

PASSAIC VALLEY REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL Serving Little Falls, Totowa, & Woodland Park

Strategic Plan 2019-2022



"To assure today's education programming is relevant to tomorrow's college and career employment expectations"

Available online at www.pvhs.k12.nj.us



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Letter from the Superintendent

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT
Passaic Valley Regional High School District #1

Dr. JoAnn Cardillo, Superintendent
Phone: 973-890-2500
Email: Cardilloj@pvhs.k12.nj.us



Passaic Valley Regional High School
East Main Street
Little Falls, New Jersey 07424

July 2019

Dear Community Members and Passaic Valley Staff,

It is with an extreme sense of joy that I share this Strategic Plan with each member of the communities that are served by Passaic Valley Regional High School. Under the direction of our current Board of Education, the administration of both the district and the school unanimously committed to a thorough needs assessment of the school programs, facility needs, and community input on all matters regarding Passaic Valley. We planned an information gathering process that would be open, widely advertised, and provided stakeholders in the community an opportunity to voice their concerns. I am proud to say that we began these important conversations in the summer of 2018 and met in both large and small groups, as well as priority specific meetings which were completed in January of 2019. The discussions we had were not only candid and direct, but covered a wide range of topics. After analyzing the notes and data from our meetings, five areas were agreed upon as the basis for our goals and actions moving forward.

Thank you in advance for reading and understanding our plans for Passaic Valley's future. We hope you feel the same sense of pride that we do, as we see our community come together to create a nurturing and rigorous educational environment for all our students.

As always, I remain humbled to have led you through this process for the first time in our school district's history. I stand ready to continue to focus on the needs of our students while building on the traditions that make our school so special to our communities. I truly mean it when I say **#PVisTHEplacetobe.**

Sincerely,
Dr. JoAnn Cardillo, Superintendent

Township of Little Falls
Borough of Totowa
Borough of Woodland Park

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The 16-17 school year began with the development of a school/district member committee for developing the Vision, Mission and Core Beliefs that would guide the strategic planning process. The volunteer members of this committee worked to identify and provide this powerful structure of guiding principles from further discussions with a broad range of school and community stakeholders. Together the committee developed the important priority areas that would be the focus of the planning and actions taken by the leadership of the district under the governance of the Board of Education.

**Passaic Valley Regional High School District # 1
Strategic Planning Committee**

Dr. JoAnn Cardillo

Mr. Ray Rotella

Mrs. Kathleen Dellanno

Mrs. Jamie Peters

Mrs. Rachel Briggs

Mrs. Megan Miele

Mrs. Erin Wilks

Mr. William Phillian

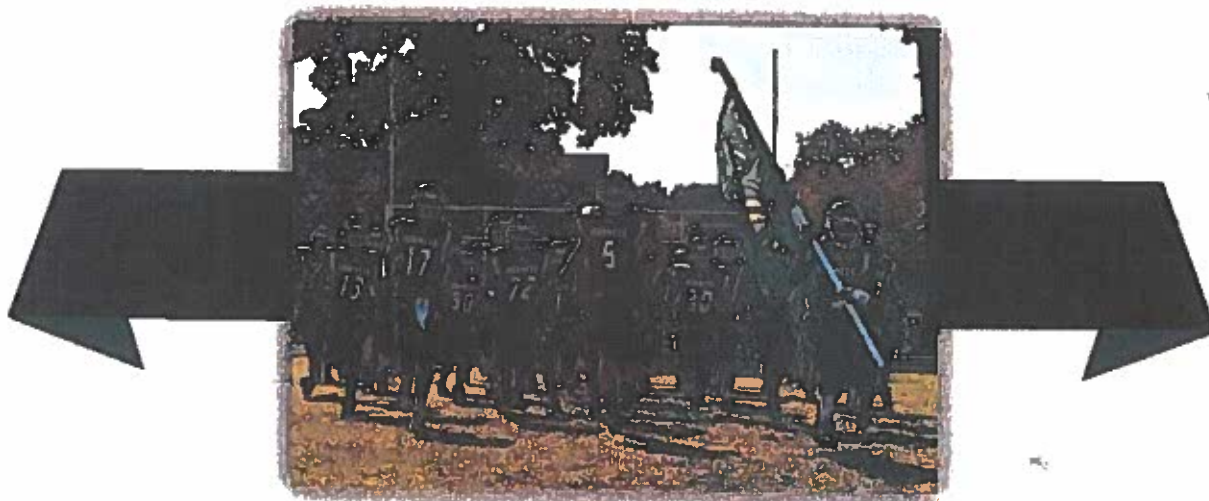
Mr. Michael DeLuccia

Mr. Marc Salvatore

Mrs. Janet Russo

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District Overview



It is important to understand the unique institutional history of Passaic Valley's place in the Passaic County community as well as the history of pride and tradition that has seen this district through various cyclical changes in the past 79 years. Indeed, in the 19-20 school year, Passaic Valley will celebrate 80 years of educating the communities of Little Falls, Totowa, and Woodland Park.

Currently, Passaic Valley provides a strong comprehensive educational program that affords students a wide range of opportunities in academics, athletics, and activities. The school can boast that the alumni is successful in the area of state and community leadership and continue to remain in the community as current business stakeholders and educators in Little Falls, Totowa and Woodland Park. Graduates are well prepared for post-secondary experiences in STEM, including areas of focus in Health Science research, Architecture and Design, the path of Computer Science careers, and Principles of Engineering projects and design. Our Humanities offerings include Theatre Arts and the study of career pathways in the areas of Communication and Broadcasting. We have a Criminal Justice program that provides a strong background in the study of safety and security opportunities with real world experiences. Many of these areas of study are now linked to internships, structured learning experiences, certification and work programs.

In 17-18 the district began an aggressive plan to update curriculum and standardize the academic assessments necessary to increase student achievement and to create an accountability system within the district that would provide all students with the course content and level of instruction to support a maximized learning environment. The district planned for and began the **Bring Your Own Device Initiative**, which provided students opportunities to bring their laptops to school for classroom use and moved teachers in a new direction of integrated technology within instruction. The BYOD initiative increased teaching and learning opportunities in all content areas. Professional development for teachers was provided by both administration and peer-to-peer. In 18-19 the program grew exponentially and projections for growth continue to be maintained.

District Overview

In 18-19 a needs assessment of guidance services was approved by the Board of Education and a re-structuring plan was put in place and implemented. The rigor of course offerings and updated requirements of state mandated changes was implemented to prepare for the debut of our new Program of Studies. This provides students with a vast array of newly developed electives linked to our Humanities and STEM Instruction, which allows for the Fine and Performing Arts coursework to serve as the bridge between the STEM and Humanities curriculum offerings.

Passaic Valley Community Forums were held at the school to ensure input in determining the priority areas of the Strategic Plan. They were then aligned to what the community deemed necessary in planning for the future of Passaic Valley. Conversations began in July of 2018 and further dates were offered during the fall and early winter in large and small group settings to accommodate as many stakeholders as possible in the development of these priority areas. The sessions ultimately led to the broad goals outlined in the body of this document. Stakeholder and parent relationships were further strengthened with the school/district administration. Community collaboration and input was documented and supports the course of action for the district moving forward.



The Vision, Mission and Core Beliefs

The Vision, Mission, and Core Beliefs outlined below are based on current survey results from students, staff and community members as well as the work of the Mission, Vision and Core Beliefs Committee.

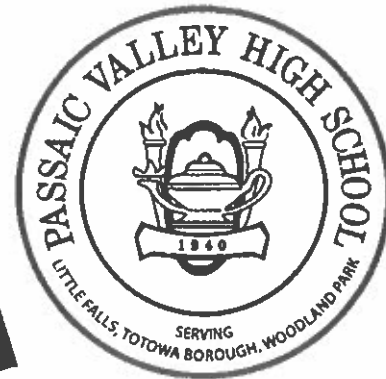
VISION

All students are prepared to meet the challenges of post secondary life with grace and confidence.

MISSION

To assure today's educational programming is relevant to tomorrow's college and career employment expectations.

Pride and Tradition defines
Passaic Valley Regional High School



CORE BELIEFS

1. We believe in a safe, orderly school campus.
2. We believe that all stakeholder voices are valuable, constructive criticism is acceptable, and mutual respect is expected of all.
3. We believe that all students in our community deserve to be educated to their full potential.
4. We believe it is important to offer a balance of exceptional academics, athletics, and activities at our school.
5. We believe that tri-boro community support and ownership of Passaic Valley is imperative to our success thus assuring the future success of the Township of Little Falls, the Borough of Totowa, and the Borough of Woodland Park.

Introduction

For Passaic Valley Regional High School District #1 to embrace the process of developing a Strategic Plan, it is important to acknowledge the emergent need for today's high school programs to be reinvented by those who are charged to lead and administer the changes in programs and offerings. As an extended regional community, we agree on the need to assure our schools are relevant sanctuaries for every child and young adult to explore, learn, and remain globally-conscious in a dynamic world, where future employment and successful lifestyles have yet to be determined. We are committed to building a strong academic bridge between our sending districts' middle schools and Passaic Valley. We must provide a safe haven for our students where they will prepare to be valued citizens and community members once they graduate, enter adulthood, and assume the challenges of our future communities and beyond to state and national levels.

The need to develop a guiding document for strategic planning is relevant and imperative to the success of Passaic Valley moving forward. It assures the staff that we have communicated with a broad range of community stakeholders and determined what our focus and set goals should be across the educational program spectrum. Strategic planning is crucial for Passaic Valley to remain relevant as the viable community choice for future generations of students in the three communities of Little Falls, Totowa and Woodland Park.

Preparation for the development of this plan began in the 15-16 school year with an internal needs assessment of the then organizational structure, district policies and regulations, and standard operating procedures. The necessary changes created the ability for the leadership of the district and school to develop and implement best practices and essential modifications of program offerings. Plans were employed to continue to address current updated state mandates, as well as supports to teachers with professional development in best practices and a system of teacher observation and evaluation as outlined by TEACHNJ and Achieve NJ.

The district began to explore academic programming development that would be unique to Passaic Valley with preparing our students for the new world of work, as well as various secondary educational experiences that are currently available and ever changing. This included a needs assessment of current special education programming resulting in a realignment plan that offers a larger variety of levels of services for students. This process of evaluating the current state of the district and providing the necessary support for systematic change, as approved by the Board of Education and the Leadership Team of the district, created the ability to move forward into the next steps of the strategic planning process.

Priorities and Goals

Each priority is clearly defined in this document with specific goals and indicators to assure that going forward the yearly school/district action plans, professional development and plans for increasing student achievement and opportunities will be aligned to the district operating budget and this important work done by all who have chosen to participate in the development of the Strategic Plan for Passaic Valley.

Priority areas for goal setting were determined collaboratively with all stakeholder groups.

They are:

- I. School Campus Safety
- II. Curriculum and Instruction
- III. Athletics and Activities
- IV. Buildings and Grounds
- V. Community Engagement



I. School Campus Safety

Goal

To increase, develop, and optimize safety and security measures and procedures in order to maintain a safe and orderly school campus.

Indicators

- A. Identify areas of security vulnerability; address as necessary.
- B. Review safety protocols and procedures with the School Safety Team and staff as prescribed by the NJ Department of Education, NJ State laws and statutes and the Memorandum of Agreement with local law enforcement.
- C. Meet with School Safety Committee to assess and evaluate practices pertaining to the safety of our students, faculty, and staff.
- D. Meet with Board Operations Committee to discuss any needed changes to our school safety program.
- E. Train security personnel in collaboration with the Little Falls Police Department and the Passaic County departments that meet at Passaic Valley.
- F. Review current practices for student discipline protocols.
- G. Educate and empower students to understand the implications and ramifications of peer pressure, harassment and bullying, and negative social media outreach.
- H. Research, plan, and train staff to apply classroom management practices that facilitate a restorative environment.
- I. Update and review policies, regulations, and Standard Operating Procedures.

II. Curriculum and Instruction

Goal

To offer a personalized program of teaching and learning that prepares all students for their choice of post-secondary studies and career success.

Indicators

- A. Create and revise curriculum in all content areas, affording inclusivity of all groups; including high achieving, college preparatory, career and technical education programs, and those programs serving our general education population, English-Language Learners, Special Education, and our at-risk population.
- B. Infuse college and career readiness standards in all coursework and structured learning experiences and future ready practices.
- C. Provide all students equitable access with modifications to all curriculum and instruction inclusive of subgroups i.e., Special Education, 504, English Language Learners, Gifted and Talented, and at-risk students.
- D. Research social emotional learning models that can successfully educate our students and teach them the importance of living a healthy lifestyle.
- E. Review and update the school technology plan as needed.
- F. Instill higher order thinking skills, problem solving skills, and questioning techniques in lesson planning and instructional practices to increase student engagement.
- G. Motivate students to set personal goals to increase their intrinsic motivation in becoming educated young adults.
- H. Provide professional development for all faculty to improve instructional practices and better engage our students in the learning process.
- I. Develop programs that further identify options to engage students in desired work/career areas.
- J. Develop strategic partnerships with local businesses to align student academic programs and opportunities in work and career areas.
- K. Maintain an active Student Attendance Committee who will analyze data via the Attendance Office, identify at-risk students and meet with families regularly.

III. Athletics and Activities

Goal

To offer a comprehensive athletic program with opportunities for students to set goals for competitive excellence, while maintaining good sportsmanship and integrity.

To offer students clubs and activities to explore a wide range of interests and concepts connected to young adult interests and various career pathways.

Indicators

- A. Collaborate with the sending districts regarding existing programs in each district thus strengthening our relationships with our community partners in the area of athletics and activities.
- B. Assess current athletic program interests to assure they are associated with the needs of our students.
- C. Provide athletes with the necessary supports and services to improve their skills and build relationships with coaches and peers.
- D. Recruit and encourage more participation from the entire student body to increase our pool of student athletes and strengthen our programs.
- E. Review attendance of club meetings to determine interest and relevance to current student needs.
- F. Measure student satisfaction regarding club offerings.
- G. Review data provided by the club advisors regarding meetings and the activities presented to students throughout the year.
- H. Meet regularly with student representation to assure student perceptions and student voices are heard.
- I. Collaborate and support the efforts of the Passaic Valley Education Foundation.

IV. Buildings and Grounds

Goal

To promote a vision for Passaic Valley to be elevated into a state-of-the-art high school facility.

Indicators

- A. Develop a plan for current and future project needs regarding both upgrades and possible new initiatives.
- B. Enhance our ability to offer our three sending community's involvement in the use of facilities.
- C. Ensure the health, safety, and maximized accessibility for our students, faculty, and community in the use of the entire district campus.
- D. Support high levels of increased athletics, academics, and activity participation at the school.
- E. Support efforts for school infrastructure to maintain reliable network access.
- F. Maintain files and an updated facilities plan for the school and campus.
- G. Identify and prioritize the needs of the physical plant on a yearly basis.
- H. Upgrade existing infrastructure and resources to support all necessary working and learning environments according to the needs of our student population.



V. Community Engagement

Goal

To create systems that enhance active engagement of faculty, staff, and students that support our commitment to a diverse school community.

To create systems that increase awareness and build partnerships with our sending districts and local community entities that result in positive outcomes of higher enrollment and support to students at Passaic Valley.

Indicators

- A. Embrace concepts of social emotional practices in serving all the students of Passaic Valley.
- B. Develop and focus on a communications program that identifies and utilizes all media platforms available to Passaic Valley.
- C. Update and increase our branding and marketing strategies in order to communicate our presence in the community and to present the effectiveness of our unique program offerings.
- D. Develop programs and activities that include incentives for student participation that lead to spirit, pride, and tradition.
- E. Collaborate with our business and community entities to enhance the district's day to day service to our students through structured learning experiences and internships.
- F. Engage every member of the school community to recognize their responsibility in building and projecting a positive image for the district.
- G. Retain and engage alumni in the daily Hornet Happenings of Passaic Valley.
- H. Embrace parents and community members into the school to partner with us in providing authentic experiences for the students of Passaic Valley.
- I. Define and utilize all media platforms for communication of school/district information on a scheduled plan of action.

Concluding Statement

Thank you again to all the participants who supported the development of this plan. This is a living document to be reviewed and adjusted as the school district plans for the five priority areas of Passaic Valley Regional High School. Our budget process will be in direct correlation to planning and aligning systems that maintain standards of educational excellence.

The Superintendent will communicate this Strategic Plan, goals, and indicators to the faculty, staff and external business and community partners. A yearly review of progress toward meeting goals will take place to assure the district budget supports the accomplishment of the priority goals.

The questions will remain focused on the five priority areas of the plan and the goals and indicators set forth to accomplish our work. This is the commitment we make to the communities that are served by Passaic Valley Regional High School District #1.



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