Career**

**GOAL:** To ensure alignment with Middle School Curriculum and High School Pathways and College/Career

### **Strategies:**

- Align middle school course work to high school expectations, especially in Algebra I, World Language, Science, and Exploratories
- Explore the concept of offering Algebra I for all grade 8 students
- Explore externships and internships and partnerships with Norwich Tech and other High Schools

- Explore collaboration with community partners to expand student access to learning opportunities outside the school day and year
- Explore student learning experiences outside of school, including expanded learning opportunities (ELOs), internships, work-related experiences, and apprenticeships receiving professional development.
- Explore partnering with business and industry in the development and management of career and technical programs
- Explore adding a site based coordinator with Perkins money and develop career path strands that compete with other Career and Technical Centers

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## 7. INFORMED INSTRUCTIONAL DECISION MAKING

### Using Assessment Systems that Work for Schools, Educators and Students

#### OUR VISION FOR SUCCESS:

We aspire to link assessments to curriculum and instructional practices in order to improve teaching and learning in every classroom. Our robust, manageable assessment systems will ensure that educators have the information they need to improve and adapt their classroom practices. Students, educators, and families will understand the purpose of assessments and how assessments align with the teaching and learning that takes place in school every day. There will be a balance between instruction and assessment so as to meet the needs of educators and students.

#### **Develop a balanced assessment system**

**GOAL:** Develop a balanced assessment system

#### **Strategies:**

- Provide Data and Assessment Literacy for Educators
- Create a Multiple-Measure Systems that Include Authentic Assessment
- Increase stakeholder Understanding and Engagement of the purpose and use of student assessment
- Educators are skillful users of data on student learning to make instructional decisions that support increased student achievement
- Explore providing structured time for professional collaboration on assessment and its connection to classroom practice (e.g., examining student work, studying calibration practices, creating “broader” assessments)
- Use high-quality assessments and multiple measures while ensuring that instruction is a priority over the assessment and is efficient, effective, and not redundant. The assessment also drives and monitors instruction.
- Investigate and pursue innovative forms of assessment and promising data platforms that support instructional decision-making
- Create an assessment balanced matrix

- Create and use an appropriate blend of formative, interim and summative tools that are useful in the day to day practice of teaching and learning and provide valid, reliable, and useful data to inform instruction
- Annually review our assessment calendar and revise as needed
- Examine school and district assessment practices to ensure that adequate time and personnel are invested in the administration of required state and local assessments
- To increase stakeholder engagement, we will create an assessment guide and publish it for parents
- Students will be involved in their own assessment process to understand and talk about their level of knowledge and skills and set goals based on that information.
- Increase the number of teachers who are releasing the work so that students can own it.
- Engage students in making meaningful decisions about their education by providing them with useful and relevant educational assessment data
- Empower students with opportunities to provide meaningful feedback on their educational experience
- Develop and implement strategies, tools, and systems at the local level to track, analyze, and report data on student performance
- Engage and prepare families to access, understand, and use relevant educational data

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## 8. STUDENT-CENTERED RESOURCE INVESTMENTS

### Investing to Support our Students, Educators and Learning Environments

We aspire to invest educational dollars and to manage public school assets with a focus on meeting the needs of students, teachers, and schools.

- Increased Resource Flexibility and improved use of fiscal data to invest in what really matters to student achievement
- Improved School Facilities
- Create more user-friendly budget documents to increase community understanding of Greater understanding of budget and grants
- Reduce the operational deficit with efficiencies and shared services and plan to lessen our reliance on grants
- Increased Resource Flexibility and improved use of fiscal data to invest in what really matters to student achievement
- Continue to use data to drive investment decisions
- Utilize metrics, reports, and tools that blend fiscal and program data to support informed budgetary decisions
- Routinely use state and local data to evaluate educational program success and use that information to inform investment decisions
- Provide professional development for school leaders on the appropriate metrics, reports, and tools that blend personnel, assessment, and resource data to help school and district leaders make significant decisions
- Use best practice in school budgeting that includes fiscal data and expense and revenue projections on a multi-year horizon
- Develop budgets that systematically invest in the programs likely to yield the greatest benefits to students and incrementally adjust investments with limited benefits to student learning
- Make investments that lessen our reliance on paper, copy machines, printers
- Routinely use state and local data to evaluate educational program success and use that information to inform investment decisions
- Promote student-centered investment decisions by leading and promoting collaboration across agencies and school districts to eliminate duplication of services and expenses to maximize savings
- Improved School Facilities

- Our schools are in dire need of repair. It is not helping the school or city budget continue to invest in boilers and roofs and expensive repairs. A facilities plan must be supported.
- NPS will work side by side with the city to support a facilities plan for NPS so that students and staff can work in energy-efficient, optimal air quality, clean, safe, and dry buildings
- Create a capital improvement plan
- Create multi-year investment plans for technology
- Developing and maintaining a strong asset protection program
- Move from investment in furniture that separates children (traditional desks) to student-centered flexible furniture that expands PBL, collaboration, and physical space (standing desks, wobble seats, sled seating, writable tables, etc.)
- Facilities program that focuses on ensuring our students attend safe, warm, dry, and educationally appropriate facilities while maximizing space and cost efficiency and on protecting our investment in school facilities
- Participating in school facility and space analyses
- Create more user-friendly budget documents to increase community understanding of Greater understanding of budget and grants
- Design an updated budget document that is more user friendly
- Create opportunities for public conversations around budget
- Invest in BoardDocs - a paperless BOE meeting management system for greater transparency to the community
- Reduce the operational deficit with efficiencies and shared services and plan to lessen our reliance on grants
- Invest in a Transportation Coordinator with the hopes of sharing services for out-of-district transportation with other districts, decreasing ride time and cost.
- The transportation Coordinator will also increase safety and customer satisfaction and lessen our internal transportation budget by working side by side with our transportation company on routes and other matters.
- Invest in school safety and crisis plan coordinator
- Explore shared services with the City, NFA, and other Cities and Towns
- Use master price agreements and other group purchasing power mechanisms
- Optimize economies of scale
- Partner with other school districts to achieve savings by sharing services and other cost-containment programs and reinvesting savings in high-impact educational programs.