

# Simsbury High School

## Annual Report 2022-2023

Simsbury Public Schools  
Simsbury, Connecticut

---



*Teaching students to meet the challenges of today  
and tomorrow with confidence and integrity*

**Preparation - Passion - Personal Growth**

**Maggie Seidel**, Principal

**Vanessa Massiah**, Assistant Principal

**Ken Pera**, Assistant Principal

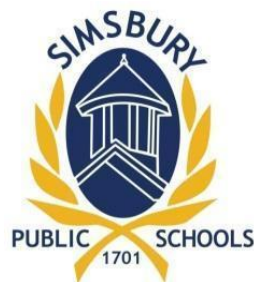
**Georgia Robert**, Assistant Principal

**Jeff Pinney**, Director of Athletics and Student Activities

---

## Table of Contents

I.	Introduction and Purpose of our Annual Report	3
II.	Simsbury High School Core Values	4
III.	Information about Simsbury High School	5
IV.	Simsbury Public Schools Vision of a Graduate	6
V.	Simsbury Public Schools Goals, 2019-2024	7
VI.	Simsbury High School Annual Report Progress	
	• Goal 1: Student Growth and Success	8
	• Goal 2: Compassionate & Connected School Culture	10
	• Goal 3: Premier Workforce	11
VII.	Outstanding Accomplishments	13
VIII.	Concluding Remarks	15



## **Introduction and Purpose of our School Annual Report**

The Simsbury Public Schools values continuous improvement. Each fall, Simsbury High School develops a strategic plan - an action plan inclusive of Simsbury Public Schools' strategic goals (2019-2024), Vision of a Graduate, information about Simsbury High School, and school improvement indicators for the school year. The goals and benchmarks set forth in this school's strategic plan were established following a cautious analysis of state and district student performance data collected during the year, as well as staff and school community input. In addition, the goals are aligned with the [Simsbury Public Schools Strategic Plan](#). Throughout the year, teachers work in collaborative teams to assess student achievement with multiple indicators, monitor student progress, and adjust/refine instructional practices accordingly. Professional development supports our improvement in our targeted areas. As we reflect on the past school year, we are very proud of the accomplishments of our students and staff members. During 2022-2023, their combined efforts have yielded significant results. With continued progress on our improvement and performance indicators, Simsbury High School continues the tradition of excellence that has set it apart from other high schools in Connecticut and across the nation.



**SIMSBURY  
HIGH SCHOOL**

### Core Values and Beliefs

# Preparation

We provide a rich and rigorous academic foundation for all students.

- We emphasize the meaningful application of knowledge and skills within the curriculum.
- We implement teaching methods designed to promote both critical thinking and creativity and to engage students in shared ownership for learning.
- We ensure that students of all abilities are included, challenged, and given appropriate instruction in preparation for college and careers.

# Passion

We offer diverse learning experiences that encourage students to discover and to develop their unique interests and talents.

- We provide an elective program characterized by wide variety and high quality.
- We present students with opportunities to connect and to excel as they explore a broad range of extra-curricular activities.
- We give students opportunities for choice—in the classroom, during course selection, and throughout extra-curricular pursuits.

# Personal Growth

We partner with families to promote character in our students as they develop into ethical and compassionate adults.

- We expect that all members of the school community will demonstrate the tenets of the Trojan Code: respect, honor, and responsibility.
- We provide students opportunities both to work collaboratively and to develop their potential as leaders.
- We guide students toward active citizenship, including service to a larger community.

**SHS Learning Expectations for College and Career Readiness—Simsbury Vision of a Graduate:**

- CRITICAL THINKER
- INNOVATOR
- SELF-DIRECTED LEARNER
- COLLABORATOR
- COMMUNICATOR
- GLOBAL CITIZEN

Teaching students to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow with confidence and integrity



## **Part II – Information about Simsbury High School**

Simsbury High School has the distinction of being one of the highest-performing high schools in the state of Connecticut. The tireless pursuit of excellence continues to yield positive results in our classrooms and on the field. The accomplishments earned by our students can be attributed to the hard work of our faculty members, who benefit greatly from the support of our parents and community members. Collectively, we are able to promote the growth of the exceptional students that call our school home.

The Core Values and Beliefs of Simsbury High School are based upon three tenets: preparation, passion, and personal growth. This foundational document explains the shared commitments that we have with our students and the greater community, while also serving as a compass guiding our educational planning and decision-making. The members of the Simsbury High School learning community are dedicated to preparing our students for success by first working to identify their passion and then fostering their personal growth through authentic learning experiences. It is this combination of support, challenge, and the shared pursuit of excellence that sets our school apart from others and makes it such an invigorating place for learning to occur. As you review the information contained within this document, you will see a record of accomplishments that serve as tangible markers of our success and notes that identify areas of focus for the future. This process of data collection and reflection sets the stage for our cycle of continuous improvement moving forward.

Thank you for taking the time to review this report. However, to fully appreciate the work that occurs at Simsbury High School, I would like to encourage you to visit our school. Once you have the opportunity to experience one of our plays, hear the written word of our students, see their excitement as they work to solve problems creatively and observe the sportsmanship displayed by our athletes, you will have a much better understanding and appreciation of what makes this school so special.

Simsbury High School is a place unlike any other, and I am honored to serve the students, staff, and community members as their principal.

Sincerely,

Maggie Seidel  
Principal

## Simsbury Public Schools ~ Vision of the Graduate



### Critical Thinker

- Engage in problem solving, inquiry, and reflective thinking
- Develop compelling questions
- Analyze information to consider varied perspectives
- Evaluate information to reason and solve problems



### Communicator

- Listen actively
- Lift conversations by asking and responding to questions
- Deliver clear, concise, accurate ideas through spoken and written language
- Demonstrate an awareness of audience by adjusting purposefully



### Collaborator

- Perform a variety of roles and responsibilities
- Function interdependently and flexibly with others
- Seek and contribute feedback
- Embrace contradictions and divergent ideas to accomplish a common goal



### Self-Directed Learner

- Take initiative and responsibility for learning and productivity
- Use “experts” and other resources to pursue goals
- Demonstrate resilience, optimism, and perseverance
- Accomplish tasks through self-advocacy, self-confidence, and a growth mindset



### Innovator

- Empower creativity and develop skills
- Use a variety of techniques as part of a process to enhance outcomes
- View failure as an opportunity to learn, persevere, and show flexibility
- Challenge the status quo, push boundaries, and achieve growth



### Global Citizen

- Exemplify empathy, compassion, and respect in interactions with others
- Consider diverse perspectives and cultures
- Act responsibly and ethically
- Recognize impact of actions and civic decisions

## **Simsbury Public Schools Strategic Plan Goals 2019-2024**

**Student Growth and Success:** Simsbury Public Schools will engage all students in rigorous, dynamic, and relevant learning growth and achievement.

**Compassionate and Connected School Culture:** Simsbury Public Schools will engage our students and adults in an inclusive, responsive, and safe environment that fosters the development of empathetic, ethical, and resilient community members.

**Premier Workforce:** Simsbury Public Schools will hire, invest in, and retain passionate and exceptional staff who will contribute to a challenging, innovative, and collaborative culture defined by continuous improvement.

**Sustainable and Strategic Investments:** Simsbury Public Schools will identify and advocate for the needs of our school communities in innovative ways to support the success and growth of all students, ensure fiscal responsibility, and the long-term stability of the district.

*Board of Education  
Adopted June 11, 2019*

*“If you go to work on your goals, your goals will go to work on you.*

*If you go to work on your plan, your plan will go to work on you.*

*Whatever good things we build end up building us.”*

*~ Jim Rohn*

<b>Goal 1: Student Growth and Success</b>
<p>Simsbury Public Schools will engage all students in rigorous, dynamic, and relevant learning experiences, in alignment to the Simsbury Vision of the Graduate (VoG), in order to ensure student growth and achievement.</p>
<b>Simsbury High School's Strategic Action Steps</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop systems for a Capstone experience that fulfills VOG and graduation requirements</li> <li>• Identify struggling learners and have teachers' growth plan focus on building capacity to use data to track and improve these students' capabilities</li> <li>• Build staff competency in the VOG attributes and rubrics</li> <li>• Build staff capacity on classroom engagement strategies</li> <li>• Provide social-emotional learning strategies to teachers for lesson incorporation</li> </ul>
<b>Performance Indicators (As measured by...)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vision of A Graduate - Capstone competency</li> <li>• SAT School Day - Grade 11</li> <li>• Next Generation Science Assessment (NGSS) - Grade 11 (Level 3 or better)</li> <li>• Advanced Placement results</li> <li>• Grade Point Average (GPA) - Grade 12</li> <li>• College enrollment and graduation</li> </ul>

**SMART Goals:** (Specific/Measurable/Aggressive yet Achievable/Relevant/Time-Bound)

<b>SAT School Day Expectations</b>
<p><b>By June of 2023:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 70% of students receiving 530 or better in math.</li> <li>• 86% of students receiving 480 or better in critical reading and writing.</li> <li>• 80% of students earning 1010 or better as a composite score.</li> </ul>
<b>SAT School Day Results</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 57.8% of students received a 530 or better in math.</li> <li>• 77% of students received a 480 or better in critical reading and writing.</li> <li>• 56% of students received a 1010 or better as a composite score.</li> </ul>
<b>SAT School Day Expectations Next Steps</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PSAT on October 11th will be given and an evaluation of the performance will be assessed for grades 9, 10, and 11.</li> <li>• Professional Development for Teachers in October 2023 and January 2024 to learn about the new SAT structure.</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with Department Supervisors to review data and create action plans for addressing specific areas of growth.</li> <li>• Offer SAT Prep class for students through the College Planning Partnership.</li> <li>• Increase knowledge and skill for all teachers around high leverage strategies to promote active learning.</li> </ul>
<b>Science Expectations</b>
<p><b>By June of 2023:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 90% will score at/above the proficiency standard (Level 3) on the Next Generation Science Standards test.</li> </ul>
<b>Science Results</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 87% scored at or above goal on the NGSS testing (3rd in the State of CT and 1st in the district reference group).</li> </ul>
<b>Science Expectations Next Steps</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Department Supervisor will review performance data of AP scores with teachers to improve instructional strategies.</li> <li>• Peer observations within and/or across departments that are framed by the teacher team and their department supervisor to address an area of growth they are currently working towards assessment, instructional strategies, or curriculum development.</li> <li>• Review of Science Smarter Balanced Assessment data for freshman students to determine a baseline, including areas of strength and weakness.</li> </ul>
<b>Advanced Placement (AP) Expectations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 70% of seniors successfully completing at least one AP course before graduation</li> <li>• 87% AP students scoring 3 or higher on at least one exam</li> </ul>
<b>Advanced Placement (AP) Results</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 78% of seniors completed at least one AP course before graduation</li> <li>• 78% of students in grades 10-12 took an AP Test and scored a 3 or higher on at least one exam</li> </ul>
<b>Advanced Placement (AP) Next Steps</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer opportunities for students to learn about AP courses.</li> <li>• Move AP Seminar to the English Department as an option for Grade 10 students to take within their English credit.</li> <li>• Department Supervisors will review performance data of AP scores with teachers to improve instructional strategies.</li> </ul>

<b>Goal 2: Compassionate &amp; Connected School Culture</b>
<p>Simsbury Public Schools will engage our students and adults in an inclusive, responsive, and safe environment that fosters the development of empathetic, ethical, and resilient community members.</p>
<b>Strategic Action Steps</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all staff are provided on-going training in the areas of cultural diversity and competency, safety and mental health needs</li> <li>• Continue to provide the SHS community and students with educational experiences around race and diversity</li> <li>• Identify, create, and refine structures in order to increase a sense of belonging, value and contribution to a positive school community (SHS Connect, Trojan Code, etc.)</li> <li>• Enact, evaluate and refine identified safety protocols consistently across the school.</li> <li>• Require all staff to develop a goal to enhance home-school communication</li> <li>• Re-establish norms for student behavior and expectations</li> <li>• Provide Social-Emotional Instructional Strategies to Staff</li> <li>• Continue mindfulness practices and hospitality events</li> </ul>
<b>Performance Indicators</b> (as measured by...)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vision of a Graduate rubrics</li> <li>• Stakeholder survey results</li> <li>• Attendance, intervention and discipline data</li> <li>• Safety and security survey</li> <li>• Capstone achievement</li> <li>• <i>Say Something</i> submissions</li> </ul>

**SMART Goals:** (Specific/Measurable/Aggressive yet Achievable/Relevant/Time-Bound)

<b>Climate Survey (Panorama or similar measure) by June 2023 Expectations</b>
<p><b>Student Favorable Responses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive climate &gt;50%</li> <li>• Safety &gt;70%</li> </ul> <p><b>Family Favorable Responses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive climate &gt; 60%</li> <li>• Safety &gt; 70%</li> <li>• School support for my child &gt; 70%</li> </ul>

<b>Climate Survey (Panorama or similar measure) Results</b>
<p><b>Student Favorable Responses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 67% of students reported favorable results (Strongly agree / Agree) to feeling a sense of belonging at school.</li> <li>• 72% of students reported favorable results (Strongly agree / Agree) to feeling safe at school.</li> <li>• 66% of students reported favorable results (Strongly agree / Agree) to feelings that all students are supported by school staff.</li> <li>• 65% of students reported favorable results (Strongly agree / Agree) to being able to ask and adult for help if they have a problem.</li> </ul>
<b>Climate Survey (Panorama or similar measure) Next Steps</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase opportunities for students to participate in school spirit activities.</li> <li>• Determine the cultural group celebrations that students and families want to be celebrated within the school community.</li> <li>• Get to know the stories of our students to build relationships and improve school safety</li> <li>• Monitor bathroom behaviors for cleanliness and safe behavior.</li> </ul>

<b>Goal 3: Premier Workforce</b>
<p style="text-align: center;">Simsbury Public Schools will hire, invest in, and retain passionate and exceptional staff who will contribute to a challenging, innovative, and collaborative culture defined by continuous improvement.</p>
<b>Strategic Action Steps</b>
<p><b>Premier Workforce</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieve and preserve a culture of quality, equity, support and responsiveness for all SPS employees</li> <li>• Promote professional development opportunities for all employees that are meaningful and relevant in moving the school forward</li> <li>• Participate in PLCs/Professional Development/Peer Visits</li> <li>• Ensure teachers meet or exceed the Simsbury Public School’s teaching standards</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for educators to engage in collaborative analysis of student work/assessment results to refine instructional practices in order to increase student achievement</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for teachers to reflect on their teaching practices</li> <li>• Collaborate with Human Resources in recruiting teachers, surveying staff, and planning for professional development</li> </ul>

**Performance Indicators** (as measured by...)

- Professional development feedback forms
- Professional Learning Communities (PLC) survey data results (even school years)
- Employee survey data
- Employee retention data

**Climate Survey (Panorama or similar measure) by June 2023 Expectations****Staff & Teachers Favorable Responses**

- Well-Being > 70%
- Belonging > 70%

**Climate Survey (Panorama or similar measure) Results**

- 81% of staff responded favorably to feelings of engagement with department colleagues.
- 59% of staff responded favorably to feelings of connection to the school community.
- 71% of staff responded favorably to feelings that the school community respects them.
- 72% of staff responded favorably to feelings that the school is a good fit for them as an individual.

**Climate Survey (Panorama or similar measure) Next Steps**

- Improve clarity on expectations and accountability for all staff members as part of the greater school community.
- Improved visibility by administration throughout the day to support teachers.
- Refocus professional learning on the analysis of student work and common assessments.

## **Outstanding Accomplishments 2022-2023**

**US News & World Report Rankings:** SHS ranked 14th among Connecticut schools and 533rd nationally.

**Science:** SHS ranked 3rd in the State of Connecticut on the Next Generation Science Standards Assessment.

**Project Lead the Way:** SHS was named a PLTW Distinguished School for 2022-23.

**Athletics/Competitions:** Two lacrosse students won All-State; One lacrosse student won the CCC Conference Championship

### **Scholastic Art Awards:**

- Nine SHS students were recognized for their achievements during the annual CT Regional Scholastic Art Awards.
- One student's self-portrait is being displayed at the state capitol in Washington, DC.
- A photography student won best in show at the Simsbury Public Library.

**National Merit Scholars:** Two students competed against 1.5 million others and earned the recognition of being a National Merit Finalist.

### **Music & Performing Arts:**

- Simsbury High School Choirs were selected to sing for the opener to the Rockettes at Radio City Music Hall.
- 24 students performed in Northern Regionals.
- Seven students performed in All-State.
- Two students participated in the National ACDA.
- One student placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Hartford Symphony's Young Artists Competition.

**CT Colt State Poetry Competition:** Three students competed in French and Chinese and received medals.

**Chess Club:** The club took first place at the CT State Speed Championships and third place at the CT State Championship.

### **Technology & Engineering:**

- 17 students competed in the CT Home Show Student Design Competition.
- SHS Architecture students were featured on WFSB Channel 3 Great Day Connecticut.

- Students from the Digital Video Production class won 2nd place in the Just Drive PSA Social Media Campaign Contest.
- SHS students received two nominations for their FOX 61 Student News segments in the Best in Student News Community Events category and Best in Student News Feature category.

**Fund for Teachers Fellow** awarded one of our English teachers to help create a new course called “Introduction to Asian American Studies”.

**Architecture Design Competition:** Four students took 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> place for their 2,000 sq. ft house design models, and two students were recognized as Honorable Mention and Judges Award at the CT Convention Home Show.

**Simsbury VFW:** Two students were honored for their work in the ‘Voice of Democracy’ essay contest.

**New National Technical Honor Society** was established with 20 new student members.

**National Honor Society:** 74 students were inducted into the Massaco Chapter.

**Fencing:** SHS Fencing ranked in the top 10 programs in the State of CT. The men’s Sabre Team won its first CT State High School Varsity Tournament.

**Capstone:** 290 students successfully presented Capstone projects

**AP Scholars:**

- 65 students qualified for the AP Scholar of Distinction Award.
- 24 student qualified for the AP Scholar with Honor Award.
- 68 students qualified for the AP Scholar Award.
- Three students qualified fort the AP Capstone Diploma.
- Two students qualified for the AP Seminar & Research certificate.

**National Merit Corporate Sponsored Scholarship:** One student was selected as a winner

**National Latin Honor Society:** SHS has 35 NJCL inductees and 29 students were designated as a cum laude winners of the National Latin Exam.

**Social Studies:** Students were recognized as "Game Changers" by Connecticut Explored Magazine for their research into Martin Luther King, Jr's time in Connecticut.

**Math:** SHS took first place in the Hartford region on the New England Math League and an SHS student was invited to participate in the American Invitational Mathematics Examination.