MADISON
METROPOLITAN
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Instruction Work Group

January 5, 2026

MMSD Mission

MMSD creates safe and inclusive schools, delivers high-quality instruction, strengthens positive relationships, and partners with families and the community to achieve student self-determination and educational excellence.

MMSD Vision

MMSD will be a learning community where all students are valued, challenged, supported, and inspired to reach for their dreams.

Guiding Commitments

Lead with Equity
Foster Belonging
Deliver Meaningful Learning
Improve with Purpose
Embrace our Collective Impact

District Improvement Plan Goals

By 2027, we will increase...

Goal	Performance Objectives
Strategic Framework Goal 1: Every child is on track to graduate ready for college, career, & community	**+10 percentage points in literacy proficiency** **+10 percentage points in students' math proficiency** +3 percentage points in 4-year HS completion
Strategic Framework Goal 2: The district and every school in it is a place where children, staff, & families thrive.	+15 percentage points in percentage of students with annual attendance rate of +90% 100% of district departments and schools with documented improvement plans, including universal and targeted strategies, and demonstrate evidence of PDSA cycles
Strategic Framework Goal 3: African-American children & youth excel in school.	**+15 percentage points in literacy proficiency** **+15 percentage points in students' math proficiency** +6 percentage points in 4-year HS completion +25 percentage points in percentage of students with annual attendance rate of +90%

Outcomes for Tonight's Presentation

Develop a shared understanding of:

Student Services Teams and the roles they (school psychologists, social workers, counselors, and nurses) serve as school mental health professionals

The core services and programs available to support student mental health and well-being (MH&WB)

How Board investment in MH&WB supports student health and wellness
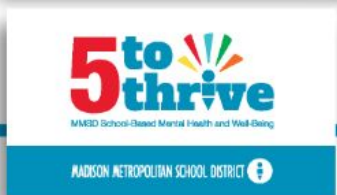
Grounding in Student Supports

www.madison.k12.wi.us/mental-health-wellbeing

School Social Worker

- Lead attendance & engagement systems
- Coordinate case management & wraparound services
- Deliver targeted & intensive social-emotional supports
- Conduct crisis intervention & safety planning
- Advocate for equity & systemic change

STUDENT SERVICES TEAMS

Center student, family, and staff voice

Promote safe and inclusive school environments

Identify needs early and provide supports

Deliver coordinated and comprehensive services

Use data to advance equity and improvement

School Nurse

- Design school health systems & protocols
- Conduct health screenings & monitor compliance
- Develop & coordinate individualized health plans (IHPs)
- Coordinate student health care care & community partnerships
- Lead mental health triage, health crisis readiness & emergency response

School Psychologist

- Guide data-based decision-making
- Consult and collaborate with educators & families
- Develop & monitor interventions
- Conduct comprehensive evaluations
- Lead crisis prevention & response

School Counselor

- Develop & implement comprehensive school counseling programming for all students
- Deliver classroom instruction in academic, SEL, & college/career readiness
- Deliver targeted & intensive social-emotional & academic supports
- Conduct crisis intervention & safety planning
- Advise & support students in academic & postsecondary planning

Student Services Teams: Mental Health & Well-Being

Individual Therapeutic Interventions
- Behavioral Health in Schools
- School-Based Health Centers

Wraparound Services
- Building Bridges
- UW CAP

Group Interventions
- FACE, Bounce Back, REST/CBITS/HEART
- Student Services intervention groups

Strong Referral and Navigation Pathways
- Mental Health Navigator
- Care Solace
- 5 to Thrive website
- Mental Health Triage

Universal Screening
- Bounce Back
- REST/CBITS

**Culturally Responsive Problem-Solving
Mental Health Literacy**

**Collaborative School Community ~ Equitable Classroom Practices ~
Equitable Schoolwide Practices ~ Equitable Data Practices ~ Teaming Practices**

Schools

Mental Health Partners

District

Develop and support implementation of a cohesive tiered system of mental health supports that can expand schools' capacity to improve our students' mental health and well-being so that they are available for learning

Support schools and staff to deliver and implement high quality (culturally relevant, evidence-based) mental health interventions

Student Services Team Investments & Impact

Since 2021–2022, Student Services allocation increased by **+28.9 FTE,** resulting in more time and resources available for students

Because we increased allocation...

Social work by 15.5 FTE

Psychologists by 4.0 FTE

Nurses by 2.4 FTE

Nursing assistants by 3.0 FTE

Added 4.0 restorative justice coordinators

We increased the capacity to...

Build staff mental health literacy

Coordinate programs (e.g., Behavioral Health in Schools and School-Based Health Centers)

Learn and implement culturally responsive, evidence-based mental health interventions

Resulting in...

Expanded continuum of supports

Increased student access and participation

Faster connection to services

More effective, consistent interventions

Stronger coordination among school teams and community partners

Universal Screening

Resilient Response to the Effects of Stress and Trauma (REST)

Screening and connecting to groups co-facilitated by clinicians and school staff

- 14 schools (6th-8th, 1 HS)
- **1497 students screened**
- 649 students interviewed
- 13 CBITS groups
- 7 HEART groups

Partner: Journey Mental Health

Bounce Back Trauma Intervention

Screening and connecting to groups co-facilitated by clinicians and school staff

- 33 schools (K-5th)
- **1972 students screened**
- 299 students interviewed
- 35 intervention groups

Partner: Rainbow Project

High School Universal Screening

Screening completed by school-based student services teams

- 6 schools (9th-12th)
- **2074 students screened**
- 364 students interviewed

2024-2025 EOY Data

Mental Health Navigation

Mental Health Navigator

Support with navigation, consultation, and connection to internal and external MH services for students

- 36 schools
- **58 students served**
- 290 individual sessions or family meetings (and school consults)
- Bilingual (Spanish)

Care Solace

Online navigation tool that connects students, families, and staff to MH services within the community

- 36 schools
- **261 students served**

Mental Health Bilingual Resource Specialist

Removing barriers and supporting seamless access to MH services for students and families via language support

- 17 schools
- 535 interpretation / translation requests
- **150 students served**
- 1 intervention group (planned expansion in 25-26)

Group Interventions

FACE (Fostering Awareness, Compassion, & Empathy) Groups
Social emotional wellness groups co-facilitated by clinicians and school staff

- 20 schools
- **39 groups**
- 3 substance use groups

Partner: Journey Mental Health

Agrace Groups
Provides short-term individual student grief support (4 sessions); groups available through FACE

- **20-25 individual students**
- multiple FACE groups

Partner: Agrace

+ REST/CBITS, HEART, Bounce Back, and additional SST-led groups

2024-2025 EOY Data

Wrap Around Supports & Clinical Collaboration

Building Bridges
Intensive wrap around services with focus on mental health connections in community and school-family collaboration

- 43 schools (K-8th)
- **115 students / families served**

Partners: Catholic Charities and Dane County

UW Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
Up to 12 student consultations/ evaluations provided by UW CAP fellows, residents, and faculty, plus weekly consultation support from fellows

- 14 schools
- **16 students served**

Partners: UW Medical Foundation and UW Hospitals & Clinics Authority

2024-2025 EOY Data

Individual Mental and Behavioral Health Services

Behavioral Health in Schools (BHS)
Mental and behavioral health services delivered in a portion of our elementary and middle schools by licensed community therapists

- 16 schools (2024-25)
- **339 students served**
- 6,253 individual sessions

Partner: Children's Wisconsin

School-Based Health Centers
Behavioral health services delivered by licensed therapists in our comprehensive high schools

- 4 schools
- **112 students served**
- 1321 individual sessions or family meetings

Partner: UW Behavioral Health Youth & Family

2024-2025 EOY Data

Program Feature: Behavioral Health in Schools

- Program intended to improve student availability for learning by providing specialized mental health services in schools during the school day
- High intensity partnership with Children's WI; BHS has been in MMSD since 2016-2017 school year
- Students who have significant mental health concerns that often interfere with learning and engagement *and* experience barriers to accessing supports in the community at the participating schools (15 elementary, 7 middle) are referred to these services.
- Therapists, **who are embedded in school teams**, provide direct therapy to students (individual and group) in addition to consultation and professional development with school staff

Behavioral Health in Schools

Goal 1: Improve the mental health and school-related functioning of students receiving Behavioral Health in Schools services

Goal 2: Improve school staff sense of knowledge and efficacy in supporting students with mental health concerns

Goal 3: Establish a satisfactory continuity of care for referred students that is inclusive of youth, family, and health system providers, including BHS services

Goal 4: Build stability and support expansion of Behavioral Health in Schools Programs in MMSD

Program Feature: Behavioral Health in Schools

Intended Outcome/Metric	Progress
Total # of students served	310
Total # of BHS sessions provided	2,227
Students receiving services for the first time (Goal: 60%)	59%
Average # of days between referral and 1st session (Goal: 15)	9
Public insurance (BadgerCare / Medicaid) (Goal: 75%)	81%
Uninsured	7%

Program Feature: Behavioral Health in Schools

Mid-Year Successes
- Launched in 6 new schools (Hawthorne, Kennedy, Lincoln, Muir, O'Keeffe, Sherman)
- Strong caseloads and billable hours support sustainability
- Consistent school and clinician supports through meetings and consultation
- Children's Wisconsin continues to expand supervision capacity

Mid-Year Challenges
- Spanish interpretation demand exceeds current MH BRS capacity
- Balancing billable hours with school integration work (e.g., consultation, professional development)

Program Feature: School Psychologist Training

Expanding the Role of School Psychologists in Madison Schools
U.S. Department of Education Mental Health Service Professional Demonstration Grant

- $1.9M awarded to MMSD
- Grant period: Jan 1, 2026–Dec 31, 2029
- Collaboration with UW–Madison School Psychology Program, MMSD project team, and graduate students
- Goal: Prepare school psychologists to deliver early intervention and intensive mental health services in MMSD
- Funds support: supervision capacity, project coordination, and joint professional learning
- Scholarships: 10 practicum students and interns per year for 4 years (40 future school psychologists)

Next Steps

MMSD Excellence Together

Center mental health and well-being in our strategic plan by strengthening equitable, multi-level systems of support that promote social-emotional learning, mental health, and well-being

Advocacy & Thoughtful Program Implementation

Advocate to state and federal government for predictable, stable funding so when we launch a program, we are confident we can scale and sustain it over time

Strong Student Services Teaming Systems

Strengthen and sustain teaming routines and ways of working so schools can effectively leverage current allocation, integrate partners and programs into coherent systems, and add resources thoughtfully

Leveraging Partners & Community Resources

Engage in ongoing collaboration with community partners to expand access to school-based services, align supports within a coherent continuum, and ensure resources are used effectively to improve outcomes
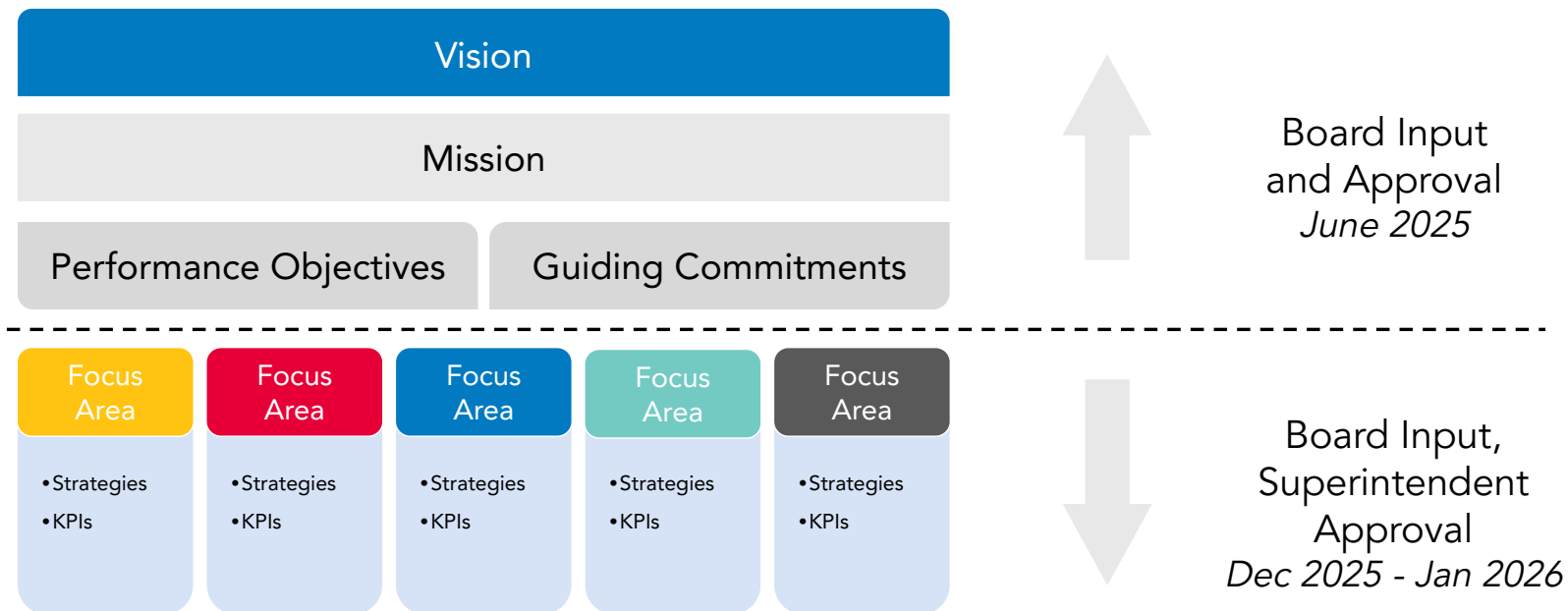
Discussion

MADISON
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SCHOOL DISTRICT

MMSD: Excellence Together

MMSD Strategic Framework

Plan Structure

Why a Strategic Plan Matters

A strong strategic plan helps the Board:

- Set **clear direction** grounded in community voice and long-term student outcomes

- Stay focused on the "**what**" and the "**why**," not the day-to-day "how"

- Align **resources, allocation, policies, and priorities** to what matters most for students

- Create **shared accountability** for progress over time

- **Support and empower staff** to deliver on the commitments made to the community

Plan
Overview

MMSD Vision

MMSD will be a learning community where all students are valued, challenged, supported, and inspired to reach for their dreams.

MMSD Mission

MMSD creates safe and inclusive schools, delivers high-quality instruction, strengthens positive relationships, and partners with families and the community to achieve student self-determination and educational excellence.

Guiding Commitments

Lead with Equity
We investigate, acknowledge, and confront the inequities within our systems, and we take individual and collective responsibility to disrupt them. We commit to creating systems that honor the identities, strengths, and needs of every student through actions that lead to just and measurable outcomes.

Foster Belonging
We create safe, welcoming, and inclusive environments where every student, staff member, and family feels valued, celebrated, and connected. We build trust and share responsibility through relationships, communication, and collaboration.

Deliver Meaningful Learning
We ensure that every student experiences challenging, engaging, and culturally relevant learning in a supportive environment designed to spark curiosity, accelerate achievement, and prepare them for an evolving world. We support high-quality, collaborative teaching and purposeful professional growth.

Improve with Purpose
We continuously plan, reflect, adapt, and improve by focusing on what works, why it works, and who it works for. Our innovation is grounded in the needs of our students and driven by a commitment to coherence, sustainability, and equitable outcomes.

Embrace our Collective Impact
We hold ourselves and each other accountable for our shared responsibility to build a school system where every action and decision moves us toward equity and excellence.

Performance Objectives

These three strategic goals will be used by the Board of Education and the community to assess the overall health of the system. Each will be **disaggregated to the greatest extent possible.** Additional measures will be tracked at the school and district level to provide a more holistic picture of our success.

Academic Achievement: MMSD will increase overall student academic achievement as measured by required state assessments (4K-2 reading readiness assessments; 3-8 Forward; 9-12 ACT) and GPA (6-12)

Belonging: MMSD will increase the percentage of students who feel they belong in their school, as measured by the climate survey.

College Credit/Credentials: MMSD will increase the percentage of students who graduate with credits or credentials that provide postsecondary value, as measured by participation and success in courses providing college credit, industry credentialing coursework, and work-based or experiential learning opportunities, and students earning a seal of biliteracy

Our
Approach

Who We Are

52
Schools
4 Comprehensive high schools
4 Alternative high schools
12 Middle schools
32 Elementary schools
  8 Elementary schools designated Community schools
  26 Elementary Schools offer full or half day 4K along with 27 Early Care and Education Centers

7,095
Staff
18% Teachers of color
30% Staff of color

5,000
Volunteers

200+
Partnerships

25,003
Students
2nd Largest in Wisconsin

Asian 7%

Black or African American 18%

Hispanic 26%

White 39%

Two or more races 10%

17%
Students Receiving Special Education Services

48%
Economically Disadvantaged

20%
English Learners

117
Languages Spoken

21 Schools offer dual-language immersion
2 Schools offer Hmong Bilingual Program
84 Students Earned the seal of Biliteracy in 2025

Our
Approach

Board Leadership

This process featured extensive input and support from the Board of Education, including:

Touchpoint	Format	Purpose
January '25	Work Session	Vision setting
February '25	RTI/Board Member 1:1s	Vision, Mission, Core Value, and Goal ideation
March '25	Board Meeting	Process update and framework structure
May '25	Work Session	Vision, Mission, Guiding Commitments, and Performance Objectives discussion
June '25	Work Session	Vision, Mission, Guiding Commitments, and Performance Objectives discussion
June '25	Board Meeting	Vision, Mission, Core Values approved
July '25	RTI/Board Member 1:1s	Performance Objective discussion
August '25	Board Meeting	Performance Objectives approved
November '25	IWG meeting/Work session	Focus Area, Strategy and KPI update
January '26	IWG meeting	Final Update

Broad-based Community Input

This process has been informed by nearly 2,500 members of the MMSD community through focus groups, interviews, and surveys, with a focus on achieving a representative response.

Superintendent School Visits	Student and Staff Focus Groups	Community Survey	Community Focus Groups	Principals Engagement
As part of Dr. Gothard's school visits during the spring of 2025, held interview and focus groups in 47 schools, engaging approximately 500 staff and 450 students.	Held student and focus groups across middle and high schools. Held department specific Central Office staff focus groups.	Launched a community survey for stakeholders to provide feedback on the draft vision, mission, and guiding commitments.	Held Affinity specific focus groups, including Black, Hmong, Hispanic, LGBTQ+, Parents of Students with IEPs	Met with principals, assistant principals, and other instructional leaders (4x)

Steering Committee

Our 80-member Steering Committee is a representative, cross-functional team of MMSD students, staff, families, and community partners that met 6 times throughout 2025 to guide the strategic planning process.

Meeting	Date	Outcomes
1	1/16/25	Context setting, Community Mapping
2	2/18/25	Review and propose revisions to previous Vision, Core Values, and Goals
3	4/15/25	Review proposed framework structure and provide feedback on draft Vision, Mission, and Guiding Commitments
4	5/22/25	Finalize Vision, Mission, and Guiding Commitments Recommendations
5	10/15/25	Review Strategic Focus Areas; Review and propose revisions to the Graduate Vision
6	11/12/25	Apply an equity check to proposed strategies and KPIs

Reflections from Steering Committee Members

*"As a writer and educator, I appreciated helping **shape the language** around meaningful strategic change. As a teacher and leader, I feel that **I had a voice** in the process."*

–Sim Ashlock

*"I love that **we dream BIG** and spread the net wide to all as best we can. I'm excited about **wellness, professional growth and actual innovation**."*

–Edie Mileham

*"**MMSD takes its goals, mission and vision seriously and are investing in the success of students, staff, and educators**. I enjoyed listening to all of the feedback from committee members and being part of such an important initiative...planning for the future of MMSD."*

–Anonymous

*"Being on the committee has **reinforced why I love this district** and continue wanting to serve our youth. The **collaborative, multiple voices/roles approach was meaningful**. I learned lots from other members of our community, appreciated the focus on equity and how we continued to dig deeper into those probing questions."*

– Bri Marshall

Leading with Equity
Representation and Equity Review

In addition to seeking representative voice in initial input, ideation, and iteration of the draft components, we intentionally paused to apply an equity review to draft elements along the way, including at the following key milestones:

- Staff applied an equity lens on their first draft of strategies.

- Steering Committee members applied the same equity review when reviewing draft strategies and KPIs during their November meeting.

- Prior to finalization, we convened a small working group to apply a final equity lenson our draft strategies and KPIs to ensure we are fulfilling our commitment to *Lead with Equity*

Equity Check Questions:

- Who benefits? Who might be left out?

- What barriers, conditions, or mindsets does this work to change?

- How does this improve access, opportunity, or voice?

- Do the KPIs show a focus on equity in who succeeds or how success is measured?

Focus Areas

These broad, high-level themes express what we're committed to improving or addressing as a system. They reflect what matters most across the district, and will be the major buckets that will organize our strategies and key performance indicators (KPIs).

Future-Ready Student Experiences	Organizational Alignment and Innovation	Professional Excellence and Talent Development	Culture of Connectedness and Well-Being	Family, Community, and Industry Partnerships
Create educational experiences that are student-centered, data-driven, and future-focused, empowering every student to lead their learning both within and outside of the classroom.	Continuously improve budgets, programs, and operations to maximize impact, build for the future, spark new ideas, and create a just, sustainable system.	Position MMSD as an employer of choice to attract, develop, and retain a representative, skilled, and well-supported workforce that flourishes professionally and personally.	Support the whole-person development of students and staff by prioritizing mental health, belonging, safety, and overall wellness and building shared mindsets and practices that foster safe and inclusive environments.	Partner with families, the community, and industry to create solutions, expand access, share resources, and prepare students for the future.

Future-Ready Student Experiences

Rigorous, Culturally and Linguistically Responsive, Grade-level, Standards-aligned Instruction - Implement rigorous, culturally and linguistically responsive, grade-level, standards-aligned instruction that builds on students' assets and funds of knowledge, and meets the needs of diverse learners

Literacy Achievement & Growth- Continue to intentionally implement a structured, science-based literacy plan that systematically and explicitly targets students' foundational, comprehension, and disciplinary literacy skills

Math Achievement & Growth- Develop integrated mastery in mathematics that includes deep conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, and the ability to apply these skills strategically.

Early Learning Success- Ensure all children have equitable access to early learning and full-day 4K to support whole child development in high-quality early learning programs.

College, Career, and Community Opportunities- Develop academic experiences that provide equitable access to college, career, and community opportunities that lead to credentials and/or college credit so that every student is prepared for success beyond graduation.

Opportunities Outside of the Classroom- Create and expand high-quality opportunities outside of the classroom including co-curriculars, work-based learning, service-learning, and student leadership.

KPIs

Primary:
- 9th-grade core course pass rate (CGCS)

Supplemental:
- Spanish summative assessments for DLI (3-8 Achieve 3000)

- HS Completion - (CGCS - 4 year)

- Number of early learning programs available to families within the district/community.

- Co-curricular participation rate (grades 6-12)

Operational Alignment and Innovation

Responsive and Student-Centered Operations: Evaluate, improve and align district operations (such as transportation and food service) to enhance students' daily experiences and respond to community needs.

Increasing Enrollment: Implement an enrollment strategy that expands and delivers quality programs, creates strong policies and procedures and engages with our community to increase enrollment and make Madison a destination district.

Equitable and Strategic Budgeting: Strengthen our budgeting process to allocate our resources equitably, efficiently, and strategically to drive student achievement and well-being.

Modernize Facilities: Modernize physical (or school/building) infrastructure to promote safety, support innovative and well-rounded learning and serve the needs of students, community and staff.

Sustainability: Advance sustainability practices across district departments to accelerate progress toward the district's zero-emissions goal through enhanced carbon tracking, operational efficiencies, and innovation in transportation, energy, and facilities.

KPIs
Primary:
- Budget Expenditures Efficiency (CGCS)

Supplemental:
- Enrollment Counts

- FRL Meal Count Participation

- Fund Balance Ratio - Unrestricted (CGCS)

Professional Excellence and Talent Development

Building a Representative Staff: Attract, recruit, and engage a representative workforce that is supported in pursuing growth within their role and the organization

New Staff Support: Strengthen the employee experience by providing timely and role specific onboarding, mentoring, and development.

Employee Growth: Expand professional development opportunities for growth by ensuring every employee has access to relevant, high-quality, job-embedded learning.

Culture of Feedback: Foster a culture that prioritizes active feedback, values achievement, and promotes shared accountability to retain employees and improve organizational effectiveness.

Competitive Compensation: Value and honor our employees' contributions by ensuring access to a cohesive, competitive, and equitable total rewards framework.

KPIs

Primary:
- Staff Retention (CGCS - inverse of Employee Separation Rate)

Supplemental:
- Student-staff proportionality

- % of staff receiving documented feedback (AGA, EE, etc.)

- % of applicants who apply in the first week.

Culture of Connectedness and Well-Being

Strengthening School Culture: Implement robust, proactive, and relationship-centered strategies that build on students' assets to boost their learning, engagement, and sense of belonging.

Restorative Approach: Align district behavior policies and adult practices to foster positive and restorative practices that are responsive to student needs.

Staff Well-being: Strengthen staff well-being by aligning structures, processes, and expectations to promote sustainable, healthy ways of working.

Mental Health Supports: Deliver equitable, culturally and linguistically responsive, multi-level systems of support that promote student mental health and well-being.

Student and Staff Voice: Integrate representative student and staff voice into authentic decision-making and continuous improvement cycles.

KPIs
Primary:
- Instructional Days Missed Due to Suspensions (CGCS)

Supplemental:
- % of students with suspensions
- Staff Climate Survey
- Student Climate Survey,
- Student Attendance (Percent of students with 90% or better attendance)

Family, Community, and Industry Partnerships

Family Experience: Develop a districtwide comprehensive family experience model that honors families' strengths and expands access to differentiated resources, communication, and supports, strengthening their role as co-educators and partners in student success.

Strengthening Partnerships: Strengthen the number of comprehensive partnerships by intentionally seeking out diverse partnerships (e.g. linguistically, racially, socially) and establishing formal, mutually beneficial, and accountable relationships with organizations and agencies that align with District goals and values.

Coordinating with Community Organizations: Enhance our presence, visibility, and accessibility with community organizations, leveraging our mutual expertise and resources to provide coordinated support for students in schools and across the community.

Sustainable Industry Partnerships: Cultivate sustainable industry partnerships to build clear, equitable career pathways for students, starting as early as middle school and develop future-ready career opportunity programs of study that align with postsecondary options and an evolving workforce..

Career-aligned Learning Opportunities: Collaborate with community and industry partners to establish year-round, career-aligned learning experiences in and out of the classroom that prioritize local industry needs and deliberately addresses equity gaps for our students.

KPIs

Primary:
- Number of active community and industry partnerships

Supplemental:
- Family Climate Survey
- % of formal partnerships that have met their EOY goals

Under Construction

- Letters from Leaders
- Brand Identity
- Baseline data
- Equity Approach
- Broad Approach Across All Work
- Glossary

Timelines

Release Printed Plan

Prepare for implementation

Implement Plan - focus on system

Implement New CODIPs

Schools implement **Y3 of current SIP** & write new multi-year SIPs

Implement Plan, CODIPs, new SIPs

Continue Implementation

Year 0: **2025-26**	Year 1: **2026-27**	Year 2: **2027-28**	Years 3-5: **2028-29 to 2030-31**

Measure Strategic Plan **baseline** with 25-26 EOY data

Report on DIP goals with 25-26 EOY data

Report on Strategic Plan **PO & KPI progress** at EOY for district

Report on **final DIP data** & retire DIP

Report on Strategic Plan PO & KPI progress at EOY for district & schools

Report on Strategic Plan PO & KPI progress at EOY for district & schools

Close out plan in 2030-31

Thank you