



**New Fairfield Public Schools
Strategic Plan**

July 2024 - December 2025

Submitted by:

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New Fairfield Public Schools Strategic Plan

July 2024 - December 2025

Introduction

In August, 2023, New Fairfield Public Schools Superintendent of Schools and Board of Education initiated a Review of Curriculum Design and Implementation Processes to inform its reflection on and development of next steps in the spirit of continuous improvement and pursuit of excellence. Dr. Judy Wilson undertook a comprehensive study of the district's curriculum and engaged with a wide range of stakeholders in the school community - staff, students, Board of Education members, and families - through interviews, focus groups, and surveys to inform her analysis. In October 2023, her [report](#) validated the district's commitment to high-quality, innovative education and outlined structures and systems to support the district in achieving its next level of work.






To plan for this next level of work, Dr. Wilson facilitated a two-day Strategic Planning professional experience in February, 2024. Approximately 30 members of the New Fairfield Public Schools community, including administrators, teaching staff, students, parents, and Board of Education members collaborated in a reflective review of the curriculum analysis and school community surveys to arrive at three comprehensive goals addressing curriculum, instruction, and wellness. These goals are intended to steer our district focus and work from July, 2024 - December, 2025, at which time the goals will be revisited, revised, and renewed for next-level growth. Strategic planning committees for each of these goals met in the spring of 2024 to develop action plans to be implemented throughout the upcoming 18 months and to articulate specific deliverables. This report shares these strategic planning goals, action steps, and deliverables, in the context of the New Fairfield Public Schools mission and the NFPS Vision of the Learner, as a compass for the systems of curriculum, instruction, assessment, wellness, and professional learning in the district.

Mission and Vision

The following mission guides New Fairfield Public Schools in its policies, goals, commitments, and practices:

The mission of the New Fairfield Public Schools is to engage students, staff, and the community in a partnership to provide a collaborative, innovative, encouraging and safe environment where all members take an active role in supporting each other's learning while also helping students pursue their own passions.

The five pillars of our **Vision of the Learner** articulate the desired attributes and outcomes for all learners in their journey through New Fairfield Public Schools:

<p>Knowledgeable Scholars</p> 	<p>Talented Communicators</p> 	<p>Critical & Creative Thinkers</p> 	<p>Engaged Global Citizens</p> 	<p>Self-determined & Self-reliant Individuals</p> 
<p>Pursue their interests and make meaning while developing a depth of background knowledge in all of the core academic domains as well as in life skills such as financial literacy, that they can use to solve problems and succeed in life.</p>	<p>Read, write, listen, speak, create and view skillfully, critically and confidently. They can adapt their style and message for a variety of purposes, situations and audiences. As a result, they have strong relationship skills and can collaborate well. They can manage conflict confidently and respectfully.</p>	<p>Access, evaluate and apply information to solve problems, pursue their curiosities and make decisions. They will grow their creativity through experiences within the fine and performing arts which will further support their ability to think critically and creatively.</p>	<p>Learn about the history of their local community, our country and other countries around the world to understand the value and unique principles of our American democracy. They learn what other cultures are like so that they can understand, respect and embrace diversity, be socially aware, be kind, compassionate, empathetic and respectful. They obtain information from multiple, reliable sources and use it to be active, civic-minded participants within and beyond their community.</p>	<p>Set goals, persevere, and reflect as they learn to understand and regulate their emotions and reactions, which will foster their overall health, wellness and mindfulness. Through this they will become intentional, resilient, independent and most importantly, self-reliant.</p>

New Fairfield Public Schools Strategic Planning Goals

Preface

We believe that in order for students to advance toward our vision, we must challenge and inspire all learners, cultivate an environment where people are confident to be themselves, and pursue opportunities for growth.

Three aspirational goals, addressing curriculum, instruction, and wellness, have been established in support of this vision. Each goal is defined below and is followed by a series of action steps that will be enacted to achieve the goal. Each action step notes specific deliverables that the work will yield in order to have observable outcomes and demonstrate progress over time. It is also important to note that across the planning and design stage already undertaken a wide range of NFPS staff members have contributed, with further opportunities available in the months ahead. This emphasis on continuing to expand the sphere of influence of our staff as leaders and contributors to this work deepens the capacity of NFPS and is intended to ensure greater coherence and consistency across the district through shared ownership.

Curriculum Goal

We will engage in an ongoing process responsive to student needs, data, and an ever-changing world to design and sustain a preK-12 standards-based curriculum that:

- creates deep engagement with content
- promotes innovative thinking
- provides opportunities to skillfully and critically solve problems and apply learning far beyond the classroom.

Action Steps

1. Deepen our understanding of how students learn as the basis for designing a curriculum to meet their needs in the context of today's ever-changing world.

Deliverables and Anticipated Impact:

- **Professional learning sessions** addressing how students learn, student self-assessment, and feedback for students to inform curriculum design and teacher planning
- **Student focus groups** to gather student perspectives and voice in curriculum, course offerings, and learning opportunities

2. Define a cohesive PreK-12 curriculum approach grounded in Understanding By Design (UbD) principles.

Deliverables and Anticipated Impact:

- **Curriculum framework** shared across all disciplines and grade-levels for consistency
- **Curriculum design criteria** used to review and calibrate curriculum for fidelity
- **NFPS Curriculum Guidebook** with key curriculum definitions and mapping of roles and responsibilities for clarity
- **Electronic curriculum platform** to allow community stakeholders to access curricular outcomes, allow staff to readily access curriculum resources, and grow student ownership of learning through curricular storyboards

3. Implement a comprehensive curriculum design process that involves research, design, implementation, and then monitoring, reflection, and revision, with input from multiple stakeholders.

Deliverables and Anticipated Impact:

- **Stage 1 mapping and transfer goals for PreK-12 across all disciplines**
- **PreK-12 Science full curriculum design** as a model
- **PreK-12 Social Studies Standards** mapped for curriculum design
- **Timeline** for curriculum process (all disciplines) mapped across next 3-5 years
- **Multiple communication vehicles** for curriculum updates to faculty, families, and the BOE

Instruction Goal

We will utilize innovative practices to engage students in appropriately challenging and relevant learning experiences, grounded in our curriculum, so that students will be empowered to:

- achieve academic success
- pursue their interests
- discover passion and curiosity for learning.

Action Steps

1. Articulate shared definitions and understanding of effective instructional practices that foster students' engagement, critical thinking, and inquiry.

Deliverables and Anticipated Impact:

- **Professional learning platform** (links, video clips, etc.) of effective instructional practices to serve as a resource for staff
- **Professional learning sessions** that deepen staff collaborative study of effective instructional practices

- **AI strategy group** to investigate instructional opportunities with AI to deepen student critical thinking skills

2. Integrate outcomes aligned to the pillars of the NFPS Vision of the Learner into classroom instruction.

Deliverables and Anticipated Impact:

- **Competency continuum across pillars of the VoL** to describe levels of competency and measurable / observable components for each pillar for staff, students, and families
- **Assured experiences** drafted to assess student progress in these competencies
- **Examples of student progress** collected for each pillar of the VoL across disciplines
- **Student self-assessment and feedback** related to their growth towards pillars of the VoL integrated into instruction

Wellness Goal

We will cultivate a community of confident, global citizens who have a sense of belonging as we develop a culture that:

- supports a positive, safe, and respectful learning environment
- ensures that all stakeholders are physically, mentally, and emotionally available to persevere, learn, and grow
- celebrates compassion, empathy, and advocacy.

Action Steps

1. Integrate opportunities for students' physical movement across the school day in support of wellness and learning engagement.

Deliverables and Anticipated Impact:

- **Professional learning sessions** related to the benefits of and vehicles for physical movement in academic environments and **flexible use of space** for instruction

- **Enhanced outdoor learning spaces** in our schools to promote physical movement
- **School-based movement programs** for students in need of movement opportunities outside of the classroom setting

2. Articulate a vertically-aligned PreK-12 continuum of practices to foster students' social-emotional wellness.

Deliverables and Anticipated Impact:

- **Developmental guidance curriculum (9-12)** drafted and piloted (based on CT Standards addressing academic, career, and social-emotional development, such as goal-setting, work/life balance, coping strategies, & resilience)
- **PreK-12 social-emotional learning resource** selected for implementation
- **District-wide social-emotional MTSS committee** to create a shared framework for the multi-tiered support of social and emotional competencies PreK-12

3. Enhance community and family education and partnerships in support of student wellness.

Deliverables and Anticipated Impact:

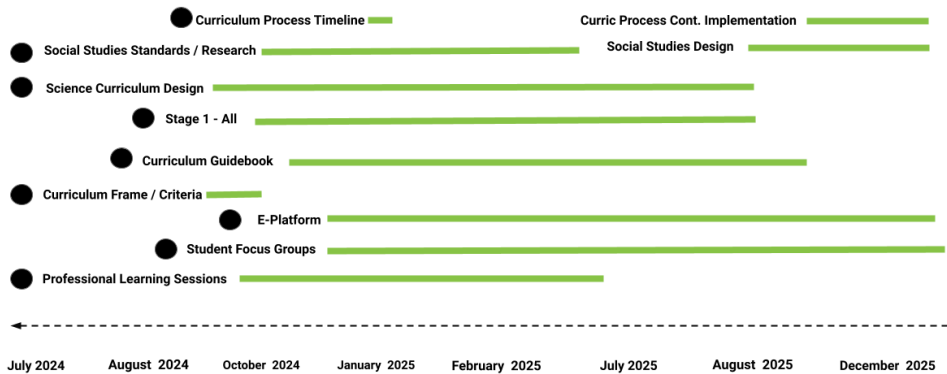
- **Family education programs (in-person and video series)** to address technology use, challenging behaviors, and mental health
- **PreK-12 student leadership opportunities, extracurricular activities, and clubs** for all students expanded
- **District-wide wellness committee** (and by extension, building sub-committees) to research, communicate, and provide professional learning opportunities for staff wellness

Timeline

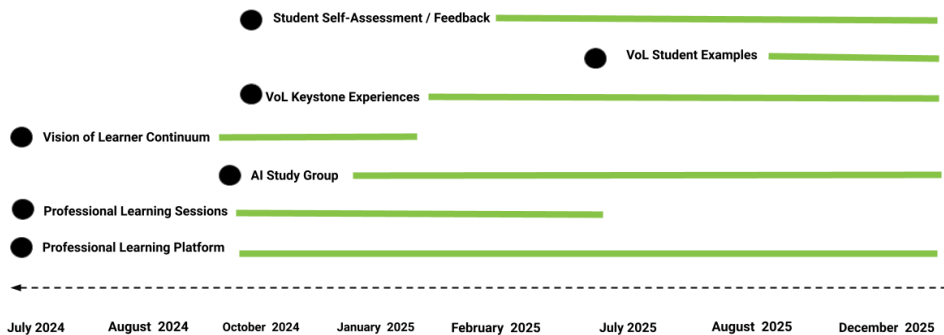
Given the ambitious nature of this work, a timeline has been developed to structure and pace the action steps for each goal across the upcoming eighteen months. Foundational research,

professional learning, and the design and implementation of structures will be the initial focus this summer and fall, with other action steps taking priority in the winter, spring, and into next summer to build on these foundations. This intentional pacing is mapped for the deliverables for each action step in the timelines below. Synergies across the three goals have also been identified by the planning committees to ensure that the work can be integrated and enhanced, not duplicated.

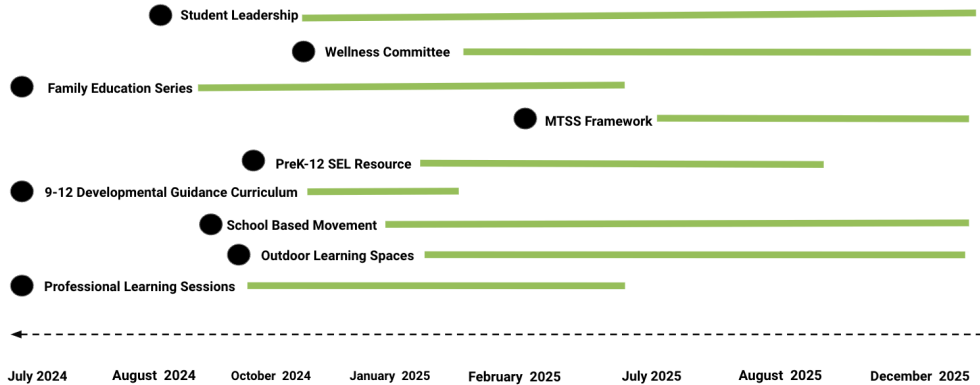
Curriculum Action Steps Timeline



Instruction Action Steps Timeline



Wellness Action Steps Timeline



Next Steps

Staff members who have contributed already to the development of the Strategic Plan are eager to begin the work this summer, and other staff members have been invited to join the groups as well. Summer Curriculum Projects funded through the FY25 budget will focus on the early deliverables across all three goals. The following is a list of specific projects planned to launch this summer in support of the Strategic Planning goals and in preparation for the start of the 2024-2025 school year in New Fairfield:

Summer 2024	
Curriculum Goal	Curriculum Framework and Design Criteria to be established
	Understanding by Design (UbD) Institute to be offered to all staff for training in curriculum design framework
	PreK-12 Science Curriculum Research / Mapping phase to be undertaken
	PreK-12 Social Studies Standards review to be undertaken
Instruction Goal	Vision of the Learner Competency Continuum to be designed

Wellness Goal	9-12 Developmental Guidance Curriculum research and design to be initiated
	Family Education Series to be mapped, outlined, and prepared to launch

We are eager to begin and appreciate the support of the New Fairfield Public Schools staff, administration, and Board of Education, as well as the support of the New Fairfield community as we undertake this important and adaptive work for the district.