

# Torrington Public Schools



2018-2021

Torrington Strategic Plan  
Susan Lubomski,  
Interim Superintendent

## ***Vision Statement***

*The Torrington Public Schools will ensure every student is able to graduate with the skills and attributes that empower them to enter the college or career of their choosing.*

### ***Why Have a Strategic Plan?***

A Strategic Plan should be a living document that inspires focus, coalesces a collective vision for achievement, adjusts to real-time changes, and continues to develop over time. As progress is made and challenges are encountered, we will adjust timelines and strategies to ensure that our forward progress continues. While the work required to get there may change to meet the needs of the Torrington Public Schools, its students, the families, and staff, the goal of empowering students to acquire the skills and attributes they need for success will remain as the constant focus.

## Strategic Plan Goals

The following goals were re-approved by the Board of Education in September 2017 as the framework for the Strategic Plan. They will be updated and revised as necessary over the life of the plan to address the needs of the district.

### Torrington Public School District Strategic Mission

Through engaging instruction that is relevant, rigorous, and personalized to student needs, Torrington Public Schools will:

- Successfully prepare all students to be productive 21<sup>st</sup> Century citizens by ensuring that they can think critically and creatively to solve problems and construct arguments based on evidence.

To accomplish this Mission, we will work to focus the systems that support student success so they are all coherently aligned with our vision and student learning goals.

### Instructional & Assessment Practices

1. The Torrington Public Schools will implement a 5-year Curriculum Revision and Alignment Plan that will create a review cycle for curriculum, all instructional materials, and digital learning methods that reflect the needs of teaching and learning in a rapidly changing world. Additionally, it will ensure that all materials are aligned with a focus on the district's strategic goal (critical and creative thinking for problem solving and solving problems based on evidence). When the revision cycle is complete, it will:

- Create a comprehensive instructional program with a Pre-K to 12 scope and sequence for all content areas
- Provide clearly defined pathways for student progress along a learning continuum aligned with the Connecticut Core Standards
- Provide Career Pathways for all students
- Provide for the inclusion of common assessments of grade level or course outcomes to ensure a consistency of programs and practices.
- Contain universally designed units that are relevant and rigorous and integrate digital tools for learning.
- Support a focus on critical thinking and creative problem-solving based on evidence as measured by both standardized and summative assessments.
- Support appropriate social and emotional learning outcomes.



Jonathan Costa  
EdAdvance, 2016

2. The Torrington Public Schools will implement a 5-year Professional Learning Plan that will:

- Focus and align the professional learning opportunities in the district so that they are aligned with the district vision and student goals for learning.
- Focus on high leverage instructional and assessment practices that build capacity for critical and creative thinking, rigorous problem solving, and making arguments based on evidence.

### **Accountability Strategies**

1. Talent recruitment, performance expectations, evaluation and growth processes will all be aligned with professional learning practices and support the improved capacity to create instructional environments that are positive and challenging for all students.
2. All staff evaluation processes will be aligned with demonstrations of student progress as measured by district and state assessments and the district's local assessments of success. All evaluations will be completed on time and in a manner consistent with contractual provisions.
3. The Torrington Public Schools will present annually the Next Generation Accountability Report that measures student progress in the District against the DRG, and State.
  - The Torrington Public Schools will issue annual data on chronic absenteeism with the goal of lowering the chronic absenteeism rate by 5% over the next three years.
  - The Torrington Public Schools will issue annual data on the Graduation Rate with the goal of increasing that figure by 5% over the next three years.

### **Policy Strategies**

The Torrington Board of Education will review and edit all its current policies to ensure that they:

- Are consistent with current State Statutes and district practice.
- Are aligned with the district's strategic achievement goals and appropriately support teaching and learning in a digital age.

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## **Resource Deployment Strategies**

1. The Torrington Public Schools will adopt a funding cycle based on current financial assets that will provide instructional materials and digital learning opportunities aligned with Torrington Public Schools' district goal.
2. The Torrington Board of Education in collaboration with the City will maintain a Sustainable Budget Plan that reviews and monitors revenue and expenses.
3. The Torrington Public Schools will project a 5-year capital plan that includes a facility review.
  - The Torrington Public Schools will present a digital learning device and instructional resource acquisition strategy that is based on the financial assets of the District and aligned with the district's strategic achievement goal.
4. Torrington Public Schools will seek additional funding options as appropriate.

## Instruction and Assessment Strategies



1. The Torrington Public Schools will implement a 5-year Curriculum Revision and Alignment Plan that will create a review cycle for curriculum, all instructional materials, and digital learning methods that reflect the needs of teaching and learning in a rapidly changing world. Additionally, it will ensure that all materials are aligned with a focus on the district's strategic goal (critical and creative thinking for problem solving and solving problems based on evidence). When the revision cycle is complete, it will:

- Create a comprehensive instructional program with a Pre-K to 12 scope and sequence for all content areas
- Provide clearly defined pathways for student progress along a learning continuum aligned with the Connecticut Core Standards
- Provide Career Pathways for all students
- Provide for the inclusion of common assessments of grade level or course outcomes to ensure a consistency of programs and practices.
- Contain universally designed units that are relevant and rigorous and integrate digital tools for learning.
- Support a focus on critical thinking and creative problem-solving based on evidence as measured by both standardized and summative assessments.
- Support appropriate social and emotional learning outcomes.



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- Focus and align the professional learning opportunities in the district so that they are aligned with the district vision and student goals for learning.
- Focus on high leverage instructional and assessment practices that build capacity for critical and creative thinking, rigorous problem solving, and making arguments based on evidence.

### ***What does this mean for my child and the district?***

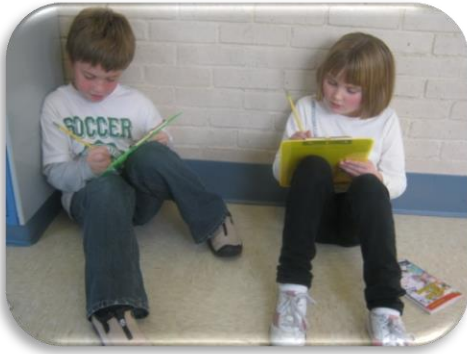
- Greater consistency in instructional experiences from school to school, grade to grade and course to course.
- Greater consistency in the language, terms and focus of instructional efforts throughout a student's experience.
- Greater clarity of expectations and continuity of evidence of obtainment and success reporting.
- Predictability and stability in planning for changes and budgetary needs.
- Assure that course outcomes reflect state standards, are aligned with the district's vision, and are developmentally appropriate as students move through the grades
- Assure that goals for learning, assessment practices and instructional methodologies are always current and targeted on student success.
- Assure that student's social and emotional learning will be considered and that every child will have a strong connection to at least one adult in the school community.
- Increase opportunities for career pathways, internships, apprenticeships, and job shadowing
- Assure that teachers have the skills that they need to create instructional challenges for students aligned with the district vision and curriculum expectations.

### ***What will evidence of success and completion look like?***

- A comprehensive instructional program with a K-12 scope and sequence for all content areas.
- Clearly defined grade, school and/or course outcomes at all levels.
- Common assessments of grade level or course outcomes to ensure a consistency of programs and practices.
- A noticeable focus on key district learning outcomes measured by both standardized and formative assessments as part of a balanced and appropriate assessment system.
- Curriculum with units that are relevant and rigorous and integrate digital tools for learning.
- Focused and aligned professional learning opportunities to support teachers providing students with appropriate actionable feedback and rigorous instruction tied to the district goals for learning.
- An aligned focus on high leverage instructional and assessment practices that build capacity for critical and creative thinking, rigorous problem solving, and making arguments based on evidence.
- Clarity of teacher expectations on instruction and the measurement of student achievement.
- More authentic use of technology to create engaging, relevant, and personalized learning experiences for students.
- Students who are college and career ready.
- Identification of social and emotional needs and implementation of strategies to best address these needs.

### **Action Steps-Instruction and Assessment Strategies**

<b>Required Step</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Resource/Resp.</b>	<b>Date Due</b>
Create a scope and sequence for all content areas, Pre-K -12	Scope and Sequence which can be posted on the website and used as a reference for staff and parents	Teachers, Coaches, Assistant Superintendent	June 2019 and on-going
Create a model for 7-12 career pathways	Students at 7-8 would be able to explore career pathways to pursue in grades 9-12, including college courses, internships, apprenticeships and job shadowing	7-12 Admins, Teachers, Assistant Superintendent	June 2019 and on-going
Create or enhance Formative and Summative Assessments using Critical Thinking Rubrics in all content areas	Students would be assessed using rubrics aligned with CCS, NEASC expectations, and content area skills	7-12 Admins, Teachers, Assistant Superintendent	June 2019 and on-going



## Accountability Strategies

1. All staff evaluation and growth processes will be aligned with professional learning practices and support the improved capacity to create instructional environments that are positive, rigorous and challenging for all students.
2. All staff evaluation processes will be aligned with demonstrations of student progress as measured by district and state assessments and the district's local assessments of success. All evaluations will be completed on time and in a manner consistent with contractual provisions.
3. The Torrington Public Schools will present annually the Next Generation Accountability Report that measures student progress in the District against the DRG, and State.
  - The Torrington Public Schools will issue annual data on chronic absenteeism with the goal of lowering the chronic absenteeism rate by 5% over the next three years.
  - The Torrington Public Schools will issue annual data on the Graduation Rate with the goal of increasing that figure by 5% over the next three years.

### ***What does this mean for my child and the district?***

- An aligned focus on high leverage instructional practices that build capacity for critical and creative thinking, rigorous problem solving, and making arguments based on evidence.
- More consistently rigorous and challenging student work that all are responsible for managing through to completion.
- Greater clarity of expectations and continuity of evidence of obtainment and success reporting.
- An enhanced vested interest of all staff in having all students do well.
- Students will gain better social, emotional and problem solving skills.
- Increased focus within the district on strategies to keep students interested and engaged in the life of the school and in the instruction being offered.

### ***What will evidence of success and completion look like?***

- Common assessments of grade level or course outcomes to ensure a consistency of programs and practices.
- A noticeable focus on key district learning outcomes measured by both standardized and formative assessments as part of a balanced and appropriate assessment system.
- Increased clarity for teachers to know what to teach and how to measure student achievement.
- Recognition of the benefit of being in a classroom with an exemplary teacher, supervised by exemplary administrators.
- Clear expectations for improved performance that will increase student achievement and reduce the drop-out rate.
- Analysis of student performance data that provides an objective measure on which to base accountability.
- Increased attendance rates
- By aligning all evaluation tools to student progress and completing the provisions of these tools consistently and on time, Torrington can assure positive student progress in our schools.

### Action Steps-Accountability Strategies

Required Step	Outcome	Resource/Resp.	Date Due
Identify root causes of graduation rate, provide training on data analysis and engagement strategies, including Restorative Practices	Increase graduation rate through engagement, Restorative Practices and career pathways	Teacher training- Teacher Leaders, Admins and Assistant Superintendent	June 2019, on-going
Implement Restorative Practices, PreK-12, collaborate with community agencies	Reduce Chronic Absenteeism through increased social, emotional supports for student challenges	Teachers, Admins and Assistant Superintendent, Superintendent, Community Agencies	June 2019, on-going
Train administrators in the calibration process for teacher evaluation	Enhanced effectiveness of teacher and administrator evaluation process to increase student engagement and achievement	Teachers, Admins and Assistant Superintendent, Superintendent	June 2019



## Policy Strategies

The Torrington Board of Education will review and edit all its current policies to ensure that they:

- Are consistent with current State Statutes and district practice.
- Are aligned with the district’s strategic achievement goals and appropriately support teaching and learning in a digital age.

### ***What does this mean for my child and the district?***

- An aligned focus on policies that support instructional practices that build capacity for critical and creative thinking, rigorous problem solving, and making arguments based on evidence.

### ***What will evidence of success and completion look like?***

- All policies have been reviewed, updated and edited so that they are aligned with the district’s vision and support the assessment and instructional practices most aligned with the skills of critical and creative thinking, rigorous problem solving, and making arguments based on evidence.

## **Action Steps**

<b>Required Step</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Resource/Resp.</b>	<b>Date Due</b>
Policies will be reviewed within the timeframe stated in this document	Policies will be current and relevant	Board members, Administration, Assistant Superintendent, Superintendent	On-going
Policies will be reviewed regularly	Policies will be aligned with the Board Goals, District Strategic Plan Vision and Mission for Instruction and Student Needs, and State Mandates	Board members, Administration, Assistant Superintendent, Superintendent	On-going



## **Resource Deployment Strategies**

1. The Torrington Public Schools will adopt a funding cycle based on current financial assets that will provide instructional materials and digital learning aligned with Torrington Public Schools' district goal.
2. The Torrington Board of Education in collaboration with the City will maintain a Sustainable Budget Plan that reviews and monitors revenue and expenses.
3. The Torrington Public Schools will project a 5-year capital plan that includes a facility review.
  - The Torrington Public Schools will present a digital learning device and instructional resource acquisition strategy that is based on the financial assets of the District and aligned with the district's strategic achievement goal.

### ***What does this mean for my child and the district?***

- Students have the materials and digital tools they need to be successful learners in a 21<sup>st</sup> century work and life environment.
- A focus on preserving the district's infrastructure while ensuring efficient use of funds.
- Increased sense of accountability at the district and school level.
- Improved cooperation among departments and schools as well as the ability to recognize priorities.

### ***What will evidence of success and completion look like?***

- Increased sense of transparency and predictability around the budgeting process.
- Increased clarity regarding how specific investments align with the district's vision for student success.
- Parents and community have confidence in the budget process and the wisdom of the districts purchasing and resource deployment strategies.
- Improved metrics in the areas of talent management – staff recruitment, retention, and overall job satisfaction within the district.

## Action Steps

Required Step	Outcome	Resource/Resp.	Date Due
A fiscally responsible Budgetary Plan will be established and presented to the Board of Education and Board of Finance.	The 2019-2020 Budget Plan will align with the District Strategic Plan for instruction, social and emotional needs of students.	Business Manager, HR Director, Director of Student Services, Assistant Superintendent, Director of Facilities, Superintendent, Board members, Administrators, Teachers and Staff	November-April 2019
A 5 year Capital Plan will be developed and presented to the Board of Education and Board of Finance	The District will be able to address facility needs in a timely manner.	Director of Facilities, Superintendent, Board of Education Members, Board of Finance Members	December 2018

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## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Assessments:** tools used to check student mastery of learning including **formative** assessments to check for understanding and inform instruction and **summative** assessments given at the end of instruction to measure mastery

**Benchmarks:** lists of specific learning targets or goals for a course

**Capital Plan:** estimate of expenses to maintain or upgrade buildings and facilities; can include technology hardware funding

**Connecticut Core Standards (CCS):** set of national learning goals for Math and English Language Arts courses at each grade level that defines clear learning goals adopted by the Connecticut State Department of Education in 2010

**Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE):** agency that governs professional practice, teaching and learning standards, data, and student assessment for all Connecticut public schools

**Course outcomes:** learning goals, what all students will know and be able to do

**Curriculum:** plan that identifies what knowledge and skills students will learn in a course

**Data-driven staff evaluation tool:** process to determine teacher and administrator performance level based on student outcomes including growth and achievement

**DRG:** District Reference Group. Towns and cities of similar size that share a similar demographic profile including student characteristics and income and educational level of residents

**Educational Specifications:** a detailed plan that describes all aspects of school operation: how it is managed, curriculum, facility, students served, staffing model

**Professional Learning Communities (PLC):** A philosophy and set of structures that supports teacher collaboration focused on improved practice and improved outcomes for students

**SMART goal:** a target that is specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound

**Student performance data:** various measurements of achievement in Reading, Math, Writing, Science, and other content areas including the SBAC (Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium), SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test), District developed tests, and teacher developed tests

## APPENDIX A

### Curriculum Development Schedule -2017-2022

Curricular Area	Year 1 Research & Review	Year 2 Curriculum Development	Year 3 Recommendations Pilot new additions	Year 4 Implementation, Monitor, Assessment Review	Year 5 Implementation Evaluation
English Language Arts	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Math	2020-2021	2021-2022	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
Science	2021-2022	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Social Studies	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2017-2018
Computer Science  Tech	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Art	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2017-2018	2018-2019
Music	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2017-2018	2018-2019
PE/Health	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2017-2018	2018-2019
World Language	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2017-2018	2018-2019

#### The Curriculum Development Schedule cycle allows for the following:

- Researching new practices in response to state mandates and trends in college & career readiness, while reviewing the existing curriculum
- Editing and revising the curriculum based on research, identifying materials that would enhance the curriculum and curriculum delivery, identifying possible budgetary impacts
- Piloting new curriculum, purchasing necessary materials, gathering feedback on the new materials
- Monitoring the implementation of the new curriculum, identifying and evaluating the assessment measures, Analyzing resulting data and progress
- Continuing implementation and evaluation of the curriculum

#### This process includes:

- Vertical articulation, K-12 for consistency of instruction throughout the district
- Budgetary planning overtime in each curricular area
- Time for teachers to review, pilot, implement and revise based on data and research of best practices
- Collaborative work on the curriculum and the building of staff capacity and expertise in their content area

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Policy Review Timeline**

GOAL: To review the Torrington Board of Education Policy Book

- Series 1000 – Review for Action at Policy Committee Level
- Series 1000 – Edits at Policy Committee
- Series 2000 – Review for Action at Policy Committee Level
- Series 1000 – Changes to BOE
- Series 2000 – Edits at Policy Committee
- Series 3000 – Review for Action at Policy Committee Level
- Series 2000 – Changes to BOE
- Series 3000 – Edits at Policy Committee
- Series 4000 – Review for Action at Policy Committee Level
- Series 3000 – Changes to BOE
- Series 4000 – Edits at Policy Committee
- Series 5000 (5000-5040) – Review for Action at Policy Committee Level
- Series 4000 – Changes to BOE
- Series 5000 (5000-5040) – Edits at Policy Committee
- Series 5000 (5040-End) – Review for Action at Policy Committee Level
- Series 5000 (5000-5040) – Changes to BOE
- Series 5000 (5040-End) – Edits at Policy Committee
- Series 6000 (6000-6050) – Review for Action at Policy Committee Level
- Series 5000 (5040-End) – Changes to BOE
- Series 6000 (6000-6050) – Edits at Policy Committee
- Series 6000 (6070-6100) – Review for Action at Policy Committee Level
- Series 6000 (6000-6050) – Changes to BOE
- Series 6000 (6070-6100) – Edits at Policy Committee
- Series 6000 (6105-6120) – Review for Action at Policy Committee Level
- Series 6000 (6070-6100) – Changes to BOE
- Series 6000 (6105-6120) – Edits at Policy Committee
- Series 6000 (6130-6182) – Review for Action at Policy Committee Level
- Series 6000 (6105-6120) – Changes to BOE
- Series 6000 (6130-6182) – Edits at Policy Committee
- Series 6000 (6184-END) – Review for Action at Policy Committee Level
- Series 6000 (6130-6182) – Changes to BOE
- Series 6000 (6184-END) – Edits at Policy Committee
- Series 7000 – Review for Action at Policy Committee Level
- Series 6000 (6184-END) – Changes to BOE
- Series 7000 – Edits at Policy Committee Level
- Series 7000 – Changes to BOE