



GOWANDA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT



BLUEPRINT FOR SUCCESS



<https://gowcsd.org>



10674 Prospect Street
Gowanda, NY 14070

2025-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

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Dear Members of the Gowanda School Community,

As we begin a new school year together, it has never been more important to remain focused, aligned, and intentional in all that we do. Each year we grow stronger as a district, and this year we are excited to share with you the updated results of our collaborative planning—our renewed commitment to continuous growth and excellence.

Our Blueprint for Success (2025-26) reflects the ideas and priorities shaped by thoughtful conversations with our Board of Education, Leadership Team, staff, families, and community members. Once again, your feedback played a vital role in shaping this year's plan. Together, we have built a roadmap that not only guides our daily work, but also ensures we remain centered on our mission: serving every child, every day, in every way possible.

This updated plan will continue to serve as the backbone of our work. It provides direction and clarity while reinforcing our commitment to connecting with each child and family, strengthening relationships, and enhancing our sense of community. Our shared vision for Gowanda is one of excellence, belonging, and opportunity—and by working together, we will continue to make that vision a reality.

Thank you for your feedback, support, and partnership. The success of our students and the progress of our district are made possible by the strength of our community. We are proud to stand alongside you as teammates in this important work, and we look forward to all that we will accomplish together in the year ahead.

With gratitude and enthusiasm,

Dr. Robert B. Anderson
Superintendent

Max Graham
President, Board of Education

PROCESS INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

Blueprint Planning is intended to:

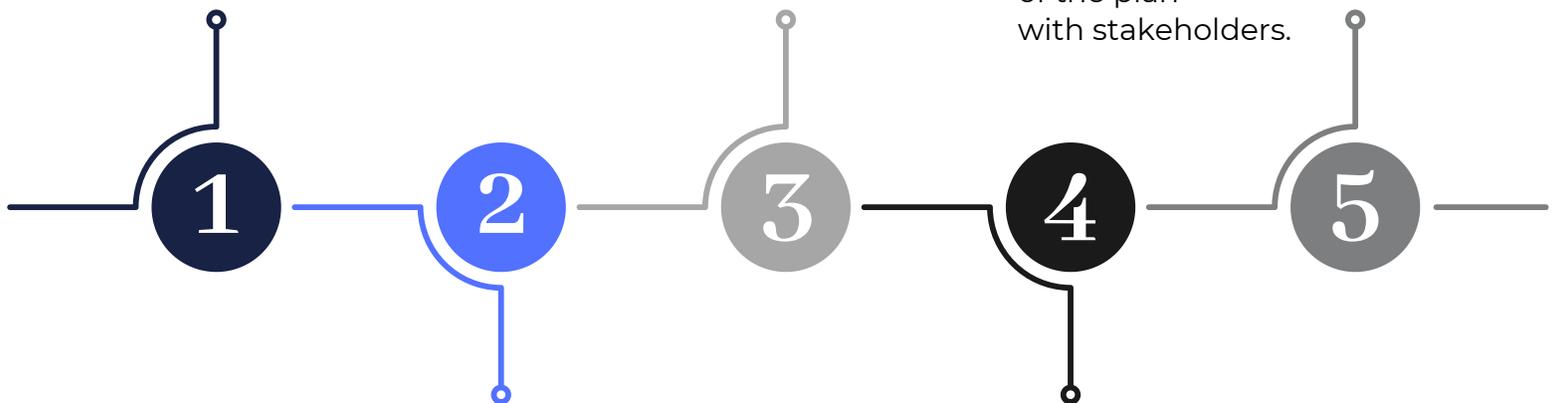
- Involve all members of the school community and reflect their shared perspectives.
- Allow stakeholder representatives to review community feedback to clearly define the district's mission, vision and core values.
- Engage a team in defining the priorities of the district and suggesting action steps to accomplish objectives.
- Facilitate action planning focused on identifying who, when and how the work will get done.
- Provide the district with a road map that is transparent, accountable, and focused.
- Enable the district's efforts to innovate, allocate resources and continuously grow in a coordinated, thoughtful, and aligned manner.
- Be an iterative, evolving, and ongoing process that builds from one year to the next while reflecting emerging needs and changing demands.



2024: Community Feedback Gathered

August 2025: Community Team Assembled, Mission/Vision/Core Values Reviewed, Priority Areas Developed, Strategies Suggested.

Fall 2025: Revisions and review completed by the Leadership Team. Communication to the community and implementation of the plan with stakeholders.



2025: Mission/Vision/Core Values/Priority Areas reviewed by the Board of Education and Leadership Team.

August 2025: Action plans developed that specifically identify what will be done to meet the objectives of each priority area and who will be responsible for leading the work

WHO WE ARE

At Gowanda, our shared core purpose, aspirations and expectations are clear:

OUR MISSION

The purpose of the Gowanda CSD is to prepare our students to be successful and embrace a changing world.

District Motto

“High expectations, Every Panther, Every day.”

OUR VISION

The Gowanda CSD will provide a high-quality, personalized education that will focus on developing communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking skills through unique academic opportunities.

Core Values

We believe that we can achieve our vision and accomplish our mission in all of our work if we strive to:

- *Collaborate and connect with all members of our school community.*
- *Demonstrate commitment to our work and to each child.*
- *Embrace diversity and inclusivity.*
- *Provide rigorous academic opportunities and leadership development for all.*
- *Care deeply about each student and their family.*
- *Take pride in what we do and how we do it.*
- *Act with integrity, honesty, and personal accountability.*

OUR DISTRICT

Gowanda Central School District, located in Gowanda, New York, serves a diverse community in both Cattaraugus and Erie counties. The district is committed to providing a well-rounded education with a focus on academic excellence, personal growth, and community involvement. Offering a range of programs from athletics to the arts, it supports students in their educational and extracurricular pursuits. With a dedicated staff and strong community ties, Gowanda Central fosters a supportive and inclusive learning environment.

OUR COMMUNITY

The community surrounding Gowanda Central School District is a close-knit, rural area located in the scenic regions of Cattaraugus and Erie counties. Known for its strong sense of community, residents actively support local schools, businesses, and events. The area boasts natural beauty, with nearby forests, rivers, and parks, offering outdoor recreation and a peaceful atmosphere. With a mix of agricultural, residential, and small-town charm, the Gowanda community is proud of its rich history and welcoming spirit.

OUR LEADERSHIP

Board of Education

Max Graham, President
Zachary Nobles, Vice-President
Susan Bettker
Crista Monat
Mark D. Nephew
Brittney Olszewski
John Y. Waterman, Jr.

Administration

Robert B. Anderson, Ed.D., School Superintendent
Barb Smith,
School Business Administrator
Ashley Wakelee,
Director of Learning and Continual Improvement
Rebekah Newell,
High School Principal
Darlene Silleman,
Middle School Principal
Chelsea Kroll,
Elementary School Principal
Janine Jalal,
Director of Special Education
Rich Smith, Director of Facilities
Nicole Genovese,
Food Service Manager
Annette Hoelscher,
Transportation Supervisor
Candy Phillips, Athletic Director
Lea Golden, Title VI Director

OUR PLAN

The **Mission** of the Gowanda Central School District is clear and powerful: to prepare every student to be successful and to embrace a changing world. This commitment is reinforced daily by the district's motto—"High expectations, Every Panther, Every day"—which emphasizes the shared responsibility to support every learner in reaching their fullest potential. Grounded in this mission, the district seeks to nurture not only academic success but also the confidence and adaptability that students will need in an ever-evolving society.

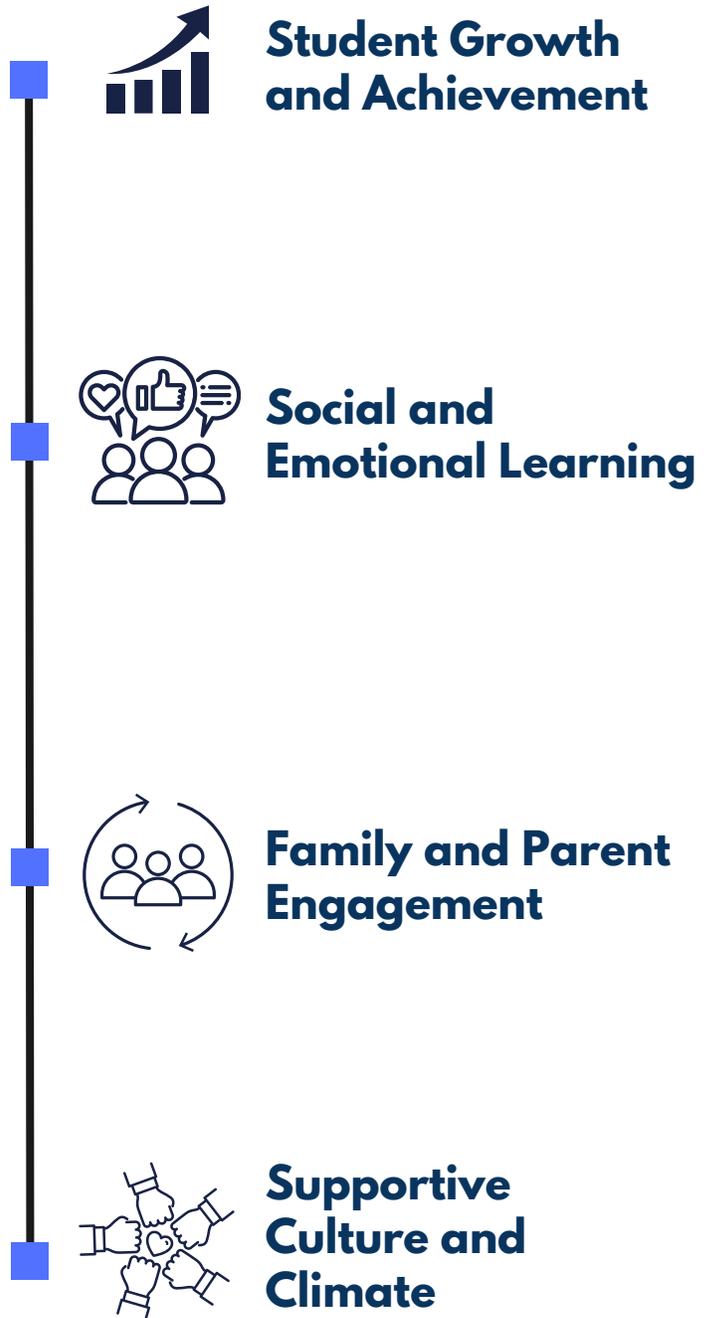
The **Vision** of the district centers on providing a high-quality, personalized education designed to prepare students with the skills of communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking. These skills are essential for lifelong learning and success in the future. By offering unique academic opportunities, Gowanda ensures that students engage in meaningful experiences that both challenge and inspire them. The vision reflects a belief in preparing learners who are not only ready for college or careers but also equipped to be thoughtful, capable citizens in their communities and beyond.

The **Core Values** of the Blueprint highlight what guides the district's daily work and long-term decision making. Collaboration and connection with the school community, a deep commitment to each child, and the embrace of diversity and inclusivity are central to this approach. Equally important are providing rigorous academic opportunities, cultivating leadership, demonstrating care for students and their families, and acting with integrity, honesty, and accountability. Pride in the district and in the success of its students unites staff, families, and community members in a common purpose.

The Blueprint identifies four **Priority Areas** with corresponding goals to bring the mission and vision to life. **Student Growth and Achievement** focuses on ensuring that all students learn at high levels with multiple opportunities to demonstrate progress. **Social and Emotional Learning** emphasizes a comprehensive plan to support the well-being and development of students. **Family and Parent Engagement** calls for stronger connections through communication, trusted relationships, and welcoming environments. Finally, **Supportive Culture and Climate** highlights the importance of involving staff and community members in building safe, inclusive schools where everyone feels valued. Together, these priorities create a roadmap that will guide Gowanda CSD in continuing to grow as a district of excellence.

PRIORITY AREAS

Based on community feedback and initial planning by the Board of Education and Leadership Team, the following areas were identified as priorities to be focused on in order to fulfill the mission of the district. Goals have been developed for each area.





PRIORITY AREA GOALS

Student Growth and Achievement	Goal: Gowanda Central School District will ensure all students learn at high levels with multiple opportunities to demonstrate growth.
Social and Emotional Learning	Goal: Gowanda Central School District will offer a comprehensive plan to provide appropriate social-emotional development and support.
Family and Parent Engagement	Goal: Gowanda Central School District will work to increase family engagement using multiple forms of communication, build relationships with trusted adults for each student and their family, and ensure all families feel welcome in the school environment.
Supportive Culture and Climate	Goal: Gowanda Central School District will promote district culture and climate through extended involvement of staff and community members in decisions and activities to further a safe and welcoming school environment.

ACTION PLANS



Priority Area 1: Student Growth and Achievement

District Goal: Gowanda Central School District will ensure all students learn at high levels with multiple opportunities to demonstrate growth.

Focus Area 1: High Quality Curriculum and Instruction

Strategies:	Person or People Responsible	Timeline
Literacy - Vertical Alignment PK-12 - Strategies for teaching reading and writing across all disciplines	E2CCB Instructional Coach, Director of Learning & Continual Improvement, GCS TOSA's, Principals, Collaborative Teams	Sept 2025; Ongoing
RTI/MTSS - Training and discussion around essential questions 3 & 4 in collaborative teams - Incorporating intervention and enrichment opportunities for all students	E2CCB Instructional Coach, Director of Learning & Continual Improvement, GCS TOSA's, Principals, Collaborative Teams	Sept 2025; Ongoing
Informal Feedback / Instructional Coaching - Establish coaching cycles for all grades / departments	E2CCB Instructional Coach, Director of Learning & Continual Improvement, GCS TOSA's, Principals, Collaborative Teams	Sept 2025; Ongoing



ACTION PLANS



Focus Area 2: Student Assessment and Grading Systems

Strategies:	Person or People Responsible	Timeline
<p>Portrait of a Graduate - Defining a Gowanda graduate and providing students with the tools they need to be successful post-high school, and developing a district plan for 2026 implementation</p>	<p>E2CCB Instructional Coach, Director of Learning & Continual Improvement, GCS TOSA's, Principals, Collaborative Teams</p>	<p>Sept 2025; Ongoing</p>
<p>Project-Based Learning / Assessment - Training for all staff - Incorporate PBL & A 2x/year in all classes</p>	<p>E2CCB Instructional Coach, Director of Learning & Continual Improvement, GCS TOSA's, Principals, Collaborative Teams</p>	<p>Sept 2025; Ongoing</p>
<p>Formative & Summative Assessment Development - Continued support on developing and analyzing data, reteaching & enrichment</p>	<p>E2CCB Instructional Coach, Director of Learning & Continual Improvement, GCS TOSA's, Principals, Collaborative Teams</p>	<p>Sept 2025; Ongoing</p>
<p>District will review and monitor grading practices to ensure uniformity.</p>	<p>Supt; Director of Learning; Principals</p>	



ACTION PLANS



Priority Area 2: Social and Emotional Learning

District Goal: Gowanda Central School District will offer a comprehensive plan to provide appropriate social-emotional development and support.

Focus Area 1: Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

Strategies:	Person or People Responsible	Timeline
Tier 1 for All - Define Panther Pride - Set expectations for what it means to be a Panther in all three buildings	Building Principals, Student Support Team Members, Classroom Teachers, Paraprofessionals	Sept 2025, Ongoing
Data Review - Ongoing data analysis of student behavior to identify trends and areas for improvement	Building Principals, Student Support Team Members, Classroom Teachers, Paraprofessionals	Sept 2025, Ongoing
In-Class Lessons / Peer Groups - Development of lessons and small group sessions based on identified trends and areas of need	Building Principals, Student Support Team Members, Classroom Teachers, Paraprofessionals	Sept 2025, Ongoing



ACTION PLANS



Focus Area 2: Attendance		
Strategies:	Person or People Responsible	Timeline
<p>Attendance Committee - Establish and meet to discuss chronically absent students and develop individual plans to support students and their families in improving school attendance.</p>	<p>Building Principals, Student Support Team Members, Classroom Teachers, Paraprofessionals</p>	<p>Sept 2025, Ongoing</p>
<p>Outline Tasks for Attendance Interventions - Who is doing what and how often? Phone calls and letters home at 3 days, 5 days, 10 days, etc.</p>	<p>Building Principals, Student Support Team Members, Classroom Teachers, Paraprofessionals</p>	<p>Sept 2025, Ongoing</p>
<p>Trusted Adult - Outlining a main point of contact for each child w/ weekly outreach</p>	<p>Building Principals, Student Support Team Members, Classroom Teachers, Paraprofessionals</p>	<p>Sept 2025, Ongoing</p>



ACTION PLANS



Priority Area 3: Family and Parent Engagement

District Goal: Gowanda Central School District will work to increase family engagement using multiple forms of communication, build relationships with trusted adults for each student and their family, and ensure all families feel welcome in the school environment.

Focus Area 1: Communication

Strategies:	Person or People Responsible	Timeline
Parent Contact - Schedule weekly phone calls and 2x / year P/T conferences	District Administration, Building Principals, Classroom Teachers, Paraprofessionals	Sept 2025, Ongoing
Social Media - Use of various social media tools to share news and updates with all district stakeholders	District Administration, Building Principals, Classroom Teachers, Public Relations Specialist	Sept 2025, Ongoing
District News - Use of Smore to provide regular updates to families	District Administration, Building Principals, Classroom Teachers, Public Relations Specialist	Sept 2025, Ongoing



ACTION PLANS



Focus Area 2: Welcoming Environment / Connectedness

Strategies:	Person or People Responsible	Timeline
<p>Give Thanks / Stakeholder Shout-outs - Identify school community members who help support and interact positively with the school</p>	<p>District Administration, Building Principals, Classroom Teachers, Paraprofessionals</p>	<p>Sept 2025, Ongoing</p>
<p>Data Analysis - Use of Panorama & School Climate Survey Data to identify areas in need of improvement</p>	<p>District Administration, Building Principals, Classroom Teachers, Student Support Team Members</p>	<p>Sept 2025, Ongoing</p>
<p>Warm Welcome - All students (PK-12) are welcomed to school and each classroom with an appropriate, friendly greeting</p>	<p>District Administration, Building Principals, Classroom Teachers, Paraprofessionals</p>	<p>Sept 2025, Ongoing</p>



ACTION PLANS



Priority Area 4: Supportive Culture and Climate

District Goal: Gowanda Central School District will promote district culture and climate through extended involvement of staff and community members in decisions and activities to further a safe and welcoming school environment.

Focus Area 1: Culture of Collaboration and Respect

Strategies:	Person or People Responsible	Timeline
Building Leadership Teams & District Leadership Team - Monthly meetings to review areas of need	District Administration, Building Principals, Team Leads	Sept 2025, Ongoing
End of Year Surveys - Survey district stakeholders to identify what's working and what needs improvement	District Administration, School Stakeholders	May 2026
Principal's Panel - Convene students to discuss ongoing issues at the building level	Building Principals, Students	Sept 2025, Ongoing

Focus Area 2: Professional Development & Support

Strategies:	Person or People Responsible	Timeline
Regional Collaboration - Work with E2CCB districts to address regional needs	E2CCB Staff, Director of Learning & Continual Improvement, GCS TOSA's, Building Principals, Collaborative Teams	Sept 2025, Ongoing
Individualized Professional Development - Review needs and schedule accordingly with feedback from department leaders	Director of Learning & Continual Improvement, Building Principals, Department Leaders	Sept 2025, Ongoing
Vertical Professional Development - Support PK-12 teams to ensure vertical alignment in instructional practices	Director of Learning & Continual Improvement, Building Principals, Department Leaders	Sept 2025, Ongoing

OUR NEXT STEPS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Timeframe	Activity	Who
October 2025	Blueprint Plan Presented to the BOE and Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superintendent • Director of Learning and Continual Improvement • Administrative Team
October/November 2025	Blueprint Plan and/or Presentation Shared with Faculty, Staff and Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superintendent • Director of Learning and Continual Improvement
October/November 2025	Blueprint Plan “unpacked” and shared with the faculty and staff at faculty meetings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principals
February 2026	Blueprint Budget Recommendations Made Blueprint Expenditures Finalized	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superintendent • Director of Learning and Continual Improvement • School Business Administrator
May 2026	Blueprint Updates provided to the BOE, Community and Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superintendent • Director of Learning and Continual Improvement

OUR NEXT STEPS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

<p>June 2026</p>	<p>Blueprint Planning Meeting / Begin Plan Updates for 2026-2027</p> <p>Updates provided to the BOE, Faculty, Staff and Community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superintendent • Director of Learning and Continual Improvement • Administrative Team • BOE • Superintendent • Administrators • Staff • Community Members
<p>July, 2026</p>	<p>Blueprint Planning Day Held Plan Updated for 26-27</p>	
<p>Spring 2027</p>	<p>Blueprint Refresh Conducted</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BOE • Superintendent • Administrators • Staff • Community Members
<p>Spring 2028</p>	<p>Blueprint Refresh Conducted</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BOE • Superintendent • Administrators • Staff • Community Members
<p>June 2029</p>	<p>Blueprint Planning Meeting / Plan Updated for 2026-2027</p> <p>Updates provided to the BOE, Faculty, Staff and Community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superintendent • Director of Learning and Continual Improvement • Administrative Team • BOE • Superintendent • Administrators • Staff • Community Members

2024-2025

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