



Town of Simsbury

933 Hopmeadow Street Simsbury, Connecticut 06070

Board of Finance Agenda Submission

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November 23, 2020

Ericka Butler
Town Clerk
Simsbury, CT 06070

Dear Ms. Butler:

A **Special Meeting** of the Board of Finance will be held at **5:30 PM** on **Monday, November 30, 2020**, and broadcast live and rebroadcast as noted above.

The Agenda is as follows:

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Approval of Minutes:
 - November 17, 2020
4. FY21/22 Budget Guidance Discussion
5. FY21/22 Capital Discussion
6. FY21/22 Parks & Recreation Special Revenue Fund Discussion
7. Adjourn

Yours Truly,
Robert Pomeroy
Chairman

Board of Finance Regular Meeting Schedule:
12/15/20, 1/19/21

**Board of Finance
TOWN OF SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, November 17, 2020 at 5:45 P.M.
Zoom Meeting/Simsbury Community Television Live Stream**

PRESENT: Arthur House, Derek Peterson, Robert Pomeroy, Kevin Prell, Linda Schofield (by phone)

ALSO PRESENT: Maria Capriola, Town Manager; Tom Fitzgerald, Management Specialist; Amy Meriwether, Director of Finance/Treasurer; Neil Sullivan, Director of Personnel, Simsbury Schools

1. Call to Order - Establish Quorum

Mr. Pomeroy called the meeting to order at 5:48 P.M.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Presentation: Board of Education Enrollment Overview

Mr. Sullivan shared a slide presentation providing an overview of enrollment as of October 1, 2020. He reported enrollment is slightly below 4,000 students, a decrease of 65 students from one year ago. K-6 saw a decrease in 20 students and 9-12 had a decrease of 45. No single elementary school felt the impact of fewer students. He then shared projected versus actual enrollment by school, noting 65 below projection was surprising and the bulk of those numbers came from the larger schools. Next, he gave enrollment figures by individual grades. He indicated that many families may have chosen not to send their children to kindergarten due to the circumstances around COVID-19, further noting that kindergarten is not a compulsory grade. He then spoke about the increase of 19 students over projection in 9th grade, noting there is normally attrition in that grade due to private school options. He then provided historical projected enrollment versus actual enrollment figures from 2010-11 to 2020-21 and a five-year historical enrollment trend from 2016-2020, which indicates the overall enrollment has declined from 4110 to 3960, a reduction of 150 students, representative of a 3.8% decrease. He indicated this has yielded staffing savings but they are not equal to the 3.8% decline, given that it is across multiple buildings. He further noted the complexity of this year with the creation of a distance learning environment. The State required that a distance learning experience be provided and at the elementary level, 20% chose to start in distance learning this year. This required a significant shift of staffing to staff 19 teachers in the distance learning environment. Seven new positions were added at the elementary level this year. Two were originally budgeted and five were added in order to meet social distancing goals and to provide one distance learning only classroom. Out of those seven, all five of those contracts were interim contracts offered on a one-year basis with no expectation that those positions will move forward into the next budget year. The middle and high school level staffing was not impacted by distance learning. He noted the number of homeschooled students has more than doubled this year. However, he believes most of those students will come back after the pandemic.

Ms. Meriwether asked Mr. O'Neil to speak about staff repurposing.

Mr. O'Neil said they took 16 FTE teachers in non-classroom roles with certification and repurposed them to classroom positions.

Each board member noted appreciation for the flexibility and challenges faced this year by Mr. O'Neil and the Board of Education. Discussion followed about hybrid versus full-time schedules and projections.

4. Approval of Minutes - October 20, 2020

MOTION: Mr. House made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 20, 2020 Regular Meeting as written. The motion was seconded by Ms. Schofield. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

5. Finance Director's Report

Ms. Meriwether noted the updated list of grants and donations in her report. Regarding COVID-19 impact on the Town, expenditures for FY21 have increased about \$15,000 since last reporting, mainly related to election supplies and poll workers. The prior year loss related to COVID-19 was covered by the prior year savings. The current year loss estimated thus far is covered at this point. Funding is expected from the State of about \$55,800 for COVID expenditures and \$13,738 is expected for election costs, as well as a private grant for \$8,682, totaling \$78,220 available right now to cover COVID costs. She noted this does not include any FEMA funding. For the Board of Education she noted an increase of about \$16,000 since last reporting. The majority of that is related to an increase in PPE and an extension of the tents contract. She noted there is state funding for the Board of Education and with the small use of the Non-Lapsing Fund, the Board of Education will probably see an estimated \$264,000 remaining in the Non-Lapsing Fund.

6. Town Budget Status Report

Ms. Meriwether gave a General Fund overview, noting revenues total about \$51,900,000 as of September 30, 2020, about 51% of revenues. She noted the majority of increases are in the Tax Department and the Building Department. She also noted a decline in the Finance Department due to the decrease in interest rates. Lastly, she noted an increase in the Town Clerk's Department. For expenditures, she reported they are in line with expectation, with the exception of a decrease in the Police Department. For the Simsbury Farms Fund, she noted revenues in excess of expenditures of almost \$140,000 at this point due to a decrease in revenues from Special Programs, Day Camps and the Pool, which were affected by COVID. For expenditures, she reported the same offset and noted the Golf Course expenditure for a piece of large equipment.

Ms. Schofield asked about the surplus and if that is typical this time of year.

Ms. Meriwether noted it is typical and it will dwindle as time goes by. Regarding the Health Insurance Fund, she reported a current surplus of about \$30,000 and the reserve is about \$4.7M, 32% of expected claims. She noted the target is 20-25% of expected claims. There may be an

uptick due to rescheduled doctor appointments and medical procedures and staff will be keeping an eye on this. It was noted this will affect the current calendar year. Discussion followed and Ms. Meriwether noted she will provide options during the budget process.

Ms. Schofield and Mr. House were asked to give a report on the Parks & Recreation Task Force. Ms. Schofield noted there have been a few meetings and there were some differences of opinion. They looked at a five-year annual average shortfall (expenses minus revenue) of \$266,000. Over five years the average annual subsidy from the General Fund includes the \$180,000 given the last few years up front, averaging \$269,000. Looking forward, she noted other potential shortfalls, like pension changes and the impact of the minimum wage increase. She reported others on the committee look at the problem differently, noting positions and expenses some years back that were allocated to the Special Revenue Fund and should not have been. They would like to reallocate those items back to the Board of Selectmen. She noted there are two issues: how to define the problem of shortfalls versus equity and who should pay (users of the programs or all taxpayers). She discussed possible solutions and others on the committee wanted to move items to the Board of Selectmen budget, not have any fee increases and fund those new expenses to the Board of Selectmen through taxes. She noted this is important in relation to the Tri-Board meeting discussion as the committee would like this increase to the Board of Selectmen budget to not be counted in the percentage guidance given by the Board of Finance. She noted she and Mr. House were not in agreement with that.

Mr. House added that he was not comfortable agreeing to a revenue increase for this coming year without knowing the other priorities of the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Pomeroy noted this needs to be considered against all the other priorities. Discussion followed about allocation corrections and pay-to-play fees versus taxes. It was noted that recommendations from this committee were made and no action was taken. Mr. Pomeroy asked that this topic be discussed at the Tri-Board meeting.

7. Supplemental Appropriation - Ice Rink Refrigeration Condensing Unit Replacement

Ms. Meriwether reported that the replacement of the refrigeration condensing unit at the Simsbury Farms ice rink revealed that the steel support was in poor condition and would need to be replaced. The cost to replace the steel is \$13,000 and an additional appropriation is being sought to pay for that.

Ms. Schofield noted that the Capital Reserve Fund should only be used in the case of an emergency and is contingent upon a phone call to the Board of Finance and the Board of Selectmen.

MOTION: Mr. Prell made a motion to approve a transfer of \$13,000 from the Capital Reserve Fund to the Capital Non-Recurring Fund to cover the cost of replacing steel supports for the ice rink condensing unit. Mr. Peterson seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

8. Private Duty Fund Transfer

Ms. Meriwether noted that after consultation with Bob DeCresenzo, it was determined that a request to transfer the Police Private Duty Fund balance to the Capital Reserve Fund can be made with Board of Selectmen approval and if there is no approval, it will revert back to the General Fund.

MOTION: Mr. Prell made a motion to approve the Police Private Duty Fund transfer request as presented. Ms. Schofield seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

9. Tri-Board Preparation Discussion

Mr. Pomeroy noted the guidelines prepared which were included in the meeting packet, adding that the goal is to share this document with both boards as a guide for discussion at the Tri-Board meeting. He noted this information is meant to help set the stage for this year, adding that they did not adjust the pension rate and did not implement the mortality rate adjustments.

Ms. Meriwether screen shared the budget assumption analysis. Discussion followed about the mill rate, negotiated salaries, mortality rates, impact on taxpayers, COLA increases, the Grand List, the K-shaped recovery, COVID expenses, debt service, and capital budget planning. It was agreed that a discussion about long-range planning and a Tri-Board meeting on capital prioritization is needed.

Mr. Pomeroy noted the Tri-Board meeting is scheduled for November 30 at 5:30 P.M. and it will be virtual. He noted there was agreement on guidance of 1.5% or less for operating budgets. The written guidelines will be shared with the Board of Education and the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Pomeroy thanked Ms. Heavner and Ms. Meriwether for their work on this.

10. Proposed 2021 Meeting Dates

MOTION: Mr. Prell made a motion to adopt the 2021 regular meeting schedule as presented. Ms. Schofield seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

11. Board of Education Quarterly Financial Report

Ms. Meriwether screen shared and presented the first quarter budget analysis. She gave a summary of State grant awards and Federal grant awards. She then provided a breakdown of expenditures from 2019-20 and 2020-21.

12. Board of Education Savings Initiatives

Ms. Meriwether provided a listing of savings initiatives that the Board of Education has taken part in as requested by the Board of Finance.

Mr. Pomeroy noted appreciation for the fact Ms. Meriwether is now covering both the Town and Board of Education finance positions and is doing a fabulous job.

13. Adjourn

MOTION: Ms. Schofield made a motion to adjourn at 7:40 P.M. Mr. Prell seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Haberlin
Commission Clerk

**BOARD OF FINANCE
TOWN OF SIMSBURY
BUDGET Framework - FY22**
Adopted by the Board of Finance on_____

I. Guiding Principles Statement

The Simsbury Town and Education budgets are financial plans that include expenditures, revenues and debt. Each year the Town goes through a collective process to decide what services the Town should provide and how much money we should spend on those services. The budget expresses the political and civic values of the community through funding priorities and goals balanced with what our residents can afford to pay.

The Board of Finance serves as the budget-making authority for the Town of Simsbury and considers the financial aspects of town government as a whole, rather than from the standpoint of any particular board, department, project or officer. The Board looks at the current budget context, fiscal goals and policies of the town, benchmarking with other AAA rated and neighboring towns, and evaluates long-term obligations including debt and soft liabilities like pensions and benefits.

Guiding principles for the Board include:

- Adopting a balanced budget
- Ensuring efficiencies - doing more with less
- Transparency
- Public input and participation

II. Budget Context

In setting this year's budget, the Town of Simsbury, like all towns across the country, is facing unprecedented circumstances and challenges. Within the scope of these challenges and other affordability benchmarks, we note the following:

- Extraordinary challenges from global pandemic – COVID-19 impact in education, health, safety and equity
- Likely increased education spending needs
- Updated Pension investment and mortality assumption costs: \$1,215,933
- Probable multi-year recession
- Simsbury unemployment at 3.7% (Source: [CT DOL October 2020](#))

- United Way [ALICE](#) at 20%
- Grand list growth of 1.52% (\$1,430,190)
- Social Security COLA of 1.3% (avg. \$20/month) (Source: [Social Security Administration](#))
- Inflation as measured by the change in Consumer Price Index: [\(CPI\) 1.2%](#)
- Household Median Income: \$117,181 (Source: Parks and Open Space Master Plan 2020)
- Per Capital Income: \$60,349 (Source: Parks and Open Space Master Plan 2020)
- Median Net Worth: \$794,597 (Source: Parks and Open Space Master Plan 2020)

- Education Enrollment (Source: BOE Oct. meeting power point)
 - Oct. 2020 student enrollment: 65 students below projections
(*majority from kindergarten*)
 - 2021 student enrollment projections: flat
 - Five-year school enrollment: down 150 students; 3.8%

- Town est. population 2020: 25,395 (Source: [2019 July Census est.](#))
 - 4.3% under five years
 - 23.8% under 18 years
 - 17.2% over 65 years

- Population growth projections (Source: Parks and Open Space Master Plan 2020)
 - 2024 Projected: 24,647
 - 2030 Projected: 26,052
 - 2035 Projected: 26,716

- Foregone revenues (Source: Tax Assessor)
 - \$220,000 - Local Elderly
 - \$80,000 - Elderly and Totally Disabled
 - \$120,000 – Veterans (includes local ADVET)
 - \$135,000 - Fire and Ambulance
 - \$55,000 - Ensign Bickford (EBAD 45,000-65,000)
 - \$54,000 - Ensign House, 590 Hopmeadow St.
 - \$70,000 Meadowood taxes
 - \$680,500 Total

- Other State Mandated foregone revenue:
 - \$_____ Manufacturing abatements
 - \$_____ Solar
 - \$_____ Non-profits & other tax-exempt properties
 - \$_____ Other

- Simsbury Economic Data from [Town Charts](#)

Snapshot

| Town | Mill Rate | Taxes/\$350,000 | School Ranking Niche 2021 | Safety Ranking Alarms.org 1/19/20 |
|-------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|--|
| W. Hartford | 41.8 | 10241 | 13 | 72 |
| Granby | 39.61 | 9704 | 38 | 14 |
| Simsbury | 38.28 | 9379 | 15 | 11 |
| Glastonbury | 36.9 | 9041 | 7 | 33 |
| Cheshire | 33.22 | 8139 | 18 | 18 |
| Avon | 32.9 | 8061 | 10 | 23 |
| Canton | 32.59 | 7985 | 24 | 13 |
| Farmington | 27.97 | 6853 | 11 | 52 |

III. Budget Goals and Priorities

This budget policy balances the needs of the Town with what residents can reasonably afford to pay and sets the following goals and priorities in order to develop a responsible budget and spending plan:

- Accomplish more with less - current constraints will necessitate resourcefulness, self-sufficiency, and invention
- Improved transparency, including a clearer budget mailer
- Prioritize health and safety, education, meeting contractual obligations, BOS and BOE priorities
- Maintain AAA bond rating
- Ongoing operating expenditure budgets should not exceed the amount of ongoing revenue budgets
- New program costs requests shall identify either new ongoing source of revenue or offsetting/ongoing expenditures to be eliminated (e.g. spend to save, fees or grants), or in the case of a state mandated duty, the expenditure should demonstrate that it is not unreasonably excessive and cannot be accomplished at a lesser cost

- Data driven and demonstrated decision-making
- Performance measurements
- Conservative revenue estimates

IV. Board of Finance Decision Points During Budget Process

- Set the mill rate
- Determine the general reserve target for FY 22 is (15-17% policy range)
- Decide whether to amend current policy and permit debt service to exceed 7% policy for BOE school construction
- Approve BOE and BOS Operating Budgets and Capital Budget
- Decide whether to issue Debt with 10-year series bonds or longer for BOE projects
- Set the pension investment assumption (recommended at 6.5%)
- Decide whether to fully fund pension ARC with adjusted mortality rates, as recommended
- Set the tax collection assumption
- Determine best use of excess reserves:
 - Pandemic response
 - Mill rate stabilization for feathering in pension assumptions/mortality adjustments
 - Capital purchases
 - Debt service stabilization in anticipation of BOE capital expenditures
 - Other

V. Additional Information Requested by the Board of Finance

- Long term plan for Solar taxes declining year to year
- Base capital analysis
- Town Master Capital plan
- Recommendations for Culture, Parks and Recreation Fund
- Ranked Capital and CNR
- Organizational charts for all departments, showing reporting hierarchy and numbers
- Performance metrics by department
- Show benefits by departments (retirement, OPEB, health)
- Itemize proposed capital in BOE operating budget (e.g. cars, trucks, furniture, equipment over \$10,000). Rank priorities
- Include COVID costs as separate line item in each department budget, and sources of funding (if still an issue)

➤ Benchmark with Avon, Bloomfield, Canton, Cheshire, Farmington, Glastonbury, Granby, South Windsor, West Hartford, Windsor:

- Population
- Mill rate
- Median income
- Per capita income
- Unemployment
- Median home value
- Median tax in \$
- Bond rating
- Equalized Net Grand List
- Operating per capita
- Cost per pupil
- School ranks
- Public safety ranks
- Town and BOE employee numbers (per capita)
- Debt per capita
- Debt service as a percentage of operating budget
- Debt as a percentage of median income
- Debt as a percentage of taxable property
- Total indebtedness
- Total debt as a percentage of expenditures
- General Fund unassigned
- Plan fiduciary net position as a % of total pension liability
- Median pensions for General Government, Police, and BOE
- Neighboring towns budget percent increases for FY22

2020-2021 BOARD OF SELECTMEN GOALS

Adopted August 10, 2020

| Topic Area | Goals |
|--|---|
| Financial Management | Engage in long range planning of Capital between BOS, BOF and BOE |
| | Explore shared services between Town of Simsbury and Simsbury Board of Education |
| | Update financial benchmarking for the BOS and BOF |
| | Complete revenue fund analysis; implement recommendations |
| | Demonstrate how tax dollars are distributed; show impact on median valued home |
| Maintaining Quality of Life/Community Character | Support the work of the SPIRIT Council |
| | Research ability to upgrade signage on state roads |
| Fostering an Engaged, High Quality Workforce | Facilitate employee engagement opportunities |
| | Create executive coaching & 360 feedback opportunities for employees |
| | Invest in our workforce through professional development opportunities |
| Parks & Recreation | Explore Pollinator Pathways opportunities |
| | Explore the Open Space Ranger Program |
| | Disc Golf - create a capital project for disc golf |
| | Splash Pad - create a capital project for a splash pad; seek donations and grants |
| Infrastructure | Prepare visual of what North End of Town will look like after Big Y and Sidewalks are complete |
| | Advocate for expansion of water and gas line installation; increase coordination between utilities |
| | Improve cell service in town |
| | Parking improvements (not an all inclusive list): DOT commuter lots, contiguous business parking, parking on Route 10/lined parking on-street |
| | Research underground utilities for center of town |
| Transportation | Advocate for improvements to DOT timing of lights on Hopmeadow in Weatogue |
| | Increase bus service; explore opportunities for fixed route service |
| EDC | Complete research on business incentive policy, provide recommendations to update the policy |
| | Conduct business outreach visits; collect and track feedback received on the visits |
| | Identify infrastructure improvements that the town can support to help entrepreneurs be successful |
| | Assist with promoting 350th Anniversary events |
| | Complete marketing materials refresh for tourism, real estate, and business recruitment purposes |
| | Improve wayfinding signage |
| | Develop a plan for co-working space(s) |



Town of Simsbury

Town Manager Goals, July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021

Adopted June 22, 2020 by Board of Selectmen

Human Resources/Labor Relations

| <i>Priority</i> | <i>Goal</i> |
|-----------------|-------------|
|-----------------|-------------|

| | |
|--------|--|
| High | Complete negotiations for successor collective bargaining agreements with: AFSCME (parks and public works), dispatchers, and all 3 unions represented by CSEA. Implement wage, benefits, and other ratified changes. |
| High | Conduct third annual leadership retreat, with a focus on creating a diverse workforce and inclusive workplace. |
| High | Research and conduct other professional development opportunities for executive coaching/small group/departamental work (funds permitting). Proceed with customer service and anti-harassment training for staff. |
| Medium | Proceed with implementation of new vendor for defined contribution and deferred compensation administrative services. |
| Medium | Issue a RFQ for pension counsel. |
| Low | Issue a RFQ for pension and OPEB actuarial services. |

Economic Development

| <i>Priority</i> | <i>Goal</i> |
|-----------------|-------------|
|-----------------|-------------|

| | |
|--------|--|
| High | Support business recovery due to the pandemic. Work collaboratively with the Economic Development Commission, Town staff, Main Street Partnership, Chamber of Commerce, and other organizations that support the business community. |
| Medium | Working with the Economic Development Commission, conduct visitations and outreach with the business community. |
| Medium | Working with the Economic Development Commission, complete research on business incentive policy. Provide recommendations to update the policy to the Board of Selectmen. |
| Medium | Assist special villages with initiatives related to special events, infrastructure improvements, and economic development. |



Town of Simsbury

Financial Management

| <i>Priority</i> | <i>Goal</i> |
|-----------------|--|
| High | Prepare and submit FY 21/22 operating and capital budgets in accordance with Charter timeline requirements. Continue to quantify our baseline and capital needs. Incorporate data from the Parks and Open Space Master Plan and the Facilities Master plan into our capital budgeting. |
| High | Monitor revenues, expenditures and cash flow due to the pandemic to maintain financial stability. |
| High | Continue implementation of our new financial management and human resources software system. Implement electronic timekeeping and leave accruals for our workforce. |
| Medium | Engage in long range planning for operating and capital budgeting purposes. Facilitate planning between the Boards of Selectmen, Finance, and Education when appropriate. |
| Medium | Support the work group to review recommendations from the Parks and Recreation Special Revenue Fund analysis. Implement recommendations as feasible. |
| Low | Continue to update our financial benchmarking data annually. |

Special Projects

| <i>Priority</i> | <i>Goal</i> |
|-----------------|--|
| High | Continue to coordinate the Town's response to the pandemic. Focus on the health, safety, and recovery of the community and the organization. Support residents with unmet needs during this unprecedented time. |
| High | Complete the public safety radio system upgrade. |
| High | Proceed with and implement the body camera project for the Police Department. |
| High | Support the Board's vision for a diverse and inclusive community through special projects, initiatives, and policies. |
| High | Evaluate opportunities for sharing financial management services with the Board of Education on a more permanent basis. Evaluate feasibility of shared Information Technology services. Formally document existing shared service arrangements with the BOE. |
| High | Facilitate the potential Meadowood open space acquisition. |



Town of Simsbury

Special Projects Continued

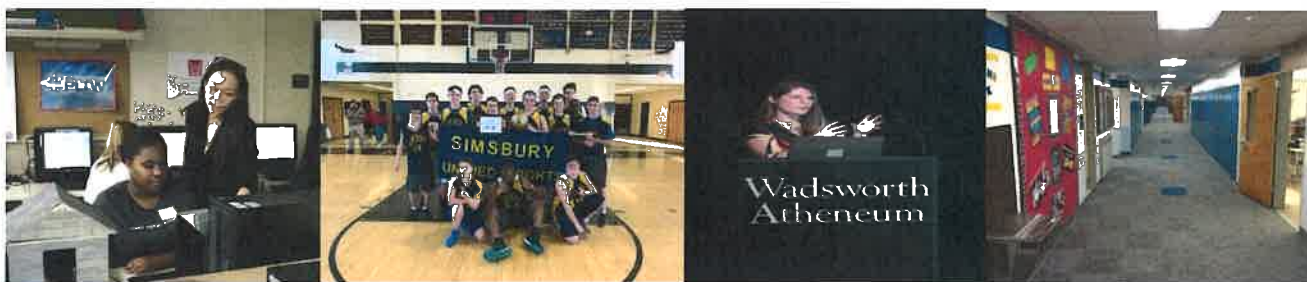
| <i>Priority</i> | <i>Goal</i> |
|-----------------|---|
| Medium | Complete the Parks and Open Space Master Plan. |
| Medium | Complete the Town Facilities Master Plan. Select work order system. |
| Medium | Complete ordinance review work: Proposed Ordinance to Prohibit the Intentional Feeding of Wildlife; Proposed Ordinance to Regulate Short-Term Rentals; Proposed Revisions to the Volunteer Firefighter and Ambulance Personnel Tax Abatement Ordinance. |
| Medium | Support the work of the 350 th Anniversary Committee and events. |
| Low | Submit a proposal to the Board of Selectmen to create a senior services volunteer driving program to expand resources for our senior transportation network. |
| Low | Update our open space stewardship and acquisition policies. Develop open space land management policies and updates to our agricultural leases. Develop a ranger program. |
| Low | Support and coordinate fundraising and planning efforts for a future splash pad project. |

2020-2021 EDC Work Plan - ADOPTED

| Work Stream | Task | Person/People | Status |
|-----------------------|--|--|--|
| Business Incentives | Complete research on business incentives. Provide recommendations/update Business Incentive Policy. | Peter Van Loon, Tom Earl Staff: Maria Capriola, Melissa Appleby | Ongoing, draft policy expected to be presented to BOS in December |
| Marketing | Complete marketing materials refresh for tourism, real estate, and business recruitment purposes. | Brooke Freeman, Charmaine Seavy Staff: Sarah Nielsen | Revised scope and marketing proposal being developed. Proposal and contract expected to be executed by November 30 th |
| Business Outreach | Conduct business outreach. Collect and track feedback. | Bob Crowther, Charmaine Seavy, Tom Earl Staff: Maria Capriola, Melissa Appleby, Mike Glidden, | Ongoing, temporary pause due to COVID-19, talks resumed recently |
| Business Outreach | Implement EDC member shadow program for development projects. | Tom Earl, Peter Van Loon Staff: Mike Glidden | New |
| Business Outreach | Assist with gathering feedback on wayfinding signage needs (type, location, etc). | To be Determined (2) Staff: Sarah Nielsen | Funding for wayfinding signage pushed out to FY22 |
| Support Entrepreneurs | Support infrastructure for entrepreneurs. Promote access to business resources, information, and infrastructure. | Peter Van Loon, Ron Jodice Staff: Andrew Sherman | Ongoing |
| Support Entrepreneurs | Develop a plan for co-working space. | Peter Van Loon, Ron Jodice, Tom Earl Staff: Andrew Sherman, Morgan Hilyard | Ongoing |

Simsbury Public Schools Milone & MacBroom Enrollment Projections 2021-22

| | 10/1/2020 Actual | 2021-22 Projection | Difference |
|--------------|---------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| K-6 | 2018 | 2081 | +63 |
| 7-8 | 633 | 633 | 0 |
| 9-12 | 1309 | 1306 | -3 |
| Total | 3960 | 4020 | +60 |



SIMSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Strategic Plan Goals 2019-2024

Student Growth and Success: Simsbury Public Schools will engage all students in rigorous, dynamic, and relevant learning experiences, in alignment to the Simsbury Vision of the Graduate, in order to ensure student growth and achievement.

Compassionate and Connected School Culture: Simsbury Public Schools will engage our students and adults in an inclusive, responsive, and safe environment that fosters the development of empathetic, ethical, and resilient community members.

Premier Workforce: Simsbury Public Schools will hire, invest in, and retain passionate and exceptional staff who will contribute to a challenging, innovative, and collaborative culture defined by continuous improvement.

Sustainable and Strategic Investments: Simsbury Public Schools will identify and advocate for the needs of our school communities in innovative ways to support the success and growth of all students, ensure fiscal responsibility, and the long-term stability of the district.

*Board of Education
Adopted June 11, 2019*

Board of Education

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Superintendent
Erin Murray
Assistant Superintendent for Teaching &
Learning
Susan Homrok-Lemke
Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Services
Burke LaClair
Business Manager
Neil Sullivan
Director of Personnel

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VISION OF A GRADUATE

- ▶ **CRITICAL THINKER** ▶ **COMMUNICATOR** ▶ **COLLABORATOR**
- ▶ **SELF-DIRECTED LEARNER** ▶ **INNOVATOR** ▶ **GLOBAL CITIZEN**

The driving force behind our 2019-2024 goals is our K-12 “Vision of a Graduate” (VoG). The VoG is the result of a process to define competencies and attributes required to be successful in a rapidly changing society. By identifying and prioritizing the competencies and skills necessary for our students, we will ensure that all our graduates will be prepared to contribute to a global society with integrity, empathy, and resilience. By the time a student graduates from Simsbury High School, our goal is for that student to be a critical thinker, a communicator, a collaborator, a self-directed learner, an innovator, and a global citizen.



Critical Thinker

- Engage in problem solving, inquiry, and reflective thinking
- Develop compelling questions
- Analyze information to consider varied perspectives
- Evaluate information to reason and solve problems



Communicator

- Listen actively
- Lift conversations by asking and responding to questions
- Deliver clear, concise, accurate ideas through spoken and written language
- Demonstrate an awareness of audience by adjusting purposefully



Collaborator

- Perform a variety of roles and responsibilities
- Function interdependently and flexibly with others
- Seek and contribute feedback
- Embrace contradictions and divergent ideas to accomplish a common goal



Self-Directed Learner

- Take initiative and responsibility for learning and productivity
- Use “experts” and other resources to pursue goals
- Demonstrate resilience, optimism, and perseverance
- Accomplish tasks through self-advocacy, self-confidence, and a growth mindset



Innovator

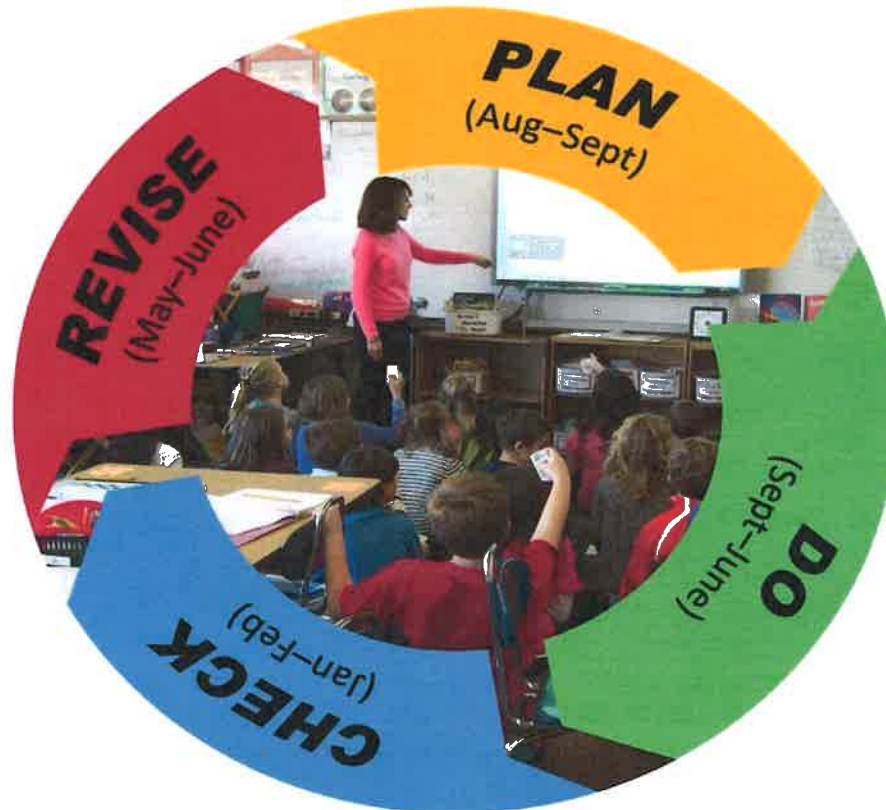
- Empower creativity and develop skills
- Use a variety of techniques as part of a process to enhance outcomes
- View failure as an opportunity to learn, persevere, and show flexibility
- Challenge the status quo, push boundaries, and achieve growth



Global Citizen

- Exemplify empathy, compassion, and respect in interactions with others
- Consider diverse perspectives and cultures
- Act responsibly and ethically
- Recognize impact of actions and civic decisions

Continuous improvement in the Simsbury Public Schools is a cycle that begins in the summer with the analysis of data related to the school and district strategic plans. Areas in need of improvement are identified and strategic plans are developed to focus our work throughout the year. Individual teacher goals are developed in alignment with school and district goals. Reviews of each teacher and administrator professional learning plan are conducted throughout the year and the results relative to our district goals are published the following fall.



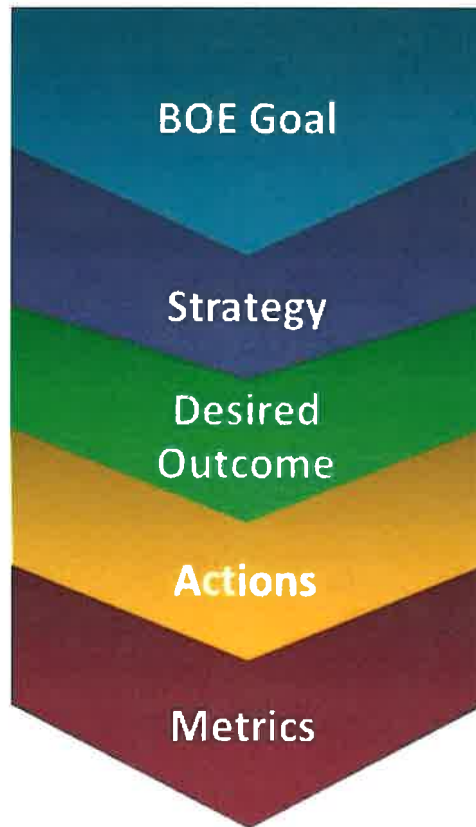
Continuous Improvement Planning Cycle

District • School • Grade Level/Department

*Innovation is the ability to see
change as an opportunity
- not a threat.*

~ Steve Jobs

The **Simsbury Public Schools' goals** provide the foundation for our strategic plan framework.



- **Strategies** are developed to describe how the goals will be achieved.
- **Desired outcomes** illustrate the expected end result of the work.
- **Actions** detail the means by which the desired outcomes will be achieved.
- **Metrics** provide a quantitative assessment to track progress toward the goals.

STUDENT GROWTH AND SUCCESS



"The content of a book holds the power of education and it is with this power that we can shape our future and change lives."



























~ Malala Yousafzai

SPS STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL 1: Student Growth and Success

Simsbury Public Schools will engage all students in rigorous, dynamic, and relevant learning experiences, in alignment to the Simsbury Vision of the Graduate, in order to ensure student growth and achievement.

STRATEGY 1

Ensure Success for Every Student – Align rigorous curriculum, delivery of instruction, and assessment for continuous improvement of student achievement.


















| DESIRED OUTCOME | ACTIONS | 19-20 | 20-21 | 21-22 | 22-23 | 23-24 |
|--|--|--|---|---|---|---|
| <p>The written and implemented curriculum will reflect the Vision of a Graduate competencies and supporting attributes across all content areas</p> <p><u>As measured by:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curricular experiences that achieve the VoG competencies VoG projects across all grade levels and content areas Equity assessment of the curriculum Alignment and vertical articulation of instructional experiences utilizing the Eduplanet 21 platform Rubric used to evaluate Capstone projects | Utilize the SPS audit of elementary, middle, and high school curriculum to revise the curriculum to align with the competencies outlined in the SPS VoG. |  |  |  |  |  |
| | Ensure the K-12 curriculum and courses are diverse and culturally responsive. |  |  |  |  |  |
| | Organize K-12 standards-based curriculum and assessments using the online curriculum platform. |  |  |  |  |  |
| | Design capstone/portfolio process. | |  |  |  |  |
| | Expand career and higher educational opportunities including internships and externships for students in grades 9-12. | |  |  |  |  |
| | |  = Research/Plan  = Implement  = Monitor/Revise | | | | |

SPS STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL 1: Student Growth and Success

Simsbury Public Schools will engage all students in rigorous, dynamic, and meaningful learning experiences, in alignment to the Simsbury Vision of the Graduate, in order to create student growth and achievement.

STRATEGY 2

Provide a Challenging and Supportive Learning Experience – Achieve a high standard of academic performance and growth for all students while minimizing achievement gaps.













| DESIRED OUTCOME | ACTIONS | 19-20 | 20-21 | 21-22 | 22-23 | 23-24 |
|--|---|--|---|---|---|---|
| <p>Students will make appropriate growth annually toward reducing the achievement gap</p> <p><u>As measured by:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next Generation Accountability Report • State Assessments • District Assessments • Data Team Structures • Intervention Data Reports • Placement criteria for ELA and Math | Develop a protocol to analyze and implement programming that focuses on reducing the achievement gap. |  |  |  |  | |
| | Analyze and refine current practices, structures, and programming for all students so that they are being met with innovative interventions and support across all tiers. |  |  |  |  |  |
| | Develop a comprehensive transition plan to meet the needs of all students, including the unique needs of students new to district (<i>Open Choice, EL, preschool/elementary, elementary/middle school, middle/high school, and high school/post-secondary</i>). |  |  |  |  |  |
| | |  = Research/Plan  = Implement  = Monitor/Revise | | | | |

SPS STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL 1: Student Growth and Success

Simsbury Public Schools will engage all students in rigorous, dynamic, and relevant learning experiences, in alignment to the Simsbury Vision of the Graduate, in order to ensure student growth and achievement.

STRATEGY 3

Engage in Assessment Practices that Inform Instructional Strategies – Instructional strategies will be determined through the use of assessment and data systems to maximize student success.

| DESIRED OUTCOME | ACTIONS | 19-20 | 20-21 | 21-22 | 22-23 | 23-24 |
|--|---|--|---|---|---|---|
| <p>All students will meet or exceed grade level standards using a body of evidence in all content areas K-12</p> <p>A balanced assessment system will reflect student growth over time</p> <p><u>As measured by:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> District Assessments across all grade levels State Assessments in grades 3-8, 11 Grade 9 PSAT Data reports from SIMS Electronic writing portfolio Revised elementary report cards K-8 NEASC reporting of VOG competencies | Utilize the Simsbury Assessment Think Tank (SATT) structure to continuously analyze, refine, and monitor our assessment system to ensure balance and purposeful assessment tools and practices. |  |  |  |  |  |
| <p>Assessment system platforms (SIMS and PowerSchool) will provide necessary information about student growth in relation to grade level learning outcomes</p> <p><u>As measured by:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SIMS Platform Electronic Portfolio Platform | Use our SIMS assessment platform to refine data analytics to support effective programming and instruction K-12. | |  |  |  |  |
| | |  = Research/Plan  = Implement  = Monitor/Revise | | | | |

COMPASSIONATE AND CONNECTED SCHOOL CULTURE



*"I'm a very strong
believer in listening and
learning from others."*

~ Ruth Bader Ginsburg

SPS STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL #2: Compassionate and Connected School Culture

Simsbury Public Schools will engage our students and adults in an inclusive, responsive, and safe environment that fosters the development of empathetic, ethical, and resilient community members.

STRATEGY 4

Meaningful Relationships: Develop and sustain a strong sense of belonging and respect between and among students and adults.

| DESIRED OUTCOME | ACTIONS | 19-20 | 20-21 | 21-22 | 22-23 | 23-24 |
|--|--|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| All schools will sustain a healthy, respectful, caring, inclusive and safe learning environment for students, staff, and community members. <u>As measured by:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School climate surveys Focus group discussion Self-assessment tools Celebrations Reduced percentage of students who require Tier II/III behavior intervention Student participation in events/clubs/sports Stakeholder feedback Naviance IEP Honor roll Discipline data PGP PBIS PD opportunities Teacher leadership | Demonstrate a sense of self, school, and community pride. | ➡ | ★ | ✚ | | |
| | Identify, create and refine structures in order to increase a sense of belonging, value, and contribution to a positive school community. | ➡ | ★ | ✚ | | |
| | Promote and celebrate diversity and cultural understanding in all aspects of the district's curriculum, relationships, procedures, and daily work. | ➡ | ➡ | ★ | ★ | ✚ |
| | Develop, plan, and implement appropriate social and emotional competencies necessary for success. | ➡ | ➡ | ➡ | ★ | ★ |
| | Adopt tiered intervention supports for students who demonstrate lagging social, emotional, and/or behavior skills. | ➡ | ➡ | ★ | ★ | ✚ |
| Students and faculty will demonstrate the attributes of a global citizen as reflected in the Vision of the Graduate. <u>As measured by:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rubrics Increased involvement of service-based opportunities Increased number of community businesses and Simsbury alumni working with schools and supporting internships Community service hours Externships | Ensure student opportunities to participate in service-based school and community activities. | | ➡ | ★ | ✚ | |
| | Expand civic, business and community partnerships. | | | ➡ | ★ | ✚ |
| | Strengthen home-school partnerships to improve school climate and increase student investment in learning. | ➡ | ★ | ✚ | | |
| | | ➡ = Research/Plan ★ = Implement ✚ = Monitor/Revise | | | | |

SPS STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL #2: Compassionate and Connected School Culture

Simsbury Public Schools will engage our students and adults in an inclusive, responsive, and safe environment that fosters the development of empathetic, ethical, and resilient community members.

STRATEGY 5

Safe and Healthy Environment: Ensure environments that are both emotionally and physically safe for all students and adults.

| DESIRED OUTCOME | ACTIONS | 19-20 | 20-21 | 21-22 | 22-23 | 23-24 |
|---|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Students and staff feel safe to express their individuality while demonstrating respect for others. <u>As measured by:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey results Conversations between and among faculty and students Professional development plans Survey on psychological safety Department action plans | Provide opportunities for students and staff to take appropriate risks in order to foster personal and professional growth. | | | | | |
| | Ensure all staff is provided ongoing training in the areas of cultural diversity/competence, mental health/wellness, and violence prevention to support the safety and well-being of students and adults. | | | | | |
| | Articulate and strengthen the 7-12 continuum of school counseling and college advising services for students and families | | | | | |
| Schools will reflect protective and preventive safety measures. <u>As measured by:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety drill logs Safety committee notes Safety plans/binders District/school crisis team agendas/minutes Feedback from Simsbury Police Department | Enact, evaluate, and refine identified safety protocols consistently. | | | | | |
| | Review, prioritize and benchmark safety procedures. | | | | | |
| | Develop financial plans, inclusive of cost estimates, to secure the resources to execute identified safety priorities. | | | | | |

| | |
|--|------------------|
| | = Research/Plan |
| | = Implement |
| | = Monitor/Revise |

PREMIER WORKFORCE



*"Get the right people on
the bus and in the right
seat."*

~ Jim Collins










SPS STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL 3: PREMIER WORKFORCE

Simsbury Public Schools will hire, invest in, and retain passionate and exceptional staff who will contribute to a challenging, innovative, and collaborative culture defined by continuous improvement.

STRATEGY 6

Placing a Premium on High Quality Staff – Recruit and retain exceptional employees who are valued, respected, and rewarded for their efforts.

| DESIRED OUTCOME | ACTIONS | 19-20 | 20-21 | 21-22 | 22-23 | 23-24 |
|--|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| <p>Recruit, hire, and retain employees in all positions to maintain a premier workforce.</p> <p><u>As measured by:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of candidate pools and hiring outcomes in difficult-to-fill positions Retention rates for teachers at critical years Level of satisfaction with employment experience | Target recruitment programs to address critical needs and hard-to-fill positions. | ★ | ✚ | | | |
| | Create hiring standards and uniform screening/interviewing protocols for supervisors to ensure consistent and equitable hiring practices and outcomes. | | ➡ | ★ | ★ | ✚ |
| | Develop a process to analyze retention data for teachers at key junctures of their career in order to determine trends about professional longevity. | ➡ | ★ | ✚ | | |
| | Develop a process for regular employee feedback to determine overall job satisfaction of different employee groups. | ➡ | ★ | ✚ | | |
| <p>Achieve and preserve a culture of quality, equity, support, and responsiveness for all SPS employees.</p> <p><u>As measured by:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff diversity trends "Customer service" feedback from employees related to experiences with HR, technology, maintenance, etc. Analysis of professional support structures | Work with administrators and supervisors to establish intentional and focused recruitment efforts in an effort to achieve greater diversity on the professional staff. | ★ | ✚ | | | |
| | Convene regular meetings with SPS employee groups to review HR practices with regard to equity, responsiveness, and value placed on employees. | | ★ | ✚ | | |
| | Develop a process for employee feedback to determine effectiveness of professional support systems and satisfaction with "customer service" experiences (HR, Business Office, technology, maintenance, etc.). | ➡ | ★ | ✚ | | |








| DESIRED OUTCOME | ACTIONS | 19-20 | 20-21 | 21-22 | 22-23 | 23-24 |
|--|---|---|---|------------------|-------|-------|
| Provide a competitive compensation and benefit plan. <u>As measured by:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Results of market analysis on SPS compensation packages against area school districts | Conduct a compensation study to compare SPS salaries and benefits with area school districts. |  |  | | | |
| | Conduct post-process discussions with representatives of employee groups to determine satisfaction with collective bargaining processes and outcomes. |  |  | | | |
| | Engage governing boards (BOE and BOF) in discussions about findings of compensation study. |  |  | | | |
| | |  | | = Research/Plan | | |
| | |  | | = Implement | | |
| | |  | | = Monitor/Revise | | |

SPS STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL 3: PREMIER WORKFORCE

STRATEGY 7

Prioritizing Professional Growth and Teamwork – Invest in growth opportunities and teamwork for all employees by providing meaningful professional development, structures for collaboration, and quality feedback on performance.

| DESIRED OUTCOME | ACTIONS | 19-20 | 20-21 | 21-22 | 22-23 | 23-24 |
|---|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| <p>Promote professional development opportunities for all employees that support a challenging, collaborative, and innovative culture.</p> <p><u>As measured by:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive program evaluation on professional development opportunities and activities Employee assessment of professional development opportunities and activities PLC Survey PLC Toolkit | Create a professional development needs assessment for employee groups and develop comprehensive professional development plans that includes leadership training. | | | | | |
| | Promote job-specific, ongoing, and personalized professional development plans that encourage the sharing of innovative practices and capitalize on the internal expertise of SPS employees. | | | | | |
| | Identify “best practices” (exceptional) PLC’s that cultivate effective collaboration and innovative teaching practices and develop a PLC “Toolkit” that can be shared across the district. | | | | | |
| | Prioritize Simsbury’s “Vision of the Graduate” in professional development planning for all employee groups. | | | | | |
| | Engage in professional learning around technology to increase flexibility with respect to when and how learning occurs most effectively. | | | | | |
| <p>Develop and maintain a performance evaluation system that is meaningful to all SPS employees.</p> <p><u>As measured by:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of employee ratings on performance evaluations | Refine and streamline performance evaluation systems and structures for teachers (including those in non-classroom roles) and administrators, while providing on-going, meaningful, and actionable feedback. | | | | | |
| | Improve performance evaluation systems for non-certified employees to include formative and summative evaluation cycles. | | | | | |

| DESIRED OUTCOME | ACTIONS | 19-20 | 20-21 | 21-22 | 22-23 | 23-24 |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of satisfaction with evaluation experience by both employees and supervisors. | Implement regular training for supervisors and managers regarding observations and/or performance evaluations. | |  |  |  |  |
| | |  | | = Research/Plan | | |
| | |  | | = Implement | | |
| | |  | | = Monitor/Revise | | |

SUSTAINABLE AND STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS



“Where we stand is not as important as the direction in which we are moving.”

~ Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.

SPS STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL 4: Sustainable and Strategic Investments

Simsbury Public Schools will identify and advocate for the needs of our school communities in innovative ways to support the success and growth of all students, ensure fiscal responsibility, and the long-term stability of the district.

STRATEGY 8

Ensure Long-term Stability of the District – The physical and technological infrastructure of each school building will be systematically reviewed. The future costs of operation maintenance will be developed.























| DESIRED OUTCOME | ACTIONS | 19-20 | 20-21 | 21-22 | 22-23 | 23-24 |
|---|---|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Provide voters/town boards with detailed information on what it costs to adequately operate and maintain the district's assets <u>As measured by:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The matrix of needs building conditions and costs from our facilities master plan. A review of the configuration of our schools and the future costs of operation | Complete a Facilities Master Plan with professional opinion and cost estimates. | | | | | |
| | Develop a framework for prioritizing requests for the town's 6 Year Capital Improvement Plan. | | | | | |
| | Complete a School Reconfiguration Study with community input and feedback on potential options. | | | | | |
| | Develop a process for community understanding of the cost of maintaining our current structure versus other potential configurations. | | | | | |
| Provide staff and students with ready access to technology and a stable district network infrastructure <u>As measured by:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our data on network "down-time" and impacts to technology. | Complete an independent review of district options for strengthening our network infrastructure. | | | | | |
| | Determine budget implications (both operating and capital) for improvements and potential support needed. | | | | | |
| | | = Research/Plan = Implement = Monitor/Revise | | | | |




SPS STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL 4: Sustainable and Strategic Investments

STRATEGY 9

Ensure that school budget needs are effectively communicated in the context of fiscal

responsibility – Improve the budget communication and development process to provide the most relevant information to voters in supporting the needs of all students.

| DESIRED OUTCOME | ACTIONS | 19-20 | 20-21 | 21-22 | 22-23 | 23-24 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|-------|
| Provide voters/town boards/stakeholders with improved access to clear information on the financial needs of the district to serve all students to help ensure continued budget support. <u>As measured by:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voter approval of the Board of Education Budget and levels of support. | Improve the district's web page to make the budget information more transparent. |  |  |  | | |
| | Provide an updated professional presentation of the BOE budget book and improved internal structure for budget communications with school leaders and staff. |  |  |  | | |
| | Review the budget presentation and communications of our peer districts both in the region and beyond. |  |  |  | | |
| | Continue to enhance our shared services with the town and neighboring districts. |  |  |  |  | |
| Provide central office and business staff with the financial and human resource software tools needed to provide clear and professional budget information and improve customer service. <u>As measured by:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A review with the Town of our shared financial and human resources software system needs. | Issue a request for proposals to review demonstrations of potential new financial/HR software systems and determine costs and estimated timelines for transition. |  |  |  | | |
| | Present summary of needed capital project and costs for budget consideration. |  |  |  | | |
| | Complete the training, implementation, and conversion to a new software system. |  |  |  | | |

| | |
|---|------------------|
|  | = Research/Plan |
|  | = Implement |
|  | = Monitor/Revise |

SPS at a Glance

Our school system

- October 1, 2018 enrollment of 4,018 students K-12
- Eight schools/programs
 - * 1 high school
 - * 1 middle school
 - * 5 elementary schools
 - * 1 pre-school

Our students

- Demographics (2017-2018)
 - * 76.4 percent White
 - * 5.9 percent African American
 - * 8.0 percent Hispanic or Latino
 - * 6.5 percent Asian American
 - * 3.2 percent two or more races
- Services
 - * 9.6 percent participate in Free or Reduced-Price Meals
 - * 14.1 percent receive special education services (This does not include students with Section 504 Plans.)
 - * 1.5 percent participate as English Learners
- Performance
 - * 97.7 percent graduation rate
 - * 1196 average combined SAT score
 - * 76 percent of students complete at least one AP Course
 - * 86 percent of students achieve a score of 3 or above on AP Exam
 - * 23 National Merit Scholars
 - * *U.S. News & World Report* ranks Simsbury High School 8th Best Public High School in CT, and in the top 500 in the U.S.

System Resources

- \$70,880,978 FY 2019-20 Operating Budget
- Six Year Capital Improvement Program (The district is underway with a Facilities Master Plan & Reconfiguration Study.)
- 750 employees
- 381 certified teachers
- 93% percent of teachers with a master's degree or above

Here is a [link](#) to the 2017-18 Simsbury School District Profile and Performance Report. The school district and individual school Profile and Performance Reports are accessible on the State of CT [EdSight portal](#).

Glossary of Acronyms:

| | |
|--------------|--|
| BOE | Board of Education |
| BOF | Board of Finance |
| EL | English Learners |
| ELA | English Language Arts |
| IEP | Individualized Education Program |
| NEASC | New England Association of Schools and Colleges |
| PBIS | Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports |
| PGP | Professional Growth Plan |
| PLC | Professional Learning Community |
| SATT | Student Assessment Think Tank |
| SIMS | Student Information Management System |
| SPS | Simsbury Public Schools |
| VoG | Vision of a Graduate |