

Bridport, Cornwall, Middlebury, Ripton, Salisbury, Shoreham, Weybridge



2024-2029
STRATEGIC PLAN

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Context and Data:

This 5-year Strategic Plan, was deliberately rooted in equity and designed to prioritize the success of every student PreK-12 in the Addison Central School District (ACSD). Informed by a district-wide equity audit and a community-based examination of equity issues, the three foundational Board goals focus on students' **access** to resources, sense of **belonging**, and academic **success**. In concert, these goals are crucial to reaching our vision that all ACSD students reach their full learning potential, have a sense of belonging in our schools, and enrich our community and the communities where they live in the future.

The pages below detail the ACSD Board's foundational work including their newly drafted mission, vision, and strategic goals; the design, roles, and reports of the ACSD Advisory Committee and the Action Team; Strategies and Targets for each Strategic Goal; a Glossary; and Appendix with the Action Team's recommended Action Steps and Endnotes which provide additional context. For additional information about the Strategic Plan and our Equity Work visit: www.acsdvt.org/district-link/strategic-plan and www.acsdvt.org/district-link/equity-work

Strategic Plan Process Overview

This Strategic Plan is the result of two intentionally designed community groups, the ACSD Advisory Committee and Action Team, in addition to the work of the ACSD School Board. In 2021-2022, the Advisory Committee was formed to identify equity issues and opportunities within ACSD. In 2023, an Action Team was formed to translate the Board's strategic goals into

recommended actions and strategies. Both groups were comprised of diverse community stakeholders and were instrumental in compiling additional input and data. Following the work of the Advisory Committee and Action Team, the ACSD Board created an Ad Hoc committee in October 2023 to clarify the Board's goals, develop targets, and enhance the strategies associated with each goal, and clarify the structure and content of the strategic plan. Throughout the process, there have been ongoing opportunities for students, families, staff, and community members (stakeholders) to stay up to date and shape the direction of the Strategic Plan.

Roles and Responsibilities in the Strategic Plan

The composition of the Advisory Committee and Action Team included intentional efforts to engage traditionally underrepresented members of the ACSD community including those living with disabilities, living in poverty, and those who identify as LGBTQ+ and BIPOC (both groups are described in the glossary). The Strategic Plan was approved by the ACSD Board on December 11, 2023. It was then handed off to the ACSD Implementation Team. The Advisory Committee, Action Team, ACSD Board and Implementation team each have a distinct roll in the Strategic Plan process:

- The Advisory Committee was convened in 2021-2022. Their role was to help define equity in the planning process, advise the board on community engagement, review existing data and suggest additional data, and work to develop priorities for the Board's goals. Their work concluded in recommendations that were presented to the Board in the fall of 2022 before the Board began drafting their strategic goals.
- After the Board set their strategic goals in 2022, the Action Team convened to review the work of the Advisory Committee and draft strategies and action steps to meet the Board's goals.
- The ACSD Board set the vision for the strategic plan. They drafted and approved the goals and targets, modified and adopted the Action Teams strategies and included its recommended Action Steps. The Board's role is not to prescribe how the Strategic Plan is implemented, but they will receive regular updates from the Implementation Team about the district's efforts to meet the Strategic Plan targets and goals.
- The Implementation Team is a group comprised of ACSD school and administrative leaders who have the experience, training, and subject matter expertise to prioritize, adjust, and enhance the Action Steps recommended by the Action Team and report back to the Board.

Strategic Plan Goals & Focus on Equity

This Strategic Plan was developed with the understanding that persistent gaps and disparities exist in our schools. Research shows that the twin goals of access and belonging are foundational to a students' ultimate success. A sense of belonging is a protective factor which leads to positive, successful experiences in school. Meanwhile, equitable, sustainable, fiscally responsible access to instructional resources and staff are an essential ingredient to fulfilling students' academic success. Finally, academic success cannot be achieved without recognizing and addressing the persistent achievement gap. The educational achievement gap is best understood

as the persistent gap in academic achievement between educationally marginalized students and educationally centered students. In ACSD, this gap most impacts students who have been identified for an IEP, those living in or near poverty, and those minoritized because of race or ethnicity.

We are exceptionally grateful to all of the members of our community who came to the table to support this work.

FOUNDATIONAL BOARD WORK

The ACSD Board adopted the following Mission and Vision statements, Equity Definition, and Strategic Goals on October 10, 2022. This work served as the foundation for the ACSD Action Team to develop strategies and action steps to meet the ACSD Board's strategic goals.

Mission

Our mission is to provide high-quality, equitable, and varied learning environments that inspire a passion for learning and growth among our students.

Vision

Our vision is for all ACSD students to reach their full learning potential, have a sense of belonging in our schools, and enrich our community and the communities where they live in the future.

Strategic Goals

BELONGING. Everyone will feel safe, welcomed, and included in our schools and the district. Students and families will be able to engage with the school system in valuable ways.

ACCESS. ACSD will allocate resources to address students' needs across the district in equitable, sustainable, and fiscally responsible ways. ACSD will maintain infrastructure and facilities that support varied learning and successful outcomes for all of our students.

SUCCESS. ACSD's learning environment will inspire a passion for learning and value diverse identities and abilities, while preparing our students to make positive contributions to the community and beyond.

Equity Definition

Educational equity means that our schools provide each student with a high-quality, universally designed, and culturally responsive curriculum. It also means students can access programs and services that meet their needs. Our students succeed when we are responsive to their academic, social, and emotional wellbeing.

Educational equity means valuing various identities because diversity enriches our school community. This includes, but is not limited to, identities based on race, ethnicity, religion, family economics, class, geography, ability, language, sexual orientation, gender, immigration status, or initial proficiencies.

Educational equity requires ongoing efforts to identify, acknowledge, and disrupt inequitable practices in our district. It requires us to acknowledge our biases as individuals and as a district. We also must commit to making changes to address inequities to improve outcomes for all students.

ACSD adopted an equity policy (C29) in 2020, which includes a more detailed equity definition and implementation statement. The policy can be found on the district policy [website](http://www.acsdvt.org/school-board/policies-procedures):
www.acsdvt.org/school-board/policies-procedures

2021-2022 ADVISORY COMMITTEE

DESIGN

The Advisory Committee on Equity was comprised of students, parents, staff, administrators, and community members. Particular attention was given to selecting members who hold underrepresented identities (ex: BIPOC, LGBTQ+ folks, people living in poverty, people living with a disability). The committee had 13 members: 3 students, 2 parents/caregivers, 2 educators/staff, 4 community members at-large, 1 principal and the Director of Equity and Student Services. Committee Members were compensated for their time and efforts were made by the district to provide child care, food, and transportation to eliminate barriers to participation.

The Advisory Committee was asked to advise ACSD in four ways:

- Help define equity in the planning process
- Advise how to better engage the community
- Provide input on what data should be collected by the district, and
- Work in partnership with the board and staff to develop priorities and then determine how to work towards those priorities.

MEMBERS

Amanda Gomes, student MUHS
Addison Copeland, student MUHS
Abigail Sunderland, student MUHS
Christal Brown, parent MUMS
Ruth Shattuck Bernstein, parent Shoreham and MUHS
Liam Battjes-Greenwood, staff MUMS
Claire Benjamin, staff Cornwall
Christina Wadsworth, staff Weybridge
Michael Little, parent MUMS
Jessie Witscher, parent MUMS
Alejandra Perez, parent Bridport and MUMS
Esther Charlestin, community member/elected leader
Justin Campbell, Principal MUHS
Nicole Carter, Director Equity and Student Services



Advisory Committee Co-chairs
Esther Charlestin & Amanda Gomes, MUHS '23

STAFF & CONSULTANTS

Emily Blistein, Director of Communications and Engagement
Emma Mulvaney-Stanak, Consultant
Lisa Ryan, Advising Consultant

PROCESS

The Committee met from December 2021-Summer 2022. ACSD hired consultant Emma Mulvaney-Stanak of EMStrategies to plan and guide their work. The Committee began by establishing norms, agreements, and electing co-chairs (one student and one adult) to help serve as leaders and liaisons to the District. The Committee reviewed initial data from Hanover Research (Appendix), convened additional stakeholder meetings and broke into smaller groups to gather feedback on the topics of academic environment, social environment, staff perceptions of equity work, and district engagement and outreach.

Throughout the Committee's work, the meetings were intentionally designed to engage participants including best practices for youth-adult partnerships, interpreters to support multilingual participation and technology to support hearing impairments.

The Committee's work resulted in a final report which can be found along with the minutes and other materials on ACSD's [strategic plan webpage](http://www.acsdvt.org/district-link/strategic-plan): www.acsdvt.org/district-link/strategic-plan.

STRATEGIC PLAN ACTION TEAM

DESIGN

The ACSD Action Team was comprised of students, parents, staff, administrators, and community members. Particular attention was given to selecting members who hold underrepresented identities (ex: BIPOC, LGBTQ+ folks, people living in poverty, people living with a disability). The committee had 15 members: 4 students, 3 parents/caregivers, 3 educators/staff, 1 principal, the Director of Equity and Student Services, Director of Finance and Operations, and Director of Teaching and Learning. Team Members were compensated for their time and efforts were made by the district to eliminate barriers to participation.

The ACSD School Board and school district tasked the Action Team with:

- Reviewing the work of the Advisory Committee, district data, and inviting other stakeholders in to advise on where ACSD is doing well and where we are falling short to meet the diverse needs of our community.
- Drafting strategies and action steps that identify the greatest leverage points that ACSD can act upon to meet the Board's strategic goals and vision/mission (adopted October 2022), while using the District's equity definition as a lens in their analysis.
- Sharing draft recommendations with the ACSD Board for consideration and approval.

MEMBERS

Alixis Williams, student MUHS
Aislyne McGill, student MUHS
Camila Blanco, student MUHS
Chad Fredette, student MUHS
Samantha Paine, parent Shoreham and MUHS
Jess Vennable-Novak, parent Mary Hogan
Linda January, parent Bridport
Ben Long, MUHS math teacher and parent
Kelly Landwehr, Lead Nurse and parent
Meg Baker, Pre-K Coordinator and parent
Bjarki Sears, Principal Salisbury School
Esther Charlestin, MUMS Dean of Culture and Climate
Nicole Carter, Director of Equity and Student Services
Caitlin Steele, Asst. Superintendent of Teaching and Learning
Matthew Corrente, Director of Finance and Operations



Action Team Co-chairs
Samantha Paine & Camila Blanco, MUHS '23

STAFF & CONSULTANTS

Emily Blistein, Director of Communications and Engagement
Emma Mulvaney-Stanak, Consultant
Lisa Ryan, Advising Consultant

PROCESS

The Team met from January 2023-June 2023. ACSD hired consultant Emma Mulvaney-Stanak of EMStrategies to plan and guide their work. The Team began by establishing norms, agreements, and electing co-chairs (one student and one adult) to help serve as leaders and liaisons to the District. An additional meeting was offered for students to increase their engagement and voice in the process. The group then began to review the work of the 2022 ACSD Advisory Committee and ACSD board. They also reviewed data and input collected to-date by the district through surveys and community meetings. The Team began to create an initial list of strategies and action steps from their analysis that aligned with the Board's strategic goals. Additional stakeholders were identified to help identify gaps in knowledge and insights in how the District could deepen its work to address inequities. Those stakeholder groups included numerous school and community members with a perspective and/or lived or professional experience on:

- Current resource allocation within the district
- Poverty and socioeconomics
- Marginalized identities
- Special education and students living with disabilities

The Team deliberated on the additional feedback received from stakeholders and refined its recommendations. They used an equity rubric planning tool to help identify strategies and action steps that would leverage the biggest impact on existing inequities while engaging as much of the school community as possible.

Throughout the Team's work, the group worked to intentionally design meetings and ways to engage participants with best practices for youth-adult partnerships. This included holding youth advisory meetings where youth were in the majority to help advise the ACSD consultant and staff on ways to continually improve our work together.

Minutes from each of the Team's meetings can be found on the District's strategic plan webpage. <https://www.acsdvt.org/district-link/strategic-plan>. These documents include a summary of who met with the Team from various stakeholder community groups.

You can find the Action Team's full Recommended Action Steps in Appendix 1 of this document.

GOALS, TARGETS & STRATEGIES

GOAL 1 ~ BELONGING

Everyone will feel safe, welcomed, and included in our schools and the district. Students and families will be able to engage with the school system in valuable ways.



TARGETS

- All students, staff, and families say that they are safe, welcome, and included at their schools, with demonstrated improvement over time.
- Evidenced-based measurement tool shows improvement in valuable family engagement.
- Barriers to valuable family engagement have been identified and reduced.
- Improvement in identifying and addressing Social Emotional Learning and mental health needs that are impacting student and staff success in schools.
- Reduction in the number of incidents of identity based harassment.

STRATEGIES

Strategy 1: Build a system for universal wellbeing, positive culture, and a sense of belonging based on evidence-based practices that support youth.

Strategy 2: Elevate the importance of, and prioritize improvement of students' mental health.

Strategy 3: Put students and families who traditionally and historically experience marginalization first when engaging in decision making and planning.

Strategy 4: Develop policies and procedures to prevent and address identity based harassment.

GOALS, TARGETS & STRATEGIES

GOAL 2 ~ ACCESS

ACSD will allocate resources to address students' needs across the district in equitable, sustainable, and fiscally responsible ways. ACSD will maintain infrastructure and facilities that support varied learning and successful outcomes for all of our students.



TARGETS

- Comprehensive data sources are used to identify and understand the academic, social emotional and mental health needs of all students.
- The full range of student needs are equitably addressed across the district. There is demonstrated alignment between what students need and experience at school.
- Major resource allocation decisions are analyzed to ensure that impacts of those decisions are equitably shared and positively support historically marginalized student populations.
- All ACSD facilities will be safe, well maintained and equipped to support evidence-based, inclusive educational practices.
- ACSD will attract and retain a strong and diverse workforce to ensure consistent student access to high quality instruction.

STRATEGIES

Strategy 1: Create consistent, data-informed, equity-based resource allocation systems.

Strategy 2: Collect, analyze, and report on the full range of student needs and resource allocation data.

Strategy 3: Recruit, hire, onboard, coach, and mentor staff with diverse identities to achieve strong retention.

Strategy 4: Prioritize facility and infrastructure planning to ensure equitable resource allocation and successful student outcomes.

GOALS, TARGETS & STRATEGIES

GOAL 3 ~ SUCCESS

ACSD's learning environment will inspire a passion for learning and value diverse identities and abilities, while preparing our students to make positive contributions to the community and beyond.



TARGETS

- ACSD will raise each grade-cohort's math and literacy proficiency levels to 80% proficient by 2029, as measured by the VTCAP.
- The achievement gap between the general population and historically marginalized students will be decreased by 50% for each grade-cohort for math and literacy between 2024- 2029 (baseline 2023).
- 4-year cohort HS graduation rates will increase to at least 90%. The gap in graduation rate between historically marginalized students (including students with recognized disabilities) and the general population will be reduced by 50%.
- Decrease in chronic absenteeism and dropout rate, reduction in the gap in both between historically marginalized students and the general population will be reduced by 50%.
- All graduating students are prepared for their transition to adulthood beyond high school, whether pursuing a post-secondary school activity, post-secondary education, vocational training, integrated employment, continuing adult education, independent living, and/or community participation.

STRATEGIES

Strategy 1: Identify and address systemic barriers that affect student success in every classroom due to but not limited to, primary language spoken, socioeconomic status, disability status, or historically marginalized identities.

STRATEGIES (cont)

Strategy 2: Build capacity for culturally responsive practices by bringing in voices to help diversify the curriculum, facilitate difficult or courageous conversations, and put diverse resources into the community.

Strategy 3: Provide multiple pathways for K-12 students that are equally dynamic and celebrated to assure student success.

Strategy 4: Prioritize coherent and transparent professional development that aligns with district goals and targets, supports staff growth, and values diverse identities across our district.

Strategy 5: Continual evaluation for improved and consistent delivery of the district's coordinated curriculum to ensure student success.

Strategy 6: Prioritize early identification of developmental delays/disabilities or students at risk of development delays/disabilities to ensure early intervention that address student needs.

GLOSSARY

Affinity Space: An affinity space is a physical or virtual space intended to be free of bias, conflict, criticism, or potentially threatening actions, ideas, or conversations. The purpose of an affinity space is to provide a positive, affirming environment for groups, often those who feel marginalized, to come together and engage in open and honest dialogues.

Bias: A form of prejudice that results from our need to quickly classify individuals into categories.
Cultural Competency: Cultural competency involves an ability to increase one's awareness about personal biases, assumptions, attitudes and worldviews; specific knowledge of cultures, history, worldviews, languages, and diverse experiences; and a repertoire of skills that allow one to effectively intervene in personal and professional domains.

BIPOC: Stands for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color and is person-first language which enables a shift away from terms like "marginalized" and "minority."

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI): A more detailed summary of the ways aspects of diversity and equity work together. Diversity is the difference between people, things, and experiences. Inclusion is the practice of valuing unique experiences and contributions people have to offer. Equity refers to a practice where people receive resources they need to participate in society.

Equity: The fair treatment, access, opportunity and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that prevent the full participation of some groups. The principle of equity acknowledges that there are historically underserved and underrepresented populations and that fairness regarding these unbalanced conditions is necessary to provide equal opportunities to all groups. Also, see ACSD's educational equity definition on page 2 of this report.
Equity Rubric: A comprehensive tool with a series of categories, questions, and/or criteria to help people better understand equity and make decisions that result in more equitable outcomes.

Flexible Pathways: Flexible Pathways are any combination of high-quality expanded learning opportunities, including academic and experiential components, which build and assess attainment of identified proficiencies and lead to secondary school completion, civic engagement and postsecondary readiness. Flexible pathways allow students to apply their knowledge and skills to tasks of personal interest as part of the personalized learning planning process.

Historically Marginalized Students - those students who have been historically underserved by educational institutions for any one, or more than one, characteristic including ethnic and racial minorities, English Learners, students with Free and Reduced Lunch, students with disabilities, and students who are migrant, foster, or homeless. (As defined in the ESSA Vermont State Plan, Approved by USED)

Implicit Bias: Negative associations expressed automatically that people unknowingly hold and affect our understanding, actions and decisions; also known as unconscious or hidden bias.

Inclusion: Authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policy making in a way that shares power.

LGBTQ+: LGBTQ+ stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (or sometimes questioning), . The "plus" represents other sexual identities. The first four letters of the acronym have been used since the 1990s, but in recent years there has been an increased awareness of the need to be inclusive of other sexual identities to offer better representation.

GLOSSARY

Marginalization: A social process by which individuals or groups are (intentionally or unintentionally) distanced from access to power and resources and constructed as insignificant, peripheral, or less valuable/privileged to a community or “mainstream” society. This term describes a social process, so as not to imply a lack of agency. Examples of marginalized groups include, but are by no means limited to, groups excluded due to race, religion, political or cultural group, age, gender, or financial status.

Multicultural Competency: A process of embracing diversity and learning about people from other cultural backgrounds. The key element to becoming more culturally competent is respect for the ways that others live in and organize the world and an openness to learn from them.

Restorative Practices: Restorative practices are used in schools to foster an equitable and positive school culture. Restorative practices focus on strengthening relationships and connections between individuals, both youth and adults, in a school community. Restorative practices offer schools an alternative to traditional disciplinary actions that center on punishment for misbehavior and breaking rules.

APPENDIX 1:

Recommended Action Steps for Goal 1

The Action Steps below were recommended by the ACSD Action Team in their work developing strategies and action steps. The Board is intentionally including the recommended Action Steps as part of the final Strategic Plan with gratitude to the community members who came to the table to deliberate and recommend them. This inclusion is intended as a recognition of community stakeholder input and as a starting point for the Implementation Team as they put the Strategic Plan into action.

Recommended Action Steps for Goal 1, Strategy 1:

1. Expand learning opportunities outside of school by prioritizing DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) education for all school community members in partnership with DEI education professionals.
2. Create restorative communities, proactive practices, and policies by implementing a human-centered versus rules-centered system of conflict resolution for the entire school community.
3. Create student-centered systems where staff intentionally check-in with students and use tools such as affinity spaces to promote student well-being. Provide staff training to promote student connection. Encourage students' agency to develop these systems and tools.
4. Ensure all school spaces and experiences are welcoming and create a sense of belonging to marginalized school community members—students, staff, families, and community. Invite marginalized community members to inform how to create these spaces and experiences.

Recommended Action Steps for Goal 1, Strategy 2:

1. Starting in PreK, develop appropriate understanding of mental health among students. Offer differentiated mental health support based on students' needs.
2. Train teachers and staff to help identify students that may need mental health support. Include teachers and staff in support plans.
3. Support staff to understand, support, and celebrate the diverse make-up of the ACSD community. Design support systems that are culturally responsive to our community.
4. Recognize that mental health for the majority of students is most supported by choosing to implement approaches to learning that provide students with strong and consistent relationships.
5. Prioritize age appropriate sensory, movement, outdoor time, and creative experiences into the school day from PreK to graduation.

APPENDIX 1:

Recommended Action Steps for Goal 1 (Cont)

The Action Steps below were recommended by the ACSD Action Team in their work developing strategies and action steps. The Board is intentionally including the recommended Action Steps as part of the final Strategic Plan with gratitude to the community members who came to the table to deliberate and recommend them. This inclusion is intended as a recognition of community stakeholder input and as a starting point for the Implementation Team as they put the Strategic Plan into action.

Recommended Action Steps for Goal 1, Strategy 3:

1. Amplify and celebrate student voice and experiences, especially diverse and historically marginalized students.
2. When there is a district or school-wide decision to be made, use an *equity rubric* to examine if the decision benefits marginalized students/school community members. Ensure it does not contribute to inequities experienced by marginalized people. ¹
3. Provide and match families with support needed to negotiate the school systems. Consider family mentors, advocates or liaisons, parent advocacy groups, and district welcome resources.

1. ACSD is still developing its understanding and consistent use of equity as a concept across the district. This includes understanding how to use tools that help address inequities and proactively move the district towards more equitable outcomes. Rubrics are often used in public education settings. The Team recommends ACSD seek additional resources and models from other districts or professionals to find a decision making equity rubric that works well for ACSD's size and capacity. The Team's objective is for the district to consistently use a rubric tool by district and building leaders when making decisions and have it be well understood by those who use it.

APPENDIX 1:

Recommended Action steps for Goal 2

The Action Steps below were recommended by the ACSD Action Team in their work developing strategies and action steps. The Board is intentionally including the recommended Action Steps as part of the final Strategic Plan with gratitude to the community members who came to the table to deliberate and recommend them. This inclusion is intended as a recognition of community stakeholder input and as a starting point for the Implementation Team as they put the Strategic Plan into action.

Recommended Action Steps for Goal 2, Strategy 1

1. Fiscal Management Systems

- Create a *PreK-12 equity-informed budget* using weights and other metrics to factor in small schools and equity needs of students by researching other districts' approaches. 2
- Identify and remedy inequitable approaches to accessing resources within schools.
- If students cannot access the services they need in their elementary school, consider a criteria-informed, *equity-informed school placement* at another ACSD school. 3
- Optimize resource access and allocation to move the district towards a more unified and “one community” structure and culture. 4
- Create an *equity-based rubric* for assessing the district's programs and systems. 1

2. The Team did not have the expertise or time to explore Equity Based Budgeting, but suggest ACSD seek resources, models, and case studies including Burlington School District's Equity Based Budgeting and Vermont's education funding weight formulas to consider how weights and metrics could be developed to fit ACSD's needs. The Team's encourages the Board to move away from per pupil budgeting that does not account for students' unique needs that may include more resources for success (Goal 2). The Team also encourages the Board to challenge concepts of “zero sum” thinking where initiatives compete or funding one initiative means another is cut. Building a budget committed to student access and equity requires prioritizing to meet the strategic plan goals and will allow ACSD to identify creative ways to raise additional revenue.

3. The Team noted students may benefit from placement in another ACSD elementary school for many reasons including special education needs, language access, multiple family households, and harassment/bullying. The Team's encourages ACSD to examine and create clear, consistent school placement criteria and models that does not create more inequity (eg for transportation).

4. The Team observed ACSD schools act independently which contributes to a lack of community and continuity between elementary and middle school. The Team encourages the Board and district to consider ways to unify programs, systems, and approaches separate from school consolidation. Examples include: joint fundraising for student activities, a consistent staffing model between schools, one unified athletic team name, and cross-school projects. The Team noted ACSD's continued conversation about school consolidation and small schools needs may present conflicting approaches to advance equity based decision making, especially for budgeting. The Team did not have the time to adequately explore consolidation and held conflicting opinions among themselves on whether the district should pursue it. However, they agreed the Board and district should proactively dialogue about consolidation with the school community, as it is a critical part of how ACSD defines equitable outcomes for its students.

APPENDIX 1:

Recommended Action Steps for Goal 2 (cont)

The Action Steps below were recommended by the ACSD Action Team in their work developing strategies and action steps. The Board is intentionally including the recommended Action Steps as part of the final Strategic Plan with gratitude to the community members who came to the table to deliberate and recommend them. This inclusion is intended as a recognition of community stakeholder input and as a starting point for the Implementation Team as they put the Strategic Plan into action.

Recommended Action Steps for Goal 2, Strategy 1 (cont)

2. Equitable Staffing

- Develop a strategic staffing model among the schools. Look at recruitment and retention strategies for staff, especially during challenging times.
- Provide students with access to medical services by having at least a minimum of one full time nurse at each school and adequate medical and support *staffing*. 5
- Look at positions (ex: mental health) that need to be paid on a different scale than teachers to more effectively recruit and retain.
- Diversify educator and staff workforce. Specifically, hire BIPOC teachers and administrators and understand the importance of all youth/families seeing BIPOC educators/leaders.
- Create a hiring process that uses an equity lens, accounts for implicit bias in hiring, and prioritizes skills/expertise among applicants' inclusion/equity knowledge and practices.
- Be transparent about the logic, funding sources, and school-level and district-level decision making process behind staffing levels in each school. Use *equity rubric* in these decisions. 1
- Wrap equity into staff supervision and evaluation systems.

5. The Team made this recommendation based on stakeholder feedback on the critical physical and mental well-being of students. The Team recognizes staffing levels in small schools can be a challenging balance. The group encourages the district to examine how equity based budgeting and challenging “zero sum” thinking can reimagine how past staffing decisions often are made, e.g. one new position means the loss of a pre-existing position. Also, there was some disagreement about the recommendation of a minimum full time nurse at every school among the group due to concerns about negative impacts on other staff positions being cut.

APPENDIX 1:

Recommended Action Steps for Goal 2 (cont)

The Action Steps below were recommended by the ACSD Action Team in their work developing strategies and action steps. The Board is intentionally including the recommended Action Steps as part of the final Strategic Plan with gratitude to the community members who came to the table to deliberate and recommend them. This inclusion is intended as a recognition of community stakeholder input and as a starting point for the Implementation Team as they put the Strategic Plan into action.

Recommended Action Steps for Goal 2, Strategy 2

1. Collect data necessary to inform equity-based decisions in the district and align decision making based on data.
2. Prepare an annual report to the Board. Specifically address initiatives and feedback on initiatives for: School Buildings, Staffing, Marginalized identities, Poverty, Special Education, PreK, After School
3. Integrate data into fiscal management and staffing systems.
4. Analyze system responsiveness and favor those that are quick and responsive, vs. sluggish, especially related to addressing issues of harm and inequity, but also special education (efficient response), mental health. Minimize red tape.
5. Include an Equity Narrative in the Budget Book detailing historical process, annual intentional progress, budget effects, and next year goals.
6. Evaluate and address whether our after school and preK programs meet community needs. Address equity gaps in collaboration with community partners.

6. When conducting assessments and analyzing data, the Team recommends the district use culturally competent and equity-informed practices. This includes using a variety of tools to collect data and feedback from the school community.

APPENDIX 1:

Recommended Action Steps for Goal 3

The Action Steps below were recommended by the ACSD Action Team in their work developing strategies and action steps. The Board is intentionally including the recommended Action Steps as part of the final Strategic Plan with gratitude to the community members who came to the table to deliberate and recommend them. This inclusion is intended as a recognition of community stakeholder input and as a starting point for the Implementation Team as they put the Strategic Plan into action.

Recommended Action Steps for Goal 3, Strategy 1

1. Leverage staff knowledge and skill to support general education teachers to adapt and strengthen lesson plans and investigate inconsistencies in classrooms.
2. Use modeling to better anticipate students' needs for accommodations in learning, address inconsistencies in the referral process for special education, and reduce the stigma for special education students.
3. Increase accessibility of curriculum by using evidence-based tools and strategies most effective for all students regardless of ability.

Recommended Action Steps for Goal 3, Strategy 2

1. Offer role-appropriate professional development for teachers, staff, and administrators that creates a responsive and inclusive environment. Add more family education and provide them resources about diversity and culturally responsive communities.
2. Improve and use year-round diverse curriculum content that reflects different cultures, marginalized identities, and socio-economic privilege. Offer curriculum in inclusive, safe, and engaging ways for all students, especially for students with marginalized identities. Create a consistency in curriculum between schools. Seek and incorporate student feedback on curriculum improvements. Incorporate state's new District Quality Standards and Education Quality Reviews from AOE (Act 1, 2019).
3. Create accountability for all staff based on their role and responsibilities in the district in creating an inclusive and responsive environment.

Recommended Action Steps for Goal 3, Strategy 3

1. Establish consistent grading practices, allowing for effective analysis of fairness and equity in assessment.
2. Continue to value and enhance celebrating student success beyond traditionally celebrated high achievements in sports, grades, and college placement.
3. Ensure all pathways are seen and valued as equally viable and vibrant options beginning in elementary school. This includes access to outdoor time, unified arts subjects, and alternative learning environments.
4. Make flexible pathways, including early college, more accessible to students during the transition to the start of high school.
5. Better utilize and introduce the Hannaford Career Center to families and students before high school.

APPENDIX 2:

Research & Reports

2022 Hanover Research Reports (each report is hyperlinked below or can be found at www.acsdvt.org/district-link/equity-work)

- [EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION DIAGNOSTIC, July 2022](#)
- [OPEN-ENDED RESPONSE ANALYSIS, August 2022](#)
- [STRATEGIC PRIORITIES DATA SUMMARY, 2022](#)

The ACSD [Advisory Committee's Recommendations Report](#) is hyperlinked here or can be found at www.acsdvt.org/district-link/strategic-plan under the Advisory Committee section.

The ACSD Action Team [Final Recommendations and Report to the ACSD Board](#) is hyperlinked here or can be found at www.acsdvt.org/district-link/strategic-plan under the Action Team section.



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