



WATERTOWN
CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Our Children, Our Future!

*"Pathway to Excellence: Nurturing Our Children,
Shaping Our Future"*

Strategic Plan
July 01, 2023 - June 30, 2028

Dear Watertown City School District Community,

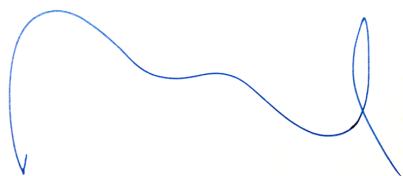
In our ongoing pursuit of excellence, collaboration, and intentionality, we are thrilled to present the outcomes of our collective efforts—the "Pathway to Excellence: Nurturing Our Children, Shaping Our Future." This strategic plan stems from inclusive planning sessions involving our Board of Education, Leadership Team, dedicated staff, fabulous students, engaged parents, and community members.

Your invaluable feedback has been instrumental in shaping a comprehensive plan that propels us forward in our journey of growth and achievement. The strategic plan will serve as the cornerstone of our endeavors, guiding our mission to connect with every child and family while strengthening our bonds as a school and community over the next five years.

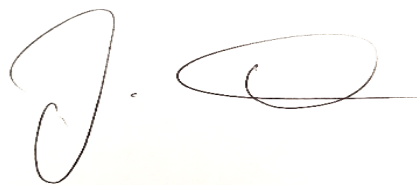
Together, we embark on this shared commitment, and we eagerly anticipate serving as your partner in the ongoing pursuit of becoming a model district of excellence.

We extend our gratitude for your feedback and unwavering support. Your collaborative spirit and teamwork are pivotal in shaping the future success of our district and the lives of our students.

Sincerely,



*Dr. Larry C. Schmiegel
Superintendent of Schools*



*Jason Harrington
President, Board of Education*



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Process Introduction and Overview

Strategic Planning is intended to:

- Involve all members of the school community and reflect their shared perspectives.
- Allow stakeholder representatives to review community feedback to clearly define the district's mission, vision and core values.
- Engage a team in defining the priorities of the district and suggesting action steps to accomplish objectives.
- Facilitate action planning focused on identifying who, when, and how the work will get done.
- Provide the district with a road map that is transparent, accountable, and focused.
- Enable the district's efforts to innovate, allocate resources and continuously grow in a coordinated, thoughtful, and aligned manner.
- Be an iterative, evolving, and ongoing process that builds from one year to the next while reflecting emerging needs and changing demands.



Steps in the Watertown City School District's Strategic Planning Process

October 2023: Stakeholder Feedback Collected



November 2023: Communicate Strengths & Identify Needs for Strategic Planning



February 2024: Present the "DRAFT" Strategic Plan to the Board of Education during an Open Session



February 2024: Board of Education approves Strategic Plan



June 2024: Confer with the Strategic Planning Team to refine action steps for the upcoming school year.



July 2024: Present the updated Strategic Plan to the Board of Education, community, Administrative Cabinet, and staff.



Mission

Vision

Core Values

In the Watertown City School District, we recognize that successful organizations articulate their purpose, envision their future state to fulfill that purpose, and establish guiding principles for their actions. These fundamental elements are known as the mission, vision, and core values.

Throughout our Strategic Planning Process, the school community has collectively defined our raison d'être, identified the outcomes that occur as we work toward our mission, and outlined the expected behaviors for both individuals and the organization as a whole.

Mission Statement:

Watertown City School District is committed to building a caring culture that fosters lifelong learners and responsible citizens.

Vision Statement:

At Watertown City School District, our vision is to cultivate a vibrant educational community marked by a caring culture that nurtures lifelong learners and responsible citizens. Grounded in our core values, we aspire to be a district renowned for our unwavering commitment to exceptional programs that meet the diverse needs of all students. Through the cultivation of meaningful relationships, welfare-centric actions, and a dedication to safety and security, we are dedicated to fostering an environment where every individual feels valued and respected. Our vision encompasses the creation of a caring, inclusive, and equitable space that celebrates diversity and sets high expectations for achievement. We are united in our pursuit of excellence, challenging students to reach their full potential academically, socially, and personally. Watertown City School District envisions a future where each member of our community thrives, inspired to embrace learning and contribute responsibly to the world around them.



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Core Values:

Watertown City School District believes in:

Priority on Safety and Security:

- We believe in prioritizing the safety and security of our school community, ensuring an environment where students and staff feel secure, both physically and emotionally.

Welfare-Centric Actions:

- We believe in making decisions and taking actions with the welfare and best interests of all individuals in mind, fostering a supportive and caring environment.

Creating a Caring and Inclusive Environment:

- We believe in creating a school environment that is caring, inclusive, equitable, and welcoming, where diversity is celebrated and every individual feels valued and respected.

Building Meaningful Relationships:

- We believe in cultivating strong and meaningful relationships with all students, staff, and stakeholders, recognizing that positive connections are foundational to a thriving educational community.

Commitment to Exceptional Programs:

- We believe in focusing on and delivering exceptional programs that cater to the diverse needs of all students, ensuring a well-rounded and enriching educational experience.

Fostering High Expectations:

- We believe in fostering high expectations for achievement, challenging students to reach their full potential academically, socially, and personally.

Expecting Excellence:

- We believe in expecting excellence in everything we do, setting a standard of high-quality performance across all aspects of the educational experience.

These belief statements serve as guiding principles for Watertown City School District, reflecting our collective commitment to providing an exceptional, inclusive, and supportive learning environment for all.



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Priority Areas

Based on community feedback and initial planning by the Board of Education and Executive Leadership Team, the following areas were identified as priorities to be focused on in order to fulfill the mission of the district. A district goal has been developed for each area.

Increasing the Graduation Rate

- **Goal:** Increase the WCSD graduation rate by implementing individualized learning and engagement experiences inside and outside of the classroom for all students.

Increasing Meaningful Student Engagement

- **Goal:** Enhance overall student engagement in the Watertown City School District by implementing comprehensive initiatives that focus on creating dynamic and inclusive learning environments, fostering meaningful connections between students and educators, and providing diverse extracurricular opportunities that cater to students' interests and talents.

Improving Overall Student Attendance

- **Goal:** Improve the student attendance rate in the Watertown City School District by implementing targeted strategies and interventions that foster a positive and supportive learning environment, address barriers to attendance, and actively engage students, parents, and the community in promoting regular school attendance.

Enhancing Behavioral Supports for Students

- **Goal:** Enhance student behavioral supports in the Watertown City School District through evidence-based strategies, positive school climate initiatives, targeted interventions for at-risk students, and professional development for staff. The objective is to create a safe and supportive learning environment that promotes the social-emotional well-being of all students.

Enhancing Infrastructure (Buildings & Grounds)

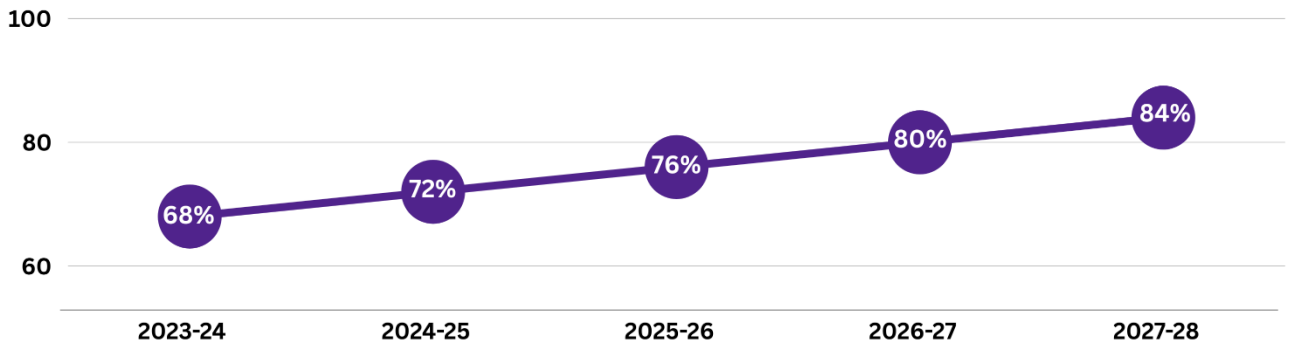
- **Goal:** Improve infrastructure (buildings and grounds) in the Watertown City School District by implementing strategic enhancements and maintenance initiatives. This includes modernizing facilities, addressing critical maintenance needs, and creating a safe, conducive, and aesthetically pleasing environment for optimal student learning and staff well-being.



Action Plans

The outlined plans have been crafted to direct the district's efforts towards achieving the goals within each priority area. Each action step serves as a strategic approach to fulfilling an objective, with a set timeframe established, and the specified parties taking on the primary responsibility for spearheading the initiatives.

Priority 1: Increasing the Graduation Rate



In formulating our goal to increase the graduation rate, we have deliberately set yearly percentage increases that are both meaningful and achievable. It is crucial for us to recognize the individual journeys of our students, and by setting realistic targets, we aim to provide every child the opportunity to strive for and attain graduation. Our commitment extends beyond statistics; it underscores our unwavering belief that each student can reach their full potential, and graduation is a significant milestone on their unique educational path.

Action Steps:	Person/People Responsible	Timeframe
Form a Superintendent's Student Advisory Council	Superintendent	Summer-Fall 2023
Form a Superintendent's Teacher Advisory Council	Superintendent	Summer-Fall 2023
Assemble a high school scheduling committee to assess current offerings and propose improvements for enhancing student experiences	Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Scheduling Committee	Annually
Conduct Root Cause Analysis of current graduation rate	Director of Student Empowerment and Success	Fall 2023/Winter 2024
Implement New Student Checklist	Director of Student Empowerment and Success	Fall 2023/Winter 2024



Create a Graduation Coach position for WHS to focus on at-risk students w/ a Hire Date of 6/1/24 or sooner	Assistant Superintendent for Personnel and Student Services	Winter/Spring 2023-24
Create a position for a full-time Credit Recovery Teacher at WHS w/ a Hire Date of 6/1/24	Assistant Superintendent for Personnel and Student Services	Spring 2024
Review and strengthen instructional support services in the areas of ELA, Math, Social Studies & Science	Assistant Superintendent for Instruction	Ongoing
Implement Early Warning Systems Training for Administrators & PPS Teams	Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Director of Student Empowerment, Principals, Teachers, Student Support Services	Ongoing
Develop WCSD Graduate Exit Survey	Portrait of a Graduate	Spring 2024

Priority 2: Increasing Meaningful Student Engagement

District Goal: Enhance overall student engagement in the Watertown City School District by implementing comprehensive initiatives that focus on creating dynamic and inclusive learning environments, fostering meaningful connections between students and educators, and providing diverse extracurricular opportunities that cater to students' interests and talents.

Action Steps:	Person/People Responsible	Timeframe
Administer student engagement survey	Director of STEM, Principals	Spring 2024
Analyze results of student engagement survey to determine action plan	Superintendent, Asst. Superintendent for Personnel and Student Services, Asst. Superintendent for Instruction, Director of Student Empowerment, Principals	Spring 2024



Utilize i-Ready, STAR, NYS Assessments and Cognos data to guide curriculum and teaching practice improvements.	Asst. Superintendent for Instruction, Principals, Instructional Coaches, Teachers	Ongoing
Increase proficiency/mastery rates on state assessments each year.	Asst. Superintendent for Instruction, Principals, Instructional Coaches, Teachers	Ongoing
Implement Science of Reading, Effective Teaching, Breakthrough Coach, and Science of Learning professional development and support to empower teachers' and administrators' in assisting all students.	Asst. Superintendent for Instruction, Principals, Instructional Coaches, Teachers	Ongoing
Implement a data-driven instructional coaching program utilizing student performance data and teacher feedback to identify specific areas for improvement. This will include regular analysis of assessment results and teacher observations to inform coaching strategies and ensure targeted support for educators	Asst. Superintendent for Instruction, Instructional Coaches, Principals, Teachers	Ongoing
Enhance the new teacher program to offer increased support for first-year educators.	Asst. Superintendent for Instruction, Instructional Coaches, Teachers	Ongoing

Priority 3: Improving Overall Student Attendance

District Goal: Improve the student attendance rate in the Watertown City School District by implementing targeted strategies and interventions that foster a positive and supportive learning environment, address barriers to attendance, and actively engage students, parents, and the community in promoting regular school attendance.

Chronic Absenteeism Rate for: 2023-2024 will be, at the most, 42%

(chronic absenteeism is the percentage of students missing 10 percent or more of school days in one school year)

Action Steps:	Person/People Responsible	Timeframe
Identify root causes for absences and provide all-encompassing child welfare and attendance services schoolwide. This includes tailored absence prevention and intervention support.	Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Assistant Superintendent for Personnel and Student	Ongoing



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	Services, District Attendance Committee	
Empower families to actively contribute to student attendance, making it a shared responsibility by holding school-based "attendance nights" within all schools with professional development for parents/guardians on attendance trends, parenting, and health information	Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Assistant Superintendent for Personnel and Student Services, District Attendance Committee	Ongoing
Utilize school teams to engage in personalized daily outreach to families of students with low attendance	Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Assistant Superintendent for Personnel and Student Services, Principals, Home-School Coordinators	Ongoing
Introduce attendance incentive initiatives for students	Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Assistant Superintendent for Personnel and Student Services, District Attendance Committee, Building Principals	Ongoing

Priority 4: Enhancing Behavioral Supports for Students

District Goal: Enhance student behavioral support in the Watertown City School District through evidence-based strategies, positive school climate initiatives, targeted interventions for at-risk students, and professional development for staff. The objective is to create a safe and supportive learning environment that promotes the social-emotional well-being of all students.

Decrease Student Disciplinary Referrals during the 2023-2024 school year by 2%

Action Steps:	Person/People Responsible	Timeframe
Strengthen the PBIS program in each building by increasing number of committee members across the buildings	Director of Student Empowerment and Success/Asst. Superintendent of Instruction, Principals, PBIS Teams	Winter 2024



Provide funding for PBIS in each building at a per pupil rate	Director of Student Empowerment and Success, Asst. Superintendent of Instruction	2024-2025
Distinguish between minor and major referrals in SchoolTool and implement consistent identification and documentation of these two types of referrals across District schools	Director of Student Empowerment and Success, Asst. Superintendent of Instruction	Spring 2024
Process all disciplinary referrals within two days of the infraction and notify all parents/guardians by phone of such referrals	Assistant Superintendent for Personnel and Student Services, Building Principals	Winter 2024
Begin implementing the PAX Good Behavior Game in some K-4 classrooms	Director of Student Empowerment and Success, Asst. Superintendent of Instruction, Principals, Teachers	Winter 2024
Conduct a Pupil Personnel Services (PPS) "personnel inventory" of how staff are being assigned/utilized in each building.	Assistant Superintendent for Personnel and Student Services, Building Principals	Winter 2024
Create a PPS "playcard" of the roles/responsibilities of PPS personnel titles so that staff know to whom to go/send students who are in need of assistance	Assistant Superintendent for Personnel and Student Services, PPS Staff Members	Winter 2024
Provide professional development for all staff (to include First Student drivers/aides) on the scope, substance, and purpose of behavior referrals	Assistant Superintendent for Personnel and Student Services, Building Principals	Winter, Spring 2024



Priority 5:		
<p>District Goal: Improve infrastructure (buildings and grounds) in the Watertown City School District by implementing strategic enhancements and maintenance initiatives. This includes modernizing facilities, addressing critical maintenance needs, and creating a safe, conducive, and aesthetically pleasing environment for optimal student learning and staff well-being.</p>		
Action Steps:	Person/People Responsible	Timeframe
Meet with Fiscal Advisors of Syracuse, King & King Architects, and Construction Associates LLC to discuss strategies and timelines for building condition surveys.	Superintendent, Asst. Superintendent of Finance, Director of Facilities	November 2023
Conduct site visits with custodians, administration, and key staff in each building to identify focus areas for each site in the building condition survey as required by NYSED	Superintendent, Asst. Superintendent of Finance, Director of Facilities	Ongoing
Meet with two BOE members, district leadership, Fiscal Advisors of Syracuse, Construction Associates LLC, and King & King Architects to review the progress of the building condition survey and discuss next steps	Superintendent, Asst. Superintendent of Finance, Director of Facilities	Ongoing
Initiate and Implement Capital Improvement Project: 13M (Wiley/Case/WHS)	Superintendent, Asst. Superintendent of Finance and Director of Facilities	Ongoing
Implement the Capital Improvement Project for Watertown City School District - Turf Installation 1.4M	Superintendent, Asst. Superintendent of Finance and Director of Facilities	Ongoing



Accountability and Implementation Plan

What gets measured, gets done. It is important to stay focused on the work at hand and to hold each other accountable for achieving outcomes. In the spirit of transparency, diligence to the task at hand and sharing our progress as a team, the following schedule has been developed for regular reporting on progress in working towards objectives.

Timeframe	Activity	Who
February 2024	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strategic Plan Presented to the Community and Adopted by the BOE 2. Strategic Plan "unpacked" and then shared with the faculty and staff. 3. Strategic Plan unpacked with smaller groups. 	Superintendent, BOE Superintendent Principal
2023-2024 Quarterly	Strategic Plan Updates provided to the BOE, Community, and Staff	Superintendent and Administrators
February-March 2024	Strategic Plan Budget Recommendations Made Strategic Expenditures Finalized	Superintendent and Administrators
June 2024	Final Report Strategic Plan Updates provided to the BOE, Community, and Staff	Superintendent and Administrators
July 2024	Strategic Plan Planning Day Held Plan Updated for 24-25	BOE Superintendent Administrators Staff Community Members



2023 Strategic Planning Committee

Strategic Planning Committee - Focused

Xion Newton, Student
 Evan Grosse, Student
 Colleen O'Shaughnessey, Parent
 Christin Filipelli, Parent
 Kevin Chamberlin, CCE
 Jen Lachenauer, Pivot
 Julie Williams, Teacher Assistant
 Linda Griffin, Senior Typist
 Laurie Faunce, Teacher
 Kevin Todd, Teacher
 Matthew Burdick, Director of Student Empowerment & Success
 Chad Fairchild, Principal
 Tina Lane, Asst. Superintendent for Personnel and Student Services
 Lynn Gaffney, Asst. Superintendent for Instruction
 Dr. Larry C. Schmiegel, Superintendent
 Milly Smith, Board of Education Member

Administration Team Members

Dr. Larry C. Schmiegel, Superintendent
 Tina Lane, Asst. Superintendent for Personnel and Student Services
 Lynn Gaffney, Asst. Superintendent for Instruction

Board of Education Members

Jason Harrington, President
 Rande Richardson, Vice President
 Culley Gosier
 Lorie Converse
 Milly Smith
 John Cain

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to over 100 dedicated students, staff, faculty, administrators, parents, community sponsors, and Board of Education members whose collective wisdom, commitment, and collaborative spirit have been instrumental in shaping the Watertown City School District's Strategic Plan. Your diverse perspectives and unwavering support have been the driving force behind this visionary roadmap for our educational community. Together, we are poised for a future of excellence, inclusivity, and continuous growth, thanks to your invaluable contributions.



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