

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Vision

Every Rochester student graduates as a confident, capable learner who can think critically, communicate effectively, and contribute meaningfully to a diverse and multicultural society. They demonstrate strong literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving skills; collaborate respectfully across differences; and apply their learning to improve their lives and communities.

Every RCSD graduate leaves the district with exposure to multiple pathways and the freedom to choose their next step—college, career, or military service—fully prepared to learn, grow, and thrive in the world beyond school.

The Board affirms that its primary responsibility is to govern with a focus on improving student outcomes. The Board’s educational philosophy establishes the expectations that guide all Board action, including the adoption of Board Goals, Guardrails, and policies that define how the Board governs and how the Superintendent leads the District.

The Board’s educational philosophy shall be grounded in the following governance commitments:

1. Children first.
The Board shall adopt long-term student outcome Goals describing what students should know and be able to do as a result of their PK–12 experience in the District.
2. Unified governance for the entire District.
Board members serve the entire Rochester City School District, not exclusively the geographic area from which they were elected.
3. Values-based limits on Superintendent action.
The Board shall adopt Guardrails defining the operational actions or categories of actions the Superintendent shall not permit while leading the system toward the Board Goals.
4. Clear separation of roles.
The Board governs through policy, Goals, Guardrails, and monitoring. The Superintendent manages implementation and operations.
5. Evidence-based accountability.
The Board shall routinely monitor the Superintendent’s progress toward Board Goals and adherence to Guardrails using data, evidence, and monitoring reports.
6. Community partnership.
The Board commits to transparent communication and meaningful engagement with students, families, staff, and community stakeholders to inform its vision, values, and policy decisions.
7. Equity and excellence.
The Board commits to eliminating inequitable systems, policies, and outcomes, and ensuring that all students—regardless of background—have access to high-quality instruction aligned to college, career, and community readiness.

Governance Discipline

All Board decisions shall align to this Educational Philosophy, the Board’s adopted Goals and Guardrails, and the Board’s policies governing its own conduct.

Rochester City School Board Policy Manual

0000

The Superintendent is responsible for designing, implementing, and continuously improving systems, strategies, and operations that advance the Board's adopted vision and values as described by Goals and Guardrails.

This Educational Philosophy shall serve as the foundation for the Board's work and its delegation to the Superintendent.

NYSSBA Ref: Mission Statement and Vision (0000) – Recommended Policy

Notes: Strategic Framework Policy (March 2, 1995) Vision Statement, revised; Amended March 24, 2022 pursuant to Resolution No. 2021-22: 523; Amended March 26, 2026 pursuant to Resolution No. 2025-26: 491

ct