EAST RAMAPO
CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

2016-2020 Strategic Academic Plan

All the Way Up for Student Success!

"Is it good for kids?"

This question spotlights the core principle that will guide our actions and decisions in the East Ramapo Central School District. Our district is committed to living up to its promise to our students, parents, community members, and taxpayers – a promise to equip every student with the confidence and competence for success in life and career. This strategic plan, developed by a cross-section of East Ramapo educators and external stakeholders, is our compass for our journey towards caring, thriving, highperforming schools.

Our schools can't do it alone. Strong relationships with our stakeholders is key to student achievement, and so is continuous improvement of our professional practices.

At East Ramapo, we are on a journey to find out how great we can be. We are determined to keep moving **all the way up for student success!**

Dr. Deborah L. Wortham
Superintendent
(Spring Valley, New York)

DRAFT

A Call to Unified Action

At East Ramapo Central School District, we believe that all of our students will achieve at high levels when instruction meets their needs. Only about one-quarter of our students meet standards in Mathematics and English Language Arts. Only 13 out of every 20 high school students graduate on time. The figures are even more troubling for our English Learners, with a 42% dropout rate in 2014-2015. **We can do better. We must do better.**

This strategic plan offers an opportunity to accelerate our student performance. The plan was developed by more than 100 East Ramapo stakeholders, including parents, community members, teachers, staff, administrators, board members, and government officials.

Our plan commits our school system to five audacious goals for student success.

This is our unified response to strengthening our professional practices in order to ensure just, responsible, and equitable outcomes for all of our students.

Students Who "Met Standards" on State Math Tests
(Number out of every 20 Students)

Graduation Rate

Grade Level	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	Test Taker # 2015-2016
All Students Grades 3-8	NA	3	3	3	3,614
3rd Grade	2	3	4	3	712
4th Grade	3	3	3	4	669
5th Grade	2	3	3	3	652
6th Grade	3	5	4	4	558
7th Grade	2	2	2	2	536
8th Grade	2	2	1	2	487
Integrated Algebra (Regents Exams)	14	14	10		
Algebra I (Common Core)	NA	14	9		
Geometry (Regents Exams)	14	13	11		
Geometry (Common Core)	NA	NA	9		
Algebra 2/ Trigonometry (Regents Exams)	10	9	7		

Students Who "Met Standards" on State ELA Tests
(Number out of every 20 Students)

Grade Level	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	Test Taker # 2015-2016
All Students Grades 3-8	3	3	3	4	3,562
3rd Grade	3	3	3	4	692
4th Grade	4	2	2	5	646
5th Grade	2	3	3	3	633
6th Grade	3	3	3	5	552
7th Grade	3	2	2	4	522
8th Grade	4	4	3	5	517
Regents Exams	16	16	16		

2014-2015 Graduation Rates

		Number of Students	Graduation Rate
All Students	Regular Diploma	429	63%
	Advanced Diploma	100	15%
Female	Regular Diploma	214	68%
	Advanced Diploma	50	16%
Male	Regular Diploma	215	60%
	Advanced Diploma	50	14%
Asian	Regular Diploma	0	NA
	Advanced Diploma	0	NA
Black	Regular Diploma	244	68%
	Advanced Diploma	48	13%
Hispanic	Regular Diploma	117	53%
	Advanced Diploma	26	12%
White	Regular Diploma	34	56%
	Advanced Diploma	9	15%
Students with Disabilities	Regular Diploma	32	31%
	Advanced Diploma	2	2%
English Learners	Regular Diploma	11	12%
	Advanced Diploma	0	0
Economically Disadvantaged	Regular Diploma	301	62%
	Advanced Diploma	56	12%

Our Mission

As a unified community, the **East Ramapo Central School District** is committed to educating the whole child by providing a healthy, safe, supportive, engaging and challenging learning environment.

Our Vision

We will become **proficient** in all that we do.

Our Shared Values

In everything we do, we **motivate, facilitate, and reinforce...**

1. Trust and open communication
2. Confidence
3. Collaborative relationships
4. Mutual respect and ethical behavior
5. Diversity and inclusiveness
6. Excellence

Goals and Measures of Student Progress

A fundamental aim of our school system is to equip each student with the competence and confidence for success at the next level. Our **Goals and Measures of Student Progress** constitute our promise to our students, our parents and caregivers, and our community. They represent our commitment to each student's learning, growth and success … from preschool through high school.

Goals	Measures of Student Progress * Priority measures
1 Success in the Early Years Every student will demonstrate social, emotional and academic readiness to meet or exceed grade level standards by the end of second grade.	• Increased percentage of students in pre-K through Grade 2 meeting criteria for social-emotional, physical and cognitive development. ∗ Increased percentage of students in grades pre-K through Grade 2 achieving proficiency in early literacy and numeracy. ∗ Increased number of appropriate student referrals to special education. ∗ Increased percentage of English Language Learners demonstrating growth in the acquisition of English Language skills.
2 Healthy, Safe, Supported, Engaged and Challenged Every student will be challenged, in a safe learning environment, to be a productive and engaged citizen capable of meeting high expectations.	• Increased percentage of students participating in workshops about academic expectations and goal setting. ∗ Increased percentage of students who feel safe and valued in their school as measured by a valid and reliable perception survey. • Increased percentage of students who demonstrate knowledge of healthy food choices, exercise, personal care, and routines that support hygiene. • Increased percentage of students participating in student-led conferences.
3 Motivated, Confident, Empowered Critical Thinkers Every student will demonstrate ownership of his/her education and be fully engaged in becoming critical, creative-thinking goal-setters.	• Increased percentage of students who have successful adult mentor partnerships. • Increased percentage of students who demonstrate growth in resilience, confidence, engagement and voice in solving real-world problems. • Increased percentage of students cognitively engaged during classroom instruction.
4 Mastery of Academic Subjects and the Arts Every student will meet and/or exceed standards in all subjects including the arts at the end of key transition grades.	∗ Increased percentage of students demonstrating growth in performance in all academic subject areas and the arts. ∗ Increased percentage of under-performing students at every grade level making at least 1.5 years' growth in the core subject in one year. ∗ Increased percentage of students meeting or exceeding proficiency in the core academic subjects and the arts. ∗ Increased participation and success rates of middle school students and high school students in upper level/AP/Honors courses ∗ Increased percentage of English Learner students who attain mastery of English Language skills within 3 years.
5 High School Graduation and Readiness for College and Careers Every student will graduate from high school prepared for college, career, and post-secondary experiences.	• Increased percentage of students who demonstrate successful transitions from pre-school to Kindergarten, Kindergarten to Elementary, Elementary to Middle, Middle to High School, and High School to college/post-secondary experiences. ∗ Increased percentage of 10th graders who are on track for on-time high school graduation. ∗ Increased 4-year high school graduation rates. ∗ Decreased 4-year high school dropout rates. • Increased percentage of high school students enrolled in college, career training, the work place, or the military within 6 months of graduation.

Professional Practices

Continuous improvement of student learning rests on continuous improvement of teaching practices, leadership practices, and organizational practices. Those professional practices, framed by the **Four Pillars** of our theory of action, define what we must implement, monitor, and support every day ... in every classroom, in every school, and system-wide.

	Pillar #1 High Expectations for Teaching & Learning	**Pillar #2** Culture of Safety and Strong Relationships with Families & Community	**Pillar #3** Results-focused, Collaborative Professional Learning	**Pillar #4** Data-driven, Effective and Efficient Systems
TEACHING PRACTICES	**T1.** Teachers use a variety of research-validated instructional strategies (e.g. role play, independent work, research projects, cooperative learning) as multiple options for completing assignments. **T2.** Teachers raise expectations and level of rigor for all students, regardless of current level of achievement, to ensure students' continuous growth and development.	**T3.** Teachers challenge, encourage and honor all students, and promote a high achieving, caring and supportive environment. **T4.** Teachers provide families a variety of engagement options which are responsive to parent's schedules and interest.	**T5.** Teachers use collaborative planning time to share and reflect on curriculum, scope and sequence, student needs, and instructional practice. **T6.** Teachers develop professional growth plans based on collaborative analysis of student work and reflection about professional practices.	**T7.** Teachers analyze and use formative and benchmark assessment data to monitor student learning and adapt instruction to meet students' learning needs. **T8.** Teachers meet regularly to review formative assessment and make instructional adjustments to address areas of concern and/or accelerate student learning.
LEADERSHIP PRACTICES	**L1.** Principal/Leadership Team communicates high expectations for student performance and lets students know that everyone is invested in each student's success. **L2.** Principal/Leadership Team facilitates school-wide collaboration and consensus on work that meets rigorous standards within and across grade levels and subjects.	**L3.** Principal/Leadership Team builds the capacity of the school to connect every student to at least one caring adult within the school and / or community. **L4.** Principal/Leadership Team builds systems to link educators, students, parents and caregivers, and community to create safe, caring, high-performing schools.	**L5.** Principal/Leadership Team develops and implements a differentiated professional development plan and annual calendar, aligned to the school's improvement plan and the professional learning needs of each teacher or staff. **L6.** Principal/Leadership Team continuously assesses the impact of professional development programs on student learning and the professional practices of each teacher or staff member.	**L7.** Principal provides frequent feedback about student learning and professional practices to monitor implementation of school-wide and grade level / department continuous improvement plans. **L8.** Principal/Leadership Team meet with teams of teachers to review how data is being used to drive continuous improvement of classroom instruction, identifying students that need academic, behavioral interventions or acceleration.
ORGANIZATIONAL PRACTICES	**O1.** District/School Leadership implements a standards-based curriculum and formative assessments aligned to state standards, with vertical, horizontal and cross-content alignment across the core instructional program. **O2.** District/School leadership allots time for professional development, collegial collaboration, and preparation of standards-aligned curriculum, instruction and assessment practices.	**O3.** School/ District and community develop a shared vision and plan for promoting, enhancing, and sustaining a high achieving, positive school culture. **O4.** School staff sponsor workshops or distribute information to assist parents in understanding how students can improve skills, get help when needed, meet class expectations, and achieve high academic growth.	**O5.** School/District implements a systemic evaluation and continuous improvement protocol to assess the delivery and effectiveness of professional development offerings. **O6.** District/School Leadership develops a cadre of school and district leaders who have attained mastery of core leadership practices and will facilitate the learning of other teachers, leaders, and staff.	**O7.** District leadership ensures that all schools have access to high quality benchmark assessments and professional development to implement data decision support systems that help to inform student learning and improve instruction. **O8.** District leadership ensures that categorical and district budget items are clearly linked to the District's vision focus, and staff development.

Educational Strategies

The **Four Pillars** are the building blocks for purposeful action at every level. They define the capabilities we need and must develop to achieve the Goals and Measures of Student Progress; they provide a "frame" for the work and contributions of teachers, leaders, staff, families, and community partners. The **Educational Strategies** represent the high-leverage programs and initiatives which, when implemented with fidelity, will facilitate continuous improvement of professional practices and the creation of thriving schools where every student can meet high academic and behavioral standards.

Pillar #1
High Expectations for Teaching & Learning

1.1 Standards-aligned instructional system
- Align curriculum, assessments, materials and pacing guides with the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS), and ensure consistent day-to-day implementation in every school and in every classroom.
- Expand full-day Kindergarten to all Elementary schools.
- Provide access for every student to participate in integrated arts programs, Advanced Placement (AP) classes, and Honors courses.

1.2 Responsive Instruction and student engagement
- Implement a common set of research-informed core instructional practices to facilitate culturally responsive, "good first teaching" across academic areas, grade levels, and student groups.
- Strengthen early-literacy and numeracy foundations in pre-Kindergarten to Grade 2, with age-appropriate materials, supports, and ongoing staff development.
- Strengthen student engagement and ownership of learning through a student portfolio system that includes setting of academic and behavioral goals, personal monitoring of progress, and student-led conferences and expositions.
- Require every high school graduate to complete a concrete post-secondary plan collaboratively with staff, peers and parents/care-givers.

1.3 Timely system of supports
- Implement an English Language Development program for English Learners that links with the core instructional program, honors students' prior knowledge, and employs multiple forms of assessing mastery of academic content and vocabulary.
- Implement early-warning screening and accelerated intervention process for Special Education students and students at-risk of not meeting the standards.
- Provide timely interventions to ensure that every Grade 10 student is on track for on-time graduation.

Pillar #2
Culture of Safety and Strong Relationships with Families & Community

2.1 Positive behaviors & student voice
- Implement and monitor all tiers of the Positive Behavior & Intervention System (PBIS) in every school and every classroom, to create a safe culture for learning and work.
- Implement a student-to-adult or student-to-student mentoring program.
- Conduct at least one student-led summit annually as a forum for open, mutually respectful communication among students, staff and parents/care-givers.

2.2 Family education and collaboration
- Provide ongoing training to parents/caregivers regarding effective strategies for strengthening language and math skills of students in Kindergarten through Grade 2.
- Engage parents and caregivers in ongoing training, collaboration and communication to better understand and support student achievement.
- Educate parents and caregivers about how to access school and community resources that support family health and wellness, and behavioral and life success for students.

2.3 Internships and dual degree programs
- Develop community partnerships that provide opportunities for students to enroll in courses at local colleges and universities, and to participate in internships and apprenticeships with local employers and community organizations.

> "What we have before us are some breathtaking opportunities disguised as insoluble problems."
>
> - John Gardner

Pillar #3
Results-focused, Collaborative Professional Learning

3.1 Standards-based professional development
- Define and implement the CCLS-aligned instructional practices that all teachers and classroom-based support staff will master and deliver.
- Define and implement the professional standards for support staff at all levels, and provide ongoing staff development aligned to those expectations.

3.2 Evidence-based collaboration
- Provide dedicated time for teachers, leaders, and staff to engage in Data Summits at the end of each assessment cycle, with emphasis on analysis of student data, reflection on professional practices, and planning for the next assessment cycle.

3.3 Teacher & administrator leadership networks
- Develop a cadre of highly skilled and well-trained teachers, leaders and staff to facilitate professional learning at the school, department and district levels.

Pillar #4
Data-driven, Effective and Efficient Systems

4.1 Timely assessment system
- Implement an assessment system to provide timely and authentic feedback about student growth, instructional practices, interventions, and communication with parents.

4.2 Planning, public reporting, and celebrations
- Set performance targets and develop results-focused improvement plan for each school and district-level unit.
- Implement a public reporting online Dashboard to share school and district progress at least three times per year.
- Organize school and district-based ceremonies to celebrate the accomplishments of staff and students at least twice during the school year.

4.3 Culture of Service Excellence
- Organize central roles, resources, and processes to better support schools.
- Strengthen faculty and staff professional relationships through collegial shared vision, improved communication, challenging work, and career development.
- Conduct periodic staff satisfaction surveys to measure feedback and ensure staff satisfaction.

Paying Attention to Our Intention

Achieving East Ramapo Central School District's **Goals & Measures of Student Progress** requires the commitment of the school district and its partners to disciplined implementation of the district's strategic plan.

Furthermore, successful student outcomes rest on results-focused annual action planning; ongoing capacity-building for teachers, leaders and staff; consistent monitoring of progress so that we can make course-corrections in a timely manner; and public reporting and celebration of accomplishments to sustain commitment of internal and external stakeholders and to "nurture the heart."

Moving **All the Way Up for Student Success** demands consistent attention to our intention.

Student Success

Accountability for performace and celebration of accomplishments

Annual Action Plan, with clear performance objecives	Professional development and capacity-building	Continuous monitoring, feedback and support

East Ramapo Demographic Information
2014-15

8,497 Students

48% Female

52% Male

39% Black or African American

50% Hispanic

5% Pacific Islander

5% White

1% Multi-racial

29% English Language Learners

21% Students with Disabilities

84% Economically Disadvantaged

14 Schools

1. Chestnut Ridge Middle School
2. Early Childhood Center
3. Eldorado Elementary School
4. Elmwood Elementary School
5. Fleetwood Elementary School
6. Grandview Elementary School
7. Hempstead Elementary School
8. Kakiat Elementary School
9. Lime Kiln Elementary School
10. Margetts Elementary School
11. Pomona Middle School
12. Ramapo High School
13. Spring Valley High School
14. Summit Park Elementary School

BOARD OF EDUCATION
Yehuda Weissmandl, President
Harry Grossman, Vice President
Joe Chajmovicz
Bernard L. Charles, Jr
Sabrina Charles-Pierre
Pierre C. Germain
Moshe Hopstein
Jacob J. Lefkowitz
Yonah Rothman

Superintendent
Dr. Deborah L. Wortham

East Ramapo Central School District
105 South Madison Avenue
Spring Valley, NY 10977

http://www.ercsd.org