

SARATOGA SPRINGS CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT



2026 - 2030

PATHWAYS TO EXCELLENCE



<https://www.saratogaschools.org/>



3 Blue Streak Boulevard
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

STRATEGIC PLAN

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Dear Members of the Saratoga Springs Schools Community,

It has never been more important to be focused, aligned and intentional in our work. We are very excited to share the results of our collaborative efforts to develop plans that will help us to continue growing and improving as we always strive for excellence.

Our “Pathways to Excellence” is the result of planning sessions that were held with our Board of Education, Leadership Team, students, staff, parents, and community members. We worked with feedback gathered from the community this fall as we developed a plan that will help us continue to grow and achieve as we strive for excellence in all that we do.

This updated strategic plan will be the backbone for our work. It will serve as a roadmap in our efforts to connect with each child and family while enhancing our connections as a school and a community. We’re in this together and look forward to being your teammate in our continued effort to be a model school of excellence.

Thank you for your feedback and support. Your collaboration and teamwork make all the difference in the lives of children and in the success of the district.

Sincerely,

Dr. Michael Patton
Superintendent of Schools

Natalya Lakhtakia
President, Board of Education



PROCESS INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

Blueprint Planning is intended to:

- Involve all members of the school community and reflect their shared perspectives.
- Allow stakeholder representatives to review community feedback to clearly define the district's mission, vision and core values.
- Engage a team in defining the priorities of the district and suggesting action steps to accomplish objectives.
- Facilitate action planning focused on identifying who, when and how the work will get done.
- Provide the district with a road map that is transparent, accountable, and focused.
- Enable the district's efforts to innovate, allocate resources and continuously grow in a coordinated, thoughtful, and aligned manner.
- Be an iterative, evolving, and ongoing process that builds from one year to the next while reflecting emerging needs and changing demands.

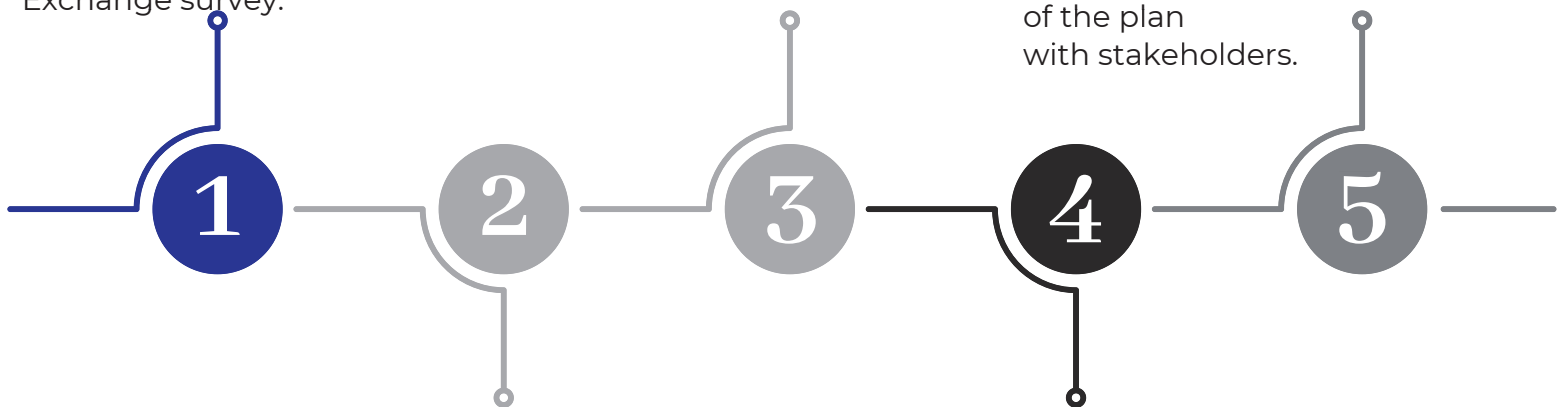
October 2025:

Community feedback gathered through Thought Exchange survey.

November 2025: Community team assembled, mission/vision/core values reviewed, priority areas developed, strategies suggested.

December/January 2025:

Revisions and review completed by the Leadership Team. Communication to the community and implementation of the plan with stakeholders.



November 2025: Draft mission/vision/core values developed by the Board of Education and Leadership Team.

December 2025: Action plans developed that specifically identify what will be done to meet the objectives of each priority area and who will be responsible for leading the work.

WHO WE ARE

Our shared core purpose, aspirations and expectations are clear:

OUR MISSION

To prepare all learners to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

OUR VISION

Our school community will foster a safe, welcoming, and rigorous learning environment that values relationships, promotes meaningful connections, and respects the individuality of each learner.

OUR CORE VALUES

Equity of Opportunity:

Ensure that each learner has access to the resources and support they need to be successful.

Community:

Create a welcoming and inclusive environment where every person feels seen, valued, and connected.

Collaboration:

Work cooperatively while honoring diverse perspectives to achieve shared goals and strengthen learning outcomes.



OUR DISTRICT

The Saratoga Springs City School District serves a diverse and vibrant community in Saratoga Springs, New York, providing a comprehensive K–12 educational program grounded in academic excellence and whole-child development. The district is committed to high expectations, innovative instruction, and strong support systems that promote student achievement, creativity, and well-being. Through meaningful partnerships with families and the broader community, Saratoga Springs fosters a culture of collaboration, inclusion, and civic engagement. Its schools emphasize personalized learning, arts and athletics, and preparation for college, careers, and active citizenship.

OUR COMMUNITY

The community surrounding the Saratoga Springs City School District is a dynamic and welcoming city known for its rich history, cultural vibrancy, and strong sense of civic pride. Residents value education and actively support the schools through community partnerships, volunteerism, and engagement in district initiatives. Saratoga Springs is home to a thriving arts scene, world-class performing arts venues, and nationally recognized attractions that contribute to a high quality of life. The community blends historic charm with economic vitality, offering a supportive environment in which families, students, and schools can thrive together.



OUR LEADERSHIP

Board of Education

Natalya Lakhtakia,

Board President

Beth Braxton,

Board Vice President

Tony Krackeler

Dr. Deborah Amory

Anjeanette Emeka

Ashley Fogarty

Matthew Kopans

Dr. Leigh Wilton

Dr. Connie Woytowich

Administration

Dr. Michael Patton, Superintendent

Dr. Lisa Cutting, Assistant

Superintendent

for Curriculum, Instruction and

Assessment

David L’Hommedieu, Assistant

Superintendent of Information

Technology

and Innovation

Bobby Yusko, Assistant Superintendent

for Business

Dr. Joseph Greco, Director of Personnel

Development

Dr. Danielle Bouton-Wales, Director of K-

12 STEM and Secondary Education

Dr. Michele Whitley, Director of K-12

Humanities and Elementary Education

Stacey Moulton, Director of Pupil Services

Abigail Adams-Snell, Director of Budget,

Accountability and Assessment

Maura Manny, Director of Community

Outreach and Communications

OUR PLAN

The Saratoga Springs City School District Pathways to Excellence is grounded in a clear mission to prepare all learners to thrive in a rapidly changing world, ensuring students are equipped with the skills, knowledge, and dispositions needed for future success. Guided by a shared vision, the district is committed to fostering a safe, welcoming, and rigorous learning environment that values strong relationships, meaningful connections, and respect for the individuality of every learner. This foundation reflects a deep belief that students learn best when they feel known, supported, and challenged.

At the heart of the Pathways to Excellence plan are core values that emphasize equity of opportunity, community, and collaboration. The district is dedicated to ensuring that every learner has access to the resources, supports, and opportunities necessary to succeed, while cultivating an inclusive environment where all members of the school community feel seen, valued, and connected. Through intentional collaboration and the honoring of diverse perspectives, the district strengthens learning outcomes and advances shared goals.

Priority Area 1 focuses on Academic Excellence and the Student Experience by delivering an engaging and rigorous curriculum that empowers students to think critically, communicate effectively, innovate, and reflect on their growth as learners and global citizens. Instructional practices are designed to inspire curiosity, foster creativity, and support personalized pathways that meet the diverse needs of students. This priority underscores the district's commitment to both high expectations and meaningful learning experiences.

Priority Areas 2 and 3 emphasize Connections and Engagement, and Operational Excellence as essential drivers of long-term success. The district actively promotes strong partnerships among schools, families, and the broader community so that all learners feel supported, valued, and connected. At the same time, Saratoga Springs is focused on maximizing resources, strategically managing enrollment, and creating flexible, innovative learning environments through the Legacy Project, ensuring sustainability and excellence now and into the future.



PRIORITY AREAS

Based on community feedback, the following areas were identified as priorities to be focused on in order to fulfill the mission of the district. Goals have been developed for each area.



Academic
Excellence and The
Student Experience



Connections and
Engagement



Operational
Excellence

PRIORITY AREA GOALS

Academic Excellence and The Student Experience	Goal: Provide an engaging and rigorous curriculum that empowers all learners to think critically, communicate effectively, innovate, and reflect on their personal growth as global citizens.
Connections and Engagement	Goal: Promote active school and community partnerships for all learners to feel supported, valued, and connected.
Operational Excellence	Goal: Maximize the effective and efficient use of district resources, create flexible and innovative learning environments through the Legacy Project, and strategically manage enrollment.



ACTION PLAN



Priority Area 1: Academic Excellence and The Student Experience

Goal: Provide an engaging and rigorous curriculum that empowers all learners to think critically, communicate effectively, innovate, and reflect on their personal growth as global citizens.

Action Steps:	Person/People Responsible	Timeframe
Engaging and Enriching Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment		
<p>Curriculum:</p> <p>Ensure SSCSD curriculum is aligned with and reflects the skills outlined in the NYS learning standards and guidelines.</p>	<p>Teacher Professional Learning Teams Office of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Instruction:</p> <p>Align instruction with evidence-based high-yield strategies.</p>	<p>K-12 Instructional Staff Administrative Teams Office of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Assessment:</p> <p>Utilize a systematic, balanced assessment system that includes varied ways for students to demonstrate what they know.</p>	<p>Teacher Professional Learning Teams Curriculum Teams Office of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
Equity of Opportunity, Rigor and Supports		
<p>Operationalize multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) and corresponding professional learning for teachers and administrators.</p>	<p>Teacher Professional Learning Teams K-12 Instructional Staff Administrators Related Service Providers</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Increase student achievement across all cohorts and subgroups in grades K-12.</p>	<p>K-12 Instructional Staff Administrators</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
Elevating Student Voice and Engagement		
<p>Promote opportunities for student engagement and student voice within our classrooms and school community.</p>	<p>K-12 Instructional Staff Club/Activity Advisors Coaches Administrators</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

ACTION PLAN



Priority Area 2: Connections and Engagement

Goal: Promote active school and community partnerships for all learners to feel supported, valued, and connected.

Action Steps:	Person/People Responsible	Timeframe
Professional Development and Support		
Collaborate in Teacher Professional Learning Teams to strengthen curriculum, refine instructional practices, and use assessment data to improve student learning outcomes across grades K-12.	Grade level leaders Department Heads Instructional Coaches Teacher Professional Learning Teams Administrators	Ongoing
Provide effective and relevant professional development opportunities for all staff through varied formats.	District Professional Learning Committee	Ongoing
Consistent and Timely Communications		
Establish consistent feedback loops to collect, review, and respond to stakeholder input related to the overall school experience.	Communications Supported by Building Administrators and K-12 Instructional Staff	Ongoing
Streamline and unify communication systems to promote clarity, consistency, and accessibility for all.	Building and District Communications	Ongoing



ACTION PLAN



Action Steps:	Person/People Responsible	Timeframe
Safe, Welcoming and Affirming Environments		
Create a safe, welcoming, and affirming school environment by using restorative practices, consistently enforcing the code of conduct, and demonstrating mutual respect for all.	Students K-12 Faculty K-12 Support staff Administrators	Ongoing



ACTION PLAN



Priority 3: Operational Excellence

Goal: Maximize the effective and efficient use of district resources, create flexible and innovative learning environments through the Legacy Project, and strategically manage enrollment.

Action Steps:	Person/People Responsible	Timeframe
Effective and Efficient Use of Resources		
Develop and maintain an annual and multi-year financial plan that aligns resources to student learning needs, sustains high-quality programs, and preserves long-term fiscal health.	Business Office Board of Education District Leadership Team	Ongoing
Continuously improve the operational efficiencies and effectiveness of our food services, transportation, and facilities and operations departments.	Food Services Transportation Facilities and Operations	Ongoing
Flexible and Innovative Learning Spaces		
Develop long-range capital project plans for collaborative and innovative learning spaces, based on input from stakeholders, to support the diverse learning needs of students.	Board of Education Legacy Referendum Advisory Committee Capital Project Committee	Through June 2033
Utilize our five-year building condition survey to determine future facilities needs and priorities.	Capital Project Committee	June 2031



ACTION PLAN



Enrollment Management

Utilize effective enrollment management strategies to support the responsible use of district resources, including facilities, staffing, transportation, and instructional programs. Ensure that all schools have the resources necessary to deliver high-quality instruction.

Board of Education
 Building Administrators
 District Administrators
 Human Resources
 Facilities
 Transportation

Ongoing



OUR NEXT STEPS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Timeframe	Activity	Who
January 2026	Pathways to Excellence Presented to the Board of Education and Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superintendent • Assistant Superintendents • Administrative Team
February 2026	Pathways to Excellence and/or Presentation Shared with Faculty, Staff and Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superintendent • Assistant Superintendents • Administrative Team
February/March 2026	Pathways to Excellence “unpacked” and shared with the faculty and staff at faculty meetings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principals
March/April 2026	Pathways Budget Recommendations Made and Expenditures Finalized	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superintendent • Assistant Superintendents • Administrative Team
May 2026	Updates provided to the Board of Education, Community and Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superintendent • Assistant Superintendents • Administrative Team
July 2026	Planning Meeting /Plan Updated for 2026-2027 Updates provided to the Board of Education, Faculty, Staff and Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superintendent • Assistant Superintendents • Administrative Team
July 2027	Planning Meeting /Plan Updated for 2027-2028 Updates provided to the Board of Education, Faculty, Staff and Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board of Education • Superintendent • Administrative Team • Staff • Community Members
July 2028	Planning Meeting /Plan Updated for 2028-2029 Updates provided to the Board of Education, Faculty, Staff and Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board of Education • Superintendent • Administrative Team • Staff • Community Members
Fall 2029	Begin process to update Strategic Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board of Education • Superintendent • Administrative Team • Staff • Community Members

2025-26 Planning Team

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Cody Conley
Laura Cardone
Jill Cowburn
Lisa Cutting
Tina Davis
Jessica Dawson
Laura Downey
Ashley Fogarty

Brian Frappier
Bill Gold
Leah Grady
Corie Hart-Nelson
Dan Hinckley
Karen Horn-Jansen
Rana Hughes
Courtney Jablonski
Jerry Keenan
Maranda Keyes
Alexandra Keyzer
Bridget Kolakowski
Tony Krackeler
David L'Hommedieu
Erin Leary
Courtney Lloyd

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Maura Manny
Stacey Moulton
Ella Newell
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Jessica Varcoe
Hannah Weeden
Leigh Wilton



2026-2030



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