

Regional School District 12
District Strategic Plan
2024-2029



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Introduction

Educators and parents know that a district thrives when it articulates a clear vision for teaching and learning. The Region 12 Strategic Plan represents the input of key school community members – staff, administrators, parents, and Board of Education. As stakeholders genuinely invested in the academic success and well-being of all learners, we believe that collaborative and continuous improvement efforts will assure our students are provided with the academic, artistic, athletic and enrichment opportunities to maximize their potential.

Purpose

Our purpose is to build a learning environment that is collaborative, optimizes student achievement, and develops engaged citizens. The world is dynamic as technology has continued to change the global landscape. Educators in Region 12 have a renewed commitment to ensure all students obtain the necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions through safe, inclusive, and challenging learning environments.



Mission

Our mission is clear: The Region 12 community educates, challenges, and inspires all learners to become compassionate, creative, and courageous individuals who are empowered by the knowledge, character, and perseverance to achieve their greatest potential within the global society.

The Process

The development of the Strategic Plan began in 2022 with the guidance and support of the Long-Range Planning Committee (LRP), a subgroup of the Region 12 Board of Education. At that time, the district engaged the services of consultant Richard Lemons. During a presentation by the LRP to the Board of Education in November of 2022, the purpose for developing a strategic plan was highlighted:

- It enables stakeholders to voice and agree on the same priorities and focus on the same path to improvement.
- It is a common thread among all the highest performing districts.
- It provides a road map (litmus test) for investment of resources and operational efficiency.
- It benefits the students.
- It formalizes the school district's mission, vision, values, goals, and objectives.

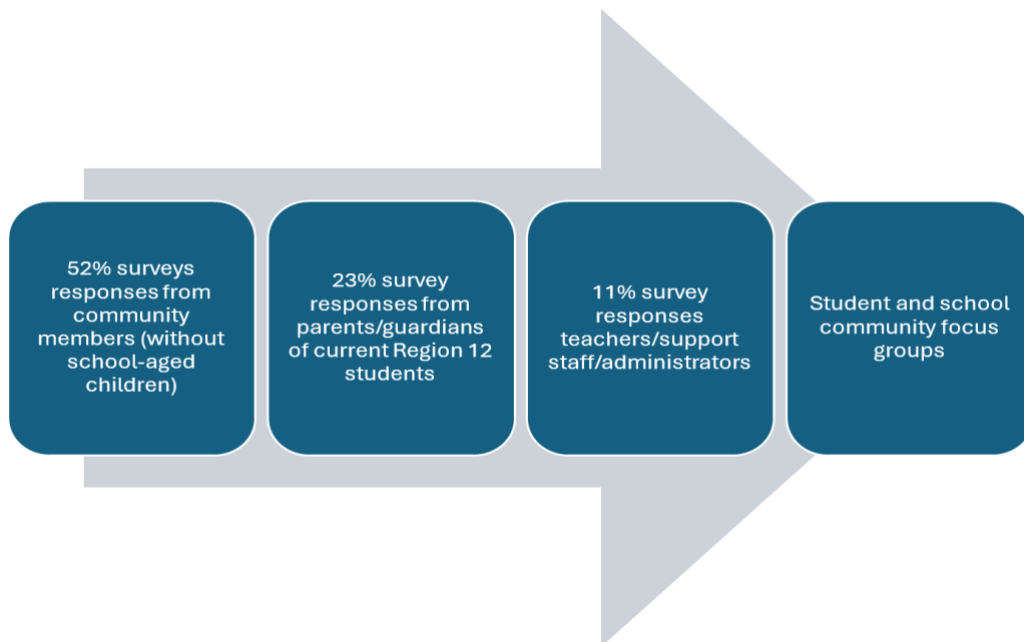
Data gathering was an essential part of the process in the early stage, which solicited input from key stakeholders throughout the school community. Through a survey tool sent to staff, families, and community members, individuals had an opportunity to voice their opinions relevant to advancing school improvement efforts that could directly benefit students and staff. Focus groups were included as another venue to allow for open dialogue among some constituent groups, which included community, school leaders, and students. Data from surveys, open response, and focus groups was consolidated and the results were presented to the Long Range Planning Committee in April 2022.

Data Gathering

A total of 555 responses were received from survey respondents. Survey questions used primarily multiple choice with an opportunity for open response. Participants responded to the following prompts within the survey:

- What should our priorities be in the future?
- What are we good at?
- What do we need to improve?
- What should our values and actions be in coming years?

As the graph below depicts, a majority of the responses came from community members without school-aged children, with the remainder of responses from parents/guardians and Region 12 staff.



Theory of Action

IF we believe that a successful school system operates with a **clear and consistent vision** for continuous improvement, *then leaders* strategically align curricular, instructional, and technological resources that will enhance student learning and performance.

IF we believe in **high-quality teaching and learning**, *then staff and leaders* employ instructional practices, systems, and consistent accountability measures to raise student achievement.

IF we believe that **strong partnerships** lead to the well-being of all students, *then staff and leaders* collaborate with community stakeholders to create optimal learning spaces that provide safe, inclusive, and personalized learning environments.

IF we believe that the **safety and well-being** of students and staff are necessary to build and sustain a positive culture, *then staff and leaders* must create the conditions and opportunities in every building to ensure members feel safe, respected, and valued.

IF we believe that **innovative programs** will benefit students, *then staff and leaders* develop opportunities and programs to meet students' unique needs, abilities, and interests and attract families to our district.

IF we believe that **preparing students for college and career** is our responsibility, *then staff and leaders* build a portrait of a graduate with well-defined academic, civic, and character attributes to ensure their future success.

General Education Terms

Benchmarks - academic benchmarks refer to assessments that measure students against institution standards and learning goals. Benchmarking allows educators to identify students' strengths and weaknesses, which can then inform their future instruction.

Best instructional practices – a wide range of individual activities, policies, and programmatic approaches that are often evidence-based and are likely to have a positive effect on student outcomes.

Calibration - a process of peer review conducted by members of a disciplinary and/or professional community who discuss, review, and compare student work in order to reach a shared understanding of the academic standard such work needs to meet.

Collegial learning walks - a brief classroom visit utilizing a researched-based tool that provides principals and teachers opportunities to reflect on what students are learning, learning strategies, student interaction with the content, and student engagement. A Learning Walk is NOT an evaluation.

Common assessments – assessments that a group of teachers give to their students in their respective classrooms. The purpose of common assessments is to provide data so teachers can compare and analyze the results to improve student learning and teacher instruction.

Evidence-based interventions – interventions are instructional strategies and activities that have proven effective in supporting learners.

Formative assessment - In classrooms, formative assessment refers to frequent, interactive assessments of student progress and understanding to identify learning needs and adjust teaching appropriately.

Innovation - this can include everything from new teaching techniques and curriculum design to the use of digital tools and online resources. The goal of innovation in education is to make learning more individualized, engaging, and effective for students at all levels.

Personalized learning - an educational approach that aims to customize learning for each student's strengths, needs, skills, and interests. Each student gets a learning plan that is based on what they know and how they learn best. Personalized learning does not replace an IEP, a 504 plan, or intervention programs.

Portrait of a Graduate – represents a school district's vision for the 21st Century skills, character traits, and/or social-emotional competencies that students need to succeed in college, career, and life.

Senior Project - is a project that challenges high school seniors to demonstrate their academic knowledge and skills in authentic ways.

Standardized assessment - A standardized test is a test that is administered and scored in a consistent, or "standard" manner. Standardized tests are designed in such a way that the questions and interpretations are consistent and are administered and scored in a predetermined, standard manner.

Student engagement - refers to the degree of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion that students show when they are learning.

Summative assessment - The goal of summative assessment is to evaluate student learning at the end of an instructional unit by comparing it against some standard or benchmark.

Definitions above from CT.GOV, Google, Education Glossary of Terms

Strategic Priorities

Powerful Learning

Ensure the highest quality teaching and learning.

Family and Community Engagement

Enhance relationships with families and community partnerships to expand learning opportunities.

Diversity, Belonging and Well-being

Ensure that all members of the school community are welcomed, valued, safe and supported.

Innovation and Delivering Value

Identify and implement diverse student programming in a fiscally responsible manner to meet student needs and interests and draw families to our district.

Understanding the Priorities and the Key

Each of the Strategic Priorities developed through our planning process grew out of the input from multiple stakeholders. The four priorities in this document represent a comprehensive vision – one that ensures our students will receive the appropriate care, ongoing support, and innovative programming they deserve as they move through Regional School District #12.

Our Strategic Priorities, aligned with our Theory of Action, articulate a broad vision that will guide us in defining the essential attributes of what all students need to know and be able to do through our academic, elective, and enrichment programs K-12. These priorities will help shape curricular shifts, instructional strategies, support systems, staffing decisions, and budgetary requests.

With the four Strategic Priorities at the forefront, the following charts outline the district **Commitments, Strategic Actions, the Key** to identify phases and timeline of our work (Research/ Implementation/Evaluation, and Revision) and the **Deliverables**.

The key

R = Research and Planning Phase

I = Implementation Phase

E = Evaluation and Revision Phase

Strategic Priority 1: Powerful Learning

Commitments	Key	Strategic Actions	Deliverables
1. Establish a deep understanding of teaching and learning committed to engaging students, promoting personalized learning, and supporting high academic achievement	R Yr. 1	• Agree and develop common terms and language within and across subject areas. • Research and develop professional development opportunities to refine best instructional practices and build educator capacity. • Identify areas to improve, support, and deepen teacher knowledge of best practices, powerful learning, and academic expectations.	◇ Surveys of staff, students, and other key stakeholders to assess acquisition and understanding of common language ◇ Classroom observations and assessment of teaching and learning (formal and informal)
	I Yrs. 1 & 2	• Refine new teacher orientation with a defined program, speakers, and resources. • Implement academic benchmarks (common assessments) to determine students' strengths and areas in need of further growth. • Execute a systematic approach to the implementation of best practices. • Develop a cycle for curriculum revision by grade level and subject area (e.g., 3rd grade math) using concept-based framework. • Make curriculum maps and general curricular information transparent to the community.	◇ New teacher orientation, including a plan for speakers and resources ◇ Collegial "learning walks" to share and support best practices and classroom innovation. ◇ Staff selected student-produced artifacts as models and exemplars of excellence. ◇ Curriculum maps accessible through website
	E Yrs. 3 - 5	• Use calibration exercises to evaluate consistency in rigorous instruction and assessment practices (by grade/level). • Monitor and evaluate curriculum units of study to determine student engagement and understanding of concepts and skills. • Refocus staff development on purposeful and strategic opportunities for teacher growth.	◇ Analysis of calibration exercises ◇ Revised staff development plans ◇ Increased student learning (formative/summative/standardized assessments)

Strategic Priority 1: Powerful Learning (continued)

Commitments	Key	Strategic Actions	Deliverables
2. Develop a Portrait of a Graduate to reflect the district's mission for ensuring the success of all students	R Yr. 1	- Explore skills sets and industry standards to ensure alignment with curriculum and instruction, as appropriate. - Organize a K-12 committee of staff and leaders to define the expectations and skill sets of a graduating senior. - Develop tools to assess appropriate integration within instructional practice.	◇ Observations of classroom instruction and assessment ◇ Survey staff, parents, students
	I Yrs. 2 & 3	- Offer professional development for leaders and staff through external consultants and resources related to defining a Portrait of a Graduate K-12. - Invite input from all stakeholders. - Implement assessments to ensure defined attributes and skills are being appropriately, equitably, and consistently applied in curriculum and instruction.	◇ Staff development plans, resources, and feedback ◇ Stakeholder input ◇ Approved assessment tools for evaluation
	E Yrs. 3 - 5	- Review the integration of Portrait of a Graduate attributes at each level and its impact on student learning. - Invite feedback from post-graduate students through planned visits/focus groups.	◇ Analysis of academic performance and achievement trends ◇ Data on college acceptances and graduate career paths ◇ Alumni feedback ◇ Assessments that measure defined attributes of a graduate (e.g., what all students should know and be able to do)

Strategic Priority 1: Powerful Learning (continued)

Commitments	Key	Strategic Actions	Deliverables
3. Use student performance data to make informed decisions and modifications regarding instruction	R Yrs. 1 & 2	• Create a framework for mutually agreed Tier 1 level instructional strategies by grade/level. • Develop a cadre of evidence-based -interventions for students Gr. K-12 (Tier II and III). • Utilize the district's data warehouse to store student performance data.	◇ Grade level /dept. meetings with focus on student performance ◇ Review student performance by grade/subject level ◇ Linkit
	I Yrs. 2 & 3	• Develop professional development for leaders and staff, as needed. • Examine student work and/or other in-house assessments to identify student strengths and areas for growth, both academic and social-emotional. • Use in-house assessments to identify struggling learners and develop intervention plans (Tier II, III).	◇ Strategic modifications to support learning ◇ Common assessments ◇ Documented evidence-based interventions for individual students with specific needs
	E Yrs. 4 & 5	• Evaluate data trends for all student groups and grade levels. • Determine what curricular or instructional changes need to be made to support and improve student learning. • Use data to pursue leadership goals that support improved classroom instruction. • Assess improvements in ELA, Math, and Science, particularly in areas of concern from previous data trends (e.g., math).	◇ Classroom observations and supervision ◇ Next Generation Accountability (State) ◇ Performance on ELA, Math, Science (all students, high need students) and percentage growth target achieved

Strategic Priority 1: Powerful Learning (continued)

Commitments	Key	Strategic Actions	Deliverables
4. Develop a comprehensive facilities plan to ensure optimal learning spaces for each child	R Yr. 1	- Develop and communicate a 5-year facilities/maintenance plan for all buildings to ensure schools are safe, well-maintained, up- to code, and address future needs. - Review outside architect plans for elementary schools regarding building needs, costs, and potential timeline for improvements.	◇ Facilities plan shared with superintendent and BOE ◇ Budget requests tied to specific needs across the district ◇ Architect plans shared for review by the BOE to support ongoing facilities decisions
	I Yrs. 1 & 2	Engage parents and community stakeholders in dialogue regarding the state of elementary schools in all three towns.	◇ Community feedback and input
	E Yrs. 2 - 5	- Evaluate plan to update aging elementary school buildings, including costs. - Determine process for communicating plan and soliciting community support. - Meet the ongoing needs of agriscience in accord with 5-yr. plan; build in costs during budget.	◇ Updated elementary schools ◇ Well-maintained agriscience space to continue to meet the needs of students and families

Strategic Priority 2: Family and Community Engagement

Commitments	Key	Strategic Actions	Deliverables
1. Identify effective communication strategies that promote two-way dialogue and feedback	R Yrs. 1	- Seek new ways to engage the community in dialogue about the schools. - Review current communication strategies and interaction/engagement level of stakeholders. - Research alternative strategies used by other districts in CT.	- Meeting agendas and action plans - Plan for developing new communication strategies (building level and district)
	I Yrs. 2	Implement new strategies to increase shared decision-making within the school community.	Invite parents and other stakeholders to have input (e.g., participation on committees) involving safety, hiring of key roles, and other educational needs
	E Yrs. 2-5	Solicit ongoing feedback.	Review input from parents and stakeholders
2. Inventory community assets and foster connections with members and local organizations eager to support Region 12 students	R Yrs. 1 & 2	Leverage stakeholder committee to plan and conduct community inventory of assets.	Inventory of community partners
	I Yrs. 3 & 4	- Implement a plan to reach out/network with potential partners. - Share with community partners the academic, social, and civic responsibilities expected of Region 12 students.	Network plan to engage community partners
	E Yrs. 4 & 5	Evaluate community partners and assess benefit to students (e.g., learning partner, internship, mentorship).	Data regarding students' perceptions of the benefits of mentors and community partnerships

Strategic Priority 2: Family and Community Engagement (continued)

Commitments	Key	Strategic Actions	Deliverables
3. Utilize Senior Project presentations to promote community involvement	R Yr. 1	Identify community members who would welcome being active participants in Senior Project (mentor, etc.).	Community participants survey/reflection
	I Yrs. 1 & 2	Determine and implement needed modifications to program to enhance student experience and align with Portrait of Graduate work.	Shared plan of program changes in alignment with Portrait of Graduate expectations
	E Yrs. 3 - 5	- Develop prompts to solicit feedback from the community. - Analyze partnerships and their influence on student learning for projects.	- Student, staff, and parent feedback - Information and data regarding students' performance on Senior Projects
4. Develop a multi-faceted marketing strategy that reflects the district programs	R Yr. 2	Engage a district-level team to research potential strategies for marketing the district.	Team minutes with actions steps and timeline for implementation
	I Yr. 3	- Create a plan with timeline of visits/access to information on Region 12 for prospective parents and families. - Reach out to all local real estate brokers/offices to share new programs and other news about the district.	- Family tours - Virtual Tours - Link on website - Evening presentations - Open House for brokers/realtors
	E Yrs. 4 & 5	Evaluate trends and qualitative measures regarding marketing.	Feedback from community-at-large and prospective parents

Strategic Priority 3: Diversity, Belonging, and Well Being

Commitments	Key	Strategic Actions	Deliverables
1. Develop a school culture that promotes safety and belonging for students and staff	R Yr. 1	- Identify an annual climate survey tool given to all students, staff, and families to determine their perceptions on school culture. - Research enhancements that will build and/or refine school culture.	Climate survey tool for school community
	I Yrs. 2 - 4	- Develop a plan to utilize morning meetings, advisories, and other age-appropriate forums to address issues of equity, acceptance, and belonging. - Work with the district's Safety and Security Committee to address building-level concerns that may arise. - Develop and revise policies and practices that demonstrate respect, care, and support for students and staff. - Work with stakeholders to identify potential barriers to programs, services, and enrichment opportunities. - Implement professional development opportunities for staff to address issues regarding equity and inclusion in classrooms.	- Deliberate plan of action and schedules that allow students to voice opinions, concerns - Committee agenda and follow up action steps for district-level issues - Continue to build in practice drills (e.g., evacuation, reunification) - Request potential security and facilities improvements through the budget to enhance safety - Student handbooks that outline clear behavioral expectations
	E Yr. 5	- Analyze school data (e.g., climate survey; focus groups; informal feedback) and make ongoing improvements to student experiences. - Hold all school members accountable for following expectations and showing respect for others.	- Data points from surveys and focus groups - Disciplinary records and consequences - Parent conferences

Strategic Priority 3: Diversity, Belonging, and Well Being (continued)

Commitments	Key	Strategic Actions	Deliverables
2. Ensure a positive and safe school climate	I Yrs. 2 - 5	- Facilitate student-led conversations on issues of wellness and mental health. - Provide appropriate support for students struggling socially (e.g., lunch buddy, peer mentor). - Promote opportunities for students to share information related to safety and security.	- Instruction during health classes - Counseling sessions - Explicit services and programs for students struggling with social-emotional issues - Anonymous tips for students on safety and security issues
	E Annual	- Assess the number of students accessing counseling. - Assess the number and quality of anonymous tips.	Data from students' use of services
3. Demonstrate a commitment to increase diversity among the Region 12 workforce	R Yr. 1	Research and identify recruitment tools and practices to increase culturally responsive recruitment and hiring efforts.	Evidence-based recruitment tools from CSDE (CT State Dept. of Education) and other educational organizations
	I Yr. 1	Implement a recruitment plan through our Human Resources Department (HR) that will support the attraction, recruitment, and hiring of employees from diverse cultures and backgrounds.	Diversity Recruitment and Hiring Plan
	E Yr.1/ Annual	Submit Diversity Recruitment Plan to CSDE for evaluation and suggestions.	- Accepted plan by CSDE; published on HR tab (Region 12 website) - Data to inform future recruitment and hiring efforts (e.g., new candidates and retention of employees) - Prospective candidates/new employee feedback

Strategic Priority 4: Innovation and Delivering Value

Commitments	Key a	Strategic Actions	Deliverables
1. Research and identify creative opportunities to attract and sustain interest in Region 12 programs and services	R Yr. 2	As a collective team of leaders and district staff, continue to seek out new and innovative programs that will support student interest.	Formalized district process to request and approve new strategies or programs to advance student opportunities in Region 12
	I Yrs. 2-3	- Visit other districts to learn about alternative and innovative programs to advance student needs, interests, and college/career aspirations. - Implement new or refine existing programs that will support innovative opportunities to advance learning (e.g., dual enrollment, elementary partnerships, agriscience, astronomy).	New programs and innovative opportunities; approved and budgeted
	E Yrs. 3-5	Review, monitor, and make modifications to ensure programs and strategies benefit student learning and growth.	Report that features program improvements and their return on investment (ROI)
2. Create a system of continuous improvement	R Yr. 1	Investigate new, creative instructional strategies to deepen student engagement in the classroom.	Documented list of potential programs and opportunities to advance student learning
	I Yrs. 2 - 4	- Implement revised curricular programs and classroom instruction to deepen students' understanding of concepts and skills. - Continue to improve the agriscience program and its ability to offer state-of-the-art programs.	- Updated and revised curriculum units of study - Ongoing improvements to the delivery of programs and services for agriscience students
	E Yr. 4-5	Evaluate Region 12 improvements and the benefit to students and/or staff.	- Self-reflection - Qualitative and quantitative data on program improvements

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