



Ardsley School District - Strategic Planning Guide 2019

OUR MISSION: Building on a tradition of academic excellence and success for every student, we cultivate passionate learners and informed global citizens who actively influence their world.

The Strategic Planning Council was formed in fall 2018 and included over **40 members from our learning community** including parents, students, teachers and administrators from each school (CRS, AMS & AHS), as well as Board of Education and community members. The Strategic Planning Council analyzed qualitative and quantitative data gathered from two distinct surveys and crafted thoughtful **strategic priorities and initiatives that will guide our district** for the next three to five years.

Priority 1: Learning & Achievement

Goal: To ensure that all learners have access to robust learning opportunities tailored to their needs, strengths and interests while maximizing their personal potential and inspiring collective achievement.

Learning and achievement drive our mission as a school district. Current research indicates the more we can incorporate student choice and control, academic challenges and opportunities for collaboration in our curriculum, the greater our students' motivation, engagement and levels of effort and persistence will be. This priority greatly focuses on these key factors and will also examine the feasibility of extending our world language program and our academic support resources.

Priority 2: Social & Emotional Learning (SEL)

Goal: To help all our students acquire and effectively apply the skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions in order to achieve success in school and life.

This work has already begun throughout our district with programs such as RULER, Challenge Success, No Place for Hate, the Building Bridges Club and more. We need to continue and expand our focus in every classroom and school so that it becomes part of our district culture. These initiatives will work to further promote positive social behaviors, improve student attitudes toward learning, and reduce stress and depression amongst our students.

Priority 3: Student / School Life

Goal: To foster a love of learning in every student so that they have the courage to explore their interests, are self-motivated, demonstrate confidence and collaborate freely.

This priority recognizes that scheduling, involvement in activities outside the classroom, and interactions with faculty, staff and classmates are a large part of student success. We will analyze the master schedules and scheduling process at each school and determine how we can best balance instructional time, student choice, and student wellness. Also included in this priority will be determining how to better provide students with desirable nutritious lunch options, improving communication channels with students and families, reviewing safety procedures throughout the district and evaluating transportation enhancements.

Priority 4: Learning Environment

Goal: To ensure a learning environment where students feel safe, supported, welcomed and respected and that also promotes student health, engagement, learning, and growth.

As a high performing and desirable school district, we continue to see increases in our enrollment. Within this priority we will examine the need for additional physical space to better accommodate anticipated growth, support our expanding curriculum needs, maintain class sizes optimal for learning and ensure student safety. In addition, this priority will review our current physical environment for adequate resources, safety, comfort, and overall cleanliness.

Summary of Priorities and Initiatives

(**Bold** designates Year 1; ****** Indicates Central Office initiatives / responsibilities)

Learning and Achievement

Improvement Initiatives

- **Students should have a voice and choice in their selection of courses and electives.**
- All students must have appropriate support to meet their academic needs.
- Examine the feasibility of extending our world language programming to foster early exposure, and its impact on secondary world language instruction.
- Evaluate additional student feedback and creative thinking opportunities in courses and curriculum.
- Research how to incorporate more student voice in his/her learning experiences.

Enhancement Initiatives

- Curriculum is responsive to the academic and societal landscape while also engaging and challenging our students.
- Better understand how field trips are selected, organized, and implemented. If appropriate, make adjustments to increase and enhance these learning experiences.
- Evaluate our academic programs to ensure students have the opportunity to engage in a well-rounded educational experience.
- Ensure that classroom learning experiences have collaborative opportunities for students to engage in.
- Ensure that student learning includes opportunities to experience and/or thrive in music and the arts. Students are given choices whenever possible.

Social & Emotional Learning (SEL)

Improvement Initiatives

- **Continue the initial implementation of Social Emotional Learning with RULER and Challenge Success. Each building will work with their SEL teams to develop appropriate and attainable action steps / tasks to fulfill this initiative.**
- **Review and develop an implementation plan based on the recommendations made in the 2019 Tri-States Consultancy on Guidance K-12.**
- Identify opportunities to improve social interactions throughout our learning community.

Enhancement Initiatives

- If necessary, enhancement initiatives for this priority will be developed on a building basis as part of the RULER and Challenge Success implementation.

Student / School Life

Improvement Initiatives

- **Determine how to improve the lunch options in all buildings.****
- **Evaluate the master schedule to balance instructional time, student wellness, and student choice.**
- **Ensure the creation of a master schedule that maximizes instructional time, student choice and student wellness.**
- Assess what mental health and wellness programs, services and support are available to students, staff and families. Make adjustments as appropriate.
- Students should get enough homework to reinforce learning and have a school/life balance.
- Evaluate start time optimization for all schools, external factors, implications, and research.
- Collect data and evaluate placing monitors back on the buses at one or more of the building levels. (This includes looking at bus schedules, number of riders per bus, training of bus staff.)

Enhancement Initiatives

- **Review safety procedures and protocols for daily routines and emergency situations. Make adjustments as warranted to improve how students feel about their safety.**
- Assess current transition procedures from grade to grade to ensure effective support for both students and families in the process.
- Develop a shared understanding of faculty and staff support of our students. Identify current practices, analyze student needs, develop an action plan and develop criteria to evaluate success.
- Review current arrival and dismissal procedures for both walkers and busers. Consider and implement actions to improve and enhance the safety and efficiency.
- Review current practices, procedures and communication channels between school/district and home. Monitor effectiveness and enhance communication strategies as appropriate.
- Foster positive engagement with parents in all aspects of learning and student life.
- Evaluate the accessibility and quality of all after-school programs and modify guidelines as appropriate.
- Monitor and adjust the technology available to students and staff to ensure that our resources are progressive, purposeful, and developmentally appropriate.

Learning Environment

Improvement Initiatives

- **Research the need for additional classroom space and develop a plan to create more space and better accommodate increased enrollment.****
- **We need to maintain temperatures that are comfortable throughout the year.****

Enhancement Initiatives

- Monitor indoor and outdoor facilities to ensure that they are clean, safe and meet the changing needs of our learning environment.