



Fall River Area Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Inc.
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By Matthew H. Malone, Fall River's superintendent of schools.

Fall River's road map to stronger public schools

It is imperative that an organization, any organization that desires to push the needle of continuous improvement, clearly define a limited number of targeted strategic goals that will drive the system forward to achieve mutually agreed upon outcomes.

In Fall River, we are extremely privileged that we have a School Committee and a mayor that understands the importance of focusing on doing a few things very well.

Over the summer, our School Committee met to establish a set of strategic goals for school year 2016-17 that will help propel the system forward. This was completed using a facilitated workshop model that was both unique and refreshing for the participants, myself included. The collaboration involved between and among the School Committee and the synergy evident in the room was palpable.

The culmination of the planning and work session resulted in the articulation of six strategic goals that each member of the School Committee agreed, is the most important work requiring our attention and focus. As part of the process and a key driver of our improvement strategy, I concur with the goals that the School Committee established.

As superintendent, I have been very clear that my work in Fall River will be about sustaining and deepening the instructional delivery model to increase student achievement — the key metric that the state uses to hold us accountable for results. As such, we will maintain our commitment to our legacy improvement plan, “The Focused Plan for Accelerated Student Learning,” which drives our capacity building for differentiated learning supports for students, rigorous classroom activities, site-level centrality, social emotional student supports, and high quality professional development for faculty and staff- tweaking this work as we get more sophisticated in our learning and progress.



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Coupled with the continuation of our improvement plan and under the governance of our School Committee, we will also work on executing the following six strategic goals:

1. Develop a human capital strategy/teacher retention plan
2. Develop and refine multiple pathways for student success
3. Work on refining budget design using a zero-based budgeting system
4. Work to increase parent and community engagement/customer service
5. Develop a capital facilities master plan
6. Implement a performance management dashboard

Clearly, we are an organization focused on continuous improvement, both vertically and horizontally. Our greatest assets are our human assets — our faculty, staff, and leaders — who work with, and support, our students every single day.

We are fortunate that we are governed by a School Committee that understands our need for focus and disciplined effort in order to close student achievement gaps and build the capacity of our site level teams as we relentlessly drive for excellence, meeting the challenges of urban education in the 21st century the only way we know how: head-on.

Fall River Public Schools have a historic track-record of success. We will continue to exceed expectations and knock down barriers in order to open the doors of access and opportunity for all of our students.