



Rutland City Public Schools



Strategic Plan



Table of Contents

Preface	2
From the Superintendent	3
From the School Board President	4
Portrait of a Graduate	5
Our Process	6
Strategic Plan Overview	7
Goals, Objectives, and Strategies	8
Acknowledgements	14
Glossary of Terms	15



Preface

We are pleased to present to you the strategic plan for Rutland City Public Schools (RCPS), which outlines our vision and commitment to enhancing the educational experience of your children. This document embodies our dedication to creating a school district where every student has the opportunity to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Our goals, objectives, and strategies are centered around three key priority areas: Teaching and Learning, Evolution of Wellness through Inclusive School Communities, and Resources for Success. We believe that by implementing these strategies, we can create a school district that fosters academic excellence, student well-being, and a supportive community. Your involvement and support are integral to the success of this plan, and we look forward to working together to achieve our shared goals.



From the Superintendent

Dear RCPS Community,

Society's pace of change and expectations for adult success evolve with greater speed than ever. Additionally, as our society faces the challenges of the age, we are ever more in need of values like civic virtue and service to the community. Given this context, educators think constantly about how to best prepare our young people. We consider questions such as, "What skills will our Kindergarten students need when they finish high school?" Or, "How can our 10th grade students become contributors and even leaders right now in our local community?"

The document that you are reading is our plan to address those questions. Last year, members of our Rutland community studied and developed our vision of the future for our students, our Portrait of a Graduate. The product requires that our curriculum and teaching practices address the whole child. Not only must we continue to teach

traditional skills like critical thinking and communication, but we need to refine systems to ensure that our students adopt practices that lead to wellness. And although the following are not new to schools, our Portrait asks that our schools use instruction to emphasize the concepts of adaptability, collaboration, empathy, and integrity. Furthermore, our community makes the promise that we provide this high-quality, relevant, and meaningful curriculum to all students, regardless of background.

This year, we again engaged the community to chart a path to meet the vision of the Portrait of a Graduate. This strategic plan is our commitment to ensuring every student achieves academic success and develops the traits necessary to thrive in a rapidly changing world. We focus on enhancing teaching and learning, promoting student and staff wellness, and effectively managing resources to support our

students' journey toward becoming well-rounded, empowered individuals.

This strategic plan represents the voice of our entire Rutland community. It reflects our collective dedication to creating a nurturing, challenging, and inclusive educational environment. Over the next few years, we invite your collaboration in helping our schools guide our children toward becoming competent, healthy, and caring individuals who will lead our future Rutland, our Vermont, and our world.

Sincerely,

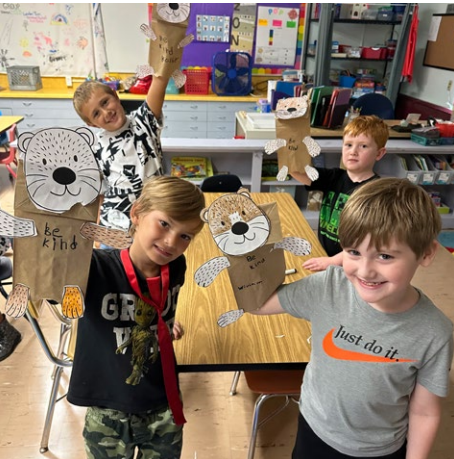


Bill Olsen

Superintendent, RCPS



From the School Board President



The RCPS Board and school administration began the strategic planning process with the hope of emerging from the pandemic with a means to help our kids not only recover from the consequences it brought to us, but also to help them thrive and be ready to become fully engaged adults. Through the development of our Portrait of a Graduate, we created a vision of the future for our students, the target for our schools to lead our students toward success and to their fullest potential. Using federal grant money to fully fund the visioning and strategic planning project, we entered into a rewarding partnership with the national education organization, Battelle for Kids.

We gathered all the stakeholders – community agencies, area businesses, parents, teachers, staff, and students – many times over the course of the past two years to formulate this vision and a plan to realize it. Additionally, we focused on getting a

firm understanding of where our students are in relation to these objectives. What evolved is a very impressive and comprehensive Portrait of a Graduate and a strategic plan, which you will read more about on the following pages.

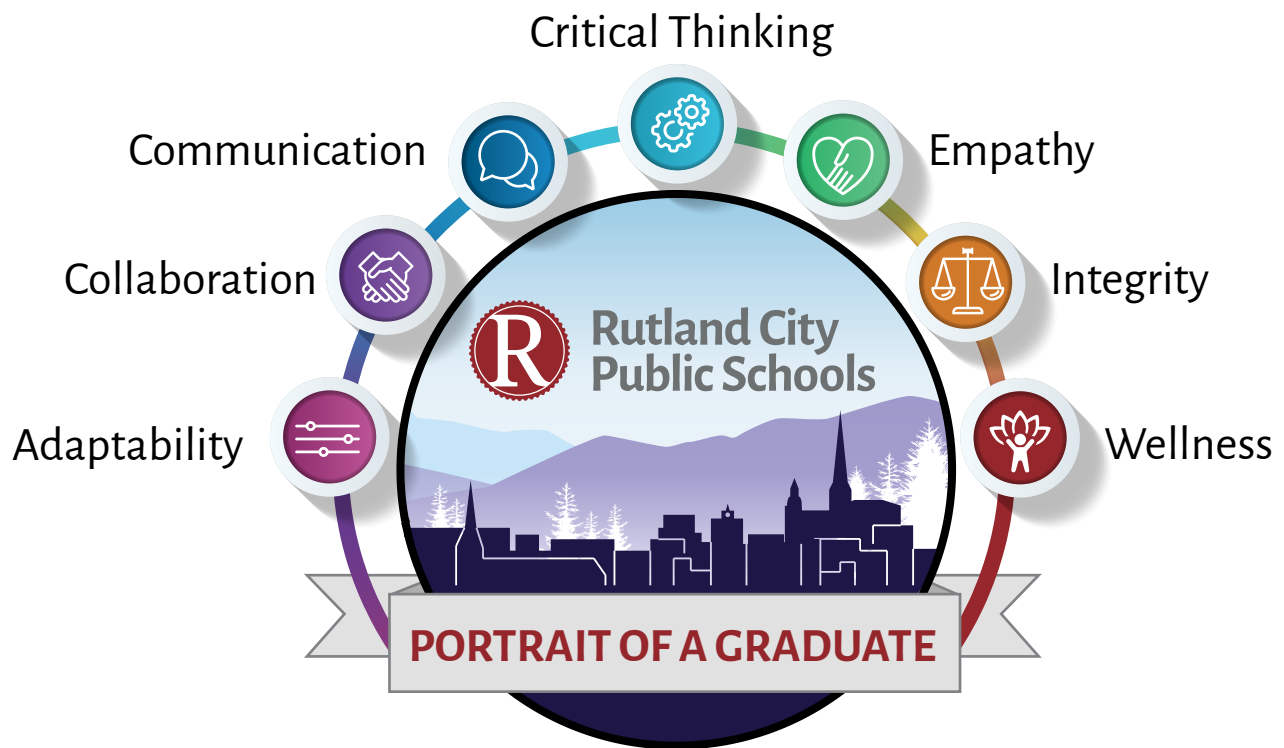
The way in which we came together as a community to discuss our hopes and dreams for our students and for RCPS was inspiring. Developing the Portrait of a Graduate and strategic plan demonstrated a shared commitment to making our city stronger and better. It is a very exciting time to be part of RCPS. Our entire community can be very proud of this work.

Sincerely,

Cathy Solsaa

RCPS Commissioner, Chairperson





ADAPTABILITY contributes to resilience, improvement, and success in the pursuit of a solution, product, or performance. RCPS graduates navigate ambiguity, criticism, and obstacles and choose to persevere.



COLLABORATION allows the achievement of shared goals by working together. RCPS graduates integrate their talents into diverse groups, honor the strengths and contributions of others, and incorporate feedback to advance the group's goals.



COMMUNICATION conveys thoughts, feelings, needs, and information and is essential to our interconnectedness. RCPS graduates listen, observe, and read with attention, openness, and curiosity in order to decipher meaning, intentions, and nuances. They formulate and deliver effective spoken, written, and non-verbal messages for a range of purposes and variety of audiences.



CRITICAL THINKING is explorative, rational, and evidence-based. RCPS graduates approach problems with creativity. They identify, develop, evaluate, prioritize, and apply ethical, equitable, innovative, and responsible solutions.



EMPATHY fosters compassion and an understanding of others' perspectives. RCPS graduates acknowledge different perspectives and lived experiences, recognize our shared humanity, and treat one another with dignity and kindness.



INTEGRITY is demonstrated by an adherence to a shared set of values. RCPS graduates are honest, reliable, responsible, and trustworthy. They hold themselves and others accountable.



WELLNESS is an evolution of person, place, and practice. RCPS graduates pursue healthy mental and physical lifestyles and promote communities where all may thrive while striving for balance.



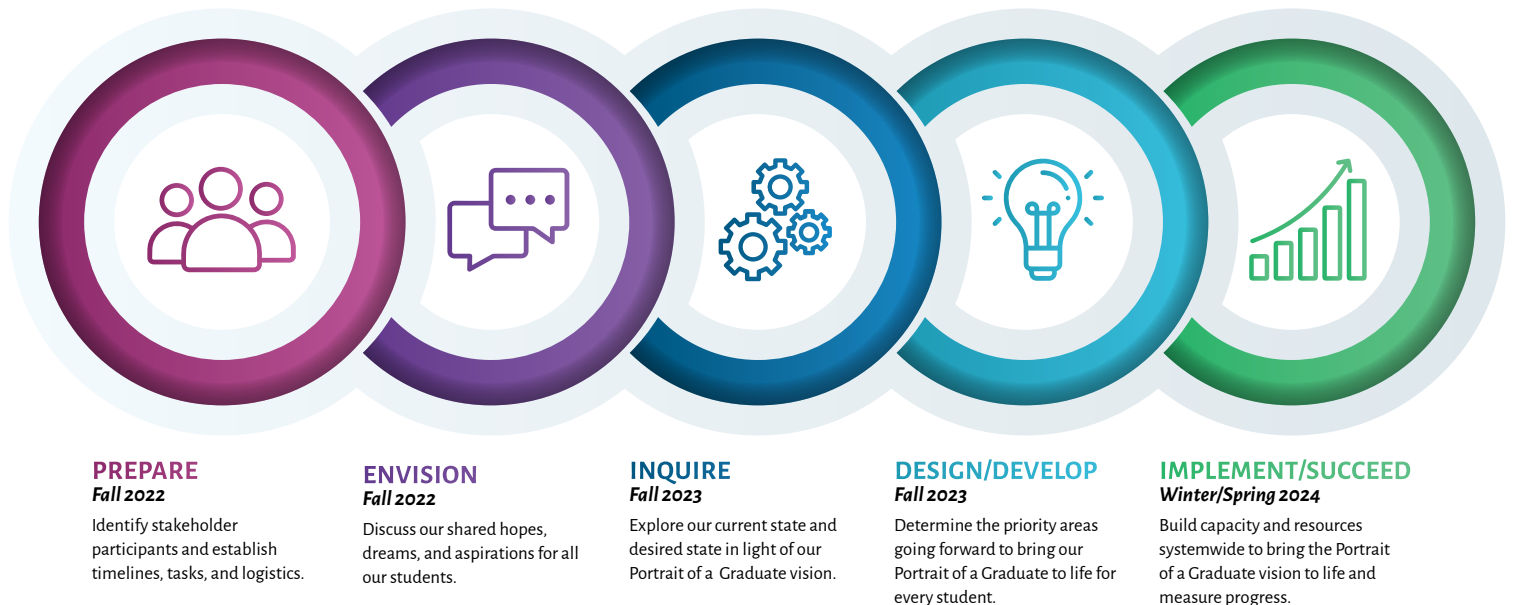
**Rutland City
Public Schools**

Our Process



RCPS community members, in conjunction with district leadership, developed our Portrait of a Graduate, which serves as the vision for our strategic plan.

This process began in the fall of 2022 and concluded in the winter of 2024. This process had about 150 stakeholders participate - parents, community members, students, teachers, and staff. We conducted a current state analysis to acquire a balanced portrayal of our present reality and identified priorities that will help our Portrait come to life. From these priorities, we established goals and strategies through an iterative vetting process, constantly using stakeholder feedback to guide their development.



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As a prospective parent and a senior leader at Rutland Regional Medical Center, it was a privilege to actively participate in Rutland City Public Schools' strategic planning initiative. Through collaborative efforts with the diverse Strategic Planning Design Team, we have brought forth innovative ideas and shared visions that will help our public school system prepare students for a brighter and more successful future as productive citizens of the next generation.

Jonathan Reynolds, RHS Alumnus

PharmD - VP Clinical Operations - Rutland Regional Medical Center

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Strategic Plan Overview

PRIORITY AREA 1

Teaching and Learning

Teaching and Learning is structured to provide all students access to high-quality instruction and standards-based content that clearly identifies student learning and supports student growth toward Portrait of a Graduate traits.

PRIORITY AREA 2

Evolution of Wellness through Inclusive School Communities

Embody a culture of well-being through practices and infrastructure to enhance the physical, social, and emotional health of our students and staff, contributing to the vitality of our school community.

PRIORITY AREA 3

Resources for Success

Secure, cultivate, and sustain resources to empower and uplift a diverse community, fostering an environment of adaptability, collaboration, and critical thinking.



The big takeaway from my experience serving on the RCPS “Portrait of a Graduate” strategic sessions was that it takes a community to support the students to reach their potential and to thrive. And the community turned out to be part of, and engaged in this process. It was exciting and inspiring to be in the room for the meetings. I look forward to being part of the on-going process as a community member and alumna. We all have an investment in all students’ well-being and educational accomplishments.

Carolyn Crowley Meub, RHS Alumna



Goals, Objectives, and Strategies



PRIORITY AREA 1 **Teaching and Learning**

Teaching and Learning is structured to provide all students access to high-quality instruction and standards-based content that clearly identifies student learning and supports student growth toward Portrait of a Graduate traits.

Objective 1 – Learning Systems

RCPS supports all students in accessing standards-based programming and working towards the Portrait of a Graduate traits by removing barriers to success.

STRATEGIES

- Annually review district-wide curriculum and all grade levels to evaluate curricular offerings, revising for relevance, alignment, gaps, and redundancies.
- Analyze building schedules, personnel, and professional time to identify and make targeted adjustments that respond to issues impacting students including but not limited to vulnerable students, those living in poverty, having a disability, BIPOC, LGBTQ+, MLL, students experiencing homelessness, and high-achieving students.
- Promote and embed Portrait of a Graduate traits within academic and social standards for all K-12 students.
- Expand understanding of diversity by intentionally including underrepresented and marginalized voices, histories, and experiences into the curriculum, and interacting respectfully in all teaching and learning.

Objective 2 – Assessment

Regular assessment embedded in student learning experiences drives instructional decisions and practices.

STRATEGIES

- Adapt and adjust instructional practices (universal for all students) and interventions (targeted and intensive) based on student outcomes and data.
- Build, support, and align grade-level and cross-disciplinary team competency and structures for reviewing student data, updating and refining assessments, making instructional changes, and providing robust interventions.
- Align and support the role of K-12 teacher leaders and academic coaches to emphasize instructional leadership and develop collective efficacy among all staff.



Objective 3 – Student Agency

Students are empowered to make informed choices and develop agency throughout their educational journey.

STRATEGIES

- Guide students to take ownership in their educational journey by setting goals and identifying progress through self-assessment of their own learning.
- Provide timely, accessible, and inclusive school communication for academic and social purposes.
- Forge multiple RCPS learning pathways that empower students and generate agency supported by strong community and family partnerships.
- Proactively build a healthy community by implementing teaching practices and providing resources that align restorative approaches at all grade levels.

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As parents looking at our children's collective future, it is easy to get bogged down in the isolation and divisiveness which is so palpable. Being a part of The Portrait of a Graduate Design Team filled us with hope. It demonstrated the inclusivity and compassion within our community just waiting to be shared. This educational community has so much to offer and we are so glad to be a part of it.

Anna and Frank Gries, RCPS Parents

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Goals, Objectives, and Strategies



PRIORITY AREA 2

Evolution of Wellness through Inclusive School Communities

Embody a culture of well-being through practices and infrastructure to enhance the physical, social, and emotional health of our students and staff, contributing to the vitality of our school community.

Objective 1 – Students

As RCPS students gain confidence in making healthy lifestyle choices, they enhance their physical, social, and emotional well-being.

STRATEGIES

- Align and promote district-wide consistency when monitoring and responding to social, emotional, and physical needs of students.
- Identify and integrate resources and strategies, especially from health, physical education, and social-emotional learning curriculums, into complementary learning experiences across all content areas.
- Encourage active participation by all stakeholders to support and promote the pursuit of healthy and balanced mental and physical lifestyles.

Objective 2 – Staff

Staff achieve a greater sense of success in their work, encompassing work-life balance, connections and community with students, peers, and the greater community.

STRATEGIES

- Implement a problem-solving framework that encourages collaboration and involves team members in identifying and proposing solutions to challenges.
- Foster a positive and collaborative culture that values diverse perspectives and ideas, and recognizes and appreciates contributions, promoting a sense of belonging.
- Model and promote practices and protocols that encourage work-life balance and healthy lifestyle choices.



Objective 3 – Infrastructure

Students, staff, and visitors to RCPS facilities and programs feel welcome, safe, respected, and represented.

STRATEGIES

- Promote a safe and secure environment for all students, staff and visitors, who lawfully enter upon District property or who travel in District for the purposes of this District.
- Create inclusive and representative physical spaces through both design and commitment to fostering a culture of respect and dignity.
- Promote participation in and access to co-curricular opportunities for all students.
- Raise awareness of and provide opportunities for skill development concerning digital wellness and safety.

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As a Rutland City Public Schools student advocate, I was thrilled to be a part of the Strategic Planning process. Everyone was able to share their opinion in a respectful way, and all were heard. I loved seeing other students offer their opinions, and the teachers and community members would listen and try to address those problems. Our goals for Portrait of a Graduate and Strategic Planning are to create a pathway to make our schools a happier and healthier place for learning where students can be safe and grow. I believe we achieved our goals to the best of our ability, and will continue to do so.

Shania Reed, RCPS student

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Goals, Objectives, and Strategies



PRIORITY AREA 3 **Resources for Success**

Secure, cultivate, and sustain resources to empower and uplift a diverse community, fostering an environment of adaptability, collaboration, and critical thinking.

Objective 1 – Staff

Recruit, develop, and retain highly qualified staff committed and connected to the ideals of our Portrait of a Graduate.

STRATEGIES

- Analyze and articulate procedures to recruit and retain diverse and highly effective teachers, staff, and administrators.
- Develop partnerships with the community, create opportunities for students to become RCPS employees, attract professionals to the area, and provide pathways for advancement.
- Provide resources to staff that support their specific areas for growth to include professional development, mentoring/coaching opportunities, and a reflective evaluation system.

Objective 2 – Equitable Resources

Ensure the equitable distribution of resources to support the district's goals.

STRATEGIES

- Develop an annual budget based on Strategic Plan priorities.
- Audit and align our continuum of services to support students with the resources and environment that best meets their needs.

Objective 3 – Infrastructure

Ensure that all facilities, equipment, and infrastructure are properly maintained and support the function of the environment.

STRATEGIES

- Invest in a district-wide infrastructure that focuses on functionality, reliability, school improvement, and innovation.
- Develop plans and protocols to address emerging security, safety, and health needs.
- Leverage technology infrastructure in order to facilitate clear and equitable communication among students, families, and staff.



Acknowledgements

Thank You!

We are grateful to the students, teachers, administrators, Board of Education members, parents, and business and community leaders who collaborated with us to develop our Portrait of a Graduate and Strategic Plan.

Board of School Commissioners

Sara Atkins-Doenges
Karen Bossi
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Heather Hauke
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Marybeth Lennox-Levins
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Student Representative
Cathy Solsaa
Stephanie Stoodley
Amaya Tonda
Student Representative

Families, Business, and Community Members

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Peter Amons
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Melissa Patterson
David Perez
Ted Plemenos
Jen Pros
Pam Reed
Carol Renfrow
Matthew Riley
Lindsey Riter
Justine Ruhlin
Stephen Sampson
Greg Schillinger
Glenn Scott
Kim Sihler
Tim Smith
Tracy Smith
Summer Stoutes
Susan Tanen
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Manoah Diaz
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Danielle Goldberg
Aiden Good
Ayva Hamous
Paige Harned
Sydney Kravetz
Bella Looney
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McKenna McLaughlin
Kylee Niering
Sophia Perone
Chelsea Pond
Shania Reed
Robert Rushing
Finian Smathers
Owen Spafford
Christopher Valle-Downes
Regan Vooris
Daniel Wright
Daniel Yelvington



Glossary of Terms

Universal / Targeted / Intensive

Universal: Education that is designed for all students, regardless of their abilities or needs. It includes general classroom instruction.

Targeted: Specialized support and instruction provided to students who may need extra help but not intensive intervention.

Intensive: Highly focused and individualized support given to students with significant learning challenges or disabilities.

Data Team Process

A systematic approach where educators gather and analyze data about students' performance to make informed decisions about teaching methods and interventions to help students succeed.

BIPOC

An abbreviation for "Black, Indigenous, and People of Color." It refers to individuals from non-white racial and ethnic backgrounds.

MLL / ELL

MLL: "Multilingual Learner," a student who is learning multiple languages.

ELL: "English Language Learner," a student who is learning English as a second language.

Curriculum

The set of educational materials, lessons, and activities that teachers use to teach students. It outlines what students should learn in a particular subject or grade level.

Instruction

The process of teaching and guiding students in the classroom, including lesson delivery, explanations, and activities to help them learn.

Assessment

The evaluation of students' knowledge and skills, often through tests, quizzes, projects, or observations. It helps teachers understand how well students are learning.

Student Agency

The ability of students to take ownership of their learning and make choices in their education, such as setting goals and making decisions about their learning path.

RCPS

RCPS stands for Rutland City Public Schools

Cross-Disciplinary Team

A group of educators from different subject areas who collaborate to provide a holistic approach to teaching and addressing students' needs.

Intervention

Additional support or specialized instruction provided to students who are struggling academically to help them catch up or overcome learning challenges.

Collective Efficacy

The belief among educators that together, as a team, they have the ability to positively impact students' learning and success. Collective Efficacy among teaching staff is a strong indicator of the likelihood of student success.

Teacher Leaders

Experienced teachers who take on leadership roles within the school, such as mentoring other teachers, leading professional development, developing curriculum, modeling best practices, and participating in decision-making processes.

Academic Coach

A specialized educator who works with teachers to improve their instructional practices and help them enhance student learning outcomes.

Continuum of Services

A document describing different service delivery models and types of support to provide instruction to students with disabilities.



**Rutland City
Public Schools**

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