



ROADMAP TO 2029: The Strategic Plan

YEAR 3: 2026-2027



RESPONSIBLE. RESILIENT. READY.

OUR JOURNEY FORWARD:

Entering Year Three of the Roadmap to 2029



Dear Ramsey School District Community,

As we enter the third year of our five-year strategic plan, Roadmap to 2029, I find it an appropriate time for us to pause and reflect on how far we have come together. Reaching this midpoint is an opportunity to celebrate the genuine momentum, growth, and shared purpose that define our district.

Our vision remains clear and ambitious: **to be the absolute best public school district in the State of New Jersey.**

Achieving that vision requires more than just goals on a page—it requires a deep, shared commitment to who we are. That is why this year we are launching our **“We Are Ramsey”** campaign.

At its heart, “We Are Ramsey” represents the profound connections that tie our entire community together.

- It is the bridge between our rich traditions stretching back over a century and our vibrant present, fueled by a relentless commitment to continuous improvement.
- It is the thread that connects our youngest “Rising Rams” taking their first steps in elementary school to our middle schoolers, high schoolers, and ultimately to the thousands of proud Ramsey alumni making an impact across the globe.

Every day in Ramsey, this seamless educational journey comes to life:

- **In our elementary classrooms**, where natural curiosity is sparked through active, hands-on learning that balances strong academics with care for the whole child.
- **At Smith Middle School**, where every learner is known deeply by name and cared for individually—a supportive place where students are encouraged to take risks, navigate the world, and recognize that they belong to something bigger than themselves.
- **At Ramsey High School**, where a culture of excellence and belonging shines. As the best high school of its size in New Jersey, RHS is a place where our students refuse to settle for “good enough.” Our students are encouraged to be scholars, artists, and athletes all at once, supported by educators and coaches who care about their success in every area of life.

Over the past two years, we have laid strong foundations across our five core goal areas: Academics, Student Development, Learning Environment, Human Resources, Finances & Facilities, and Community Engagement. In year three, we build upon that foundation with clear purpose and heart. We are all Rams.

I have never been more confident in our path. We have the plan, we have the passion, and most importantly, we have the people. No matter where we go or what role we play in this wonderful community, we share a single, lifelong identity.

We are all Rams. **We Are Ramsey.**

Sincerely,

Dr. Andrew C. Matteo
Superintendent of Schools

Vision Statement

To be the best public school district in New Jersey.

A place where:

- **Faculty and staff** aspire to build their careers.
- **Families** eagerly choose to call home.
- **Students** look back with a profound sense of wonder and accomplishment.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to achieve this vision by:

- **Intentionally improving student outcomes**, consistently outperforming expectations.
- **Systematically empowering every student** to realize their fullest potential, becoming better tomorrow than they were yesterday.
- **Treating all stakeholders as valued human beings**, dedicating our best efforts to their success and well-being.



Key Concepts

Strengths First:

We celebrate the unique strengths of each student and staff member. By focusing on strengths, we aim to create a community where every individual feels welcome, valued, and respected.



Rich Tradition:

We honor the rich tradition that has shaped our school district since its inception in 1908. Tradition connects us to our past, grounds us in the present, and guides us toward a future where we respect our roots while embracing progress.



Stronger Together:

While recognizing the strengths of the individual, we also believe that we are stronger together. We value the power of teamwork and encourage students, educators, and families to work together to achieve common goals.

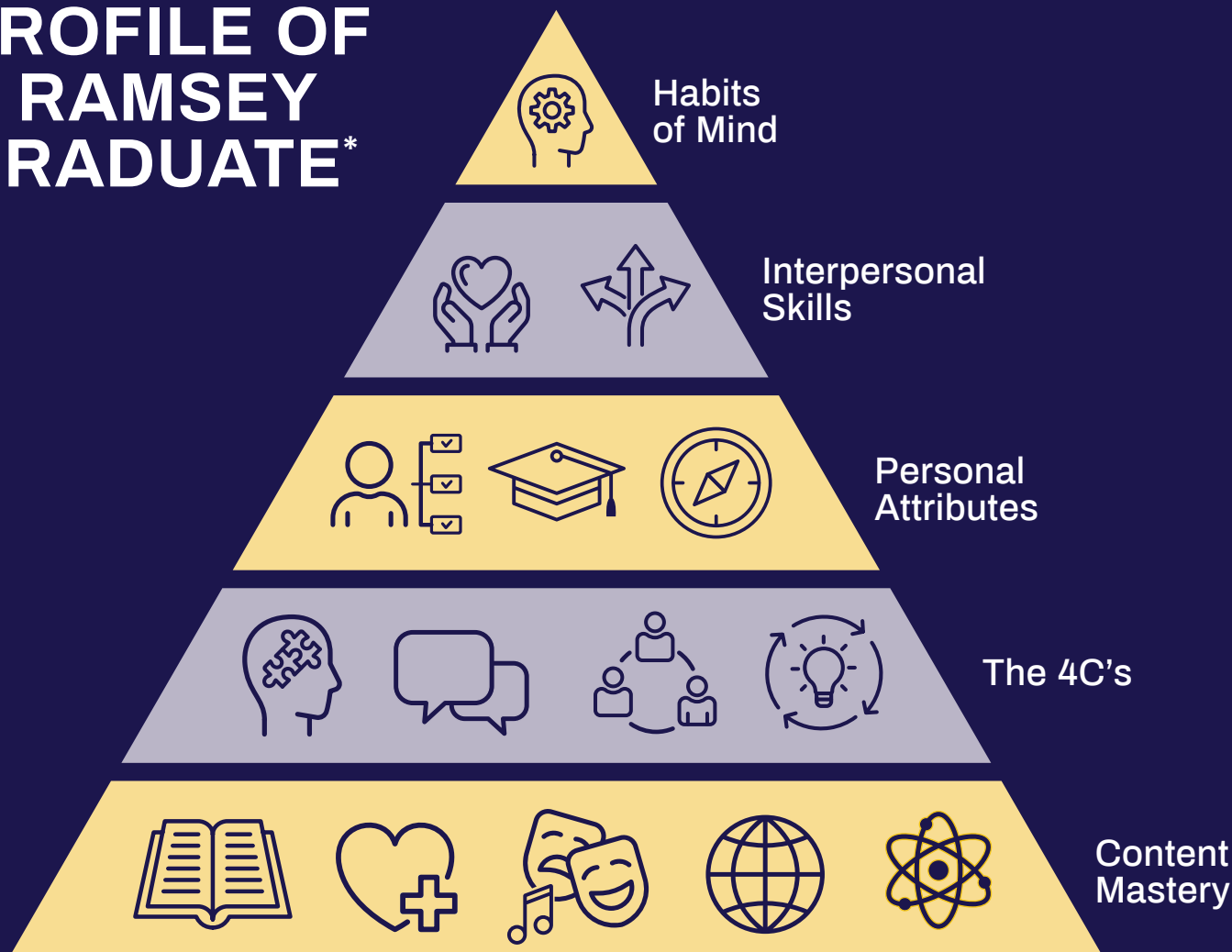


Continuous Improvement:

While respecting our rich tradition, we also believe in the continuous growth and development of students, staff, and the community. By embracing new ideas and approaches, we prepare students to navigate and succeed in a rapidly changing world.



PROFILE OF A RAMSEY GRADUATE*



1. Content Mastery

A baseline understanding of knowledge in **HUMANITIES, WELLNESS, THE ARTS, WORLD LANGUAGES**, and **STEM** and the ability to transfer that knowledge to other situations.

2. The 4C's

CRITICAL THINKING: Reason effectively using relevant information to make a judgment or solve a problem.

COMMUNICATION: Listen effectively and express ideas for a range of purposes and audiences.

COLLABORATION: Work effectively with others towards achieving a common goal.

CREATIVITY: Generate ideas, learn from mistakes, and elaborate and refine ideas to maximize value.

3. Personal Attributes

RESPONSIBILITY: Make good choices that reflect integrity and accountable behavior in an effort to promote growth.

ACADEMIC MINDSET: Have a positive attitude and belief about themselves as a learner.

SELF DIRECTION: Set goals, prioritize, and engage in independent and lifelong learning.

4. Interpersonal Skills

EMPATHY: Understand others' views and needs with an open mind.

ADAPTABILITY: Adapt to complicated challenges, persist when obstacles arise, and understand different views on a problem or solution.

5. Habits of Mind

REFLECTION: Reflect on their own learning and experiences; think about their own thinking.

* The Profile of a Ramsey Graduate (Profile) outlines the skills and competencies we expect all students to have developed and demonstrated by graduation, after 13 years of targeted education.

ROADMAP TO 2029

STRATEGIC GOAL AREAS:



Goal 1:
ACADEMICS



Goal 2:
**STUDENT
DEVELOPMENT**



Goal 3:
**LEARNING
ENVIRONMENT**



Goal 4:
**HUMAN RESOURCES,
FINANCES,
AND FACILITIES**



Goal 5:
**COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT**





Goal Area 1

ACADEMICS

Design meaningful learning experiences that maximize growth potential for every student. Empower students, through a variety of engaging programs, to apply and transfer knowledge and skills to real-world contexts.



Goal Area 1 Intended Outcomes:

2026-2027 Annual Targets

1. Increase student achievement on NJSLA-A Mathematics.
2. Increase student achievement on NJSLA-A ELA.
3. Maintain percentage of graduates who have taken at least one AP exam and earned a 3 or higher at **60% or higher**.
4. Increase the number of students who take dual enrollment classes by **16% from 301 to 350 students**.
5. Increase score on staff survey question, "I am confident I can support my students' growth toward the cognitive competencies (critical thinking, communication, collaboration, creativity) in the Profile of a Ramsey Graduate," from **88% to 90%**.
6. Increase score on the community survey question, "My child's school is preparing them for the next academic year" as measured by the annual parent survey from **85% to 87%**.
7. Increase score on staff survey question, "I am confident I can support my students' growth toward the academic content outlined in the NJ Student Learning Standards" from **87% to 90%**.



1.1 Profile of a Ramsey Graduate:

Continue to implement developmentally appropriate experiences throughout students' Preschool-Grade 12 journey that foster the academic and cognitive aspects of the Profile.

Strategies 2026-2027

- Administer cornerstone tasks to monitor student growth in Profile of a Graduate competencies and inform continuous improvement efforts.
- Pilot student portfolios on the Toddle platform to advance the Ramsey Profile of a Graduate vision.

1.2 Curriculum:

Develop and teach a modern and standards-based curriculum to help students acquire skills and knowledge while fostering understanding and the ability to transfer learning to new situations.

Strategies 2026-2027

- Implement the revised scope and sequence of K-2 phonics/morphology instruction.
- Implement a new curriculum and learning management system.
- Create and implement new Grades K-5 Gifted & Talented entrance criteria for the 27-28 school year.
- Increase access to common math tasks that elevate student achievement.
- Support literacy through the implementation of benchmark writing tasks in Grades 2-8.
- Implement a five-year curriculum cycle.

1.3 Instructional Practices:

Improve student outcomes by implementing evidence-based teaching practices.

Strategies 2026-2027

- Build teacher capacity in Preschool to Grade 3 to improve teacher practices in phonics/word study instruction.
- Build teacher capacity in Grades 4 and 5 to improve practices in word study/grammar instruction.
- Build teacher capacity in Grades 6-12 to improve literacy processes.
- Build teacher capacity in Grades 3-5 to improve teacher practices in math instruction.
- Develop a cohort for K-5 Special Area teachers (Music, Art, Spanish) to study best practices in elementary special area instruction.
- Determine a common language for evidence-based instruction.

1.4 Innovative Programs:

Create dynamic, relevant programs for students to gain experiences for college and career readiness, both within and beyond the classroom.

Strategies 2026-2027

- Continue expanding Dual Enrollment offerings available to high school students.
- Establish and execute a Career Fair opportunity to further career development and exploration.
- Expand the AP Capstone Program.
- Expand and modernize the Computer Science program in Grades 6 through 12.
- Plan the resequencing of RHS Science courses to begin with Biology in Grade 9.
- Implement the first stage of RHS Social Studies course resequencing, ultimately moving World History to 11th Grade and the addition of AP World History.

1.5 Analytics:

Use a combination of assessment information to understand learners, communicate progress, tailor instruction, and celebrate success.

Strategies 2026-2027

- Refine the implementation of the Georgia Numeracy Project Numeracy Screener for students receiving Tier Grade 3 instruction K-3.
- Analyze World Language assessment data annually to inform decisions about student progress, program access, and curriculum design.
- Explore assessment and grading practices throughout the high school mathematics program to monitor and communicate growth.





Goal Area 2

STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

Create a culture of positive well-being and continual growth for students. Foster relationships and understanding of others while promoting educational excellence and resilience.



Goal Area 2 Intended Outcomes:

2026-2027 Annual Targets

1. Increase score on the staff survey question, "I am confident I can support my students' growth toward the interpersonal (responsibility, academic mindset, self-direction) and interpersonal (empathy, adaptability) competencies in the Profile of a Ramsey Graduate," **from 83% to 86%.**
2. Increase score on the parent survey question, "The extracurricular activities offered by my child's school match their interests" from **72% to 77%.**
3. Win Big North Sportsmanship awards at team and overall program level by season.

Ramsey
Public
Education
Foundation
2026

SMITH
• e-Sports: \$6,555
• Smith Musical (6-8): \$2,300
• Gizmo & Gadgets Club (6-8): \$1,085
• Cookie Club: \$1,200
• TV Studio: \$4,950
• Ono Roller Fidgets: \$150
• Art Program Display Panels: \$2,350
• Smith Fitness Center: \$9,075

SMITH & RHS
• Diverse Voices Speaker: \$8,800

RHS
• Creative Poetry: \$1,000
• Francophone Music Live: \$6,700

LE & HUBBARD
Stuffed Animals for Kindergarten
day: \$1,800

ER
• Poponic Garden System: \$4,750
• School One Book: \$2,820
• About Composting: \$9,250
• Notices Club: \$11,635
• er Sensory Center: \$800
• ar STEM Projects and Activities: \$600

www.RamseyPEF.org



2.1 Profile of a Ramsey Graduate:

Instill the key intrapersonal and interpersonal skills from the Profile of a Ramsey Graduate in both classroom instruction and related programming.

Strategies 2026-2027

- Implement a Profile of a Ramsey Graduate Portfolio system across all 6th Grade exploratory courses.
- Intentionally utilize morning meeting time to develop and improve students' intrapersonal and interpersonal skills.

2.2 Extracurricular Activities:

Provide meaningful extracurricular activities including clubs and athletics as part of the Ramsey Experience.

Strategies 2026-2027

- Create a more unified and intentional experience for the District's performing arts students across all grade levels.
- Reorganize and refocus extracurricular clubs and activities at Ramsey High School.
- Enhance the positive youth sports experience in Ramsey Athletics by creating a positive team culture and providing professional learning for all stakeholders centered around leading with integrity, positive communication, accountability, resilience, and ethical decision-making.
- Build on the Ramsey Sports Performance approach by providing student-athletes with nutritional guidance.

2.3 Social-Emotional Learning:

Embed a comprehensive SEL program that is consistent and developmentally appropriate.

Strategies 2026-2027

- Explore and implement an iteration of Morning Meeting at Smith School during the RAM Period.
- Explore and implement a Positive Habit Program at Smith School during the FLEX Period.
- Leverage RULER systematically as an SEL program at three elementary schools.

2.4 Citizenship:

Build a culture of positive and responsible citizenship at their school, local, national, and global communities in part through an age-appropriate character education program.

Strategies 2026-2027

- Highlight the global vision of Ramsey High School.
- Ensure all stakeholders have a deep understanding of the character education program as a means to prepare for applying for National Schools of Character.
- Continue to refine attendance practices and enhance attendance-related communication to RHS community stakeholders.
- Continue partnership with local and county election officials to offer opportunities for students to participate in the civic process.

2.5 Use of Technology:

Ensure students create and maintain a healthy relationship with technology, promoting responsible development and success.

Strategies 2026-2027

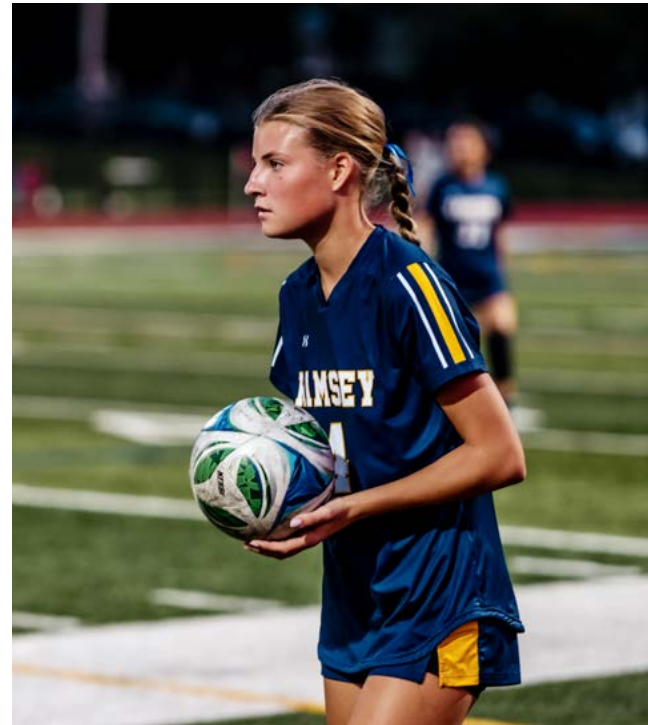
- Implement Project Reboot at Dater and Smith to increase intentional use of technology among students.
- Further refine processes and protocols using Yondr for a phone-free school environment at Ramsey High School, aligning to new law and policy.
- Examine and refine the AI tools that are approved for both teacher and student use.
- Explore secondary students' use of and perspectives on AI to inform the development of school frameworks for ethical use, responsible use, and fluency.
- Implement the District's AI Plan.
- Create and implement age and grade-appropriate boundaries for classroom technology use to both limit screen time and to encourage intentional use of technology for learning.



Goal Area 3

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Foster a safe, supportive and inclusive educational environment where every student is embraced, recognized, and appreciated for their individuality.



Goal Area 3 Intended Outcomes:

2026-2027 Annual Targets

1. Improve percentage of students regularly attending school from **94% to 95%**.
2. Increase score on the family survey question, "My child feels safe at school" from **92% to 95%**.
3. Increase number of staff members certified in Mental Health First Aid from **59% to 65%**.
4. Increase score on the community survey question, "The staff at my child's school creates a school environment that helps them learn" from **88% to 90%**.
5. Increase score on the family survey question, "My child has a sense of belonging at their school" from **85% to 88%**.
6. Increase score on the family survey question, "My child enjoys going to their school" from **81% to 85%**.
7. Increase overall growth on the WIDA ACCESS.



3.1 Safety and Security:

Provide all members of the school community with the training and resources to ensure a safe and secure school environment.

Strategies 2026-2027

- Enhance the District's safety and security by strengthening and updating the reunification plan to ensure an organized, efficient, and compassionate process for reconnecting students with their families during emergencies.

3.2 Mental Health and Well-Being:

Provide access to a multi-tiered support system for mental health and well-being.

Strategies 2026-2027

- Continue to partner with Ramsey Stigma-Free to promote mental health support and resources to the school community.
- Introduce new resident therapy dogs across the District.

3.3 Culture of Inclusion and Belonging:

Honor, leverage, and capitalize on the strengths and perspectives of each member of the Ramsey school community and provide a space where everyone belongs.

Strategies 2026-2027

- Expand community belonging initiatives by partnering the District Inclusion and Belonging Advisory Group with the Ramsey Public Library to co-host and expand their annual Lunar New Year celebration.

- Firmly establish International Night as a Preschool to Grade 12 experience that includes cultural representations.

3.4 Embrace Inclusive Practices:

Develop programs and experiences in which all students can learn, grow, and thrive.

Strategies 2026-2027

- Increase the number of students with IEPs educated in less restrictive environments as soon as they demonstrate readiness, ensuring students have access to general education settings to the maximum extent appropriate.
- Align and complete the continuum of special education self-contained programs across all District buildings to ensure consistent programming and a seamless Preschool to Grade 12 pathway for students with IEPs.

3.5 The Ramsey Experience:

Establish and support a cohesive Preschool to Grade 12 experience for students by implementing developmentally appropriate transitions so they feel a part of a spirited, enthusiastic, and supportive school community.

Strategies 2026-2027

- Designated touchstones for families at each grade level at Smith School.
- Continue developing formal peer leadership programs at Dater, Smith, and RHS.





Goal Area 4 HUMAN RESOURCES, FINANCES, AND FACILITIES

Maintain fiscal responsibility through creative recruitment, development, and retainment of top-tier personnel while also providing facilities that enrich learning experiences.



Goal Area 4 Intended Outcomes:

2026-2027 Annual Target

1. Increase the District average score on the staff survey question, "The district has been supportive of my professional growth" from **79% to 84%**.
2. Increase score on the staff survey question, "I am satisfied with the amount and quality of instructional resources available to me as a staff member," from **78% to 80%**.
3. Increase score on the family survey question about how informed they feel about District finances from **55% to 60%**.
4. Increase score on the family survey question, "This district does a good job of attracting talented people" from **83% to 86%**.
5. Increase score on the staff survey question, "This district does a good job of attracting talented people." from **85% to 87%**.
6. Increase the score on the family survey relating to district facilities from **92% to 94%**.
7. Increase score on the staff survey relating to teaching facilities from **74% to 78%**.
8. Increase score on the staff survey question, "I am satisfied with the technology resources available to me as a staff member" from **90% to 93%**.



4.1 Recruitment and Retainment of Staff:

Develop strategies and processes for the recruitment, retention and growth of top-tier talent.

Strategies 2026-2027

- Map and elevate the District's talent acquisition and onboarding experience for new staff by auditing application timelines and processes to ensure an efficient hiring pipeline.
- Integrate the Profile of a Ramsey Educator into the District's infrastructure by embedding its core competencies into our recruitment materials, hiring process, and staff recognition programs.
- Design a welcoming and intentional professional journey for new staff, ensuring incoming educators are supported by a robust mentoring program.

4.2 Professional Learning:

Continuously provide research-based and customized professional learning opportunities.

Strategies 2026-2027

- Create the teams and structure to implement Instructional Rounds.



- Design and align a professional learning plan that offers teachers choice in their learning, subject-specific experiences, and collaborative analysis of effective teaching practices.
- Engage high school staff in professional learning through Facing History's "*Schools Where We Belong*" partnership to build capacity for fostering a welcoming, inclusive high school experience for all students.

4.3 Financial Stewardship:

Utilize and optimize financial resources transparently to achieve student learning objectives and enhance the Ramsey experience.

Strategies 2026-2027

- Continue to increase overall District financial transparency.
- Investigate new revenue sources and funding opportunities.
- Refine the use of electronic payments for parents.

4.4 Facility Improvements:

Provide enhancements to facilities that meet both present and evolving student and programming needs.

Strategies 2026-2027

- Modernize maintenance and grounds work order system.
- Modify long-range facilities plan to reflect the current financial landscape.

4.5 Technology Infrastructure:

Ensure cybersecurity while maintaining advanced software and data systems, provide high-capacity connectivity, and equip students and staff with educational devices that improve the educational experience and enhance student outcomes.

Strategies 2026-2027

- Create and enforce a process that ensures that any hosted software platform in use has signed a Student Data Privacy Agreement.
- Establish a proactive cyber resilience model by continuously updating response governance, regularly testing team readiness through simulations, and actively monitoring critical data assets to mitigate threats before they escalate.



Goal Area 5 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Create initiatives that continue to develop strong partnerships between families, schools, and the broader community to actively enhance students' learning and development through a collaborative support network.



Goal Area 5 Intended Outcomes:

2026-2027 Annual Targets

1. Increase score on the parent survey question on overall rating of satisfaction with communication from the district from **84% to 88%**.
2. Increase score on the staff survey question on overall rating of satisfaction with communication from the district **76% to 80%**.
3. Increase score on the parent survey question, "I know where and how I can direct a question, complain, or concern" from **78% to 81%**.
4. Increase score on the parent survey question about how informed they feel about student successes and achievement from **78% to 81%**.
5. Increase score on the parent survey question about how informed they feel about District successes and achievement from **86% to 88%**.
6. Increase score on the parent survey question about how informed they feel about District goals and plans from **79% to 82%**.
7. Increase score on the parent survey question about communication being open and transparent from **83% to 85%**.

5.1 School Progress Communication:

Create a systematic approach to provide families updates about the unfolding curricular program as well as students' progress toward academic and Profile of a Graduate.

Strategies 2026-2027

- Establish clear, consistent, and systematic guidelines for grading practices and communication at Smith Middle School.
- Establish clear guidelines for communicating progress and building partnerships with families specifically related to grade-level curriculum and assessments at the three elementary schools.

5.2 Alumni Association:

Develop an alumni association that advances learning for Ramsey students and builds community relations.

Strategies 2026-2027

- Establish events and opportunities to engage alumni.

5.3 Partnerships:

Build sustainable partnerships across the community that promote student growth.

Strategies 2026-2027

- Strengthen the partnership with Saddle River School District.
- Continue to partner with Ramsey Seniors.
- Continue partnership with Ramapo College for clinical interns.
- Continue partnership with Rutgers University's Public School Collaborative Leadership program.



5.4 Family Engagement:

Refine parent educational programming to provide relevant learning and networking activities.

Strategies 2026-2027

- Create and implement three MTSS Trainings for K-5 Families: MTSS Overview, I-Ready Assessment Understanding, Foundational Literacy and Math Education.
- Improve evening parent orientation sessions at key transitional times throughout the Preschool through high school continuum.
- Continue to offer meaningful grade-level or topic-specific information sessions for RHS families.
- Coordinate a parent information session focused on Project Reboot and tech intentionality.

5.5 District Communication:

Create a systematic approach for the District and schools to share important news, celebrate student achievements, and keep families informed of District and school operations.

Strategies 2026-2027

- Create and disseminate a quarterly School Counseling newsletter for families of students in Grades 6-12.
- Create and disseminate thoughtful Athletics newsletters that provide detailed information surrounding student-athlete wellness and resources, beyond scoreboard achievements.
- Facilitate thoughtful use of content sharing surrounding staff and student achievement, milestones and community engagement through a variety of communication channels.
- Conduct regular audits of communication channels including but not limited to weekly school newsletters, District newsletters and web platforms to ensure continuity in information sharing across all platforms.



Ramsey School District
25 North Franklin Turnpike
Ramsey, NJ 07446
201.785.2300

info@ramsey.k12.nj.us

www.ramsey.k12.nj.us

[@ramseynjschools](https://www.instagram.com/ramseynjschools)