



# West Essex Regional School District

Mission, Values, Vision, and Goals  
2023-2028

## **MISSION:**

*WE engage. WE empower. WE aspire.*

## **STATEMENT OF VALUES**

*As an educational community, we believe that...*

1. It is essential that we provide a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment that fosters learning for ALL.
2. We make decisions based upon the academic, social, and emotional needs of ALL of our students today and tomorrow.
3. A rigorous curriculum must balance relevant life, career, and academic skills that appropriately challenge ALL of our students.
4. High expectations and continuous, data-driven reflection are essential to ensure we meet the needs of our dynamic and diverse school community.
5. Collaborative decision making, including input from all stakeholders, is critical in maintaining a positive learning environment.
6. Effective lines of communication with our community, families, staff, and students are essential.
7. Students and educators should be encouraged to take intellectual risks, pursue their passions, and inspire one another.
8. Students should have a voice in their education.
9. Effective educational leaders are responsive, accountable, transparent, trustworthy, and immersed in the learning process.
10. Finances should be allocated in a fiscally responsible and prudent manner with the goal of creating a safe and equitable learning environment.
11. Our community deserves schools that they can be proud of.

## VISION STATEMENT

*Our values are being embraced and our mission is being accomplished when we see:*

### **Safety & Wellness:**

- Students interacting with diverse peer groups, developing empathy, respect, and kindness towards others
- Students demonstrating the positive, balanced outlook that's reflective of social and emotional wellness
- A shared understanding that social-emotional learning is the foundation for academic success
- Effective, efficient, state of the art security measures and drills to support physical safety in schools

### **Teaching & Learning:**

- Teachers and students collaborating to create community outreach programs that promote diversity and empathy for an increasingly interconnected world
- Students developing college readiness skills such as research, analysis, evidence-based arguments, collaboration, writing, and presenting
- Students engaging in real-world learning experiences that promote career readiness skills such as critical thinking, collaborative problem-solving, and grit
- Learning experiences that encourage students to embrace academic challenge, adapt, learn independently, and persevere

### **Leadership & Governance:**

- Leaders communicating with consistency and transparency
- School stakeholders working together to plan and monitor progress towards district goals
- Students and teachers using the latest technologies as tools to acquire knowledge, communicate, and solve real-world problems

### **Community & Culture:**

- Students fulfilling a mandatory service requirement for our community
- Inclusive and collaborative culture being modeled by adult and student leaders
- Parents and community members engaging in global networking and communication
- Stakeholders engaging with alumni to be more active in our educational community

### **Finance & Facilities:**

- Budgetary planning that is transparent
- Investment in developing capabilities to teach technology skills relevant for the future
- Financial investments that support resources that are allocated equally to all learner profiles
- Financial investments that improve student outcomes

## **GAP ANALYSIS**

*Based on a review of relevant data sets, the following have been identified as areas where we may be falling short of our vision*

### **Safety & Wellness:**

- 35-40% of students and staff believe that respect is shown at school
- Only 57% of students reported feeling comfortable approaching their counselor if they have a problem. Ideally we should close this gap and get closer to 100% of students feeling comfortable visiting their counselor. Students need to feel supported both emotionally and socially within the classroom and in the school activities in which they participate.

### **Teaching & Learning:**

- Less than half of the student population agree that teachers make a strong connection between academic topics and their relationship to the real-world.
- Improvement needed in Senior Service Projects offered.
- There is a lack of data on the performance of our graduates in their freshman year in college.

### **Leadership & Governance:**

- Less than half of respondents on our staff survey agreed that they participated in decision making and that the administration embraces collaborative decision making.
- There is a lack of data from students and staff on the effectiveness of our various web-based programs.

### **Community & Culture:**

- Students do not feel teachers make a strong connection between academic and real world situations.
- Parents do not believe their child gets guidance on extra curricular activities.
- Parents do not feel encouraged to participate in school activities

### **Finance & Facilities:**

- 74% of parents do not understand the budget priorities
- 39% of staff do not feel their classroom/office technology is working effectively
- There is a lack of data on how resources are allocated across different learner profiles

## GOALS

*As a result of the gap analysis that was conducted, the following have been identified as priority, long-range goals.*

1. Strengthen connections that promote student and staff safety and wellness
2. Cultivate career readiness and real-world learning experiences for students
3. Improve communication and embrace collaborative decision making with all stakeholders
4. Ensure a positive, inclusive school culture and climate
5. Align budget, resources, and district priorities

## FIVE-YEAR MILESTONES

*The following objectives will serve as annual milestones to track progress in each of our long-range goals.*

**Goal #1:** Strengthen connections that promote student and staff safety & wellness

- *By June 2023, the District will gather data on student and staff perspectives on the current state of these relationships, HIB occurrences, caseloads and frequency of interactions, and variations in school policies and practices.*
- *By September 2024, the District will design new student-support staff interaction protocols that address issues identified in Year 1 data collection*
- *By June 2025, the District will facilitate a professional development program that provides student support staff with the skills needed to implement this new system effectively*
- *By June 2026, at least 75% of students who participate in a survey will respond that they are comfortable approaching their guidance counselor when they have a problem*
- *By June 2027, the District will use data gathered in student focus groups and surveys to fine-tune student-staff interaction protocols accordingly*

**Goal #2:** Cultivate career readiness and real-world learning experiences for students

- *By June 2023, the District will gather data on local industry partners and alumni who would be willing to support work-based learning experiences and form an advisory committee to provide feedback to teachers and students on authentic,*

*performance-based learning experiences.*

- *By June 2024, the District will provide effective professional development on how to support authentic, performance-based learning in the classroom.*
- *By June 2025, the District will evaluate and revise existing performance-based assessments as well as implement new ones to serve as benchmarks in both high school and middle school academic courses.*
- *By June 2026, at least 60% of students who participate in a survey will respond that their teachers make connections between academic topics and the real world.*
- *By June 2027, the District will implement an enhanced internship program (SLE) and work-based learning experiences for upperclassmen.*

**Goal #3:** Improve communication and embrace collaborative decision making with all stakeholders

- *By June 2023, the district will create a new stakeholder leadership group and gather perspectives on current obstacles to communication and collaboration.*
- *By June of 2024, create a process for the ongoing sharing of progress made on district action plans with all stakeholder groups that includes opportunities for additional feedback.*
- *By June of 2025, increase the collection of student feedback from postgraduate students to include an alumni database and follow-up survey.*
- *By June 2026, at least 60% of stakeholders responding to a survey will agree that our district embraces collaborative decision making.*
- *By June 2027, at least 70% of stakeholders responding to a survey will agree that our district embraces collaborative decision making.*

**Goal #4:** Ensure a positive, inclusive school culture and climate

- *By June 2023, administer surveys and focus groups to identify areas of cultural underrepresentation and current state of school culture.*
- *By June 2024, identify partner(s) who possess the experience and expertise to initiate cultural programming to address issues identified in Year 1 and implement new programs accordingly.*
- *By June 2025, at least 60% of respondents to a district stakeholder survey will agree that the District culture is positive and inclusive.*
- *By June 2026, assess the inclusivity of student recognition programs through targeted surveys and student focus groups and fine tune programs accordingly*
- *By June 2027, at least 70% of respondents to a district stakeholder survey will agree that the District culture is positive and inclusive.*

**Goal #5:** Align budget, resources, and district priorities

- *Beginning January 2023, the Business Administrator will present a timeline of the budget process and present monthly budget updates at all Board of Education*

*meetings.*

- *By May 2023, the District will conduct a detailed, public budget presentation that outlines how the budget will support priorities identified in the District's strategic plan*
- *By January 2024, the District will survey district staff members about current technology to assess technology needs for the 2023-2024 School Year.*
- *By May of 2024, the District will conduct a detailed, public budget presentation that outlines how the budget will support the technology needs identified in the 2024 district survey.*
- *By June 2025, more than 60% of respondents to a district stakeholder survey will agree that the District budget is aligned with its priorities.*