

# **Blueprint for Excellence**

# **Strategic Plan**

2024-2025

Dear Members of the Grand Island Central School District 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 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 our work. 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,

Ashli Dreher
President, Board of Education
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### **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 road map 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 Grand Island CSD Planning Process:**





### **Our District**

The Grand Island Central School District, located on Grand Island, NY, serves a diverse community with a strong commitment to academic excellence and student development. The district comprises schools all dedicated to providing a comprehensive education. With a focus on innovative teaching practices and a supportive learning environment, the district aims to prepare students for success in a global society. Extracurricular activities, sports, and arts programs are also emphasized to foster well-rounded personal growth.

### **Our Community**

The community surrounding the Grand Island Central School District is a vibrant and close-knit area located on a scenic island in the Niagara River. Known for its beautiful parks and recreational opportunities, residents enjoy a blend of suburban tranquility and natural beauty. The area boasts a strong sense of community, with numerous local events, family-friendly activities, and active civic organizations. Its proximity to both Buffalo and Niagara Falls provides easy access to urban amenities while maintaining a peaceful, small-town atmosphere.

### **Plan Overview**

The Grand Island Central School District's Blueprint for Excellence emphasizes a mission to inspire students to reach their highest potential by honoring individual pathways, fostering academic excellence, and promoting personal and social growth. Its vision is to cultivate educational excellence and empower students to harness their talents, understand themselves and the world, appreciate diverse arts, respect cultural differences, pursue fulfilling careers, uphold civic responsibility, and excel academically. The district is guided by core values that prioritize student focus, flexibility, inclusivity, learning from experiences, positive connections, respect, joy in learning, service, and safety. Key priorities include enhancing academic excellence through authentic learning experiences, maintaining high-quality operational resources, supporting student well-being, and improving community connections through effective communication.

## **Our Leadership Team**

Brian Graham, Ed.D., Superintendent Cheryl Cardone, Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Personnel Services John Fitzpatrick, Assistant Superintendent of HR, Curriculum and Staff Development

Robert Merkle, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent of School Business and Finance

## **Board of Education**

Ashli Dreher, *President* Susan Marston, *Vice President* Joy LaMarca, *Trustee* Danielle Bruno, *Trustee* Jay Grover, *Trustee* Sherry Steffans, *Trustee* Roger Broeker, *Trustee* 



### 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 affirmed 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 updated mission, vision, and core values.

### Mission:

We inspire each student to achieve their highest potential by honoring their unique pathway, fostering academic excellence, supporting personal growth, and promoting social responsibility.

### Vision:

The Grand Island School District cultivates excellence in education and empowers students to:

- Harness their talents for personal and communal benefit.
- Gain a profound understanding of self, community, nation, and globe.
- Embrace diverse artistic expressions.
- Foster respect, empathy, and cultural appreciation.
- Forge fulfilling personal and professional paths.
- Uphold civic responsibility.
- Excel academically, igniting a thirst for learning.

### **Core Beliefs:**

## We believe in providing experiences and opportunities that support and develop these core beliefs:

- Student Focused
- Flexibility and Resilience
- Inclusivity and Belonging
- Learning from Success and Failure
- Developing Positive Connections
- Respect for Individuality
- Respect and Trust
- Joy in Learning
- Service and Social Responsibility
- Safety and Well-being
- Clear and Accessible Communication
- Joy in Learning
- Service and Social Responsibility
- Safety and Well-being
- Clear and Accessible Communication

Blueprint for Excellence

### 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 in order to fulfill the mission of the district. A district goal has been developed for each area.

## Academic Excellence

**Goal:** We will expand authentic learning experiences that challenge and support students to reach their full potential while developing their 21st Century Skills to further engage in our school, community, and the dynamic world.

## Operations

**Goal:** We will provide the school community with a high-quality physical plant and the resources needed to most effectively learn/teach/carry out their duties.

## **Student Well-Being**

Goal: We will ensure that each student's mental, physical, and social needs are supported.

## **Community Connections**

**Goal:** We will enhance engagement by improving communication across all grade levels to effectively connect students, families and the community.



### **Action Plans**

The following plans have been developed to guide the actions the district takes in order 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**

**Goal:** We will expand authentic learning experiences that challenge and support students to reach their full potential while developing their 21st Century Skills to further engage in our school, community, and the dynamic world.

Action Steps:	Person/People Responsible	Timeframe
<ul> <li>Develop a focus on vertical alignment across buildings and horizontal alignment within grade levels.</li> <li>Facilitate cross-grade and cross-building professional development (PD) workshops.</li> <li>Track the number of vertical/horizontal alignment-focused professional development sessions held for teachers across different buildings.</li> <li>Achieve 100% participation rate from targeted staff groups (e.g., elementary and secondary departments).</li> <li>Collect pre and post-workshop surveys to measure staff understanding of alignment practices (target: 100% of participants report increased understanding).</li> </ul>	Principals, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Human Resources, Department Chairs, Curriculum Committees	Ongoing cyclic review in four years.
<ul> <li>All teachers will implement high-quality, differentiated Tier 1 instruction that ensures students meet grade-level expectations, fostering academic growth, engagement, and equitable learning opportunities for all.</li> <li>Student/State Assessments: All students will achieve a passing score or mastery level on grade-level assessments, state assessments, indicating they meet or exceed grade level expectations.</li> </ul>	Teachers, Principals, Psychologists, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Human Resources, Counselors	Ongoing

<ul> <li>Continue to consider new and relevant courses across the district such as offerings in elective areas, AP classes and through college partnerships.</li> <li>Propose and introduce at least 3 new elective courses annually. Establish 1 new elective annually in the course catalog.</li> <li>Meet annually with college partnerships to explore additional course offerings.</li> </ul>	Counseling Teams, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Human Resources, Principals	Ongoing
<ul> <li>Promote more academic accomplishments on social media, Board Meetings, and in weekly/ monthly newsletters.</li> <li>Promote academic accomplishments by sharing at least two student achievements weekly, highlighting one accomplishment at each board of education meeting.</li> </ul>	Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Human Resources, Principals	Ongoing
Develop student leadership opportunities to engage with younger learners to expose them to relevant content (STEAM, Language, Business, etc.)	Principals, Teachers, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Human Resources.	Ongoing
Create a culture of professional development that provides a variety of opportunities that are continuous, coordinated and provide high quality growth opportunities for all staff across the district. This plan will also ensure new staff are trained on prior initiatives and include safety training such as CPR and Mental Health First Aid.	Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Human Resources, Department leaders, Grade Level Leaders, Teachers	Ongoing
<ul> <li>Enhancing STEAM at the elementary level to engage in internships to prepare them for college and future careers.</li> <li>Holding a STEAM event once a year where students present their projects to families, community members, and potential internship partners</li> </ul>	Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Human Resources, TOSA for Curriculum and Instruction, Principals, Counselors, Department Chairs.	Spring 2024
Increase opportunities for students to self assess strengths and weaknesses and complete surveys on how they feel the academic program can be enhanced. High School - student advisory; counselors meet 1 on 1	Principals, Teachers, Building Leadership Team	Fall 2024 Ongoing



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<ul> <li>Evaluative Beings survey at the Middle School, three times annually.</li> <li>Monthly meetings of the student advisory council.</li> <li>Individual student and counselor advisement meetings.</li> <li>5th grade participates using Evaluative Beings survey; twice a year.</li> </ul>		
<ul> <li>Expand vocational opportunities and work-based learning programs for students.</li> <li>Develop the Technology Academy at GIHS by Spring 2025 and achieve a 20% increase in enrollment.</li> <li>Expand work-based learning opportunities by adding 3 new partners annually (job shadowing, internships, apprenticeships).</li> <li>Achieve a 100% success rate of students in vocational programs annually.</li> </ul>	CTE Teachers, Counselors, and Principals, Assistant Principals, Advisory Groups, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Human Resources.	Ongoing Annual progress reviewed in Spring 2025
<ul> <li>Pilot a formative assessment program using the ThinkTech platform for grade 3-5 students to assess their mastery of the Power 100, providing actionable feedback to students and teachers throughout the academic year.</li> <li>By the end of the academic year, 100% of students participating in the ThinkTech Power 100 pilot will demonstrate at least a 10% improvement in their NYS assessment scores compared to the previous year's results.</li> </ul>	Teachers, Principals, TOSA for Curriculum and Instruction, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Human Resources.	Spring 2025
<ul> <li>Using performance indicators to identify student strengths and weaknesses. (Anecdotal data attendance, behavior, etc.)</li> <li>Administering assessments aligned with performance indicators at least three times per year.</li> <li>Developing support plans for students identified as needing intervention or enrichment based upon review of the data.</li> </ul>	Counseling Teams, Teachers, Principals, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Personnel Services, RTI/ IST Teams	Spring 2025
Continue utilizing a systemic approach, communication, attendance letters, home visits, etc. to improve chronic absenteeism.	Attendance Clerk, Counseling Teams, Social Workers, Assistant	Spring 2025



<ul> <li>Sending attendance letters to families of students with absences within one week of reaching 5 days, 9, days, 15 days, or 20 days absent</li> <li>Conducting home visits for students missing 15 plus school days</li> <li>Reducing the overall chronic absenteeism rate by 10% compared to the previous year</li> </ul>	Superintendent for Pupil Personnel Services, Principals	
<ul> <li>Use data to drive academic decisions for students for interventions, scheduling, AIS, reading, counseling groups, etc. Consider expanding how we use our data.</li> <li>Create an RTI committee to establish congruence between three buildings as to how we support our students.</li> <li>Implement professional development for tier 1 interventions.</li> <li>Reduce the number of students requiring AIS.</li> </ul>	Principals, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Human Resources, RTI or IST teams.	Spring 2026
<ul> <li>Improve the ability for teachers to access and communicate iReady assessment data vertically in our student management system, and better align iReady and standardized assessment data with student grades.</li> <li>Integrating iReady data into the student management system, ensuring accessibility for all grade levels.</li> <li>Establishing a protocol for aligning iReady and standardized assessment data with students grades.</li> <li>Offering learning opportunities for teachers on accessing, analyzing, and utilizing iReady data.</li> </ul>	Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Human Resources, Principals, Instructional Technology, Teachers	Spring 2026
<ul> <li>Students will develop a portfolio of work completed throughout their academic journey.</li> <li>Promote best practice in instruction supported by research.</li> <li>There will be an annual focus on an evidence-based instructional strategy with a focus on increased student engagement and achievement with 100% implementation in each classroom.</li> </ul>	Seal of Civic Readiness Coordinator, Building Leadership Team, Principals, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Human Resources	Pending new graduation measures.

<ul> <li>Developing strategies to teach students and teachers how to use AI as a productive learning tool.</li> <li>100% of students will demonstrate the ability to effectively use AI tools for research, problem-solving, and project development</li> <li>Measured by a project or assignment where AI is used as a primary resource, with a rubric assessing functionality, creativity, and accuracy.</li> </ul>	Principals, Teachers, TOSA for Curriculum and Instruction, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Human Resources.	Fall 2027
Investigate a certified health curriculum at the Elementary level.	Principals, Teachers, TOSA for Curriculum and Instruction, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Human Resources.	Fall 2027
Establish a Report Card Committee to explore and develop family-friendly report cards and comments that effectively highlight the teacher-student relationship.	Principals, Teachers, TOSA for Curriculum and Instruction, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Human Resources.	Fall 2028

## **Priority 2: Operations**

**Goal:** We will provide the school community with a high-quality physical plant and the resources needed to most effectively learn/teach/carry out their duties.

Action Steps:	Person/People Responsible	Timeframe
Create a continuous feedback loop for food service for comments and suggestions to ensure we are providing nutritious meals that are palatable to our students. Diligently monitor the requirements for free lunches and prepare applications as available to work towards free breakfast and lunch for all students.	Director of Food Service	Summer 2025 and Ongoing
Investigate and implement the NYS breakfast "After the Bell" program to promote healthy eating habits.	Food Service and Building Level Wellness Committees	Fall 2024
Develop strategies to recruit and train highly qualified staff in all areas (transportation, B&G, food service, faculty, substitutes etc.). Promote a positive/collegial work environment, which allows opportunities for staff to learn from each other both vertically and horizontally.	Assistant Superintendents, Building Leaders, Department Leaders	Fall 2024 and Ongoing
Create a plan (budget dependent) to regularly monitor facility conditions with long- and short-term plans to address needs. Explore projects such as solar power, outdoor instructional and performance space, air conditioning in District buildings, and a fitness center in the middle school to be used by MS and community at large.	Assist Superintendent for Finance, Director of Facilities, Director of Instructional Technology, Director of Athletics	Summer 2024 and Ongoing
Create clear procedures for the district - Human Resources, Curriculum and Instruction, School Business Office.	Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Human Resources; Assistant Superintendent for Pupil	Fall 2024 and ongoing.



Create a process through which new employees acquire the knowledge, skills, and behaviors needed to integrate into the District; beginning with administrative tasks (such as paperwork), orientation and required training.	Services; Assistant Superintendent for School Business and Finance.	
Continue to update all facilities as it pertains to improving spaces for learning.	Superintendent, Board of Education, Assistant Superintendent for School Business and Finance, Principals, Teachers, Parents; Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Human Resources; Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Personnel Services.	Fall 2024 and Ongoing
Investigate additional fundraising opportunities - Alumni association, community at large, district grant writer, athletic hall of fame, boosters, etc	Athletic Director, Teachers, Principals, District Administrators.	Fall 2024 and Ongoing
Review Transportation study and investigate school start times.	Superintendent, Board of Education, Assistant Superintendent for School Business and Finance, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Personnel Services, Building Principals.	Spring 2025 and ongoing.

### **Priority 3: Student Well-Being**

**Goal:** We will ensure that each student's mental, physical, and social needs are supported.

Action Stones Deveou / Develo		Time
Action Steps:	Person/People Responsible	Timeframe
Continue to implement and train faculty, staff, and students regarding WEB (Where Everybody Belongs) , Youth Mental Health First Aid (District), Blue Crew Academy (High School) Unified programs (High School) etc	Program Coordinators	Ongoing
Educate and find resources to help with cyber citizenship.	Instructional Technology Staff and Social Workers, Counselors.	Ongoing
Continue to expand Family Support Services.	Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Personnel Services and TOSA Social Worker	Ongoing
Create quarterly forums to support and educate parents and students regarding bullying, socioemotional, vaping, anxiety, digital citizenship, etc.	Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Personnel Services and Family Support Staff, Counselors and Social Workers.	Ongoing
Communicate to the community the available support groups.	Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Personnel Services and Family Support Staff	Ongoing
Continue to investigate Mental Health funding opportunities to support the Youth Mental Health First Aid initiative.	Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Personnel Services	Ongoing
Continue to increase the training to utilize restorative practices.	All building level and district level administrators.	Ongoing



Review, revise and expand impactful bullying programs.	Building Administrators/Social workers, Counselors, Teachers, DASA Coordinators.	Ongoing
Continue to implement and refine Special Education Programs that are targeted to students' needs.	Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Personnel Services, Building Principals and School Psychologists	Ongoing
Review and revise eligibility procedures for all students participating in extracurricular activities and sports.	Athletic Director and Administrators	Fall 2024
<ul> <li>Transition from Crisis Prevention Institute strategies to Safety Cares intervention strategies.</li> <li>All faculty and staff who have direct contact with students will be trained.</li> </ul>	Targeted Pupil Personnel Faculty and Staff.	Fall 2024 and ongoing.
Continue to run monthly Pupil Personnel Staff Department Meetings with the Assistant Superintendent and the specific departments within.	Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Personnel Services	Fall 2024 and ongoing
Research strategies to integrate SEL throughout the curriculum.	Counselors, Social Workers, Principals, Pupil Personnel Staff, Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Personnel Services, Teachers, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Professional Development and Human Resources.	Fall 2024 and ongoing.
Increase participation and utilization of the Access - VR program to include both High School and Middle School students.	Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Personnel Services, School Psychologists, Teachers.	Fall 2024 and ongoing

Evaluate possible adjustments to school start times.	Superintendent, Board of Education, Assistant Superintendent for School Business and Finance, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Personnel Services, Building Principals.	Spring 2025
<ul> <li>Investigate outdoor spaces for students to effectively use for activities like recess and learning</li> <li>Identify three suitable outdoor spaces within the school grounds or nearby community for student activities such as recess and outdoor learning</li> </ul>	Building Principals	Summer 2025
<ul> <li>Form a wellness committee at each level and develop a unified goal-setting approach for each, including healthy eating habits.</li> <li>Develop three wellness goals related to healthy eating, reducing sugary snack availability, and promoting water over sugary drinks</li> </ul>	Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Personnel Services, Director of Athletics, Assistant Director of Athletics, Principals, Director of Food Service, Physical Education Department, Nurses, Teachers.	Summer 2025

### **Priority 4: Community Connections**

**Goal:** We will enhance engagement by improving communication across all grade levels to effectively connect students, families and the community.

Action Steps:	Person/People Responsible	Timeframe
Reorganize all electronic newsletters (S'more) to place new items at the top and repeat messages at the bottom.	All building administrators.	Fall 2024
Sustain and expand the "Vikings Care" initiative across all schools to foster a culture of support, empathy, and community engagement.	Principals, Teachers, Counselors, Social Workers.	Fall 2024
All administrators will ensure that information sent to families is also shared with staff and the transportation department.	All district administrators.	Fall 2024
<ul> <li>Develop a QR code system to include on the printed school calendar, linking to the most up-to-date online calendars.</li> <li>Generate a functional, dynamic QR code linked to the GI District calendar.</li> <li>Pilot the feature and collect feedback from at least 20 stakeholders (staff, parents).</li> <li>Ensure 100% of updates to the online calendar are reflected within 48 hours throughout the school year.</li> </ul>	Communications Liaison. (Larry Austin & Robin Kwiatek) Building Principals/Senior Clerk Typist in each Building.	Spring 2025
<ul> <li>Create a training video for parents on using the parent portal and post it on the school website.</li> <li>Create a video for parents explaining how to set up an IC parent portal, navigate parent portal, and view data from the parent view.</li> <li>Upload video to district/building home pages.</li> </ul>	Building technology integrators and eLearning Coaches	Fall 2025
<ul> <li>Research and update the school district website to enhance user-friendliness.</li> <li>Purchase new website platform; Summer 2024</li> <li>Train faculty to update new site; Fall 2024</li> <li>Update all District/Building pages; Winter 2025</li> </ul>	Technology Department, All district administrators, Senior Clerk Typists	Winter 2025



Create and maintain a single, unified district calendar for all schools and stakeholders, featuring tabs for each school and its events.	All District Administrators, PTA, Technology Department, Communications Liaison.	Fall 2026
Develop a survey for businesses to offer internships, tours, and career opportunities, particularly for middle school students.	Middle School CTE program	Fall 2026
Investigate Grand Island community organizations to take part in a community fair at the high school and middle school.	Middle School and High School Library Services.	Fall 2026
Expand a mentorship program pairing: 5th-grade students with 7th grade students 9th-grade students with 12th-grade students	Middle School WEB Coordinators and High School Blue Crew Academy Coordinators	Fall 2028



### 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
December, 2024 January, 2025	<ol> <li>Blueprint Plan Presented to the Community and Adopted by the BOE</li> </ol>	Superintendent, BOE
	<ol><li>Blueprint Plan "unpacked" and shared with the faculty and staff.</li></ol>	Superintendent
	<ol> <li>Blueprint Plan unpacked with smaller groups.</li> </ol>	Principals
2025-2026 Quarterly	Blueprint Updates provided to the BOE, Community and Staff	Superintendent and Administrators
February/March, 2025	Blueprint Budget Recommendations Made Blueprint Expenditures Finalized	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 25-26	BOE Superintendent Administrators Staff Community Members

## 2024 Blueprint Team

Participant	Category (Teacher, Parent, Community Leaders, SRP, BOE Trustee, etc.)	Email Address
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