

SUSSEX ACADEMY

STRATEGIC

PLAN

2019 - 2023



## Message from Head of School



Sussex Academy's Strategic Plan is the culmination of a process begun in fall 2018. This plan is the result of a collaborative process that spanned over five months. Members of the strategic plan committee represented a variety of stakeholder groups including faculty/staff, parents, students, and community members.

Our Strategic Plan is comprised of four themes: Nurturing the Whole Child, Commitment to Professional Excellence, Fortifying Relationships, and Integrating 21<sup>st</sup> Century Technology. The four strategic themes provide the framework that will guide our efforts to improve academic quality and service to students, increased support and resources for our faculty/staff, and to strengthen our relationships within the greater community.

I am confident the strategies laid out in this strategic plan will continue Sussex Academy on a successful path by providing an excellent public charter education to the children in Sussex County, Delaware.

I want to take the time to thank everyone who engaged in this strategic planning process, and helping to shape the contents of this plan to help keep our school a viable and competitive educational option in a fast paced and ever evolving 21<sup>st</sup> century environment.

As we move forward, I welcome and encourage your continued participation.

Sincerely,

Eric M. Anderson

Head of School

## School Profile

Founded in 2000, Sussex Academy is a tuition-free public charter school providing an accelerated academic program for students in grades 6 – 12. Sussex Academy's vision is to cultivate globally-minded students of distinction by providing them with the knowledge, skills, and values to become successful, productive citizens in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

- Beautiful 50+ acre campus located centrally in Georgetown, Delaware
- State-of-the-art facilities including two turf fields and aquatic center
- Middle School and High School musical theater programs
- Individualized learning support
- Reputation for being among the top academic public schools in the state
- Named a Blue Ribbon School in 2016
- First Charter school in Delaware to receive a 10-year charter renewal
- Recognized by the Delaware DOE for exceeding academic expectations in 2018
- Offers International Baccalaureate classes and Diploma Program



# Our Mission

The mission of Sussex Academy is to foster academic achievement and social responsibility in a small school environment where students participate in a highly accelerated college preparatory program that prepares them for the technological and global mindedness needed for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and that instills ethical conduct and service to others in their day-to-day lives.

# Our Vision

Our vision is to cultivate students of distinction by providing them with the knowledge, skills, and values to become successful, productive citizens.







# Our Goals

- Maintain high academic performance
- Foster critical, independent thinking, and reflection
- Ensure a safe, respectful school environment
- Advocate personal growth and responsibility
- Provide opportunities for individual and group success
- Model and encourage collaborative decision making
- Facilitate ongoing professional development
- Encourage parental involvement and partnerships
- Promote service and community partnerships
- Instill environmental awareness and social consciousness
- Develop technological competence

# School Statistics



SNAPSHOT CLIMATE & CULTURE ACADEMICS EDUCATORS FINANCE ACCOUNTABILITY

<h3>Enrollment</h3>  <p><b>795</b></p> <p>795 students were enrolled in school as of September 30.</p> <a href="#">More Info</a>	<h3>English Language Arts</h3>  <p><b>91.07%</b></p> <p>91.07% of students were proficient in English language arts (ELA) last school year.</p> <a href="#">More Info</a>	<h3>Graduation Rates</h3>  <p><b>92.5%</b></p> <p>92.5% of students graduate high school in 4 years with a regular high school diploma.</p> <a href="#">More Info</a>
<h3>Attendance</h3>  <p><b>91.52%</b></p> <p>91.52% of students had on-track attendance last school year.</p> <a href="#">More Info</a>	<h3>Mathematics</h3>  <p><b>80.58%</b></p> <p>80.58% of students were proficient in math last school year.</p> <a href="#">More Info</a>	<h3>College and Career Ready</h3>  <p><b>Pending</b></p> <p>College and Career Readiness information coming soon!</p> <a href="#">More Info</a>

Retrieved from: <https://reportcard.doe.k12.de.us/>

## SWOC Analysis

*Throughout this process all stakeholder groups were invited to engage using a variety of methods including surveys, town hall meetings, focus groups, and research.*

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Academic program</li><li>• Friendly student atmosphere</li><li>• Beautiful facilities</li><li>• Middle school program feeds into high school program</li><li>• High staff retention</li><li>• Strong athletic programs</li><li>• Strong theater programs</li><li>• Communication</li></ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Limited course offerings</li><li>• School lunch program</li><li>• Emotional support for students</li><li>• Diversity</li><li>• Communication</li><li>• Consistent academic expectations</li><li>• Providing meaningful professional development opportunities</li><li>• Collaboration between MS &amp; HS</li><li>• Academic support for struggling students</li><li>• Integration of technology</li></ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Partner with surrounding schools</li><li>• Charter schools are afforded more flexibility than district schools</li><li>• Tracking</li><li>• Many of our current families have relevant business connections</li><li>• Proficiency-based grading model</li><li>• Build on clubs and sports offerings</li></ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Challenges</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Funding – charter schools get less than traditional public schools</li><li>• Lottery – limits ability to diversify student population</li><li>• Students come to SA with significant learning gaps</li><li>• Transportation</li><li>• Lack of local media coverage</li></ul>

## Strategic Area #1: Nurturing the Whole Child

Goal 1: Provide students with the life skills that help them to build coping skills and to support overall well-being (body and mind).

Strategy 1: Integrate resources to support the mental well-being of students, educators, and school administrators.

Strategy 2: Create opportunities for students to gain knowledge, build skills, and engage in experiences related to well-being (body and mind), school, and life skills.

Strategy 3: Utilize community partners who offer programs, many of which are evidenced based, to support youth and families in Sussex County.

Goal 2: Each student will participate in a personalized learning plan that will include goal-setting and reflection throughout the year to culminate with a student-led conference on growth and conclusions at the end of each academic year.

Strategy 1: Phase in participation starting in grades 6 & 9, with full implementation in the 2022 -2023 school year.

Strategy 2: Provide on-going professional development for staff in implementing and supporting the program.

Strategy 3: Provide on-going promotion and family communication of the program.

Goal 3: The school will develop and offer more academic choices to students for course selection.

Strategy 1: Offer more world language choices in high school and introduce exploratory world language choices in the middle school.

Strategy 2: Offer more courses in the Liberal Arts ( i.e. music, visual arts, performing arts, philosophy, etc.) and increase exploratory options in the middle school.

Strategy 3: Redefine and develop career pathways in the high school.

Strategic Area #1 Progress Indicators

Goal	Baseline Metrics	How Frequently Reviewed
<p>Provide students with the life skills that help them to build coping skills and to support overall well-being (body and mind).</p>	<p>2018-2019 SY:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HS has activity period 2 days a week</li> <li>• Social worker available 2 days a week for students by appointment</li> <li>• Currently there are no non-IB study hall periods</li> <li>• No full-time counselor to address student emotional needs</li> <li>• No place for students to go when feeling stressed or anxious</li> <li>• Most HS teachers have planning every other day</li> </ul>	<p>Yearly Through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritizing of personnel decisions</li> <li>• Student/parent satisfaction surveys</li> <li>• Faculty/staff satisfaction surveys</li> <li>• Interventions taken to address student/staff well-being</li> </ul>
<p>Each student will participate in a personalized learning plan that will include goal-setting and reflection throughout the year to culminate in student-led conference of growth and conclusions at the end of each academic year.</p>	<p>2018 – 2019 SY:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only students with special needs have IEPs</li> <li>• Most conferences are parent/teacher initiated and not student led</li> </ul>	<p>Yearly Through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2019-20 SY all 6<sup>th</sup> &amp; 9<sup>th</sup> graders have a personalized learning plan and have participated (at minimum) in one student-led conference</li> <li>• 2020-21 SY all 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> &amp; 10<sup>th</sup> graders have a personalized learning plan and have participated (at minimum) in one student-led conference</li> <li>• 2021-22 SY all 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, &amp; 11<sup>th</sup> graders have a</li> </ul>

		<p>personalized learning plan and have participated (at minimum) in one student led conference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2022 -23 SY all students have a personalized learning plan and have participated (at minimum) in one student led conference</li> </ul>
<p>The school will develop and offer more academic choices to students for course selection.</p>	<p>2018 – 2019 SY:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current CTE pathways include engineering, graphic design, and communications</li> <li>• Spanish is the only world language offered and world language is not offered in the middle school</li> <li>• There are limited course offerings in the Arts</li> <li>• Only Honors and IB level courses are offered</li> </ul>	<p>Yearly Through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course selection audit</li> <li>• Data from student satisfaction surveys</li> </ul>

Goal 1: Establish a personalized professional growth plan for every faculty/staff member that contains goals and activities intended to support staff performance and student engagement/achievement.

Strategy 1: Align resources (time, personnel, technology, financial) to fund and support ongoing professional development opportunities for all faculty and staff.

Goal 2: Institute a framework of professional standards and attitudes for all faculty and staff grounded in the 3 Rs in alignment with the Sussex Academy Strategic Plan.

Strategy 1: Convene a committee comprised of all stake holders to develop a framework grounded in the school's 3Rs culture (keep it real, be respectful, and value relationships.)

Goal 3: Increase and establish a culture of collaboration within and across all grade levels (6-12) and content areas.

Strategy 1: Create Department Coordinator position to facilitate regular department collaboration and lead the work of prioritizing content standards both horizontally and vertically.

Strategy 2: Increase opportunities for middle school and high school staff to build and strengthen professional relationships.

#### Strategic Area #2 Progress Indicators

Goal	Baseline Metrics	How Frequently Reviewed
Establish a personalized professional growth plan for every faculty/staff member (formal document containing goals and activities intended to support staff performance and student engagement/achievement.)	<p>From staff PD inventory survey*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 19% of all staff have had PD on incorporating technology into practice</li> <li>• 5% of the staff have had PD on differentiating instruction</li> <li>• 7% of staff have had PD related to proficiency based</li> </ul>	<p>Yearly Through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher satisfaction surveys</li> <li>• Every teacher develops, reflects, and revises their personal learning plan yearly</li> <li>• Student achievement data</li> </ul>

	<p>grading and creating quality and/or alternative assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7% of staff have had PD on trauma-informed practice</li> <li>• 26% of staff have presented workshops to other adult learners</li> <li>• 100% of staff have had content specific PD</li> </ul> <p>*survey only represents PD taken in the past 5 years.</p> <p>For SY 18-19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 91.15% of students were proficient in ELA as measure by the Smarter Balance(SB) Test</li> <li>• 90.67% of students were proficient in ELA as measured by the SAT</li> <li>• 84.18% of students were proficient in math as measured by the SB</li> <li>• 62.87% of students were proficient in math as measured by the SAT</li> </ul>	
<p>Institute a framework of professional standards and attitudes for all faculty and staff grounded in the 3 Rs in alignment with the Sussex Academy Strategic Plan.</p>	<p>Currently no framework of professional standards exist.</p>	<p>Yearly Through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SY 2019-20 creation of collaborative framework that includes all stakeholders.</li> <li>• Data from student/parent satisfaction surveys</li> </ul>

<p>Increase and establish a culture of collaboration within and across all grade levels (6-12) and content areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currently we have an ILT team comprised of MS and HS teachers from all core content areas</li> <li>• Departments (6-12) meet once monthly</li> <li>• There is neither a formal document nor process for 6-12 vertical or horizontal academic alignment across or within content areas</li> </ul>	<p>Yearly Through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SY 2019-20: Establish department coordinators for all content areas</li> <li>• SY 2019 – 20: Horizontally and vertically prioritize standards within all content areas</li> <li>• SY 2020-21: Horizontally and vertically prioritize standards across content areas</li> <li>• SY 2020-21: Begin to develop proficiency scales for all prioritized standards</li> <li>• Successfully executing of a school-wide expedition</li> </ul>
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Strategic Area # 3: Fortifying Relationships

Goal 1: Develop, promote, and maintain a team approach between home and school.

Strategy 1: Expand the use of Schoology to both middle and high school.

Strategy 2: Increase opportunities for families to get involved/network and offer opportunities throughout diverse geographical areas within the county.

Strategy 3: Coordinate events and communication through PTO, Sports Boosters, and Performing Arts Booster Club (PABC) to promote and increase participation rates.

Goal 2: Build community partnerships and stronger community relationships.

Strategy 1: Create a business directory that represents what connections we already have within the Sussex Academy community.

Strategy 2: Host business luncheons for members of the community to tour the school, interact with students, and learn more about the school’s programs.

Strategy 3: Develop partnerships with other schools in the county/state to share resources, develop partnerships with colleges/universities for dual enrollment opportunities, and develop international exchange programs to promote global mindedness.

Strategic Area #3 Progress Indicators

Goal	Baseline Metrics	How Frequently Reviewed
Develop, promote, and maintain a team approach between home and school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currently there is no school wide framework for school/home communication</li> <li>• PTO members consist of parents located on the Eastern side of Sussex County</li> <li>• Schoology is only used in the high school</li> </ul>	Yearly Through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent/teacher Surveys</li> <li>• Creation of a school wide framework for communication between home and school</li> <li>• Demographics for parent organizations</li> </ul>
Build community partnerships and stronger community relationships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currently there are no exchange partnerships</li> <li>• There is no business directory</li> <li>• Currently grandparents day and a legislative breakfast are held</li> </ul>	Yearly Through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing exchange partnerships</li> <li>• Creating and maintaining of school business directory</li> <li>• Event metrics</li> </ul>

#### Strategic Area # 4: Integrating 21<sup>st</sup> Century Technology

Goal 1: Integrate technology to support and enhance teaching and learning for the 21<sup>st</sup> century learner.

Strategy 1: Bring the use of 1 to 1 technology to students in grades 6-12.

Strategy 2: Implement Schoology and other online platforms (i.e. Google) school wide.

Strategy 3: Invest in ongoing technology-based professional development for faculty and staff making it an expectation for lessons to integrate technology.

Strategy 4: Hire a full-time IT person who can coordinate hardware and software and can work with the staff/state to ensure exceptional technology training and usage.

#### Strategic Area #4 Progress Indicators

Goal	Baseline Metrics	How Frequently Measured
Integrate technology to support and enhance teaching and learning for the 21 <sup>st</sup> century learner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High School students are 1 to 1 with iPads</li> <li>Schoology is only currently used in the high school</li> <li>Currently the IT responsibilities are shared by multiple staff members with assistance from a contracted, part-time IT technician</li> <li>Currently staff must report tech support needed through <a href="http://www.saashelp.xyz">www.saashelp.xyz</a></li> </ul>	Yearly Through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation of 1:1 technology school wide</li> <li>Implementation of Schoology school wide</li> <li>Increased IT support</li> <li>Classroom observation data</li> <li>PD offered and provided to faculty/staff</li> </ul>

#### Plan Assessment

This strategic plan will be assessed on a yearly basis using the identified progress indicators under each strategic area. The strategic plan is current for five years and will be reviewed and revised as necessary on an annual basis. Additionally, the Sussex Academy Head of School, will keep the board and community apprised and will deliver a presentation on progress of the strategic plan annually at the August Board of Director's meeting.



### **Strategic Planning Committee Members**

#### **Eric M. Anderson, Head of School**

Amy Adamcik, Parent  
Jennifer Couch, Science Teacher  
Greg Criniti, STEM Teacher  
Andie Davis, English Teacher  
Donald Demasters, Parent  
Gina Derrickson, Director of Communications  
Chantal Fitzkee, Parent  
Rebecca Frankum, Art Teacher  
Todd Hickman, Parent  
Patches Hill, Parent  
Karen Hugues, Writing Teacher  
Diane Issel, Community Member  
Dr. Uday Jani, Board Member  
Kathleen Leebel, Parent  
Jennifer Leonard, Library Media Specialist  
Robyn Maccubbin, Parent  
Sara Messina, Social Studies Teacher

#### **Jennifer Scott, Board Chair**

Susie Mitchell, Board Member  
Heather Moore, Science Teacher  
Matt Mundok, Parent  
Chris Novak, Social Studies Teacher  
Janet Owens, Director of Middle School  
Thomas Peet, Special Services  
Robert Scannell, Substitute Teacher  
Stephanie Sherman, Science Teacher  
Stacy Short, Parent  
Cameron Smith, World Language Teacher  
Jenn Thompson, Community Member  
Dr. Denise Westbrook, Board Member  
Rita Williams, Parent  
Monica Yenovkian, Parent