A Strategic Plan
2016-2021

The Wachusett Regional School District

Superintendent of Schools
Darryll McCall, Ed.D.
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Why Do Strategic Planning?

A strategic plan is the vehicle that allows an organization to look at its future. Through visioning, developing a mission, examining core values, and setting achievable goals, the district moves toward attainment of school improvement. A well-done plan keeps the district aligned, puts systems in place, makes improvement a process, and most importantly promotes sustainability.

A comprehensive strategic plan will help the district define itself, create purpose, and move everyone in the same direction. Each year, school improvement plans should reflect a consistent vision, mission, and core values. The result will be improved instruction, enhanced student achievement, and a district where high expectations are met.
Summary of the Strategic Planning Process

In the fall of 2015, the Wachusett Regional School District partnered with Massachusetts Association of Regional Schools Consulting Group (MARS) (Appendix A) to facilitate a strategic planning process. The plan included four main steps that were divided into multiple phases. These steps were:

1. **Clarify a Vision, Mission, and Core Values**
2. **Collect and Analyze Data**
3. **Identify Critical Issues**
4. **Develop the Strategic Plan**

MARS conducted a series of meetings with district and school administrators and the School Committee where they presented information about the value of strategic planning and the importance of developing a defining vision, mission and core values with input from all constituent groups. A Steering Committee was formed consisting of twenty-three representatives from school staff, parents, and community members. The Committee was initially charged with redefining the district’s vision, mission, and core values that would serve as the infrastructure for this strategic plan.

The MARS Consulting Group established a process for the district with an emphasis on the importance of data collection and analysis critical to the success of the venture. Several methods of data collection were used, including surveys and a process known as a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis.

SWOT analyses began with the School Committee in early December. SWOT analyses were also done with Central Office personnel and school Principals in December. These meetings continued throughout the winter when SWOT analysis opportunities were provided to staff in all thirteen school buildings, as well as members of the Steering Committee and groups of town officials, parents, and citizens. An executive summary (Appendix B) of all of the SWOT meetings was prepared and presented to the Steering Committee in April 2016. This document pointed to all the common points made across all of the constituent groups and provided a basis for developing the strategic plan.

The Steering Committee members utilized this information during a series of meetings as they worked to develop the vision, mission, and core values for the district. The Steering Committee met for the last time on July 26, 2016, to finalize the strategic priority initiatives that committee members and district leaders had developed. The culmination of this entire body of work is this Strategic Plan that represents a reflection of the environment and profile of all components of the regional district.
Data Gathering Process

Community surveys and focus groups were utilized to gather information about the Wachusett Regional School District and its constituents’ vision and concerns.

Community Survey

The Steering Committee reviewed examples of similar community surveys and developed one that would best connect with members of the district communities and produce the desired data.

The resulting survey of Wachusett community members received 2,312 responses. Eighty percent (80%) of the responses came from parents and grandparents, and over 100 responses came from Wachusett Regional High School students. A summary of the data received can be found in Appendix C.

Focus Groups

The Focus Group process consisted of leading groups of people through an exercise to identify what they believed were the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (referred to as a SWOT process) related to the district. The MARS consultants began by leading district and school administrators in this Focus Group process on December 3, 2015. The next group to go through the SWOT process was the Wachusett Regional School Committee on December 14, 2015. The Strategic Planning Steering Committee participated in this exercise on January 13, 2016.

MARS consultants personally visited all thirteen schools in the district to engage the staff in the SWOT process. They also held evening community forums in all five district towns: Princeton (1/21/16), Holden (1/28/16), Paxton (2/11/16), Rutland (2/22/16), and Sterling (2/25/16). The format for these Focus Groups is shown in Appendix D. An Executive Summary of the results of all eighteen of these important data-gathering events is shown in Appendix B.
## Strategic Planning

### Steering Committee Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position/Role in the District</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>William Beando</td>
<td>Principal, Wachusett Regional High School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe Becker</td>
<td>Rutland Community Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Berlo</td>
<td>Deputy Superintendent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linnea Budd</td>
<td>Student Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lauren Carlson</td>
<td>WRHS Parent (Rutland)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tony Cipro</td>
<td>Principal, Houghton Elementary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Dennis</td>
<td>School Committee (Holden)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liam Fritsche</td>
<td>Student Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catherine Knowles</td>
<td>Supervisor of Pupil Personnel Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deb Ludovico</td>
<td>Teacher, Wachusett Regional High School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darryll McCall</td>
<td>Superintendent of Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kimberly Merrick</td>
<td>Administrator of Special Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amy Michalowski</td>
<td>Mountview Middle School Parent (Holden)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jon Edward Novak</td>
<td>School Committee (Rutland)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norman Plourde</td>
<td>Sterling Community Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melissa Rondinone</td>
<td>Teacher, Chocksett Middle School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Slipp</td>
<td>Teacher, Davis Hill Elementary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Todd Stewart</td>
<td>Principal, Central Tree Middle School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe Sullivan</td>
<td>Holden Community Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neil Sulmasy</td>
<td>Princeton Community Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kristine Thayer</td>
<td>Teacher, Glenwood Elementary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scott Wahlstrom</td>
<td>Teacher, Paxton Center School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megan Weeks</td>
<td>School Committee (Princeton)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I am truly honored to have the opportunity to present the WRSD 2016-2021 Strategic Plan. Working in conjunction with the Massachusetts Association of Regional Schools (MARS), a Strategic Planning Steering Committee was created during the last school year. The Steering Committee consisted of twenty-three representatives representing a variety of stakeholders. In order to gain feedback from the community, a survey was conducted which produced over 2,000 responses. Focus group meetings were also held in all 13 schools and in each individual town.

Drawing on the information gathered, the Steering Committee established five learning domains from which strategic objectives, priority initiatives, and action plans have been crafted. I am thankful for all of those who participated in this endeavor as it is truly representative of a broad spectrum of the constituents who make-up our district.

The WRSD Strategic Plan will provide our community with a sense of purpose as we define priorities and set budgets. Each school will now create a School Improvement Plan that ties directly back to the Strategic Plan and will help define budget priorities at both the building and district levels. Goals that are set by administrators and teachers will have common themes connected to the five learning domains, thus helping bring our five town district toward common educational outcomes.

The creation of the Strategic Plan took many hours, and involved numerous people, but the final product was well worth the time and effort, and will be the focal point for Wachusett moving forward over the next five years. This is an exciting time for the district and for our entire community.

Sincerely,

Darryll McCall, Ed.D.
Superintendent
VISION STATEMENT

The vision of a district describes the specific long-term goal or dream of the institution. It is a statement that everyone will strive to reach and attain. It should therefore meet the test of time. The district should plan to review its strategic plan on a continuous five-year basis. If the Vision Statement truly reflects the district's future, then as the plan is reviewed, the vision should not change. The statement developed by the Steering Committee represents beliefs and aspirations that encompass the passion that each member brought to this process.

Wachusett Regional School District
Vision Statement

The Wachusett Regional School District will foster a vibrant educational community in which all students will realize their highest potential and become responsible and productive citizens.
MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission Statement is the fundamental description of what the district does, whom it serves, and how it accomplishes its goals. It is clear, actionable, and set to achieve the vision of the district.

Wachusett Regional School District
Mission Statement

The Wachusett Regional School District seeks to ensure meaningful student growth and promote social emotional well-being in a safe and nurturing environment. We will integrate the talent, experience, and knowledge of all members of our community to develop lifelong learners, equipped to think critically in an ever-changing, global society.
CORE VALUES

Core values represent the “heart and soul” of a school district. Their importance should not be underestimated. They form the foundation for all the actions that the district takes. They are the underpinnings of beliefs, how the district operates, how it works with people at all levels, and what the district envisions as its purpose.

Wachusett Regional School District
Core Values

Commitment to Excellence
- Modeling effective teaching that engages and meets the needs of all students
- Providing a rigorous curriculum with expanding options and opportunities for all
- Recruiting and retaining excellent staff

Perseverance
- Tenacity and hard work
- Persisting in the face of obstacles
- Focusing on goals

Critical Thinking
- Analyzing, evaluating, and problem solving
- Thinking creatively
- Being adaptive

Collaboration
- Listening and communicating effectively
- Maximizing strengths and respecting differences
- Cooperating to reach common ground

Global Citizenship and Responsibility
- Celebrating diversity while recognizing commonalities
- Demonstrating civic respect by giving back to the communities
- Developing student's leadership skills for success in a global society

Creativity and Innovation
- Respecting the diversity of thoughts and ideas
- Embedding the arts into content areas
- Thinking freely, not fearing mistakes

Acceptance and Respect of Others
- Demonstrating tolerance
- Fostering a community of teamwork and collaboration
- Creating an atmosphere of safety and acceptance
Making Sense of the Information

As information was gathered through surveys and SWOT analysis, several areas became clear focal points for us as we refined the plan. The areas of focus were divided into five main domains that truly define how we can best help our students. When thinking in the terms of “what is best for kids,” we are confident that the five domains encompass a broad spectrum of the most important items necessary to help our students become successful, productive, and truly outstanding citizens in the future. These 5 domains are:

1. Leadership, Governance, and Communication
2. Aligned Curriculum
3. Effective Instruction
4. Professional Development and Structures for Collaboration
5. Students’ Social, Emotional, and Health Needs

To further delve into the details associated with some of the most pressing issues we face as a district, each domain has an if/then statement. The if/then statement is a way to explain that if certain items occur, then there will be a specific outcome or outcomes. Each if/then statement was carefully crafted to encompass the actions that must take place so that we are moving forward with our plan.

After the if/then statement for each domain, strategic objectives were developed that are well defined objectives that help to guide the district as it creates areas of focus for the next five years. The objectives are very specific, yet broad enough to allow all of our schools to align their own school improvement plans with our District Strategic Plan.

Following the strategic objectives, the creation of priority initiatives further breaks down the details associated with the plan. Working in conjunction with building and central office administration, each initiative represents a clear actionable step that the district will take, over the next five years, to work toward achieving the goals of the strategic plan.

Finally, each priority initiative has been further reduced to action steps and a timeline. These actionable items are how we will measure our progress over the next several years.

Following the strategic plan details are the appendices, which include a detailed timeline for each strategic objective and associated priority initiatives over the 5 years of this plan. Please refer to Appendix E.
## Domain 1: Leadership, Governance, and Communication

As with any school district, matters dealing with the budget are a concern for stakeholders from all groups, but they are especially relevant in Wachusett. As a regional school district, Wachusett functions best when towns are able to work together at providing adequate funding for our education system. In order to provide our community with a strong educational program, Domain 1 helps to define how we will collaborate and communicate issues related to the budget with all stakeholders.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Leadership, Governance, and Communication</th>
<th><strong>If</strong> the district establishes a clearly defined set of goals, develops a responsible budget based on priority initiatives, and works closely with community stakeholders to communicate district needs and adopt the budget, <strong>then</strong> the district will have the resources to allow students to realize their highest potential.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategic Objective 1A</strong></td>
<td>Establish and communicate a clearly defined set of goals and strategic objectives to guide district and school improvement initiatives.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Priority Initiatives** | 1. Leaders establish clear and common goals that support school and district improvement  
   a. SIP’s aligned to support district goals  
   b. Goals include facilities (where applicable)  
   2. Leaders use a variety of data sources to identify priority initiatives.  
   3. Goals relative to district and school improvement clearly communicated to the community, parents and town officials |
| **Strategic Objective 1B** | Develop a transparent budget that supports the district’s goals and strategic objectives and share details with community stakeholders in an environment open to dialogue and collaboration. |
| **Priority Initiatives** | 1. Prepare a budget aligned with School Improvement Plans and strategic initiatives with a shared vision of district-level priorities  
   2. Budget addresses facility and technology needs in order to support effective instruction  
   3. Develop a budget that meets prioritized district needs that can also be supported by the member towns  
   4. Report budget goals and initiatives to stakeholders in a timely manner |
| **Strategic Objective 1C** | Ensure that relevant information is communicated out to community stakeholders and is easily understood. |
| **Priority Initiatives** | 1. Identify all stakeholders in a tiered system of communication  
   2. Leaders communicate goals and strategic objectives to all stakeholders via multiple modalities (web/meetings).  
   3. Leaders communicate progress toward goals and objectives |
Domain 1 Implementation Timeline and Responsible Parties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Objective 1A</th>
<th>Establish and communicate a clearly defined set of goals and strategic objectives to guide district and school improvement initiatives.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timeline</strong></td>
<td>2016-2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility</strong></td>
<td>Central office and building based administrators</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This objective provides a path for administration to define both district level and building level goals. The creation of the School Improvement Plan (SIP) for each building will occur within the first three months of the new school year to provide a basis for budget planning. Goals associated with plans at the building and district level will be shared with the community when completed. This is a recurring objective that will be reviewed annually.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Objective 1B</th>
<th>Develop a transparent budget that supports the district’s goals and strategic objectives and share details with community stakeholders in an environment open to dialogue and collaboration.</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Timeline</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility</strong></td>
<td>Central office and building based administrators</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Budget planning associated with School Improvement Plans and District Goals will be completed earlier in the year to allow for adequate time for discussion and feedback from stakeholders. Items associated with facilities and technology will be highlighted as part of each SIP. This work has already begun in the form of discussions around district and school priorities. Administration, at both the central office and building levels, that include the Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, Director of Business and Finance, Director of Human Resources and building principals, will be responsible for this objective annually.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Objective 1C</th>
<th>Ensure that relevant information is communicated out to community stakeholders and is easily understood.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timeline</strong></td>
<td>2016-2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility</strong></td>
<td>Central office and building based administrators</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Building and district leaders have already started the process of communicating information to the community through blogs, websites, email, and phone messages. We are in the third year of the creation of
the WRSD Budget Book that is updated throughout the course of the budget season and is available online. Both principals and central office administration will report progress on goals to the public on a regular basis through reports to the school committee.

## Domain 2: Aligned Curriculum

With a district comprised of 13 schools, across 5 towns, it is imperative that an aligned curriculum is in place to provide consistent educational outcomes for students. With five communities feeding into one high school, teachers and families have a desire to provide each student entering 9th grade with a common background from which to build their secondary education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Aligned Curriculum</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>If</strong> educators implement an aligned curriculum that articulates common, well-defined learning outcomes with a focus on depth of understanding and critical thinking, <strong>then</strong> students will be prepared for the next level of learning.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Strategic Objective 2A

Develop a consistently implemented and vertically aligned Pre K-12 Curriculum.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority Initiatives</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Develop a dynamic and clearly articulated PK-12 curriculum with a focus on vertical alignment  
   a. Unpack district priority standards with instructional staff to define grade level expectations  
   b. Monitor curriculum implementation to ensure consistency across and between grade levels  
2. Use common assessments within schools and across schools to measure progress toward grade level expectations  
3. Establish a curriculum review cycle which will tie to the budget priorities |  |

### Strategic Objective 2B

Develop common, well-defined learning outcomes with a focus on depth of understanding and critical thinking across all grades and content areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority Initiatives</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Develop benchmark assessments based on priority learning outcomes to evaluate instructional programs and student growth.  
2. Identify mastery-level learning outcomes and define mastery/proficiency at each grade level and for each subject  
3. Match curriculum expectations with individual student learning needs |  |
Domain 2 Implementation Timeline and Responsible Parties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Objective 2A</th>
<th>Develop a consistently implemented and vertically aligned Pre K- 12 Curriculum.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Timeline</td>
<td>2016-2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Curriculum Team, Teaching Staff, Building Administration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Curriculum Team (Deputy Superintendent, Curriculum Supervisor, Pupil-Personnel Supervisor, Administrator of Special Education, Administrator of Assessment, and Supervisor of Information Services) will lead the work in this area. The teachers and building level administration (Principals and Assistant Principals) will identify district-wide priority standards across all grades (PK-12) in the core content areas and unpack these standards to develop priority learning outcomes and define grade level expectations by subject. Once identified, the priority learning outcomes will be used to define what mastery/proficiency looks like at each grade level, be used as the criteria for the design of common benchmark assessments, and drive our work on instructional practices. The Deputy Superintendent will work with the Curriculum team to identify and prioritize budget impacts on an annual basis throughout the duration of this plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Objective 2B</th>
<th>Develop common, well-defined learning outcomes with a focus on depth of understanding and critical thinking across all grades and content areas.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Timeline</td>
<td>2017-2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Curriculum Team, Teaching Staff, Building Administration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Curriculum Team will work closely with building administration and our teaching staff to develop common benchmark assessments that will provide multiple measures of student progress toward priority learning outcomes. Work in this area will also include identifying what mastery/proficiency looks like at each grade level for each subject. This work is foundational to identifying and implementing effective instructional practices in the next domain. The Deputy Superintendent will work with the Curriculum team to identify and prioritize budget impacts on an annual basis throughout the duration of this plan.
Domain 3: Effective Instruction

Creating a program of study that is supportive of the needs of students, as well as being data-driven, is an important area to focus on. In today’s world, educating students must be done at both the micro, local, and the macro, global, levels. Helping teachers become better equipped to enhance the learning opportunities for students was another catalyst under this domain.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. Effective Instruction</th>
<th>If educators implement evidence-based, high-quality instructional practices focused on critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration, and systematically measure, analyze, and act upon student learning data, then all students will be challenged to grow as individuals and global citizens.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategic Objective 3A</strong></td>
<td>Implement evidence-based, high-quality instructional practices focused on critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Priority Initiatives** | 1. Instructional staff engage in ongoing, focused discussion and collaborative reflection on the effectiveness of instructional practices  
  a. Identify effective instruction based upon data trends/ priority learning standards  
  2. Instructional staff differentiate core instruction and assessment to meet the diverse needs of all learners  
  3. Define and support effective differentiation |
| **Strategic Objective 3B** | Systematically measure, analyze, and act upon student learning data. |
| **Priority Initiatives** | 1. Staff will be trained to examine and evaluate student work to plan and adjust instruction, and evaluate student learning  
  2. Staff will examine student data to evaluate and monitor student learning and evaluate instructional practices  
  3. Instructional staff develop assessments and evaluate student work based on a common understanding of mastery level learning outcomes  
  4. Students consistently receive constructive, targeted feedback as well as guidance on how to improve |
| **Strategic Objective 3C** | Staff regularly use technology to support student learning, enhance student engagement, and work toward developing innovative instructional practices. |
| **Priority Initiatives** | 1. Ensure that level of technology and infrastructure is sufficient to meet student instructional needs  
  2. Support and train staff in integrating technology into the classroom environment that supports and engages students  
  a. Establish district wide and building based PLC’s to research, pilot, and share best practices  
  3. Use technology to prepare students to be successful global citizens |
Domain 3 Implementation Timeline and Responsible Parties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Objective 3A</th>
<th>Implement evidence-based, high-quality instructional practices focused on critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timeline</strong></td>
<td>2017-2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility</strong></td>
<td>Teaching Staff, Building Administration, Curriculum Team</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Instructional staff will be trained and supported to collaboratively reflect on the effectiveness of instructional strategies. The criteria developed under domain 2: Aligned Curriculum (priority learning outcomes) will be used to focus our work on effective instruction. Staff will be trained to differentiate their instruction in the core content areas to meet the diverse needs of all learners. Anticipated costs under this strategic objective will be mainly in the area of professional development.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Objective 3B</th>
<th>Systematically measure, analyze, and act upon student learning data.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timeline</strong></td>
<td>2016-2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility</strong></td>
<td>Curriculum Team, Building Administration, Teaching Staff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Curriculum Team will work with building administration to train our teaching staff to examine and evaluate student work in order to evaluate student learning, adjust instruction, evaluate the effectiveness of instructional practices, and provide targeted feedback to students. This multi-year initiative will rely heavily on teachers working together collaboratively and reflecting on the effectiveness of instructional practices. The main impacts on the budget on an annual basis will be in the form of professional development costs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Objective 3C</th>
<th>Staff regularly use technology to support student learning, enhance student engagement, and work toward developing innovative instructional practices.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timeline</strong></td>
<td>2016-2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility</strong></td>
<td>Central Office Team, Curriculum Team, Teachers, Building Administration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Deputy Superintendent and the Supervisor of Information Services, along with the Superintendent and the Director of Business and Finance will work to ensure that the technology infrastructure will support the instructional demands in each of our buildings and that appropriate hardware is available to teachers and students alike. The same group, along with the Curriculum Supervisor, Administrator of Special
Education, Administrator of Assessment and Accountability, and building Principals will work to develop a plan for training and support of our teaching staff across the district. The building Principals and our teaching staff will research, pilot, train, and share best practices of using technology to support effective instruction. The Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, and Director of Business and Finance will develop a long range plan for implementation of technology and infrastructure into our schools which will be updated on an annual basis for the duration of this plan.

**Domain 4: Professional Development & Structures for Collaboration**

Professional development support was a common theme echoed throughout the process. With a defined PD domain, the goals of the entire strategic plan can be aligned with those of administrators and teachers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Objective 4A</th>
<th>Professional development includes high-quality job-embedded professional development aligned with district, school, and educator goals.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Priority Initiatives   | 1. PD opportunities are specific, ongoing, and include a plan for support during initial stages of implementation  
2. Educators align goals with district and school goals and PD provided to support district/school goals  
3. Professional development will be supported annually through the budget process |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Objective 4B</th>
<th>Systems, structures, and protocols are in place and used to guide collaborative discussions to improve implementation of the curriculum and instructional practices.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Priority Initiatives   | 1. Provide training to building based teams on how to follow and use a team process and protocols  
2. Monitor implementation process and make adjustments based upon student learning data |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Objective 4C</th>
<th>Professional development and structures for collaboration are evaluated for their effect on raising student achievement.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Priority Initiatives   | 1. Use survey data on an annual basis to monitor staff needs, training implementation, and progress of strategic initiatives  
2. Monitor implementation process and make adjustments based upon student learning data |
# Domain 4 Implementation Timeline and Responsible Parties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Objective 4A</th>
<th>Professional development includes high-quality job- embedded professional development aligned with district, school, and educator goals.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timeline</strong></td>
<td>2016-2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility</strong></td>
<td>Curriculum Team, Central Office Team, Building Administration, Teaching Staff</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The Curriculum Team and building administration will provide specific, ongoing, professional development opportunities that are planned out in advance and include a long term plan to support new initiatives through the initial stages of implementation. Professional Development will be included in the District and School Improvement Plans. Teaching staff will align their goals with District and School improvement goals. Central Office staff will ensure that professional development is supported annually through the budget process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Objective 4B</th>
<th>Systems, structures, and protocols are in place and used to guide collaborative discussions to improve implementation of the curriculum and instructional practices.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timeline</strong></td>
<td>2016-2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility</strong></td>
<td>Building Administration, Teaching Staff, Curriculum Team</td>
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</table>

Building administration (Principals and Assistant Principals) will provide training to teaching staff on how to collaboratively examine student work, data, and the effectiveness of instructional practices. The Curriculum Team will support the building administration in these training initiatives and both groups will monitor the implementation process. Teaching staff and administration will use the results of these collaborative discussions of student learning data to make instructional adjustments. The main budget impact of this Strategic Objective will be in the form of training and support materials.

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<tr>
<th>Strategic Objective 4C</th>
<th>Professional development and structures for collaboration are evaluated for their effect on raising student achievement.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timeline</strong></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility</strong></td>
<td>Curriculum Team, Superintendent, Building Principals, WREA Leadership</td>
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</table>
The Curriculum Team and building Principals will examine professional development (PD) initiatives and structures for collaboration for their effect on raising student achievement. The same group, along with the Superintendent and WREA Leadership, will examine annual PD survey results to identify and prioritize staff training needs. There are no anticipated budget impacts to be able to evaluate our professional development initiatives.

## Domain 5: Students’ Social, Emotional, and Health Needs

Students can only learn when their most basic needs are being met. We are aware that there are many issues that students face on a daily basis that affect learning and Domain 5 is the beginning of a broader conversation and plan to support children. Issues such as diversity, mental health, and social isolation must all be addressed in a manner that is inclusive and supportive.

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<tr>
<th>5. Students’ Social, Emotional, and Health Needs</th>
<th>If the district supports effective researched-based practices that promote a healthy school climate, builds an understanding of social, emotional and physical health as factors affecting learning, and works collaboratively with families and community services, then students will be able to utilize their knowledge and skills to maximize their learning potential.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategic Objective 5A</strong></td>
<td>Build an understanding of social, emotional and physical health as factors affecting learning.</td>
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</table>
| **Priority Initiatives**                     | 1. Identify effective research based practices that promote student health  
a. Develop a system of support  
2. Educate all staff regarding student social, emotional and physical elements that impact learning |
| **Strategic Objective 5B**                   | Engage families and the community in a partnership to increase the district’s capacity to address students’ social, and emotional health needs.                                                     |
| **Priority Initiatives**                     | 1. Educate parents and the community regarding social, emotional and physical elements that impact learning through the use of developmentally appropriate dialogue  
2. Maintain consistent protocols and communication across all district schools  
3. Enlist local support agencies to provide wrap-around services |
Domain 5 Implementation Timeline and Responsible Parties

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Strategic Objective 5A</th>
<th>Build an understanding of social, emotional and physical health as factors affecting learning.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timeline</strong></td>
<td>2016-2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility</strong></td>
<td>Central office administration, building administrators and teaching staff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As this is a long-term objective, the first few years will be dedicated to identifying effective research based practices that support student health, educating educators on students needs, and developing a lasting system of support. Current programs and practices will be assessed and modified as needed. With the support of counselors at the middle level, and the eventual increase of counseling support at all levels, dedicating funds and time to supporting the well-being of our students is an extremely important and timely task. Counselors, School Psychologists, Principals, Assistant Principals, the Supervisor of Pupil Personnel Services and Administrator of Special Education will all partake in this objective.

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<tr>
<th>Strategic Objective 5B</th>
<th>Engage families and the community in a partnership to increase the district’s capacity to address students’ social, and emotional health needs.</th>
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<td><strong>Timeline</strong></td>
<td>2016-2021</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility</strong></td>
<td>Central Office administration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this objective, our Supervisor of Pupil Personnel Services and Administrator of Special Education will be working in conjunction with one another to begin to establish dialogue with families around issues that impact student learning that will allow our staff to meet students’ needs in a consistent manner in each of our 13 schools. Identifying and maintaining viable means to having open dialogue around student wellness issues with families will be a focal point for this objective.
Appendix A: MARS Consulting Group

Wachusett Regional School District

Strategic Plan Timeline

December 2015
• MARS Consultants: meet with Superintendent McCall; Focus Group with Regional School Committee

January 2016
• Steering Committee: 1st meeting; introductions; SWOT Focus Group; begin review of Community Survey
• MARS Consultants: facilitate Steering Committee meeting; PowerPoint presentation regarding Strategic Planning process; Focus Group process with 10 schools, 2 communities (Holden & Princeton), Steering Committee, & Administration; gather 750 pieces of data from 460 individuals; drive 1,297 miles [1,731 total miles to date]

February 2016
• Steering Committee: 2nd meeting; discuss Timeline; Finalize Community Survey; work on Vision/Mission/Core Values; review Executive Summaries of Focus Groups to date
• MARS Consultants: facilitate Steering Committee meeting; Focus Groups in 1 school and 3 communities (Paxton, Rutland & Sterling); continue to refine data from Focus Groups; work with District to distribute Community Survey (email, school/town libraries, Landmark Newspaper)

March 2016
• Steering Committee: 3rd meeting; discuss and refine vision/mission/core values; continue review of Focus Group data; review Community Survey data
• MARS Consultants: facilitate Steering Committee meeting; coordinate remaining Focus Group data and provide Executive Summaries of each group and final summary of all data; provide Executive Summary of all Community Survey data; Focus Group process with final two schools

April 2016
• Steering Committee: 4th meeting; finalize Vision/Mission/Core Values statements; begin developing Strategic Goals
• MARS Consultants: facilitate Steering Committee meeting; process any remaining Focus Group and Community Survey data

March 2016
• Steering Committee: 5th meeting; finalize 4 – 6 Strategic Goals
• MARS Consultants: facilitate Steering Committee meeting; communicate 4 – 6 Strategic Goals with Administrators and help develop Action Plan; prepare final sections of Strategic Plan
June 2016

- Steering Committee: discuss and achieve consensus on final Strategic Plan
- MARS Consultants: communicate final Strategic Plan to Superintendent McCall

July/August

- Plan distributed by Wachusett Central Office
Appendix B: Executive Summary of Focus Groups

Executive Summary – Focus Group Results

**Strengths**
- Great kids/Happy students
- Academic rigor
- Extra- and co-curricular activities
- Involved parents/Supportive families
- Sense of community
- Staff: dedicated, hardworking, qualified; collegial; collaborative
- Supportive building administration
- Quality of instruction
- STEAM
- Regionalization efficiencies

**Weaknesses**
- Insufficient budget/resources – state & local
- Lack of effective public relations program
- Lack of coordinated curriculum
- Lack of a quality professional development program
- Needed technology – infrastructure & for students
- Needed equipment & supplies
- Needed additional Support Staff: reading, ELL, special education (& alternative special education), librarians, mental health/counselors, office staff, nurses, & paraprofessionals
- Lack of trust & clear vision - Central Office
- Class sizes in some areas (K-12)
- Demands on teachers/limited planning time

**Opportunities**
- Partnerships: private business/community members/colleges
- Federal, state, and local grants – grant writer
- Make professional development relevant
- Realign state funding formulas/per pupil expenditures/Regional Agreement
- Strengthen district management
- Increase offerings for non-college bound students – entire spectrum of student abilities
- Programs for gifted students
- Redistricting/building expansion
- Increased technology
- Support for staff: internships; mentoring; collaboration

**Threats**
- Funding/budget/financial issues
- High stakes testing
- Five-town lack of agreement on: spending levels; cohesion; support
- Charter, Choice-out, & private schools
- State issues: unfunded mandates/interference/non-support of regional school district (including transportation)
- Growing class sizes
- Building maintenance
- Lack of mental health services
- Too much student empowerment – lack of respect
- Half day "K" program option needed
Appendix C: Summary of Community Survey

Categories below based mainly on number of times each issue expressed.]

Most Often Expressed

- Positive experiences: “...my children have done well...”; “...love the schools and teachers...”; “...I applaud the dedication of teachers and support staff...”; “...couldn’t be more pleased...”; happy with school administration...”; “...I am privileged and thrilled with the district...”; my children have enjoyed going to school and look forward to each day...”
- Thank you: “...thank you for the opportunity to provide this feedback...”; “...thank you for reaching out with this survey...”; “...thank you for asking for our input...”; “...thank you for taking the time to read my responses...”

Expressed by Multiple Respondents

- “...I am open to research leaving the district, at least K-8...”; “...it may be time to deregionalize as it seems like the priorities of the towns no longer match up...”
- “...keep pushing for additional funding...”; “...I love this district and just wish all could understand that we need to increase the budget to make this an even better district...”

Also Expressed

- “...failing technology is a dire problem...”
- “...underfunding at the State level is the significant issue...”
- “...high standards I expect from Wachusett have lowered...”
- “...frustrating that the same towns do not support the budget...”
- “...Athletic fees are too high...”
- “...the buses are crowded...”
- “...biological clock is not conducive to 6:00 AM start...”
- “...survey should be done yearly to benchmark improvement...”
- “...provide full-day kindergarten for all...”
- “...should be better way to ‘sell’ our student to college...”

Executive Summary of Themes and Issues – Community Survey

Areas in Need of Improvement

[Levels below based mainly on number of concerns expressed of same issue.]

Highest Level of Concern

- Financial issues [see separate list]
- Curricular issues [see separate list]
- Technology issues – for students, staff, & schools
- Better communication: staff ↔ students; staff ↔ families; district ↔ families; CO administration ↔ staff
Wachusett Regional School District Strategic Plan 2016-2021

- Need for more & better professional development (input from staff)

**Significant Level of Concern**
- Need for full-day kindergarten
- Concern about class sizes in some schools/levels
- More emphasis on mental health issues
- Quality of teaching in some areas
- Better anti-bullying programs & efforts
- Staffing needs [see list under “Financial Concerns”]
- Concern regarding substance abuse
- Concern about students “falling between the cracks”

**Moderate Level of Concern**
- Increase environmental consciousness
- Need to be able to respect all school administrators
- Better safety/security – e.g., discipline, lock down procedures – break down the HS into “houses”
- More extra-curricular activities (better access & more non-official)
- Sports are too political
- School Committee too large (should represent schools and towns)
- School Committee & Central Office need a better public perception
- Elementary schools should start earlier and secondary schools later
- Better balance between academics and sports
- Parent/teacher evenings too difficult to see all teachers
- Students need more input into HS issues
- Some school administrators do not value parent input – attending events
- Need better, more relevant, up-to-date school & district websites
- More leadership opportunities for elementary & middle school students
- Stronger Central Office & more transparent with decisions
- Better consistency of teacher responsibilities between schools (e.g., duties)
- Bus driver training & accountability
- Hire and retain best teachers
- Provide more healthy lunches

**Financial Issues**

**Highest Level of Concern**
- Better use of budget available
- Avoid annual conflict between towns regarding budget
- Staffing needs: librarians; counselors/mental health professionals; ESL staff; paraprofessionals; clerical support
- Build trust & improve community relations, communication & understanding of needs of District to get communities’ budget support
- Better maintenance & renovation of some schools (e.g., Thomas Prince)
Significant Level of Concern

- Funding for art, music, and sports
- Fund late busses
- Schools & towns must live within their means
- Better cost controls & allocation of resources

Moderate Level of Concern

- Heat in winter & air conditioning in fall and spring (+ summer programs)
- Too high extra-curricular fees causing some students not to participate
- Need before & after-school “care” or “extended day” programs

Curricular Issues

Highest Level of Concern

- More & better funded AP courses
- Need more academic vigor – strengthen honors program
- Concern about higher/highest level of students – more ability grouping
- Concern about students with academic needs (special education & non-special education) – basic skills support at HS
- Concern about students “in the middle”
- Need for updated textbooks in most areas – use of electronic texts/books & learning materials
- Need to align curriculum between towns & between levels
- Better teacher evaluation process

Significant Level of Concern

- High School classes relevant to interests & future needs of students – more diverse courses
- Need earlier intervention for academic issues (e.g., reading)
- Better meeting of individual student needs
- Need for elementary curriculum director
- Need computer science program at HS
- Need more diversified curriculum
- Concern about PK-12 math & science curricula

Moderate Level of Concern

- Less busy work & more relevant learning
- Need wider variety of business courses
- Provide less distractions from “time on learning”
- More hands-on learning opportunities
- Need for (better) “crisis intervention teams”
- Make transition between levels more smooth
- HS students in too many study halls
- Add second language in elementary schools
• Create more cultural awareness – lack of diversity of students & staff
• Develop longer school days
• Provide career exploration
• Coordinate homework between teachers
• Make tutoring available

What are the STRENGTHS of the school district?
[Categories below based mainly on number of times each issue expressed.]

Most Often Expressed
• A great school district: teachers; curriculum; academic program
• Communication & safety
• Community involvement/sense of community
• Great ________ school.....

Expressed by Multiple Respondents
• Strong music & art program
• Stronger, more transparent leadership recently
• Terrific athletic program
• Support of programs and special education
• Facilities
• Building principals
• Diversity & size of the student population

Also Expressed
• Extracurricular program
• STEAM
• Central Administration
• Test scores
• Small elementary schools
• Early Childhood Program
• Excellent students
• Caring, welcoming schools
• Positive school climate

Wishful Thinking
Categories below based mainly on number of times each issue expressed.]

Most Often Expressed
• “...stop the debates/conflicts/arguments at budget time...”;
  “...approve an adequate budget to meet the needs of students and teachers ...
  “...receive adequate funding from the towns and State to support education...”

Expressed by Multiple Respondents
• “…provide more AP classes, enrichment classes at lower grade levels and foreign language beginning at the elementary level…”
• “…provide more STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Math) at all grade levels at all schools…”
• “…improve technology in all areas…”
• provide free full-day kindergarten…”
• “…restore late buses for students…”
• “…reduce class sizes especially at elementary/middle school grades…”
• “…restore librarians along with other position such as guidance counselors, paraprofessionals, etc…”
• “…hire more paraprofessionals and pay them well to keep them in the district; also provide professional development for them…”
• “…improve communication within the schools and across the district…”

Also Expressed
• “…influence Paxton and Rutland in order that they stop being budget busters…”
• “…tell Holden it should go out on its own…”
• “…hire more teachers…”
• “…get rid of the bad teachers…”
• “…eliminate the Common Core…”
• “…create a student exchange program…”
• “…get rid of unions…”
• “…provide better professional development…”
• “…make two high schools…”
• “…redistrict – the Wachusett district is too big…”
• “…let principals do their job…”
Appendix D: Focus Group Format

Strategic Planning – SWOT Analysis

List as many items as possible under:

1. **Strengths** of the District
   - What advantages does our school have?
   - What does our school do better than other schools?
   - What makes this school unique?
   - What does this school community see as our strengths?
   - What do staff members see as our strengths?

2. **Weaknesses** of the District
   - What are the disadvantages that this school has compared to other schools?
   - What could be improved?
   - What are the people within this school community likely to see as weaknesses?
   - What are people within the school likely to see as weaknesses?
   - What factors cause students to go to other schools?

3. **Opportunities** for the District
   - What strengths can you exploit to increase the school's competitive advantage?
   - What is happening in education that might be a good opportunity for the school?
   - What opportunities might technology give us?
   - What are the unique elements in our community that might provide opportunities?
   - What is missing from our school/community that might make an opportunity for us?
   - What weaknesses might we eliminate to create opportunities?

4. **Threats** to the District
   - Are there any threats to the school community that might affect viability (e.g. financial, infrastructure, things our competition are doing)?
   - What dangers might the school be exposed to because of changes in governing policy?
   - What risks/obstacles do we face?
## Appendix E: 5-Year Timeline

### WRSD 2016-2021 Strategic Plan
(Ver.-9/1/16)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2016-17</th>
<th>2017-18</th>
<th>2018-19</th>
<th>2019-20</th>
<th>2020-21</th>
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### 1. Leadership, Governance and Communication

1A. Establish and communicate a clearly defined set of goals and strategic objectives to guide district and school improvement initiatives.

1A.1 Leaders establish clear and common goals that support school and district improvement

1A.1.1 SIP’s aligned to support district goals

1A.1.2 Goals include facilities (where applicable)

1A.2 Leaders use a variety of data sources to identify priority initiatives.

1A.3 Goals relative to district and school improvement clearly communicated to the community, parents and town officials

1B. Develop a transparent budget that supports the district’s goals and strategic objectives and share details with community stakeholders in an environment open to dialogue and collaboration.

1B.1 Prepare an annual budget aligned with School Improvement Plans and strategic initiatives with a shared vision of district-level priorities

1B.2 Budget addresses facility and technology needs in order to support effective instruction

1B.3 Develop a budget that meets prioritized district needs that can also be supported by the member towns

1B.4 Report budget goals and initiatives to stakeholders in a timely manner

1C. Ensure that relevant information is communicated out to community stakeholders and is easily understood.

1C.1 Identify all stakeholders in a tiered system of communication

1C.2 Leaders communicate goals and strategic objectives to all stakeholders via multiple modalities (web/meetings)

1C.3 Leaders communicate progress toward goals and objectives

### 2. Aligned Curriculum

2A. Develop a consistently implemented and vertically aligned Pre K-12 Curriculum.

2A.1 Develop a dynamic and clearly articulated PK-12 curriculum with a focus on vertical alignment

2A.1.1 Unpack district priority standards with instructional staff to define grade level expectations

2A.1.2 Monitor curriculum implementation to ensure consistency across and between grade levels

2A.2 Use common assessments within schools and across schools to measure progress toward grade level expectations

2B. Develop common, well-defined learning outcomes with a focus on depth of understanding and critical thinking across all grades and content areas.

2B.1 Develop benchmark assessments based on priority learning outcomes to evaluate instructional programs and student growth.

2B.2 Identify mastery-level learning outcomes and define mastery/efficiency at each grade level and for each subject

2B.2.1 Match curriculum expectations with individual student learning needs
### WRSD 2016-2021 Strategic Plan

**EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION**

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<tr>
<td>3A. Implement evidence-based, high-quality instructional practices focused on critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3A.1 Instructional staff engage in ongoing, focused discussion and collaborative reflection on the effectiveness of instructional practices</td>
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<tr>
<td>3A.1.1 Identify effective instruction based upon data trends/ priority learning standards</td>
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<tr>
<td>3A.2 Instructional staff differentiate core instruction and assessment to meet the diverse needs of all learners</td>
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<tr>
<td>3A.2.1 Define and support effective differentiation</td>
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<td>3B. Systematically measure, analyze, and act upon student learning data.</td>
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<td>3B.1 Staff will be trained to examine and evaluate student work to plan and adjust instruction, and evaluate student learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>3B.2 Staff will examine student data to evaluate and monitor student learning and evaluate instructional practices</td>
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<td>3B.3 Instructional staff develop assessments and evaluate student work based on a common understanding of mastery level learning outcomes</td>
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<td>3B.4 Students consistently receive constructive, targeted feedback as well as guidance on how to improve</td>
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<td>3C. Staff regularly use technology to support student learning, enhance student engagement, and work toward developing innovative instructional practices.</td>
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<td>3C.1 Ensure that level of technology and infrastructure is sufficient to meet student instructional needs</td>
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<td>3C.2 Support and train staff in integrating technology into the classroom environment that supports and engages students</td>
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<td>3C.2.1 Establish district wide and building based PLC’s to research, pilot, and share best practices</td>
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<td>Use technology to prepare students to be successful global citizens</td>
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<td><strong>PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT</strong></td>
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<td>4. Professional Development &amp; Structures for Collaboration</td>
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<td>4A. Professional development includes high-quality job-embedded professional development aligned with district, school, and educator goals.</td>
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<td>4A.1 PD opportunities are specific, ongoing, and include a plan for support during initial stages of implementation</td>
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<td>4A.2 Educators align goals with district and school goals and PD provided to support district/school goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>4A.3 Professional development will be supported annually through the budget process</td>
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<tr>
<td>4B.1 Provide training to building based teams on how to follow and use a team process and protocols</td>
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<td>4B.2 Monitor implementation process and make adjustments based upon student learning data</td>
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<td><strong>5. Students’ Social, Emotional and Health Needs</strong></td>
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<td>5A. Build an understanding of social, emotional and physical health as factors affecting learning.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5A.1 Identify effective research based practices that promote student health</td>
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<td>5A.1.1 Develop a system of support</td>
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<td>5A.2 Educate all staff regarding student social, emotional and physical elements that impact learning</td>
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<td><strong>SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL LEARNING</strong></td>
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<td>5B. Engage families and the community in a partnership to increase the district’s capacity to address students’ social, and emotional health needs.</td>
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<td>5B.1 Educate parents and the community regarding social, emotional and physical elements that impact learning through the use of developmentally appropriate dialogue</td>
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<td>5B.2 Maintain consistent protocols and communication across all district schools</td>
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<td>5B.3 Enlist local support agencies to provide wrap-around services</td>
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