Port Chester School District Strategic Plan 2021-2024
R.A.M.S.
Rigorous and Equitable
Academic Experiences +
Mental/Emotional Health Supports=
Success for All Types of Learners

**Vision Statement:** The vision of the Port Chester School District is **SUCCESS FOR EVERY STUDENT**. This vision has been internalized by every teacher, administrator and staff member who work tirelessly every day to ensure student success. The educational programs and services offered to our students reflect a quest for scholastic excellence, combined with respect and concern for the worth and development of individual students.

**Mission Statement:** The mission of the Port Chester School District, through an active partnership among community, parents, staff, and students, is to develop responsible and self-sufficient citizens who value cultural diversity, are creative and adaptable, and possess the self-esteem, motivation and skills to continue individual growth, think critically, and communicate effectively.

**Our Shared Beliefs:** Success for Every Student

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<th>Board of Education-</th>
<th>Superintendent-</th>
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<td>Luigi Russo, President</td>
<td>Dr. Aurelia L. Henriquez</td>
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<td>Sharon Burke, Vice President</td>
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WHAT IS STRATEGIC PLANNING?

Strategic planning is something most districts do on a regular basis. It is an opportunity for a district to collaborate, reflect and plan. Since July 2021, we have been engaged in the preliminary stages of this planning. Through a district wide SWOT analysis, stakeholder group meetings, leadership and faculty and staff input, we asked ourselves several main questions:

- How are things going in our district right now?
- What are our strengths, challenges, and opportunities?
- Where do we want to be as a district in three to five years?
- How can we best focus our efforts and work together to get there?
- How can we continue to grow as a responsive organization?

Based on the feedback received from focus groups, Superintendent Roundtables, community and staff surveys, Board Retreats, and the SWOT analysis, four Focus Areas emerged to guide our work and to continue the planning process.

Focus Areas

1. Powerful Teaching, Leading, and Learning
   - Evidence-based Decision Making
   - Data Informed Culture
   - Inclusive Excellence
   - Collaborative Decision Making
   - Opportunities for Voice
   - Instructional Monitoring and Support
   - Multiple Pathways to Graduation
   - Closing the Achievement Gap
   - Early Learning
   - Responsive Instruction
   - SEL/Mindfulness
   - Academic Rigor

2. Family, Student and Community Engagement/Connectedness
Multiple Opportunities to Collaborate
  Transparency
Opportunities for Student and Community Voice
  Inclusive, Data Informed Culture

3
  Fiscal Planning and Facilities
  Ethical governance and transparency
  Data Informed Decision Making
  Safe Schools
  Transparent Conversations/Planning
  Short Term and Long Term Planning

4
  Improve Communication
  Family & Community Empowerment
  Family and Community Engagement
  Responsive Communication
  Use of Multiple Platforms to Communicate
  Provide Equitable Access to Information

During the August 2021, Board of Education Retreat, Board/Superintendent Goals were created, based on feedback received. The goals and feedback were shared openly at a Board Meeting and continue to serve as a North star to build a culture that supports continuous improvement. Through collaboration with key stakeholders, priorities and actions were developed to support the new culture. **The guiding question is: What does success for all students look like?** How can we ensure that our district is positioned for student success in years to come? While our district is strong in so many ways, we can never remain static, and we commit to continuous improvement.

**Focus Area # 1 - Powerful Teaching, Leading, and Learning**

**Goal - Increase Student Outcomes Through Multiple Pathways and a Data-Informed Culture**
The District will utilize data, research, experience, and collaboration to inform instruction, strategic planning, and district targets. The process of openly sharing and discussing data, and creating goals for the future has assisted in establishing a data-informed culture. Therefore, the priorities outlined in this plan are directly aligned to the District’s mission, vision, and goals which were established by key stakeholders as priorities, based on community and educator feedback, and is the foundation for our focus for the future.

**Priorities**

Build a district-wide culture of inquiry and data study K-12, with a strong focus on outcomes, targets, and achievement that supports the whole child, whole school, whole community philosophy.

With an emphasis on literacy and the adoption/implementation of our new literacy program—American Reading Company, all students who have entered Kindergarten in Port Chester Schools by 2022 and who have remained in our schools through grade 3, will achieve grade level literacy by the end of Grade 3.

Distribute leadership and share accountability between and amongst stakeholders at each school building and at the district level. Include students and families in conversations around student data and student success.

Develop a comprehensive vision for high quality instruction full of opportunities and access for all students that includes differentiation and personalized learning at the elementary, middle, and high schools. Create a collaborative school environment, rich with cooperation, teamwork, shared ownership, and distributed leadership.

Increase quality professional development opportunities for all staff across our district as evidenced by staff surveys and posted offerings throughout the school year.

**Actions**

Focus on our **Data Driven Essential Agreements**

In Port Chester Schools, we are committed to:

1. Creating a positive, and inclusive data-informed culture where we continue to learn and grow
2. Discussing data regularly, and including all stakeholders in the conversation
3. Making decisions to increase student outcomes using data at all levels
4. Communicating consistently, and in alignment from Pre-K through grade 12. We foster open communication around data with our:
   1. Board of Education
   2. Teachers and Administrators
   3. Parents and Guardians
   4. Students
   5. Community
5. Following assessment calendars by level, and followed across all grades and buildings

Focus on our **Essential Agreements For Teaching and Learning**

1. Our Classrooms Promote Learning
2. Our Students Are Empowered to Learn
3. Our Students Grow As Independent Learners
4. Our Students Are Engaged In Their Learning
5. Our Students “Show What They Know”
6. Our Students Are Responsible Citizens

Create a culture of student agency, where ALL students are exposed to multiple college and career opportunities across grade levels Pre-K-12.
Utilize data, research, experience, and collaboration to inform instruction and strategic planning.
Openly share data, discussions and goals for the future.
Data relating to disproportionality will be examined using Data Study.
Engage Innovare as Thought Partner to provide access to data to the community and educators in accordance with our Essential Agreements, and assist the district in making data-informed decisions.
Launch the Principal’s Promise Academy- Provide alternative learning options for students who have yet to be successful in the traditional high school setting through personalized instruction, differentiated scheduling, and college and career readiness activities.

What does success look like?
The District will know that it has succeeded when ALL schools are represented and engaged in improvement work. Click here to learn more about Port Chester School District’s Professional Development Plan. School leaders will embed the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL) in their practice which will be evidenced in school culture, instructional leadership and conversations, and will inform the District’s ongoing strategic planning as we move forward. Together, key stakeholders will collaborate to identify strengths, omissions, and areas in need of further development. This information will be gathered into a digitized/e-format for review and used in establishing district and school-level expectations, timelines for future work, and deliverables. This will be discussed openly at Board of Education Meetings.

During the 2023-2024 school year, the entire district will adhere to the established data-driven Essential Agreements and continue to have active data teams at each school. All schools embrace the role of administrators and teachers in supporting a culture of inquiry and data study. Students in need of academic and/or behavior intervention services will be referred by their general education teachers or parents to their respective Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) / Response to Intervention (RTI) teams for prompt consideration and development of required plan for services. Students with RTI/MTSS plans will be monitored closely for progress and revisions of their plans as delineated in the District’s RTI/MTSS Plan. Click here to learn about the Response to Intervention (RTI) Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) District Plan. Students
with disabilities will be afforded opportunities to receive their education and services in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) as delineated in their Individualized Education Plans (IEPs).

During the 2023-2024 school year, the District will continue to promote healthy and safe learning environments where students can receive the instruction and other supports they need to learn and achieve at high levels. All schools will embrace the role of administrators and teachers in the active use of positive behavioral supports and interventions and ensure that all students have access to safe and supportive environments conducive to learning. School Principals will engage in continuous professional development to ensure that the District mitigates elements leading to disproportionality of the suspension rates for students with disabilities.

Click here to learn more about American Reading Company
Click here to see the District’s Policy 5313 on Disciplinary Penalties Procedures

Focus Area #2  Improve Communication
Goal - Improve Communication and Ensure Systemic Equitable Access to Information

Port Chester Schools continue to create opportunities for all students, teachers, leaders, staff, parents, and members of the community to feel included, respected, and well-informed. We see our diversity as a strength, and we are engaging stakeholders in conversations about inclusive excellence and equitable access in all programs, practices, and initiatives. This commitment fits into the district’s vision of Success for All Students because when all students are supported and have access to programs and learning opportunities it ensures that they will be successful in our schools and therefore it is an important priority to pursue as it is in our students’ best interest.

Action Plans-
Utilize multiple platforms and outlets to broadcast important information to celebrate and highlight the district’s success stories.
Collaborate and be inclusive more often to allow for meaningful discourse with key stakeholders.
Include opportunity for student voice.

Celebrate publicly our students’ and staff’s accomplishments.
Ensure access to translation devices at all Board of Education Meetings.
Use Covey’s Speed of Trust and 13 Habits of High Trust Leaders to guide relationships.
Ongoing collaborative conversations with elected officials.
Opportunities for student voice.
Implement a robust school climate survey system for staff, students, and families beginning in September 2023 with a participation rate of at least 50% for constituencies throughout the school year.
**What does success look like?**

Building a culture of collaboration and trust is the necessary foundation for inclusive excellence. Based on quantitative and qualitative data gathered, the need for consistency and collaboration across schools has emerged as a priority. Lack of collaboration and consistency in the past has led to disconnected and isolated decisions regarding curriculum, instruction, and programmatic decisions that were not supported by data. One of the goals of the Board of Education for the 2021-2022 year is: Foster A Sense of Community Connectedness. In the same way that the Board and District aim to ensure that students, families, and district staff engage in meaningful and authentic interactions and to forge and sustain community partnerships to expand opportunities for students, a collaborative environment, which emphasizes shared ownership, is key, at all schools.

[Click here to see District Communication Protocols.](#)

**Focus Area #3  Family (student) and Community Engagement and Connectedness**

**Goal:** Foster a Sense of Community Connectedness and Pride in Ram Nation

Our goal is to continue engaging with stakeholder groups including Port Chester students, families, staff, and the larger community to assess strengths and capabilities while identifying opportunities for growth.

**Priorities:**
Create a culture of inclusivity to provide all students with fair, just, and personalized learning and growth opportunities.

**Actions:**
Ensure that students, families, and district staff engage in meaningful and authentic interactions. Forge and sustain community partnerships to expand opportunities for students both in and outside of the school day.

Create District-wide opportunities for students and families to celebrate Port Chester Pride and a sense of “Ramily.” Click here to learn about Ram Nation Pride Day.

Build partnerships with Community Based Organizations to increase student outcomes and bolster afterschool programs.

Inspire community events where students and families can positively learn and enjoy student learning together.

Foster new partnerships with at least 3 local universities and colleges by June 2024 that will offer more opportunities for our students, and create a pipeline of additional talent for staff recruitment

**What does success look like?**

Build protocols for talking and engaging in aligned conversations.

Strengthen the connection between our UPK and our Elementary schools.

School and district leaders and K-12 faculty will participate in professional learning that is tailored to their needs.
All students participate in district initiatives that build a sense of connection and pride through multiple district-wide Initiatives (K-12)- World Kindness Day, Ram Nation Pride Day, MLK Interfaith Celebration, Special Education Gala/Parent Engagement, STEAM Fest, etc. District-wide after school and summer school options that partner with community organizations.

**Focus Area # 4  Fiscal Planning and Facilities**

**Goal** - Engage in Strategic Planning for Fiscal Responsibilities and Facilities

**Actions**

Collaborate for strategic planning to safeguard fiscal stability, while allowing for a proactive approach to improving and maintaining safe schools and well-maintained facilities and grounds for which our community can be proud.

Review facilities budget, and operations for long-term planning purposes.

Ongoing conversations with our elected officials about the current reality of the district and community.

**What does success look like?**

Success is demonstrated through ongoing planning, realized savings in energy cost reductions, long range planning to ensure major mechanical systems and buildings/facilities are safe, clean and in good condition. The goal is to enhance the student learning experience by providing state of the art learning and athletic spaces, a healthy environment, and nutritious menus in cafeterias. The environment that students and staff occupy is a nexus to supporting the educational goals of the school district.

Click here to see Port Chester School District’s latest Five Year Capital Plan.

Click here to see a schedule for active projects throughout our District.

Click here to see the Long-Range Plan and Building Conditions Survey

**Technology**

Empowering Future-Ready Education through Innovative Technology:

The Port Chester School District's Technology Department is dedicated to fostering a transformative learning environment by seamlessly integrating cutting-edge technology solutions. Our commitment to digital literacy, personalized learning, and robust infrastructure aims to equip students, educators, and administrators with the tools they need to excel in an increasingly digital world. Through strategic partnerships, professional development, and data-driven decision-making, we pave the way for an interconnected, adaptable, and equitable educational experience for all members of our district community.

**Goals for the Technology Department**
● **Improve Infrastructure Reliability**: Reduce system downtime by 20% over the next fiscal year through proactive maintenance and infrastructure upgrades, ensuring uninterrupted access to digital resources for students and staff.

● **Foster Data-Driven Decision Making**: Develop and implement a comprehensive data analytics framework within the next year, enabling administrators to make informed decisions on technology resource allocation, curriculum effectiveness, and student performance.

● **Enhance Cybersecurity Measures**: Decrease the number of cybersecurity incidents by 25% within the next year through continuous security audits, staff training, and the implementation of advanced cybersecurity tools.

● **Promote Responsible Digital Citizenship**: Over the next three years, implement a comprehensive digital citizenship curriculum that reaches 100% of students, focusing on educating them about ethical online behavior, privacy protection, respectful communication, and critical evaluation of digital content. This initiative aims to cultivate a safe and respectful online environment while empowering students to become responsible and informed digital citizens.

● **Expand Student Technology Internships**: Within the next academic year, establish partnerships with at least three local technology companies to provide mentorship through our district summer student internship program.

Click here to see District's Five Year Technology Plan.

**Safety & Security**

The Safety and Security Department at Port Chester School District is dedicated to creating a safe and secure learning environment for all students, staff, and visitors. Our mission is to implement comprehensive measures that ensure the physical and emotional well-being of everyone within our educational community. With a commitment to excellence and continuous improvement, our department strives to maintain a supportive atmosphere that fosters academic growth and personal development.

**Key Goals and Objectives:**

1. **Safety Infrastructure**: Our first priority is to assess and enhance the safety infrastructure of all school facilities within the district. This includes conducting regular safety audits, upgrading security systems, and implementing appropriate access control measures.

2. **Emergency Preparedness**: We regularly update comprehensive emergency response plans for various scenarios, including natural disasters, medical emergencies, and potential threats. Regular drills and training sessions will be conducted to ensure all stakeholders are well-prepared to handle emergencies effectively.

3. **Student and Staff Well-being**: The safety and well-being of students and staff are of utmost importance. We will focus on promoting mental health awareness, establishing counseling and support programs, and implementing anti-bullying initiatives to create a positive and inclusive environment for everyone.
4. **Community Partnerships:** Collaboration with law enforcement agencies, community organizations, and parents is crucial for enhancing safety measures. We will actively engage in partnerships to strengthen our safety network and share resources and knowledge.

5. **Technology and Innovation:** Embracing modern technology and innovative solutions will aid in bolstering our security efforts. We will invest in state-of-the-art systems, such as video surveillance, access control, and threat detection tools.

6. **Continuous Training:** Regular training and professional development for school staff will be a priority. This will ensure that they are well-informed about safety protocols, aware of potential risks, and equipped to respond appropriately in challenging situations.

7. **Safety Culture:** Fostering a culture of safety and security within the district is essential. We will encourage open communication, encourage reporting of concerns, and celebrate safety achievements to build a collective sense of responsibility for everyone’s well-being.

8. **Data-Driven Approach:** Utilizing data and analytics, we will continuously monitor safety trends and incidents to identify potential areas for improvement and make informed decisions regarding resource allocation and intervention strategies.

By prioritizing safety and security within the Port Chester School District, we believe that our commitment to safeguarding our learning community will pave the way for academic success, personal growth, and a thriving educational experience for all stakeholders.

[Click here for the Draft 2023-2024 District-Wide Safety Plan](#)

[Click here for District Visitor Policy](#)

[Click here for a video update on Safety, Security, and Cybersecurity](#)

**Cybersecurity and Data Privacy**

Port Chester Schools has two main areas of cybersecurity. Internally we focus on data privacy while externally we focus on the infrastructure to provide safeguards.

The district DPS team meets biweekly to discuss, review and improve our data privacy protocols. These include requiring all vendors to sign data privacy agreements and parent bill of rights agreements. We ensure the district is in compliance with NYS Ed-Law 2d and protecting student and staff data. We provide a robust training for all new teachers about cybersecurity and data privacy as well as require all staff complete a data privacy refresher training each year. We also constantly have email campaigns to all staff about the importance of not sharing student data, protecting and maintaining passwords, and how to identify a phishing threat. We also have an external BOCES consultant review all of our procedures and meet with the DPS team to discuss findings and make recommendations.

In terms of our cybersecurity infrastructure and safeguards, we have several network-facing devices that protect outsiders from getting through to the district network from the internet such
as an intrusion prevention/detection system and firewall. While browsing the internet in the
district or on a district device, the students have their web browsing activity filtered to prevent
browsing inappropriate content or malicious websites containing malware. Students’ email
communications are protected through configurations such as geo-fencing, spam protection,
whitelisted/blacklisted senders and other privacy controls. On any device that isn’t a
domain-enrolled Chromebook where the device is safely locked down utilizing Google’s Admin
Console, the users are protected with Next Generation Anti-Virus and Policy to prevent any
malicious programs from executing and to ensure good computer hygiene.

By focusing on cybersecurity and data privacy, Port Chester School District is committed to
protecting its digital assets and ensuring the privacy and security of sensitive information. This
proactive approach will build trust among all stakeholders and continue to provide a safe digital
environment for learning.