

VISION



ROCHESTER COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

PRIDE IN EXCELLENCE



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CONTENTS PAGE

Contents	Page 02
Introduction	Page 03
Learning	Page 04
Teaching	Page 05
Leadership	Page 06
Professional Development	Page 07
Community Engagement	Page 08

INTRODUCTION

Rochester Community Schools has a rich history of excellence that has been strengthened over time through the strategic planning process.

To ensure RCS continues to provide high-quality education and innovative learning opportunities for all students, the Board of Education selected G&D Associates to serve as the facilitator for the next iteration of the strategic plan.

This vision document reflects a collaborative effort among all stakeholders, inclusive of Rochester Community School District students, teachers, administrators, staff, parents, caregivers, recent graduates, community members and the Board of Education, in partnership with G&D Associates.

The content has been driven by community engagement activities that include:

- An online community survey which garnered 6,106 responses from:
 - 1,698 parents and caregivers
 - 719 district employees
 - 446 non-parent/caregiver community members
 - 3,243 students
- 412 focus group participants that included:
 - 124 students
 - 162 parents/caregivers
 - 64 district employees
 - 48 community members
 - 5 recent graduates
 - 9 community forum attendees

Continually advancing educational experiences for all students and staff can be achieved through an evolution of the systems that drive learning and teaching. The foundation for this evolution is the development of a vision. The vision outlines how Rochester Community Schools will continue to develop, support, enhance and drive forward learning through five key areas while providing the basis for the district's strategic planning.

The five areas include learning, teaching, leadership, professional development and community engagement.



LEARNING

Rochester Community Schools believes that well-rounded students who possess core academic knowledge, high levels of self-awareness and the ability to apply their learning have the skills that will enable them to thrive in a continually evolving global society. The district will ensure all students have independence in foundational literacy, mathematics, science and humanities skills. These skills, along with embedded coaching on character, citizenship, creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, cultural proficiency and communication, will continue to prepare students for success beyond school.

Progress will be determined by evidence that includes, but also reaches beyond, grades and standardized test scores to demonstrate grade-level proficiency and growth. This evidence-based approach ensures that all students, at all ability levels, get learning experiences tailored to their needs. RCS will empower students to be owners of their learning by engaging them as co-creators of their experiences and action plans. Learners will set and reflect upon goals while having opportunities to provide and respond to feedback from a variety of sources.

Relevance and global connection are developed through career exposure and exploration. A variety of specialized focus areas in individual schools along with Career and Technical Education (CTE) offerings across the district will enhance college-bound and direct-to-work pathways, enabling students to access career certifications, advanced coursework options and post-secondary credit.

The district creates a sense of belonging and supports the development of skills and habits that enable physical, social-emotional and mental wellness. Content will be culturally relevant and include opportunities for all students to concentrate on areas of interest and passion through remedial, on-level, and advanced/accelerated pathways. To ensure the district continues to foster this culture of belonging, students will have meaningful input into practices and approaches to learning in collaboration with RCS educators.

Through a commitment to foundational academic knowledge, deepening learning skills and a culture of wellness, Rochester Community Schools develops the leaders and responsible citizens of the next generation.



TEACHING

Rochester Community Schools is committed to cultivating the art of teaching through a culture of innovative excellence. The district believes that teaching is both an art and a science where approaches are flexible and adaptive to meet the needs of each learner. To sustain this culture, the district honors and respects innovative and effective educators and will facilitate the sharing and adoption of their practices.

To enhance educator effectiveness, RCS will evaluate and appropriately adjust its time structures. Common planning will empower educators to collaborate on lessons grounded in academic standards, share promising practices, align assessments and hone their professional skills. Educators will have access to a variety of focused data sets that enable customized approaches to teaching to address individual learner needs. Lessons will embed high-interest enrichment experiences in areas such as STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics) and community-connected projects in ways that are accessible to all students.

Environments that are safe and reflective of district values will inspire innovative approaches to learning and teaching. RCS spaces will continue to accommodate a variety of learning preferences and needs. Educators will be provided with the technologies and support needed to deliver engaging, real-world, connected learning.

To ensure every learner gets the academic, social and emotional support they need, RCS will utilize a multi-tiered system of academic and behavioral support. As part of a proactive approach to behavior, RCS teachers will continue to utilize a deep knowledge of

their students' learning needs through relationship building while modeling positive behaviors. Flexible staffing models will provide access to additional qualified educators — providing robust systems of intervention and enrichment.

Rochester Community Schools values and respects the art of teaching. By providing a variety of evidence-based resources and supports, RCS educators are empowered to personally meet every student at their level with the appropriate pacing, breadth, depth and level of challenge.



LEADERSHIP

Leadership is not a title in Rochester Community Schools; rather, is demonstrated by a set of behaviors and actions that inspire and bring people together to achieve their best. To this end, our leaders will foster a culture of transparency and empathy-building across the district that creates a sense of belonging, engagement and professional growth.

The RCS board of education, central administrators and school leaders will regularly collaborate to develop a shared approach to district improvement. Policies, administrative regulations and structures support the district's vision while enabling RCS to align resources, personnel and budget to the prioritized needs of the district. These aligned systems will allow the district to measure the effectiveness of its programs and work to make identified adjustments.

Alignment between the district and schools will continue to ensure cohesive vision progress. Communications, both internally and externally, will continue to provide stakeholders with a clear view of strategic goals, innovative practices and decision-making processes.

Current employee effectiveness, commitment and happiness are the foundation for the district's

continued excellence. Leaders will model and support a healthy work/life balance. Administrators will regularly engage staff members about what motivates them, their growth and initiative implementation while providing feedback about their practices. To ensure continuous improvement and achievement of the highest standards, evaluation structures will be responsive to the needs of students and educators.

Rochester Community Schools recruitment, retention and hiring practices will continue to include a variety of approaches to securing the best educators, support personnel and administrators who are able to carry out the district's vision. Cohesive development opportunities will deepen the talent pool of leaders while creating sustainable systems that enable Rochester Community Schools to evolve. District committees and subcommittees will include educators, representative employees, parents/caregivers, community members and students to provide a problem-solving partnership that is equitable in representation, varied in perspectives and transparent in practice.

Through the highest quality executive and instructional leadership, Rochester Community Schools establishes the gold standard for building a framework of continued and sustainable excellence.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A focused and sustained investment in people provides the foundation for continued excellence, growth and innovation in Rochester Community Schools. The district believes this investment is most impactful and inspiring when it includes all employee groups.

District departments and schools will collaborate to ensure coherent professional learning experiences. RCS will continue to utilize a variety of assessment methods to identify the needs of individual employees, schools and the district. Employees, inclusive of our leadership, will be provided the opportunity to engage in regular professional learning that is focused on their personal development and collective growth.

Professional learning will go beyond single sessions to include job-embedded coaching and ongoing assistance. RCS will provide the time and support needed to

implement, adjust and evolve new strategies and initiatives. Coaching is non-evaluative and provides timely feedback and personalized assistance tailored to the individual. For those new to their positions, RCS will provide in-depth onboarding coupled with sustained mentorship. Employees will have the opportunity to collaborate with peers across the district through programs and services such as professional learning networks, teacher labs and model worksites to provide immersive and impactful development. These continued support strategies ensure that effective practices are implemented districtwide.

Rochester Community Schools investment in professional learning enables its staff members to develop the practices that prepare RCS students for high levels of success in life — leading to unprecedented levels of pride in our profession and community.





COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Positive relationships between our public school district and the wider community are essential to the continued success of each. Rochester Community Schools is committed to fostering strong partnerships with all stakeholders to enhance student success.

RCS engages families as partners in their students' educational experiences. The district will continue to leverage a variety of communication methods and tools to provide strategic planning implementation updates, celebrate excellence and build trust, as well as provide "windows" into life in our buildings. RCS schools will share information that ensures families and the community have access to the resources needed to support student learning while providing opportunities to give feedback about the services offered.

District personnel will continue to connect families in need with resources related to a variety of wrap-around services to ensure students are ready to engage in learning. To support parents and caregivers who are new to the district, transferring to a new school or interested in advocating for their students, Rochester Community Schools will provide onboarding, support and collaborative opportunities.

The district will continue to build partnerships with, but not limited to, local government, businesses, educational institutions and philanthropic organizations that engage the local community in collaborative civic projects, volunteer opportunities, cooperative jobs, internships and apprenticeships. RCS employees will build an understanding of local and global working practices to ensure the skills taught and learned are transferable. RCS will enable safe access to industry mentors and subject experts who are available through digital communication, face-to-face meetings and virtual field expeditions.

Because RCS is truly a community school district, facilities will continue to be accessible, comfortable, technology-rich and of a professional standard so community members can use them for a variety of purposes.

Rochester Community Schools commitment to partnership and engagement empowers its stakeholders to develop a common vision and values that make for a thriving community.