



STATE of the DISTRICT Spring 2024



Dear Brookfield Community,

As we enter the final months of the 2023-2024 school year, I present the State of the District. Our annual community update is framed into three specific sections; *Where We Were, Where We Are and Where We Are Going*. This document is intended to provide a succinct overview of the Brookfield Public Schools. The collaboration of the Board of Education, faculty, staff, families and community members have been instrumental in achieving tremendous progress on the areas articulated below.

I am so proud of our students, faculty, staff and the greater Brookfield community. Our parent leadership has been second to none, especially in re-establishing the District Wide PTO and supporting SPEACS (Students, Parents, Educators Advisory Council to the Superintendent) as we work to further engage the learning community. Thank you for your feedback and ideas. Our students continue striving toward the skills articulated in our Strategic Plan's *Portrait of the Graduate*.

As we continue to build upon the successes of tradition and recent accomplishments, it is paramount that we work to inspire our students to dream big as they create their tomorrow pursuing a future filled with unlimited potential for life, learning and work beyond school.



Thank you to everyone for your continued engagement and support!

Sincerely,
Dr. John W. Barile, Superintendent

WHERE WE WERE

Across the district students are developing and applying skills articulated in the **Portrait of the Graduate**. We have implemented new courses at Brookfield High School in STEM and Humanities, along with a bilingual teacher to support Spanish speakers, and full time para educators to support kindergarten classrooms for our young students.

Academic recovery has been strong. Our efforts to boost student achievement yielded spring 2023 SBA scores that not only closed the achievement gap for our high need students, and placed us third in DRG B for the most significant growth scores of all 20 comparable districts. Please see the [December 6th regular meeting presentation](#).

The Brookfield Public Schools takes students' **academic and mental health/wellness** very seriously. Targeted investments are being implemented aligned with student needs. Such investments include the leadership of our instructional coaches, summer school services, social workers and tutors. BHS partnered with Connecticut Institute For Communities, Inc. (CIFIC) to provide private mental health support for students and their families. Our new Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA's) have played a critical role in support of our most vulnerable learners.

Digital Security Tools: We have continued to expand access to digital learning tools and improve school safety. This past year we collaborated with Sandy Hook Promise to initiate a 24-7 anonymous threat reporting system. The [Say Something app](#) went live last spring and has been fully implemented at both WMS and BHS this



academic year. The district continues to use the [Securly platform](#) to filter and monitor for threats and student online safety. We now protect the district with multi factor authentication protocols, advanced endpoint protection to support our cybersecurity insurance. These efforts have increased network reliability and safety by implementing these proactive measures for users and our organizational platforms. BPS looks forward to participation in an innovative grant with the [CT Center for School Safety and Crisis Preparation](#) to combat swatting.

School security has also been enhanced throughout the district. All three schools have School Resource Officers (SRO's). We also have added a security monitor at Whisconier Middle School and two security monitors at Candlewood Lake Elementary to support school safety in a variety of ways, including interior and exterior perimeter monitoring and visitor admission. We also added an additional day and evening security personnel at BHS, while collaborating with the police department to institute an armed school security officer position in the evenings to cover the many after school and evening activities scheduled at the high school. Please see the link to our [security video](#)

[WHERE WE ARE](#)

The **Strategic Plan** was adopted in March, 2023. The Plan has helped the district prepare and plan for the future, guide district actions, and provide district stability. The Plan has also served as a framework to provide and support district alignment in curriculum, instruction, and assessment as we fulfill the development of the district's **Portrait of the Graduate** on our way for each member of the school community to *Create Their Tomorrow*.

Specifically, the Strategic Plan helps to **define the Brookfield C's or Portrait of the Graduate**: what it looks like to display **Critical & Creative thinking**, how **Collaboration** is measured, in what ways **Communication** can be demonstrated, and what are the possibilities for positive **Change**. This plan of action will strengthen our foundation for academic achievement, student support, professional development and accountability. In alignment with the Strategic Plan, please see the following links to two presentations to the Board of Education that align with this year's focus of the Strategic Plan: [BPS Curriculum Process \(from January 17, 2024 \)](#) and [the BPS Instructional Core \(from March 6, 2024\)](#).

Please take the time to view the March 1, 2023 [Strategic Plan, Slide Deck presentation, and the actual video of the presentation to the Board](#), as well as the [Strategic Planning Alignment doc](#).

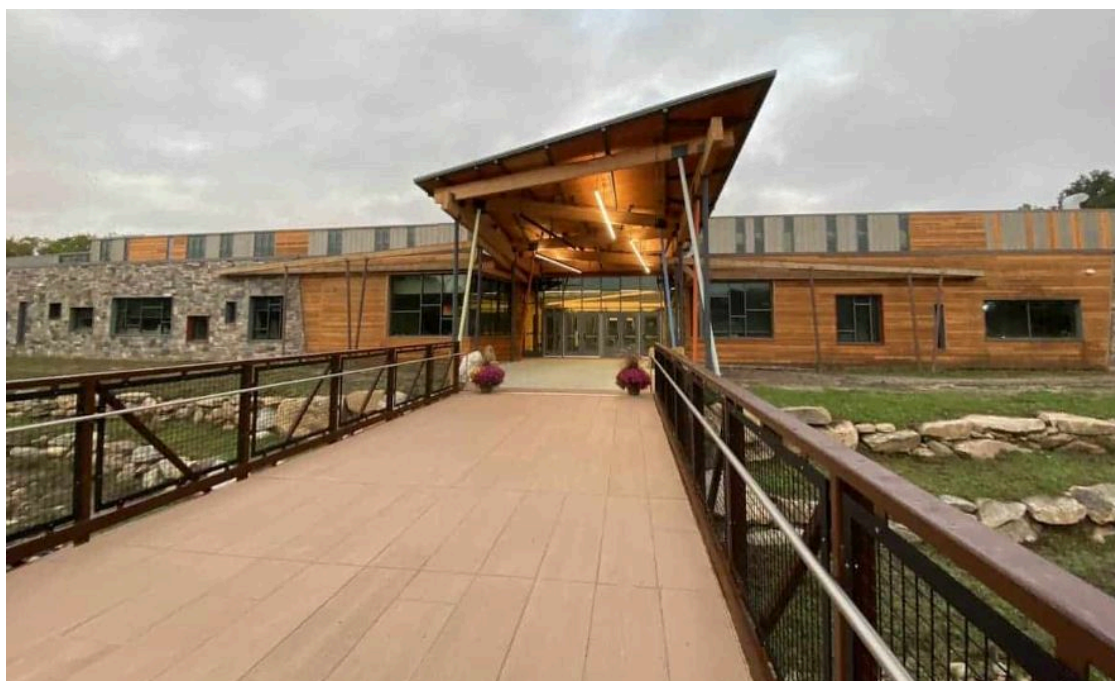
The District has embarked on a comprehensive **Special Education Program Review**. Capitol Region Education Council (CREC) reviewed and analyzed District Resources, Organizational Processes & Structures, Student Learning and Outcomes, and Communication & Collaboration. The recommendations from this report served as a guide for the work of our new Special Education Director and all of the faculty and staff this year. I am pleased to share that we have addressed all of the recommendations on our way to excellence in our Special Education programming. [Link to CREC February 21](#) presentation.



The [athletic program review](#) has been completed, including a site visit conducted on March 5th-6th, 2024. Parents and student-athletes had the opportunity to provide feedback during the self-reflection portion of the study. While the initial report indicates excellence in our program, targeted recommendations are anticipated to provide us with direction on how to enhance our process and programs. The final report, when received, will be presented to the Board of Education and shared with the public.



The school year began with great excitement as our youngest students [moved into the brand new, state of the art Candlewood Lake Elementary School](#). The new mascot, Clessie the Cub, was there to welcome all students and families for their first tour on Labor Day! Importantly, Whisconier Middle School has been “right sized” for Grades 6-8 as a significant part of the district transition plan. Additionally, after a great deal of research and planning we were able to institute a later school start time at BHS and also transition from a Three Tier Bus schedule to a Two Tier schedule.



The [PikMyKid app](#) has been instrumental in supporting a safe and efficient dismissal process at the new Candlewood Lake Elementary School and has been even more useful in the past month with the completion of the external WiFi at CLES.

We also reinvigorated the District Wide PTO and initiated the advisory council SPEACS (Students Parents Educators Advisory Council to the Superintendent), which has a primary focus on exploring ways to enhance communication & engagement, and resource provision for students. Thanks to all of you who have attended and engaged in these action-oriented groups.

WHERE WE ARE GOING

Communications & New Website:

We are thrilled to have begun the rollout of our new communication and parent, student and staff engagement platform, [ParentSquare](#). Beginning the first week of July all communications from and with the schools and District will be through the ParentSquare app.

Introductory video: <https://vimeo.com/392768203/fa21a5c85d?share=copy>

[Presentation to the Board of Education at the 3/20/2024 meeting](#)

Training for staff will occur upon return from summer break during the professional learning days.

Training for parents will occur over the summer and we plan to hold in-person and virtual training sessions. We will announce the times and locations of the training.

Teaching & Learning:



A new [K-3 reading curricular tool is being piloted](#) and will be proposed to the CAPE subcommittee in April before being presented to the full Board of Education for adoption. The plan is to have the new curricular tool in place for implementation this coming fall, with a plan to phase-in implementation for grades 4 and 5 in the near future. As soon as the new program is officially adopted by the Board of Education, we will share the information with you.

Currently we are implementing our new math program, [Illustrative Math](#), in grades 4-8. We will implement K-3 in the near future.

At BHS we will be implementing two new courses in the 2024-2025 school year: **College Algebra and Creative Writing II.**

We look forward to implementing goals from the new [Special Education Strategic Plan](#). The goals are born from collaboration with faculty, staff and parents as well as the CREC Program Reviews.

We are planning for a new **Portuguese bilingual program** at Candlewood Lake to accommodate the growing number of children enrolled speaking Portuguese as their first language.

Operations and Facilities:

The Board's [adopted budget](#) for next year includes additional funds in the maintenance account. Now that Candlewood Lake school is completed, we are focusing our maintenance efforts on Whisconier and BHS. [Capital Improved Plan and building conditions study](#)

Next year's new state law regarding the Kindergarten age requirement begins. Students must need to be 5 years old by September 1st. Please see the letter from Dr. Pepsoski and Dr. Barile regarding [kindergarten registration and the process for submitting an age waiver](#).

The **first day of school** for students for the 2024-2025 school year will be after Labor Day, September 3, 2024. **It will be a full day.** [2024-2025 District Calendar](#)