



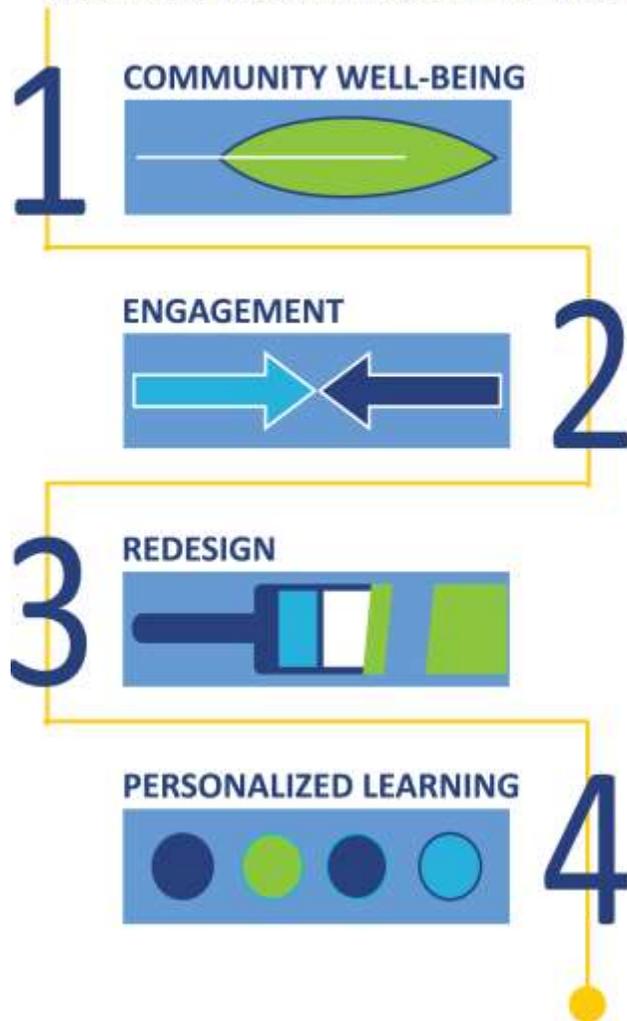
# Westerly Strategic Plan

*In Pursuit of the Growth Mindset*

Personalization + Redesign + Engagement + Community Well Being  
=  
Best in Region, Restoring Tradition, and Closing Gaps

## STRATEGIC PLAN 2016-2020

Best in Region + Restoring Tradition + Closing Gaps





## **Executive Summary**

**Embedded in a growth mindset is the belief that an open positive outlook will lead to deep learning and personal well-being. The Westerly Public Schools Strategic Plan reflects this belief and the desire to create classrooms and relationships that nurtures children. To maintain our mission, imbue our core beliefs in all of our work, and achieve our goals.**

**We are inspired to (PERC) pierce the future with a bright light of hope, compassion, understanding, tolerance, passion, security and exploration. That's the plan in a nutshell. We are challenging ourselves to support Personalization learning, seek Engagement, reach for an innovative Redesign and encourage Community Wellbeing. We have deliberately designed this document to be substantially less complex than previous strategic plans because we found those old documents cumbersome and not well understood. We also looked to the state of Rhode Island and the RIDE strategic plan for ideas and design features.**

**Our strategic plan is the organizational tool, the definitive action plan but not an authoritarian dictation. We see our strategic plan as an instrument that encourages both alignment and autonomy. We will use to close the performance gap among our minority groups, to press our performance forward so that we may become a premier district in the region and not only restore a deep tradition of pride and excellence but build a new tradition of strength, paradigm transformation and strategic innovation. The work will not be achieved by drones but by people. Our investment in our community will be defined by our tenets of hope, compassion, understanding, passion, security and exploration. We will strive to offer the best of ourselves and we will encourage others to be their best selves in the name our children and all future generations.**



## **Mission Statement**

To create an inspiring, challenging, and supportive environment where students are encouraged and assisted in reaching their highest potential.

## **Core Beliefs**

The core belief of Westerly Public Schools is all children can learn. It is our responsibility to assist in fostering a community of life-long learners with our students at its center. As educators, we know all children can achieve at high levels when provided with opportunities, sustenance, high expectations, and proper supports both in school and at home. As a learning community culture we strive to promote critical thinking and problem solving skills, to inspire creativity, and encourage risk taking among students and staff. We recognize that all children are unique and it is our responsibility to provide multiple pathways to success for our students and their families. Our staff is our most important resource and to provide for the best education of our students we are committed to developing their skill and ability.

## **School Committee Goals**

- 1. Support Excellence in Student Performance***
- 2. Recruit, Retain, and Develop High Quality Staff***
- 3. Fully Engage Parents and Community***
- 4. Improve and Maintain Westerly School Facilities***
- 5. Develop and Implement A Comprehensive Financial Strategy***

## **The Purpose of the Strategic Plan Format**

The purpose of the Westerly Strategic Plan is to provide a guide that allows for dynamic operational decisions that encourage, but do not constrain the community into lock step action plans because of the vast and ever changing state of our world.



**Personalization**

**Key Outcome:**  
 Starting in early childhood, students will have access to personalized learning experiences that are experiential, blended, flexible, and differentiated.

Target Area	Westerly Public Schools will:
<b>Instruction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use data on a regular basis to analyze, interpret, and plan next steps</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Integrate multiple pathways into Pre K-12 classrooms to increase student independence and choice in order to accelerate learning</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide Pre K-12 access to high-quality learning opportunities that provide students the ability to control the space and content of their learning using varied instructional methods that may include digital and blended learning</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Support multiple pathways through apprenticeships/internships</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Create personalized learning assessments using multiple measures in a comprehensive assessment system</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Evolve assessment system to continually monitor and close gaps in subgroups</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Create a system of feedback from stakeholders that is inclusive of student voice</li> </ul>



<b>Educator Quality</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Harness the collective capacity of the staff to create sustainable and collegial professional learning communities that impact student learning</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Support personalization by promoting and supporting school adoption of best and next practices in PreK-12 blended and personalized learning</li> </ul>
<b>Technology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Utilize technology to enhance learning, support staff retention, motivate students, and engage parents</li> </ul>
<b>Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Create a technology plan that covers infrastructure and invests in devices that increase student access and learning outcomes</li> </ul>

**Redesign**

**Key Outcome:**  
 Westerly is recognized as a leader in creating quality learning environments that meet the needs and flexibility of 21st century learners.

<b>Target Area</b>	<b>Westerly Public Schools will:</b>
<b>Instruction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Redefine instruction in the classroom to create personalized learning to support the needs and flexibility of 21st century learners.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Increase access to high quality, proficiency-based language programs in grades Pre-K-12</li> </ul>



<b>Assessment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identify and implement a Pre K-12 evidence-based comprehensive assessment based system that is manageable and utilizes varied types of assessments to improve instruction and student outcomes</li> </ul>
<b>Educator Quality</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Recruit high quality staff with multiple certifications</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Construct a five year professional development plan to support the strategic plan</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Utilize model classrooms and effective practice to create and celebrate innovation</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Support on-going professional learning on assessment literacy to improve the quality and use of assessments in the instructional cycle</li> </ul>
<b>Technology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Continually update and innovate state of the art technology to enhance the school experience</li> </ul>
<b>Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide a global learning experience in an open campus setting by not restricting time or place while keeping learning as the constant</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Construct 21st century classrooms that will provide visual spaces that are interconnected and use open spaces, such as, but not limited to, outdoor learning spaces</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Commit to planning and implementing all appropriate safety design features in learning spaces</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Commit to investigating and implementing environmentally sustainable building and construction criteria</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Create Human Resource functions that respond to the ever complex learning and working environment</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop and implement a comprehensive financial strategy</li> </ul>



**Engagement**

**Key Outcome:**  
 Students, parents, and educators will be engaged in the local and global community through a variety of ways (e.g. parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community).

Target Area	Westerly Public Schools will:
<b>Instruction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Implement virtual learning opportunities for parents</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Assist parents with parenting skills and setting home conditions to support children as students</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Assist educators to better understand families while creating an asset-based mindset</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Engage all families, especially those with diverse ethnic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Align curriculum and instruction to include best practices for global citizens and cultural competencies</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Enact quarterly learning walks open to a multitude of stakeholders</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Engage all stakeholders in understanding the role and importance of assessment as a natural part of the learning cycle aimed at improving student learning</li> </ul>



<b>Educator Quality</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Retain high quality new educators by providing intensive personalized support, mentorship, and professional learning</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Utilize professional learning for educators to learn innovative ways to use families as participants with decision making and develop leadership roles for parents</li></ul>
<b>Technology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Improve communication by using technological advances to improve communication, conferencing, distance learning from school-to-home and from home-to-school about programs and student progress</li></ul>
<b>Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Acquire and utilize an improved Student Information System for educators, students, and families that provides a user friendly platform</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Create a comprehensive communication plan</li></ul>



**Well Being**

**Key Outcomes:**  
 Westerly Public School students have acquired the social and emotional skills necessary to collaborate with others, successfully navigate challenges, and embody a growth mindset.

Westerly Public Schools is a safe and supportive school for children and staff that allows for optimal conditions for teaching and learning.

Target Area	Westerly Public Schools will:
<b>Instruction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use high-quality health and educational screening of young children and provide families with information and resources about early childhood development</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Promote healthy cultural identity and rich peer-based experiences</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Infuse into the learning experience the successful mindsets and dispositions of healthy and productive citizens</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sustain and evolve appropriate anti-bullying strategies, in accordance with RIGL 16.71-2 (e)</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Construct measures to promote and measure social and emotional well being</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Collect and use data on school climate to improve the culture of schools</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Utilize high quality health and educational screening of young children to provide families with early childhood development resources</li> </ul>



<b>Educator Quality</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Expand educators knowledge and practice of providing effective social-emotional learning in the classroom to instill a whole child mindset</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Be transparent and consistent in the development and implementation of safety policy and procedure in order to provide staff with information to make the best choices during a crisis</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Have leaders participate in drills at each grade level to evaluate plan effectiveness</li></ul>
<b>Technology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Continually update and revise safeguards to certify that students are enacting the tenets of digital citizenship</li></ul>
<b>Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Implement strict safety codes, policies, and hardware to ensure safety of all stakeholders to support community well-being</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate reciprocal community resources and services for families, students and the school</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Partner with mental-health providers to expand student access to high-quality mental-and behavioral-health services in schools</li></ul>



## Glossary of Terms

**Assessment:** the wide variety of methods that educators use to evaluate, measure, and document the academic readiness, learning progress, and skill acquisition of students from preschool through college and adulthood (RIDE 2015)

**Blended Learning:** the practice of using both in-person and technology-based learning experiences when teaching students; for example, students using online tools with teacher support during class; another example, a mix of being taught by a teacher in the classroom and portions completed independently online outside the classroom (RIDE 2015)

**Cultural Competence:** having an awareness of one's own cultural identity and views about difference, and the ability to learn, build on, and respect the varying cultural and community norms of others; ability to understand the within-group differences that make each student unique, while celebrating the between-group variations that make our country a tapestry (RIDE 2015)

**Global Learning:** the set of broad skills that ensure student preparedness in the areas of 21st century skills, language proficiency, cultural/global awareness, and social-emotional learning (RIDE 2015)

**Growth Mindset:** a belief that intelligence and other basic abilities can be developed, which results in a commitment to learning and a focus on improvement. (RIDE 2015)

**Learning Walks:** is a brief classroom visit utilizing a researched-based tool that provides principals and teachers opportunities to reflect on what students are **learning, learning** strategies, student interaction with the content, and student engagement.

**Multiple Pathways:** the implementation of the idea that learning can occur at different times and in different places, including the classroom, the community, a workplace, outdoors, online, etc. which results in schools creating alternative learning experiences that may be better suited to some students while expanding the number and type of learning options available to all students. (RIDE 2015)

**Personalized Learning:** a diverse variety of educational programs, learning experiences, instructional approaches, and academic-support strategies that are intended to address the distinct learning needs, interests, aspirations, or cultural backgrounds of individual students; its implementation may differ from district to district and school to school; also known as Student-Centered Learning. (RIDE 2015)

**Professional Learning Communities:** a group of educators that meets regularly, shares expertise, and works collaboratively to improve teaching skills and the academic performance of students. (RIDE 2015)

**Proficiency Based Learning:** systems of instruction, assessment, grading, and academic reporting that are based on students demonstrating that they have learned the knowledge and skills they are expected to learn as they progress through their education (RIDE 2015).



**RIGL 16.71-2 (e):** ) Each strategic plan must indicate the method in which school administrators and staff shall achieve and maintain an orderly educational environment in accordance with due process and with due regard for the rights of students.

**Student Engagement:** the degree of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion that students show when they are learning or being taught, which extends to the level of motivation they have to learn and progress their education (RIDE 2015).

**Student Information System:** is a management **information system** for education establishments to manage **student** data

**21st Century Learning:** a broad set of knowledge, skills, work habits, and character traits that are believed to be critically important to success in today's world, particularly in collegiate programs and contemporary careers and workplaces (e.g., critical thinking, innovation, collaboration)

**Whole Child:** an approach that believes that each child, in each school, in each of our communities deserves to be healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged. The whole child approach focuses on learning, teaching, and community engagement as a way to support students.

**World-Class Standards:** content standards that are equivalent in rigor, expectations, and scope to the content standards of the highest performing countries in the world (RIDE, 2015).

**Virtual Learning:** environment is a set of teaching and **learning** tools designed to enhance a student's **learning** experience by including computers and the Internet in the **learning** process.

## **How this Strategic Plan was Created:**

The Strategic Planning Committee, facilitated by the Center for Leadership and Educational Equity, utilized the collective capacity of various stakeholders consisting of more than 25 school personnel, community members, parents, and school committee members to provide essential input into the revision and creation of Westerly School District's Strategic Plan. The committee met in the late spring of 2015 with the sole purpose of coming together as one community with diverse perspectives to contribute to the development of a comprehensive and measurable strategic plan that has the power of help Westerly Public School District meet its three articulated goals: Best in Region, Restore Tradition, and Close Gaps.

The committee analyzed the current plan and District data, as well as utilized the relevant research in the article *Mindsets for an Equitable Education* by Carol Dweck. The successes of the previous plan included but were not limited to: Implement BEP, Early Childhood, School Redesign, Student Wellness, RtI, Parent Academy, and Tower Street Financial Systems. The plan was aligned to best and next practices in educational research, Joyce Epstein's work on family engagement, and the newly adopted 2015-2020 RIDE Strategic Plan.