



SOUTH ORANGETOWN Central School District

UPDATE

VOL. 1 • NO. 3

SPECIAL ISSUE: A ROADMAP FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

DEAR SOUTH ORANGETOWN COMMUNITY MEMBERS:

Last year, our Board of Education and administrative team initiated the development of a three-year strategic plan to guide our efforts toward providing a high-quality education for all our students.

We invited the entire school district community to contribute to this process and you responded! More than 2,500 students, staff, parents and community members provided feedback through our Community Strategic Planning Survey last winter and dozens participated in focus group sessions last spring. Your thoughtful contributions helped to shape the five focus areas shared in this special issue of the **SOCSD Update**.

Our leadership is in the process of finalizing performance indicators to measure our district's progress—in fact, work is already underway.

But, this is just the beginning! By sharing this strategic planning update, we invite you to stay tuned and get involved. Please consider joining one of our PTAs or committees, attending our athletics and performing arts events, or volunteering as a guest speaker or mentor professional. South Orangetown Central School District's "Roadmap for Student Success" is a journey that we need to make together.

Sincerely,

Robert R. Pritchard, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Rosemary Pitruzzella
Board of Education President

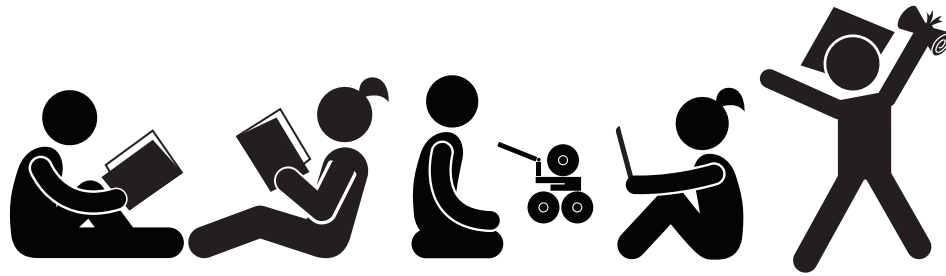


MISSION STATEMENT

In a rapidly changing world, the South Orangetown school community affirms its positive vision of the future by providing a safe and caring environment where the excitement of teaching and learning is shared by all, and where we encourage and nurture the uniqueness of each child.

Through diverse and challenging programs, we promote high academic standards, creative and critical thinking, self-respect and respect for others, and acceptance of our responsibilities in a global society.

We are committed to fostering a love of learning in our students.



Elevate. Engage. Inspire.

With feedback from students, staff, parents and community members, the South Orangetown Central School District Board of Education and administrative team identified **five focus areas** that will guide the school district's efforts towards providing a high-quality education for all of our students.

Resources will be directed to where they are most impactful: **engaging young learners** with an instructional program that reflects **relevant curriculum** taught by **highly-qualified staff**.

VISION STATEMENT

The South Orangetown School District's vision is to **ELEVATE, ENGAGE** and **INSPIRE** our students by building a culture of:

- High expectations where students will possess the knowledge and skills that will prepare them for a variety of post-graduation options (**ELEVATE**)
- Healthy, productive, and supportive relationships between students, staff, families, and the community (**ENGAGE**)
- Equitable access to opportunities in order for students and staff to pursue their full potential as responsible citizens and lifelong learners (**INSPIRE**)

FOCUS AREAS & OBJECTIVES

Following are each of the **five focus areas** and selected objectives:

FOCUS AREA A: Promote Academic Success

To promote academic success, the District will continue its efforts to provide students with 21st Century learning opportunities, enhance student literacy, address the needs of diverse learners and foster a respectful learning environment.

TO ACCOMPLISH THIS, WE WILL:

- Provide students with opportunities to conduct research from reliable sources and apply 21st Century Skills – communication, collaboration, critical thinking and creativity – to solve real world problems
- Create dynamic flexible environments that are an expression of student-centered learning and address the structures of time, space, and how students and adults are grouped for teaching and learning
- Teach students to write informative, persuasive and research-based essays in a coherent, organized way which speaks to specific audiences
- Facilitate student self-assessment skills so that they may better assess their progress in reading, writing, math and other subject areas
- Provide students with a well-balanced, differentiated curriculum that addresses the diverse needs of all learners through a wide variety of course offerings, extracurricular activities, teams and clubs
- Support students in developing skills to communicate effectively and appropriately with people of other cultures

FOCUS AREA B: *Develop Human Resources and Professional Capacity*

To develop professional capacity, the South Orangetown Central School District is committed to developing a highly-engaged employee community and nurturing a professional culture that allows employees to be actively engaged in lifelong learning.

TO ACCOMPLISH THIS WE WILL:

- Identify highly-qualified candidates for positions by actively recruiting through online platforms, traditional print resources and university placement offices
- Ensure that all employees receive timely, appropriate feedback and actively participate in setting targets for their professional growth through observations and evaluations
- Provide multiple pathways for employees to develop their skills through the range of opportunities offered in our professional development catalog, mentoring, new teacher training and other resources, such as BOCES and the NYSUT Learning Trust

FOCUS AREA C: *Improve Communication and Foster Community Engagement*

The South Orangetown Central School District is committed to engaging all stakeholders to enhance student success.

TO ACCOMPLISH THIS WE WILL:

- Engage families by keeping them informed about what students need to achieve at each grade level, hosting parent workshops to support instruction, enhancing the Family Resource Center as a robust resource for strengthening home-school partnership and working with PTA leaders in support of shared goals
- Increase access to information for families without technology at home and for parents with limited English language proficiency
- Increase accessibility of the district's digital communications for individuals with visual, hearing, motor and/or cognitive disabilities

FOCUS AREA D: *Enhance the Health and Safety of our School Community*

The South Orangetown Central School District will support a culture based on high expectations for healthy and safe behaviors while promoting respect and good citizenship.

TO ACCOMPLISH THIS WE WILL:

- Develop and promote K-12 extracurricular activities which boost students' physical activity and interest in athletics
- Maintain and promote school-based counseling and mental health supports
- Review and enhance character education programs, bullying prevention programming and reporting protocols
- Engage families in conversations and develop practical solutions for addressing substance use in our community

FOCUS AREA E: *Develop Management Systems that Emphasize Quality Control and Continuous Improvement*

South Orangetown Central School District will develop and align instructional support infrastructure, leveraging technology, operations and business services to build a culture of alignment and continuous improvement.

TO ACCOMPLISH THIS WE WILL:

- Foster and maintain a collaborative environment for higher quality decision-making by incorporating input from various stakeholder groups
- Use resources to achieve the district's vision through long-range financial and capital planning and curriculum-driven budget decisions to ensure sustainability of programs

A ROADMAP FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

WHAT TO EXPECT

As our school district moves forward with implementing the three-year strategic plan, the following are a few key “mileposts” to watch for:

- Enhancement of the **Family Resource Center** as a robust resource for strengthening home-school partnership
- Redesigned learning spaces and facilities enhancements, starting this summer, to include the **Cottage Lane Elementary School** library, the **South Orangetown Middle School** auditorium and makerspace/tech labs and the **Tappan Zee High School** wrestling room and main gym bleachers
- Exploration of student-focused scheduling at **Tappan Zee High School** and **South Orangetown Middle School**
- Expanded teacher recruitment pool resulting from Human Resources efforts, such as an annual district career fair for prospective applicants
- Launch of Anonymous Alerts, a third-party tool for students and families districtwide to report safety concerns



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