Strategic Plan
Locally Inspired, Globally Prepared

WINDSOR CENTRAL
Locally Inspired, Globally Prepared
Strategic Plan
Bringing meaningful purpose, practical strategies, and goals together makes an organization’s aspirations more credible—and more likely to be achieved.”

—Thierry Nautin
Letter from the Windsor Central Modified Unified Union School District Board

On July 1, 2018 the six of towns of Bridgewater, Killington, Plymouth, Pomfret, Reading and Woodstock came together to form a single PreK-12 school district. Our new combined School Board consists of members from each of the towns and we were charged with creating a vision and a set of goals for our newly unified district. We engaged in meaningful discussion about what we wanted for our students and our new district and we reached out to students, families, teachers, staff, and community members. First, we developed our Portrait of a Graduate which defines the skills, knowledge, and personal habits that students in Windsor Central Unified Union School District (WCMUUSD) should develop during their years in our district. Then we developed this Strategic Plan which sets forth specific priorities and goals, which reflect the topics that the greater WCMUUSD learning community has identified as the most important to our schools.

It is with great enthusiasm and pride that we present this Strategic Plan to our community. It is a truly exciting time to be a student in our WCMUUSD schools. For the first time in our history, we have come together to develop a unified vision of our future. A future where we clearly set forth the goals we have for our students. A future where graduates of our schools demonstrate academic excellence, self-direction, skillful communication, critical problem solving and stewardship. This Strategic Plan instructs our teachers, staff, administration, and board and sets forth our roadmap as we plan curriculum, develop policies, work on budgets, and evaluate facilities. The Portrait of a Graduate and the Strategic Plan will be the cornerstones by which the newly formed WCMUUSD board will operate and guide our district.

Pamela Fraser, Barnard
Bryce Sammel, Barnard
Matthew Hough, Bridgewater
Jennifer Iannantuoni, Killington (Co-Chair)
Jim Haff, Killington
Morgan Sailer, Plymouth
Jennifer Flaster, Plymouth
Patti Kuzmickas, Pomfret
Bob Coates, Pomfret
Adam Ameele, Reading
Timothy Bishop, Reading
Clare Drebitko, Woodstock
Louis Piconi, Woodstock
Ben Ford, Woodstock
Samantha DiNatale, Woodstock
Paige Hiller, Woodstock (Chair)
Malena Agin, Woodstock
Background Information

At the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year, the Windsor Central Unified District (WCSU) began operating as a single entity focused on serving PreK-12 students in all of our communities. As a newly formed district, member towns had the unique opportunity to set forth a vision and a plan for how we collectively move forward to create the best education system in the New England region resulting in our district being a destination for families with school-age children. Over 60 stakeholders (consisting of community members, parents, educators, and students) came together and worked over a year to craft a collective vision, our Portrait of a Graduate; the roadmap to activate that vision is our Strategic Plan.

The vision and the Strategic Plan do not exist in isolation, but rather they are a response to the context of a changing world and to the unique challenges and resources associated with the state of Vermont. The goals for our district are responsive to the realities and possibilities in our towns.

Vermont in general, and our member towns specifically, have a remarkable number of natural and human capital resources. There is a true “sense of place” that draws people to the area, with our beautiful mountains, lakes, and rivers. Our tight-knit communities are rich with diversity and have the resilience and know how to solve problems and create solutions—think Vermont Strong! Many talented, successful, and well-traveled individuals live or own second homes in our member towns. Integration of these resources into instructional programming can fundamentally change the relationship of students with their schools and their local communities.

A post-secondary credential has never been more important. Higher education is the gateway for our students’ individual economic opportunities and state and national competitiveness in the global economy. Post-secondary learning experiences help our students remain competitive in a global economy where the automation of jobs is accelerating.

College graduates with a bachelor’s degree typically earn 66% more than those with only a high school diploma, and are less likely to face unemployment.

Over the course of a lifetime, the average worker with a bachelor’s degree will earn approximately $1 million more than a worker without a postsecondary education.

By 2020, an estimated two-thirds of job openings will require postsecondary education or training.

Percentage of Woodstock Union High School & Middle School (WUHSMS) students enrolled in any college at any time after the first year of high school according to the National Student Clearinghouse:

2016: 72%  2017: 67%  2018: 54%

Percentage of WUHSMS high school class that completed a degree within six years according to the National Student Clearinghouse:

Class of 2011: 46% completed degree within 6 years (57% enrolled)

Class of 2012: 58% completed degree within 6 years (65% enrolled)
Finally, rural economies are at risk. Vermont is one of two states in our country that saw its population decline in 2018 resulting in low student enrollment. One way to approach this challenge is to cut and reduce budgets, but this is unsustainable and won't attract families to our communities. Strategic investments in our school system are necessary to attract families and businesses to our towns and schools.

The many community and school members who worked on our Portrait and Strategic Plan did not shy away from these realities. They understood the urgency presented in the demographic and college completion data and considered the broad-based assumptions related to the future of work. A great deal of thought, passion, and “can do” thinking emerged, allowing us to present our communities an exciting path forward—one that responds to the challenges on the horizon. Our Strategic Plan is designed to positively position our students to be “future ready” and to provide an example for other rural communities around how strong investments in schools result in local growth and global connectedness.
Our process

We worked collaboratively with community members to develop our Portrait of a Graduate and Strategic Plan. Through this process we engaged with over 60 stakeholders—community members, parents, educators, and students. Together, we crafted a collective vision and our Portrait. We investigated our current state and identified our priorities that will help our Portrait come to life. Finally, we developed and refined the goals and strategies in our Strategic Plan, using community feedback as a guide.
I feel the Portrait of a Graduate addresses some of the most important aspects of education. In a world changing so fast with so many options of what to learn, and how to learn, the Portrait will bring some great focus to our students and teachers.”

—Portrait Design Team Member

“[My biggest takeaway was] the importance of preparing our children (students) to have a different set of skills then formerly required to be successful citizens in this world. To involve kids more fully in their learning rather than just feeding them information to regurgitate. Hopefully it will lead to more joyful and purposeful lives.”

—Portrait Design Team Member

This work has confirmed my thinking and, I hope, my practice of getting students to develop critical skills through content. In addition, I’m loving the distinctive element of ‘stewardship’ that this district has embraced and hope to instill that virtue with my students .... and live it myself.”

—Portrait Design Team Member
A Windsor Central Graduate Exhibits...

**ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE**
Has enduring understanding of essential concepts in academic domains
Applies and uses content knowledge in real world situations
Accesses information efficiently and effectively
Evaluates information critically and competently
Has the ability to navigate and create in a technology-rich, global environment

**CRITICAL THINKING AND PROBLEM SOLVING**
Makes judgments and decisions based on evidence and reasoning
Understands the complexity associated with a given problem and can design appropriate solutions
Identifies, defines and solves problems that connect to the real world through both collaborative and independent effort
Acts on creative ideas to make tangible and valuable contributions

**SKILLFUL COMMUNICATION**
Effectively communicates in both digital and face-to-face environments
Communicates for a range of purposes and with a variety of audiences
Articulates thoughts and ideas through a variety of modalities
Cultivates the ability to listen and values alternative perspectives
Demonstrates strong digital citizen skills as both a producer and a consumer

**SELF DIRECTION**
Demonstrates skills in time management and prioritizing
Develops intrinsic initiative and responsibility for learning
Perseveres through an ongoing process of success and failure
Exhibits a growth mindset
Pursues interests and talents

**STEWARDSHIP**
Demonstrates responsibility for local and global communities
Values and performs civic duties
Committed to personal and community health and wellness
Embraces diversity and respects differing points of view
Acts with empathy and care for others
Critical Focus Areas

**STUDENT SUCCESS**
We care about our students’ futures. Through attention to academic excellence, critical thinking and problem solving, skillful communication, and stewardship, our students will be ready for post-secondary learning. Moreover, they will be prepared to be successful in this environment. Students will attain these skills through deeper learning experiences which reside at the intersection of rigorous academic content and authentic learning experiences.

**LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**
Students and educators excel in healthy, welcoming physical environments that enable and inspire the vision of our Portrait of a Graduate.

**COMMUNITY ALLIANCE**
Understanding the strong interdependence and synergy that exists between communities and our local school system, this Strategic Plan aims to deepen the collaborative relationship between these two entities for the benefit of both.

**CULTURE**
Students, community members, and staff will create an environment that is safe and embodies a greater shared responsibility for setting high expectations and creating a sense of purpose so it becomes a cultural norm.

**FOUNDATIONAL SYSTEMS**
The Windsor Central Unified District will establish strong foundational structures, policies, and procedures so that all components of the school system work cohesively with recognizable efficiencies, and in service of student learning.
Goals of the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan

1. All students will be empowered to make both local and global contributions through the attainment of the skills and dispositions outlined in our Portrait.

2. 95% of students will enroll into a post-secondary educational experience (4-year college, 2-year college, military, apprenticeship) and will demonstrate a success rate above state and national averages.

3. Our facilities serve as an exemplar for Vermont and meet or exceed national best practices for school design.

4. At each grade level, students will engage with and contribute to the community in a way that is thoughtfully and purposefully integrated with the curriculum.

5. Students will own their learning and be a meaningful and positive voice in their school communities.

6. Students will be fully present for learning and be stewards of their personal wellness with a focus on eliminating drug and alcohol misuse in the school environment.

7. Cultivate trust, transparency, and inclusion across our towns and stakeholders.

8. Coordinate, simplify, and routinize operational systems in each of our buildings and in our district as a whole so that operations are transparent, user-friendly, and efficient.

9. Actively seek donors and investors and strategically promote our schools to potential new families, students, and educators.
Plan Strategies

Student Success

1. All students will be empowered to make both local and global contributions through the attainment of the skills and dispositions outlined in our Portrait of a Graduate.

Strategy 1.1 In partnership with EdLeader21, design and implement Performance Tasks and Capstone Projects in grades 5, 8, and 12 to assess students’ mastery of Portrait of a Graduate skills and dispositions.

Strategy 1.2 Achieve a high level of math proficiency for all students through curriculum review, classroom instructional practices, professional development, and robust interventions so that all students reach their full potential.

*Portrait Competency: Academic Excellence*

Strategy 1.3 Conduct a two-year PreK–12 STEM curriculum review and revision (Fall 2020- Spring 2022) followed by a two-year PreK–12 Humanities curriculum review and revision (Fall 2022- Spring 2024).

*Portrait Competency: Academic Excellence*

Strategy 1.4 Review, refine, and where necessary, establish stewardship experiences so that they are well planned, purposeful and integrated into content areas and grade level curriculum.

*Portrait competency: Stewardship*

Strategy 1.5 All Woodstock Union High School Middle School students will have at least three opportunities to *empathize* with a *client* and design a solution that reflects an understanding of the client’s needs.

*Portrait competencies: Skillful Communicator and Critical Thinking and Problem Solving*

Strategy 1.6 Design and Implement K–12 Digital Citizenship curriculum.

*Portrait competency: Skillful Communicator*
Strategy 1.7 Through adult modeling, create a culture of reflection and revision. *Portrait competency: Self-Direction*

- **1.7 A:** Teachers and administrators of students in grades 5–12 will survey their students requesting feedback on and critique of their practice. Data will be aggregated annually and students will receive a report that includes staff reflection and response to feedback.

- **1.7 B:** All administrators will survey their staff requesting feedback on and critique of their practice. Data will be aggregated annually and staff will receive a report that includes administrators’ reflection and response to feedback.

- **1.7 C:** The Windsor Central Unified District Board will survey stakeholders requesting feedback on and critique of their collective practice. Data will be aggregated annually and stakeholders will receive a report that includes the Board’s reflection and response to feedback.

Strategy 1.8 Provide targeted, sustained professional development for teachers and leaders around models for reflection, critique, descriptive feedback, and revision and support implementation of these models in classrooms across the district. *Portrait competency: Self-Direction*

**Student Success**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2</th>
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**PORTRAIT COMPETENCY: ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE**

Strategy 2.1 Prepare students to turn post-secondary aspirations into reality.

- **2.1 A:** Provide opportunities in middle school that immerse students in authentic experiences that lead to a greater understanding of future possibilities.

- **2.1 B:** Ensure that all students, by the beginning of their junior year, identify at least two viable pathways to a post-secondary educational program.

- **2.1 C:** Implement “future focused” training for all incoming seniors prior to the start of the school year.

Strategy 2.2 Establish school-based data teams to design instructional goals that put all students on track for the development of strong foundational skills in the areas of English Language Arts and Mathematics.

Strategy 2.3 Design and implement accessible SAT test preparation opportunities for students beginning in grade 8 or 9.

Strategy 2.4 Establish a stand-alone guidance department at WUHSMS to ensure purposeful relationship building with post-secondary educational institutions.
Strategy 2.5 Establish and implement a system for the annual review of data from the National Student Clearinghouse regarding post-secondary outcomes for WUHS students and design appropriate interventions to address areas of concern.

Strategy 2.6 Design and implement learning experiences to build students’ financial literacy.

Strategy 2.7 Identify systems of support for first generation post-secondary students.

Strategy 2.8 Identify and implement an assessment that allows for international benchmarking of students.

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**Learning Environment**

Our facilities serve as an exemplar for Vermont and meet or exceed national best practices for school design.

**Strategy 3.1** Fully Implement and fund the Board approved recommendations of the Campus Configuration Committee.

**Strategy 3.2** RemEDIATE the facility deficiencies identified in the December 2017, WUHSMS Master Plan Report by LaVallee Bresinger and in the 2018 Report from the Director of Buildings and Grounds.

**Strategy 3.3** Create and implement a school-by-school learning environment design report to achieve Portrait outcomes (moveable furniture, white boards, communication hub).

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**Community Alliance**

At each grade level, students will engage with and contribute to the community in a way that is thoughtfully and purposefully integrated with the curriculum.

**Strategy 4.1** Establish a second high school campus that provides a learning experience embedded in a community organization or business. Examples include Burr Burton Academy Mountain Campus and Rivers and Revolution.

**Strategy 4.2** Foster and grow international partnerships to ensure all students have a variety of opportunities to engage with global peers and experience learning environments outside of the United States.

**Strategy 4.3** Grow the Center of Community Connections (C3) Program, which is dedicated to facilitating connections between students and community resources, to service all students in grades PreK–12.

**Strategy 4.4** Design a co-op class to enhance professional skills and dispositions before high school students go out to work in the field.

**Strategy 4.5** Create an intentional system to recruit, maintain, and train community partners including professionals and experts in different fields of work, local businesses, and non-profit organizations.

**Strategy 4.6** Establish an externship program for district educators with local and regional businesses and organizations.

**Strategy 4.7** All teachers will annually engage in a protocol to refine a learning experience to address an authentic need.
Culture

Students will own their learning and be a meaningful and positive voice in their school communities.

Strategy 5.1 Develop a structure within all schools that provide opportunities for student leadership around setting high expectations and establishing a sense of purpose.

Strategy 5.2 Incorporate meaningful opportunities for students to engage in district-wide leadership structures.

Culture

Students will be fully present for learning and be stewards of their personal wellness with a focus on eliminating drug and alcohol misuse in the school environment.

Strategy 6.1 Establish a leadership team comprised of parents, administrators, teachers, students, local law enforcement, and other community partners to build a comprehensive approach to addressing drug and alcohol misuse.

Strategy 6.2 Maintain a licensed drug and alcohol counselor position in the district.

Strategy 6.3 Investigate and fund other models for deterrents including social-emotional PreK-12 programming and the formation of a K–12 counseling department.
Culture

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Cultivate trust, transparency, and inclusion across our towns and stakeholders.

Strategy 7.1 Maintain a Faculty Advisory Council and implement a district-wide Parent Advisory Council and Student Advisory Council.

Strategy 7.2 Build two-way relationships with educational leaders and stakeholders through regular informal conversations in homes or community gathering places.

Strategy 7.3 Produce a district-wide annual report that is mailed to residents and businesses in all district communities.

Strategy 7.4 Identify and administer a district-wide climate survey to be given annually to parents, educators, and students.

Strategy 7.5 Implement a public facing, user-friendly structure for maintaining Board agendas, documents, minutes, and presentations.

Foundational Systems

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Coordinate, simplify, and routinize operational systems in each of our buildings and in our district as a whole so that operations are transparent, user-friendly, and efficient.

Strategy 8.1 Solidify baseline and emerging hardware and software technology infrastructure.

Strategy 8.2 Implement systems that allow for the digital completion of student demographic and medical forms.

Strategy 8.3 Redesign school and district websites to improve functionality, communication, and district identity.

Strategy 8.4 Implement a centralized online registration system for all students grades PreK–12.

Strategy 8.5 Review and revise Human Resource protocols (hiring processes, staff handbook, job descriptions, supervision, and evaluation processes).

Strategy 8.6 Develop an organizational chart for the district including Central Office, building administration, teaching, and support personnel and share with all stakeholder groups.
**Foundational Systems**

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**Strategy 9.1** Name and brand the district and campuses to build a shared identity, enhancing district pride, and designing and dispersing promotional materials highlighting district programs and outcomes.

**Strategy 9.2** Establish an endowment foundation to simplify and encourage donations to the district.

**Strategy 9.3** Design and implement a high-quality teacher recruitment, orientation, and mentoring program.

**Strategy 9.4** Become a destination for regional and national level professional learning experiences for educators.

**Strategy 9.5** Intentionally engage community partners (Board of Selectmen, Rotary Club, Realtors, Legislators) in promoting the school district and member communities.
## Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Reference</th>
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<tr>
<td>Client</td>
<td>A person or group of people that has a problem in need of a solution. Students design solutions for clients. Learn more at <a href="http://ideo.org">ideo.org</a>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication Hub</td>
<td>A central location where students and staff can engage in digital communication with individuals in other schools, states, and countries for educational purposes. Learn more at <a href="http://nepris.com">nepris.com</a>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Co-op</td>
<td>Cooperative Education is a structured method of combining classroom-based education with practical work experience. A cooperative education experience, commonly known as a “co-op”, provides academic credit for structured job experience. Learn more at <a href="http://hypertherm.com">hypertherm.com</a>.</td>
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<td>Critique</td>
<td>The language of kind, specific, and helpful feedback that supports student growth. Learn more at <a href="http://KQED.org">KQED.org</a>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Digital citizenship</td>
<td>The quality of habits, actions, and consumption patterns that impact the ecology of digital content and communities. Learn more at <a href="http://ISTE.org">ISTE.org</a>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Empathize</td>
<td>The ability to understand and share the feelings of another—perspective taking. Learn more at <a href="http://dschool.standford.edu">dschool.standford.edu</a>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Externship</td>
<td>Teacher/faculty “externship” is a professional development strategy that allows teachers and faculty to learn through direct experience about trends, skill requirements, and opportunities in industries related to their areas of instruction in order to enrich and strengthen their teaching and bring relevance to student learning. Learn more at <a href="http://edweek.org">edweek.org</a>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning Environment</td>
<td>Learning environment refers to the diverse physical locations, contexts, and cultures in which students learn. Learn more at <a href="http://edglossary.org/school-culture">edglossary.org/school-culture</a> and <a href="http://edglossary.org/learning-environment">edglossary.org/learning-environment</a>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Performance tasks and capstone projects</td>
<td>A multifaceted assignment that serves as a culminating academic and intellectual experience for students, typically during their final year of high school or middle school, or at the end of an academic program or learning-pathway experience. Learn more at <a href="http://edglossary.org">edglossary.org</a>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflection and revision</td>
<td>A strategy for on-going improvement that involves reflecting on work in order to inform the next iteration. Learn more at <a href="http://edglossary.org">edglossary.org</a>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social-emotional</td>
<td>Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. Learn more at <a href="http://CASEL.org">CASEL.org</a>.</td>
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Thank you

We’re grateful to the teachers, parents, students, and community members who collaborated with us to develop our Portrait of a Graduate and Strategic Plan.

Adam Ameele
Amelia Lennon
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Jennifer Lockhart
Jennifer Stainton
Jessica Stout
Jim Haff
Joan Haley
Jody Henderson
Julie Brown
Justin Shipman
Kathleen Willis
KES Faculty
Kim Harris
Kristen Hurd
Laura Djordjalian McComb
Lisa Kaija, Teacher
Louis Piconi
Maggie Mills
Malena Agin
Marie Cole
Mark Lackley
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Mary Guggenberger
Maryanne DePresco
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Matthew Hough
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Melissa Karr
Morgan Sailer
Morgan Willis
Nicole Conte
Paige Hiller
Pamela Fraser
Pat Fitzsimmons
Patti Kuzmickas
Raphael Ademek
Ray Rice
Rebecca Claffey
Rebecca Trowbridge
RES Faculty
Sam DiNatale
Sherry Sousa
Steve Daigle
Tammy Meyers
Tao Smith
Tim Bishop
Tim Brennan
TPVS Faculty
WES Faculty
WUHSMS Faculty