



Shrewsbury Public Schools

Strategic Priorities: Definition & Checklist

In their book Strategy in Action: How School Systems Can Support Powerful Teaching and Learning, Rachel Curtis and Elizabeth City advocate that districts create an overall strategy that is focused on the “instructional core” triad of students, educators, and content by determining no more than five strategic priorities. They utilize Stacey Childress’s definition of strategy:

“Strategy” is the set of actions an organization chooses to pursue in order to achieve its objectives. These deliberate actions are puzzle pieces that fit together to create a clear picture of how the people, activities, and resources of an organization can work effectively to accomplish a collective purpose. (p. 3)

For our purposes, please consider our district’s “objectives” to be what is set out in the *Profile of a Graduate*. The task is to ultimately determine no more than four strategic priorities that represent how the district will focus its efforts towards achieving those objectives, which will in turn help the district meet the “collective purpose” articulated by our mission and core values. A strong strategic priority must be:

- Broad enough to apply across the entire district, PreK-12
- High leverage, so that if executed well it will ultimately have a significant impact on student learning
- Motivating, so that it promotes innovation and problem solving that move the district closer to fulfilling its aspirations
- Aligned with the other strategic priorities so that together they are coherent and mutually reinforcing