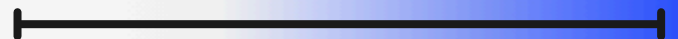




GOWANDA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT



BLUEPRINT FOR SUCCESS



2026-2027 STRATEGIC PLAN



<https://gowcsd.org>



10674 Prospect Street
Gowanda, NY 14070

TABLE OF CONTENTS

3

Introduction and Overview

4

Mission/Vision/Core Values

8

Priority Areas

10

Action Plans

15

Accountability and Implementation Plan



Dear Members of the Gowanda School Community,

At Gowanda, our commitment to excellence is not a destination; it is a continuous journey. As we build upon the strong foundation of our previous Blueprint for Success, it has never been more important to remain focused, aligned, and intentional in our work on behalf of every student we serve.

We are proud to share this refreshed strategic plan, developed through a highly collaborative process that engaged our Board of Education, leadership team, staff, families, and community members. This updated plan reflects both the progress we have made and the valuable feedback gathered throughout this past year. It honors the work that has come before while sharpening our focus for the future.

This refreshed strategic plan will serve as a guiding framework for our next chapter - ensuring that we continue to grow, innovate, and strengthen the connections that define our school community. At its core, this work is about ensuring that every student experiences a true sense of belonging and knows that we believe in their potential as they grow socially, emotionally, and academically into leaders for whom anything is possible.

Thank you for your continued partnership and support. Your voice, collaboration, and commitment are essential to our success and to the bright future of the Gowanda Central School District.

Sincerely,

Robert B. Anderson, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Max Graham
President, Board of Education



PROCESS INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

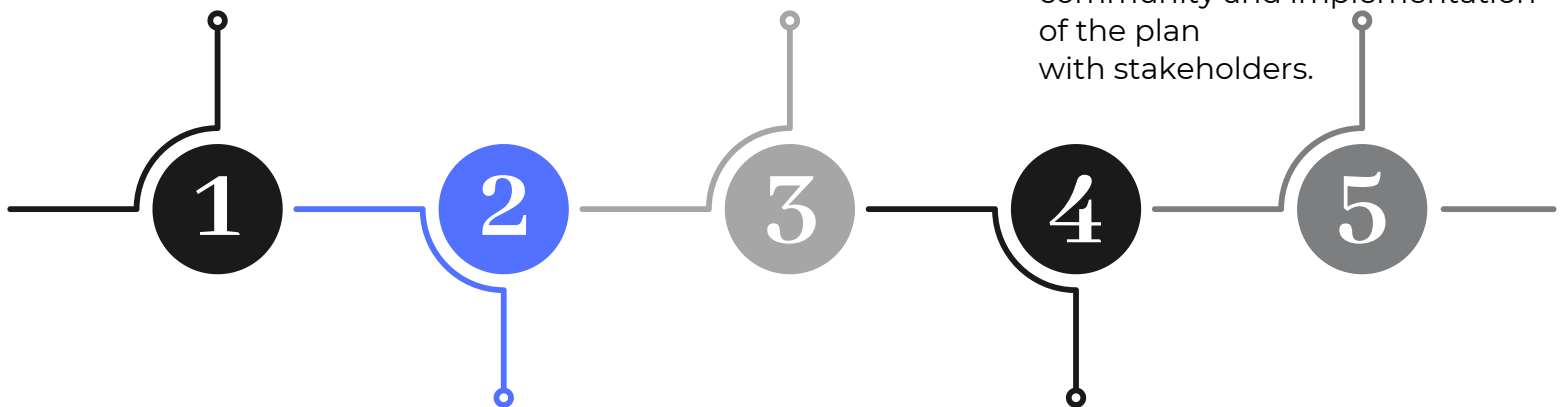
Blueprint Planning is intended to:

- 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.

April 2026:
Community
Feedback Gathered

May 2026: Community Team
Assembled, Mission/Vision/Core
Values Reviewed, Priority Areas
Developed, Strategies Suggested.

July-September 2026: Revisions
and review completed by the
Leadership Team.
Communication to the
community and implementation
of the plan
with stakeholders.



April 2026: Mission/Vision/Core
Values/Priority Areas reviewed by
the Board of Education and
Leadership Team.

June 2026: 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 Gowanda Central School District is committed to high expectations for every Panther, every day. We partner with students, families, staff, and the community to provide a safe, inclusive, and engaging learning environment that empowers every student to achieve excellence, embrace challenges, and reach their full potential.

OUR VISION

Every Panther is prepared to learn, lead, and thrive with the knowledge, character, confidence, and resilience to succeed in college, career, and life.

Core Values

P.A.N.T.H.E.R.

P – Perseverance

We embrace challenges, demonstrate resilience, and strive for continuous growth.

A – Accountability

We take responsibility for our actions, learning, and contributions to our school community.

N – Nurturing Relationships

We foster a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment where everyone is valued and respected.

T – Trust

We build trust through honesty, integrity, and open communication.

H – High Expectations

We believe every Panther can achieve excellence through effort, determination, and high standards.

E – Excellence

We pursue excellence in academics, character, service, and everything we do.

R – Respect

We treat ourselves, others, and our community with kindness, dignity, and compassion.

OUR DISTRICT

The Gowanda Central School District is a student-centered school community dedicated to providing a safe, inclusive, and engaging learning environment where every student is encouraged to achieve their full potential. Serving students across multiple communities in Western New York, the district is committed to high expectations, strong relationships, and preparing every Panther for success in college, career, and life. Through innovative instruction, comprehensive student support, and meaningful partnerships with families and the community, Gowanda fosters both academic excellence and personal growth. Guided by its Blueprint for Success, the district is focused on developing knowledgeable, resilient, and compassionate graduates who are prepared to learn, lead, and thrive in an ever-changing world.



OUR LEADERSHIP

Board of Education

Max Graham, President

John Y. Waterman, Jr., Vice President

Susan Bettker

Aimee Gernatt

Crista Monat

Zachary Nobles

Brittney Olszewski

Administration

Robert B. Anderson, Ed.D., Superintendent

Barbara Smith, School Business Administrator

Ashley Wakelee, Director of Learning and Continual Improvement

Janine Jalal, Director of Special Education

Rebecca Newell, HS Principal

Darlene Silleman, MS Principal

Wendy Luce, HS-MS Assistant Principal

Chelsea Kroll, ES Principal

Chandra Shaver, ES Assistant Principal

Rich Smith, Director of Facilities

Annette Hoeschler, Transportation Supervisor

Nicole Genovese, Food Service

Lea Golden, Title VI Director

Matt Kordrupel, Technology Coordinator

OUR COMMUNITY

The Gowanda Central School District serves a welcoming rural community that values its rich history, strong traditions, and close-knit relationships. Centered in the village of Gowanda and extending into parts of Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, and Erie Counties, the district includes portions of the Towns of Collins, Persia, Dayton, Perrysburg, and New Albion, as well as areas within both the Seneca Nation of Indians Cattaraugus Territory and the Cattaraugus County community of Versailles.

Nestled in the scenic hills of Western New York along Cattaraugus Creek, the area offers a blend of small-town charm and natural beauty, with easy access to parks, forests, and outdoor recreation. Residents enjoy a strong agricultural heritage, vibrant youth sports and community programs, and local landmarks that reflect the village's historic roots as a regional hub. Community members take pride in supporting their schools, attending events at the district's campus on Panther Drive, partnering with local organizations and businesses, and honoring the rich cultural contributions of the Seneca Nation.

There is a deep appreciation for family, agriculture, and outdoor activities such as hiking, hunting, fishing, and snow sports, all of which help shape students' experiences beyond the classroom. Community members recognize the important role of public education in strengthening the region's future and actively collaborate with the district to expand academic, arts, and career and technical education opportunities for all learners. Together, residents, families, businesses, and local organizations share a commitment to creating pathways that help every student and the broader Gowanda area grow, succeed, and thrive.



OUR PLAN

The Gowanda Central School District's updated Blueprint for Success establishes a clear commitment to ensuring high expectations for every Panther, every day. The district's mission emphasizes providing a safe, inclusive, and engaging learning environment where every student is empowered to achieve excellence, embrace challenges, and realize their full potential. This commitment is reinforced by a vision of creating a culture where every Panther is prepared to learn, lead, and thrive with the knowledge, character, confidence, and resilience necessary for success in college, career, and life. Together, the mission and vision reflect a student-centered approach focused on both academic achievement and personal growth.

The Blueprint is grounded in the district's P.A.N.T.H.E.R. Core Values, which define the culture and expectations for students, staff, and the broader school community. Perseverance, Accountability, Nurturing Relationships, Trust, High Expectations, Excellence, and Respect serve as the foundation for daily decision-making and interactions. These values encourage resilience, responsibility, integrity, collaboration, and compassion while fostering an environment where every individual feels valued, supported, and challenged to do their best. Collectively, they reinforce the district's belief that strong relationships and high standards are essential to student success.

To achieve its vision, the Blueprint identifies K-12 Literacy Across All Content Areas as a key strategic priority.

Recognizing that literacy is fundamental to success in every discipline, the district is committed to developing confident readers, writers, speakers, listeners, and critical thinkers by embedding literacy instruction throughout every classroom and content area. This comprehensive approach ensures students build the communication and analytical skills necessary to succeed academically while preparing them to become lifelong learners.

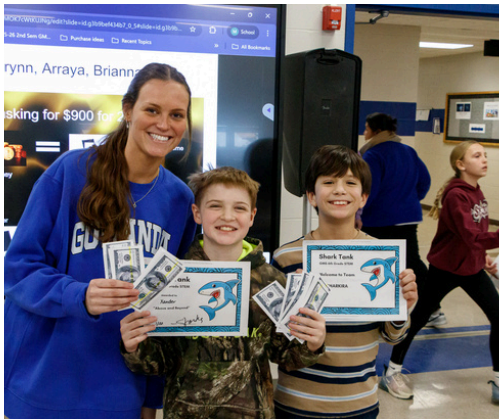
The Blueprint also prioritizes preparing students for an evolving future through a Portrait of a Graduate and Competency-Based Education framework while remaining committed to Educating the Whole Child. Gowanda will provide authentic, rigorous learning experiences that help students develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed for success beyond graduation. At the same time, the district will strengthen its Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), expand social-emotional learning, and deepen family partnerships to ensure every student receives the academic, behavioral, and emotional support needed to thrive. Together, these priorities reflect Gowanda's commitment to developing well-rounded graduates who are prepared to contribute positively to their communities and confidently navigate an ever-changing world.

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.



**K-12 Literacy
Across all Content
Areas**



**Portrait of a
Graduate/
Competency Based
Education**



**Supporting the
Whole Child**



PRIORITY AREA GOALS

K-12 Literacy Across all Content Areas

Goal: Develop confident readers, writers, speakers, listeners, and thinkers by embedding literacy instruction in every classroom and every content area.

Portrait of a Graduate/ Competency Based Education

Goal: Prepare every Panther with the knowledge, skills, and competencies needed to succeed beyond graduation through meaningful learning experiences.

Supporting the Whole Child

Goal: Ensure every Panther feels safe, connected, supported, and challenged academically, socially, and emotionally.

ACTION PLANS



K-12 Literacy Across all Content Areas

Goal: Develop confident readers, writers, speakers, listeners, and thinkers by embedding literacy instruction in every classroom and every content area.

Strategies:	Person / People Responsible:	Timeline:
Professional Learning		
- Continued Professional Learning Communities Work - Provide ongoing professional development on evidence-based literacy instruction - Utilize teacher leaders to model best practices	Erie 2 BOCES Teacher Leaders Administrative Team	2026-2027 School year
Curriculum & Instruction		
- Review K-12 vertical and horizontal alignment of shared reading and writing strategies - Develop crosswalks of horizontal standards for literacy - Ensure speaking tasks/presentations (performance) are embedded in all content areas/grade levels (speaking standards)	Administrative Team Collaborative Teams Literacy Committee	2026-2027 School year
Assessment		
- Monitor student growth through diagnostics and progress monitoring - Use formative assessments to guide instructions - Analyze data collaboratively to inform interventions	Collaborative Teams	2026-2027 School year

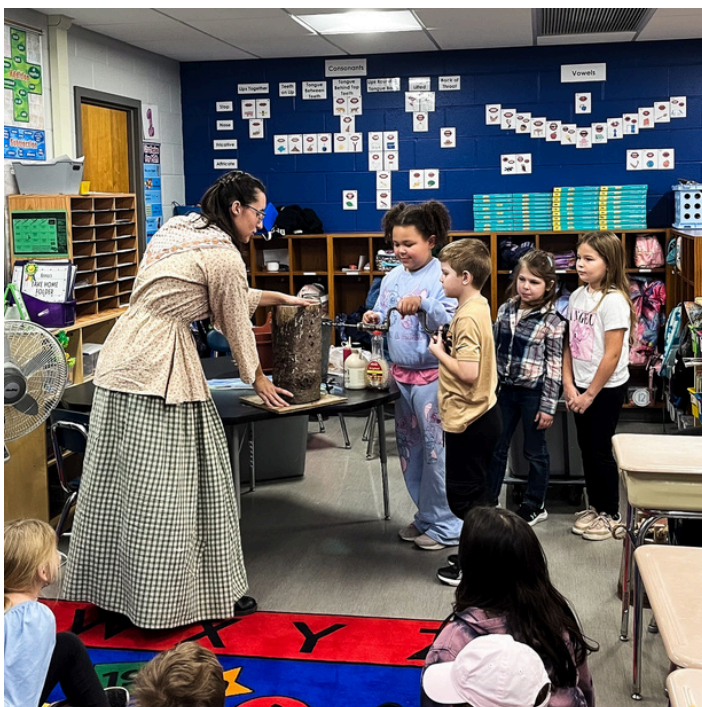
ACTION PLANS



Portrait of a Graduate / Competency-Based Education

Goal: Prepare every Panther with the knowledge, skills, and competencies needed to succeed beyond graduation through meaningful learning experiences.

Strategies:	Person / People Responsible:	Timeline:
Professional Learning		
• Build a common understanding of the district's PoG and learner competencies • Develop staff capacity in competency-based education • Provide training in authentic learning, project-based learning, inquiry, and performance-based assessment • Support teachers in designing rigorous, student-centered learning experiences • Calibrate scoring of performance assessments using common rubrics	Administrative Team Erie 2 BOCES Instructional Staff	2026-2027 School year



ACTION PLANS



Curriculum and Instruction

- Partner with the community for authentic opportunities
- Revise the curriculum to intentionally embed PoG competencies and authentic learning experiences in K-12
- Develop at least one high-quality “gold standard” authentic learning or PBL unit in every grade level or content area
- Create opportunities for students to publicly demonstrate their learning through exhibitions, showcases, presentations, portfolios, capstone experiences, or community presentations
- Highlight and celebrate the portrait of a graduate competencies through monthly student recognitions, classroom examples, and district communications

Administrative Team

Team Leads

Instructional Staff

2026-2027 School year

Assessment

- Collect evidence of implementation through classroom observations, student work, performance assessments, and student reflections to monitor progress toward competency-based learning
- Develop competency-based performance assessments aligned with portrait of a graduate competencies
- Use student reflection and self-assessment as a part of the assessment process

Administrative Team

Team Leads

Instructional Staff

2026-2027 School year

ACTION PLANS



Supporting the Whole Child

Goal: Ensure every Panther feels safe, connected, supported, and challenged academically, socially, and emotionally.

Strategies:	Person / People Responsible:	Timeline:
Academic Support		
- Enhance the MTSS process through data-driven decision-making - Identify and respond to individual student academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs - Provide targeted interventions and supports to help all students grow, succeed, and thrive	Administrative Team Collaborative Teams Counselors	2026-2027 School year



ACTION PLANS



Social Emotional Learning

- Develop and implement a vertically aligned K–12 SEL curriculum through Character Strong
- Provide Tier 1 support focused on bullying prevention, social skills, and healthy relationship development
- Build consistent opportunities for students to develop positive character, relationships, and social-emotional skills across all grade levels
- Develop and strengthen Tier 2 and Tier 3 behavioral interventions within the MTSS framework
- Collaborate with school counselors to create targeted supports and individualized intervention plans
- Implement progress monitoring systems to track student growth and response to interventions

Administrative Team
Collaborative Teams
Counselors

2026-2027 School year

School Climate

- Enhance school culture and climate through increased family engagement opportunities
- Strengthen staff connections and collaboration across the school community
- Foster a welcoming, inclusive environment where all students, families, and staff feel a sense of belonging

Administrative Team
Staff

2026- 2027 School year

OUR NEXT STEPS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Timeframe	Activity	Who
July-August 2026	Blueprint Plan Presented to the BOE and Community	• Superintendent • Administrative Team
October 2026	Blueprint Plan “unpacked” and shared with the faculty and staff at faculty meetings.	• Principals
February 2027	Blueprint Budget Recommendations Made Blueprint Expenditures Finalized	• Superintendent • Administrative Team
May 2027	Blueprint Updates provided to the BOE, Community, and Staff	• Superintendent • Administrative Team
June 2027	Blueprint Planning Meeting / Plan Updated for 2027-2028 Updates provided to the BOE, Faculty, Staff, and Community	• Superintendent • Administrative Team • Staff • Community Members
Spring 2028	Blueprint Refresh Conducted	• BOE • Superintendent • Administrators • Staff • Community Members

2025-2026

BLUEPRINT FOR SUCCESS



<https://gowcsd.org>



10674 Prospect Street
Gowanda, NY 14070

STRATEGIC PLAN