

Scituate Public Schools



Strategic Plan: 2018 – 2023

We are crew

Scituate Public Schools Strategic Plan: 2018 - 2023

Guided by our core values and mission, the district's strategic plan articulates a vision for the future of the Scituate Public Schools and outlines the priorities, strategic objectives and action plans to realize that vision. The plan is intended to serve as our compass; directing our focus, energy and resources to continually improve our district over a five year period. Its design ensures that the district's strategic plan is relevant and actionable at all levels of our district, from our School Committee, to our schools, to our classrooms.

The content of our plan is a result of input from a range of stakeholders including: School Committee, teachers, students, parents, principals, department chairs, coordinators and community members. Developing this plan involved an analysis of the educational needs of our students, now and into the future. In addition to input from stakeholders, the development included a review of student achievement and growth data as well as national and worldwide labor and occupational projections. From beginning to end, the plan is designed to reflect the priorities of our school community and ultimately, to prepare our students for success long after they leave the Scituate Public Schools. This strategic plan is a dynamic and transparent document. It allows the community to view our priorities and objectives and see action plans in real time. It allows our staff to regularly monitor our own progress and update action steps annually to ensure that our district makes steady, incremental progress to achieve our priorities. The document itself is composed of several elements that guide our work and each is outlined below.

Core Values: They represent the common beliefs of our school community. They shape who we are as a team and what we do every day to give our students the very best education.

Mission: Our mission drives our program and services for students and this community. It is centered on student success and achievement. A strong mission statement is typically 1-2 sentences that embodies the primary focus of our work.

Vision for the future: The vision offers a snapshot into the future of our district five years from now. It honors our history and describes how we will evolve and grow to meet students' needs in an ever changing society. It follows through on current initiatives and pushes us to grow and to never rest on our laurels.

Priorities: The Scituate Public Schools has outlined five priorities over the next five years. Our priorities reflect the core values, mission and vision for the future. For each priority, our district articulates what that priority will look like by 2023 as well as steps to achieve it through a set of strategic objectives. Ultimately, achieving our priorities helps us realize our vision for the future and stay true to our mission. The priorities of the district are overseen by the Scituate School Committee and Superintendent of Schools.

Strategic Objectives: Each district priority is broken down into a finite set of strategic objectives. Strategic objectives lay out a road map to achieve each priority through a clear theory of action. If we accomplish all the strategic objectives, then we will achieve our priority. And if we achieve all of our priorities, then we will realize our vision and ultimately deliver on our overall mission. Each objective is assigned strategy coordinator(s). Typically, this is a leader or leaders within the district who bring unique expertise to the work and help direct the efforts toward achieving a particular objective. Coordinators ensure that each strategic objective is led to success. While there are coordinators for each objective, our entire faculty and staff contribute to achieving it through annual goals and action plans.

Annual Goals & Action Plans: Each year, the district self-reflects and evaluates our progress in the strategic plan. As part of that process, annual goals and action plans are developed for each objective. The goals and action plans are developed by an action planning team, led by the strategy coordinator. Annual goals serve as incremental targets for progress toward a strategic objective. These ‘through-lines’ allows school leaders and teachers to develop professional practice goals that support district priorities in our classrooms each day. Annual goals are structured as SMART goals: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and on a Timeline.



Core Values:

The Scituate Public Schools believes in

Building relationships as the foundation for a safe and supportive community
Success for all students
Active engagement in learning
A growth mindset that fosters personal excellence, resilience and perseverance
Integrity, mutual trust, collaboration and respect for all
Embodying these values is everyone's responsibility

Mission:

The mission of Scituate Public Schools is to...

Graduate well-rounded global citizens with the skills, passion & confidence to make a positive impact in our world.

Vision for the Future:

By 2023, The Scituate Public Schools will be...

A district known for its innovative, world class education. The Scituate Public Schools prepares its students to succeed in an increasingly globalized society by providing authentic, consistent & innovative curriculum. Our educators meet the needs of all students through engaging, rigorous & research based instructional pedagogy. Our students actively engage in their learning; in schools with flexible learning spaces. Our students graduate as resilient, balanced and well-rounded global citizens able to make a positive impact in the world.

2018 – 2023 Strategic Plan

| District Priorities | Strategic Objectives |
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| 1. Authentic, consistent and innovative curriculum | <p>1.1: Develop and maintain Understanding by Design (UbD) curricula reflecting common, consistent learning experiences and Performance based Assessments (PbAs) for all students.</p> <p>1.2: Adopt criterion-referenced assessments for literacy and mathematics throughout Scituate elementary schools.</p> <p>1.3: Expand STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Mathematics) curricula and learning experiences through student-centered learning and computer science education.</p> <p>1.4: Establish and implement cross curricular, public facing, Project based Learning (PbL) experiences that reinforce problem solving, creative thinking & communication skills.</p> |
| 2. Engaging and rigorous pedagogy to educate all students | <p>2.1: Engage all students in an inclusive learning environment by utilizing high impact educational pedagogy such as co-teaching, centers based instruction & personalized learning that reinforce problem solving, creative thinking and communication skills.</p> <p>2.2: Expand flexible, virtual and offsite learning opportunities to meet unique educational needs and broaden the experience for all students.</p> <p>2.3: Establish a comprehensive District Professional Development plan to support all staff, including non-teaching staff.</p> |
| 3. Developing resilient, balanced and healthy students | <p>3.1: Implement a developmentally appropriate and culturally proficient continuum of Social/Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum PK-12.</p> <p>3.2: Provide students with expanded, high quality opportunities for personal growth and excellence in academic, artistic and athletic experiences & achievements in and beyond the classroom.</p> <p>3.3: Strengthen and consistently implement PK-12 Response to Intervention (RTI) processes to reflect social/emotional needs.</p> |

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| <p>4. Flexible learning environments & structures that support innovative, authentic education</p> | <p>4.1: Develop and implement a plan for SPS elementary schools that effectively supports an equitable & sustainable 21st century elementary education experience for all students through addressing organizational, structural and facility needs.</p> <p>4.2: Create a unified secondary schedule to support rigorous, well rounded, 21st century educational experiences and provide access to programs across the combined middle-high school campus.</p> <p>4.3: Implement a comprehensive facilities maintenance & capital plan and a system through which maintenance needs can be reported, communicated, tracked and addressed.</p> <p>4.4: Determine starting times and tiers for all schools that best support the needs of students and families.</p> <p>4.5: Unify & simplify district communications platforms</p> |
| <p>5. Local to global community engagement & partnership</p> | <p>5.1: Develop an SPS alumni network to engage alumni with our school district.</p> <p>5.2: Create opportunities for all students to develop and demonstrate global competency.</p> <p>5.3: Explore collaborative partnerships with local and regional organizations including parent organizations, higher education, non-profits, businesses & corporations.</p> <p>5.4: Increase cultural proficiency and diversity throughout our district and community.</p> <p>5.5: Provide all students with authentic civics learning experiences and register all graduates to vote.</p> |

“We are crew”: This motto (originally “We are crew, not passengers”) was coined by Kurt Hahn, founder of Outward Bound. He was a champion of authentic, hands-on, engaging, cross-curricular learning experiences long before these ideas were adopted in public education. Beyond a nautical metaphor & commitment to innovative, engaging education, the spirit of this statement resonates with the mission and core values of the Scituate Public Schools. “We are crew” means that all members of our district are active contributors to education in Scituate. Students, teachers, staff, parents, community – we are *all* crew. The spirit of Crew evokes our core values of collaboration, perseverance and mutual respect. Crew connects to our mission and illustrates that the path to graduation starts in pre-school; not high school. It reminds us that, to be successful, we must all work together and take an active role in the success of our students every day.

Indicators of Student Success

Ultimately, the outcome of our strategic plan is our students' success and achievement. Since there is no singular measure of student success, we consider multiple measures across a range of indicators. These measures serve as data points in a feedback loop for our plan. They allow our district to self-reflect on student growth & achievement and analyze our progress at the individual, classroom, school and district levels. Below are 8 selected indicators. Taken individually, each shows only a small snapshot but viewed as a whole, they provide us with a comprehensive view of student achievement throughout the Scituate Public Schools. This list is by no means exhaustive, nor is it intended to be. These multiple measures serve as mile markers; ensuring that the work we do every day with our students supports their growth and achievement in a range of areas. Each indicator also notes the target for student achievement. This target projects how the strategic plan should impact our students. In areas where we can grow, growth is the target. In areas in which we should maintain already high achievement, consistency is the target. Below is an overview of these eight indicators for student success.

Success after Scituate Public Schools: The ultimate measure of a school district is how its students do after they graduate. SPS is creating an alumni network with the intention of getting high quality feedback from our graduates regarding how SPS prepares them for life after graduation.

1. SPS Alumni Feedback

Social/Emotional Indicators: The Scituate Public Schools is focused on fostering well-rounded, well-adjusted and balanced students. We consider students' social and emotional wellbeing just as important as the academic standing. Our indicators range from culture and climate to student wellbeing as well as participation and achievement in extra-curricular experiences beyond the classroom.

2. School Culture & Climate Survey
3. PEAR Survey PK-12
4. Academic, Artistic & Athletic Participation & Achievement

Authentic, Performance-Based & Standardized Academic Indicators: Our district utilizes a combination of performance based and standardized assessments as indicators of academic growth and achievement across the district. This blended approach allows us to assess student growth in authentic ways while still preparing them for the standardized testing models employed at the state and national levels.

5. Performance based Assessments (PbA) & Authentic Exhibitions of Learning
6. Elementary reading and mathematics assessments
7. MCAS
8. Advanced Placement (AP) Participation & Performance

1. **SPS Alumni Feedback:** The ultimate measure of a school district is how its students do after they graduate. SPS launched an alumni network in May of 2019 with the intention of getting high quality feedback from our graduates regarding how SPS prepares them for life after graduation. Scituate High School Alumni Association is committed to helping its members connect with each other, to engage with the school and the community, and to inspire future generations of Scituate High School students by way of mentoring, advising and tutoring. The purpose of this institution is to engage, connect and celebrate alumni and friends of Scituate High School and lay the groundwork for compiling contact information for meaningful survey sample, network, and resource development that will support current SPS students. Starting in June, 2019, SPS will administer:
 - a. Alumni Survey
 - b. Graduation Survey

2023 Student Success Target: 50% of graduates respond to GOLD alumni survey, providing feedback data for our school district

- 2. Comprehensive School Climate Inventory (CSCI):** In 2018, Scituate Public School District began a partnership with the National School Climate Center to administer the Center's Comprehensive School Climate Inventory. The Inventory was sent to our students, family, and staff to gather their perspectives about climate. There are seven overarching categories. Students, parents, and staff complete inventory items for the first five categories while staff give feedback on all seven. The District data, in the aggregate is represented below and is based upon a five point scale. The scale is nationally normed. To read the scale, any scores 0 – 2.4 are considered areas to improve; scores between 2.5 – 3.5 are considered typical or neutral and any scores above 3.5 are considered positive and stronger than typical. Below is a snapshot of this self-reflection from a district level.

2023 Student Success Target: Interpersonal relationships will be reported at 4 or more on the five point scale each year.

- 3. PEAR HSA Survey 5-12:** For this measure, Scituate works with the PEAR Institute, which is a joint partnership by Harvard Medical School and McLean Hospital. The PEAR Institute created the Holistic Student Assessment (HSA), a data-driven tool, to be used to promote social-emotional development in young people. The HSA is a self-report tool that provides schools with social-emotional 'portrait' of the unique Strengths and Challenges of each young person. Data can be reported at individual, classroom, school and district levels. The HSA is a 61-question instrument that describes a young person's development as a holistic interaction between four core developmental needs: Active Engagement (engaging the world physically), Assertiveness (expressing voice and choice), Belonging (social connection and relationships) and Reflection (thought and meaning-making). Any item noted as a Strength or Challenge represents that respective Scale Measure is greater than +1 or -1 Standard Deviation from the mean responses of age-alike peers who have taken the HSA across the nation. Below is a snapshot of student social-emotional strengths and challenges from a district perspective.

2023 Student Success Target: Relationships with peers and adults is self-reported as a top 3 strength in all grades PEAR is given

- 4. Academic, Artistic & Athletic Participation & Achievement:** The purpose of this indicator is to ensure that our district encourages well rounded students. It is important to our district that at least one measure of our strategic plan reflect our commitment to arts & athletics. It is our philosophy that we provide a wide range of opportunities for participation as well as hold true to our commitment to excellence and achievement. Below is a snapshot of both.

2023 Student Success Target: 100% of SPS students will participate in either a fine arts, music, athletics or club program before they graduate

5. Performance based Assessments (PbA) & Authentic Exhibitions of Learning

This measure is an innovative approach to evaluate student learning opportunities. Performance-based assessments provide an opportunity for students to demonstrate their understanding by meeting different criteria than those assigned to a traditional assessment, i.e., paper writing, quizzes, and tests. A PbA, is an authentic performance task where students use their learned content, skills, and strategies to demonstrate solutions to complex real-world problems. Teachers determine when it is appropriate to use a performance-based assessment and provide structures, including criteria for success, which serves as a guide for students to communicate his or her understanding. Finding solutions to real-world problems develops students' abilities to collaborate, think critically, communicate clearly and concisely, and use their creativity to apply innovative thought or design as a solution to a problem. The District staff wants to ensure that Scituate High School's graduates are college and or career ready. While the development of PbAs takes time, doing so provides our students with the most authentic, personalized learning and assessment experiences possible and will ultimately provide them with a strong foundation for success in the 21st century. As outlined in the plan, the district will institute PbAs in all grades. Below is a snapshot of that progress.

2023 Student Success Target: 100% of students will experience at least one PbA in each unit of study

6. **Elementary Reading and Mathematics Assessments:** Early reading and maths skills are foundational to student success and therefore a key measure of the impact of the strategic plan. The elementary program utilizes three key instruments to measure skills in these areas.
- a. DIBELS Next (grades K&1): Reading assessment of basic fluency, phonemic awareness, letter recognition & decoding.
 - b. STAR reading comprehension assessment (grades 2-5): This is a norm-referenced, computer adaptive reading assessment. The assessment is a global measure of a student's reading ability including decoding, comprehension, and vocabulary.
 - c. Symphony Math benchmark (grades 1-5): Computer Adaptive Test that locates each student on a standardized scale of mathematical ability three times per year. Student scores near 50 are the average, lower percentiles indicate overall slower growth and values higher indicate accelerated overall growth relative to the nation at large.

2023 Student Success Targets: 90% of elementary students will annually meet or exceed the benchmarks for DIBELS and STAR reading assessment and meet or exceed the 75th percentile for Symphony Math assessment.

7. **MCAS:** While MCAS is certainly not the singular measure of student learning, it is one helpful tool because it serves as a common assessment throughout the Commonwealth. MCAS measures student achievement and growth on English Language Arts (ELA), Math and Science, Technology and Engineering (STE). The state sets a 0-4 scale to measure school and district achievement and growth on MCAS. Exceeded Target (4 points); Met Target (3 points); Improved Below Target (2 points); No Change (1 points); or Declined (0 points). DESE provides a tremendously detailed set of MCAS data which you can find [here](#). Below is a helpful snapshot of MCAS student achievement and growth across the district using a simple average of all six SPS schools.

2023 Student Success Target: The average student achievement and student growth rating (where applicable) for all SPS schools will meet or exceed state targets in ELA, math and STE exams in aggregate and for high needs students.

8. **Advanced Placement (AP) Participation & Performance.** Advanced Placement or “AP” courses often represent the terminal course in a particular subject. The courses are intended to reflect the same depth, complexity and pace as a college course which makes this an important measure of the impact of our strategic plan. Similar to the philosophy we hold for arts and athletics, we believe that access and exposure is just as important as achievement. This is especially true with AP as it represents opportunities for high school students to experience college before they graduate. The AP tests are scored on a 1-5 scale and students who earn a “3” or better may be eligible to earn college credit for their AP course. Below is a snapshot of SPS students’ AP participation and achievement. For context, it provides available state and global data as well.

2023 Student Success Target: 100% of SPS graduates will have taken at least 1 AP course and annually, 80% of exams will earn at least a 3.