Rockford Area Schools
District Operational Plan (DOP)
Goals, strategies and performance indicators
School Year 2026-27

This District Operational Plan is organized around the areas of strategic planning, aligned to the Superintendent goals provided by the Rockford Area Schools Board of Education and reflects both the current work and future goals of school district administration.

The Mission of Rockford Area Schools

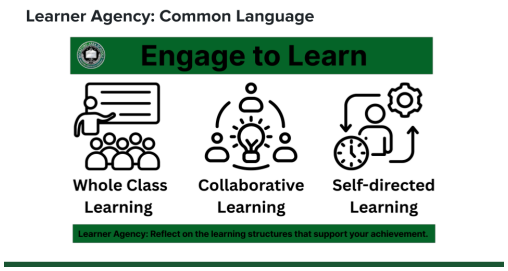
In partnership with our communities and families, Rockford Area Schools provides challenging opportunities to engage, inspire, and educate globally-minded citizens.

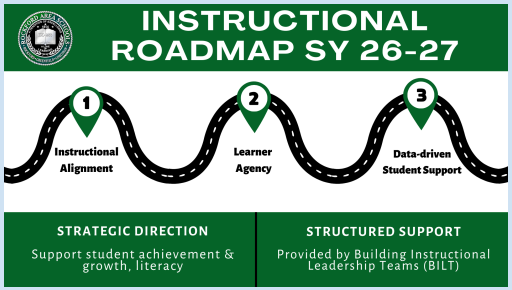
Rockford Area Schools Strategic Directions

Strategic Direction	Definition	Rationale
Student Achievement and Growth	Provide high quality instruction, curriculum, and professional development for staff, to impact our students through a robust learning experience.	Through continuous improvement, provide each and every student with a comprehensive education that gives students opportunities to pursue their own personal/professional goals and aspirations.
Healthy and Supportive Environment	Promote respect and collaboration in order to foster secure relationships where all people feel valued and safe. Cultivating a culture to empower all to share new and innovative ideas, and advocate for their own wellbeing, as well as the wellbeing of others.	People do better when they feel better.
Community, School and Family Partnerships	Strengthen and grow supportive and trusting relationships through community outreach and partnerships that encourage collaboration to drive school and community growth.	Community and family engagement promotes school success and satisfaction. Partnerships based on mutual trust and support help to foster this involvement.
Culture of Collective Purpose	Through interconnectedness & interdependence, we create a school community where each person belongs, contributes and feels a sense of ownership.	To create a culture of connectedness where each individual understands their unique value and vital role as part of the school community.
Stewardship of Resources	Strategically investing our resources in a responsible and efficient way that ensures the best possible educational experience for students while also promoting sustainability and ethical financial practices.	To create systems and structures that allow our resources, for quality educational experiences, to be maximized and provide transparency and trust throughout the school community.

Student Growth and Achievement

Rationale	Leader(s)
Our purpose as a school district is to educate our students and maximize their individual gifts and talents. Providing quality programming, ensuring our teachers are trained in best practices, and partnering with students and families to offer opportunities that connect to their passions is important to overall student growth and achievement.	Dr. Jeff Ridlehoover Kathy Mattson

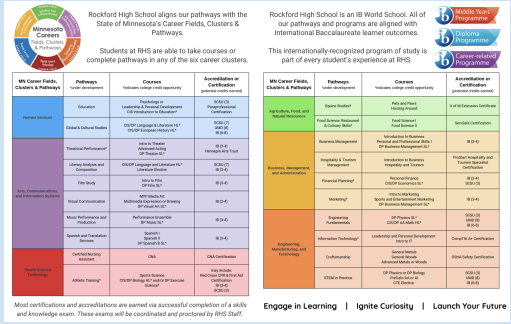
Goals	Strategies	Performance Indicators	Timeframe
Utilize achievement and growth data to support instructional practices via established national norms and baselines related to Fastbridge annual growth metrics.	Review predetermined baseline metrics to ascertain individualized student growth data via our annual Fastbridge assessments in literacy and mathematics.	Fastbridge growth data via national norms	SY 2026-2027
Continue the establishment of asynchronous professional development opportunities for licensed staff	Create professional development/learning opportunities for licensed staff to access as necessary for licensure renewals and job-embedded growth and improvement	Development of Repository Items	SY 2026-2027
Student Agency	Professional development tailored to the concepts of Student Agency By use of common vocabulary and structured instructional practices, provide students with multiple, self-selection modalities to demonstrate proficiency as measured via state academic standards		SY 2026-2027

Goals	Strategies	Performance Indicators	Timeframe
Instructional Roadmap	Provide professional learning related to instructional alignment, learner agency, and data-driven student support		SY 2026-2027
Improve alignment of our MTSS structures	Expand engagement with SEMI DLT, define MTSS-related roles, and use results from 25-26 to implement theories of action	MTSS Products	SY 2026-2027
Improve structure of flex times within each building	Reimagine the current WIN, Boost, and Rocket Block time to create a highly structured system of supports regarding general classroom instruction, intervention work, and extension opportunities.	Elementary BLAST Secondary BLAST	SY 2026-2027

Healthy and Supportive Environment

Rationale	**Leader(s)**
Per the rationale established by the Board of Education, "people do better when they feel better," our work will center on ensuring that every student and member of our staff is treated with respect and kindness. In addition, we are committed to a proactive approach of establishing clear processes to assist students, families, and staff when challenges occur.	Dr. Jeff Ridlehoover Kathy Mattson Melissa Joseph Jeff Kienitz Courtney Neibert Cindy Gapinski

Goals	Strategies	Performance Indicators	Timeframe
Streamline the functions and operations of the RAS Human Resources Department	Incorporate the use of enhanced Human Resources tools (i.e., Frontline Central) Compliance to state and federal standards related to employee personnel files Utilize a paperless system for employee reimbursements	The successful configuration of Frontline Recruiting and Hiring, including job requisitions, workflow, applicant pipelines, and a job template repository	SY 2026-2027
Create and implement a data dashboard to support the Rockford Area Schools Profile of a Graduate	Objective, data informed tracking Visual branding via signage	Internal indicators Website data dashboard	SY 2026-2027

Goals	Strategies	Performance Indicators	Timeframe
Refine and potentially increase offerings related to our career pathways and college credit-earning courses	Build upon our work with the branding of *Launch Your Future: Early College and Career Preparation.* Visual branding in our schools as well as via our website and social media platforms.	  Industry Certifications Student Enrollment Data (by course) Partnerships with Business and Industry Partnerships with post-secondary institutions	SY 2026-2027
Continue to build professional and relational capacity in our staff through intentional professional learning and job-embedded opportunities.	Insights Training for the RAS Leadership Team. Book Studies: *Lead like Lasso* *Start With the Why*	Insights participant feedback Participant feedback	SY 2026-2027

Goals	Strategies	Performance Indicators	Timeframe
Continue implementation of the District Cybersecurity Governance and Compliance Program	Finalize and operationalize Tier 1–Tier 4 cybersecurity governance documentation aligned to NIST CSF 2.0, Minnesota cybersecurity requirements, cyber insurance expectations, & data privacy regulations. Continue annual cyber risk assessment activities, access management reviews, incident response planning, and cybersecurity auditing processes.	Completion and publication of governance documentation and procedures | Cyber audit documentation and corrective actions | MFA (Multi-Factor Authentication) and privileged access reviews | Incident response and reporting procedures | Annual cybersecurity compliance review documentation	SY 2026-2027
Continue modernization of District Safety and Emergency Management systems and procedures	Continue alignment of district safety and emergency preparedness systems with ICS/NIMS practices, reunification planning, responder coordination, emergency communications, & physical security modernization efforts. Continue collaboration with local law enforcement, emergency management agencies, and safety partners.	Updated district safety documentation | Reunification planning updates | CRG (Critical Response Group) and responder mapping integration | Lockdown and emergency drill documentation | Safety committee documentation and meeting records | Emergency communications testing and validation	SY 2026-2027
Continue modernization and integration of physical security systems	Continue integration and modernization of district physical security systems including cameras, access control, lockdown systems, responder mapping, emergency notification systems, and operational monitoring platforms.	Physical security integration documentation | Lockdown system testing records | Updated digital maps and responder coordination systems | Camera/access control lifecycle planning | Emergency notification validation	SY 2026-2027

Community, School, and Family Partnerships

Rationale	**Leader(s)**
Students perform better when strong partnerships exist between our schools, our families, and the greater community. Clear and transparent communication as well as the solicitation of feedback from all stakeholders ensures that all voices are heard and greater understanding is gained.	Dr. Jeff Ridlehoover Melissa Joseph Jeff Kienitz Christa Larson Courtney Neibert Kathy Mattson

Goals	Strategies	Performance Indicators	Timeframe
Complete and share the information provided via the contracted demographic study	Engage in a multi-city demographic study to ascertain future growth in residential housing and student enrollment.	Insert Study	Summer 2026
Municipality Partnerships	Continue partnering with the City of Corcoran to determine and plan for the eventual construction of a new school in Corcoran Continue partnering with the City of Greenfield to plan for future development, primarily in the site across and adjacent to Rockford High School Continue partnering with the City of Rockford as growth is occurring in the land parcel across Highway 55	Feedback from municipal partners	SY 2026-2027

Goals	Strategies	Performance Indicators	Timeframe
Form a district communication team to establish standard communication practices to ensure clear, consistent, and responsive communication throughout the district. Work to improve the consistency, transparency, and effectiveness of internal and external communications.	Collaborate to establish a clear purpose. Establish messaging consistency. Centralize communication and create templates	Develop a general Communication Plan and communications repository	SY 2026-2027
Implement ADA Title II and Digital Accessibility Compliance readiness activities	Develop and implement district digital accessibility governance processes including website reviews, accessibility remediation planning, VPAT review procedures, accessible document practices, and staff awareness initiatives aligned to ADA Title II requirements	Accessibility governance procedures | Website and document remediation tracking | VPAT(Voluntary Product Accessibility Template)/vendor accessibility review documentation | Staff training and awareness materials | ADA compliance readiness planning documentation	SY 2026-2027
Increase our overall impact via public relations and marketing as a means to promote our school district and capture, retain, and recruit students and families to Rockford Area Schools	Dedication to our website presence, including regular updates of content (photos, happenings, etc.) Dedication to more timely and frequent social media content and posts CIC coordination in the areas of NWSISD promotion (social media, magnet nights, etc.)	Visible content improvements Enrollment indicators	SY 2026-2027

Culture of Collective Purpose

Rationale	**Leader(s)**
Strong organizations are built on trust, collaboration, partnership, and understanding. Establishing clear direction, strong lines of internal and external communication, and a shared leadership model will provide all stakeholders with common purpose related to our individual and collective work.	Dr. Jeff Ridlehoover Kathy Mattson Bridget Peterson Cindy Gapinski Melissa Joseph Jeff Kienitz Courtney Neibert

Goals	Strategies	Performance Indicators	Timeframe
Create, highlight, and post visual representations of important operational and instructional initiatives	#AdvantageRockford signage/decals RAS Profile of a Graduate signage/decals. Student Agency signage	Visual exemplars in schools, social media, and website 	SY 2026-2027
Revise our School Board meeting protocol to establish a systematic structure for site and district presentations	Create a new and improved school site/Principal presentation model	Principals presentations (February/May/November) Department of Learning & Innovation (January/March/May/October)	SY 2026-2027
Restructuring of the personnel and duties of staff in the District Office	Improve central office efficiencies by aligning job descriptions and providing cross-training and	Updated job descriptions	SY 2026-2027

Goals	Strategies	Performance Indicators	Timeframe
	operational support		
Support and Onboarding of new administrative staff	Provide mentorship and professional growth opportunities to new administrators at Rockford High School	MASSP, MNIAAA, etc.	SY 2026-2027
Continue refining the workflow and structures of the custodial and buildings and grounds team	Through a process of continuous improvement and recognition of skills and experiences, tailor the Custodial and Building & Grounds Departments in a way that maximizes efficiencies and provides the greatest impact	Workflow/job specific oversight documents	SY 2026-2027
Develop Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Data Governance practices	Develop district guidance and governance practices related to artificial intelligence, student data privacy, digital citizenship, and responsible technology usage while reviewing vendor data practices and emerging operational risks.	AI guidance documentation | Data governance review documentation | Vendor review procedures | Handbook and policy recommendations | Student/staff awareness materials	SY 2026-2027

Stewardship of Resources

Rationale	**Leader(s)**
As stewards of resources consisting of physical assets, human capital, and monetary reserves, it is prudent to provide the public, as well as our internal stakeholders, with accurate, relevant, and timely reporting of district affairs.	Dr. Jeff Ridlehoover Bridget Peterson Christa Larson Melissa Joseph Jeff Kienitz

Goals	Strategies	Performance Indicators	Timeframe
Implement with the fidelity the one-year early retirement incentive (ERI) program	Early Retirement Incentive MOA	Employee participation	SY 2026-2027
Utilize the data provided via the Long Term Facilities Management (LTFM) study to develop a multi-year plan to address district needs	Develop a coordinated plan of action to address future facilities needs and improvements	Action plan	SY 2026-2027
Through coordination with our LTFM study, engage in facilities work that best enhances and protects the infrastructure of Rockford Area Schools	Board discussion/decisions	Action plan(s)	Summer 2027 and Beyond
Implement capital projects funding $250K annually	Detailed budget discussions	Budgetary decisions and action(s) taken	SY 2026-2027 and Beyond

Land Appraisal	Work with a professional land appraiser to ascertain the financial worth of a currently unused portion of District property in Hennepin County Discussions with the RAS Board of Education to highlight potential options of land use regarding this particular property	Land appraisal and subsequent conversation	Summer/Fall 2026
Settle current year employee contracts within Board approved ranges.	Establish trust and a strong working relationship with all bargaining units to find fair and sustainable wage and benefit increases that will be used to recruit and retain high-quality employees	Contract parameters/settlements	Summer 2026
Maintain error-free state reporting now that we are Ed-Fi certified to maximize revenue from the state	Collaborate closely with staff to ensure accurate reporting of student data. Engage in MDE training sessions and webinars, as well as training offered through our student information system, to remain informed about the latest state reporting guidelines and requirements	Error-free MARSS Uploads	SY 2026-2027 and Ongoing

Continue implementation of long-term technology infrastructure and lifecycle sustainability planning	Continue districtwide technology lifecycle management, infrastructure modernization, wireless/network review, classroom technology replacement planning, backup/disaster recovery validation, and technology inventory governance aligned with district strategic and levy priorities	Updated 5–10 year technology plan | Infrastructure lifecycle documentation | Technology inventory and audit records | Backup and recovery validation documentation | Annual infrastructure review reports | Capital levy alignment reporting	SY 2026-2027