

Maine Regional School Unit 21

The Schools of Arundel, Kennebunk, and Kennebunkport



*Guiding Our Students and Schools
to a Prosperous Future*

A Strategic Plan

2010 – 2015

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RSU 21 – Strategic Plan Overview



On July 1, 2009, the Arundel School Department and Maine School Administrative District 71 joined together under Maine's School Consolidation Law to form Regional School Unit 21. As the Board of School Directors began their work last summer, it became clear that the new district was in need of a strategic plan - a blueprint for identifying our goals, determining approaches to accomplish those goals, and methods for measuring our progress. We embarked on the journey toward the development of this, the Five Year Strategic Plan, shortly thereafter. Over the course of the next nine months the Strategic Planning Committee worked arduously, with assistance from J. Duke Albanese, consultant with Great Schools Partnership and former Maine Commissioner of Education, gathering and reviewing data, seeking input from community and staff, and researching best practices in education to develop this guiding document.

In these pages you will find an honest reflection of where we are, where we hope to go, and the targets by which we will measure our achievement. We have tried to be visionary while appreciating our current realities, and we have set aggressive goals while remaining cognizant of the challenges that threaten our progress. Those challenges are many and varied, requiring thoughtful and deliberative action, but action nonetheless. While some measures place our students in the highest percentile in the state of Maine, we recognize that we must look beyond this small sampling and understand that our students must be competitive on a global scale. The post-secondary world they will soon enter is far different than that of previous generations, and competition for college acceptances, as well as employment, will come not just from other students in New England, but from the far reaches of the globe.

With the adoption of this Strategic Plan, we are boldly stating that our students should be among the best-prepared students in the world – a worthy goal, and one from which we should not waver. Along the way we will debate best practices, propose new programming, and celebrate our success. We invite you to join us on our journey.

Andrew R. Dolloff, Superintendent of Schools

RSU 21 – Setting a Course for the Future: *Planning Forward in Times of Challenge and Opportunity*

We find ourselves in times of considerable challenge as our community, state, nation --- and even the world --- emerge from what has been termed the Great Recession. For RSU 21, 2009-2010 --- our inaugural year as a new regional school district --- has been punctuated by our own challenges as we mature our community relationships, as we deal with economic realities, as we shape our new identity, and most importantly, as we look forward to and plan for a prosperous future for our students and schools. What we know for sure is that our strength as an organization lies in the support of our citizens, the quality of our staff, and in our commitment to ensure excellence in the educational opportunities afforded to each and every one of our students.

We know that times are changing. The economy will improve steadily as the downturn cycle wanes and the opportunities for a bright future emerge. The 21st century is fast-paced, with powerful trends accelerating the implementation of advanced technologies, with careers coming and going, and with greater complexity a reality in virtually all of the pursuits available to our young graduates.

In essence, as a school district we must anticipate the future as best we can, move forward in a planned, yet feasible way, set our sights on important milestones of improved student achievement and attainment, knowing full well that the world that our students will inherit will pose unique challenges and opportunities. By planning forward and setting direction for our schools and students, we will be prepared for the future.

Those children who enter our schools this fall as kindergartners will be on track to graduate from high school in 2023. If they pursue a college degree, they will be finishing their undergraduate years in the latter part of the 2020s. Their work lives will likely extend well into the 2070s.

What kind of education should we provide to our children and our youth? What level of investment should we seek from our public? And what should our students really *know and be able to do*?

These are questions being posed at all levels – locally here in RSU 21, in our capital in Augusta, in Congress, and at the White House. Besides the challenges of an anemic economy, America is redefining its public schools and setting high expectations for the learning of our nation's school children.

The students and schools of RSU 21 --- of Arundel, Kennebunk, and Kennebunkport --- are experiencing these times of economic challenge and the accompanying calls for

both greater effectiveness in teaching and learning, as well as efficiency in operations and use of resources.

What has been decided in our school district is that we must move forward in a thoughtful manner, striving to provide a high quality learning experience for *all* students, while ensuring astute management of financial and human resources. The public will accept no less --- and RSU 21 is committed to meeting the expectations of our citizens.

To this end, the Board of Directors and the administration, with extensive contributions from our public, have developed a five-year Strategic Plan, setting priorities in five categories that combine to create a blueprint to help guide RSU 21 in the years ahead. At its heart, this Strategic Plan sets some lofty goals and targets for student achievement and attainment. While ambitious, the performance targets are attainable and will lead the district, its schools, and students toward a world-class education that will prepare today's students for *their* times – for the challenges and the opportunities that are sure to come *their* way.

Emerging Trends

As the Board of Directors and the Administration elicited feedback from the public and the RSU 21 staff – in preparation for the crafting of this Strategic Plan - we also made a commitment to collect and analyze important data about our schools, student achievement and attainment, finances, facilities, and enrollments. From these data certain emerging trends require our attention and strategic planning.

Clearly, for RSU 21 and many other school districts across Maine and New England, declining enrollments appear to have no antidote. Unless there is an unforeseen and significant in-migration of families with children, a continued decline over the next five years is inevitable. Fewer students will translate into a further loss in state subsidy and with the economy still anemic and a recovery expected to be slow, more funding could be lost as the state deals with its own challenges. Also, federal stimulus dollars for schools are projected to sunset. Thus, RSU 21 is likely to face the combined financial effects of declining enrollments, lower state subsidy, and reduced federal monies. Programs and staffing levels will assuredly be examined for cutbacks or possible elimination.

It is evident that another powerful trend is upon us as we enter the second decade of the 21st century. Accelerated advancements in technology are promising to fuel considerable change in the workplace and in the social networks that have emerged as society adapts to an age dominated by information and media. The effects of this reality on teaching and learning are, and will be, significant.

Technology is spawning smart tools and processes for facilitating learning opportunities in the classroom and beyond. The explosion of access to technology offers teachers

and students an extraordinary menu of resources – to be accessed virtually – at any time in any place.

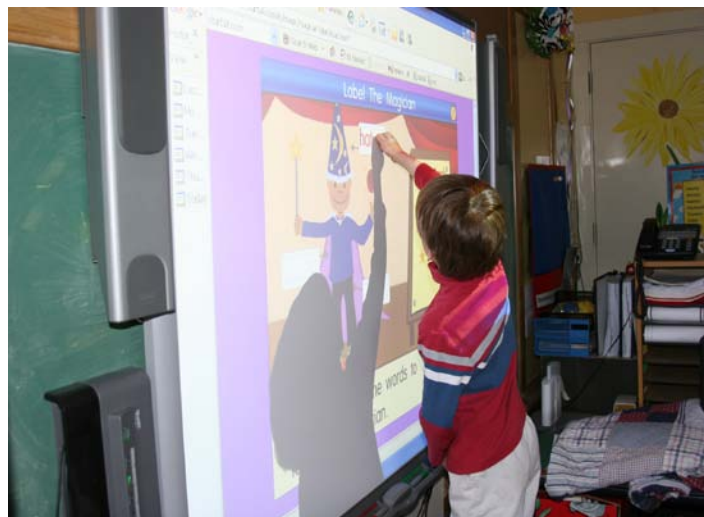
In RSU 21 our charge is to prepare our students for this changing world, adapting our instruction and curriculum in ways that will certainly warrant new investments and the reallocation of resources towards the acquisition of the new tools of technology and their applications. Today’s students are “digital natives” and their pursuit of knowledge and skills necessitates our commitment as adults – as teachers, as parents, as elected representatives of the people – to change with the times as well. The implications for professional development of staff loom large as we move forward and experience rapid change in the years ahead.

While these times pose many challenges, it is the pledge of the RSU 21 Board and Administration to plan ahead, use good data to inform all decisions, and shape the future of our schools through an open process of policy and budget review and adoption.

“Technology, technology, technology. Having students remain mindful of putting evidenced-based research behind what they hear and read is imperative. There is far too much information that can be posted just about anywhere, and kids need to learn to decipher what is legitimate and what is bogus or unfounded. Mental inquiry is essential.”

“Teachers need to have the tools to guide students through the changing times. If teachers are not given the opportunity and skills to keep up, it will be difficult for the students to keep up.”

Citizens of RSU 21



RSU 21 Arundel, Kennebunk, Kennebunkport

A Strategic Plan 2010 - 2015

What follows are the Mission, Core Beliefs, the Guiding Goal and Major Measures, and five categories that frame the long range plan intended to guide RSU 21 over the next five years. The Board of Directors and the Administration have articulated **Lead Objectives** and accompanying **Action Steps** that will move the district to its goal of preparing all students for success through access to a world class education.

Our Mission

Our Core Beliefs

Our Guiding Goal and Major Measures

Category I – Teaching and Learning

Category II – High Performing Administration, Faculty, and Staff

Category III – Financial Planning and Oversight

Category IV – Facilities Planning and Management

Category V – Monitoring, Updates, and Reporting Process





Our Mission

To support and challenge every student to develop the skills, knowledge, and character needed to be responsible, productive, and adaptive learners, workers, citizens, and leaders prepared to succeed in our global society.

“Along with the core educational programs of English, math, social studies, science, and foreign language, a student needs to be able to effectively communicate, work well with other people, and be able to use technology in a variety of capacities.”

RSU 21 Parent



Our Core Beliefs

We believe...

- All students can learn.
- All students can succeed in life.
- All students are unique and deserve learning opportunities that engage their interests, passions, and aspirations.
- All students deserve to be surrounded by staff members who are skilled, knowledgeable, and caring.
- All students and staff members have the right to feel physically and emotionally safe.
- An effective teacher is the most important ingredient in student learning.
- Rigor and relevance must be the foundation of all instruction and curricula.
- Setting and maintaining high expectations leads to higher achievement.
- Diversity strengthens the individual, the school, and the community.

And, we believe...

- *That education must be an active partnership among students, parents, educators, and all members of our community.*

Measures of Progress *Setting High Expectations for Student Achievement and Attainment 2010 – 2015*

Overview

At the core of our Strategic Plan is a commitment to elevated student learning. To that end, we have established the following Guiding Goal, Major Measures, and Performance Targets for 2015. The 2009-10 school year is the baseline year for the data collection and analysis. After careful consideration the Board of Directors and the Administration opted to set ambitious performance targets for 2015, believing that RSU 21 needed to “stretch” its expectations for student learning, recognizing the need for all students to aspire and achieve at much higher levels of performance. The bottom line: the schools of Arundel, Kennebunk, and Kennebunkport will be high achieving schools, helping our students acquire world class skills and knowledge needed to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Our Guiding Goal:

All students will graduate from our schools with a world class education prepared to succeed in college, in work, and as involved, responsible citizens.

Major Measures and Performance Targets

By the end of the **2015** school year:

- **95%** of students will graduate from high school within four years of enrolling.
2010 Baseline: 92%
Maine: 77.6% New England: 77.0% U.S.: 81.2% (Ed Week, 6/11/09)
- **80%** of graduates will be enrolled in a two or four year college degree program or a post secondary industry certificate within one year of high school graduation.
2010 Baseline: 62% for two or four-year college.
Data for certificate programs not yet available.
U.S.: 70% (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics)
- **70%** of students enrolling will receive a two or four year college degree or a postsecondary industry certificate within six years of high school graduation.
2010 Baseline: 65% for two or four-year college (KHS Class of 2004).
U.S.: 57% (National Center for Educational Statistics)

- **70%** of Kennebunk High School juniors and seniors will be enrolled in International Baccalaureate, Early College, and /or Advanced Placement (AP) courses.

2010 Baseline: 54%

- **75%** of Kennebunk High School students will meet or exceed the state standards in the Mathematics, Reading, Writing, and Science sections of the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)/Maine High School Science Assessment.

2010 Baseline: Math – 56% Reading – 67% Writing – 60% Science – 56%
 Maine Averages: Math – 46% Reading – 48% Writing – 47% Science – 41%
(U.S. comparisons do not apply, as Maine is the only state requiring all students to take the SAT.)

- **85%** of MSK students will meet or exceed the standards in Reading;
75% of MSK students will meet or exceed the standards in Mathematics on the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP).

2010 Baseline: Reading – 78% Math – 67%
 Maine: Reading – 68% Math – 60%
 New Hampshire: Reading – 77% Math – 66% (NH Department of Education)
 Rhode Island: Reading – 70% Math – 54%

- **90%** of Grade 5 students will meet or exceed the standards in Reading;
85% of Grade 5 students will meet or exceed the standards in Mathematics on the NECAP.

2010 Baseline: Reading – 84% Math – 78%
 Maine: Reading – 72% Math – 64%
 New Hampshire: Reading – 79% Math – 75% (NH Department of Education)
 Rhode Island: Reading – 72% Math – 61%

- **100%** of Grade 3 students will demonstrate growth in Reading and Mathematics on the Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA-MAP).

2010 Baseline: 90%

- **75%** of Grade 3 students will reach their target growth goals in Reading and Mathematics on the NWEA-MAP.

2010 Baseline: Reading – 71% Math – 69%



The Strategic Plan --- Category I

Teaching and Learning

Overview

A school district's vibrancy and effectiveness lies in its focus and attention to teaching and learning. Being clear about what constitutes literacy for students – *that is, what should students know and be able to do at key junctures in their school careers* – is essential. Further, both the learning and the teaching must be contemporary and informed by research. Students deserve the highest quality instruction, and the school district in turn should expect students to engage in a rigorous curriculum and demonstrate high levels of performance.

Accompanying a rigorous, forward-looking K-12 curriculum, is a commitment to and demonstration of effective instructional practice by teachers across all grade levels in all subject areas.

In RSU 21, we intend to offer our students high-quality learning opportunities that guide them to proficiency and beyond in core subject areas and to successful demonstration of 21st century knowledge and skills like critical thinking, media literacy, problem-solving, innovation, and creativity.

Snapshot of the Present

Strengths

- Commitment to Professional Development
- Use of technology in the classroom, especially at the K-8 level.
- Special education services are comprehensive and are of high quality.
- Development of a K-12 foreign language program.
- Varied and challenging curriculum, including the presence of International Baccalaureate programs at the Middle School and High School.
- Experienced and knowledgeable staff.

Weaknesses

- Lack of technology training targeted at the delivery of the curriculum.
- Inadequate student access to technology at the High School.
- 21st century skills are not embedded in classroom instruction on a daily basis.
- Lack of a long-term tracking system of students beyond high school graduation.
- Limited opportunities for the community and schools to interact.



The Strategic Plan --- Category I

Teaching and Learning

Lead Objective 1 – School Culture: *Continually maintain a culture of rigorous academic, social, and behavioral standards in each school.*

Action Strategies

- Empower staff to effectively hold students to high standards in all arenas.
- Ensure that policies and expectations are well-written, timely, and well-communicated to students, parents, and staff.
- Use data as a means of measuring progress in raising behavioral, social, and academic standards.
- Develop a coherent, K-12 system of interventions to ensure that struggling students receive the academic and personal support they need to work at grade level and succeed in higher-level courses.

Lead Objective 2 - Curriculum: *Ensure that the curriculum, K-12, across content areas and schools, is well-articulated and coordinated with a rich array of assessment practices measuring student progress while instructional practice and materials reflect a strong research base.*

Action Strategies

- Undertake a comprehensive mapping and articulation of the K-12 curriculum, embedding 21st century skills and knowledge with traditional content area standards aligned with the national Common Core Standards.
- Develop an accompanying comprehensive mix of assessments that include standardized testing, curriculum-embedded local assessments, and research project demonstrations.

Rigor and relevance must be the foundation of all instruction and curriculum.

RSU 21: Our Core Beliefs

The Strategic Plan --- Category I

Teaching and Learning

Lead Objective 3 – 21st Century Themes and Skill Development: *Infuse 21st century themes of Global Awareness and Financial, Civic, Health, Environmental, and Arts Literacy into the K-12 curriculum and instructional practice.*

Action Strategies

- Foster skills development in 21st century learning focused on innovation, creativity, problem solving, critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and entrepreneurial pursuits.
- Research the expansion of International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program to grades 9-10, as well as the Primary Years Program for K-5. Provide a recommendation to the School Board regarding the possible expansion of IB.
- Administer district-wide self-assessment of 21st century teaching and learning to gauge staff understanding, level of integration, and areas where support is needed.
- Provide professional development for K-12 faculty that focuses on instructional strategies and assessment practices that support 21st century learning.
- Incorporate the effectiveness of the implementation of 21st century skills instruction into teacher evaluations.

Lead Objective 4 - STEM: *Elevate student performance, instructional practice, and career aspirations in the increasingly important areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).*

Action Strategies

- Provide teachers with professional development in the content of targeted science and technology standards to further their understanding about important connections between science and engineering.
- Collaborate and partner with organizations and universities to generate greater awareness and interest concerning educational and career opportunities in engineering and technology design.
- Examine the sequence and vision of mathematics and science curriculum with a focus on grades 6-12. Develop revised, vertically aligned curriculum maps for both subject areas.
- Undertake an analysis of the support and intervention resources available K-12 in mathematics.
- Increase the integration of engineering design skills into science and mathematics curriculum and instruction.

The Strategic Plan --- Category I

Teaching and Learning

Lead Objective 5 – Information, Media, and Technology: *Broaden the use of technology as a critical tool to facilitate teaching, learning, and communication in an information and media-driven 21st century.*

Action Strategies

- Develop a vision for digital teaching and learning that can guide instructional practice and student work, K-12.
- Use technology to track student progress and inform instruction.
- Train staff and students to utilize technology as a tool to research, organize, evaluate, and communicate information to staff, parents, and the public.
- Develop a plan, with specific timelines, for the implementation of 1:1 computing at Kennebunk High School.
- Embed in the curriculum, skills instruction focused on assisting students in becoming responsible and knowledgeable consumers and users in an information and media driven society.

Lead Objective 6 - Transitions: *Develop and implement a comprehensive initiative to assist students with the important transitions from middle to high school and from high school to post secondary.*

Action Strategies

- Examine the effectiveness and the extent of the availability of career technical education (CTE) as an important pathway to post secondary learning and careers.
- Institute a data system to better track graduates of Kennebunk High School.
- Target first generation college attendees and institute a strong support and aspirations program.
- Establish a comprehensive college aspirations program with an elementary, middle school, and high school component of activities and supports.
- Develop pathways that encourage students to access early college, apprentice, and internship opportunities.
- Develop key partnerships with regional public and private colleges and universities for the purpose of expanding access to early college/dual enrollment courses for juniors and seniors.
- Examine the structure of the senior year in light of the complexity of the transition to careers and college.

The Strategic Plan --- Category I

Teaching and Learning

Lead Objective 7 – Community Connections: *Strengthen community connections to expand applied learning opportunities for students.*

Action Strategies

- Identify community needs, as well as individuals and projects that could help motivate and engage students and their learning.
- Ensure that students have multiple pathways available in the junior and senior years including apprenticeships, community projects, virtual learning, and early college.



“They need to learn how to think and problem-solve. They should be compassionate, open minded, life-long learners. They should have the skills and knowledge to become healthy and well-balanced members of society.”

RSU 21 Parent

The Strategic Plan --- Category II

High Performing Administration, Faculty, and Staff

Overview

Effective schools and school districts make the recruitment, evaluation, and retention of high performing teachers, administrators, and support staff an organizational priority. Ensuring that students learn to the highest levels necessitates a district faculty of talented teachers, current in the knowledge and skills, committed to life-long learning, and adept at motivating and guiding today's students. Managing and leading learning organizations like schools requires outstanding administrators who are advocates for students and supporters of staff, who can articulate and implement a vision for learning, while holding high expectations for all. School districts employ a variety of individuals whose responsibilities lie beyond the instructional program, but support key services like transportation, school nutrition, maintenance, and finance. The capabilities of these staff are critical to an efficient and effective organization that complements and supports the efforts of educators.

RSU 21 is committed to its employees and the school cultures in which they work and contribute, always recognizing that the organization is focused on providing the best learning experiences and education for its students. Over the course of this Strategic Plan, it is the intent of the District to enhance the performance of all employees, while ensuring a professional and supportive workplace.

Snapshot of the Present

Strengths

- Low staff turnover; teachers appear content.
- Administrators communicate well with each other and have a clear understanding of their responsibilities.
- NWEA Testing is real-time documentation of student achievement.
- Teachers demonstrate that they care about their students.
- Administrators use S.M.A.R.T Goals to define and measure progress.

Weaknesses

- Desire for more professional development by teachers.
- Limited opportunity for administration to conduct meaningful annual evaluations of all staff members.
- Limited opportunity for peer observation and professional dialogue around pedagogy.
- Minimal opportunity for student/parent feedback on instructional practices.

The Strategic Plan --- Category II

High Performing Administration, Faculty, and Staff

Lead Objective 1 – High Performance: *Ensure that RSU21 is a high-performing organization with every school meeting or exceeding annual goals.*

Action Strategies

- Establish an annual School Review using test data, testimonials, and written evaluations of school effectiveness.
- Establish an annual District-Wide Review with formal communication at the beginning and end of the year, including a progress report midway through the school year.
- Ensure appropriate levels of administrative oversight and support within each building.

Lead Objective 2 – Professional Growth: *Ensure that RSU 21 staff, faculty, and administrators have explicit performance goals and a professional development plan to achieve them.*

Action Strategies

- Develop a system for receiving student and parent feedback on instructional practices.
- Adopt protocols for peer observations that lead to increased professional dialogue.
- Explore the inclusion of student performance data into the formal teacher evaluation system.
- Create professional learning communities that focus on student learning, collaboration, and setting measurable student achievement goals.
- Align systems, evaluation, and hiring policies and procedures with the district's mission, core beliefs, curriculum, and strategic plan.

Strategic Plan ---Category III

Financial Planning and Oversight

Overview

Much is entrusted to those overseeing and governing school organizations. Superintendents are expected to be visionary educational leaders and astute managers of resources. School boards are expected to ensure the design and implementation of policy and processes that guide effectively the governance of the school district, ensuring a balanced responsibility to students and to taxpayers.

A persisting struggling economy has brought demands for efficient operations, as the public clamors for significantly higher student achievement and aspirations for *all*, not *some* of the students. Arguably, the expectations for America's schools and for those schools of the communities of Arundel, Kennebunk, and Kennebunkport have never been higher.

Snapshot of the Present

Strengths

- Communities support the schools.
- Financial staff and elected officials are knowledgeable and attentive to detail.
- Presence of an effective Education Foundation.

Weaknesses

- State contribution to local education continues to dwindle.
- Federal stimulus funds will be limited beyond 2010.
- Enrollment will continue to decline across the district.



Strategic Plan ---Category III

Financial Planning and Oversight

Lead Objective 1- Funding: Secure an appropriate level of funding that allows the district to further its mission in a responsible, efficient, and innovative manner.

Action Strategies

- Analyze the district's outstanding indebtedness and research the market for options to refinance existing bonds that support major capital construction projects.
- Provide leadership for investigating the costs and benefits of regional agreements among area school districts and/or municipal governments centered on programming for certain populations of special education students, transportation services, adult education, and school nutrition services.
- Establish an analysis process regarding expenditures that maximizes efficiency of operations in non-instructional areas ensuring a priority of investments in the curricular, co-curricular, and instructional programs.

Lead Objective 2 – Financial Analysis: Undertake a five-year analysis of projected trends in revenue streams and expenditures and use the findings to guide the annual preparation of RSU 21 budget recommendations to the voters.

Action Strategies

- Design and implement an aggressive student recruitment plan, targeting homeschoolers, independent school students, recent and potential dropouts, and students moving to Maine.
- Develop, using projected enrollment trends, a 5-year K-12 staffing blueprint that is based on Board policy for school-wide student-teacher ratios, as well as actual class size data.

Strategic Plan ---Category III

Financial Planning and Oversight

Lead Objective 3 - Development Office: Establish and mature a district Development Office charged with expanding and cultivating supplemental revenue sources to support the K-12 program.

Action Strategies

- Create and implement a plan to secure additional revenue from foundations, patrons, alumni, state and federal government grants.
- Expand the capacity of the Development Office by recruiting volunteers from the community.
- Articulate and implement a three year plan for the Development Office including targeted amounts for annual giving.
- Undertake the design and implementation of a robust alumni association for the purposes of strengthening ties to Kennebunk High School and RSU 21, while attracting annual contributions and special gifts and helping to guide capital campaigns.

"We need to enlist more volunteerism inside and outside of the classroom, tap into alumni resources and funding possibilities like universities do, and pursue grants wherever possible to extend tight budgets. Then manage all of it like any good business would. It takes a village.....but you have to ask!"

RSU 21 Parent

Strategic Plan ---Category IV

Facilities Planning and Management

Overview

Ensuring the adequacy and operational efficiency and utilization of the buildings and playing fields of RSU 21 are significant goals of the district, as well as a continuing major investment. Students and staff at all levels need access to modern facilities that support instructional programs, while meeting contemporary standards for energy efficiency, safety, and accessibility. Further, our community programs deserve well-constructed buildings and well-maintained fields to support the expanded activities offered to the RSU 21 community. Informed by the Space Utilization Study conducted by Harriman Associates, the actions in the Strategic Plan call for several options to be considered by the citizens of the district as enrollment trends, the condition of present buildings, and program needs evolve.

Snapshot of the Present

Strengths

- There is generally adequate space district-wide.
- Kennebunk Elementary School is well-designed and well-constructed.
- Middle School of the Kennebunks and Sea Road School are well-designed.
- There are elementary schools in each community.
- Schools are well-located for visibility and access.

Weaknesses

- High School classrooms are poorly sized and outdated, interior traffic patterns are confusing, disconnected, and inadequate, and building systems are inefficient.
- There are several aging buildings: Mildred Day School, Kennebunkport Consolidated School, Kennebunk High School.
- Student performance spaces are lacking.
- Community gathering spaces are inadequate.
- Reliance on traditional energy sources positions the district poorly for the future.
- Athletic/recreational fields are insufficient.



Strategic Plan ---Category IV

Facilities Planning and Management

Lead Objective 1 – Adequate Space: Provide comfortable, up-to-date facilities with adequate space for all educational needs, as well as appropriate and attractive community spaces which invite public use of the schools.

Action Strategies

- Develop a comprehensive plan for a renovation or new construction project for Kennebunk High School.
- Develop a comprehensive plan for K-5 buildings, including recommendations for school closure, construction, and/or renovation. *The Facilities Space Utilization Study, completed in the fall of 2010, will guide the District's planning and consideration of options.*
- Identify for each building a 10-year capital improvement plan that addresses any structural or systems needs, as well as instructional and programmatic needs.



Strategic Plan ---Category V

Monitoring, Updates, and Reporting Process

Overview

The Administration and the RSU 21 Board of Directors are committed to conducting the affairs of the school district in a transparent manner, grounded in the highest levels of ethics and integrity. Drawing on strong public engagement and support, we intend to offer our students a world class education through exceptional instruction at all levels. We believe that a comprehensive approach to inviting the active participation of students, teachers, parents, and the public in shaping our schools is key to the future prosperity of our communities. To this end, we intend to enhance effective communication within the school district organization and across our three communities.

Snapshot of the Present

Strengths

- Administration and Board work diligently to ensure that processes are transparent and information is shared with the public.
- District website is informative, current, accessible, and popular.
- The district's electronic rapid communication system is used effectively.
- Schools make efficient use of electronic and hard-copy communications systems.
- Parent-Teacher Associations are active and engaged at the K-8 level.
- Community engagement is high

Weaknesses

- School websites lack consistency of user interface.
- School marketing to parents and students within the district, as well as to prospective students outside the district, is insufficient.
- The district web site does not provide updated district performance data in an easily understood user friendly format.



Strategic Plan ---Category V

Monitoring, Updates, and Reporting Process

Lead Objective 1 – Transparent Reporting: Develop and implement a performance monitoring and reporting system for the district and provide transparent reporting of how the district is performing against the goals established by this strategic plan.

Action Strategies

- Annually, develop and publish a holistic district report card based on defined measures of progress.
- Develop, publish, and periodically update an electronic “dashboard”, reporting accomplishment of the measures of progress.

Lead Objective 2 - Communication: Develop a comprehensive and sustainable communication strategy that demonstrates the intent of RSU 21 to undertake the oversight and governance of the school district in an open and transparent fashion.

Action Strategies

- Commit to openness, communication, and continued community involvement in the development of district policy and practice.
- Review all present protocols for communications with staff, parents, and the public on the activities, decisions, events, and policy making of district schools.
- Establish a team of key staff and representatives of the Board to help shape and monitor all district efforts to communicate and engage the public.
- Examine the adequacy of present practice in ensuring the voice of students in the affairs of the school district.
- Hold annual student summits with representatives from the middle school, high school, and recent graduates.



Appendix

RSU 21 Board of School Directors

Jack Reetz	Arundel
Leia Lowery	Arundel
Dan Pleva	Arundel
Timothy B. Hussey, Vice Chair	Kennebunk
Ed Geoghan	Kennebunk
Arthur R. Leblanc III	Kennebunk
Kevin Knight	Kennebunk
Frank Drigotas	Kennebunk
Matthew Fadiman	Kennebunk
Maureen King	Kennebunkport
Robert Domine	Kennebunkport
Norman M. Archer, Chair	Kennebunkport
David Pepin	Student Rep
Emily Junker	Student Rep

Strategic Planning Team

Norm Archer	RSU 21 Board – Kennebunkport
Henry Bourgeois	Kennebunk
Andrew Dolloff	Superintendent of Schools
Gaby Grekin	Kennebunkport
Tim Hussey	RSU 21 Board – Kennebunk
Maureen King	RSU 21 Board – Kennebunkport
Leia Lowery, Chairperson	RSU 21 Board – Arundel
Patrick Manuel	Assistant Superintendent
Jack Reetz	RSU 21 Board – Arundel

A Portrait by the Numbers

Our Schools Today

Kennebunk Elementary School	K-3	474 students
Kennebunkport Consolidated School	K-5	197 students
Mildred L. Day School	K-5	242 students
Sea Road School	4-5	255 students
Middle School of the Kennebunks	6-8	511 students
Out of District Tuition Schools	6-12	286 students
Kennebunk High School	9-12	735 students
TOTAL:		2700 (2414 in-district)

Our Students

No. %

Caucasian	2550	95
African American	33	1.2
Hispanic American	10	0.4
Asian American	70	2.6
American Indian	5	0.2
Special Education *	467	17
English Language Learners*	32	1.2
Free/Reduced Lunch* (in-district)	483	20

(*Included in total numbers)

Our Staff

No.

Total Staff	435
Central Office	10
School Administrators	9.5
Teachers	220
Special Education	83
School Nutrition	18
Educational Technicians/Assistants	108
Transportation/Facilities	75



A Portrait by the Numbers

Our Financial Support

Budget by School, 2010 -11

Kennebunk Elementary School	2,779,975.00
Kennebunkport Consolidated School	1,389,605.00
Mildred L. Day School	1,606,824.00
Sea Road School	1,449,430.00
Middle School of the Kennebunks	3,436,859.00
Out of District Tuition	2,784,678.00
Kennebunk High School	5,122,746.00
Special Education	5,586,435.00
Transportation, Facilities, Technology	6,129,173.00
Other – Food Service, Administration, Testing, Athletics and Co-curricular	2,177,505.00
Debt Service	2,613,770.00
TOTAL	\$35,077,000.00
Per Pupil, excluding Debt Service	\$11,475.16

Community Share of School Costs

	<u>%</u>
Arundel	11.7
Kennebunk	65.0
Kennebunkport	23.3

District Enrollments

	<u>2010-2011</u>	<u>Projected, 2015*</u>
Arundel	604	623
Kennebunk	1,664	1,571
Kennebunkport	428	385
Elementary, K-5	1,168	1,055
Middle, 6-8	647	636
High School, 9-12	885	856
TOTAL	2700	2547

Projected decline: 5.67%

**Data provided by Planning Decisions – RSU 21 Projections, February 2010*

Assessment Descriptions

New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP)

Maine has joined New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont in the yearly administration of the NECAP. This assessment is used by participating states to meet No Child Left Behind Act requirements for testing reading and mathematics once each year from grade 3 through grade 8. Most content area tests consist of a combination of multiple-choice and constructed-response questions. NECAP student results are reported in one of four achievement levels:

- o Proficient with Distinction
- o Proficient
- o Partially Proficient
- o Substantially Below Proficient

<http://www.maine.gov/education/necap/index.html>

Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA)

These computerized adaptive reading and math assessments help determine a child's instructional level and monitor academic progress from year to year. These tests present students with engaging, age-appropriate content. As a student responds to questions, the test responds to the student, adjusting up or down in difficulty. Student results correspond to a value on the RIT Scale (for Rasch Unit). RIT measures understanding regardless of grade level.

<http://www.nwea.org>

MAINE HIGH SCHOOL ASSESSMENT (including The Maine SAT Initiative)

All Maine high school juniors are required to take the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) in critical reading, writing, mathematics, and science. This policy encourages all Maine students to engage in instruction and assessment that is intended to raise expectations and to increase readiness for college or other post secondary opportunities; is consistent with the high expectations for student achievement expressed in Maine's Learning Results; and supports the emerging PreK-16 College Ready Initiative already underway as a joint effort of the University System and the Maine Department of Education. Individual SAT scores are reported on a 200-800 College Board Scale for each subject area. To maintain consistency within the State assessment system, the Maine Department of Education converts the traditional College Board Scale to scaled score ranges between does not meet standards, partially meets standards, meets standards, and exceeds standards.

<http://sat.collegeboard.com/home>
<http://www.maine.gov/education/mhsa/index.htm>

Glossary of Terms

21st Century Skills: A term that educators use to describe the practical, real-world skills that students will need to thrive in the colleges and workplaces of the 21st century. Unlike academic knowledge acquired in a specific subject area, 21st century skills can generally be applied throughout a student's life and across all content areas, learning contexts, or careers. Examples include critical-thinking and problem-solving skills, social and self-management skills, leadership and teamwork skills, multicultural awareness and understanding, writing and communication skills, technology and online-research skills, global and media literacy, among others. For more information, visit the Partnership for 21st Century Skills website (p21.org).

Advanced Placement (AP): A national high school program designed by the College Board (collegeboard.com and collegeboard.com/student/testing/ap/about.html), the creator of the SAT, that offers thirty-seven courses in twenty-two subject areas to high school students who want to learn challenging material and earn college credit before graduating. At the end of each Advanced Placement course, most students choose to take a test and earn a numerical score between one and five. If students score a three or higher, they can potentially receive transferable college credit if they enroll in a college that accepts AP credits. AP course-taking can also enhance a student's high school transcript and help gain admission to college.

Assessment: The processes of documenting—including collecting, describing, scoring, and interpreting—what a student has learned. The term *assessment* also describes the student products educators use to gauge academic attainment. An *assessment* can entail anything from traditional tests and quizzes to portfolios (collections of student work assembled over time) and exhibitions (formal presentations of what a student has learned).

Baseline Data: The data a school collects to establish a baseline, or starting point, for comparing school or student performance over time. For example, if a school's average graduation rate for 1997–2000 was 85%, that percentage could be used as *baseline data* when looking at the subsequent 2001–2010 trend in graduation rates. Baseline data are usually collected for several different performance indicators and are used to help schools and educators determine if performance is improving over time.

Common Core State Standards: A set of learning standards in the subject areas of *English Language Arts* and *Mathematics* that have been (or soon will be) adopted in forty-eight of the fifty states. The Common Core State Standards Initiative (corestandards.org), which created and promotes the standards, is coordinated by two national organizations: the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers. The standards were developed in collaboration with teachers, school administrators, and content experts, and they are intended to provide a clear, consistent, and challenging set of K–12 learning expectations for states. Maine is in the process of adopting the Common Core State Standards.

International Baccalaureate (IB): A sequence of academically challenging courses, lessons, and examinations developed by the International Baccalaureate Organization (ibo.org) that are designed to prepare students for success in college and adult life. More than 877,000 students at 3,071 schools in 139 countries are currently involved in the three International Baccalaureate programs: *Primary Years Programme* (ages 3–12), *Middle Years Programme* (ages 12–16), and *Diploma Programme* (ages 16–19). International Baccalaureate is recognized by colleges and universities around the globe, and in some cases students who graduate from the Diploma Programme can earn college credit.

Early College/Dual Enrollment: The practice of allowing high school students—usually juniors or seniors—to take college courses prior to graduation. In most cases, dual enrollment students can earn both high school and college credit for completing their college courses. Early college programs are often used as a strategy for increasing college aspirations and enrollments, while promoting a stronger “college-going culture” in high schools.