





Program Narrative

In 2026-27, the Rochester City School District (RCSD) will continue many Contract for Excellence (C4E) initiatives that support the Regents Reform Agenda. The following C4E-funded activities will help students to meet ELA and Math standards as well as increase the college and career readiness of students:

- In-School Suspension (ISS) keeps students who receive a suspension at school in a learning environment. An identified "ISS Room" provides continued instruction and maintains engagement in the educational setting and process.
- Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) keeps students who receive a suspension from an RCSD school campus in a learning environment. An identified "OSS Room" provides continued instruction and maintains engagement in the educational setting and process in an RCSD classroom (after regular school hours).
- Social Workers and School Counselors to assist students and support improved academic performance as they fall behind academically.
- Parent Liaison and Home School Assistance to reach out to the community and ensure students are attending school and staying on track academically.



- English Language Learners' educational needs are supported by bilingual and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) teachers and support staff, and activities in the Department of ELL. More than 3,800 RCSD students are ELLs (18% of the total District enrollment) and speak more than 70 languages.
- General Education Summer School. The goal of an equity-driven summer learning model is to ensure that all students have access to the same quality of instruction. Equity-driven summer learning models are essential in providing access to quality education for all students and closing the achievement gap.
- All City High is a non-traditional high school program for mature students in grades 10–12, ages 17–21, who need an alternative pathway to earning a New York State high school diploma. The program offers a supportive learning environment with small class sizes, highly qualified teachers, individualized graduation plans, semester-based scheduling, flexible class options, and Online Credit Recovery (OCR) courses to help students recover credits and stay on track for graduation. Students can earn a minimum of 10 credits per year, receive transition planning to support their post-secondary goals, and, if employed, may earn academic credit through the General Education Work Experience Program (GEWEP).
- Rochester International Academy (RIA) serves newly arrived immigrant students in grades 7-12, by providing a supportive learning environment that develops English language proficiency while building academic content knowledge. Through culturally responsive instruction, strong family and community partnerships, and



comprehensive social-emotional supports, RIA helps students successfully adjust to their new school, community, and country while preparing them for a successful transition to their home school.

Targeting Narrative

[2025-26 Accountability Status](#) - This is the latest publicized information brought forth by the NYS Education Department.

Building-level accountability designations are available through the NYSED Public School Report Card. The level of need across the Rochester City School District remains high, with the majority of schools serving economically disadvantaged student populations that exceed the accountability threshold of 30 or more students.

Performance among accountability subgroups varies across schools; however, students with disabilities continue to demonstrate the greatest need for academic improvement throughout the District. At the same time, English Language Learners have shown sustained progress, particularly in graduation rates, over the past decade.

All RCSD schools conduct a comprehensive needs assessment to evaluate student performance, identify root causes of achievement gaps, and inform school improvement efforts. Based on their New York State accountability designation, schools develop and implement the required improvement plan. Schools identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) develop a School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP), while schools identified for Local Support and Improvement (LSI) develop a School Improvement Plan (SIP). These plans serve as road maps for continuous improvement and are grounded in data analysis, stakeholder engagement, and evidence-based strategies designed to



improve student outcomes.

RCSD currently has 29 schools identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI), including 7 schools designated as CSI-Receiverhip (CSI-R). District leadership provides ongoing professional development and technical assistance to principals and school leadership teams throughout the year to support implementation, monitoring, and continuous refinement of each school's improvement plan.

The overarching goal of these plans is to address identified academic priorities—particularly for English Language Learners and students with disabilities—using the accountability indicators established under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and New York State's accountability framework. Required components of school improvement plans include:

- A comprehensive needs assessment informed by ESSA accountability indicators and school-level performance data;
- Data-driven goals aligned to identified school needs, with emphasis on English Language Arts, mathematics, and graduation outcomes, as applicable;
- Root cause analyses identifying the factors contributing to performance gaps;
- Evidence-based strategies and action steps designed to address identified needs;
- Analysis of disaggregated student performance data to ensure equitable outcomes for all student groups; and
- Alignment with District priorities, benchmarks, and continuous improvement initiatives.

The Rochester City School District is a high-need district, with more than 87% of



students identified as economically disadvantaged. Additionally, approximately 22% of students receive special education services, and 17% are English Language Learners.

As a result, virtually every RCSD school serves a significant proportion of students included in the targeted populations under the Contract for Excellence (C4E).

Consistent with the 75/50 Rule, the District directs more than 75% of its Contract for Excellence funding to the 50% of schools with the greatest student need, as measured by concentrations of economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and students demonstrating low academic achievement. This requirement is met through a combination of school-based programs and districtwide initiatives that support the District's comprehensive planning and continuous improvement process.

Strategic Plan Goals

During the 2025-26 school year, our strategic plan was updated by the Board of Education, setting the stage from now through 2031.

Priority 1: Instructional Excellence Preparing students for Life

- Goal 1A: Increase the percentage of students in grades 3-8 who are proficient on the NYS ELA assessment from 19% to 34% by June 2031.
- Goal 1B: All students reading by third grade - increase the percentage of students proficient on 3rd grade NYS ELA from 22% to 49% by June 2031.
- Goal 1C: Increase the percentage of students in grades 3-8 who are proficient on the NYS math assessment from 16% to 31% by 2031.
- Goal 1D: Increase the number of students earning five or more credits in 9th grade from 73% to 81% by June 2031.



Priority 2: Provide Healthy, Joyful, and Inclusive School Culture & Climate *

- Goal 2A: By 2028, 100% of RCSD schools will implement restorative practices with fidelity.
- Goal 2B: By 2028, the District will reduce the percentage of overall out-of-school suspensions to less than 8.5%.
- Goal 2C: By 2028, the District will reduce the current chronic absenteeism rate by 25%.
- Goal 2D: By 2028, at least 75% of District students will participate in annual student surveys (e.g., student climate survey and participatory budgeting) and identify their school community as "a place where they feel safe and belong."

Priority 3: Recruit, Grow, and Retain *

- Goal 3A: By 2028, increase the percentage of teachers identifying as BIPOC from 24% to 30%.
- Goal 3B: Increase employee engagement in professional development activities over the next three years, as evidenced by a 10% increase in participation rates and an average participant feedback rating of 3 out of 4 or higher on professional development activities.
- Goal 3C: Enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion by implementing inclusive practices and culturally responsive teaching methods, leading to a measurable increase in student engagement and satisfaction across all demographics within the next three years. Assessments will be conducted by identifying and administering a baseline survey to students and staff, followed by efforts to achieve incremental year-over-year increases.
- Goal 3D: Increase employee retention rates by 5% over the course of



three years through the successful implementation of retention initiatives and employee well-being programs.

Priority 4: Strengthen School, Family, and Community Engagement *

- Goal 4A: By 2028, 100% of RCSD schools will implement the community school model with fidelity.
- Goal 4B: By 2028, RCSD will strengthen the connection between School, Family, and Community by ensuring 100% of schools have representation of parents on school-based planning teams.
- Goal 4C: RCSD will provide enhanced communication channels to families to boost engagement across the District's community, as evidenced by a 30% increase in parents and students who signed up with the District's parent portal.
- Goal 4D: Increase the percentage of parents who agree or strongly agree they feel a sense of belonging to their child's school community from 59% to 75% by 2028.

Priority 5: Operational Efficiency/Excellence *

- Goal 5A: Submit a balance budget to the Board of Education.
- Goal 5B: Actual General Fund revenue exceeds budget by no more than 1.0%, and actual General Fund expense is under budget by no more than 2.0%.
- Goal 5C: Develop a comprehensive long-range plan to optimize the efficient utilization of facilities and transportation services for students, aiming to reduce cost, minimize environmental impact, and enhance convenience and safety, resulting in a 15% increase in overall transportation efficiency and 10% improvement in facility utilization rates within the next three to five years.



- Goal 5D: RCSD will invest and improve facilities and resources to enhance student learning and ensure a safe school environment.

* = currently being updated

Experimental of District-Wide Programs Narrative

As noted earlier in this narrative document, District-wide programs include:

- **All City High** is a non-traditional high school program for mature students in grades 10–12, ages 17–21, who need an alternative pathway to earning a New York State high school diploma. The program offers a supportive learning environment with small class sizes, highly qualified teachers, individualized graduation plans, semester-based scheduling, flexible class options, and Online Credit Recovery (OCR) courses to help students recover credits and stay on track for graduation. Students can earn a minimum of 10 credits per year, receive transition planning to support their post-secondary goals, and, if employed, may earn academic credit through the General Education Work Experience Program (GEWEP).
- **Rochester International Academy (RIA)** serves newly arrived immigrant students in grades 7-12, by providing a supportive learning environment that develops English language proficiency while building academic content knowledge. Through culturally responsive instruction, strong family and community partnerships, and comprehensive social-emotional supports, RIA helps students successfully adjust to their new school, community, and country while preparing them for a successful transition to their home school.
- **Youth and Justice and Agency Youth** consists of four separate program sites, in which students are assigned/admitted due to either struggles with mental health or involvement in the juvenile justice system. Serving approximately



1,200 students each year, the program partners with various entities to ensure that students receive appropriate instructional supports during their stay.

- **Home Hospital Program** is a flexible and inclusive program designed to meet the needs of students who range from the level of Alternate Assessment to Advanced Placement (AP). Per the NYS Commissioner's Regulations, Home/Hospital Instruction provides continuity of academic instruction in core subjects to students who are homebound or are unable to attend school usually for reasons of disability, discipline, injury, or physical, mental or emotional illness as substantiated by a licensed physician.

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