

## Thetford School District Strategic Plan February 2007 – January 2011

### Introduction

The Thetford School District is responsible for the education of students in grades K-12 with elementary school students attending Thetford Elementary School and secondary students at Thetford Academy. Thetford Academy is a private, independent school that has accepted designation as the public junior high and high school for the Town of Thetford. The relationship between the Thetford Elementary School and Thetford Academy is a true partnership with a sense of common responsibility and goals that ensure all Thetford students a continued rich educational experience and high academic achievement.

Thetford is strongly committed to its children and to their education. This five year strategic plan for the Thetford School District reflects that belief. This is Thetford's second strategic plan, spanning 2006-2011. (The first one spanned the years 2002-2005.) This document is intended to be a guide for the Thetford School District Board as well as the principal and staff at the Thetford Elementary School. The process to create the plan took five months, during which the strategic planning committee reviewed extensive data, including all available assessment information, comparisons with other similar schools, and state and national reports on education. Through surveys, focus groups, public forums and other meetings, the committee gathered information and perspectives from teachers, staff, parents, students and the community.

The Strategic Plan is a vehicle to keep our school 'on track.' The plan transcends particular administrations, school boards, staff, and volunteers. It sets a tone and a direction for our school district. The plan provides a blueprint for a great school that allows our bright, energetic children to learn and be challenged in the best possible environment.

### **Thetford School District Strategic Plan Committee**

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## **Thetford Elementary School Philosophy**

Thetford Elementary School seeks to serve the town of Thetford by developing all children in our care to their fullest potential academically, socially, emotionally, and physically. It is our purpose to give each child an excellent foundation in the basic academic areas while simultaneously encouraging inquisitiveness, the acceptance of responsibility, an understanding of self, an increasing awareness of the world around us, an appreciation of basic values, and the ability to formulate sound judgments. We have the highest expectations for our students and their ability to achieve and excel.

It is our belief that learning should take place in a structured environment with a friendly and personal atmosphere and with the use of a wide variety of methods and materials. Learning should be interesting and offer a high degree of student involvement. A strong and caring relationship should exist between and among all members of the school community – students, parents, staff, and School Board members.

We believe the development of each child should occur in an accepting, stimulating, and creative environment. We recognize each child as an individual and believe that our instructional program should encourage his/her uniqueness and foster pride in his/her own self worth. The school should be a place where all students, teachers, and staff members are able to realize their own values in the educational process while being part of and supported by the greater school community. The Thetford Elementary School motto of “Together Everyone Succeeds” is a meaningful statement that we take very much to heart.

### **Academics and Curriculum**

Children are in school to learn academic discipline through rigorous instruction. TES is committed to meeting the needs of its diverse student learners, challenging them, and instilling a love of learning that will sustain students throughout their lifetime. TES encourages staff and students to utilize the myriad outdoor opportunities present around TES for education, play and extra-curricular activities.

**GOAL 1. TES will continue to focus on high academic achievement for all students, striving to continually raise overall school performance.**

**OBJECTIVE A.**

**Clear and effective communication skills are essential, therefore writing instruction at TES will be infused throughout the curriculum as part of the daily learning experience. [Principal]**

**OBJECTIVE B.**

**The ongoing revision of the math program, including curriculum, instruction and assessment, will continue as necessary to create an exemplary program that provides the highest level of mathematics achievement for all students and recognizes a range of learning styles. [Principal and Superintendent]**

**OBJECTIVE C.**

Age-appropriate use of technology will be integrated throughout the TES curriculum, with innovative resources, reliable systems and materials, and with knowledgeable staff. *[Principal]*

**OBJECTIVE D.**

TES Science curriculum will incorporate a place based, hands-on learning experience for all grades and will reflect research and best practice in the field of science education. *[Principal]*

**OBJECTIVE E.**

TES will provide student opportunities to develop leadership and conflict resolution skills and encourage all students to value individual judgment. *[Principal and Staff]*

**OBJECTIVE F.**

Students will have access to Library services that provide rich and current materials needed for students to research and learn, and TES will incorporate a program to teach these skills. *[Principal]*

**OBJECTIVE G.**

TES will have a foreign language program that is a sustainable part of the standard curriculum. *[Principal and Board]*

**OBJECTIVE H.**

Enrichment programs will be designed to provide all students opportunities to experience a broader range of learning beyond the required subjects. *[Principal and Staff]*

**OBJECTIVE I.**

Additional programs, such as Challenge Programs, will be designed to provide individual students coursework appropriate to their abilities and needs. *[Principal and Staff]*

**OBJECTIVE J.**

TES will attract, retain, and develop strong, caring, well-trained teachers who provide differentiated learning opportunities, that meet the individual needs of all students. *[Principal, Staff, Community]*

**OBJECTIVE K.**

TES will support continued professional development for all teachers that will promote independent and collaborative reflection and advance the needs of the school. *[Principal and Staff]*

**OBJECTIVE L.**

TES will actively work to improve curriculum coordination between TES and Thetford Academy. *[Principal and Staff]*

## **Social, Emotional, and Physical Health**

TES supports the development of healthy children and provides a physically, socially and emotionally safe environment for all school community members.

**GOAL 2: TES will provide additional learning opportunities—physical, emotional, and social education— for all children. Adults in the school community will encourage healthy choices.**

### **OBJECTIVE A.**

Proper nutrition and health education will be taught in the classroom and supported throughout the school. TES will offer healthy nutritious meals. [*Principal and Staff*]

### **OBJECTIVE B.**

TES will expand opportunities for students to participate in both non-competitive and competitive physical activity. [*Principal and Staff*]

### **OBJECTIVE C.**

TES will foster and look to expand healthy and environmentally conscious (“green”) practices. [*School Board*]

### **OBJECTIVE D.**

The TES community will work together to foster understanding and respect for diversity within the school, the community, and the world at large and the School Board will regularly review the Diversity Policy and determine the degree to which it is being implemented. [*School Board*]

## **Community and Communication**

TES is a welcoming, accessible and safe community and encourages a feeling of shared ownership and responsibility. We foster, encourage and sustain parent and community involvement.

**GOAL 3: The TES Staff, Administration, School Board and Parents will communicate effectively to support student achievement.**

### **OBJECTIVE A.**

TES will have consistent and clear written guidelines that outline the mutual expectations and responsibilities of the school and parents. [*Principal and School Board*]

### **OBJECTIVE B.**

Recognizing that the community and parents have a responsibility to be active and engaged, TES will clearly and effectively communicate regarding matters and activities occurring within and about the school, and have policies and protocols which are transparent and easily understood. [*Principal and School Board*]

**OBJECTIVE C.**

The administration will encourage dialog and new ideas from parents, staff, and other experts to establish an atmosphere of mutual respect throughout the school community. [*Principal*]

**OBJECTIVE D.**

Teachers at TES will communicate to all parents grade-level expectations, homework expectations, and special activities in the classroom. [*Principal and Staff*]

**OBJECTIVE E.**

Curriculum, instruction and learning experiences will be coordinated within and across grade levels so that experiences and academic expectations from grade to grade are consistent, progressive, well communicated, and reflect the content of the Vermont Framework of Standards. [*Principal and Staff*]

**OBJECTIVE F.**

There will be a consistent format for report cards. [*Principal and Staff*]

## **Administration and Governance**

It is critical for the School Board to oversee operations in the Thetford School District to ensure parents and taxpayers that the children of Thetford are receiving the best possible educational experience and that resources are being used effectively.

**GOAL 4: The School Board will do its utmost to professionally and responsibly undertake its duties in regards to the educational services provided in the District.**

**OBJECTIVE A.**

School Board members will obtain professional development. [*School Board*]

**OBJECTIVE B.**

The School Board will routinely evaluate the strategic plan, annually report progress on achieving objectives, and use the plan as a framework for setting direction. [*School Board*]

**OBJECTIVE C.**

The School Board will continue to promote a collaborative working relationship with Thetford Academy soliciting active parental and community participation, and will regularly review the partnership agreement and the effectiveness of educational services provided to the students of Thetford in grades 7-12. [*School Board and Community*]

**OBJECTIVE D.**

TES will implement a Preventative Maintenance Plan to maintain and continually improve existing facilities. [*Staff, Principal, School Board*]

**OBJECTIVE E.**

**The School Board will promote long-range planning for the Thetford School District by holding meetings with Thetford Academy and the Thetford Select Board in order to coordinate future capital projects. [*School Board*]**