



CHELMSFORD
PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Chelmsford Public Schools

Five Year Strategic Plan

September 2022 – June 2027

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Letter from Superintendent

Dear Chelmsford School Community,

We are excited to share with you our new Chelmsford Public Schools Strategic Plan. This five-year strategic plan will act as our compass for our work and allow us to successfully prioritize initiatives, while also ensuring that we measure progress towards our outlined goals and adjust course as necessary. Through our strategic plan and its implementation in the years ahead, we will educate, engage, prepare, and empower each and every student in the Chelmsford Public Schools to discover and pursue their full potential.



It is important to note the significant impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on education and the lives of our students and families. We are proud of how our community endured through the challenges the pandemic presented and maintained our focus and common commitment to ensure for the health, safety, and well-being of the CPS community. As educators, the pandemic challenged us in ways we had not previously been challenged. We were forced to adapt quickly and often to best practices and guidance from the health community. Our CPS community persevered and responded with resiliency to successfully emerge from the pandemic.

The Chelmsford Public Schools are remarkable. Many of our schools, departments, and programs receive state and national recognition for high performance and exceptional accomplishments. As a community and district, Chelmsford prioritizes public education and its duty to provide all students with a rigorous, robust, and equitable education so they may become self-directed, creative, and well-rounded learners who are ready to become the innovative leaders of tomorrow. We currently provide our students with an exceptional education, however in the spirit of continuous improvement, recognize as a district we have areas of growth to ensure our students are best prepared for the next step in their education and career. This plan allows us to expand upon our strengths and strategically address our areas of improvement.

Our strategic planning process began in December 2021. To ensure our plan was representative of the entire Chelmsford Public Schools community, an 11-member steering committee was formed. The steering committee, consisting of leaders and staff from the central office, schools, and school board, crafted this strategic plan over the course of seven months. The committee analyzed both qualitative data from over 110 focus group participants (as detailed in the appendix) and quantitative data from district and state sources to determine priority areas of focus. The strategic plan would not have been possible without the commitment of the steering committee members and difficult conversations to arrive at the most critical strategic priorities for CPS to pursue.

We want to thank all the parents, families, staff, and students for their participation throughout this strategic planning process. Candidly sharing your opinions with us during the development of this plan for how we may improve along with your feedback in focus groups and on our draft plan were critical to the development of a robust strategic plan. This document details our theory of action, priority areas, and how we will measure success towards each of those areas over the next five years. The strategic plan reasserts our dedication to ensuring each and every student in the Chelmsford Public Schools receives an education that will allow them to be productive life-long citizens prepared for college, career, and life.

Jay Lang, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Donna M. Newcomb, Chair
Chelmsford School Committee

Chelmsford Public Schools' Strategic Plan

Chelmsford Mission and Vision

Chelmsford Public School's mission is a statement of our long-term district aspirations.

Mission:

The mission of the Chelmsford Public Schools is to educate, engage, prepare, and empower well-rounded and knowledgeable learners who PERSEVERE through challenges, demonstrate RESPECT and INTEGRITY in their words and actions, are DEDICATED to their community, and display EMPATHY as global citizens while discovering and pursuing their full potential.

Vision:

The vision of the Chelmsford Public Schools is to provide all students with multiple pathways to optimize their own potential for academic excellence, leadership, and social and emotional wellness. We work from a rigorous curriculum that is aligned with state standards using multiple forms of data to inform innovative approaches to teaching. Our students' success is anchored in the high expectations of teachers who are part of a professional, collaborative culture that demands a continuous focus on instructional improvement. It is our responsibility that every student feels safe, cared for, appropriately challenged, and supported in our schools. Our students' successes are celebrated within and across schools as well as throughout the broader community. Parents and the Chelmsford community are connected to the daily life of our schools through consistent, multidirectional, and multi-modal communication, which builds external support for and pride in the district, schools, teachers, and students. As a result of high-quality teaching, meaningful partnerships, and well-resourced schools, our students contribute to the Chelmsford community as self-directed, creative, and well-rounded learners who are ready to become the innovative leaders of tomorrow.

Chelmsford Theory of Action

Chelmsford Public School's Theory of Action reflects our core beliefs about what will lead to long-term success for our students, families, community, and staff.

IF...

- District leaders provide direction, rigorous curriculum, appropriate resources, and ongoing development, and
- Principals create the conditions, the culture and build buy-in to ensure initiatives are implemented faithfully in a welcoming environment, and
- Teachers foster an inclusive learning environment, ensure curriculum is accessible to each and every student, and build strong relationships with students and families

THEN...

We will realize our vision that every student will reach their full academic potential, feel confident in themselves and their abilities, and grow into strong community members and citizens.

Chelmsford Priority Areas

Using our Theory of Action as a guide, Chelmsford Public Schools has identified five priority areas to direct our efforts and resources over the next five years, this will allow us to achieve our district mission and vision, to address any obstacles that arise, and enable our district to utilize our energy and resources with greater alignment.

- 1 Academic Achievement**
- 2 Equity**
- 3 Social-emotional Learning**
- 4 Human Capital and Staff**
- 5 Operations and Facilities**

Academic Achievement

The district will focus on mathematical achievement, particularly in elementary and middle grades (K-8), to build a strong foundation for academic success in high school and beyond.

Chelmsford Public Schools believes that high-quality academic instruction must remain at the forefront of our efforts to support each and every student in Chelmsford. We will achieve this by focusing on building foundational skills in math, where Chelmsford student achievement has lagged behind reading, and by continuing to support reading instruction in order to support academic success across subjects.

How we will measure our success

1. Percent of students making adequate annual growth (student growth percentiles based on MCAS).
2. Percent of 3rd-graders meeting standards in reading based on i-Ready.
3. Percent of 3rd-graders meeting standards in math based on i-Ready.
4. Percent of 8th-graders meeting standards in math based on i-Ready.



Equity

The district will focus on providing equitable opportunities for each and every student to close achievement gaps between marginalized student populations and their peers.

Chelmsford students represent a wide variety of identities, backgrounds, and experiences. We will focus on making sure that each and every student is given the opportunity to succeed and thrive in Chelmsford Public Schools and that our increasing diversity becomes a strength of our district.

How we will measure our success

1. Achievement gap between general education and students with IEPs.
2. Achievement gap between general education and students who are economically disadvantaged.



Social-emotional Learning

The district will focus on ensuring students have strong relationships with staff and their peers so students feel welcomed, included, and safe in school.

Chelmsford Public Schools knows that ensuring students feel safe and welcomed in their learning environment is critical for supporting student engagement and learning. We will closely track these efforts to nurture the whole child in order to make sure each and every student feels a sense of belonging in our district.

How we will measure our success

1. Percent of students that report feeling a sense of belonging in school across grades K-12.
2. Percent of students that report having positive relationships with peers across grades K-12.
3. Percent of students that report having positive relationships with staff across grades K-12.



Human Capital and Staff

The district will focus on attracting and developing a highly effective teaching staff equipped to meet the diverse needs of our student population.

The teachers and staff in Chelmsford Public Schools are one of our greatest strengths and supporting and developing this group will remain a top priority. We will continue to provide opportunities for professional development while also ensuring that our staff is equipped to meet the needs of each and every student in Chelmsford.

How we will measure our success

1. Increase the number of adults from diverse backgrounds working with students, including support personnel and college partners to reflect the diversity of our student population.
2. Percent of instructional staff who receive professional development and training and indicate that they feel adequately prepared to differentiate for diverse student populations.
3. Percent of staff who report feeling equipped to provide culturally responsive instruction.



Linda Tanini
Massachusetts Outstanding
Biology Teach of the Year



Operations and Facilities

The district will enhance educational facilities to provide students with safe and modern facilities that support innovative student learning.

Students and teachers thrive when their learning environments are clean, modern, and welcoming. We will focus on providing buildings and facilities that reflect the high-quality education that takes place inside of them, and we will continue to explore new ways to deliver innovative learning experiences for our students.

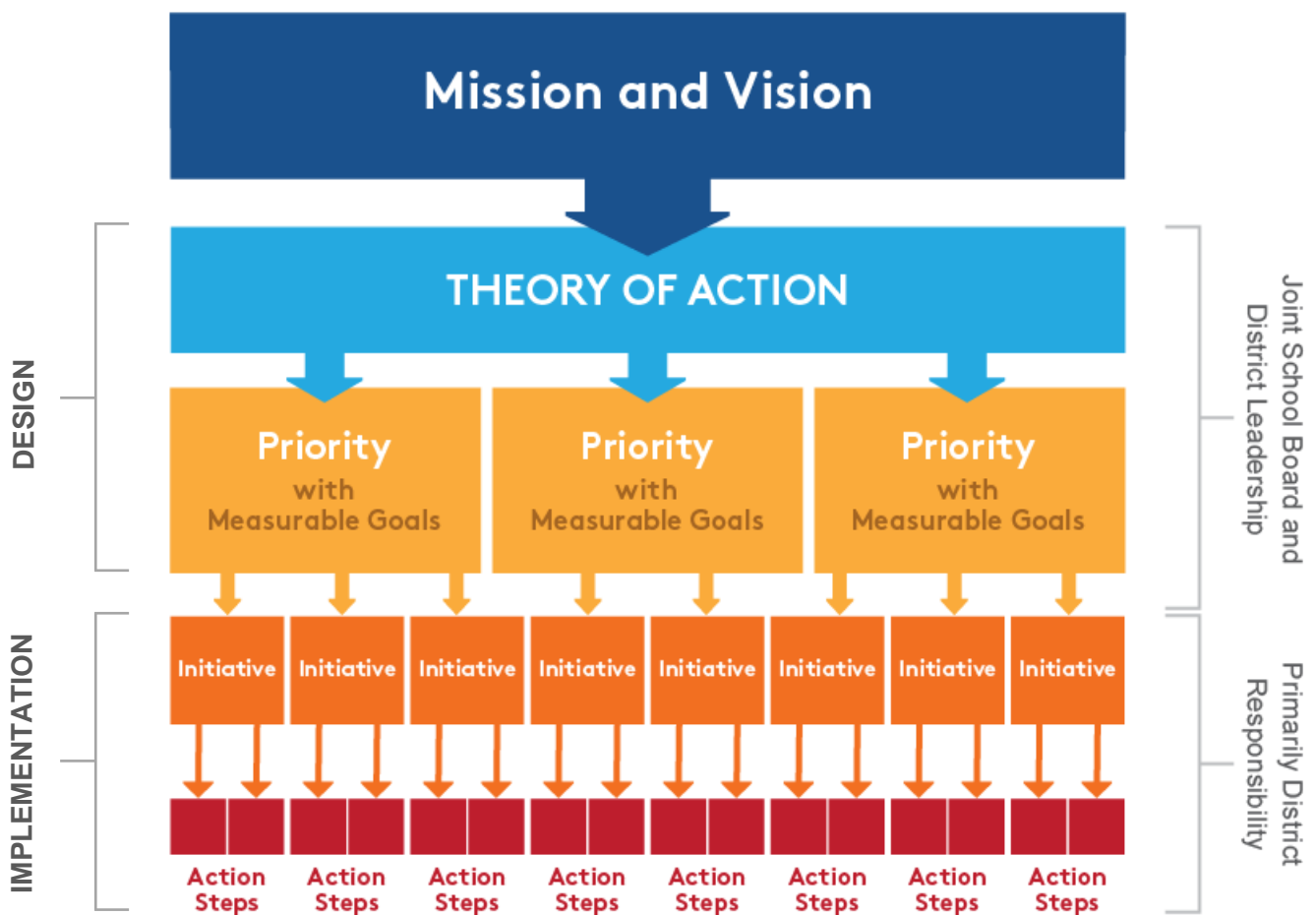
How we will measure our success

1. Annual review of short-term capital plans (to determine what priority areas have been completed), and if the district was early/late/on-time and over/under budget.
2. Annual review of maintenance work orders submitted and completed.
3. Annual review of building conditions for APPA standard of cleaning.
4. Maximize the amount of instruction time to ensure consistency across grade levels, particularly at the elementary and middle schools.



Next Steps – Implementation

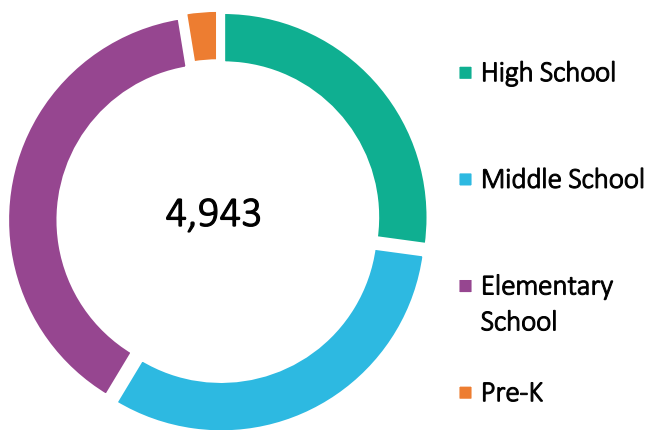
Through our strategic planning process, we have identified the strategic priority areas that will have the greatest impact on all of our students. These strategic priority areas will ensure that when we are forced to make challenging decisions about how we allocate our primary resources– people, time and money – our decisions will align to these strategic priority areas. Implementing this strategic plan starts by monitoring our progress towards our strategic priority areas. As we monitor our progress towards these priority areas, we will be communicating our results to parents, families, school staff, and community members, as this will hold us accountable to achieving our mission and vision for our district. We resolutely believe that our strategic plan will provide the best outcomes for all of our students, families, community partners, and staff, as we continue to build upon and strengthen our excellent school district.



About Chelmsford Public Schools' – Fast Facts

Chelmsford Public Schools educates nearly 5,000 students, grades Pre-K - 12 across eight schools. The district employs roughly 760 staff members, including approximately 450 teachers.

Student Enrollment



Class of 2021

Graduation Rate:
97%

Percentage of students attending college:
4-year college: 72%
2-year college/tech: 4%



In the Classroom

13 to 1 student/teacher ratio
95% attendance rate

Special Education – 16.7%
English Language Learners – 4.3%

Per pupil expenditure
\$15,659

Staff

760 teachers and administrators
instruct and care for our children each day



Source: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (2021)

Process Overview

Chelmsford Public Schools took a multi-step approach in the creation of the new strategic plan.

Form Steering Committee

Created 11-member Steering Committee to develop strategic plan (included leaders and staff from central office, schools, parents, and the school committee).

Gather Input

Hosted three community meetings and gathered input with district leaders, principals, district staff, parents, students, and community members focused on their experience in Chelmsford Public Schools through focus groups and interviews.

Complete Needs Assessment

Gathered quantitative data provided by the district and state to identify Chelmsford's areas of strength and improvement.

Draft Key components of the Strategic Plan

Engaged in a multi-step process to draft the theory of action, key district priority areas, and related measures for monitoring progress.

Gather Feedback on Draft

Gathered for three community meetings to solicit opinions and feedback from families, students, representatives of community organizations, and district staff.

Finalize Plan Based on Feedback

Incorporated community feedback and edits into a finalized strategic plan.

Community Engagement

Prior to building the new strategic plan, Superintendent Lang and his team solicited feedback from various stakeholders (referenced below) to understand the district's strengths and priority areas. This included staff, community members, students, and a steering committee to ensure that the plan would serve all members of our district and community.

Stakeholder Input:

In February 2022, community, and district partners (listed below and in the appendix) were invited to aid in the development of the new strategic plan. Over 110 participants were interviewed in 20 focus groups and 7 interviews over the course of two weeks. The interviews were conducted at central office, schools, and town hall.

Community Participants	District Participants
Parents	Central Office Staff
School Committee Members	Principals
	Teachers and Support Staff
	Students

Community Feedback:

- 655 respondents to an online Family Engagement survey, which included more than 50 staff members.
- Two virtual community meetings and one in person meeting providing feedback on the strengths and areas of improvements for Chelmsford, which were used to inform the drafting of the strategic plan.
- Three additional community meetings were held providing feedback on the draft strategic plan.

Steering Committee Members:

To aid in the development of our strategic plan, a Steering Committee of leaders were chosen. The members (listed below) were responsible for making sure that our five-year strategic plan would be applicable to the community and all members of Chelmsford Public Schools.

Name	Position
Dr. Jay Lang	Superintendent
Dr. Linda Hirsch	Assistant Superintendent
Joanna Johnson-Collins	Director of Business and Finance
Bill Silver	Director of Technology
Amy Reese	Director of Student Support Services
Candace Hall	Interim Director of Personnel
Dr. Jeff Parks	Parker Middle School Principal
Jason Fredette	Byam Elementary School Principal
Steve Murray	Chelmsford High School Principal
Jeffery Doherty	School Committee Member
Maria Santos	School Committee Member

Needs Assessment Summary

Chelmsford's parents, staff, students, and community are extremely proud of our schools and their successes. While developing this plan, feedback from a variety of sources highlighted many bright spots including:

Academic Achievement	Students' ELA and Math MCAS scores exceeds Massachusetts average by more than 13%
Staff Relationships	Staff are extremely passionate and committed to ensuring all students succeed, as they consistently go above and beyond for their students.
Student Belonging	Students feel their teachers care about their well-being and they feel supported by staff and other students.
Finances	The well managed district budget provides the district with options to fund new initiatives based on staff and student needs.
Communication	Parents are satisfied with how they receive district updates and highly rate several sources of communication.

Glossary of Terms

- **Equity:** the allocation of opportunities, resources, and supports to achieve an equal outcome for each and every CPS student recognizing the different and unique backgrounds and circumstances each CPS student presents.
- **i-Ready:** a reading and mathematics assessment designed to identify students' proficiency levels, provide personalized learning, and progress monitor students' learning gains throughout the school year.
- **Marginalized Student Populations:** a student is considered part of a marginalized population if identity contributes to being or feeling underserved, harassed, or sidelined in their community.
- **Measurable Goals:** specific and measurable targets related to district priorities.
- **Mission and Vision:** statements of our long-term district aspirations.
- **Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS):** a system of supports to provide evidence-based instruction and interventions that are designed to teach and support students at various mastery levels in both academic and social-emotional learning. Tier 1 is designed to be universally designed instruction and interventions for all students, while Tier 2 and Tier 3 are supplemental interventions designed to support smaller groups of students or individual students struggling with specific academic or social-emotional needs.
- **Priorities:** broad areas of focus to achieve the district's Theory of Action.
- **Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS):** standardized test taken by 3rd through 10th grade students in Massachusetts that measures proficiency in a number of subject areas, especially English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics (Math).
- **Steering Committee:** a group of district stakeholders including parents, school committee members, principals, and central office leaders which brings content expertise and a variety of perspectives to the strategic planning process.
- **Theory of Action:** foundational statement regarding what will be necessary to achieve long-term success in the district.
- **VOCAL:** VOCAL is an annual survey sponsored by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Participating students are asked to share their views on three dimensions and nine topics of school climate.