Planning for the Future

In the fall of 2014, the Cairo-Durham Central School District Board of Education assembled a committee comprised of faculty members, administrators, board members, parents, and community members. This 23-member Strategic Planning team met five times in November and December 2014 to develop a plan for the future that includes a new mission statement, vision, and strategic initiatives.

During the intensive planning process, the team identified common beliefs about the district, strengths and weaknesses of the district, and the impact of external factors on the school community. Using this information as a guide, the group identified the major initiatives that must be achieved if the Cairo-Durham Central School District is to continue to provide high-quality opportunities for our students.

During the planning sessions, several themes emerged, including:

- the importance of student well-being
- strong administrative leadership
- rigorous and vertically aligned curriculum
- community involvement
- transparent and ongoing communication
- respect for diverse people and interests
- efficient and targeted financial planning, and
- faculty and staff appreciation.

The new mission statement that was established defines our district’s purpose by answering the question, “What do we do?” The vision statement answers the question, “What do we want to be?” by identifying where the school community wants to go as we move into the future.

Open dialogue, listening to each other, and consensus were at the core of the conversations that comprise the strategic direction identified in this plan. The strategic plan seeks to be more than just a planning process and document. It is a way to engage the Cairo-Durham community as a whole in order to design a school system that will prepare our students for a successful future in our ever-changing world.

The strategic plan represents the first planning phase and now requires an operating plan establishing specific action steps for meeting goals and objectives. Action Planning Teams will be recruited to develop plans for the implementation of strategic initiatives defined by the initial Strategic Planning Team.

To learn more about the Cairo-Durham strategic plan or to become involved in one of the implementation teams, please contact Bridget Agostinoni, Board Clerk, at bagostinoni@cairodurham.org or by calling (518) 622-8534 ext. 23040.
Our Mission, Vision, Core Beliefs & Strengths

MISSION: WHAT WE DO
The Cairo-Durham Central School District, in partnership with the community, is committed to creating multiple learning pathways that empower all students to maximize their individual potential and become leaders in their local and global communities.

VISION: WHAT WE WANT TO BE
The Cairo-Durham Central School District will provide a collaborative and engaging environment that is committed to the educational excellence of each individual student. By fostering high expectations and creating educational leaders, we will be recognized regionally and across the state as an exemplary school system.

CORE BELIEFS
We believe:
• Students come first.
• Targeted, timely staff development is critical.
• High-quality teachers skilled in practice are paramount.
• Support staff should be valued and respected for the invaluable contributions that they make to support student learning.
• Strong and consistent leadership is essential.
• Change must be embraced as we move forward.
• The connection between school, home, and community is crucial.
• The effective use of technology is vital to education.
• Student success requires home and school connections supported by technology.
• Our schools should be the center of our community.
• Instruction should engage and challenge all students.
• Data should be integral to the decision-making process.
• We must encourage a culture that values data.
• We must continually plan for efficient and effective utilization and deployment of resources.

STRENGTHS
Program
• Our students continually strive for excellence in everything they do.
• We continually inspire our students to do better and to reach their full potential.
• Students’ interests and needs always drive course offerings.
• We offer a great many programs and classes to students.

Leadership
• We have strong leaders who are always willing to listen, who are agents of change, and who care for the district as a whole.
• Our professional, dynamic staff is caring, compassionate, and committed to excellence.
• We have strong resources that support instruction.
• We have strong administrative support for staff professional development.
• Our Board of Education places value on research-based initiatives and smaller class sizes.
• We have always encouraged the individuality of our educators.
• We have a well-established culture of collaboration and support.

Community
• We are a small school district that gives the community the opportunity to know the leadership and staff who instruct our students.
• We have been able to establish relationships with multi-generational families while connecting and welcoming new families into our school communities.
Our Challenges, Competition & External Factors

CHALLENGES
The Cairo-Durham School District is committed to addressing the challenges that we face on a day-to-day and year-to-year basis.
- Stabilizing enrollment
- Providing consistent funding for extracurricular and co-curricular activities
- Overcoming geographic distances
- Meeting increased needs that result from socio-economic challenges
- Improving our graduation rate
- Increasing communication and transparency
- Achieving long-range financial stability
- Improving student achievement and literacy
- Supporting special education needs
- Unifying the community
- Retaining district leadership and staff
- Aligning curriculum for Pre-K through 12
- Overcoming Focus District status

EXTERNAL FACTORS
The Cairo-Durham Central School District realizes that there are political, social, technological, and demographic factors that impact every public school system over which we have no control. This district will always do its best to respond to these issues. Politically, the Common Core State Standards, Annual Professional Performance Review, Race to the Top, and other initiatives were implemented too quickly and have led to poor implementation, parental frustration, a shift of funding, and an increased need for professional development. Socially, this district has many complex family structures, which can cause increased stress for students, affecting their focus and success in the classroom. The technological infrastructure that is necessary to support economic growth in our district is deficient. Demographically, declining enrollment is causing less building usage, less state aid, fewer programs and staff, and possible redistricting.
**LEADERSHIP**

The leadership of the Cairo-Durham Central School District will support a comprehensive education program that includes the development, implementation and monitoring of a consistent Pre-K through 12 vertically aligned curriculum making sure that no gaps exist across content areas or grade levels. District leadership will prioritize fiscal, community, and professional development support.

By June of 2015, district leadership will implement through multiple communication methods and at multiple venues throughout the community our district mission and vision statements that will be embodied and embraced by all stakeholders.

**COMMUNITY**

By 2016, the Cairo-Durham Central School District will develop a comprehensive community support policy that focuses on proactively working with schools and our community to provide an environment that is healthy, safe, and productive for our children to ensure the academic success for all students.

By 2016, the district will develop a plan that will recognize and embrace the diverse range of members and resources across the community while working towards making our district the center of learning and a place to promote opportunities that demonstrate what our larger school community has to offer.

**INSTRUCTION**

By the 2015-2016 school year, the district will develop a vertically aligned Pre-K through 12 curriculum that explicitly reflects the progression of skills and continuum of educational experiences through research-based best practices and alignment to the Common Core.

Also by the 2015-2016 school year, the district will create a professional development plan and calendar for district-wide staff that responds to all data sources (summative, benchmark, and interim student data). This professional development plan will be reviewed bi-annually to ensure alignment with student performance data, district goals, and curriculum frameworks.

**STRATEGIC PARAMETERS**

Our strategic parameters are the ground rules that we have agreed on to guide our strategic plan.

- Place trust and value in the opinions of educators.
- Make communication between the school and community transparent and beneficial to all.
- Put student health (educational, emotional, and physical) at the forefront of curriculum design and decisions.
- Do not tolerate discrimination of any kind.
- Provide an avenue for students to express themselves.
- Ensure that Pre-K through 12 instructional programming meets the needs of all students.
- Always give Pre-K through 12 instructional programs precedence when allocating resources.
- Involve all stakeholders in decisions and hold them to high expectations.
- Implement a widely used and transparent problem-solving model, and clearly communicate a chain of command.
Strategic Plan

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

John Amoroso  
Peter Byrne  
Lorraine Colistra  
Rob Conti  
Marie Culihan  
Nathan Farrell  
Tim Fisher  
Bernadette Gavin-Palmieri  
Laura Giarrusso  
Justin Karker  
Heather Maassmann  
Rob MacGiffert  

Tracy MacGiffert  
Janet McKeon  
Tara Mentes  
Jeff Miriello  
Doug Ostrander  
Dean Pectal  
Amie Rogers  
Joe Scampoli  
Jennifer Searing-Burke  
Anthony Taibi  
Donna Trunzo  

Andrew DeFeo, Facilitator  
Kimberly Shannon, Communications Specialist

Cairo-Durham  
CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

P.O. Box 780 • Cairo, NY 12413 • 518.622.8534  
www.cairodurham.org

Produced in cooperation with Questar III's Communications Service