

# **Blueprint for Excellence • Strategic Plan**

**July 2024**





*Standing proudly at the convergence of the Esopus Creek and the Hudson River, the Saugerties Lighthouse stands as a sentinel of history and natural beauty. As the sun sets, the lighthouse, casting a warm glow over the landscape, the Saugerties Lighthouse becomes a beacon of both literal and metaphorical light, guiding travelers and admirers alike towards its captivating allure.*



*Dear Members of the Saugerties School Community,*

*It has never been more important to be focused, aligned, and intentional in our work. We are very excited to share the results of our collaborative efforts to develop plans that will help us to continue growing and improving as we always strive for excellence.*

*Our “Blueprint for Excellence” is the result of planning sessions that were held with our Board of Education, Leadership Team, staff, parents, and community members. We worked with feedback gathered from the community this past fall as we developed a plan that will help us continue to grow and achieve as we strive for excellence in all that we do.*

*This plan will be the backbone for what we do. It will serve as a roadmap in our efforts to connect with each child and family while enhancing our connections as a school and a community. We’re in this work together and look forward to being your teammate in our continued effort to be a model school of excellence.*

*Thank you for your feedback and support. Your collaboration and teamwork make all the difference in the lives of children and the success of the district.*

*Sincerely,*



*Dr. Daniel Erceg  
Superintendent of Schools*



## Table of Contents

Overview and Introduction.....	4
Mission, Vision, Core Values.....	7
Priority Areas.....	8
Action Plans.....	9
<a href="#">Academic Excellence</a>	
<a href="#">Family, Community Engagement</a>	
<a href="#">Professional Culture</a>	
<a href="#">The Student Experience</a>	
Accountability and Implementation Plan.....	20
Blueprint Committee Members.....	21

## Overview and Introduction

**Blueprint Planning** is intended to:

- Involve all members of the school community and reflect their shared perspectives.
- Allow stakeholder representatives to review community feedback to clearly define the district's mission, vision, and core values.
- Engage a team in defining the priorities of the district and suggesting action steps to accomplish objectives.
- Facilitate action planning focused on identifying who, when, and how the work will get done.
- Provide the district with a roadmap that is transparent, accountable, and focused.
- Enable the district's efforts to innovate, allocate resources, and continuously grow in a coordinated, thoughtful, and aligned manner.
- Be an iterative, evolving, and ongoing process that builds from one year to the next while reflecting emerging needs and changing demands.





## Steps in the Saugerties CSD Planning Process:



## Our District

Saugerties Central School District, nestled in the picturesque Hudson Valley of New York, is a cornerstone of educational excellence and community pride. Serving a diverse student population from pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade, the district is committed to providing a nurturing and rigorous learning environment. With a focus on innovation, inclusivity, and academic achievement, Saugerties Central School District offers a comprehensive curriculum, enriched by extracurricular opportunities and supportive partnerships with families and the community at large. Renowned for its dedicated educators, vibrant student life, and commitment to student success, Saugerties Central School District continues to empower students to reach their full potential and thrive in an ever-changing world. Saugerties Senior High School was recently recognized as a PLAN Pilot School and is embarking on “successfully implementing performance-based learning and assessment practices” (<https://www.nysed.gov/plan-pilot/plan-pilot>).



## Our Community

The community surrounding the Saugerties Central School District is characterized by its scenic beauty, rich history, and vibrant cultural scene. Located along the banks of the Hudson River and framed by the majestic Catskill Mountains, this charming town offers residents and visitors an abundance of outdoor recreational opportunities, including hiking, skiing, and boating. With its quaint downtown area filled with shops, restaurants, and art galleries, Saugerties exudes a welcoming small-town charm while also being within easy reach of larger metropolitan areas like Kingston and Albany. The community takes pride in its strong sense of local identity, active civic engagement, and supportive networks, making it an ideal setting for families and individuals seeking a close-knit community with access to both natural beauty and cultural amenities.

## Our Leadership Team

### Board of Education

Jeffrey Riozzi  
William Ball  
Christine Bellarosa  
Dr. Katie Emmerson-Hoss  
Sakinah Irizarry  
Carole Kelder  
Michael Meyer  
Scott Polston  
Timothy Wells

### District Administration

Dr. Daniel Erceg, Superintendent of Schools  
Dr. Gwendolyn Roraback, Deputy Superintendent  
Colleen Mills, School Business Official  
Dr. Lisajane Kappler, Director of Pupil Personnel Services  
Jaime Churchill, Director of Special Education  
Shannon Molyneaux, Director of Human Resources

## Plan Overview

The Saugerties Central School District Blueprint for Excellence is a strategic plan focused on fostering equitable, engaging, and inspiring educational experiences for students, families, and the community. Rooted in a mission to support success and empowerment in a diverse world, the vision is to become a beacon of educational excellence where every individual achieves their fullest potential. Guided by core values such as integrity, empathy, equity, and collaboration, the blueprint emphasizes creating inclusive environments that promote belonging, respect, and innovation. The district's priorities and goals center on academic excellence, family and community engagement, professional culture, and enhancing the student experience to ensure a supportive and enriching educational environment for all stakeholders.



## Mission

## Vision

## Core Values

Successful organizations clearly define their purpose, what they need to become to fulfill their purpose, and how they operate or behave. These are commonly known as their mission, their vision, and their core values.

Through the Blueprint Planning Process, the school community defined why we exist, what happens in the organization when we are working towards the mission, and what behaviors should be evident from individuals and the organization as a whole. The following statements constitute our redefined mission, vision, and core values.

### **Mission:**

We provide equitable, engaging, inspiring, and holistic experiences that support success and empowerment for students, families, and the community in a diverse and changing world.

### **Vision:**

We are a beacon of educational excellence, where every individual is inspired to achieve their fullest potential.

### **Core Values:**

***Knowing that change is essential for growth and to accomplish our mission and achieve our vision, we will uphold the following core values:***

***Solution-Focused:*** Approach challenges with a proactive and solution-oriented growth mindset

***Integrity:*** Uphold honesty and strong moral principles in all actions.

***Empathy and Compassion:*** Understand and share the feelings of others while being kind and willing to help others.

***Engagement:*** Create a sense of belonging and ownership among all to drive collective progress and success.

***Equity:*** Ensure fairness and justice for all in an environment where everyone has access to the resources and support they need to thrive.

***Empowerment:*** Promote a culture where individuals embrace challenges, learn from failure, and strive for personal and professional growth as supporters and self-advocates.

***Inclusivity:*** Foster environments where every individual feels belonging, acceptance, value, respect, and inclusion, regardless of background or identity.

***Collaboration:*** Encourage teamwork and open communication to achieve shared goals and generate innovative solutions.





## Priority Areas

Based on community feedback and initial planning by the Board of Education and Leadership Team, the following areas were identified as priorities to be focused on to fulfill the mission of the district. A district goal has been developed for each area.

### Academic Excellence

**Goal:** We will provide all students with an individually academically challenging experience that emphasizes the development of skills and acquisition of knowledge that aligns to the Saugerties Portrait of a Graduate and New York State Standards.

### Family/Community Engagement

**Goal:** We will increase family/community engagement.

### Professional Culture

**Goal:** We will create/foster/nurture superior quality professional learning tailored to all staff needed for student success.

### The Student Experience

**Goal:** We will create an environment where all students want to come to a school where they feel welcomed, successful in their work, recognized for their efforts, and supported in all areas.



## Action Plans

The following plans have been developed to guide the actions the district takes to accomplish the objectives in each priority area. Each action step represents a strategy for meeting an objective. A timeframe has been established and the parties listed are primarily responsible for leading the work.

Priority 1: Academic Excellence		
<b>Goal:</b> We will provide all students with an individually academically challenging experience that emphasizes the development of skills and acquisition of knowledge that aligns with the Saugerties Portrait of a Graduate and New York State Standards.		
Action Steps:	Person, People Responsible	Timeframe
<b>1a. Portrait of Graduate</b>		
Solidify the Portrait of a Graduate.	Deputy Superintendent, Administration, BLT Committees (Building Leadership Team comprised of teachers, staff, parents, community members and students)	By June 2025, contingent upon NYSED's release of the NYS Portrait of a Graduate
<b>1b. Career Development</b>		
Strategize on what partnerships to explore with community partners.	Superintendent, Principals, Assistant Principals, PR Specialist	June 2025
Analyze current career development practices, interest inventories, goal-setting, and curriculum maps.	Deputy Superintendent, Director of PPS, Director of Special Education, Principals, Assistant Principals and School Counselors	February 2025
Research opportunities for career exposure such as career fairs, internships, etc.	Principals, Assistant Principals, Director of PPS, School Counselors	March 2025



Develop a means to celebrate seniors entering colleges and careers.	Sr High Principal and Assistant Principal, PR Specialist	April 2025
Research feasibility of College Test Prep and offering assessments.	Sr High Principal, Assistant Principals, Director of HR	December 2024
Research job search support best practices - helping students develop resumes, interview skills, and digital portfolios.	Deputy Superintendent, Principals, Assistant Principals, Director of PPS, Director of Special Education, School Counselors	June 2025
<b>1c. Curriculum and Instruction</b>		
Examine schedules to determine if students are required to choose between music or art and other classes.	Secondary Principals and Assistant Principals	March 2025
Review current progress monitoring procedures, provide professional development on best practices, and create common guidelines.	Deputy Superintendent, Director of Special Education, Principals	June 2025
Provide professional learning on inquiry-based, phenomenon-based, interest-based, and Project-Based Learning opportunities that maintain academic rigor.	Deputy Superintendent, Principals, Assistant Principals, Teachers	June 2025
Provide professional learning on Generative Artificial Intelligence.	Deputy Superintendent, Principals, Assistant Principals, Teachers	November 2024- June 2025
Review course offerings to see if the breadth and depth of courses allow students to explore interests that maintain academic rigor.	Deputy Superintendent, Secondary Principals and Assistant Principals, School Counselors, and Department Chairs	November 2024 - June 2025
Identify financial literacy components in the curriculum and identify where it can be enhanced.	Deputy Superintendent, High School Principal, Assistant Principals, and Department Chair (s)	June 2025



Research Revamping report cards, progress reports - Standards Based Report Cards.	Deputy Superintendent, Elementary Principals, and Instructional Coach	November 2024- June 2025
Research civic-mindedness opportunities (Volunteer opportunities) - developing community projects, and senior capstone projects.	Deputy Superintendent and PLAN PILOT Team	September 2024- June 2025
Research effective use of technology to support student learning.	Deputy Superintendent, Coordinator of Technology, Department Chair(s) and Technology Admin liaison (Principal Giangreco)	June 2025
Provide professional development to staff on universal assistive technology tools.	Deputy Superintendent, Coordinator of Technology, Department Chair (s), Director of Special Education, teachers	June 2025
Develop committees to create common assessments across grades and content areas.	Deputy Superintendent, Principals, Assistant Principals, and teachers	November 2024- June 2026
Research the benefits and feasibility of introducing a foreign language to students earlier.	Deputy Superintendent, Principals	June 2025
Research the benefits and feasibility of introducing robotics.	Deputy Superintendent, Principals, Assistant Principals	June 2025
Provide professional learning on explicit and direct instruction on executive functioning skills.	Deputy Superintendent, Director of Special Education, Director of PPS, Principals, Assistant Principals	June 2025
Work towards developing common behavior management language, including restorative practices	Deputy Superintendent, Director of PPS, Director of Special Education, Principals, Assistant Principals, BLTs, teachers	June 2025
<b>1d. Counseling and Support</b>		



Research best school counseling practices and update the SCSD School Counseling Plan.	Director of PPS, Secondary Principals, School Counselors	November 2024-June 2025
Increase parent education and support with items such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistance with FAFSA</li> <li>• Signatures on Schedules</li> <li>• Video Resources</li> <li>• Parent information nights on academic and non-academic topics</li> <li>• Regents Blueprints - multiple pathways to graduation and Seal of Civic Readiness, Seal of Biliteracy, and Seal of the Arts</li> </ul>	Director of PPS, High School Principal, Assistant Principals, School Counselors	November 2024- June 2025
<b>1e. Other</b>		
Research the feasibility of providing CPSE services that the County that has historically provided.	Director of Special Education, Business Official, Director of HR	February 2025
Research data around ideal class size at each level and other restructuring models.	Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent	June 2025
Research the benefits and drawbacks of running Pre-K.	Director of PPS	June 2025



## Priority 2: Family, Community Engagement

**Goal:** We will increase family and community engagement.

Action Steps:	Person, People Responsible	Timeframe
Research and develop a parent sign-off, schedule program.	School Counseling Department	November 2024- June 2025
Research the cohort model and current distribution of students among counselors.	Director of PPS, HS Principal, Counseling Dept. Chair	November 2024- June 2025
Research and develop a Google form for parents, and students to enter questions so counselors can respond.	Director of PPS, HS Principal, Counseling Dept. Chair, School Counselors, Department Chairs	November 2024- June 2025
Research and develop a library of video resources for families to access throughout the school year.	Secondary Principals, Assistant Principals Teacher, Students (Video Production Class)	November 2024- June 2025
Assess whether current apps and programs are efficient and user-friendly.	Deputy Superintendent, Coordinator of Technology, Principals, Assistant Principals	November 2024- June 2025
Develop parent workshops to help support parents and increase the community's value of education.	Principals and Social Workers	November 2024- June 2025
Establish expectations regarding teacher websites and, Google Classroom, and grade book.	Deputy Superintendent, Coordinator of Technology, Principals, Assistant Principals, Classroom Teachers	November 2024- June 2025
Determine the feasibility of offering alternative parent conference nights throughout the school year (quarterly).	Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, Principals	November 2024- June 2025



Advertise the Seal of Civic Readiness and Seal of Biliteracy in multiple ways to students & families.	High School Principal, School Counselor, Department Chairs, District PR Coordinator	November 2024- June 2025
Develop a communication plan with the district to ensure parents, and families understand what is happening in all schools.	District PR Coordinator, Principals	November 2024- June 2025
Research late bus runs for students in sports/after-school activities.	Transportation	2025-2026 School Year



<b>Priority 3: Professional Culture</b>		
<b>Goal:</b> We will create, foster, and nurture superior quality professional learning tailored to all staff needed for student success.		
<b>Action Steps:</b>	<b>Person, People Responsible</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Research Best Practices for recruiting and maintaining a diverse workforce	Director of HR	November 2024- June 2025
Update hiring rubric to reflect core values	Director of HR	November 2024- June 2025
Develop anti-bias training for the hiring committee	Director of HR	November 2024- June 2025
Provide continued professional learning on engagement, equity, and empowerment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Voice &amp; Choice</li> <li>• Alternative Assessments</li> <li>• Movement &amp; Kinesthetic Activities</li> <li>• Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Educational Framework (CR-SE)</li> </ul>	Deputy Superintendent, Principals, Assistant principals, Instructional Coaches	November 2024- June 2025
Research ways to implement Instructional Rounds, Learning Walks, or Japanese Learning Studies.	Deputy Superintendent, Principals, Assistant Principals, Instructional Coaches	November 2024- June 2025
Research and implement district-wide consistent restorative practices throughout the day, with a priority on the start of the school day. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement restorative practices and professional learning programs for all staff.</li> <li>• Restorative Discipline incorporated into the Code of Conduct</li> <li>• NYS SEL Framework</li> <li>• Mental Health</li> </ul>	Deputy Superintendent, Principals, Assistant Principals, Director of Special Education, and Social Workers	November 2024- June 2025





<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trauma-informed Practices</li> <li>• Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Educational Framework</li> <li>• Empathy and understanding</li> </ul>		
Research and develop a plan to incorporate more student voices to provide feedback in developing a positive school culture.	Principals, Assistant Principals	November 2024- June 2025
Create opportunities for teachers to share student work with other teachers to enhance vertical alignment.	Deputy Superintendent and Principals	November 2024- June 2025
Explore opportunities for teachers and administration to visit other schools.	Deputy Superintendent and Principals.	November 2024- June 2025
Research ways for co-planning and team time to work at the fullest potential.	Principals	November 2024- June 2025
Develop means to make professional learning transparent to parents and the community.	Deputy Superintendent	December 2025



#### Priority 4: The SAWYER Student Experience

**Goal:** We will create an environment where all students want to come to a school where they feel welcomed, successful in their work, recognized for their efforts, and supported in all areas.

Action Steps:	Person, People Responsible	Timeframe
Ensure all students are aware of opportunities available to them based on their interests.	Teachers, Building Support Teams (Social workers, school psychologists, school counselors, nurses)	September 2024- June 2025
Review funding for academic clubs to ensure it is equitable.	Secondary Principals and Assistant Principals	November 2024- June 2025
Research social skills training programs for all students.	Building Support Teams (Social Workers, School Psychologists, school counselors, nurses)	November 2024- June 2025
Promote/advertise courses offered	Principals, District PR Coordinator, School Counselors	December 2024
Develop a plan to increase alumni presenters to current students - JHS to elementary, i.e. 8th grader speaks to 6th-grade	Principals, School Counselors	November 2024- June 2025
Utilize faculty meetings for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion topics.	Deputy Superintendent and Principals	September 2024-June 2025
Implement consistent policies and/or procedures on how allergies are handled.	School Nurses Director of PPS	June 2025
Develop “see something, say something” program and poster campaign regarding vaping to improve the overall bathroom experience.	Students, Secondary Principals and Assistant Principals	June 2025
Research methods to measure student engagement	Teachers, Students	Spring 2025
Support all students and families with attendance issues.	Principals, SRO, Building Support Teams (Social workers, school psychologists, school counselors, nurses)	Spring 2025



Review the use of honor rolls and consider future steps that embrace student perspective and impact vs. intent.	Secondary Principals and Assistant Principals	June 2025
Research feasibility of therapy animals, musical therapy, art therapy, etc.	Director of Special Education, Director of PPS	November 2024-June 2025
Recognize graduates for the path they choose after HS.	School Counselors, District PR Coordinator	June 2025
Review ways in which Career and Technical and PTECH Students can showcase their learning in the district to students and families.	Career and Technical Education & PTECH students and teachers, SHS Principal, School Counselors	November 2024-June 2025
Look for opportunities to incorporate self-care such as Wellness Wednesday - stress management strategies, meditation, yoga.	Support Staff, Director of PPS	November 2024-June 2025
Research implementing a trade career day.	School Counselors, SHS Principal, CTE Principal, Assistant Principal	November 2024-June 2025
Provide additional cafeteria training on medical needs	Director of PPS, School Nurses	November 2024-June 2025
Research peer mentoring programs.	Principals, Building Support Teams (Social workers, school psychologists, school counselors, nurses	November 2024-June 2025
Develop workable and meaningful classroom protocol regarding the use of cell phones, apple watches, and earbuds.	Building faculty, staff, students, Principals and Assistant Principal	November 2024-June 2025
Focus on consistency in expectations across grade levels.	Building Admin, Faculty, and staff	November 2024-June 2025
Create opportunities for students to learn from and teach each other. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student presentations of learning</li> <li>• Instructional Rounds</li> </ul> Parent-to-Student Feedback	Deputy Superintendent, Principals, teachers, students	November 2024-June 2025



• Peer Rubrics		
Research how to track student connections.	Director of PPS, Building Support Teams (Social workers, school psychologists, school counselors, nurses)	November 2024-June 2025
Promote the elective fair.	SHS - Dept Chairs, School Counselors, Principals, Assistant Principals, District PR Coordinator	November 2024-June 2025
Host career fairs.	SHS - Dept Chairs, School Counselors, Principals, Assistant Principals, District PR Coordinator	November 2024-June 2025
Research ways to help students to get jobs while in school.	Principals, Assistant Principals, School Counselors	November 2024-June 2025



## Accountability and Implementation Plan

What gets measured, gets done. It is important to stay focused on the work at hand and to hold each other accountable for achieving outcomes. In the spirit of transparency, diligence to the task at hand, and sharing our progress as a team, the following schedule has been developed for regular reporting on progress in working towards objectives.

Timeframe	Activity	Who
July - October 2024	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Blueprint Plan Presented to the Community and Adopted by the BOE</li> <li>2. Blueprint Plan “unpacked” and shared with the faculty and staff.</li> <li>3. Blueprint Plan unpacked with smaller groups.</li> </ol>	Superintendent, BOE  Superintendent  Principals
2024-25 Quarterly	Blueprint Updates provided to the BOE, Community, and Staff	Superintendent and Administrators
June 2025	Final Report Blueprint Updates provided to the BOE, Community, and Staff	Superintendent and Administrators
July 2025	Blueprint Planning Day Held  Plan Updated for 24-25	BOE Superintendent Administrators Staff Community Members



## **2024 Blueprint Team**

### ***Community Members, Staff Members, and Students***

<i>Alex Feinberg</i>	<i>Lauren Ruberg</i>
<i>Amy Cobb-Mills</i>	<i>Maggie Myers</i>
<i>Andrew Fisco</i>	<i>Mandy Norcross</i>
<i>Ashley Wilson</i>	<i>Maria Silva</i>
<i>Aubrey Zambrella</i>	<i>Marissa Duffy</i>
<i>Brandon Schoonmaker</i>	<i>Michael Meyer</i>
<i>Cherly Newkirk</i>	<i>Natalie Michael</i>
<i>Christopher Winters</i>	<i>Nina Schmidbaur</i>
<i>Crystal Whitaker</i>	<i>Randall Ricks</i>
<i>Danielle Barros</i>	<i>Rebecca Adsit</i>
<i>Dr. Katie Emerson-Hoss</i>	<i>Sakinah Irizarry</i>
<i>Jaime Kesick</i>	<i>Sean Collins</i>
<i>Jennifer Wade</i>	<i>Stephanie Pettit</i>
<i>John Carlson</i>	<i>Thomas Allie</i>
<i>Jennifer Kavanagh</i>	<i>Noelle Marino</i>
<i>Kim Keefe</i>	<i>Gavin McPeck</i>
<i>Kristina Mulligan</i>	



## ***2024 Blueprint Team***

### ***Board of Education Members***

Bob Thomann	Board President
Jeff Riozzi	Board Vice President
Jim Mooney	Board Trustee
Mike Maclary	Board Trustee
Christine Bellorosa	Board Trustee
Carol Kelder	Board Trustee
Bill Ball	Board Trustee
Scott Polston	Board Trustee
Tim Wells	Board Trustee

### ***Administration***

Dr. Dan Erceg	Superintendent
Gwendolyn Roraback	Deputy Superintendent
Shannon Molyneaux	Director of HR
Colleen Mills	Business Official
Dr. Lisajane Kappler	Director of PPS
Jaime Churchill	Director of Special Education
Paul Tryon	Riccardi Principal
Kris Giangreco	Morse Principal
Laura Cahill	Cahill Principal
Kayla Lamb	Cahill Assistant Principal
Tom Martelli	Sr High Principal
Trish Pipitone	Sr High Assistant Principal
Ginger Vail	Jr. High Principal
Chelsea Defino	Jr./Sr. High Assistant Principal
Lee Molyneaux	Assistant Principal, Athletic Director
Rocco German	Director of Technology

