

# **“Forward in Excellence”**

## **Somers Central School District**



### **SCSD Strategic Vision & the District Strategic Success Plan**

Raymond H. Blanch, Superintendent

2016-17 School Year



# Excellence for All

In support of the SCSD Strategic Vision  
& the District's Strategic Success Plan

Dear Somers staff, parents and community members:

Somers school district is about moving “Forward in Excellence”. We are committed to meeting the individual needs of each of our students, and we are focused on ensuring that all students graduate with the knowledge, skills, and experiences they need to find success — in higher education, in the workforce, and in life.

The purpose of this document is to demonstrate our commitment to the children and families of SCSD using three over-arching goal areas targeted on the Whole Child, ensuring the development of students who are emotionally and physically healthy, safe, engaged, supported and challenged. We believe the learning environment in SCSD must sustain student learning in addition to supporting the other components – 21st Century Skills, Social/Emotional/Physical Wellness, and Global Citizenship – in order to support the development of the Whole Child. We are committed to understanding the story of each and every child and providing a personalized learning experience for all.

## PART 1: 21ST CENTURY KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS

SCSD has historically embraced the work developed by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, and this work continues to provide focus as we ensure excellence for all. First and foremost, we believe we must provide a guaranteed and viable curriculum to all students, with essential content addressed in specific courses at specific grade levels. In addition, we are committed to implementing classroom strategies and methods that reflect the learning styles of individual students. In keeping with best practice, student progress will be monitored and appropriate challenges and interventions will be provided.

## PART 2: SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL WELLNESS

A focus on the Whole Child promotes the development of students who are socially, emotionally and physically healthy. As educators in SCSD, we fundamentally believe that we must help children develop the skills to manage their emotions, resolve conflicts nonviolently, and make responsible decisions. To that end, we intend to intentionally integrate Social, Emotional and Physical Wellness into the curriculum.

## PART 3: GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

Global citizenship continues to be a fundamental belief of SCSD, and as educators, we believe that we play a vital role in helping students understand their contributions and responsibilities to the global community. In addition, education equips us all with the skills, knowledge, and attitudes to make informed decisions and take responsible actions.

Infusing the global dimension in our curriculum means that links must be made among personal, local, and global issues. It also means that students should be afforded the following opportunities:

- To critically examine their own values and attitudes.
- To appreciate the similarities among people everywhere and value diversity.
- To understand the global context of their local lives.

#### SCSD'S PLAN FOR SUCCESS

The District's Success Plan is the result of a community engagement process involving hundreds of students, parents, district employees and community members. These individuals shared their best thinking about aspects of the school experience that are most critical to student achievement and success by seeking to answer the following essential questions:

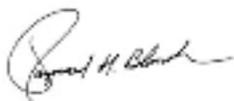
- What should our students know and be able to do when they leave SCSD?
- What are your hopes and dreams for SCSD?

The resulting mission, vision, and values describe the culture of our district — our beliefs and our “hopes and dreams” for our students — and these ideals drive our work. All of the components of the Strategic Visioning process (i.e., the goals, objectives, and actions articulated in the success plan) describe what we are seeking to accomplish, and taken together, they articulate a comprehensive system dedicated to ensuring excellence in SCSD.

This strategic plan will serve as our “educational compass,” aiding us in our journey, as we navigate from where we are to where we desire to be. This plan will also guide us to “course correct,” in order to overcome the changing conditions and challenges of the educational world and our economic times.

Your participation in this process has been – and will continue to be – critical to the success of SCSD, and I appreciate the opportunity to partner with you, as together, we move “Forward in Excellence”.

Sincerely,



Dr. Raymond H. Blanch

*Superintendent of Schools, Somers Central School District*

## **Our Mission**

Somers Central School District will ignite a passion in each student by engaging students at a personal level to ensure success in a global society.

## **Our Vision**

The vision for SCSD encompasses three fundamental areas, each an important component of the Whole Child —

- 21st Century Knowledge & Skills
- Social-Emotional-Physical Wellness
- Global Citizenship

## **Our Values**

We desire to be a school district that —

- Believes our schools are the center of our community – a safe place to be and grow.
- Leads by example and encourages students to follow their passions.
- Holds high expectations for student achievement and character.
- Develops a k-12 curriculum, instructional resources, and assessments intended to prepare students to thrive in a global community.
- Recognizes and celebrates the collective efforts and achievements of the Somers community and embraces a healthy balance of participation from all stakeholders.
- Values social/emotional/physical wellness as much as academic achievement.
- Believes the arts are vital to the core curriculum.
- Gives back to the community through service to others.
- Understands the law, the constitution, and our civic, ethical and personal responsibilities to each other.
- Develops relationships that are characterized by honesty, respect and integrity.
- Learns from and works collaboratively with individuals from diverse cultures, religions and lifestyles in a spirit of mutual respect and open dialogue.
- Supports and encourages professional collaboration, district-wide and with local organizations, to promote student learning.
- Is driven by a sense of continuous improvement.

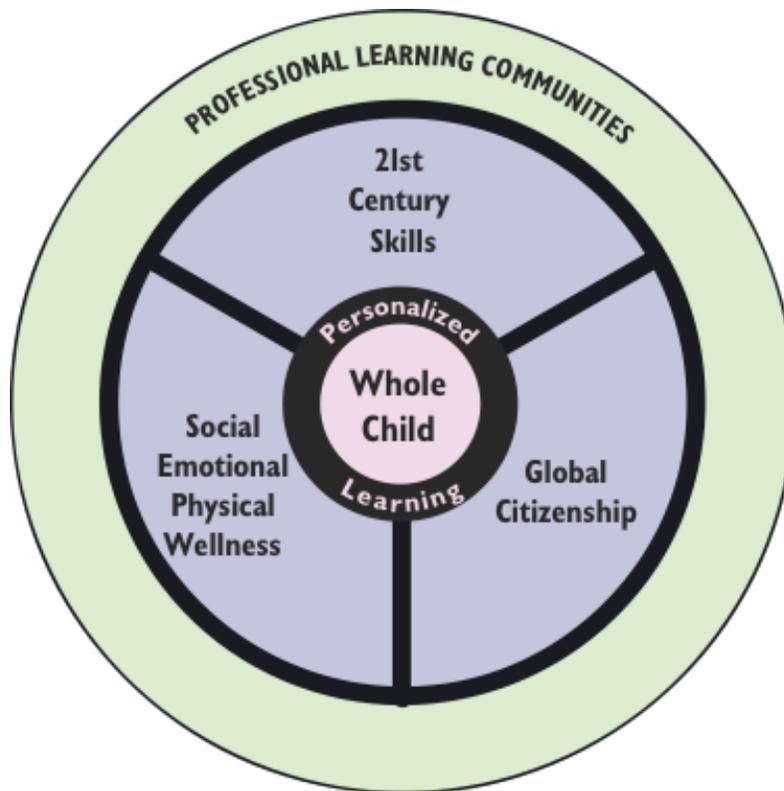
# Focused on Excellence

In support of the SCSD Strategic Vision  
& the District's Strategic Success Plan

The Strategic Success Plan is a tool that ensures the activities and resources of the District are aligned with the long-term goals outlined in the SCSD Strategic Vision. Our mission, vision, and values drive all decisions that are made within the District and provide the framework for the strategic goals and objectives at all levels of the organization.

From teachers and principals to central office administrators and support staff, our priorities are identified within the Strategic Vision – 21st Century Knowledge & Skills, Social-Emotional-Physical Wellness, and Global Citizenship (each an important component of the Whole Child) – and we will continue to focus on these three interdependent, fundamental areas as we move forward.

## The SCSD Strategic Vision



# District Success Plan Outline

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Knowledge and Skills

Goal #1: SCSD will increase the percentage of students who have access to and success in our most rigorous curriculum.

Objective: Ensure Students Learn (A1)

Clearly articulate, “What do we want our students to know, be able to do, and understand?”

Objective: Ensure Students Learn (A2)

Clearly articulate a balanced assessment system focused on collectively answering the question, “How do we know what our students know, are able to do, and can understand?”

Objective: Ensure Students Learn (A3)

Clearly articulate an instructional system focused on collectively answering the questions, “What do we do when students don’t know, are not able to do, or can’t understand? And “What do we do when they already know, are able to do, and understand?”

Objective: Develop a Culture of Collaboration (B)

Implement a methodology to promote the conversation of educators around best instructional practice.

Objective: Focus on Results (C)

Implement a technology system to store and assist in the examination of multiple types of learning.

## Social-Emotional-Physical Wellness

Goal #2 SCSD will further develop the organizational capacity to support the Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) needs of students, as measured by a body of evidence.

Objective: Social-Emotional Learning

Develop a District-wide and community-wide system to support the needs of SCSD youth.

## Global Citizenship

Goal #3 SCSD will create an articulated experience for District students as global citizens, as demonstrated by a body of evidence.

Objective: Enhance the current school experience to provide students with the prerequisite skills to achieve in a globally-connected world.

# Our Goals

## Excellence in Action

### 21st Century Knowledge & Skills

#### Goal #1

SCSD will increase the percentage of students who have access to and succeed in our most rigorous curriculum.

#### Objective: Ensure Students Learn (A1)

Clearly articulate, "What do we want our students to know, be able to do, and understand?"

#### Completed 2015/16

- Implemented 4th generation Every Day Math at SIS.
- PES and SIS examined updated Social Studies Standards and began curriculum review process.
- SHS reviewed new Social Studies Framework and implemented one inquiry based unit.
- 5th grade completed joint scoring of common writing assessments.

#### Actions 2016/17

- Expand Science 21 to kindergarten to resulting in all grades k-5.
- Examine data results from 1st year writing performance tasks to inform instruction. (Elementary)
- Finalize research and technology standards k-12.
- Expand common scoring of student writing to grades 2, 5, 8, and 10.

### **Objective: Ensure Students Learn (A2)**

Clearly articulate a balanced assessment system focused on collectively answering the question, “How do we know what our students know, are able to do, and can understand?”

#### **Completed 2015/16**

- Completed full-implementation of writing assessments for each unit in both elementary schools.
- Identified existing common assessments.
- Alpine used for the facilitation of the RtI process in each school.
- Implemented the writing center at SHS.

#### **Actions 2016/17**

- Identify common assessments that currently exist at each campus and develop an action plan to complete the process. The work will start with the following areas: ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies.
- Update curriculum maps to reflect the new Social Studies framework.

### **Objective: Ensure Students Learn (A3)**

Clearly articulate an instructional system focused on collectively answering the questions, “What do we do when students don’t know, are not able to do, or can’t understand?” and “What do we do when they already know, are able to do, and understand?”

#### **Completed 2015/16**

- Alpine used for RtI in all buildings to track student intervention and support.

#### **Action 2016/17**

- Provide professional learning opportunities for staff to learn the features of Alpine and how this information can inform differentiated instruction (Personalized Learning Plans).

### **Objective: Develop a Culture of Collaboration (B)**

Implement a methodology to promote the conversation of educators around best instructional practice.

#### **Completed 2015/16**

- Implemented the Learning Coaches model with a Professional Learning Coach at each school.

#### **Action 2016/17**

- Assign each new staff member a Professional Learning Coach to support the implementation of identified best instructional practices to support student learning aligned to the District vision.
- Continue to implement the model of professional learning and pilot in-service classes at SHS.

### **Objective: Focus on Results (C)**

Implement a technology system to store and assist in the examination of multiple types of student learning.

#### **Completed 2015/16**

- Developed initial "dashboard" of student learning.

#### **Action 2016/17**

- Expand use of "dashboard" view of student learning to be more sensitive to the needs of our students.

# Excellence in Action

## Social-Emotional-Physical Wellness

### Goal #2

SCSD will further develop the organizational capacity to support the Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) needs of students, as measured by a body of evidence.

### Objective: Social-Emotional Learning

Develop a District-wide and community-wide system supporting the needs of SCSD youth.

### Completed 2015/16

- Completed the Tri-State review process in the area of Social and Emotional Learning. (Will present the findings to the Board of Education in fall of 2016.)
- Implemented the True North program at SMS to support identified children at risk.
- Expanded the TEAM Tusker program to 4th grade.
- "Brainology" expanded to all 10th grade Wellness classrooms.

### Actions 16/17

- Discuss/implement Tri-State recommendations.
- Expand TEAM Tuskers to 3rd grade.
- Expand the survey of student social and emotional wellness to include 2nd, 5th, and 8th grade.
- Implement Digital Citizenship curriculum as a guaranteed experience in grades k-5.

# Excellence in Action

## Global Citizenship

### Goal #3

SCSD will create an articulated experience for District students as global citizens, as demonstrated by a body of evidence.

### Objective

Enhance the current school experience to provide students with the prerequisite skills to achieve in a globally-connected world.

### Completed 2015/16

- IB courses and teachers identified for 17/18 school year.
- Hosted informational meetings for families interested in the IB program.
- Convened a Global Citizen Task Force.
  - Revised vision statement
  - Audited our current practice using the "Anti-Bias Framework"
  - Identified next steps to occur at each school by using the "No Place for Hate" as a guiding framework.

### Action 2016/17

- Continue work for authorization for IB.
  - Site visit from IB
  - Continue the professional learning of faculty
  - Identify application and other related processes
  - Provide Board of Education update
- Implement the "No Place for Hate" in all schools.
- Increase student exposure to multiple perspectives through literature, new sources, multimedia, etc.
- Explore data from the Panorama survey of staff and identify the related anti-bias training opportunities needed.

# Forward in Excellence

In support of the SCSD Strategic Vision  
& the District's Strategic Success Plan

Successful implementation of this Strategic Success Plan will result in students who are prepared to find success after graduation from SCSD.

Implementation of this success plan will be directed via a partnership with the PTA and SCSD staff. Goals and opportunities will be articulated through each building's School Success Plan (SSP), with the structure of each SSP framed around the three fundamental areas of the District's vision. These goals will be monitored and reported annually.

