



# EDUCATIONAL MASTER PLAN

Adopted by the Board of Education  
on  
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## **Introduction to the Plan**

by  
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This planning document is designed to create and maintain school excellence through a focus on results. It is built on a complex adaptive planning model and replaces the complicated, command and control strategic planning process. The Plan is based on seven district approved educational standards that flow directly from a clearly articulated, compelling purpose for the district and its schools. It provides the Board of Education with a vehicle to clarify and set annual priorities, monitor the progress of long-range plans, and embed continuous improvement throughout the organization.

This comprehensive District *Educational Master Plan* for the New Paltz Central District is the result of much discussion, assessment, collaboration and envisioning since the fall of 2006. The district staff and community constituents have worked diligently to define the vision, mission, and beliefs. They are already beginning to put these aspects into action by refining the curriculum, reforming the instruction, and refocusing on learning.

As these actions and intentions take form, they bring clarity and purpose to our endeavors disclosing the strength and potential of the New Paltz Central School District. They provide an understanding of the actions we must take today to achieve our aspirations.

This document describes a dynamic and an evolutionary process. It is not complete and, perhaps, as an evolutionary process, ought never to be complete. This *Master Plan* is designed to be a learning and living document, and not to be placed on the shelf to gather dust. It is designed to breathe life into the learning process for all of us by guiding and focusing the educational program and student learning, the administrative procedures, and the board's decisions and planning process.

I am grateful for the many hours of effort and work on the part of the district administration, faculty, and staff.



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## ***CORE INTELLIGENCE***

### ***Our Mission...***

*The New Paltz Central School District exists for the children of the community. The focus of its programs and activities is the commitment to measured excellence and continuous growth and development for all.*

### ***Our Vision...***

***Our school community – students, staff, families and community members – are citizens of the world, passionate about learning and empowered to achieve their dreams.***

***Citizens of the world:*** responsible, ethical, contributing, participating members of local, national and global communities who value all peoples and care about each other; we respect the environment, work to improve the society in which we live, and understand our role in it.

***Passionate about learning:*** confident and reflective, curious, nimble thinkers whose knowledge of the past makes them capable of questioning, analyzing, and assimilating new information. They are technologically creative and able to imagine alternatives to what is and what is yet to be. They also dare to be risk takers in crafting their futures.

***Empowered:*** they are well prepared to be self-directed and expressive, to develop and use their personal skills and abilities, to be comfortable with change, achieve deep understanding, make informed and wise decisions, and to cooperate, collaborate, and compete. They live a healthy life style, are creative, and are empowered to achieve their dreams.

### ***Our Guiding Principles...***

1. To maintain a focus on learning and success for all.
2. To create a cohesive and inclusive culture PK-12, across buildings and departments.
3. To empower and create success for disengaged and disenfranchised students.





# *Educational Master Plan*

Core Intelligence  
Program Coherence  
Teacher Skill & Competency  
Learning Environment  
Leadership Capacity  
Resources

## **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS**

To maintain our focus on learning and success for all.

To create a cohesive and inclusive culture PK-12, across every building and department.

To empower and create success for disengaged and disenfranchised students.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

Our school community - students, staff, families, and community members are **citizens of the world**, **passionate about learning** and **empowered** to achieve their dreams...

## **OUR VISION**

The NPCSD exists for the children of the community. The focus of its programs and activities is the commitment to measured excellence and continuous growth and development for all.

## **OUR MISSION**



# *Educational Master Plan*

## **Introduction and Rationale:**

This *Educational Master Plan* is a shared and collaborative endeavor built around the concept of a “Transformational School Model.” This is an amalgamation of several pertinent concepts and models, including systems theory, professional learning communities, 21<sup>st</sup> century schools, transformational leadership, cognitive learning theory, and standards-based instruction.

Organizational research and education literature are quite clear about what these various models look and act like. The *Educational Master Plan* has incorporated all of these models into a framework to provide focus and direction for our decisions, actions, and programs for the future. The six areas of focus within the Plan and for our planning endeavors are:

- A Core Intelligence: the shared vision and mission developed from staff's steadfast commitment to students' learning and are consistently articulated and referenced for the staff's work. This area also includes the policies, regulations, beliefs and philosophical frameworks we hold as a school and a learning community.
- Program Coherence: a comprehensive, coherent, standards-based curriculum.
- Teaching Skills and Abilities: incorporates an instructional staff with an understanding of the curriculum content, learning theory, and teaching process, and who continuously seek to improve and learn.
- Learning Environment: incorporates collegial inquiry and collaborative learning among all staff, and the application of that learning to solutions that address students' diverse needs and improve student learning.
- Leadership Capacity: effective schools require leaders who can guide and direct the learning process and empower all to excellence. This requires collegial and facilitative participation by school administrators, who share leadership through inviting staff input in decision making and learning.
- Resources: the appropriate and necessary facilities, instructional resources, materials, physical conditions, and the human capital that support an effective learning community, and

Transformational schools are comprised of these six interacting elements which must be understood and considered together – holistically. An important point to emphasize is that **none of these elements stands alone and separate**. Because of the nature of systems, all of the parts and elements interact and these interrelationships often cause new elements to form and new phenomena, new structures, and new rules of behavior to occur. For example, the *learning environment* interacts with and alters the *program* which influences the leadership capacity which can influence the teacher capacity, etc. The relationships and the interactions become more important than the structures and activities.

Therefore, a school should not be perceived, as a machine comprised of parts and pieces which can be changed and altered from outside, or which can be “repaired” one part at a time. **It must be seen as a living organism with each component a vital and contributing member of the system**. We cannot change or tinker with one part without influencing the other parts or the whole system. In this way, the whole is greater than the sum of the component parts.

Achieving the concepts and ideals contained within this Plan will require a paradigm shift by the public, the administration, and by teachers themselves about the role of the teacher, the school, and the teaching and learning process. However, research demonstrates that this model does make a difference and produces the kind

of learning outcomes and climate that we envision. For example, for staff the following results have already been observed in various research studies:

- A reduction in the isolation of teachers.
- An increased commitment to the mission and goals of the school and increased vigor in working to strengthen the mission and vision [core intelligence].
- A shared responsibility for the total development of students and collective responsibility for students' success.
- Powerful learning that defines good teaching and classroom practice and creates new knowledge and beliefs about teaching and learners.
- Increased meaning and understanding of the content that teachers teach and the roles they play in helping **all** students learn and achieve expectations.
- Higher likelihood that teachers are well-informed, professionally renewed, and motivated to inspire students.
- More satisfaction, higher morale, and lower rates of absenteeism.
- Significant advances in adapting teaching to the students, accomplished more quickly than in traditional schools.
- Commitment to making significant and lasting changes.
- Higher likelihood of undertaking fundamental systemic change.

As a result of the changes and learning for the teachers, the research shows the results of students' participation include:

- Decreased dropout rate and fewer classes "skipped."
- Lower rates of absenteeism.
- Increased learning that is distributed more equitably in the smaller high schools.
- Greater academic gains in math, science, history, and reading than in traditional schools.
- Smaller achievement gaps between students from different and diverse backgrounds.<sup>1</sup>

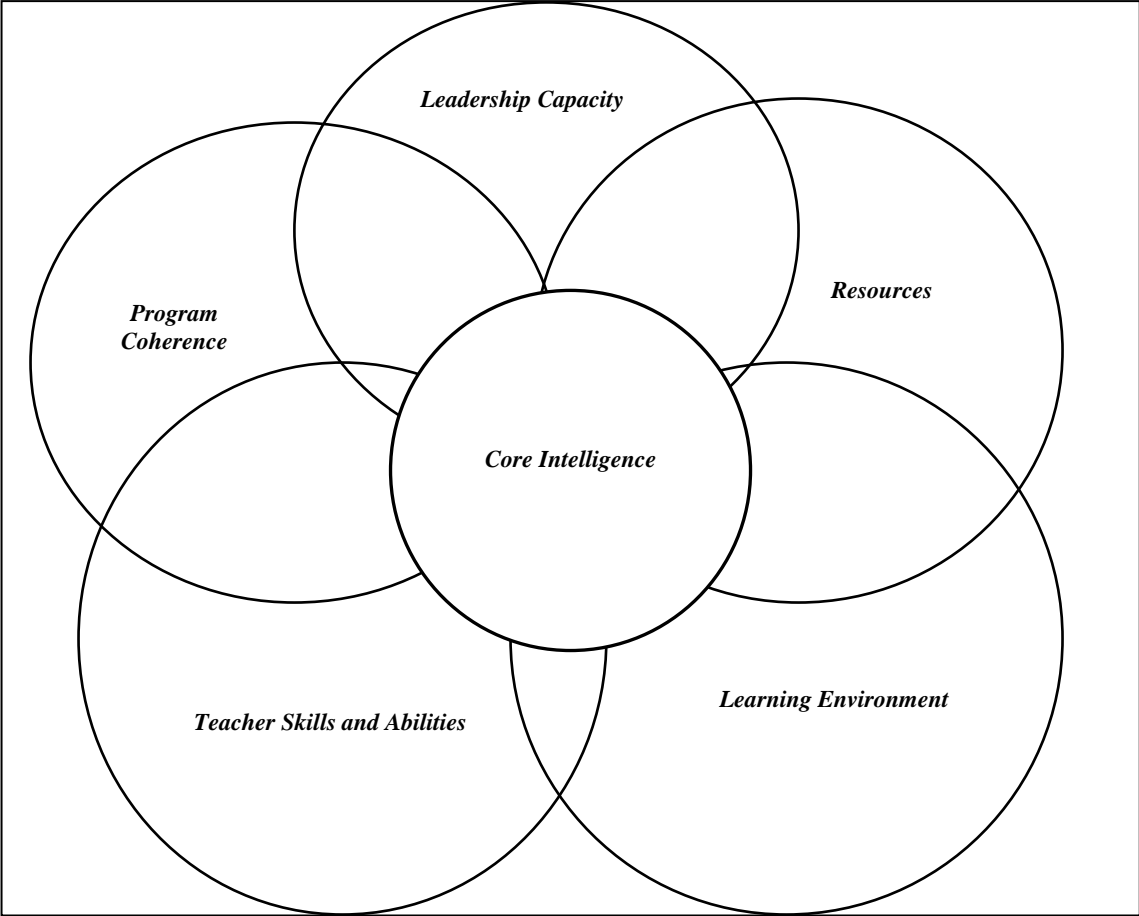
All of these outcomes are within our vision and goals, and within our grasp. It will require dedication, good planning, and lots and lots of communication and work. However, it is also important to note that, despite our greatest intentions, foresight, training, and knowledge, the future is impossible to predict. Change and growth in any human organization is not linear. One can only build a structure or scaffolding and a guide for the organization to "grow" upon.

The standards provided in this *Educational Master Plan* are the scaffolding for the district's growth. If all proceeds as hoped, then, in the words of Michael Fullan, "More good things will result than bad things."

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<sup>1</sup> Hord, S. ( 1997) Professional Learning Communities: Communities of continuous inquiry and improvement, Southwest Development Laboratory: Austin TX. (p. 27. 28).

The graphic below provides a visual of the component parts of our *Educational Master Plan*.



## *Educational Standards*

**These standards are the scaffolding upon which the educational master plan is built:**

### **Core Intelligence:**

#### **Standard 1.0**

*All policies, decisions, agreements, and procedures developed and implemented by policy makers and leadership in the New Paltz Central School District are compatible with the mission, vision and guiding principles, and enhance and assure the learning and success for all students.*

### **Program Coherence:**

#### **Standard 2.0**

*All programs, curriculum, and instructional strategies employed within the district are coherent and provide the learners with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are expected of the citizens of the future; are founded on strategies that lead learners to the highest levels of understanding, empathy and self-knowledge; and empower learners to be curious, self-directed, responsible, ethical, confident and reflective who have a love of learning.*

### **Teacher Skill and Competency:**

#### **Standard 3.0**

*All teachers in the district demonstrate a thorough knowledge and understanding of the content area they teach, knowledge and application of current learning theories and principles, and proficiency in conducting, guiding, and assessing the teaching and learning process.*

### **Learning Environment:**

#### **Standard 4.0**

*A safe and supportive learning environment is sustained throughout the district to promote inquiry and learning for all.*

### **Leadership Capacity:**

#### **Standard 5.0**

*Leadership within the district is collaborative, aligned with the district mission and vision, invites staff input in collegial inquiry and decision making, and promotes excellence, to enhance and to improve student learning.*

### **Resources:**

#### **Standard 6.0**

*The District assures that all resources (human, physical, and financial) are allocated and provided equitably, efficiently, and in a timely fashion, to support and enhance student learning.*

#### **Standard 7.0**

*The District is a valued resource within the community.*

# EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS AND EVIDENCE OF ACHIEVEMENT

## The Core Intelligence [Mission, Vision, Guiding Principles, and Traditions]:

In any organization there is a purpose and reason for its existence and for the subsequent activities. The members of the organization have both a formal and informal understanding of the way things are done in the organization. These shared understandings and common values are the “main element” of a school. The collective commitment to guiding principles that articulate what the people in the school believe and what they seek to create is what separates a transformational school from an ordinary school.

These guiding principles are not just articulated by those in positions of leadership; they are embedded in the hearts and minds of people throughout the school. Mission, vision, and principles are so integral to an effective school that they are considered the “core intelligence” of the organization, describing **who** we are, **what** we do, and **how** we do it. The greater the congruence between the formal and the informal understanding of the mission, vision, and philosophical beliefs the more powerful, appealing and motivational these “core intelligence” elements are for the members.

The New Paltz community has worked diligently to discover and formalize the “core intelligence,” make it public, use it to make program decisions, drive policy, and develop plans, and make it a part of the heart of the organization. In this sense, the vision/mission is the guiding and informing force that brings direction, clarity, and purpose to the organization. It is an integral part of all of our plans, discussions, and deliberations.

The core intelligence of the *New Paltz Central School District* makes clear that the school’s purpose is *for the children of the community* and all involved have a *commitment to measured excellence and continuous growth and development for all*. This is *why* we do what we do. (Mission)

The vision is a statement of *Who we are* rather than what we hope to be someday. Vision statements directed toward the future are simply dreams, and are seldom achieved. Vision statements that are directed toward the potential and strength of the organization today empower the members to work diligently toward achieving the goals and aspirations of the district. They have an understanding of what the school is, its abilities, strengths and potential.

The New Paltz School District – *students, staff, families and community members* – are *citizens of the world, passionate about learning, and empowered to achieve our dreams.*

### *As Citizens of the World:*

*We are responsible, ethical, contributing, participating members of local, national and global communities.*

*Who value all peoples and care about each other.*

*We respect the environment.*

*Work to improve the society in which we live, and to understand our role in it.*

### *We are Passionate about Learning:*

*We are confident and reflective, curious, nimble thinkers, whose knowledge of the past make us capable of questioning, analyzing, and assimilating new information.*

*We are technologically creative and able to imagine alternatives to what is and what is yet to be.*

*We also dare to be risk takers in crafting our futures.*

### *We are Empowered:*

*We are well prepared to be self-directed and expressive,  
to develop and use our personal skills and abilities,  
to be comfortable with change, achieve deep understanding,  
make informed and wise decisions, and  
to cooperate, collaborate, and compete.  
We live a healthy life style, are creative, and  
are empowered to achieve our dreams.*

This is “who we are!” The New Paltz Central School District is learner-focused and all of us in the organization are learners who are passionate about learning and growing and striving for excellence in everything that we do. There is an understanding that the students entrusted to our care will be living in a world that is quite different from ours and will require competencies, skills, and dispositions that are different from what has been traditionally taught. We perceive learning to be the heart of education and we understand that students must be self-directed, creative, imaginative, and enabled to construct their own understandings and knowledge.

Finally, we believe that education is more than facts, algorithms, and formulae. We believe an effective education empowers the learner with deep understanding and appreciation for learning, for him/herself, and for others.

Our educational master plan reflects and resonates with these values, beliefs, and purposes, as do our decisions, policies, procedures, and daily activities.

### **Standard 1.0**

*All policies, decisions, agreements, and procedures developed and implemented by policy makers and leadership in the New Paltz Central School District are compatible with the mission, vision and guiding principles, and enhance and assure the learning and success for all students.*

**Evidence of Achievement:** When this standard is achieved, the following elements and components will be evidenced in the district.

1. Decisions, policies, and procedures made by the Board of Education are congruent with the core intelligence, and enhance and enrich all aspects of the school and its purpose, especially student learning and success.
2. Decisions, procedures, and actions conducted by school district leadership and staff are congruent with the core intelligence, and enhance and enrich all aspects of the school and its purpose, especially student learning and success.
3. The formal structures, policies, mandates, and regulations developed and applied by the Board of Education and administration is appropriate and sufficient to empower the staff and students, and allow for effective learning and success.
4. The District is in compliance and observance of New York State laws, regulations, and program regulations, and applies these to effectively enrich and enhance student learning and success.



## Program Coherence:

The primary and driving purpose of school is found in its curriculum. It determines what learners are to understand, how we must teach, and how we must assess the learning and our endeavors. In a transformational model of education the curriculum must have meaning and purpose to all of the learners who come in contact with it. It must be coherent, i.e. rational, sound, logical, and reasoned. The school curriculum can no longer be an endless listing of behavioral objectives for students to master without question. It can no longer be simply an instructional guide or a scope and sequenced map of interesting activities for teachers to apply. Nor can it be a catalog of skills to be exhibited by students in anticipation that they may “someday” use them “on the job” or, even more critical, appear on a test.

As we come to better understand the way we learn, more effective teaching methods, and the needs of the citizen of the future, the more we understand that our curriculum must be continually revised and reformed. These activities are guided and assessed by standards that have been derived from our current planning process with staff, New York State Standards, including the Common Core Learning Standards in mathematics and English language arts and literacy in the content areas, and the New Paltz CSD mission, vision, and guiding principles.

The New Paltz Board of Education has developed and accepted the following District Standard to guide and direct the action plans and program evaluation to assure program coherence throughout the district, and to achieve success for all learners. This standard is the scaffolding upon which the educational master plan is built. The standard for the Program Coherence area is listed below:

### Standard 2.0

*All programs, curriculum, and instructional strategies employed within the district are coherent and provide the learners with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are expected of the citizens of the future; are founded on strategies that lead learners to the highest levels of understanding, empathy and self-knowledge; and empower learners to be curious, self-directed, responsible, ethical, confident and reflective who have a love of learning.*

**Evidence of Achievement:** When this standard is achieved, the following elements and components will be evidenced in the district.

1. The learning activities, strategies, and assessment techniques used in the district classrooms are congruent to the learning outcome, have purpose and provide meaning and understanding.
2. Learners in the district are engaged and fully participate in the learning process to ensure that they are successful and achieving understanding.
3. Programs and curricula offered within the district are based on the district’s core intelligence and consistent with student needs as **Citizens of the Future** including, but not limited to, the concepts, skills, and dispositions in
  - a. problem solving,
  - b. creative and flexible thinking,
  - c. love of learning,
  - d. life-long learning, and
  - e. confidence in their abilities.
4. The curriculum structure fosters and enables constructivist learning and the building of understanding by students, including affective learning outcomes for all students.

5. Curricula within the district are
  - a. *structurally coherent*, built on the standards and the disciplines, with meaning, purpose, and having consistency and congruence from grade to grade, between and among all classrooms, and pre-K through graduation,
  - b. *conceptually coherent*, having clear and consistent conceptual integrity throughout, and
  - c. *functionally coherent*, providing performance indicators focused on students and student learning.
  
6. The curriculum, instruction, and learning activities in the district classrooms encourage and empower students to exhibit:
  - a. self-direction, responsibility, ethical behavior and confidence as demonstrated through self selection of voluntary activities, school related activities, and personal behaviors and communication,
  - b. fluency, flexibility, and efficiency when applying their knowledge and understanding in a variety of contexts and problem solutions,
  - c. reflective learning through open ended instructional activities, volunteer activities, and challenging questions and curiosity,
  - d. an awareness of the boundaries of their own and others understanding, and
  - e. recognition of their own prejudices and projections.
  
7. Curriculum revision, instructional planning, and program implementation are based on comprehensive data gathering and analysis.
  
8. Student learning and achievement are continuously assessed and reported, using both formal and informal means.
  
9. Students within the district achieve at the highest levels of the New York State and other selected examinations and assessments.

## **Teacher Skill and Competency Area:**

To effectively implement a standards-based curriculum and foster student understanding, construction of knowledge, and love of learning, the teachers need to have skills and competencies in three areas.

- First, the teacher must be a scholar of the academic area they are teaching. They must know, be comfortable with, and understand the concepts, skills, and processes of the discipline.
- Secondly, the teachers must have a thorough understanding of how people learn. They must be able to apply different strategies and modalities to assure each child is learning at his/her maximum.
- Finally, the teacher must be an expert in the art and science of instruction, applying the appropriate motivational techniques, activities, and questions to enable the student to construct his/her own understanding and knowledge.

The third educational standard addresses teacher skill and competency. It is presented here as an indication of the drive for excellence that the district has initiated, and to provide an indication of the kind of resources, skills, and directions we will need in the near future.

### **Standard 3.0:**

*All teachers in the district demonstrate a thorough knowledge and understanding of the content area they teach, knowledge and application of current learning theories and principles, and proficiency in conducting, guiding, and assessing the teaching and learning process.*

***Evidence of Achievement:*** When this standard is achieved, the following elements and components will be evidenced in the district.

1. Instructional staff throughout the district demonstrates a thorough knowledge of the subject matter area and curriculum for the area the teacher is responsible for teaching and demonstrates appropriate preparation employing the necessary pedagogical practices to support instruction resulting in student learning.
2. Student learning and the achievement of intended learning outcomes are the result of meaningful lesson planning, appropriate teacher/student interaction, and active student involvement.
3. Instructional staff members demonstrate knowledge of student development, an understanding and appreciation of diversity and the regular application of developmentally appropriate instructional strategies for the benefit of all students.
4. Instructional staff members implement assessment techniques based on appropriate learning standards designed to measure students' learning progress.

## **Learning Environment:**

In the New Paltz Central School District, the focus is on *learning for all*. A learning environment is one which allows learners to explore, inquire, and take learning risks in a safe and supportive climate. As students are learning about their world and its many wonders, teachers are improving their craft, adapting their techniques, and learning how to improve student learning. This collaborative learning process creates a community in which teachers, administrators, and even students are engaged in collegial inquiry and research. Collegial inquiry helps participants to overcome disconnection caused by various specializations of grade level and subject matter. Collaborative and collegial inquiry forces debate among teachers about what is important and promotes understanding and appreciation for the work of others

This includes the need for shared values and vision [core intelligence], supportive physical settings, time allotments and scheduling, and a culture of inquiry and problem solving as a shared personal practice for all. This impinges upon the facilities and resources by requiring that flexible areas for meeting be provided and accommodated. It also has impact on the teaching schedule and the traditional roles of administrators, teachers, students, and community members.

Administrative staff encourages and supports such exploration and facilitates the collaboration by providing time and space for teachers to meet and share the findings of their action research. Data and information about the learning process and other elements that impinge upon it are shared and used for making improvements in the school, to enhance student learning, and to refine teaching practices. Everyone works to assure that successful learning is the focus for all as is clearly stated in the fourth educational standard:

### **Standard 4.0**

*A safe and supportive learning environment is sustained throughout the district to promote inquiry and learning for all.*

**Evidence of Achievement:** When this standard is achieved, the following elements and components will be evidenced in the district.

1. Instructional staff members develop effective collaborative relationships with students, parents/caregivers, teachers, administrators and other school professionals, and appropriate support personnel to meet the learning needs of each student.
2. The programs, curricula, instructional strategies and the school culture within the district are supportive and designed to motivate and empower learners to fluently, flexibly, and efficiently apply their knowledge and understanding in a variety of contexts.
3. Learners at all levels voluntarily take advantage of multiple opportunities to apply their learning and understanding toward community service: classroom-wide, school-wide, community-wide, or world-wide.
4. Action research and studies of effective instruction and learning are conducted throughout the district.

## Leadership Capacity:

The traditional pattern that “teachers teach, students learn, and administrators supervise and manage” is being revised in the New Paltz schools to more closely align with the transformational school model. In a “learning and collaborative system” there is no longer a hierarchy of who knows more than someone else, but rather the need for everyone to contribute and lead within the context of the problem and challenge. A transformational school requires the collegial and facilitative participation of the school administrator, who shares leadership through inviting staff input.

This is a redefinition of the traditional role and characteristics of school administrators. The collegial leader is willing to share authority in certain areas, has a capacity to facilitate the work of staff, and has the ability to participate without dominating. Most importantly, New Paltz administrators are able to create an environment in which the staff can learn continuously within a safe and supportive environment.

An important factor in this process is communication and interaction and encouraging staff to stay in tune with the district mission, purpose, and vision [core intelligence]. A collaborative relationship between administrators and staff leads to a shared and collegial leadership in the school – a learning community - where all grow professionally and learn to view themselves as all working toward the same goals and purpose - [core intelligence]. The fifth standard, Leadership Capacity is listed below:

### Standard 5.0

*Leadership within the district is collaborative, aligned with the district mission and vision, invites staff input in collegial inquiry and decision making, and promotes excellence, to enhance and to improve student learning.*

**Evidence of Achievement:** When this standard is achieved, the following elements and components will be evidenced in the district.

1. Leaders within the district support and facilitate the emergence of new ideas, knowledge, skills, and patterns of operation which enhance student learning and achievement.
2. Leaders support, facilitate, and encourage collaboration, dialogue, and activities to enhance instruction and student learning.
3. Leaders within the district develop and maintain clear, consistent, and interactive channels of communication and dialogue and provide staff with decision-making parameters.
4. Leaders within the district use a variety of evaluation and assessment techniques and data informed decision processes to assure effective and efficient student learning and success.
5. Leaders are supportive of and provide opportunities for staff to improve skills and content knowledge.
6. Leaders involve staff in decision making and empower individuals to act by delegating responsibility to the areas, groups, and individuals.
7. Leaders maintain and model continuous improvement and life-long learning.
8. Leaders understand and consistently communicate, model, and lead through the tenets, principles, and values of the district’s core intelligence.
9. Leaders in the district involve staff in the development, maintenance, evaluation, and implementation of Action Plans.

## Resources:

In the New Paltz Central Schools, as in the transformational school model, the amount, appropriateness, and nature of the resources that are introduced into the system, and the facilities and structures in which the school is housed influence the effectiveness and ability of the school to achieve its goals. Resources should be seen not only as a one-way import into the system, but as the way the school influences its surrounding community.

As an open system, the school must interact with its environment to survive; it both consumes resources and exports resources to the environment. Not only is the school a resource **to** the community, but it should also be seen as a resource **in** the community, exporting experience, learning, skills, creativity, problem solving, and knowledge.

The resources have a great deal of influence on all of the areas and are critical to its success. These resources include *time, capital, technology, support personnel, instructional materials*, and all other *peripheral equipment* and *facilities* that go to support and sustain the learning.

The implications to future planning and preparation are many. It is in the area of financial support that often drives the program. There must be a high correlation and coherence between the program goals and the financial resources and the community's ability to pay. Neither should overwhelm the other.

The fact that the facilities are "permanent" resources and can have a great deal of influence over the nature of the learning, the program, and the environment, it is imperative that the facilities be planned with these aspects in mind.

There are two Resource standards, one that addresses the internal resources, and the other the external resources. They are as follows:

### Standard 6.0

*The District assures that all resources (human, physical and financial) are allocated and provided equitably, efficiently, and in a timely fashion, to support and enhance student learning.*

**Evidence of Achievement:** When this standard is achieved, the following elements and components will be evidenced in the district.

1. The district resources (including capital funds) are allotted and expended efficiently.
2. The district budget is developed to provide maximum student benefit for a reasonable and acceptable cost to the taxpayer.
3. A variety of avenues and opportunities are employed to assure an efficient and effective operation, including, but not limited to – BOCES programs, energy conservation, transportation routing, regular budget audits and reviews, food service, facilities maintenance and operations, and state contracting.
4. District faculty and staff are dedicated to innovative and creative ways of lowering district costs without hindering student learning opportunities and the learning climate.
5. District facilities are physically accessible, appropriate and sufficient for all learners, and provide a safe, supportive, and enriching environment for student learning and success.
6. Learning resources, materials, technologies, and equipment are selected in consideration of the core intelligence, the curriculum expectations, and the learning environment and recognizing financial constraints.

7. Teachers, students, staff and administrators have the necessary training required to effectively and efficiently utilize the learning technologies.
8. The network and technology infrastructure is designed to support learning, instruction, and the District curriculum.
9. The network and technology infrastructure is sustainable, and extensible to support the dynamic changes in technology and the adoption/integration by teachers, staff and administration.
10. Classroom resources and instructional support personnel are used effectively and efficiently to support and enrich student learning and success.

**Standard 7.0**

*The District is a valued resource within the community.*

**Evidence of Achievement:** When this standard is achieved, the following elements and components will be evidenced in the district.

1. The school is perceived by the general public as a resource and contributor to the community, including, but not limited to facilities use, academic center, creative center for problem solving and research.
2. There is rich and strong collaboration and interaction between the District [staff, administration, and students] with the college, area businesses, and community members.

## ACTION PLANNING

### Action Planning Process:

The strength of adaptive planning is in its dynamic nature. A traditional strategic planning process is often considered complete when all the activities have been assigned, timelines established, and goals delineated. Far too often the plan dies on the shelf as new and challenging problems arise across the district that could not be foreseen or incorporated into the strategic plan by the master planners. An adaptive plan, such as this, is a dynamic and evolutionary process, in that it is not complete and, perhaps, like evolution, ought never to be complete. This Educational Master Plan is a living and flexible document, and designed to breathe life into the learning process for all by enabling us to address problems as they arise and to learn from our experiences. It will guide and focus the educational program and practice, the administrative procedures, and the board's and staff's decisions and planning process.

The *Core Intelligence* and *Educational Standards* are the foundation of the *Educational Master Plan*. The *Core Intelligence* with its mission, vision, and guiding values, informs our actions and intentions, and directs our decisions by engaging everyone in a common purpose. The approved District Standards, built on the *Core Intelligence* are the scaffolding upon which we have developed our action plans and by which we shall judge our growth and achievement. This process provides focus, singularity of effort, and efficiency to the operation by assuring that all are expending effort and time on the same priorities. It is also important to note that in adaptive planning, the effectiveness is assessed on the basis of documented results rather than emotional satisfaction and good intentions. Individuals, teams, and schools seek relevant data and information to assess the achievement of the strategies and activities of the action plan and then use that information to work for and to promote continuous improvement.

The Action Planning process is the most involved and active part of Adaptive Planning and must be done at the point of decision making and problem involvement. This may be at the classroom level, the building level, or at the Central Office level, and in many cases there will be overlap in the activities and strategies. However, this overlapping process brings coherence and clarity to our endeavors, allows for quick revision and modification, when needed, and produces a dynamic and living Plan.

The *Action Plans* delineate and specify the strategies, activities, tactics and timeframe that are being implemented to assure the achievement and fulfillment of the Standards. They begin by clearly defining the need and then creating a results-oriented goal. For example, if the purpose of the standard is to increase student learning, that purpose should be explicitly stated in a goal that will answer the question, "How will we know if our strategies are resulting in gains in student learning?" Effective team goals will focus on the intended outcome rather than on the strategies to achieve the outcome.<sup>2</sup> Once again this is contrary to the traditional approach of writing goals where the focus is on evidence of what teachers will do [Activity] rather than on evidence of what students will learn [Results].

This plan engages all employees, the Board of Education, and the community in a process of *ongoing* and continuous improvement, in which they establish short-term goals at the point of the decision, and develop strategies and activities to achieve them. It seeks to make the complex nature of planning a simpler and more dynamic endeavor by allowing for frequent adjustments based on the analysis of the evidence and degree of success. By revisiting and reviewing the progress and achievements we have made, by revising as new problems arise, and by communicating with one another as we learn together, the Plan provides a vehicle for future actions.

The inclusion of the *Action Planning Process* into the *Educational Master Plan* is also an ongoing process. While there should be documentation available for all members to know the extent and degree of completion or processing of the *Actions Plans*, it is this ongoing process that makes the *Educational Master Plan* viable. It is a networking, interacting, collaborating, communicating, and re-formatational process, not a control, command, directive, and static process.

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<sup>2</sup> Dufour, Richard and Rebecca, Eaker, Robert, Many Thomas, Learning by Doing, p. 134.



## **State of the District Report:**

Peter Senge tells us that the rationale and purpose for building a learning organization revolves around the premise and intent that such organizations will produce dramatically improved results in student learning.<sup>3</sup> As we learn and improve as individuals and as an organization, these results and improvement strategies, if they are to have any meaning or purpose, must be recorded, communicated, and used in decision-making.

The District's Annual Report is designed to provide a consistent means and process of communicating and reporting the results and achievements of the Action Plans, and subsequently, the attainment of the standards and priorities of the *Educational Master Plan*. Regardless of the status of the *Action Plans*, it is important that each group report as to the current effectiveness and degree of achievement of the goals on at least an annual basis. This provides continuity of effort and a current "picture" of the district for all to see, set priorities, and allocate resources.

The Board of Education is ultimately responsible for judging the extent of improvement and achievement of the district in meeting its Standards and living up to the mission, vision, and core principles. The superintendent will provide, on an annual basis, a State of the District Report to the Board that communicates the degree to which the district is meeting its *Educational Master Plan's* Standards, priorities, and commitment to the children of the community.

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<sup>3</sup> Senge, Peter, The fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization, (1994), p. 44.



# APPENDIX

*Action Plan Template* .....Page 28

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# Action Plan Template

The following Action Plan framework is designed to assure the achievement and attainment of the guidelines, principles, and expectations contained within the *Standards* and the *Evidence of Achievement*. The Action Plan provides a statement of the current status of the situation, a “SMART” goal or set of SMART goals including a timeline for achievement. **SMART** goals are **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**esults-oriented, and **T**imebound.<sup>4</sup>

Action Plans are the focus and topic of discussion and assessment on a periodic basis. The process is based on data, research, and assessment information, and these should be the foundation for all discussion that occurs regarding achievement and success. A focus on outcomes rather than inputs or intentions maintains the commitment to seeing evidence that the efforts are producing the intended outcomes and achieving the desired results.

## Action Plan Framework:

| <i>Action Plan for</i>   |                       |                 |   |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------|---|
| <i>Team Leader/Facilitator:</i>  |                       |                 |   |
| <i>Team Members:</i>   |                       |                 |   |
| <i>Time Frame of the Action Plan (School Year(s)):</i>   |                       |                 |   |
| <i>Standard:</i>   |                       |                 |   |
| <i>Evidence of Achievement (What it looks like when we have achieved the Standard.):</i>   |                       |                 |   |
| <i>Needs Statement (Where we are right now.):</i>  |                       |                 |   |
| <i>SMART Goal: (To bring us to, or close to the criteria in the Evidence of Achievement)</i><br><i>(Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Results-oriented, and Timebound)</i> |                       |                 |   |
| <i>Strategies/Activities<br/>To Attain Goal</i>  | <i>Responsibility</i> | <i>Timeline</i> | <i>Evidence of Effectiveness<br/>(What will be in place when the activity<br/>is complete and how will you<br/>measure it?)</i> |
|  |                       |                 |   |
|  |                       |                 |   |

<sup>4</sup> Cozemius & O’Neill, 2005.

# *Annual Report*

“The rationale for any strategy for building a learning organization revolves around the premise that such organizations will produce dramatically improved results.”<sup>5</sup> Unless these results are recorded, reported, and used in decision making the efforts have little meaning and purpose. The Annual Report framework below is designed to provide a consistent means of reporting the results of the Action Plans implemented on a yearly basis. These reports will be incorporated into the annual State of the District Report.

|   |
|---|
| <b><i>Annual Report for</i></b>   |
| <b><i>Team Leader/Facilitator:</i></b><br><b><i>Team Members:</i></b>   |
| <b><i>Standard:</i></b>   |
| <b><i>Evidence of Achievement (What it looks like if we have achieved the Standard.):</i></b>   |
| <b><i>To What Degree have you met your goals and attained the Evidence of Achievement of this Standard?</i></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b><i>Summary of where we were at beginning: (Needs Assessment Data)</i></b></li><br/><li>• <b><i>Goal(s) [in Action Plan] established to achieve Standard.</i></b></li><br/><li>• <b><i>Results, as evidenced by evaluation and assessment data.</i></b></li><br/><li>• <b><i>Conclusions, recommendations, and priorities for future.</i></b></li></ul> |

<sup>5</sup> Senge, Peter, The fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization, (1994), p. 44.

