



Wantagh Union
Free School District

Five-Year Strategic Plan 2019-2024



*Building Our
Future Together*

VISION

The Wantagh UFSD believes that all students will have an outstanding educational experience that meets the diverse needs of all learners and empowers them to meet all of the opportunities of the future.

MISSION

The Wantagh UFSD will work in partnership with students, families and the community to ensure that each student acquires the knowledge, skills and core values necessary to achieve their fullest potential and to enrich the local and global community.

VALUES

The Wantagh UFSD believes in:

- A caring and nurturing environment for learning that meets the social and emotional needs of all students.
- A collaborative approach that encourages teamwork.
- Development of strong character to foster engaged citizenship.
- Operating safe, well maintained and innovative facilities.
- Fiscal responsibility and advocacy.
- Strong communication with all constituent groups.



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A MESSAGE FROM *the Superintendent of Schools*

Dear Parents, Staff and Community,

January 3, 2019

I proudly present to you the five-year strategic plan for the Wantagh Union Free School District, *Building Our Future Together*. This plan is the collaborative work of our entire Wantagh Community and I thank all of you that participated in this effort. This planning process began during the 2017-18 school year and continued through the end of this calendar year.

Building Our Future Together focuses on four key pillars to build our long-term planning around: Outstanding Student Achievement, Exceptional Learning Environments, Successful Resource Management and Strong Connections. Each of these pillars looks at our long-term planning through a critical lens, and broad goals have been created with specific strategies and measurable action plans to accomplish these goals. Our District Research Committee compiled thousands of surveys and data from focus groups to provide our Board of Education and district leadership team with a better understanding of the values of our Wantagh Community. These four pillars, along with our vision statement, mission statement and values, were all identified based upon the feedback of the entire community. This work reflects the voice of all of the members of our community that participated in this planning process.

Over the next five years, there is a tremendous amount of work that will be done to continue to move our district forward. Much of this work has already begun, as we were able to quickly tackle some of the areas that were


identified in our initial survey data. As we move forward with our goals, we will continually monitor the metrics that have been identified to make sure we are meeting the identified targets and making adequate progress. All of our district, building and department goals will be aligned with the four pillars.

Building Our Future Together also focuses on navigating some of the significant challenges that lay ahead for the school district. Our district has faced declining enrollment, the fiscal restraints of a property tax cap, an aging infrastructure that needs attention and rising costs in employer contributions in health care. The plans that we develop over the next five years will factor in these challenges and develop a systematic approach to ensuring that we can still make positive strides forward despite them.

I am confident that as our community continues to collaborate to achieve long-term goals, we will build upon all of the tremendous success of our school district to take it to even greater heights. I look forward to building the future together with all of the stakeholders of the Wantagh School District. On behalf of the Board of Education and all of our staff and students, thank you for your continued engagement in our school community.

Sincerely,

John C. McNamara



"I am confident that as our community continues to collaborate to achieve long-term goals, we will build upon all of the tremendous success of our school district to take it to even greater heights. I look forward to building our future together with all of the stakeholders of the Wantagh School District."

- John C. McNamara,
Superintendent Of Schools

Building Our Future Together

Designing the Strategic Planning Process: Creating a Timeline and Process
July 2017



Creating a District Research Committee
October 2017



Administering Communitywide Surveys and Focus Groups
November 2017-February 2018



Analyzing Feedback and Creating a Comprehensive Report of Survey Results
February 2018-May 2018



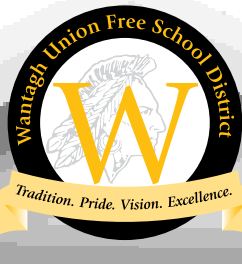
Establishing Strategic Goals and Receiving Feedback on those Goals
May 2018-January 2019



Present the Final Five-Year Strategic Plan to the Community and
a Continued Improvement Process Loop
September 2019



Building Our Future Together identifies four pillars that our strategic plan is based upon. An overview of the four pillars for success is given below.



STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-2024

BUILDING OUR FUTURE TOGETHER

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT

EXCEPTIONAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

SUCCESSFUL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

STRONG CONNECTIONS

STRONG FOUNDATION OF PAST SUCCESS

OUTSTANDING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Desired Outcome: All students in the Wantagh Union Free School District will obtain high levels of achievement through a rich and aligned curriculum, which is delivered with outstanding instructional practices that engage all learners and focuses on the important skills of collaboration, critical thinking and engaging in research and presentation.

The first pillar focuses on all of our students obtaining high levels of achievement.

Through our survey work we developed a list of critical skills that all stakeholders highly value as crucial outcomes and that

all of our students must have: the ability to collaborate, think critically, engagement in high-level research and excellent communication and presentation skills. We also heard loud and clear that our instructional pedagogy must focus on lessons that are highly engaging for today's generation of learners. As a result, we are focusing on two overarching goals for this pillar:

Goal #1: The Wantagh UFSD faculty and administration will collaboratively develop and implement a cohesive K-12 digital curriculum map for all grade levels and subject areas that embeds the identified critical skills of collaboration, critical thinking, research and presentation. This curriculum map will be available to all stakeholders, so that everyone in the community is aware of the expectations for students at each grade level and in every discipline.

Goal #2: The Wantagh UFSD faculty and administration will create specific exit outcomes at each commencement level (elementary, middle and high) that measure the critical skills of collaboration, critical thinking, research, communication and presentation for every student. Specific benchmarks related to our students' proficient use of technology will also be included.





OUTSTANDING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Targeted Outcomes:

September 2020

All stakeholders will have access to a digital scope and sequence for every grade level and every subject area. This scope and sequence will incorporate the critical skills identified by the community into all expected outcomes. It will also incorporate a technology strand that addresses the proficiency of our students in this area.

September 2021

Commencement-level exit outcomes will be completed for the elementary, middle and secondary levels and be ready for implementation. During the 2021-2022 school year these commencement assessments will be administered to all students across the district.



EXCEPTIONAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Desired Outcome: All students in the Wantagh Union Free School District will have exceptional learning environments in well maintained, safe and innovative facilities that will be modernized to meet the needs of today's learners.

It is extremely important to the Wantagh community that our students have exceptional classrooms and facilities that they arrive at to learn each day. As a result, it is critical that there is a clear long-range vision for enhancing and maintaining our existing spaces. This task comes with some fiscal challenges, as our buildings are aging and our resources are limited. As a result, it is necessary to develop a five-year facilities plan and a five-year financial plan to support this work. It will be necessary to consider options such as future bonds as existing debt is retired in the coming years. A bond, coupled with a capital reserve fund and addressing capital needs through the district's budget, will allow the district to tackle many of the \$40 million of capital projects that are critical for the district moving forward.

Goal #1: The Wantagh UFSD will enhance instructional spaces across the district to be state-of-the-art learning spaces that support the critical skills of collaboration, critical thinking, research, communication and presentation.

Goal #2: The Director of Facilities will work collaboratively with the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Director of Technology and the Assistant Superintendent for Business to develop a five-year facilities plan that identifies a fiscally responsible way to update instructional spaces through the integration of best instructional practices with technology and modernizing classroom furniture. In addition, the district will implement security upgrades in all of our facilities.



EXCEPTIONAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Targeted Outcomes:

September 2019

The district will create a Learning Environments Committee in September 2019 to develop a plan to improve instructional spaces that integrate best instructional practice, classroom furniture and technology.

This committee will make recommendations in June 2020 for improvements of our existing spaces to be incorporated into our five-year facilities plan and long-range financial plans. The committee will create a realistic timetable to purchase needed furniture and technology for all instructional spaces over the next five years.

June 2020

A long-range facilities plan will be presented to the BOE for consideration. This will be a multifaceted plan that will address all of the capital needs across the district using a combination of the existing capital reserve fund, a bond referendum and expanding the capital projects line in our annual budgets. The capital reserve fund was established in May 2018 to be funded up to \$7.5 million. To date, \$800,000 has been allocated and approved as an expenditure by voters in October 2018 to replace the middle school boilers. A bond referendum in May 2021 will allow the district to fund \$25 million in capital improvements and replace debt that is being retired from two previous bond in 2023 and 2024. This referendum could be done without increasing the tax levy. Expanding the capital projects line over the next five years 10% incrementally each year to a total of \$1 million annually would allow the district to adequately maintain and upgrade all of our facilities.



SUCCESSFUL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Desired Outcome: The Wantagh Union Free School District will be fiscally responsible and develop long-range fiscal plans to meet the needs of the community and provide outstanding educational opportunities for students.

It is critical that we successfully manage our resources to ensure that they have the greatest positive impact for our students.

The district continues to strive to provide the best educational experience possible for our students and be fiscally responsible to the taxpayers of the Wantagh community.

Goal #1: The Assistant Superintendent for Business will address the current fiscal challenges that the district faces through the development of long-range financial plans. These plans will address the challenges of increasing labor costs and the associated benefits, capital projects, reserves management, technology infrastructure and the district's unassigned fund balance.

Goal #2: The Director of Technology will create a comprehensive technology plan to address the management of all technology resources for students and staff. This plan will include a multi year approach to updating and replacing existing technology infrastructure and an ongoing plan to proactively replace equipment before it reaches failure. This plan will also be integrated with the instructional vision of the district to support faculty and staff with implementation of technology in a way that best supports instructional goals.



SUCCESSFUL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Targeted Outcomes:

September 2019

In September 2019 a District Technology Committee will be formed to develop a five year district technology plan. This plan will focus on our instructional technology needs, embedding technology competency strands into our curriculum and addressing our infrastructure needs in the area of technology.

January 2020

An updated financial plan will be presented to the BOE by the Assistant Superintendent for Business. These plans will address the challenges of increasing labor costs and the associated benefits, capital projects, reserves management, technology infrastructure and the district's unassigned fund balance. A review of our projected student enrollment will also take place as part of this plan.



STRONG CONNECTIONS

One of the most critical indicators for success for all schools is that students feel connected to the school community and that the various stakeholders are actively engaged with the school district.

Desired Outcome: The Wantagh Union Free School District will create greater connections among students, staff, parents and community to foster student success.

Goal #1: The district will develop a comprehensive K-12 mental health plan that addresses the social and emotional needs of all students. As part of this plan, the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Director of Guidance and Director of PPS will work with faculty to further develop a mental health curriculum, examine current mental health staffing levels and create a system to regularly assess students' social and emotional development.

Goal #2: The district will continue to enhance community communication to involve all constituent groups in the decision-making process.



STRONG CONNECTIONS

Targeted Outcomes:

September 2019

The Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Director of Guidance and Director of PPS will coordinate to form a committee on mental health to develop a comprehensive K-12 mental health curriculum. This committee will review personnel and program needs. This committee will also consider the various ways the social and emotional progress of all students can be assessed on a regular basis so the proper supports can be put in place. The committee will make recommendations to the BOE by March 2020.

January 2020

A district communication committee will be created to leverage technology to create more uniform ways families will receive regular communication from teachers. This will include a review of the various current platforms that are in place and recommendations will be made for consistent use.

