



***The Strategic Planning Process:
A Partnership from Portrait to Practice***

Anthony Wayne Local Schools

June 2023



Navigating the Journey with Battelle for Kids

Kevin Herman, *Assistant Superintendent*

Anthony Wayne Local Schools (AWLS) is fortunate to have dedicated and compassionate employees who work hard to provide outstanding learning experiences for our students.

We all take the responsibility we have to our students seriously, and know the important role we have in preparing our them to be future-ready. We also know the world is changing faster each passing year, and we need to adapt to these changes.

AWLS partnered with Battelle for Kids to ensure that the District remained responsive to the evolving instructional needs of students and to ensure their learning exceeds the expectations of tomorrow's careers.

The collaboration began in 2019, when Battelle facilitated four meetings with a group of 50 stakeholders to share ideas about the skills and abilities our graduates will need to have to be successful.

The group shared with us that in addition to being academically ready to enroll in college, enlist in the military or begin employment, students needed to be critical thinkers who were ready to learn and adapt to their environments, all while working well with others to be successful in the world.

This process resulted in the development of the District's *Portrait of a General*, a community vision for the attributes and skills all students should have upon high school graduation.





Using the competencies identified in the *Portrait of a General* as a guide, the District began to develop its vision for the future.

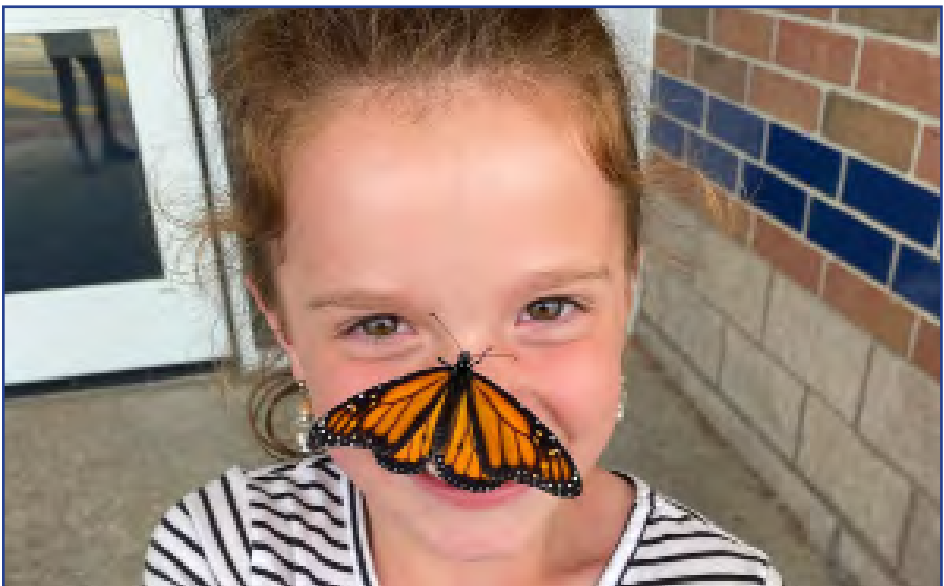
In early 2022, a stakeholder group made up of more than 60 students, parents, staff members, business leaders and community members reviewed research, held small group meetings and participated in workshops to begin develop this framework for District decision-making.

This process resulted in the development of the District's Strategic Plan, which includes new vision, mission and core beliefs statements, along with goals specific to student learning,

curriculum and instruction, community engagement, securing resources for student success and ensuring students and staff are ready to learn.

Administrators, department directors and building leaders then identified goals for their teams aligned to the District's vision, mission and goals. They later collaborated with their teams to develop the action steps needed to accomplish these goals and advance the District's work.

As we work together to take steps toward accomplishing our goals, the District will fulfill its mission of empowering students to be future ready.



District Strategic Planning Goals

Student Learning

All Generals will be provided a comprehensive and engaging learning experience whereby each can demonstrate the Portrait of a General competencies.

Curriculum & Instruction

All Generals will experience an innovative and engaging curriculum with instruction that is personalized, promotes creativity and application, and provides real-world experiences that facilitate deeper learning.

Community Engagement

Anthony Wayne Local Schools will engage in two-way communication and collaboration with stakeholders to promote community engagement and develop partnerships and relationships for the purpose of providing outstanding opportunities to all Generals and to strengthen school and community pride.

Resources for Student Success

AWLS will continue to work with the community to provide the necessary resources to ensure all Generals are future ready.

Students and Staff Ready to Learn

All AWLS students and staff will have access to personalized services to allow them as Generals to be successful academically and grow personally in all that they pursue and do each and every day.

The Pathway to a Portrait

Lori Williams, Assistant Principal, Anthony Wayne Junior High

In the spring of 2019, Anthony Wayne Local Schools embarked on a collaborative journey with Battelle for Kids, a renowned national leader, to develop our very own Portrait of a Graduate, which we proudly named our *Portrait of a General*.

We engaged a diverse range of community stakeholders, including students, staff, administrators, parents and business partners, to identify and prioritize the essential attributes that would empower our students for success beyond graduation.

Through this extensive collaboration, we identified a set of core skills that emerged as the pillars of our *Portrait of a General*.

When we focus on demonstrating and teaching these critical skills, the *Portrait of a General* equips our students with a robust foundation, empowering them to thrive in their future endeavors while contributing positively to the world around them.

The District is committed to nurturing the holistic development of our students, preparing them not only for academic success but also for a life filled with purpose, resilience and compassion.



BE RESPECTFUL



BE RESPONSIBLE

Adaptability & Flexibility

A GENERAL demonstrates awareness and a willingness to change course and acts by reflecting on options while keeping the ultimate goal in mind.

Empathy

A GENERAL demonstrates awareness, sensitivity, concern, fairness, and respect to connect with others' perspectives, feelings, opinions, experiences, and cultures.

Learner's Mindset

A GENERAL curiously pursues new experiences and ideas to develop, learn, and contribute as global citizens; while also embracing their core values and opportunities to progress through the cycle of learning, failure, growth, and reflection with integrity.

Taking Action to Develop Aspiring Generals

Stephanie Buckenmeyer, *Assistant Principal for Curriculum & Career, Grades 7-12*

The next phase in our journey was to determine what it meant to exemplify each of the *Portrait of a General* competencies.

In the following year, we worked with our staff to determine the actions which demonstrate these competencies. Once the 'Learner Actions' were finalized, staff and administrators collaborated to outline the 'Educator Actions' which support the student actions. Finally, District administration determined how building leaders can best support the 'Educators Actions' through 'Leader Actions.'

Through this iterative process, we developed a clear and collective understanding of what it means to *Be A General* - and how to support the daily actions and interactions of our students not only in the classroom, but also on the bus, in the cafeteria, on the playground and in the hallways.

We have developed an infrastructure that encourages personal growth through equipping, supporting and empowering each employee to teach and support students as they practice these skills.



★ BE SAFE

★ BE INVOLVED

Critical Thinking

A GENERAL deliberately and consistently investigates to expand and improve the quality of one's own thinking by embracing the process of analyzing, assessing, and reconstructing information to propose solutions that are mindful to the impact they may have on the other parts of a system.

Collaboration & Communication

A GENERAL articulates thoughts and ideas in a professional manner; effectively using oral, written, and nonverbal skills in a variety of ways and actively listens to feedback, acknowledges inputs, and responds appropriately. A GENERAL elicits diverse perspectives to make meaning, and when appropriate takes collective action.



Building a Focused Approach to Attracting and Retaining Employees

Jim Fritz, *Superintendent*

Over the last several years, school districts across the nation have seen fewer applicants for open positions, particularly in the areas of bus drivers, substitute employees and instructional staff.

The District worked with Battelle for Kids to develop the basic elements of a Human Capital Plan to help address this concern.

We centered our system around aligning our District Mission, Strategic Plan and *Portrait of a General* competencies to focus on four key areas: Aligning Actions, Finding the Right Candidates, Growing our Own Employees and Staff Retention.

The District will continue to refine the Human Capital Plan as shifting internal and external factors influence hiring and employee retention practices.

ALIGN

- Consistent Communications
- Continuous Improvement
- Clear Position Expectations

FIND

- Hiring & Placement
- Human Resources Branding and Recruitment
- Workforce Planning Strategies

GROW

- Professional Development
- Performance Management
- Career Pathways Development

KEEP

- Engaging Environment
- Wellness Activities
- Employee Collaboration

Accomplishments to Date

- Identified areas of need and created new positions to support District goals, including the hiring of a Human Resources Director.
- Focused communications and hiring practices on the *Portrait of a General* competencies.
- Developed a monthly staff newsletter.
- Created new recruitment materials including posters, flyers and videos.
- Engaged local media to assist recruitment efforts.
- Hosted the Ohio Department of Education to provide Human Capital Essentials certification for staff.
- Revised job postings to more accurately describe position expectations and desired candidate qualities.

AW Local Schools Is Hiring Full Time, Part Time And Substitutes

BY KAREN GERHARDINGER
MIRROR REPORTER

Want to channel your passion for community and kids into a job with top pay and opportunity to grow? Anthony Wayne Local Schools has several full time, part time and substitute positions available.

"Finding great people is all a matter of letting them know the opportunities we have," said Brad Conat. "When people do finally get a taste of what it's like here, we end up keeping them for some time. It's a matter of helping them find their way here."

As the district's new human resource director, Conat is looking for top talent at all levels - even those who haven't worked in a

"Aides can have a tremendous impact on the students and the community," Conat said, noting that junior high aide Karen Ribben and Waterville Primary aide Deb Jacoby were each recognized as Classified Staff Members of the Year over the past two years for their roles in assisting in classrooms and encouraging the children.

Other positions that don't require prior experience include bus, cafeteria and playground aides. At the high school, full time custodial positions are available with full-time wages and benefits. Food service workers with experience are also needed.

Some of the positions that require a degree and experience

offers a "sub institute" at the beginning of each year to go over rules and regulations, safety, behavioral components and classroom management.

"We take our time to vet and train our teaching subs," Conat said. "Although we are in need, we want to make sure we put the best people we possibly can in our classrooms."

The staff members in the buildings then provide a lot of support in getting those subs up and running, he said.

"Once they get in and give it a try, most subs say it wasn't as hard as they thought it was."

While some substitute teachers do it to get experience in order to get back into the classroom full time, other people like the flexibility that

AWLS Hires First Social Worker To Connect Families, Resources

BY KAREN GERHARDINGER
MIRROR REPORTER

Rebekah Hrecka calls it her jobbreaker story. As an 18-year-old she was handed a pair of gloves and asked to help an area dairy farmer with a cow that was giving birth.

"I rabbed the calf to get its heart going," she recalled. "I was obsessed over that calf. When I graduated from high school, that was my gift from their family."

Dottie is long gone, but Hrecka still loves cows - and putting on the gloves to help out where needed. As Anthony Wayne Local Schools' first social worker

families have more tools in their toolbox."

She pointed to the September 7 Generals Boot Camp, in which middle school students learned about mindfulness, exercise and coping techniques with guest instructors in a fun environment. This was the second year for the event, planned and implemented by the Fallen Timbers staff.

"The staff created this day to bolster how students can help themselves," Hrecka said.

September is Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month. Suicide is the leading cause of death for ages 10-14 and the second-leading cause of death for ages 15-21.

Rebekah Hrecka is a social worker for Anthony Wayne Local Schools.
MIRROR PHOTO BY KAREN GERHARDINGER



Developing an Instructional Framework to Support High-Quality Instruction

Jim Conner, *Director of Teaching & Learning*

The Soar Team recognized the importance of identifying and defining the characteristics of quality instruction, and aligning expectations across each building and classroom in the District.

The team worked with District administration and educators for over six months to establish specific focus areas related to providing high-quality instructional practices to all students.

Through active discussion, research and group activities, we developed a presentation to present information & best practices to our instructional staff.

Following the presentation, staff in each building were grouped by subject area to discuss the framework and provide feedback.

The result of this work is an Instructional Practices tool that will

guide the elements of planning, teaching, assessment and reflection in providing engaging daily lessons.

Starting in 2023, the District will use this tool with staff, with a focus on new teachers, to prioritize the District's vision, mission and core beliefs and support instruction that impacts our students' overall learning experience.

"In thinking of our overall goal of empowering students to be future ready, we needed a tool to help our instructional staff and building administrators connect high quality instructional practices with rigorous academic content and our Portrait of a General competencies."



Instructional Practices Goal

Provide staff with a structure for planning engaging daily lessons that connect high-quality instructional practices with rigorous academic content and *Portrait of a General Competencies* to improve instruction and empower students to be future ready.

Anthony Wayne Local Schools Instructional Practices

Anthony Wayne Local Schools empowers students to be future ready!

Meeting the needs of each student is central to planning, teaching, reflecting and assessing our instructional practices.

WHEN PLANNING I:

- Consider the needs of my students
- Align my lessons with state standards
- Use a variety of resources
- Ensure my lessons are engaging
- Allow room for flexibility

WHEN TEACHING I:

- Remain adaptable to students' needs
- Use a variety of engagement methods
- Make learning relevant for students
- Provide each student with support
- Celebrate my students' successes

WHEN ASSESSING I:

- Am empathetic to all students' needs
- Utilize a variety of methods
- Focus on understanding and content mastery
- Use data to evaluate student understanding
- Am committed to using assessments to improve learning

WHEN REFLECTING I:

- Adjust instruction with consideration to all students' needs
- Think critically about what went well and consider how to improve
- Use data to determine student learning
- Gather feedback on my teaching
- Consider how to make my lessons more engaging and effective

"...our future ready Generals will be prepared to march forward with a foundation that will allow each individual ultimate success."
from the Anthony Wayne Local Schools Vision Statement

EMPLOYMENT

ENLISTMENT

ENROLLMENT



Using District Goals to Facilitate Deeper Learning

Bethany Swift, *Math Teacher, Fallen Timbers Middle School*

It has taken intentional planning and mindful reflection, but putting all of the District's work into practice is truly exciting.

I enjoy working with a clear picture of the District's mission and vision and I am driven by the thought of how striving toward the end goal will make a difference for my students.

The *Portrait of a General* lays out our core beliefs about the skills students need to be future ready. I have found it rewarding to give focus to these competencies in the midst of teaching typical, subject-specific content.

Our District goals articulate to students, families, our community and prospective employees what we are focused on accomplishing and what we value at Anthony Wayne Local Schools.

I find them to be a valuable reminder of my role beyond just being sure kids know certain facts. For example, within the curriculum and instruction goal, there is mention of facilitating deeper learning. For me as a teacher, this is where it is at!

I jokingly said at a conference that none of us got into education because we wanted to give kids the best worksheets.

Of course, worksheets are a tool we use, but our purpose lies in deeper learning. We facilitate ownership of content, harness curiosity, develop confidence, critical thinking, and problem solving skills, help students form emotional connections to learning experiences, intend for students to apply lessons from school to real life, and ultimately cultivate a student's desire to learn more.

This is what drives us as educators and what prepares students for their futures.



" We facilitate ownership of content, harness curiosity, develop confidence, critical thinking, and problem solving skills, help students form emotional connections to learning experiences, intend for students to apply lessons from school to real life and ultimately cultivate a student's desire to learn more."

**Anthony Wayne Local Schools empowers
students to be future ready!**



Anthony Wayne Local Schools

Whitehouse, OH

www.AnthonyWayneSchools.org

 [@awgenerals](https://twitter.com/awgenerals)

419-877-5377



Battelle SOAR Team

Jim Fritz, Superintendent

Kevin Herman, Assistant Superintendent

Jim Conner, Director of Teaching and Learning

Stephanie Buckenmeyer, Assistant Principal of Curriculum & Career, Grades 7-12

Lori Williams, Assistant Principal, Anthony Wayne Junior High

Bethany Swift, Math Teacher, Fallen Timbers Middle School