



NEW FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

REBELS RISING

To the New Fairfield Students, Staff, Families and Community Members:

We are nearing the end of this historic school year and the district leadership team could not be prouder of how our staff has pulled together to reinvent education and provide a safe, inviting and productive learning environment.

As the year winds down, we are again in the process of planning for the coming year. In many ways, things will be much more “normal” next year, but we are forever changed by the experiences we’ve had over the last 15 months.

We have learned so much during this time and have grown in many ways. While the media talks about learning loss and recovery, we believe that as a school system, much like the mythical Phoenix, rising from the ashes, we are emerging from this pandemic stronger, smarter and better than ever.

As we develop our plans for the coming year and beyond, our focus is on using the lessons and skills we’ve learned to “rise” to our highest and best potential. We are developing a strategic plan to help us achieve our vision. Our district vision is being updated to include an understanding of what we wish for our graduates, when they conclude their education in the New Fairfield Public Schools.

We met with staff, parents, the Board of Education and students, asking everyone these questions:

- What do we want our students to know when they graduate?
- What do we want them to be able to do?
- What do we want them to understand?
- What characteristics do we want them to have?

The answers to these questions will be studied and synthesized and will drive our work in the years to come.

We encourage you to review and digest this plan, knowing that our priorities are consistent and clear:

- ensuring the health and safety of our students, staff and community
- ensuring the social/emotional wellness of our students, staff and community
- ensuring the best possible learning experience for our students

Thank you for your partnership,

Warmly,





NEW FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

REBELS RISING

Table of Contents

Our Process	Page 3
Health and Safety Strategies	Page 4
Our Continuity Plan: To Rise	Page 6
• Our Graduate: Why we do everything we do...	
• Our Strategy	
○ Social Emotional Learning & School Climate	
○ Academic Plans	
○ Classroom Instruction	
○ Intervention	
Stakeholder Engagement	Page 10
Schedule for Review	Page 10
Contacts	Page 11
Acknowledgements	Page 12



NEW FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

REBELS RISING

OUR PROCESS

We began our journey in March of 2020, when we were forced to close schools on short notice, with no experience to draw upon, nor guidance to follow.

We quickly pulled together teams of teachers and administrators and created our initial Distance Learning Plan, to the best of our abilities. After it was in place and a short time had passed, we surveyed parents and staff and adjusted our plan based on the feedback that we received.

At the end of the 2020 school year, we surveyed staff and parents again, to attempt to learn as much as we could about our successes and our areas for growth and improvement.

With that feedback in mind, we developed our Roadmap which outlined our planning process to prepare for the 2020 - 2021 school year. The Roadmap called for the creation of a Steering Committee and three Planning Teams. Those groups were comprised of more than 100 staff and community members and met consistently to develop our 2020 - 2021 Reopening Plan.

As we prepare for the 2021 - 2022 school year, we continue to engage staff, parents, students and the community in our process and are excited about the prospect of a more “typical” school year that will be improved by the lessons of the last year.

Throughout our work, we have shared our progress and sought feedback from staff and the community. We have held many webinars, conducted many surveys and held Feedback Forums. We have benefited greatly from the contributions, questions and feedback that we received. We are fully committed to continuing to share information and seek input.

As a result of our collective efforts, we have been open all year, both in-person and remote for those who chose that option. We have been fortunate to have already made a safe return and have had continuity of instruction. This plan represents our intentions for how we will continue, fully open, to grow, reimagine and rise, in the coming year.



NEW FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

REBELS RISING

HEALTH AND SAFETY STRATEGIES

As a district, we believe that our plans must ensure safety, be grounded in our beliefs about teaching and learning and the social-emotional needs of all stakeholders, and be flexible and adaptive.

Strategy	New Fairfield's Plan
Mask Wearing	All students and staff will wear a mask while inside the school building unless otherwise exempted in accordance with State guidelines. Students and staff will also wear masks on buses.
Distancing	Distancing will be encouraged where possible.
Cohorting	Consolidated School students will eat in classrooms and use student desks for primary seating.
Hand Washing & Respiratory Etiquette	Hand washing will be encouraged. Hand sanitizer will be available.
Cleaning & Maintaining Healthy Facilities, including Improving Ventilation	Our staff will conduct nightly cleaning of our facilities with an emphasis on high touch points. High touch point cleaning also takes place throughout the day.
Contact Tracing	Contact tracing will occur, in the situation where a case of COVID-19 is reported for someone who has been present in our schools or school programming.
Isolation	Those who are diagnosed with COVID-19 will need to isolate per CDC guidelines.
Quarantining	For those who are vaccinated and have provided documentation to the school nurse, quarantining will not be necessary. Those who are not vaccinated must quarantine according to CDC guidelines.
Screening and Testing	The schools will not conduct testing. Anyone who believes that they may have had contact with a positive case of COVID-19, are encouraged to be tested.



NEW FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

REBELS RISING

	<p>As always, we ask that staff screen themselves for symptoms of illness, COVID-19 or otherwise, prior to coming to work and that families screen their children. Anyone with a temperature of 100.4°F or greater should remain at home.</p>
Vaccination Efforts	<p>The NFPS, in conjunction with the New Fairfield Health Department, conducted staff vaccination clinics in the spring of 2021, for those 16 and older. All those who are eligible and have not yet been vaccinated are encouraged to do so. Will consider a fall clinic for those eligible at that time.</p>
Accommodations	<p>Face shields worn with face masks will be used by staff who support students who are not able to wear masks and/or who may need assistance with activities of daily living.</p>
Coordination with State and local health officials	<p>The NFPS works in close consultation with the New Fairfield Health Department and follows guidance from the State of Connecticut Department of Health, the Connecticut State Department of Education and the CDC.</p>



NEW FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

REBELS RISING

OUR CONTINUITY PLAN: REBELS RISE

This pandemic year and a half has forced us to reexamine our purpose and our methods. It has challenged us and made us stronger. As part of our planning for the years ahead, we have taken the time to get input from our community, our Board of Education, our staff and our students about what we hope our students will be like when they graduate from our schools. We also have developed a strategic plan to help us continue to grow as a school system and make us better able to help our students achieve the vision that we have established for them.

Our Graduate: Why We Do Everything We Do

In response to the four questions, mentioned above in the introduction, some common themes have emerged. We are in the process of synthesizing the multitude of input that we received and look forward to honing those themes into a description of the Graduate that will drive all of our efforts going forward. When school opens in the fall, we will have finished this process and will share the culmination of everyone’s work with the community, staff and students. Here is a sample of some terms that came up often:

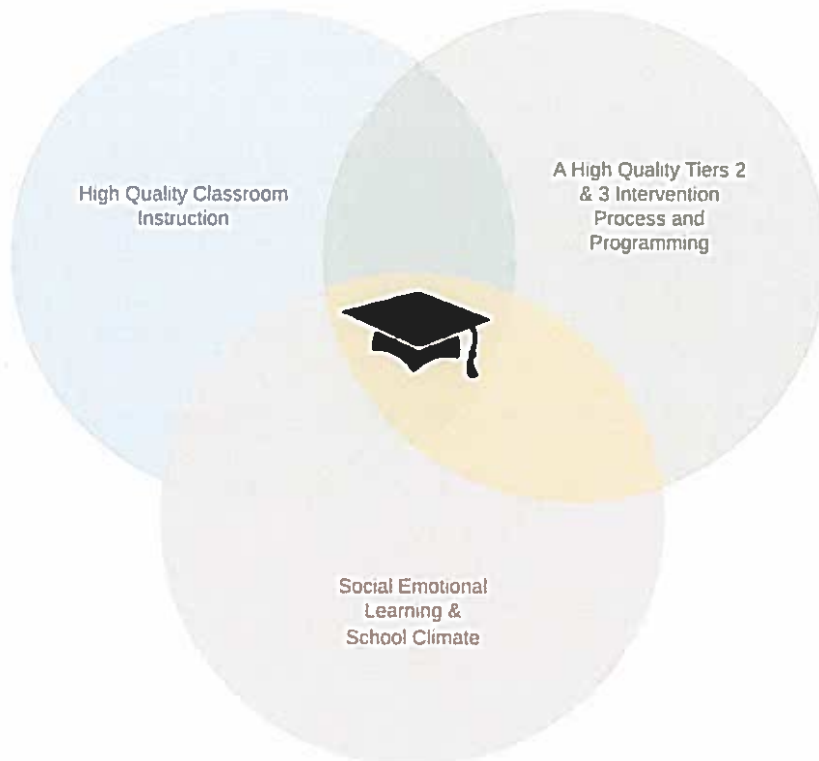
self-reliant	communicators
self-aware	creative
knowledgeable	listeners
perseverance	tech savvy
resilience	civic-minded
responsibility	reflective
worldly	financially aware
kind	wellness
organized	articulate
problem solving	empathy
collaborative	collaborative
empathetic	strong
flexible thinkers	independent



NEW FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS REBELS RISING

Our Strategy

We have established three priorities around which to focus our work in the coming several years. We believe that if we focus on creating a safe and supportive learning environment in which we provide high quality instruction, both in the classroom and through a strong intervention model, then our students will become the graduates that we envision.





NEW FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

REBELS RISING

School Climate & Social Emotional Learning

Focusing on the school setting and the social and emotional wellness of the people in it, is the first layer of our work. School culture is about traditions, history, beliefs and how a school does business. School climate is about how a school feels to the students and staff on a daily basis and how people interact with one another. Social emotional learning (SEL) is about explicitly teaching students self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. The combination of these three: culture, climate and SEL, renders students ready to learn and achieve to their full potential.

In our elementary schools, our school-wide climate model is Responsive Classroom. Teachers at Meeting House have already been trained and utilizing this approach. Consolidated teachers will be trained in the fall.

In our secondary schools, our school-wide climate model is Restorative Practices and training has begun this year and will continue over the next two years.

We have been developing our SEL curriculum and are actively reviewing resources to use to deliver this instruction to our students.

Academic Plans

We recognize that learning takes place in many different settings, in many different ways. We intend to provide an instructional program that allows students to seamlessly transition between whole class instruction, differentiated learning opportunities and targeted intervention.

Classroom Instruction

We have developed our vision of high quality instruction and are working to have that be the way that all of our classrooms operate. It is framed around what you would see and hear if you visited a classroom. It is described through the lenses of the learning environment, the teacher, the task and the student. The student is at the center of all learning and our instruction is designed to develop student agency.



NEW FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

REBELS RISING

The **learning environment** is characterized by flexibility, authenticity and personal connections and is filled with student-to-student and teacher-to-student conversation that encourages intellectual risk-taking and inclusivity.

The **teacher** intentionally and purposefully orchestrates student-centered learning by listening, assessing, guiding, questioning, encouraging and providing personalized, actionable feedback.

The **task** is complex, relevant, engaging and purposeful. It allows for student choice and leads to important knowledge, skills and/or understandings. Success is clearly defined.

The **learners** are cognitively and actively engaged and know why they are doing what they're doing. They are taking risks, collaborating, persevering, reflecting, questioning, debating, creating and making meaning.

Intervention

Our classrooms are characterized by differentiated instruction that is designed to allow all students to access their learning and succeed. If a student is not meeting with enough success with classroom instruction alone, we offer tiered intervention to support our learners.

That instruction takes place in small groups and/or individual settings and is individually developed to meet the needs of students. Intervention is available in the areas of reading, mathematics and social/emotional/behavior support.

Tier	Interventionist	Setting	Group Size	Frequency
Tier 1 <i>Available to All Students</i>	Classroom Teacher	Regular Classroom	Small group	ongoing
↓ Available to students identified through the CST process ↓				
Tier 2 <i>Focused Intervention</i>	Classroom Teacher or Specialist	Regular Classroom or Specialist Setting	Groups of 3 - 5 students	2 - 3 sessions per week
Tier 3 <i>Intensive Intervention</i>	Specialist	Specialist Setting	1 - 3 students	3 - 5 sessions per week



NEW FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS REBELS RISING

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Method	Stakeholders	Date
Staff Meeting	Consolidated School	May 4, 2021
	Meeting House Hill School	May 11, 2021
	Middle School	May 5, 2021
	High School	June 2, 2021
	Both Elementary Schools	May 24, 2021
	Both Secondary Schools	May 24, 2021
Community Focus Groups	Parents	May 10, 2021
	Parents	May 18, 2021
Town Tribune	Community	June 3, 2021
Steering Committee	Parents, Staff, Unions, Board of Education, Students	June 10, 2021
Board of Education Input	Board of Education	May 6, 2021
Board of Education Input	Board of Education members and Community	June 17, 2021

SCHEDULE FOR REVIEW

August 16, 2021
October 15, 2021
January 19, 2022
April 1, 2022



NEW FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

REBELS RISING

CONTACT INFORMATION

Role	Name	Number	Reason to Contact
Superintendent	Dr. Patricia Cosentino	203-312-5770	General questions/concerns
Assistant Superintendent	Julie Luby	203-312-5668	General questions/concerns and/or specifics of our plan
Covid Liaison	Lori Cipriani	203-312-5890	Covid health related questions or concerns within the schools
Director of Health for New Fairfield	Timothy Simpkins	203-312-5640	Covid health related questions or concerns
Director of Business and Operations	Dr. Richard Sanzo	203-312-5664	Operational questions
Director of Pupil Personnel Services	Katherine Matz	203-312-5774	Student disability related questions or concerns
Consolidated School Principal	Rob Spino	203-312-5940	School specific questions or concerns
Meeting House Hill School Principal	James Mandracchia	203-312-5905	School specific questions or concerns
New Fairfield Middle School Principal	Christine Baldelli	203-312-5885	School specific questions or concerns
New Fairfield High School Principal	James D'Amico	203-312-5800	School specific questions or concerns



NEW FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

REBELS RISING

THANK YOU, THANK YOU & THANK YOU AGAIN!

Thank you to our incredibly professional and supportive Board of Education members: Peggy Katkocin, Dominic Cippollone, Kimberly LaTourette, Kathy Baker, Greg Flanagan, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Edward Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza. This has been an experience like no other and the board has been so supportive as we developed, executed and revised our plans to educate the children of New Fairfield, in the midst of a pandemic. We could not have been as successful without your collaboration, cooperation and support.

Thank you to the team of the New Fairfield Administrators: Julie Luby, Rich Sanzo, Karen Fildes, Katherine Matz, Melissa Busnel, Alyce Misuraca, Rob Spino, Karen Gruetzner, James Mandracchia, Allyson Story, Christine Baldelli, Cheryl Milo, James D'Amico, Michael Chapleau, Scott Rohwedder and Mark Ottusch. Your compassion, dedication and talent makes our school system strong.

Thank you to the Steering Committee for your volunteerism, your organization and your dedication to our process and our product. The Steering Committee members are: Dr. Pat Cosentino, Julie Luby, Dr. Rich Sanzo, Phil Ross, Dr. Karen Fildes, Katherine Matz, Alyce Misuraca, Melissa Busnel, Christine Baldelli, Karen Gruetzner, Peggy Katkocin, Dominic Cippollone, Stephanie Strazza, Lori Cipriani, Dr. Jack Fong (New Fairfield Medical Adviser), Kathleen Dwy, Linda Norris, Roseann Petruso, Jeff Guiliano, Casey Olsen, Jean Gephart and Samantha Ruggiero.