MIDLAKES SCHOOLS

PHELPS-CLIFTON SPRINGS CSD





2026 -2028

BLUEPRINT FOR EXCELLENCE

STRATEGIC PLAN

midlakes.org

1490 State Route 488
Clifton Springs, NY 14432



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Dear Members of the Midlakes Schools 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 this fall 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 updated strategic 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 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,

Nick Ganster
Superintendent

Tracy Altman
President, Board of Education



PROCESS INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

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.

March 2026: Community Feedback Gathered

April 2026: Community Team Assembled, Mission/Vision/Core Values Reviewed, Priority Areas Developed, Strategies Suggested.

June-September 2026: Revisions and review completed by the Leadership Team. Communication to the community and implementation of the plan with stakeholders.

1 2 3 4 5

April 2026: Draft Mission/Vision/Core Values developed by the Board of Education and Leadership Team.

May 2026: Action plans developed that specifically identify what will be done to meet the objectives of each priority area and who will be responsible for leading the work

WHO WE ARE

OUR MISSION

We prepare and inspire students to be great people, ready for their limitless futures.

OUR VISION

We are a student-centered community where every child is empowered to learn, grow, and thrive through meaningful challenges and engaging opportunities in a safe and supportive environment.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Kindness – We treat others with compassion, empathy, and a genuine desire to support and uplift those around us.
Integrity – We act with honesty and strong moral principles, doing what is right even when it is difficult.
Accountability – We take responsibility for our actions, decisions, and results, and follow through on our commitments.
Collaboration/Teamwork – We work together with trust and shared purpose, valuing diverse perspectives to achieve common goals.
Respect - We value the dignity, perspectives, and contributions of every person and foster an environment built on understanding and inclusion.
Responsibility - We take ownership of our actions, commitments, and contributions while striving to make a positive impact on others and our community.
Positivity – We approach our work and relationships with optimism, energy, and a focus on possibilities.
Curiosity – We embrace a love of learning, asking questions and seeking to understand, grow, and improve.
Empowerment – We encourage and support individuals to take initiative, make decisions, and realize their full potential.
Resilience – We persevere through challenges, adapting and growing stronger in the face of adversity.

OUR DISTRICT

Phelps-Clifton Springs Central School District is a student-centered district committed to preparing and inspiring every learner to become a great person ready for a limitless future. Serving the communities of Phelps, Clifton Springs, and the surrounding area, the district provides engaging academic programs, extracurricular opportunities, and supportive experiences that focus on the whole child. Midlakes Schools values strong relationships with students, families, staff, and community partners, creating a welcoming and inclusive environment where every individual is encouraged to learn, grow, and thrive. Through a focus on academic excellence, student wellness, and community connection, the district strives to empower all students with the skills, confidence, and character needed for future success.

OUR COMMUNITY

The Midlakes Schools community is a close-knit and supportive region rooted in strong traditions, family values, and a deep commitment to education and student success. Located in the heart of the Finger Lakes region, the communities surrounding Midlakes Schools offer a blend of small-town charm, rural beauty, and growing opportunities for families and businesses. Residents take pride in their schools and actively support programs, athletics, the arts, and community events that bring people together and strengthen local connections. The district's partnership with families, local organizations, and community members helps create a welcoming environment where students are encouraged to grow, contribute, and prepare for a successful future.

OUR LEADERSHIP

Board of Education

Tracy Altman- Board President
Deb Galliher- Board Vice President
Heather Rockefeller
Lynn Lebrecht
Matt Goodman
Nic Hargarther
Jackie Blake
Jonathan Capozzi- Student Ex-Officio BOE Member

Administration

Nick Ganster- Superintendent
Jeff Hamelinck- Director of Curriculum and Instruction
Karl Dubash- Business Administrator
Andrea Eldridge- Director of Special Programs and Services
Lyndsey Burnisky- Assistant Director of Special Programs and Services
Lydia Schadler- Director of Innovation and Professional Learning
Margo Lacure- Coordinator of MTSS and Community Schools
John Lombardi- Athletic Director
Dan McAlpin- Middle/High School Principal
Jim Giancursio- Middle/High School Assistant Principal
Laura VanLaeken- Middle/High School Assistant Principal
Chris Moyer- Elementary Principal
Jessica VanDamme- Elementary Assistant Principal
Brienne Raes- Elementary Assistant Principal

OUR PLAN

The Midlakes Schools, Phelps-Clifton Springs Central School District's Blueprint for Excellence is grounded in a commitment to preparing and inspiring students to become great people who are ready for their limitless futures. Centered on the belief that every child deserves meaningful opportunities to learn, grow, and thrive, the district is dedicated to creating a student-centered environment where all learners are empowered through engaging experiences, supportive relationships, and appropriately challenging opportunities. This vision reflects a deep commitment to fostering academic achievement, personal growth, and future readiness for every student.

At the heart of the Blueprint are the district's Core Values/Guiding Principals of kindness, integrity, accountability, collaboration, respect, responsibility, positivity, curiosity, empowerment, and resilience. These values shape the culture and daily work of the district by fostering compassionate relationships, encouraging teamwork and respect for diverse perspectives, promoting honesty and responsibility in decision-making, and inspiring students and staff to approach learning with curiosity, optimism, and confidence. They empower individuals to take ownership of their actions, persevere through challenges, and continuously grow from their experiences. Together, these principles create a welcoming, inclusive, and supportive learning community where every individual is valued, encouraged, and equipped to succeed.

The district's focus on Academic Excellence emphasizes empowering all students through critical thinking, real-world learning experiences, personalized support, and rigorous instruction that prepares them for a variety of post-secondary pathways. The Blueprint also prioritizes ongoing professional learning for educators to ensure that teaching practices continue to evolve in ways that meet the diverse needs of every learner. By investing in both students and staff, the district seeks to create innovative and engaging learning experiences that inspire curiosity, creativity, and lifelong success.

Equally important is the district's commitment to Student Life and the broader Midlakes Community. The Blueprint calls for a joyful and inclusive K–12 experience where students discover their passions, engage in the arts and extracurricular opportunities, and benefit from strong wellness supports and community partnerships. At the same time, the district is committed to maintaining safe and welcoming facilities, fostering clear and transparent communication, and building a connected school community where every individual feels respected, empowered, and supported. Through these collective efforts, the district aims to cultivate an environment where students and families feel a true sense of belonging and pride.

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. Goals have been developed for each area.







Academic Excellence

Student Life

Midlakes Community



PRIORITY AREA GOALS

Academic Excellence	**Goal:** We will empower all students through critical thinking, real-world learning, and personalized support, to prepare students for diverse post-secondary pathways while investing in professional learning that equips educators to meet the needs of every learner.
Student Life	**Goal:** We will create a joyful, inclusive K–12 experience where every student discovers their passions, feels supported and inspired, and thrives through aligned wellness practices, whole-child learning, the arts, extracurricular opportunities, and strong community partnerships.
Midlakes Community	**Goal:** We will foster a safe, well-maintained, and inclusive school community through strong facilities, clear communication, and a culture where every individual feels valued, empowered, and connected.

ACTION PLANS

Priority Area 1: Academic Excellence		
Goal: We will empower all students through critical thinking, real-world learning, personalized support, to prepare students for diverse post-secondary pathways while investing in professional learning that equips educators to meet the needs of every learner.		
Action Steps:	**Person/People Responsible**	**Timeframe**
Challenging Coursework		
Develop vertically aligned performance benchmarks that ensure students build foundational skills necessary for future rigorous coursework.	Director of Curriculum & Instruction Director of Special Programs Building Administrators Teacher leaders on Instructional Council Teachers	Summer 2026 Ongoing
Establish partnerships with local businesses, organizations, and district programs to create internship opportunities while clearly defining student readiness skills.	Secondary Principal Director of Special Programs WFL-BOCES - Director of Shared Services/School to work coordinator Counselors	Summer 2026 2026-2027 Academic Year
Implement NYS media and digital literacy standards that strengthen critical thinking, responsible technology use, and AI literacy.	Director of Instructional Technology, Innovation, and Professional Development WFL-BOCES Coach Library Media Specialists K-12 CTE Teachers (7-12) Teachers	September 2026 Ongoing

ACTION PLANS

Engage teachers in conversations about balance of tech rich learning with traditional instructional models.	Director of Curriculum and Instruction Director of Instructional Technology, Innovation, and Professional Development Building Principals Teachers	Fall 2026-Ongoing
Expand current elementary academic enrichment opportunities and advanced coursework options.	Director of Curriculum & Instruction Elementary Building Administrators Elementary Instructional Council Teachers	2027-28 2028-29
Support and Differentiation		
Develop a common Midlakes definition of Differentiation. Provide educators with structured opportunities to observe differentiated instruction and support models in practice, paired with reflective debrief sessions.	Director of Curriculum & Instruction Director of Special Programs Building Administrators Instructional Coach Instructional Council Teachers	Summer 2026 Ongoing







ACTION PLANS

Strengthen educator capacity to deliver targeted interventions in the classroom at all 3 tiers while improving collaboration with AIS and intervention providers.	Director of Curriculum & Instruction Director of Special Programs Building Administrators Instructional Council Teachers, Assistant, and Aides	Summer 2026 Ongoing
Create systems for gathering regular student feedback on instructional practices and learning supports to inform teaching improvements.	Building Administrators Coordinator of MTSS and Community Schools Building Instructional Council Teachers, Tier 1 Teams	Fall 2026-Spring 2028
Professional Development and Support		
Develop systems for educators to share professional learning experiences gained outside the district with colleagues to strengthen collective capacity.	Director of Curriculum & Instruction Building Administration All Staff	Fall 2026
Conduct regular staff surveys and engagement opportunities to identify professional appreciation, support, and resource priorities.	Building Administration Building Instructional Council Tiered Teams	Fall 2026 Ongoing
Create a comprehensive professional learning inventory based on role-specific, departmental, and content-area needs.	Director of Curriculum & Instruction Director of Special Programs Building Administration Building Instructional Councils	Summer 2027

ACTION PLANS

Expand the strategic use of parents, volunteers, and community members to support student learning opportunities.	MTSS/Community Schools Coordinator Building Administration Public Relations Officer	Fall 2028





ACTION PLANS

Priority Area 2: Student Life		
Goal: We will create a joyful, inclusive K–12 experience where every student discovers their passions, feels supported and inspired, and thrives through aligned wellness practices, whole-child learning, the arts, extracurricular opportunities, and strong community partnerships.		
Action Steps:	**Person/People Responsible**	**Timeframe**
Positive Learning Environment		
Develop and implement systems that consistently recognize and reinforce positive student behaviors across all grade levels. • Positive Post Cards • Eagle Acknowledgements • Eagle Tickets • School celebrations • Continue to do mini staff trainings on Specific Positive Feedback, Corrective Feedback, Continuum of Response flipbook	Coordinator of MTSS and Community Schools Building Administration Tier 1 MTSS committee All staff	Ongoing
Establish district-wide, developmentally appropriate behavioral expectations and management practices to ensure consistency. • Behavior flow charts • Streamline disciplinary processes across the district • Academic Eligibility for Athletics, Clubs, Theatre Middle/High School	Building Administration Coordinator of MTSS and Community Schools Director of Special Programs Director of Health, Physical Education & Athletics District MTSS Team All staff	Summer 2026



ACTION PLANS

Expand restorative practices such as circles, peer mediation, and leadership opportunities to strengthen school community and belonging. • Increase membership of RP team • Train more staff members in RP • Administrator support for leadership programs (MALO, NEHS, NHS, FFA, Student Council, Eagle Ambassadors) • Processes for re-engagement/re-entry plans	Coordinator of MTSS and Community Schools Restorative Practices Team Restorative Practices Coach All Staff	Fall 2027
Comprehensive Wellness		
Strengthen and expand partnerships with outside providers to better support the academic, behavioral, health, and family needs of students.	Coordinator of MTSS and Community Schools Building Administrators Pupil Support Teams	Ongoing
Increase opportunities for outdoor play, movement, and unstructured time to support student wellness and engagement.Outdoor play spaces at the elementary.	Elementary Building Administration Director of Health, Physical Education & Athletics	Summer 2027
Implement, refine, and expand age-appropriate social-emotional learning curricula across all grade levels.	Coordinator of MTSS and Community Schools Director of Curriculum and Instruction Director of Special Programs Instructional Coach Teachers	Fall 2027
Provide education and awareness around healthy food choices and available nutritional options for students.	Business Administrator Director of Food Service Director of Health, Physical Education & Athletics	Fall 2027

ACTION PLANS

Extracurriculars and Opportunities		
Leverage booster clubs and parent organizations to strengthen K–12 athletic unity, mentorship, and program support. • Clinics with varsity/jv teams and youth sports	Director of Physical Education, Health and Athletics Coaches/players	Fall 2026
Expand partnerships with community organizations and businesses to increase career exploration and workforce readiness opportunities. • Career exposures through counseling plan • Bring in community partners	Secondary Building Administration WFL-BOCES - Director of Shared Services/School to Work Coordinator PSO Team CTE Classes Secondary Teachers	Spring 2027
Develop age-appropriate career exploration events such as elementary job fairs to build early awareness of career possibilities. • PSO counseling plan • 2nd grade walk about and unit on career options	Elementary Building Administration WFL-BOCES - Director of Shared Services/School to Work Coordinator PSO Team CTE Classes Secondary Teachers	Spring 2027
Create structured opportunities for elementary students to explore and learn about high school academic, extracurricular, and career pathways. • Sport walk throughs at ESFFA • after school activities & Harvest/Spring Fest • Multi-activity sport camp (Summer) • Youth Recognition nights • Similar Opportunities for Music and Art	Director of Physical Education, Health and Athletics Building Administration Athletic Teams FFA	2027-28

ACTION PLANS

Develop in-house work experience and entrepreneurial programs that provide practical career exposure for students. • Build a system for all the opportunities	Secondary Building Administration WFL-BOCES - Director of Shared Services/School to Work Coordinator PSO Team CTE Classes Secondary Teachers	Fall 2027
Strengthen Youth Employment Program opportunities by expanding access to student job postings and work experiences. • Internship opportunities, county job opportunities • Streamline system for job opportunities	Secondary Building Administration WFL-BOCES - Director of Shared Services/School to Work Coordinator PSO Team CTE Classes Secondary Teachers	Fall 2027
Expand structured volunteer opportunities that meaningfully engage parents within school communities. • Structured days for volunteer opportunities (reading and snacks) • Sports volunteers for events	Administrators Teachers MES	Fall 2028





ACTION PLANS

Priority Area 3: Midlakes Community		
Goal: We will foster a safe, well-maintained, and inclusive school community through strong facilities, clear communication, and a culture where every individual feels valued, empowered, and connected.		
Action Steps:	**Person/People Responsible**	**Timeframe**
Operations		
Conduct operational reviews and implement improvements to arrival and dismissal procedures across all district buildings to maximize safety and efficiency.	Business Administrator	Summer 2026-Fall 2026
Invest in reliable, high-quality campus-wide communication systems and WiFi infrastructure for students, staff, and visitors.	Directors of Instructional Technology and Facilities	Summer 2026-Ongoing
Develop and maintain a long-term facilities safety plan that continuously upgrades access control, camera systems, and HVAC infrastructure.	Superintendent Business Administrator Facilities and Safety Committees	Fall 2026
Develop streamlined systems and support structures that rapidly address immediate technology needs for students and staff.	Director of Instructional Technology	2026-2027 School Year



ACTION PLANS

Finance		
Research and evaluate transportation partnerships and options to expand summer access for students. Research current CBA's to incentivize staff to assume 12-month roles instead of 10-month roles in critical positions, among other areas of the CBA. Research ways to collaborate to partner with various organizations to provide staffing in operational areas	Superintendent Business Administrator Director of Transportation	2026-2027 School Year Ongoing
Develop concise, engaging video communications that clearly explain district budget and capital project priorities.	Business Administrator Public Relations Officer	Spring 2027
Expand visual communication strategies that improve voter awareness and understanding of district initiatives.	Business Administrator Public Relations Officer	Spring 2027
Establish community hub models that provide families with academic, social, and support resources year-round.	Coordinator of MTSS Community Schools Public Relations Officer	2027-2028 Ongoing





ACTION PLANS

Support for Staff		
Increase structured parent partnership opportunities to better align school and family support for student success. • Parent Teacher Conferences - MES • IST Process / Parent Meetings - MSS	Director of Special Programs Director of Curriculum and Instruction Building Admin Teams Coordinator of MTSS and Community Schools	Summer 2026
Strengthen coordination between transportation, support services, and school buildings to improve student outcomes.	Director of Transportation Building Administrators	Summer 2026
Research, develop, and implement innovative staff appreciation strategies that strengthen morale and belonging.	Building Administration Building Instructional Council Tiered Teams	Fall 2026 Ongoing
Develop systems to regularly assess staff wellness and respond with meaningful supports and resources.	Business Administrators Director of Curriculum and Instruction Director of Health, Physical Education & Athletics (District Wellness Coordinator) Building Administration Teacher Wellness Coordinators All Staff	Summer and Fall 2027
Expand restorative practice implementation for staff through professional learning and collaborative structures.	Coordinator of MTSS Community Schools Restorative Coach All Staff	Fall 2027

OUR NEXT STEPS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Timeframe	Activity	Who
August 2026	Blueprint Plan Presented to the BOE and Community	• Superintendent • Administrative Team
September 2026	Blueprint Plan “unpacked” and shared with the faculty and staff at faculty meetings.	• Principals
February 2027	Blueprint Budget Recommendations Made Blueprint Expenditures Finalized	• Superintendent • Administrative Team
May 2027	Blueprint Updates provided to the BOE, Community and Staff	• Superintendent • Administrative Team
June 2027	Blueprint Planning Meeting / Plan Updated for 2027-2028 Updates provided to the BOE, Faculty, Staff and Community	• BOE • Superintendent • Administrators • Staff • Community Members
Spring 2028	Blueprint Refresh Conducted	• BOE • Superintendent • Administrators • Staff • Community Members
Spring 2030	Blueprint Phase 2 Developed	• BOE • Superintendent • Administrators • Staff • Community Members

2026-27 Blueprint Team

Tracy Altman
Deb Galliher
Heather Rockefeller
Lynn Lebrecht
Matt Goodman
Nic Hargarther
Jackie Blake
Nick Ganster
Jeff Hamelinck
Karl Dubash
Andrea Eldridge
Lyndsey Burnisky
Lydia Schadler
Margo Lacure
John Lombardi
Dan McAlpin
Laura VanLaeken
Chris Moyer
Jessica VanDamme
Brienne Raes
Susan Lincoln
Sarah Lincoln

Edwin Resendiz
Stephanie Hubbard
Nichole Russell
Courtney Graff
Samantha Kesel
Kristopher LaGreca
Frank Catalano
Karen Busby
Angela Simmons
Christine Corey
Michael Purcell
Addie Klaehn
Erin Everson
Thomas Mitchell
Denise Kelly
Marissa Tyler
Janelle White
Melanie Bowman
Kate Kenyon
Shari Garver
Mary Dorgan
Christine Sanchez
Kerry Buckman



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