

# Planning the Work...

# Working the Plan



Supporting Materials Regarding  
Community-wide Strategic Academic Plan

**Dr. Deborah L. Wortham**  
*Superintendent of Schools*

Spring Valley, New York  
August 31, 2016

## Introduction

In June 2016, East Ramapo Central School District (ERCSD) embarked on a community-wide process to map the future strategic direction for the district. The exercise, actively championed by Dr. Deborah L. Wortham, Superintendent of Schools, was designed to mobilize and unify the East Ramapo community around a set of clear goals for student achievement as well as a well-articulated, easy-to-grasp pathway for accomplishing the Goals and Measures of Student Progress.

A diverse cross-section of the community participated in the strategic process, which was developed in compliance with New York State's S8131 and A 10723, and in direct consultation with state-appointed monitor, Mr. Charles Szuberla. A *Core Planning Team* of approximately 100 people met for a total of five days between June – August 2016 to shape the plan. Participants included teachers, parents, school and district level administrators, board of education members, taxpayers, community members, local government representatives, business and higher education partners, and support (classified) staff. Additionally, a community forum, attended by nearly 200 East Ramapo stakeholders, provided an opportunity for input from the wider community. Shortly after school reopens, the district intends to conduct a series of “reality check” sessions with all teachers and staff, as well as a representative sampling of East Ramapo students.

This document is a supplement to the draft strategic plan that results from the community-wide deliberation. Its purpose is to provide additional context about the planning process and the product. Furthermore, the document will address a few specific areas of particular interest to the State of New York.

## About East Ramapo Central School District

East Ramapo Central School District enrolls approximately 9,000 students who come from ethnically, linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds. These students constitute approximately one-third of all school-age children in the East Ramapo area; the vast majority of the 30,000+ potential students do not attend the East Ramapo public schools.

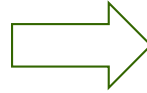
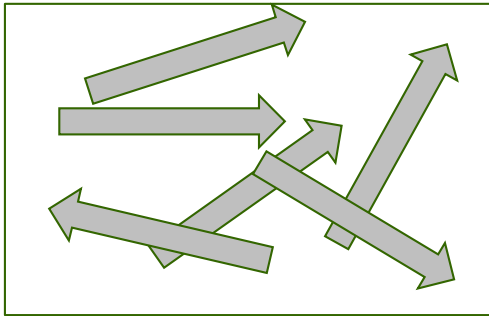
The district's demographics have changed significantly during the past few years. Here's a snapshot of the students who attend ERCSD's 14 preK-12 schools:

- ✓ 8 out of every 20 students are Black/African American
- ✓ 10 out of every 20 are Hispanic/Latino
- ✓ 2 out of every 20 are White or Pacific Islanders or Multiracial
- ✓ 17 out of every 20 students are economically disadvantaged
- ✓ 6 out of every 20 students are English Language Learners
- ✓ 4 out of every 20 are students with disabilities
- ✓ 48% Female, 52% Male

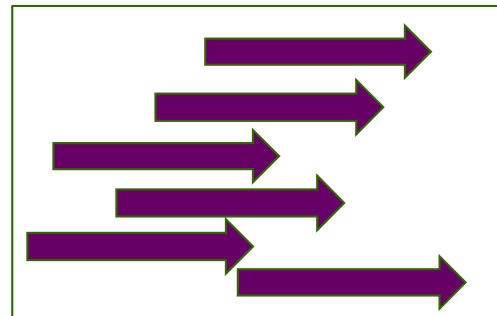
## The Strategic Planning Process

The primary aim of planning is unity of purpose, or **alignment** – *getting people, practices and programs on the same page, going in the same direction, at the same time*. Without a plan, there is no focus or clear direction. A results-focused plan is the first step toward turning the future we envision into reality.

### Misalignment

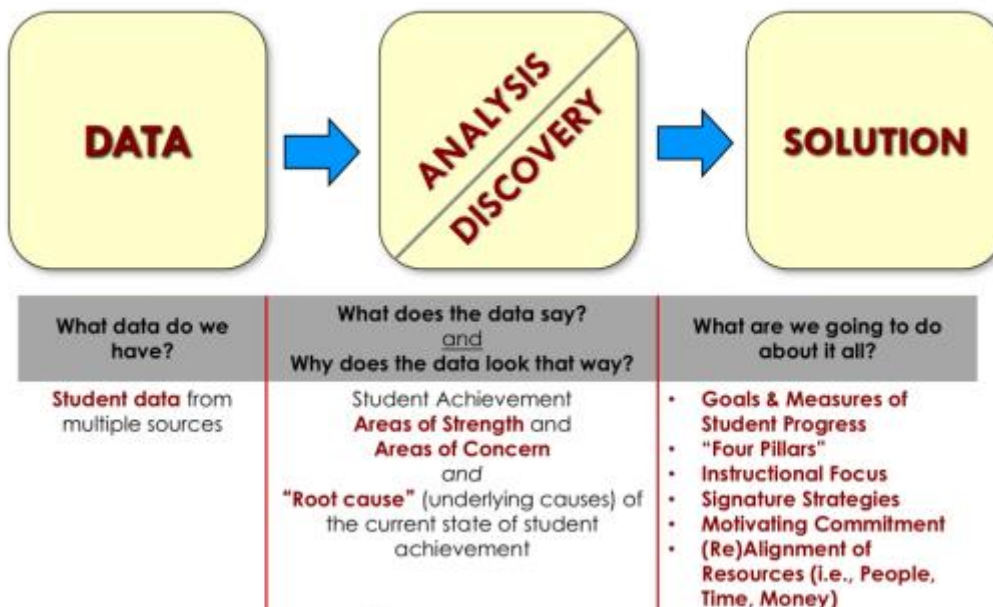


### Alignment



This alignment process, developed and facilitated by Performance Fact, Inc., provided an opportunity for East Ramapo Central School District and its diverse stakeholders to develop a results-focused continuous improvement plan that will move the school system towards its central purpose, namely: *higher levels of achievement for every student by name, regardless of the student's background, condition, or circumstance*.

#### A Data-driven, Continuous Improvement Planning Process



The strategic planning process was designed to:

- Clarify ERCSD's goals for student growth and achievement;

- Outline the roadmap for accomplishing those goals;
- Embrace the diverse voices of ERCSD’s internal and external stakeholders;
- Mobilize leadership for courageous action at all levels.

Performance Fact’s strategic planning framework emphasizes an in-depth analysis of student data from multiple perspectives, identifies the root causes of the current state of student achievement, and develops concrete solutions to address the root causes. Mr. Mutiu O. Fagbayi, President/CEO of Performance Fact and Dr. William H. Conrad, Senior Associate led the Core Planning Team meetings as well as the community forum.

In accordance with S 8131 and A 10723, the areas addressed during the planning process included:

- ✓ goals with appropriate benchmarks and measurable objectives;
- ✓ identify strategies to address areas where improvements are needed in the district;
- ✓ improving outcomes for students with disabilities
- ✓ accelerating achievement for English language learners.

The specific recommendations regarding each of these areas can be found in the eight-page document, **2016-2020 Strategic Academic Plan – All the Way Up for Student Success** (Exhibit A), as well as in later sections of this supplementary report.

As mentioned earlier, the strategic planning process also benefited from the guidance and direction provided by the state-appointed monitor, Mr. Charles Szuberla, for East Ramapo Central School District.

## **What Does the Data Say? – Assessment of the Current State of Student Learning**

This section provides an overview of student learning and achievement, based on multiple measures, including:

- ✓ student performance on statewide tests in English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies;
- ✓ high school graduation rates
- ✓ dropout rates
- ✓ attendance
- ✓ disciplinary referrals

The student data was disaggregated by relevant student-groups, such as race-ethnicity, English fluency, special education status, and socioeconomic status. Below is a sampling of the data charts, produced by Performance Fact (for full student data report, please see *Exhibit B*).

Based on 2014-2015 data, the areas of strength and areas of concern identified by the Core Planning Team included the following:

1. At the elementary and middle school levels, fewer than 5 out of every 20 students met state Math standards.
2. Only 13 out of every 20 high schoolers graduate on time.
3. Students classified as English Language Learners (ELL) had a dropout rate of 42%. Furthermore, only about 3 out of every 20 ELL students graduated on time.
4. Fewer than one out of every 20 ELL or special education students passed the state tests in English Language Arts.

5. Student performance in Science were significantly better than in Math or English Language Arts (ELA). About 15 out of every 20 4<sup>th</sup> grades met state standards, while 7 out of every 20 students in Grade 8 met standards.
6. Student performance on the Social Studies tests were also stronger than on the Math and ELA tests.
7. On virtually every measure of student growth and achievement, ELL and special education students performed at a much lower rate than other students.

Additional highlights can be found on page 2 of Exhibit A (for the full student data report, see Exhibit B).

## Why Does the Data Look that Way? – Assessment of the Current State of Teaching Practices, Leadership Practices & Organizational Practices

Following the analysis of the current state of student achievement, the Core Planning Team used Performance Fact’s root cause protocol and rubric to assess the underlying causes of the current state of student learning and achievement.

The Team assessed current teaching practices, leadership practices, and organizational practices in ERCSD, using a set of research-based **16 high-leverage practices** (or “**16 Pillars**”; see next page) and a 4-point rating rubric (Exhibit C) that offered a consistent interpretation of each high-leverage practice. The preponderance of “1” and “2” ratings indicated less-than-average level of instructional effectiveness across district schools, across content areas, and across classrooms. Since effective instruction is the strongest predictor of student learning, these self-ratings represent the greatest opportunity for improvement system-wide.

High Leverage Practices	Ratings
1 Standards-aligned consistent instruction	2 2 2 2 2 3 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 1 1 1 1 1 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 1
2 Equitable access to rigorous, high-level program	1 2 1 1 2 2 1 1 2 3 3 3 1 2 1 1 1 1 1 1 2 1 1 2 2 1 1 1 1 1
3 Differentiation	1 2 2 1 2 2 2 2 1 2 1 2 2 2 1 1 1 1 2 1 2 2 1 1 2 1 1 2 2 2
4 Culturally responsive teaching and learning	1 1 2 2 1 1 2 1 2 2 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 2 1 1 1 1 2 2 1 1 1 1 1
5 Data-driven continuous improvement	2 2 1 1 2 3 2 2 2 3 2 2 1 2 2 2 1 1 1 1 3 2 2 2 2 2 2 1 2 2
6 Accelerated intervention	1 2 2 1 2 2 1 1 1 3 2 2 1 1 2 1 1 1 1 1 2 1 1 1 2 1 1 1 1 1
7 Collegial collaboration and accountability	1 2 3 2 1 3 1 2 2 1 2 3 1 3 2 1 2 1 2 2 3 1 2 2 1 2 2 1 3 1
8 Results-focused professional learning	1 2 2 3 2 3 2 2 3 2 2 2 2 2 2 1 1 2 2 2 3 2 2 3 2 1 2 2 3 2
9 High expectations for all	2 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 1 2 1 1 1 2 2 2 1 2 2 1 1
# Effective teacher for every student, effective leader for every school	2 2 2 2 1 3 1 2 2 1 2 1 1 2 1 2 2 2 2 1 3 1 2 2 1 1 1 1 2 1
# Needs-based resource allocation	2 2 2 2 2 2 1 2 2 2 2 2 1 1 2 2 1 1 2 1 2 1 2 2 2 1 2 1 1 1
# Supports for staff	1 1 1 2 2 3 1 1 3 3 1 3 1 2 2 1 1 1 2 2 3 1 1 3 2 1 2 1 2 2
# Instructional leadership	3 2 2 3 2 3 2 2 3 3 1 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 3 2 2 3 3 1 2 2 1 2
# Safe climate for learning and work	1 2 2 3 3 3 2 3 3 3 3 2 3 2 1 1 2 3 1 3 2 3 3 3 1 3 2 2 2 2
# Effective and efficient operations	1 2 2 3 2 3 2 2 3 3 1 3 2 3 2 1 2 2 3 1 3 2 2 3 3 1 3 2 3 2
# Strong relationships with families and community	1 2 2 2 2 3 2 2 1 2 2 3 2 3 2 1 2 2 3 3 3 2 2 1 2 1 3 2 3 2

## 16 Pillars (High-leverage Practices)

High-leverage practices for root cause analysis of current state of student achievement		
	High-leverage Practices	
1.	<b>STANDARDS-ALIGNED CONSISTENT INSTRUCTION</b>	Curriculum, assessment, and teaching are directly aligned with all state standards in all content areas and for all students, with standards at the center of curriculum planning and student learning.
2.	<b>EQUITABLE ACCESS TO RIGOROUS, HIGH-LEVEL PROGRAM</b>	All students have access to challenging, on-standard teaching and courses that include coverage of the "power standards" and core content.
3.	<b>DIFFERENTIATION</b>	Instructional strategies are differentiated to meet the varied learning needs of each student.
4.	<b>CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING</b>	Instruction reflects students' prior knowledge, learning styles and cultural background; programs and policies integrate the perspectives and needs of diverse stakeholders.
5.	<b>DATA-DRIVEN CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT</b>	School staff uses frequent and timely formative assessments to monitor and adjust teaching practices, leadership practices and organizational practices.
6.	<b>ACCELERATED INTERVENTION</b>	Students not meeting academic expectations receive immediate and targeted academic and social support.
7.	<b>COLLEGIAL COLLABORATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY</b>	Staff engage in year-round cycles of inquiry (e.g., Eye on the Goal™, Lesson Study), with clear standards of professional practice and accountability.
8.	<b>RESULTS-FOCUSED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING</b>	Professional learning is linked to instructional priorities, is standards-based, has clear goals, and meets the individual needs of staff.
9.	<b>HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL</b>	Beliefs and behaviors reflect commonly held high expectations and shared responsibility for professional practices and student learning.
10.	<b>EFFECTIVE TEACHER FOR EVERY STUDENT, EFFECTIVE LEADER FOR EVERY SCHOOL</b>	Staffing assignments ensure equitable distribution of teachers and leaders to meet the specific needs of students and schools.
11.	<b>NEEDS-BASED RESOURCE ALLOCATION</b>	School resources are focused on strategies that enhance professional practice and accelerate learning for all student populations.
12.	<b>SUPPORTS FOR STAFF</b>	Teachers, leaders, and staff receive timely, focused support and intervention (e.g., coaching, mentoring, peer support, targeted training).
13.	<b>INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP</b>	The principal and instructional leadership team articulate a clear school vision, and are actively involved in planning, guiding, and assessing instruction and student learning.
14.	<b>SAFE CLIMATE FOR LEARNING AND WORK</b>	The school culture and structures support the social-emotional needs of students, and standards for student and adult conduct are fair and consistently enforced.
15.	<b>EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT OPERATIONS</b>	The school has well-established organizational procedures, and day-to-day operations run smoothly to facilitate teaching, learning, and leadership.
16.	<b>STRONG RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY</b>	Trust among home-school-community is nurtured through shared responsibility for student success, proactive communication, and meaningful stakeholder "voice."

## Goals, Measures and Benchmarks

Through the strategic planning process, the East Ramapo community identified a set of **Five Goals** and corresponding **Measures of Student Progress**. The Goals & Measures, described more fully on page 4 of Exhibit A constitute the promise – or guarantee – that the school system is making to students, parents/caregivers, taxpayers, and the community as a whole. They represent the district’s commitment to equipping every student with the confidence and competence she/he needs for success in school, college, career, and life.

The Measures were chosen to address key developmental stages in each student’s educational journey; they include cognitive as well as affective indicators, in recognition of the district’s **commitment to educating the whole child**.

Although all the Measures identified on page 4 (Exhibit A) will be monitored during the next 5 years, those identified as *priority* Measures will receive particular attention due to their relatively higher significance vis-à-vis the district’s overall Mission. **Benchmarks** – or specific targets/milestones of accomplishment – are defined below for these *priority* Measures.

Below are the proposed Benchmarks to be reached by 2020-2021. These 5-year Benchmarks will enable the district to monitor its progress and be able to provide a regular report-card to parents and community stakeholders.

Goals & Priority Measures	2014-2015 Baseline	2020-2021 Benchmarks
<b>1. SUCCESS IN THE EARLY YEARS</b>		
Increased percentage of students in grades pre-K through Grade 2 achieving proficiency in early literacy and numeracy.	Fewer than 4 out of every 20 students	<b>At least twice the 2014-2015 baseline</b>
Increased percentage of English Language Learners demonstrating growth in the acquisition of English Language skills.	Fewer than 4 out of every 20 students	<b>At least twice the 2014-2015 baseline</b>
<b>2. HEALTHY, SAFE, SUPPORTED, ENGAGED &amp; CHALLENGED</b>		
Increased percentage of students who feel safe and valued in their school as measured by a valid and reliable perception survey.		<b>At least twice the 2014-2015 baseline</b>
<b>4. MASTERY OF ACADEMIC SUBJECTS &amp; THE ARTS</b>		
Increased percentage of students meeting or exceeding proficiency in the core academic subjects and the arts.	Approximately 5 out of every 20 students	<b>At least 12 out of every 20 students for every student-group (including ELL &amp; Special Ed) (or 60%)</b>
Increased percentage of English Learner students who attain mastery of English Language skills within 3 years.	Fewer than 2 out of every 20 ELL	<b>At least 6 out of every 20 students (or 30%)</b>
<b>5. HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION and READINESS FOR COLLEGE and CAREERS</b>		
Increased 4-year high school graduation rates.	63%	<b>75%</b>
Decreased 4-year high school dropout rates.	11%	<b>5%</b>



## School Improvement and Support Framework

A results-focused strategic plan is the first step towards realizing desired outcomes for student learning and achievement. However, without disciplined implementation, the plan flounders and may not live up to its promise.

Getting things done well demands discipline. Unless school and system leaders and their teams can make their plan happen, it is not going to matter. Disciplined execution is the pathway to successful accomplishment of the expected outcomes outlined in ERCSD's **2016-2020 Strategic Academic Plan – All the Way Up for Student Success!**

To ensure disciplined implementation of the strategic plan, the district has made a multi-year commitment to Performance Fact's intensive school improvement system, **Eye on the Goal™**. Exhibit D provides an overview of the system, which has been implemented in more than 20 school systems across the USA and internationally.

The system provides professional services for and *builds sustainable capacity* of school-level and district teams in areas such as: data-informed planning and progress monitoring, targeted professional development, leadership coaching, strengthening of teacher-leadership, technical assistance, and building trust and authentic relationships. The Eye on the Goal™ system also includes 24/7 access to online resources.

**Student Outcome Data:** Eye on the Goal™ incorporates Performance Fact's proprietary **4-Lens Data Analysis Protocol**, which enables practitioners to analyze student data efficiently and effectively. Exhibit B highlights some of the features of the 4-Lens process.

**Perceptual Data:** The 4-Lens process can also be used to analyze *student* perceptual data. Perceptual data from adult surveys or professional practices employ a different protocol.

**Implementation Data & Leadership Data** – or data regarding effectiveness of professional practices – can be monitored and analyzed using a variety of tools and processes built into the Eye on the Goal™ system. The CPR Card™ and Buildup (see Exhibit D) are two of the most effective tools for gathering and making sense of implementation data.

**Instructional Focus** can be found on page 5 of Exhibit A (i.e., the 2016-2020 Strategic Academic Plan). The instructional focus is the vision of effective instruction, and the foundation for conducting cycles of inquiry that include Data Summit™ and 6-12-Week Instructional Plan at the end of each benchmark assessment cycle or each marking period.

**Access and Opportunity for All Students** is expressly addressed on page 6 of Exhibit A (under Pillars #1 & #2). Equity of access is also explicitly called out in the Measures of Student Progress on page 4 of Exhibit A.

**Professional and Leadership Development** is what Pillar #3 (page 6 of Exhibit A) focuses on. It is about “investing in people.” Within the Eye on the Goal™ system, great emphasis is placed on building teacher-leader networks, as well as providing opportunities and research-based protocols for school and district leaders to collaborate and learn together.

With the Eye on the Goal™ system, East Ramapo Central School District will have aligned processes, tools, and partners to support the implementation of the district’s 5-year Strategic Academic Plan from year to year.



**EAST RAMAPO CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

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**YONAH ROTHMAN**

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*Superintendent of Schools*

**\$3,000,000.00 Teacher Allocation Elementary Program for the Arts**

Kindergarten	2015 - 2016	Adopted Budget 2016 - 2017	\$3,000,000.00 FTE Increase to Staff Full Day Kindergarten	Total
Monolingual	2 Full Day Teachers 10 Half Day Teachers	6 Full Day Teachers 8 Half Day Teachers	6	20
Bilingual	3 Half Day Teachers	3 Half Day Teachers	4	7
Special Education	2 Full Day Teachers	2 Full Day Teachers	0	2

**The ARTS PREPARATION PERIODS**

Grade Level	PREPS	FTE
K - 1	DANCE	2
2 - 3	General Music	4
4 <sup>th</sup>	THEATRE	2
4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> & 6 <sup>th</sup>	ART	2

**ENRICHMENT PERIODS**

Grade Level	Enrichment	FTE
4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> & 6 <sup>th</sup>	Band	1
4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> & 6 <sup>th</sup>	Orchestra	1
4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> & 6 <sup>th</sup>	Instrumental	1

**2016 - 2017 APPROVED BUDGET K - 12 POOLING OF RESOURCES**

Grade Level	Enrichment	PREPS	FTE POOLING
4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> & 6 <sup>th</sup>	Band		
4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> & 6 <sup>th</sup>	Orchestra		
4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> & 6 <sup>th</sup>	Instrumental		
4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> & 6 <sup>th</sup>		ART	1
6 <sup>th</sup>	CHORUS		.4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>.4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.4</b>



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**\$3,000,000.00 Comprehensive Expenditure Plan**  
**Instructional Program for Kindergarten and the Arts**  
**2016-2017**

<b>Instructional Programs</b>		
<b>1. Full Day Kindergarten</b>		
<b>Item</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Budget Narrative</b>
<b>Salaries</b>		
Monolingual Teachers	\$390,000	Full Day Kindergarten Classes
Bilingual Teachers	\$280,000	
Employee Benefits	\$251,267	
Classroom/Supplies Instructional Materials	\$124,000	
Instructional Technology	\$111,000	Hardware
Building Repairs/Adjustments	\$50,000	Minor repairs
<b>TOTAL Full Day Kindergarten Budget:</b>		<b>\$1,206,267</b>
<b>2. The Arts/Music Program</b>		To Add The Arts (Dance/Theatre) To Elementary Education
<b>Salaries</b>		
Music Teachers	\$653,952	The Arts Classes
Art Teachers	\$252,267	
Dance/Theatre Teachers	\$268,000	
Employee Benefits	\$436,514	
Classroom Supplies/Instructional Materials	\$70,000	Musical Instruments and Smart Boards
Art, Media, Music Room Repairs	\$113,000	Dance, Art and Music Rooms
<b>Total The Arts Program Budget</b>		<b>\$1,793,733</b>
<b>Total Budget</b>		<b>\$3,000,000</b>