

# Five Pillars for becoming a “Great Public School”

## Pillar 1: Schools that produce good citizens

- Mentally and physically healthy kids.
- People who give back to their communities through service.
- Creating an inclusive community where all people are valued.

## Pillar 2: All students graduate and go on to successful post high school outcomes

- Employability skills; good attendance, work habits and social skills.
- Lifelong learners (high school is not enough!).
- Degrees, certificates and personal improvement through more education.

## Pillar 3: Equity Lens

- Schools are places that overcome individual circumstances purposefully.
- Resources are allocated in a manner that helps overcome issues of poverty and race. Outcomes for all groups are similar.
- Continual reflection on operations. No shame, no blame, no excuses.

## Pillar 4: Continuous Improvement Principles are used system wide

- The organization embraces a “Growth Mindset”.
- The organization utilizes continuous improvement principles and has a culture that has the technical training and believes in system thinking and improvement.
- Decisions are made using data and a culture of continuous improvement permeates the entire school system.

## **Pillar 5: Efficient Operations**

- **Schools are system oriented and seek to continuously improve operations.**
- **Transparent operations with explicit measurements.**
- **Public and private partnerships are sought out in order to leverage more resources to improve student outcomes.**

## **Pillar 1: Schools that Produce Good Citizens**

### **Description**

Good citizens are the heart and soul of a great community. Our schools need to be incubators where in partnership with our community, we produce citizens who are respectful of our laws, cultural norms, social systems and our environment. Our goal should be to produce citizens who embody the “Platinum Rule”. As you may recall, the “Golden Rule” is to do unto others as you would expect them to do to you. The “Platinum Rule” implores us to do better by others than we would expect them to do by us. A community in which most people give more than they take is a place of expectation and aspiration for a better future. Given the many complex and critical problems we face as a society, we need problem solvers and people who are committed to making this world a better place for us now and for our children’s future.

### **Current Performance Measures**

1. **Graduation Rates:** In order for us to create good citizens we must have an educated citizenry. High school graduation is a minimal expectation for good citizenry. Our current graduation rate as a school district is 81.6%.

2. **Attendance:** In order to graduate and also be successful in the workplace, a student needs to have good attendance. Our current attendance rate for the school district is 85.9%.
3. **Involvement in Community Activities and Service:** Good citizens are involved in serving their community. We currently have several student groups who perform regular community service including Interact and Key Clubs and student leadership groups at all three levels. We currently do not have a formal measure for tracking community service.
4. **Equity Focus:** As part of producing good citizens, we focus on making our community a better place for all of the people who live here. We have a particular focus on helping those people who are less fortunate than we are and who may be suffering economically or socially. Healthy communities are places where people have their basic needs met (physical and emotional).

### **Strategic Improvement Goals in SMART Format**

1. Graduation rates for GAPS will improve by 10% (to 91.6%) districtwide by June of 2018. The district will initiate a focused campaign with the GAPS community and with students and their parents to make sure all students know the imperative and rationale for graduating from high school.
2. Attendance rates will improve to 95% in GAPS by June of 2018 (our current rate is 85.9%). Each student will have an advisor who meets with them regularly to insure that they are on track for graduation throughout their high school years. These advisors will track student attendance. Parents will be contacted anytime their student's attendance rate falls below 92%. GAPS Parents and students will be taught the importance of attendance as a function of employability. Other measures will be developed to help insure 92% attendance for students throughout GAPS educational system.
3. As a part of each student's educational experience in GAPS, every student will participate in a community service activity each school year. Community service activities will be proposed and outlined by each building principal and will be grounded in local activities in their attendance area. A complete list of these activities will be developed and shared with the school board annually in June.

## **Resources/Training Needs/Partnerships**

1. GAPS will identify model attendance practices and allocate appropriate resources and training time to implement these programs.
2. GAPS will train staff on Equity Issues and the effects of Poverty on Community.
3. GAPS will look for model programs that exist statewide and nationally that have shown success in improving student attendance. Staff and community members will be trained in methodology used to improve student attendance. GAPS will engage in a community wide PR campaign to explain the importance of student attendance and its connection to workplace success.
4. Partnerships will be developed with local service agencies (Boys and Girls Club, United Way, Rotary, Kiwanis, etc.) to identify community service opportunities. A focused plan for school wide community service will be developed at each school and resource needs will be explicitly identified.

## **Pillar 2: All students graduate and go on to successful post high school outcomes.**

### **Description**

It used to be that a person with a good work ethic could find a job that paid a “family wage”. There were plenty of jobs in the wood products industry in the mid-Willamette Valley that paid well. In fact many of the jobs in the wood products industry and construction industry paid better than most teaching jobs did in the early 1970’s and early 1980’s. Around 1983, the timber industry basically collapsed and we also saw the beginning of the moving jobs offshore to Asia and other countries around the world.

The bottom line at this point in time is that a high school diploma is no longer good enough! All of our students must earn a high school diploma and then go on to a successful post high school outcome. What this means is that after high school graduation a student must go and complete a course of study at a community college, 4 year university, vocational certificate program or enter the military. Without additional education beyond high school, our children will likely be in for a very difficult and challenging life, one that will

## **Current Performance Measures**

The district has an overall graduation rate of 81.6%. There is a marked difference in graduation rates between our two comprehensive high schools and our alternative high school. West Albany High School, a 6A high school with 1383 students, has one of the best graduation rates in the State for large high schools (95%) while South Albany High School, a 5A high school with 1342 student, has a relatively good graduation rate (86% while the State Average is 76%). Our alternative high school, Albany Options School, with 105 students, has a very low graduation rate of 68%.

## **Strategic Goal in SMART Format**

The Greater Albany Public Schools