

A VISION FOR LEARNING IN THE SOUTH WINDSOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

INTRODUCTION & HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Societal changes have brought about challenges for educators as well as parents. In response to these challenges, the South Windsor Public Schools has developed the VISION FOR LEARNING.

Improvement of the educational process for all of South Windsor's students and staff continues to be a goal of the South Windsor Public Schools. There are excellent programs, practices, and policies already in place and these will be built upon as we move forward.

The VISION FOR LEARNING is a statement of commitment of the South Windsor Public Schools to prepare students for the twenty-first century. In order to implement this VISION FOR LEARNING, a planning process which includes collaboration among parents, teachers, and administrators has been established.

ROLE OF PARENTS

Parental involvement in the schools has been and will continue to be a goal of the South Windsor Public Schools. In addition to PTOs and the PTO Council, parent advisory groups exist in the schools. The evolving role of parents in School Development Councils (pp. 2) will strengthen involvement by providing them with an active role in developing schools for the twenty-first century.

VISION FOR LEARNING

Rapid changes in society pose a tremendous challenge to schools, teaching, and learning. Focusing on the fundamental goal of quality instruction, the South Windsor Public Schools will foster and use the expertise of staff to meet the demanding academic needs of a diverse student population. At the same time, the schools will be expected to assist parents in responding to the academic, social, and emotional needs of students.

In the Age of Information, curriculum will emphasize learning as a process of discovery. This approach focuses on developing in students the capacity to become active, independent learners and will require changes in the roles of teachers and students. Teachers will have greater involvement in developing curriculum and planning activities that will guide and support students to actively question, investigate, and analyze. The classroom will be a place where students learn to shape information into knowledge and experience into understanding. This new understanding of learning, the growing expertise of teachers, and the evolving role of parents will affect the nature of schools. As parents become more actively involved in schools, and as teachers and administrators analyze the needs of learners, explore curriculum, and respond to an ever-changing society, the schedule, structure and the environment of schools will undergo change.

Utilizing the resources of the community, the South Windsor Public Schools will create an atmosphere of reflection and discussion where knowledge is gained and applied, learning is enjoyed, and interpersonal skills are developed.

VISION PRINCIPLES

To continue to provide a sound education and meet the changing needs of the learners, educators will need to promote:

1. A process approach to learning so that the student can access, evaluate, articulate, and apply information.

2. Continual reflection about teaching to maximize student learning.
3. Practices that are responsive to the developmental stages of students.
4. Self-directed and active learning of teachers.
5. Creative thinking.
6. Proficiency in the use and application of technology.
7. Socialization and interpersonal communication.
8. Curricula that address global and multicultural perspectives.
9. Student service and interaction in the community
10. Connections between school, parents, and community.

SCHOOL SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

The School System Development Council (SSDC) is charged with remaining in the forefront in the implementation of the VISION PRINCIPLES. Membership includes the superintendent, teachers from every level, administrators, and parents. Meetings provide the vehicle for nurturing the development of schools into the twenty-first century. The stated mission of this group is to develop a method to sustain and nurture professionals in a way that will motivate them continually to seek challenges and improvement in the teaching profession.

The specific tasks of this group are to:

1. Define a process for development, review, and submission of building action plans to the superintendent.
2. Coordinate building-level plans as appropriate.
3. Review and recommend plans for approval to the superintendent.
4. Identify district resources.
5. Evaluate the process and revise as necessary.
6. Make recommendations for allocation of resources.
7. Facilitate the implementation of the VISION FOR LEARNING.
8. Provide support to School Development Councils.
9. Communicate.

SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL: A CATALYST FOR ACTION

School Development Councils were formed to actualize the VISION FOR LEARNING. The School Development Council (SDC) within each building will be the bridge between the VISION FOR LEARNING and its implementation by being a catalyst for action. This action will be the deliberate result of teachers, administrators, and parents taking the responsibility for reforming education by improving their school. It is based on the assumption that initiatives for improvement are most effective when developed by the people who are responsible to implement those initiatives.

If you wish to be considered to serve on the School System Development Council or the School Development Council, please contact your building principal for details about the time commitments and membership responsibilities.