



SWEET HOME CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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DRAFT #1

Sweet Home Central School District Board of Education Goals for the 2024-2025 School Year

At its annual retreat on October 16, 2024, the Sweet Home Board of Education engaged in a collaborative discussion regarding its goals and major initiatives for the 2024-2025 school year. The goals discussed at the Board retreat include our work in advocating for and continued implementation of the District's Strategic Plan, develop scope and financial parameters for the next major capital project, discuss practices regarding the District's adoption of Artificial Intelligence as a tool for learning, and support the continued adoption of the District's practices in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Goal #1

The Board of Education will lead in the promotion, advocacy, and implementation of year two of the Sweet Home Strategic Plan. The Board will ensure benchmarks are being met and that students are developing into the portrait of a Sweet Home graduate, as defined in the plan. The Board will regularly engage in talks with District Office and the community, and lead in the accomplishment of goals around teaching and learning, developing a future focused culture, and ensuring the needs of the whole child are met. Student achievement from an academic, social, and emotional perspective is highlighted throughout the Strategic Plan, and the Board will receive periodic feedback to monitor the District's implementation and support of its revamped Multi-Tier Systems of Support plan. The Board is dedicated to enhancing academic performance for every student. It will consistently evaluate the implementation of the plan, through benchmarks, and end-of-year data to ascertain whether there is a notable improvement in achievement levels for all students.

Rationale

The Sweet Home Strategic Plan was Board approved in June 2023. All Board members agreed that the plan will not live on shelf. Instead, the Board made it clear that benchmarks stated in the plan must be met, and that the District move toward and adopt a 21st century learning mentality that is student centered, benefitting all students in the District.

Mid-Year Notes

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EVERY STUDENT, ONE COMMUNITY, READY FOR THE FUTURE.

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Goal #2

The Board of Education will lead in efforts to develop the scope and financial parameters of the District's next major capital project. Working collaboratively with all key stakeholders and the Building Use Committee, the Board will consider the recommendations of our entire school community in developing the project. The Board will continue to study Sweet Home's increasing enrollment, and build a capital project plan that addresses spacing concerns, particularly at the elementary level. The goal is to have the scope of the plan built by June 30, 2025 to ensure our community has ample time to study the project and prepare for a late fall 2025 vote.

Rationale

An increase in enrollment, the evolving needs of our students, real-estate development in the District, additional staff in mental health areas, and the changing landscape of several District neighborhoods have led to spacing concerns in our elementary buildings. In addition, traditional spaces in elementary schools have been reconfigured to house special needs students, but were not originally built with their needs in mind. Enrollment projections show increases over the next 10 years, and potential development, particularly the Boulevard Mall redevelopment in the Town of Amherst, could lead to further increases. Also, 2025 is a year that the District will meet several large debt obligations, meaning the District can accrue debt, more easily manage the tax cap, and keep the impact to tax payers at a minimum.

Mid-Year Notes

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Goal #3

The Board of Education is committed to maintaining a diverse, equitable, and inclusive educational and work environment where all stakeholders have the opportunity to succeed and achieve. Now that a District-Wide Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee has been well established, the next phase will be to ensure that each individual building understands the work of the District-wide committee and how that work can support current structure such as Leader in Me, Building Leadership Teams, and achievement data analysis. This year is critical in supporting the work of our buildings to ensure equitable access for all students.

Rationale

Sweet Home's strength is in its diversity. Our students are exposed to many different cultures because of our diverse population. We must capitalize on this to offer our students the richest, most complete learning experiences that will provide them with a competitive edge as they prepare for life after graduation. After three years of successful implementation by the District DEI committee, it is now imperative that our buildings adopt the work through their own systems, like Leader in Me, to ensure that rich learning experiences are attainable for all.

Mid-Year Notes

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Goal #4

The Board of Education will create a budgetary plan that is inline with our new Strategic Plan and promotes teaching and learning; develops future-focused programming; and serves the needs of the whole child. The plan will be fiscally responsible to the taxpayers of the district. The Board recognizes that policy is changing in Albany, particularly in terms of the Foundation Aid Formula, and must plan accordingly to ensure the District remains completely viable in order to reach its learning, social, and emotional goals for all students.

Rationale

The District’s budget must always support the academic, social, and emotional needs of every student in our District. With that said, the District must plan responsibly. Federal stimulus money is gone, and the state is planning for major changes to its Foundation Aid Formula, one that could negatively impact Districts across New York. While the District was promised that the Foundation Aid Formula would be fully funded, the state pulled back on that promise and cut Sweet Home’s aid during the 2023-2024 school year. The District will closely monitor spending this year to ensure that District finances remain healthy, particularly in times where State Aid is being cut.

Mid-Year Notes

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Goal #5

Recognizing that educational technology plays a vital role in the development of the 21st century learner, the Board will discuss and lead in the development of the District's Artificial Intelligence practices. The Board will advocate and facilitate the effective use of AI through feedback of key stakeholders on the impact AI plays on student learning, as well as the impact AI will play on administrator and teacher work flow. The Board will support continual updates of AI and flexible District-wide practices as it is understood that AI is continuing to evolve at a rapid pace.

Rationale

Artificial Intelligence, if used properly, has the potential to revolutionize the way students learn. AI will continue to develop at a rapid pace. The District must ensure that AI supports learning so our students are prepared to thrive in a rapidly evolving technological landscape. In addition, by supporting AI, the District will monitor the impact AI has on our workforce by promoting practices that create efficiencies in providing a rich experience for our students.

Mid-Year Notes

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