

TO: School Committee

FROM: Tim Piwowar, Superintendent

DATE: June 6, 2025

RE: Strategic Plan Update: Focal Areas

As we have discussed at previous meetings, our Strategic Planning Team has been working throughout the spring to support the development of our next strategic plan. The team has worked incredibly well together, and I am happy to report that we are on track with our schedule to present a new strategic plan in the fall.

The plan will be organized into four focal areas, the “big buckets” of our focus for improvement as a district. Within each focal area, we will identify strategic priorities, and each strategic priority will have action steps with defined outcomes.

The Strategic Planning Team was responsible for developing the initial draft of the focal areas consistent with our Portrait of a Graduate. The draft focal areas were then vetted through our Administrative Council, and the feedback was shared with the Strategic Planning Team for further review. The result of this process is four focal areas and their descriptions, enumerated below.

Focal Areas for Strategic Plan

1. Student Voice and Agency

As scholars in the classroom and as members of a dynamic community, students and staff alike are constantly asking: whose voice is being heard, and whose voice is missing? Educators design lessons and experiences that amplify the diversity of our students, encourage curiosity and creative thinking, and offer students a myriad of ways to demonstrate their learning. All students, at all levels, know their voice matters and actively contribute to the continuous improvement of the school system.

2. Authentic, Relevant Learning Experiences

At all levels and content areas, students can confidently explain why what they are learning is important and how it is preparing them for future learning or life experiences. Educators collaborate with one another and with community partners to create interdisciplinary, project-based, and/or experiential learning experiences that culminate in authentic products, and culturally relevant learning for students. Students leave WPS feeling prepared for increasing independence both academically and in life.

3. Rigorous, High Quality Core Instruction

Students learn critical content knowledge, as well as the transferable skills and habits of a lifelong learner. Educators are experts of their craft, exhibiting diverse perspectives, collaborating with colleagues to plan excellent learning experiences; student learning goals and activities are rigorous for every child, and aligned with standards and best practices. Carefully calibrated assessments demonstrate student progress towards mastery of those learning outcomes. Educators prioritize their own professional growth to continuously revise and improve their practice. Educators and school leaders are consistently analyzing student learning data to ensure all students are successful.

4. Robust Learning Environments

Our school buildings and educational resources work in tandem to support excellent instruction and deeper learning for all students. The culture in all learning environments is one that celebrates continuous growth and learning. Educators and students alike look forward to being in our spaces; they feel a sense of belonging, and share a collective responsibility for upholding the positive culture of learning.

The work of the Strategic Planning Team also involved the development of draft strategic priorities. While the final activity at the team's last meeting was designed to come to a consensus about the prioritization of the strategic priorities, no clear consensus emerged and this will require further discussion with the district Administrative Council at our upcoming retreat in June.

I want to thank all the members of the Strategic Planning Team for their dedication to this process, and for engaging in really thoughtful discussions about the future of education in the Westwood Public Schools!

Members of the Strategic Planning Team:

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