



May 11, 2021

Dear Friends,

Thanks for your interest in learning about the future of East Hartford Public Schools. This document, *Pride in 5*, captures the strategic vision for the years 2021-2026. As you read through the rationale, overview and aspirational priorities, we hope you hear the bold voice of the East Hartford community seeking to surge ahead, accelerate, achieve, and pursue equity for all children!

To bring context to this document, it is important to note that our typical rhythm of planning and implementation was interrupted by the pandemic of 2020. Last year, based on this reality, we paused our nearly complete strategic planning process and focused on ReOpening our schools. Despite this necessary pause, we were excited to resume this work this spring and recirculate the data we spent the previous year collecting. While the past year was a challenging one, it was a year of opportunity that allowed us to reflect on what we truly value, to adopt new ways to work and learn, and to build unprecedented momentum for moving forward.

Our vision focuses on 5 Priorities that anchor our strategy through 2026. These priorities are value laden, belief rich and capture the way we think about our students, our community, our employees, and importantly, our potential. Finally, our plan includes a developed system of accountability aligned to state and national standards. We think these data points offer an important way to quantify our future success.

Thanks for your interest in our plan, we look forward to the conversations that could develop upon your review.

With great East Hartford Pride!

Bryan R. Hall
Board of Education Chairman
East Hartford Public Schools

Nathan Quesnel
Superintendent
East Hartford Public School



Vision: Schools that are the **Pride** of our Community

Mission: To deliver a high-quality learning experience for
EVERY CHILD, EVERY DAY.



PRIDE IN 5

The bold voice of our community seeking to surge ahead, accelerate, achieve, and pursue equity for all children!

Rationale and Process for Strategic Visioning:

The process of bringing educators, community, and students around an aspirational vision has been a cornerstone of achieving bold goals for East Hartford Public Schools (EHPS). Our educational community has embraced this important dialogue, and we are proud of the **expectations** we have set as well as the **results** we have accomplished together.

Our rhythm of planning and implementing was jarred by the pandemic of 2020. At that time, we paused our nearly complete strategic planning process and focused on the immediate work of safely, incrementally, and adaptively ReOpening our schools. We are glad we did! While the past year has been a challenging one, it has also been a year of opportunity that has allowed us to reflect on what we truly value, adopt new ways to work and learn, and build unprecedented momentum for moving forward.

We emerge ready to launch our new five-year strategic vision, *Pride in 5*. Simply put, we want to be *Schools that are the Pride of our Community*, and we are ready to put in the **effort** to make this happen.

Your Voice in the Process:

We believe in an inclusive, democratized process of honoring and valuing the diverse voices of the people for whom our plans matter most. The beautiful, diverse tapestry of East Hartford's residents have shaped a plan that stands for advancement. We think the 9th grader at East Hartford High has a lot to say about opportunities that lie ahead; we think 3rd graders can teach us about hope, and we know our families feel an urgency for their children's success. This elongated visioning process started pre-pandemic, capturing the hopes and dreams of our community through surveys, small focus groups, and large town hall meetings. Over the past year, technology has strengthened our capacity to build **relationships** throughout the community and helped us to identify strengths, needs, and opportunities. The voices of our community will continue to lead and shape our plan.

Planning the Work...Working the Plan:

While detailed planning has been a part of our core DNA, we'd like to think that we've gotten better at making this process valuable for the folks doing the work. We want our plan to be a living, breathing, iterative and well-worn partner on the path to extraordinary results. *Pride in 5*, is not a task list, nor a "how to" manual for schools, but rather a value-driven moonshot that reflects our aspirations and beliefs. It is designed to inspire our talented team of leaders and educators to blend what they know and care about at the school level with larger district priorities to achieve cohesive and systemic growth.

Pride in 5 Priorities:

Recognizing the scale of the vision we have for kids in East Hartford, we focus on 5 Priorities that anchor our strategy for the next five years. These priorities are value laden and belief rich. They capture the way we think about our students, our community, our employees, and importantly, our potential.

- 1. Accelerate Achievement for Every Child:** We will accelerate pace, broaden definition and tailor the path to achievement for Every Child. As our students begin the educational journey from the PreK setting, we embrace the enduring vision of the graduate that compels us to put their success at the center of our work. We commit to delivering a curriculum that is captivating, rigorous, culturally responsive and student centered. Our classrooms will be filled with energy, characterized by effective communication, and dominated by student thinking. For us, it's not enough to have "taught it." It's enough when our students have "applied it." To tell this story, we will use an appropriate level of diagnostic and summative assessments, each carefully aligned and vetted to ensure value and merit.
- 2. Weave Webs of Caring and Empowering Supports:** We will meet the needs of our students by weaving interconnected webs of physical, academic, and social-emotional supports that embrace kids where they are and help them lift themselves to new victories. We will lean in with our families to identify and connect to the strengths and potential that exists in every child and in every home. Our focus on supports is based on the whole child concept and an unwavering belief in the power of self-efficacy. We want our students to leave us knowing who they are and the amazing power they have to shape their world. We want our kids to feel loved, to feel respected, to be heard, and to know that **solutions** to the most indomitable challenges lie ahead.
- 3. Transform Structures and Systems:** We will seize new capabilities to enhance structures for learning and working. These new structures will be grounded in outcome data, best practice, and relevant experience. We begin each of these transitions with a focus on sustainability and an insistence that improvement never ends. Benefiting from the unlimited advantages that new technologies have provided, these new systems will offer students and employees flexibility and efficiency. We have learned that teaching and working can happen effectively in a variety of formats. We will match these formats to the strengths and skills of our students and employees.
- 4. Diversify and Grow Our Talented Workforce:** We will diversify and strengthen our highly-**competent** workforce by capturing the power that exists in engaging and blending talent from multiple backgrounds, cultures, races, perspectives, education, skills, and expertise across all district roles. By taking advantage of every hiring moment and focusing on the quality of training/development activities, we will accomplish extraordinary outcomes. We will continue to grow and retain talent through targeted professional development and career advancement opportunities. Prioritizing the relationships that are shared across classroom desks, cafeteria tables, faculty breakrooms, and school buildings will unleash the strength of a unified culture where differing perspectives lead to a single objective—to do special things for kids!
- 5. Expand Opportunities and Options for Success:** We will make investments in expanding opportunities for learning and working that center on a broad spectrum of success for students. These efforts will target the expansion of college preparatory experiences as well as high quality career and workforce development solutions. These programs will integrate academic standards with industry-valued competencies, providing students the necessary skills for post graduate success as well as Industry Recognized Credentials (IRCs). Reaching out to our community partners will engage our students as active citizens in service projects and in giving back. Through our expectation that "we do things differently around here," our students and employees will benefit from an organization that prioritizes meaningful, relevant, and rewarding work at all levels.

Pride in 5 Outcome Indicators:

While plans alone are rarely worth the paper they consume, results solidify the merit of great intentions. Over time, we have realized that there are many ways to quantify results, and that clarity is built around establishing high level outcome indicators that require layers of organizational success. We acknowledge that the indicators we have selected do not tell the totality of the results we value: the beauty of laughing children, the warm glow of an engaged staff, or the satisfied smile of a proud parent. Rather, the indicators we have selected qualify success in one dimension and give us inspired motivation to continue to tell our story.

| Outcome Indicator | Rationale |
|---|---|
| Grade 1 Literacy Acquisition Skills as measured by DIBELS 8th edition | This indicator measures the percentage of students meeting benchmark on priority early literacy skills. This measure ensures that targeted instruction in PK-1 leads to skill growth and achievement as well as provides necessary formative data used to prepare students to be proficient readers. |
| Grade 3 Reading/Math Scores as measured by annual Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA) | This indicator reflects the percentage of students meeting benchmark at the lower elementary level and offers forecasting data for long term outcomes. Third graders who are not reading at grade level are highly vulnerable for future academic failure. This indicator provides data that will align upper elementary instruction to best meet student need. |
| Grade 5 Reading/Math Scores as measured by annual SBA | This indicator reflects the percentage of students meeting benchmark at a critical transition in their education journey. This indicator quantifies performance at the elementary level and offers an important baseline for students as they move to middle school. |
| Grade 8 Reading/Math Scores as measured by annual SBA | This indicator reflects the percentage of students meeting benchmark at another critical transition in their educational journey. This indicator quantifies performance at the middle level and offers an important baseline for students as they move to high school. |
| Grades 4-8 Reading/Math High Needs Growth as measured by annual SBA | This indicator reflects the percentage of students who are identified as high needs (SPED, EL, FRL), who have met their annual growth targets on the SBA. Disaggregating this data provides an important information to assess interventions for the most academically needy population of students. |
| Grade 11 Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT) Scores | This indicator reflects the percentage of students meeting benchmark on Evidence Based Reading and Writing (EBRW) and Math. These scores serve as performance thresholds for students' ability to select and enter college. This indicator provides information necessary to re-align programming to ensure student performance. |
| 4-year High School Graduation Rate | This indicator reflects the percentage of students who graduate from high school as part of a 4-year cohort. Graduating from high school is a critical milestone in a student's education and a precursor to College and Career success. This indicator provides a summative measure of district success in moving students to post graduate readiness. |
| Grade 11-12 Access to Post Secondary and Career Readiness course work | This indicator reflects the percentage of students who are taking courses coded as Post-Secondary and Career Readiness course work. These include IB/AP/ECE/CTE, workplace experience and internship opportunities. This indicator provides important information to position resources and programming aligned with post-secondary outcomes. |
| Grades PK-12 Chronic Absenteeism | This indicator reflects a percentage of students who have missed a cumulative of 10% or more of membership days on an annual basis. Excellent attendance is a critical component of academic performance and vital to individual student success. This indicator provides important information to assess district programming regarding physical, social and emotional wellness. |

