

# DeRuyter Central School District

## Strategic Plan 2014-2019

Approved by the Board of Education August 20, 2014



Plan Facilitated by:  
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## Table of Contents

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Letter to DeRuyter Central School District Board of Education.....  | 3  |
| Board of Education.....   | 5  |
| Letter to DeRuyter Central School District Community.....           | 6  |
| Mission, Vision and Belief Statements.....                          | 7  |
| Community Café Members and Core Team Members.....                   | 8  |
| Academic Achievement Task Force .....                               | 9  |
| Academic Achievement Five Year Action Plan.....                     | 10 |
| Student Engagement Task Force.....                                  | 12 |
| Student Engagement Five Year Action Plan.....                       | 13 |
| Social and Emotional Task Force.....                                | 14 |
| Social and Emotional Five Year Action Plan.....                     | 15 |
| Home, School, and Community Partnerships Task Force.....            | 16 |
| Home, School, and Community Partnerships Five Year Action Plan..... | 17 |
| Progress Report Form.....   | 19 |



## DeRuyter Central School District

Dear DeRuyter Central School District Board of Education:

On behalf of the DeRuyter Central School District Core Planning Team and the four Task Forces- Academic Achievement, Student Engagement, Social and Emotional Well Being, and Home, School, and Community Partnerships we are pleased to submit this Strategic Plan.

The DeRuyter Central School District embarked on a process of long range planning that will guide decision making for the District. They chose to embark on a process that was open, transparent and inclusive so that the voices of all interested stakeholders could be heard. Becoming a great school requires planning and focus. The plan incorporates 5-year targets in selected areas in order to transform DeRuyter Central School District into a world class school district. The plan has built-in yearly monitoring to ensure that the work being done has the desired impact toward reaching the targets. The process in this District was rigorous, interactive and challenging with students always being the top priority. The process challenged administrators, parents and community members to think in new ways about what they want for the students in the district. To achieve the targets of this plan, it will require collaboration, perseverance and commitment by all stakeholders.

As the Board reviews the Strategic Plan and decides upon final approval, the following clarifications will be helpful:

The process started with an open invitation for staff, parents and community members to participate in a Community Café on September 10, 2013. The group was challenged to respond to the following 5 questions:

1. What skills and abilities do students need when they walk across the stage at graduation to be successful as they enter the next phase of their lives?
2. What do we as a district do well? What are the areas where improvements could be made?
3. What do we value most about DeRuyter CSD?
4. What are the things that we can do as a district to help the community prosper which in turn will help us attract more people to grow the community?
5. If DeRuyter Central School District were a model in the state or nation, what attributes or characteristics would the school have?

Continuing the process, a Core Team was created from volunteers from the Community Café and the School District Planning Team. The initial charge was to create the vision, mission, and belief statements for DeRuyter Central School District. The answers to the questions from the Community Café were compiled and presented to the Core Team. Using this data, the Core Team created the mission, vision, and belief statements. The mission is our core purpose or what we do as a school. The vision describes our future state, or what we want to be as a school. Belief statements are a set of core values we all agree to embrace and follow.

## DeRuyter Central School District

The Core Team then prioritized the responses and developed areas of focus that needed to be addressed. Four Task Force Teams were created to set the course for improvement over the next 5 years. The Core Team identified the need for our students to have diverse opportunities and challenges in all four focus areas.

Each Task Force was charged with creating strategic intents, key initiatives, and action items in the four focus areas. Strategic intents are goals and precise targets. Key initiatives are multi-year strategies that support the achievement of the strategic intents. Action items are specific tactical projects which are selected year by year, typically by administration with guidance from the District Planning Team.

The four Task Forces were charged with setting goals to build on the strengths in each area while identifying and developing capacity in each domain for improvement.

1. Academic Achievement Task Force was charged with exploring what it means to raise academic expectations for students.
2. Student Engagement Task Force explored ways to more actively engage students in the learning process.
3. Social Emotional Task Force explored ways to help students manage their emotions as well as help them to develop skills to become responsible decision makers.
4. Home, School, and Community Partnerships Task Force focused their work on increasing stakeholder participation by providing accurate and up-to-date information to all stakeholders.

There was a commitment by staff, parents and community members to contribute to the combined thinking and planning that developed a document that outlined strategies to effectively engage and appropriately challenge every student, leading to excellence for all.

It was an exciting, engaging process that has led to the development of this document and will serve as the blueprint for change and engagement for the next five years. On behalf of the Core Team and Task Forces, we submit the 2014 DeRuyter Central School Strategic Plan with pride.

Respectfully,

Judy A. Morgan  
Educational Consultant

## **Board of Education 2014-15**

Mr. Fred Lawrence, Board President

Mrs. Amy Sperat, Vice President

Mrs. Brandi Compton

Mr. Dean Hathaway

Mr. Bradley Mierke





August 20, 2014

Dear DeRuyter Central School Community:

The divide that separates traditional methods of teaching and learning from how students learn in the 21<sup>st</sup> century has been a challenge for schools for the past decade. Advances in technology have created changes in our society that have resulted in an expansion of what students need to know and learn in order to be college and career ready. Not only do students need to master the content of the subject matter, but they also must master a host of other skills such as, how to communicate and collaborate with others, how to problem-solve, how to think critically, and how to innovate and create in addition to achieving a higher understanding of technology-based applications. We know that the practice of teaching with long established customs that are outdated and disconnected from a technology rich, global society is no longer viable. It is important that we make significant changes in how we teach and learn in order for our children to be successful.

How to transform school districts from a traditional framework of education to a more progressive paradigm of teaching and learning, that embraces these new skills, is critical to the success of all students. DCS has embarked on this challenge. We started the process to shift from a traditional learning paradigm to a more progressive model of teaching and learning through the strategic planning process.

In the summer of 2013 the Board of Education charged the administration with creating a Strategic Plan, in collaboration with community members, staff and students, as a road map to enhance future teaching and learning at DCS. This process began with a Community Café on September 10, 2013 in order to get input from the community on what students need to know in order to be college and career ready. From there, a group of interested parties from all stakeholder groups created a draft of a new mission, vision and belief statements. This committee identified four areas necessary to achieve a more progressive model of teaching and learning. Four task forces were formed to address the identified areas and identify the strategic intents, key initiatives and actions necessary to guide the District through this change. The four areas consist of: Academic Achievement, Student Engagement, Social Emotional, and Home, School and Community Partnerships. The task force work was completed by July 1, 2014. The work of the task forces, along with the draft of the new mission, vision and belief statements translated into the DCS Strategic Plan which was approved by the BOE over the summer.

We have embarked on this exciting journey into the future and believe the ultimate destination is well within our grasp through hard work, team work, and dedication. The BOE congratulates everyone for the success to date and wants to thank everyone for their continued support to make the entire education process at DCS a giant stepping stone to the future for all of our children.

Sincerely,

Your Board of Education

DeRuyter Central School District

## **Mission Statement**

*The DeRuyter Central School District, in partnership with parents and the community, will educate and empower all students to embrace a passion for learning while developing into respectful, productive members of society.*

## **Vision Statement**

*The DeRuyter Central School District will be committed to providing a safe, healthy and supportive environment where all members of the learning community will reach high expectations as they achieve confidence in their talents and pursue personal success in a complex, interconnected, dynamic world.*

## **DeRuyter Central School District Belief Statements**

### ***We believe...***

*...the partnership of home, school and community is essential for student success.*

*...children are our first priority.*

*...each individual has dignity and worth.*

*...an emotionally and physically comfortable, safe and professional environment is most conducive to teaching and learning.*

*...in a learning community of integrity that promotes positive character and good citizenship.*

*...in the optimal utilization of all resources.*

*...high expectations and challenging curriculum lead to greater achievement.*

*...frequent, clear and consistent communication is essential among all school stakeholders.*

*...in learning communities where students are supported to become self directed, lifelong learners.*

*...diverse opportunities and challenges allow for each student's gifts and talents to be discovered.*

## Community Café Members

Larry Aller, Nancy Aller, Juanita Bush, Barry Buyea, Judy Buyea, Pete Camp, Brandi Compton, Mary Coolbaugh, Randy Coolbaugh, Dan Degear, Jessica Degear, Denise Cuddeback, Wendy Custer, Jim Denkenberger, Pam Gallerani, Brittanie Gibbons, Vern Groves, Janet Hathaway, Sandy Hathaway, Scott Hillman, Lisa Hirt, Anna Jarvis, Jennifer Jones, Ciara LaClair, Tina LaClair, Adrianna Ladd, Darren Ladd, Jenn Ladd, Jerry Ladd, Linda Ladd, Rick Lambert, Rob Neal, Kim O'Brien, Lisa O'Neill, Nancy Parkhurst, Doug Pelton, Amy Perrone, Trina Purcell, Regina Raleigh, Heather Sawyer-Mierke, Ralph Sehn, Bill Shoemaker, Cyndi Shoemaker, Shea Skeelee, Win Skeelee, James Southard, Sally Stack Feinberg, Charles Thornton, Jared Tiffin, Barbara Walters, Charles Walters, Jodi Wiesing, Amy Worlock, Bonnie Young, Martin Young

## Core Team Members

Donna Barber, Juanita Bush, Brandi Compton, Dan Degear, Joe Drake, Morgan Fellows, Brittanie Gibbons, Vern Groves, Jennifer Ladd, Madelynn Lawrence, Kim O'Brien, Nancy Parkhurst, Doug Pelton, Amy Prince, Regina Raleigh, Sally Stack Feinberg, Erin Young, Chuck Walters





## Academic Achievement Task Force Team

**Facilitator:** Judy Morgan

**Members:** Donna Barber, Pete Camp, Brandi Compton, Jessica Degear, Shari Elliott, Brittanie Gibbons, Anna Jarvis, Linda Ladd, Madelynn Lawrence, Kim O'Brien, Doug Pelton, Sally Stack Feinberg, Charles Thornton, Chuck Walters, Erin Young

### Task Force Charge

The Task Force for Academic Achievement will review literature and research that will lead to the development of key initiatives and action plans that will define research-based practices that will increase academic achievement including, but not limited to acquiring and applying:

- Basic knowledge
- Critical and creative thinking skills
- Communication skills
- Problem solving skills
- Collaboration skills
- College and career ready skills
- Community engagement
- Curiosity and imagination

### The Critical Questions that the Team explored:

- What do all students need to know and be able to do at each grade level?
- How do we know what all students know and are able to do as defined by learning objectives at each grade level?
- How do we measure learning? How do we report learning? Does our current grading system provide useful information for students as learners?
- What research-based teaching strategies do we currently use? What research-based teaching practices will we all use so that we can support learning at high levels?
- Research says that the components of rigor and deep learning occur with: well-developed lessons, students actively engaged in learning, frequent assessment with meaningful feedback, established and understood high expectations for learning. What evidence do we have of these practices in our classrooms? What resources/staff development would we need to successfully implement these practices?

## Academic Achievement 5-Year Action Plan

### Strategic Intent #1

By June 2019, 100% of students will meet or exceed growth expectations on district-selected assessments that measure student achievement on district adopted curriculum and college and career readiness.

### Key Initiative 1-1

We will develop and teach PK-12 ELA curriculum that is aligned to existing state standards across all content areas and set high expectations for all students.

#### Action Plans:

- 1-1.1 Identify core knowledge and skills by grade level.
- 1-1.2 Identify current practices and assessment methods. What strategies are used for teaching, and what assessment practices do we currently employ?
- 1-1.3 Add needed assessments in order to collect baseline data on student achievement.
- 1-1.4 Establish horizontally and vertically aligned curriculum that prioritizes identified core knowledge and skills developmentally appropriate for students.
- 1-1.5 Establish district-wide writing and reading programs for students.
- 1-1.6 Evaluate and/or create systems and structures that provide opportunities for staff to collaborate and implement action items.
- 1-1.7 Identify and allocate resources needed to implement action plan.
- 1-1.8 Provide relevant professional growth opportunities that align with Key initiatives, Strategic Intents and Actions.

### Key Initiative 1-2

We will develop and teach PK-12 math curriculum that is aligned to existing state standards across content areas and set high expectations for all students.

#### Action Plans:

- 1-2.1 Identify core knowledge and skills by grade level.
- 1-2.2 Identify current practices and assessment methods. What strategies are used for teaching methods for assessment?
- 1-2.3 Add needed assessments in order to collect baseline data on student achievement.
- 1-2.4 Establish horizontally and vertically aligned curriculum that prioritizes identified core knowledge and skills developmentally appropriate for students.
- 1-2.5 Identify areas where math skills are embedded.
- 1-2.6 Evaluate /create systems and structures that provide opportunities for staff to collaborate and implement action items.
- 1-2.7 Identify and allocate resources needed to implement action plan.
- 1-2.8 Provide relevant professional growth opportunities that align with Strategic Intents, Key Initiatives, and Actions.

## Key Initiative 1-3

We will teach college and career readiness skills PK-12 across all content areas.

### Action Plans

- 1-3.1 Identify college and career readiness skills.
- 1-3.2 Establish a plan to teach the identified college and career readiness skills using developmentally appropriate strategies in each content area.
- 1-3.3 Establish a system that will assess college and career readiness skills.
- 1-3.4 Evaluate /create systems and structures that provide opportunities for staff to collaborate and implement action items.
- 1-3.5 Identify and allocate resources needed to implement action plan.
- 1-3.6 Provide relevant professional growth opportunities that align with Key initiatives, Strategic Intents and Actions.



## Student Engagement Task Force

**Facilitator:** Judy Morgan

**Members:** Donna Barber, Brandi Compton, Shari Elliot, Brittanie Gibbons, Linda Kelahan, Linda Ladd, Meghan Morgan, Rob Neal, Kim O'Brien, Lisa O'Neill, Doug Pelton, Courtney Randall, Sally Stack Feinberg, Charles Thornton, Chuck Walters, Pam Walters, Erin Young

### Task Force Charge

The Task Force for Student Engagement will review literature and research that will lead to the development of key initiatives and action plans that will define research-based practices that will increase student engagement including, but not limited to:

- Defining student engagement
- Understanding that learning is an active process requiring students to be involved in learning
- Understanding the levels of student engagement
- Collecting data relevant to student engagement
- Understanding the difference between passive compliance and authentic engagement
- Applying strategies that will actively engage students in all classrooms

### The Critical Questions that the Team explored:

- What does student engagement look like?
- How will we monitor progress of increased student engagement?
- What evidence will we collect to document increased student engagement?
- What effect will increased student engagement have on planning, teaching, and learning?
- What data will we consider as valid?
- How will we know that the changes that we make have an effect on student learning?
- How are engagement and motivation related?
- Marzano states that there are areas that must be addressed when evaluating student engagement:  
1) Emotions – How does the student feel about the learning? 2) Interest – Is the student interested in what is being presented? 3) Perceived importance – Does the student see this learning as important? and 4) Perceptions of efficacy – Can the student be successful? Do we address these 4 areas of engagement in our classrooms?
- If learning is an active process requiring students to be engaged in the learning, how does it look in our classrooms? How could it look if we were to get students more actively engaged?

## Student Engagement 5-Year Action Plan

### Strategic Intent #2

By June 2019, 100% of students will be actively engaged and invested in their learning and connected to the school, local and global community.

### Key Initiative 2-1

We will research, develop and implement strategies and tools to engage all students in their learning.

#### Action Plans:

- 2-1.1 Define student engagement
- 2-1.2 Research best practices in student engagement
- 2-1.3 Create or secure tools to gather data relative to the current level of student engagement
- 2-1.4 Use existing tools to measure student engagement on an annual basis
- 2-1.5 Identify a variety of effective research-based instructional strategies for student engagement that will be supported through staff development
- 2-1.6 Provide ongoing support for implementation of research-based strategies for student engagement

### Key Initiative 2-2

We will research, develop and implement strategies and tools to connect students to their school, local and global communities.

#### Action Plans:

- 2-2.1 Define school, local and global communities.
- 2-2.2 Research best practices in making connections to the school, local and global communities.
- 2-2.3 Identify, create and promote opportunities to actively engage students in the school, local and global communities.
- 2-2.4 Create baseline data indicating current level of student engagement in school, local and global communities and update on an annual basis.



## Social and Emotional Task Force

**Facilitator:** Judy Morgan

**Members:** Maureen Alger, Brandi Compton, Joe Drake, Eric Feola, Linda Kelahan, Linda Ladd, Anna Jarvis, Meghan Morgan, Kim O'Brien, Courtney Randall, Sally Stack Feinberg, Charles Thornton, Chuck Walters, Pam Walters

### Task Force Charge

Social Emotional Task Force will research in order to develop key initiatives and action plans including, but not limited to:

- Providing opportunities for students to demonstrate skills to serve others and work collaboratively.
- Engaging students in real situations that develop their leadership skills.
- Developing self esteem and positive attitudes.
- Including student voice in school/district decision-making.
- Assessing the well-being of all students.

### The Critical Questions that the Team explored:

- What are the elements of social/emotional competencies?
- How do we provide opportunities for students to build social/emotional skills?
- How do we include student voice?
- How do we connect and encourage student involvement in areas outside the school?
- Does every student have a way to feel that they belong and are a significant contributor to the school?
- Does every student have at least one staff member that really cares about them?
- Do students acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions?
- Do we teach and expect students to have skills in self-management, self awareness, responsible decision making, relationship skills, and social awareness (CASEL)?

## Social and Emotional 5-Year Action Plan

### Strategic Intent #3

By June 2019, 100% of students will develop social/emotional competencies in the areas of self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making, relationship skills and social awareness.

### Key Initiative 3-1

We will design a process that builds knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions by all students.

#### Action Plans:

- 3-1.1 Define social/emotional learning.
- 3-1.2 Research best practices in social/emotional learning.
- 3-1.3 Create or secure tools to gather data relative to the current level of social/emotional skills demonstrated or reported by all students.
- 3-1.4 Use selected tools to measure social/emotional skills on an annual basis.
- 3-1.5 Identify a variety of effective research-based instructional strategies for social/emotional learning that will be supported through staff development.
- 3-1.6 Provide ongoing support for implementation of research-based strategies for social/emotional learning.



## Home, School, and Community Partnerships

**Facilitator:** Judy Morgan

**Members:** Judy Buyea, Brandi Compton, Dan Degear, Jessica Degear, Shari Elliott, Pam Gallerani, Brittanie Gibbons, Vern Groves, Anna Jarvis, Linda Kelahan, Jenn Ladd, Linda Ladd, Kim O'Brien, Sally Stack Feinberg, Chuck Walters, Pam Walters

### Task Force Charge

The Home, School and Community Partnership Task Force will review research in order to develop key initiatives and action plans including, but not limited to:

- Identifying opportunities to build relationships with all stakeholders.
- Reviewing and creating ways to communicate with all stakeholder groups to increase involvement.
- Exploring new ways/methods to communicate with all stakeholder groups to create a highly informed community.
- Creating partnerships to enhance the learning experiences for students.

### The Critical Questions that the Team explored:

- How do we currently communicate with stakeholders?
- What partnerships currently exist?
- Are stakeholders aware of opportunities for partnerships to be formed?
- Do parents form partnerships with the school for the benefit of student learning?
- What opportunities do we have for stakeholders to fulfill essential roles that support the student of this district?
- Do we use technology to enhance our opportunities to communicate with all stakeholders and build partnerships?
- What opportunities do we provide for the community to be engaged with the school? What opportunities could we provide?
- Do stakeholders feel welcomed and comfortable in our schools?

## Home, School, and Community Partnerships 5-Year Action Plan

### Strategic Intent #4

By June 2019, 100% of stakeholders will report that they consistently receive accurate and up-to-date information from the District so that they can make informed choices about being engaged in School/District matters.

### Key Initiative 4-1

We will implement new and improve existing communication methods which will engage all stakeholders in order for them to stay connected with the District.

#### Action Plans:

- 4-1.1 Design a survey to collect information from stakeholders.
- 4-1.2 Evaluate current methods that are used to communicate with stakeholders.
- 4-1.3 Collect information pertaining to access to technology.
- 4-1.4 Collect information pertaining to how stakeholders prefer to receive information from the District.
- 4-1.5 Update mailing database to include DeRuyter Lake homeowners.
- 4-1.6 Review and revise methods used to communicate both internally and externally.
- 4-1.7 Embrace social media as a form of communication with stakeholders.
- 4-1.8 Develop plans that will ensure that all electronic, traditional and website communications are current, accurate and user friendly.
- 4-1.9 Utilize a communication system that relays messages instantly, both text and telephone, for the transition of important information.



### Strategic Intent #5

By June 2019, 100% of stakeholders will be engaged as partners in accomplishing the District mission and objectives.

### Key Initiative 5-1

We will develop and implement meaningful opportunities that will increase stakeholder participation, trust and shared responsibilities leading to student success.

#### **Actions:**

- 5-1.1 Design a survey to collect information from stakeholders.
- 5-1.2 Survey community stakeholders to collect data on talents that they would be willing to share with the students of the District.
- 5-1.3 Survey stakeholders as to ways that the District can build stronger partnerships
- 5-1.4 Identify and implement the best practices that will ensure sustainability of quality partnerships.
- 5-1.5 Build strong relationships with students, families and the community to increase trust and shared responsibilities.
- 5-1.6 Offer orientation sessions that will inform stakeholders of opportunities to be involved and build partnerships.



## Progress Reporting

| Data Progress Reporting |               |      |      |      |      |      |             |
|-------------------------|---------------|------|------|------|------|------|-------------|
|                         | Baseline Data | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | Intent Goal |
| Strategic Intent #1     |               |      |      |      |      |      |             |
| Strategic Intent #2     |               |      |      |      |      |      |             |
| Strategic Intent #3     |               |      |      |      |      |      |             |
| Strategic Intent #4     |               |      |      |      |      |      |             |
| Strategic Intent #5     |               |      |      |      |      |      |             |

