Washoe County School District

Sparks Middle School

Classification: 1 Star School

Title I, TSI, ≥ 10% of enrolled students are English Learners

2026-2027 School Improvement Plan

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Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Student Success

Areas of Strength

I-Ready testing and training.

Testing Environment- Systems in Place to support formative and summative measures

More consistent staff in the math department- less turnover, additional tier one teaching support

Areas for Growth

School Goal: We will increase the number of proficient students on the ELA SBAC by 4% overall. Moving our percentage of students performing at or above grade level by the end of the 26-27 school year. We will decrease the number of students who score a level one on the Math SBAC by 4% overall. Moving our percentage of students performing at a level one from by the end of the 2026-27 school year.

Formative Measures: ● ELA Data Monitor: SBAC rubric in writing will be linked to Social Studies, ELA and Science.

● SLO Data from Teachers in all core subject areas: Science, Math, ELA, Social Studies.

● Common assessments used for district benchmarks in Math on School City.

● Data Chats- alignment with write like a champion grading across SS and ELA.

Equity Resource Supports

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
English Learners	• Limited academic vocabulary acquisition impacting comprehension. • Lack of targeted instructional time for integrated language and content development • Training and use of ELlevation strategies across all content areas. • Limited access to curriculum in primary language. • Lack of culturally relevant materials	• Master Schedule designated daily ELD (English Language Development) time using trained personnel. • Implement integrated ELD strategies across all content areas. • Provide translated materials for families and scaffolded resources for students. • Offer after-school academic support with embedded language instruction. • Use formative language proficiency data (e.g., WIDA, ACCESS scores) to guide interventions.
Foster/Homeless	• High mobility leads to inconsistent instruction and gaps in learning. • Trauma and emotional stress affecting school engagement and performance. • Lack of stable technology access or study space. • Difficulty participating in after-school interventions or homework.	• Assign a dedicated staff advocate or case manager for continuity and academic tracking. • Provide flexible tutoring hours (before/after school, online). • Ensure immediate access to Technology, hotspots, and school supplies. • Embed social-emotional supports, check-ins, and trauma-informed classroom strategies.

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
Free and Reduced Lunch	• Economic stress impacting attendance, nutrition, and school focus. • Limited access to enrichment and academic supports outside of school. • Underrepresentation in advanced coursework and literacy-rich environments.	• Community resource fairs twice per year bringing in outside support agencies to support families and needs. • Provide literacy-rich materials to take home (home libraries, book fairs). • Incentivize attendance and academic growth with recognition and support (e.g., celebrations, gift cards). • Implement equitable screening for honors and advanced placement classes.
Migrant/Title1-C Eligible	N/A	
Racial/Ethnic Minorities	• Cultural disconnects between school staff and student experiences. • Disproportionate discipline referrals and lower expectations. • Fewer role models of similar background in the staff.	• Implement culturally responsive teaching strategies and materials. • Provide staff professional development on equity, anti-bias, and implicit bias. • Focus of tiered training through systems at the district level. • Use disaggregated data to monitor student progress and intervene early. • Elevate student voice through affinity groups or student advisory councils.

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
Students with IEPs	• Instructional materials and assessments not always adapted or accessible. • Limited co-teaching models or inclusion in general education curriculum. • Misalignment between IEP goals and grade-level standards.	• Strengthen co-teaching models and general education teacher training. • Use standards-based IEPs and align instructional goals with SBAC targets. • Increase access to assistive technology and accommodations for ELA and math tasks. • Provide frequent progress monitoring and data-based instruction. • Ensure that co-taught supports are kept consistent and that PD training on proper co-taught supports are done and monitored with fidelity.

Problem Statements Identifying Student Success Needs

	Problem Statement	Critical Root Cause
1 ★	Students have low performance scores on ELA and Math SBAC tests. Students in the newcomer program are not exiting on the WIDA/ACCESS Test	Focus in ELA writing was on a solid one paragraph response, not to grade level standards in 6, 7, 8th grade essay format. Proper Placement of EL's showed major academic improvement and language Acquisition progress. this needs to be done with fidelity. Focus on Newcomer did not lead to growth with our long term EL's Math-first year with full staff in the math department showed growth, but still needs to continue to grow in PLC process.
2 ★	State assessment performance data reveals a persistent achievement gap between students identified as English learners and other identified student groups at the school, district, and state levels.	The school's assessment data indicates that English learner students may benefit from increased opportunities for rigorous, language-rich instruction, stronger intervention structures, and enhanced collaboration among instructional staff to address both academic and language acquisition needs.

★ = Priority

Adult Learning Culture

Areas of Strength

Most teacher departments worked with purpose intention in the PLC Process.

Unpacking the standards

Development of common assessments.

Initial steps of analysis for student needs- walk to learn/Intervention/MTSS and reteach methodology

Accountability through bi-weekly meeting minutes and norms established at SMS.

SB81: Staff climate survey was reviewed with an intentional foucs on the staff feeling valued and improving staff conditions and support to decrease burn out. Based on the staff survey results we have also made large shifts in the use of I-Ready in classes.

Areas for Growth

School Goal: Complete steps one and two of PLC process in all core content areas.

What are the essential Standards and the development of common assessments to determine if students are learning the essential skills.

1. What do we want all students to know and be able to do? (Essential standards)

2. How will we know if they learn it? (Common Assessments)

3. What will we do if students don't learn it? (Re-teach and RTI)

Equity Resource Supports

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
English Learners	• Limited English proficiency hinders access to complex academic language in core content. • Lack of translated assessments or scaffolding tools. • Inadequate teacher training in language acquisition strategies	• Employ **language-accessible versions** of common assessments and embed visuals, sentence frames, and glossaries. • Provide **co-teaching or push-in EL support** during core instruction. • Allocate **ELL instructional coaches or professional learning** on Can-Do descriptors and scaffolding techniques.
Foster/Homeless	• High mobility and absenteeism limit continuity in instruction and access to instruction. • Limited access to materials and quiet study spaces.	• Offer **wraparound services** (e.g., counseling, check-ins, transportation support). • Designate a staff advocate or case manager to **track academic progress and follow up** across settings. • Integrate **RTI support with trauma-informed practices** and SEL check-ins.
Free and Reduced Lunch	• May lack access to enrichment, tutoring, or technology at home. • Economic stress can interfere with academic focus and attendance.	• Use **school-issued devices and Wi-Fi hotspots** for digital access. • Embed **small-group re-teach and guided practice** into the school day
Migrant/Title1-C Eligible	N/A	

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
Racial/Ethnic Minorities	• Systemic inequities and potential unconscious bias in instruction or assessment.	• Engage in **culturally responsive teaching PD** focused on equitable assessment design and inclusive instruction. • Disaggregate data by subgroups to identify and **close performance gaps**. • Provide **student mentoring programs** and **family engagement sessions** to build trust and partnership. • Encourage participation in **enrichment, honors, and CTE pathways** by reviewing placement criteria and barriers.
Students with IEPs	• Need for individualized supports, accommodations, and sometimes modified curriculum. • Gaps in foundational skills due to learning disabilities.	• Ensure **IEP accommodations are implemented on all assessments**, including extended time, small group, and alternate formats. • Incorporate **SPED teachers in PLCs** to align supports with essential standards. • Use push-in or pull-out RTI time. • Regularly monitor IEP goal progress alongside progress data to ensure alignment.

Problem Statements Identifying Adult Learning Culture Needs

	Problem Statement	Critical Root Cause
1 ★	Only getting to step one and two of the PLC process during content level planning time was the implementation of only essential standards and development of common assessments. Without the accurate analysis of data, we were unable to accurately determine mastery of standards.	Lack of Common Assessments did not allow for accurate data collection or comparison of student mastery of standards. Implementation of new curriculum in Math made implementation of common assessments an additional challenge. Teacher lack of understanding of the essential standards and the implementation of grade level rigor was inconsistent across content areas. While teachers also become more focused on creating common Assessments within New 2nd year of Social studies and Science curriculum adoption.

★ = Priority

Connectedness

Areas of Strength

Increased communication

More than doubled our number of parent climate surveys for more accurate data

Updated website with more fidelity for readily accessible information to parents.

Areas for Growth

School Goal:
Sparks Middle School will strengthen family-school connectedness to reduce chronic absenteeism — currently at 25% — by increasing two-way communication, hosting inclusive connectedness events, and using parent climate survey feedback to guide engagement strategies.

We will monitor progress through attendance data,

participation in family events,

improvements in parent perception scores from the Nevada School Climate Survey.

Equity Resource Supports

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
English Learners	• Language barriers limit parent access to communication and events. • Limited bilingual staff and interpreters. • Cultural norms may lead to hesitation in school involvement.	• allocate **bilingual liaisons** and interpreters at all events and for phone calls/messages. • Translate all school communication and surveys into **home languages**. • Host **culturally responsive family nights** (e.g., heritage celebrations, multilingual workshops).

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
Foster/Homeless	• Lack of stable housing affects access to school information and events. • Parents/guardians may change frequently or be unavailable. • High mobility limits relationship building with staff	• Work with our Safe Schools professional to be a liaison for CIT families. • Partner with local shelters/ agencies to be a part of community resource events. • Ensure access to **school supplies, clothing closets, and emergency supports**.
Free and Reduced Lunch	• Families may work multiple jobs or have time constraints. • Limited internet or device access can hinder digital communication. • Financial stress can reduce event participation.	• Schedule events at **flexible times (evenings/weekends)** and offer childcare. • Use **multimodal communication** (texts, calls, mailers) instead of only digital platforms. • Offer **incentives** (e.g., food, raffles, homework passes) to encourage attendance. • Ensure events include tangible support services (e.g., resource fairs, FAFSA nights).
Migrant/Title1-C Eligible	N/A	
Racial/Ethnic Minorities	• Historical mistrust in schools due to past inequities or cultural disconnects. • Underrepresentation in decision-making processes. • Lack of culturally relevant programming.	• Establish **Family Equity Councils or advisory groups** with representative voices. • Provide **implicit bias and cultural responsiveness PD** to staff. • Celebrate **cultural heritage months and multilingual events** to affirm identity. • Use **climate survey results disaggregated by subgroup** to guide targeted actions.

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
Students with IEPs	• Families may feel overwhelmed by special education processes or excluded from general events. • Communication may focus only on problems rather than strengths. • Inconsistent collaboration between general and special education staff.	• Schedule **IEP meetings at times convenient for families** with translation and advocacy support. • Host **IEP 101 nights** to empower families to navigate the system. • Use **positive behavior and academic updates** regularly to build trust and partnership.

Problem Statements Identifying Connectedness Needs

	Problem Statement	Critical Root Cause
1 ★	Students and parents who are not connected with school are shown in the chronic absenteeism data as non-attenders. 25% of Sparks Middle School Students are considered chronically absent.	Students are not connected with school in both academics (tier one instruction) and extracurricular activities. Lack of elective options and opportunities. Lack extra curricular activities outside of sport. Stakeholder communication needs to be improved through phone contact, email, and parent meetings.

★ = Priority

Priority Problem Statements

	Problem Statement	Critical Root Cause
1 ★	Students have low performance scores on ELA and Math SBAC tests. Students in the newcomer program are not exiting on the WIDA/ACCESS Test	Focus in ELA writing was on a solid one paragraph response, not to grade level standards in 6, 7, 8th grade essay format. Proper Placement of EL's showed major academic improvement and language Acquisition progress. this needs to be done with fidelity. Focus on Newcomer did not lead to growth with our long term EL's Math-first year with full staff in the math department showed growth, but still needs to continue to grow in PLC process.
2 ★	Only getting to step one and two of the PLC process during content level planning time was the implementation of only essential standards and development of common assessments. Without the accurate analysis of data, we were unable to accurately determine mastery of standards.	Lack of Common Assessments did not allow for accurate data collection or comparison of student mastery of standards. Implementation of new curriculum in Math made implementation of common assessments an additional challenge. Teacher lack of understanding of the essential standards and the implementation of grade level rigor was inconsistent across content areas. While teachers also become more focused on creating common Assessments within New 2nd year of Social studies and Science curriculum adoption.
3 ★	Students and parents who are not connected with school are shown in the chronic absenteeism data as non-attenders. 25% of Sparks Middle School Students are considered chronically absent.	Students are not connected with school in both academics (tier one instruction) and extracurricular activities. Lack of elective options and opportunities. Lack extra curricular activities outside of sport. Stakeholder communication needs to be improved through phone contact, email, and parent meetings.
4 ★	State assessment performance data reveals a persistent achievement gap between students identified as English learners and other identified student groups at the school, district, and state levels.	The school's assessment data indicates that English learner students may benefit from increased opportunities for rigorous, language-rich instruction, stronger intervention structures, and enhanced collaboration among instructional staff to address both academic and language acquisition needs.

★ = Priority

Data Documentation for CNA

Data Documentation for CNA

The following data were used to verify the comprehensive needs assessment analysis:

Student Success

- [x] **Smarter Balanced (SBAC)**
- [x] **Student Climate Survey, Student Voice**
- [x] **Other**

Adult Learning Culture

- [x] **Lesson Plans**
- [x] **Master schedule**
- [x] **Professional learning communities (PLC) data/agenda/notes**
- [x] **Staff surveys and/or other feedback**
- [x] **Student Climate Survey**
- [x] **Teacher evaluation**

Connectedness

- [x] **Attendance**
- [x] **Behavior**
- [x] **Community surveys and/or other feedback**
- [x] **Social Emotional Learning Data**

Inquiry Areas

Inquiry Area 1 Student Success

SMART Goal 1

During the 2026-2027 school year, English Learners will increase their English language proficiency by at least one proficiency level from their baseline performance. In addition, the school will Exit rate 4 percentage points compared to the previous school year, as measured by ACCESS for ELLs English language proficiency assessment results and ACCESS growth data.

Formative Measures: Monthly progress monitoring using district English Language Development (ELD) assessments.
WIDA Screener, WIDA MODEL, or local language proficiency benchmark data.
Growth on common formative assessments in reading, writing, speaking, and listening.
Student language-production data collected during classroom observations and walkthroughs.
Percentage of EL students meeting individualized language growth targets each quarter.
PLC analysis of EL student work samples using language-development rubrics.
Attendance and participation rates in designated language-development interventions.

Improvement Strategy 1

i-Ready

Actions for Implementation

Action #	Actions for Implementation	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Complete
1	August- September Review baseline data and train staff on objectives Increase the percentage of English Learners demonstrating annual growth on the Access for assessment by meeting or exceeding one level of growth as expected on the English language proficiency growth target as measured on the annual ACCESS test.	October-December administer Quarterly and Semester Benchmark Data assessments.	April-June Review 26-27 Access Data	

Position Responsible: EL Staff, Admin Team, ELF, EL Administrator district level.

Resources Needed: EL curriculum, Access Test prep, ELLevation Tier one strategies, Common district assessments.

Evidence Level

Level 3: Promising:
i-Ready

Problem Statements: Student Success 1, 2

Status Checks

November	February	May

SMART Goal 1 Problem Statements Identifying Student Success

	Problem Statement	Root Cause
1	Students have low performance scores on ELA and Math SBAC tests. Students in the newcomer program are not exiting on the WIDA/ACCESS Test	Focus in ELA writing was on a solid one paragraph response, not to grade level standards in 6, 7, 8th grade essay format. Proper Placement of EL's showed major academic improvement and language Acquisition progress. this needs to be done with fidelity. Focus on Newcomer did not lead to growth with our long term EL's Math-first year with full staff in the math department showed growth, but still needs to continue to grow in PLC process.
2	State assessment performance data reveals a persistent achievement gap between students identified as English learners and other identified student groups at the school, district, and state levels.	The school's assessment data indicates that English learner students may benefit from increased opportunities for rigorous, language-rich instruction, stronger intervention structures, and enhanced collaboration among instructional staff to address both academic and language acquisition needs.

SMART Goal 2

Student Success: We will decrease the number of students in level one on the ELA SBAC by 2% overall. Moving our percentage of students performing at a level onel from 56% to 54% by the end of the 2026-2027 school year.

We will decrease the number of students who score a level one on the Math SBAC by 2% overall. Moving our percentage of students performing at level one from 64% to 62% by the end 2026-2027 school year.

Formative Measures: IReady diagnostics

Improvement Strategy 1

IReady/Lexia

Actions for Implementation

Action #	Actions for Implementation	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Complete
1	Common Formative and Summative Assessment	Administration (Principal, Assistant Principal, Department Leads)	SY 2026-27	

Position Responsible: Administration (Principal, Assistant Principal, Department Leads)

Resources Needed: 1003a: Before/After School Tutoring Hours (Intervention)

Certified Hourly Teachers to provide academic intervention after school.

ESSA Evidence Level 3

Evidence Level

Level 2: Moderate:
Lexia

Level 3: Promising:
i-Ready

Problem Statements: Student Success 1

Schoolwide and Targeted Assistance Title I Element: 2.4, 2.6

Status Checks

November **February** **May**

SMART Goal 2 Problem Statements Identifying Student Success

	Problem Statement	Root Cause
1	Students have low performance scores on ELA and Math SBAC tests. Students in the newcomer program are not exiting on the WIDA/ACCESS Test	Focus in ELA writing was on a solid one paragraph response, not to grade level standards in 6, 7, 8th grade essay format. Proper Placement of EL's showed major academic improvement and language Acquisition progress. this needs to be done with fidelity. Focus on Newcomer did not lead to growth with our long term EL's Math-first year with full staff in the math department showed growth, but still needs to continue to grow in PLC process.

Inquiry Area 2

Adult Learning Culture

SMART Goal 1

Adult Learning Culture: All students will access Tier I curriculum through high quality and rigorous instruction enriched with language strategies and improve student achievement. High Quality PLC's will include collaboration, regular data analysis, data-driven decision for targeted student populations and intervention, and a focus on high yield learning strategies to maximize student growth.

Formative Measures: PLC Agendas
PLC model
Common Assessments

Improvement Strategy 1

PLC Process

Actions for Implementation

Action #	Actions for Implementation	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Complete
1	All departments work around identifying standards, pacing and planning, unwrapping standards, creating assessments, and reviewing data to drive instruction and interventions will be based on the first three main questions from PLC model and student needs. What do we want all students to know and be able to do? (Essential standards) How will we know if they learn it? (Common Assessments) What do we do if students don't learn them? (data analysis, intervention/reteach, purposeful reteach) in reading/ELA, mathematics, and science by two percent in each content as measured by student achievement and growth in alignment with SBAC results. Targeted subgroups will include FRL, EL, and IEP.	Department Leaders Administration	SY 2026-27	

Position Responsible: Department Leaders Administration

Evidence Level

Level 2: Moderate:
PLC's

Problem Statements: Adult Learning Culture 1

Status Checks

November	February	May

SMART Goal 1 Problem Statements Identifying Adult Learning Culture

	Problem Statement	Root Cause
1	Only getting to step one and two of the PLC process during content level planning time was the implementation of only essential standards and development of common assessments. Without the accurate analysis of data, we were unable to accurately determine mastery of standards.	Lack of Common Assessments did not allow for accurate data collection or comparison of student mastery of standards. Implementation of new curriculum in Math made implementation of common assessments an additional challenge. Teacher lack of understanding of the essential standards and the implementation of grade level rigor was inconsistent across content areas. While teachers also become more focused on creating common Assessments within New 2nd year of Social studies and Science curriculum adoption.

Inquiry Area 3

Connectedness

SMART Goal 1

Our performance objective will be measured by reducing chronic absenteeism at Sparks Middle School from 22-20% in the 26-27 school year. Sparks Middle School will reduce absenteeism by two percent schoolwide.

Formative Measures: Attendance sheets for family events
IC and BIG attendance reports
Parent Climate survey

Improvement Strategy 1

MTSS/PBIS

Actions for Implementation

Action #	Actions for Implementation	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Complete
1	Two family events per quarter at the school site	Attendance QR codes MTSS Team identification of families PBIS incentives for attendance	SY 2026-27	
2	Creation of Student Voice Parent Group and Leadership Parent Group	Leadership Teachers Student Voice Leaders Admin Team	SY 2026-27	

Position Responsible: Attendance QR codes MTSS Team identification of families PBIS incentives for attendance

Evidence Level

Level 2: Moderate:
MTSS - PBIS

Problem Statements: Connectedness 1

Status Checks

November	February	May

SMART Goal 1 Problem Statements Identifying Connectedness

	Problem Statement	Root Cause
1	Students and parents who are not connected with school are shown in the chronic absenteeism data as non-attenders. 25% of Sparks Middle School Students are considered chronically absent.	Students are not connected with school in both academics (tier one instruction) and extracurricular activities. Lack of elective options and opportunities. Lack extra curricular activities outside of sport. Stakeholder communication needs to be improved through phone contact, email, and parent meetings.

Schoolwide and Targeted Assistance Title I Element Summary

Schoolwide and Targeted Assistance Title I Elements

1.1 Comprehensive Needs Assessment

For all Title 1 Elements, please see addendum.

2.1 School Performance Plan (SPP) developed with appropriate stakeholders

The Site-Based Committee, which includes staff, parents, and community representatives, meets in the fall to review the School Performance Plan, SBAC data, and Nevada School Performance Framework data. Stakeholder feedback is gathered through committee meetings, parent engagement opportunities, and staff collaboration to revise goals and action steps for the upcoming school year.

2.2 Regular monitoring and revision

Status checks are held quarterly through grade-level teams, parent committees, academic department leadership teams, and administrative teams. Schoolwide growth and achievement data are analyzed and adjustments are made to strategies and supports based on student outcomes.

2.3 Available to parents and community in an understandable format and language

The School Performance Plan is posted on the school website in English and Spanish and is shared with families through school communication platforms. Printed copies are available upon request to ensure accessibility for all stakeholders.

2.4 Opportunities for all children to meet State standards

Title I funds support instructional materials, intervention programs, professional learning, and academic support services that provide all students access to rigorous instruction aligned to Nevada Academic Content Standards. These initiatives are designed to improve achievement and close learning gaps across all student groups.

2.5 Increased learning time and well-rounded education

Title I resources provide additional instructional time through intervention periods, tutoring opportunities, and targeted academic support during the school day. Funds also support programs and resources that promote a well-rounded education, including literacy, mathematics, technology integration, and social-emotional learning.

2.6 Address needs of all students, particularly at-risk

Title I-funded initiatives include targeted interventions, progress monitoring, student support programs, and differentiated instruction to address the needs of all learners. Additional supports are provided for students

identified as academically at-risk to ensure equitable access to grade-level standards and opportunities for success.

3.1 Annually evaluate the schoolwide plan

The School Performance Plan is evaluated annually by the administrative team and Site-Based Committee through a review of achievement, growth, attendance, behavior, and perception data. The results of the evaluation are used to revise goals, strategies, and action steps for continuous school improvement.

4.1 Develop and distribute Parent Involvement and Family Engagement Policy

The Parent Involvement and Family Engagement Policy is developed collaboratively with staff, parents, and Site-Based Committee members. The policy is distributed through the school website, family communications, and parent meetings to ensure all families have access to the information.

4.2 Offer flexible number of parent involvement meetings

Parent involvement opportunities are offered at various times throughout the day and evening to accommodate family schedules. Meetings and events are available both in person and virtually to maximize participation and access for all families.

5.1 Determine which students will be served by following local policy

As a schoolwide Title I program, all students are eligible to benefit from the services and supports outlined in the School Performance Plan. Academic and intervention services are prioritized based on student needs identified through multiple data sources.

Schoolwide and Targeted Assistance Title I Elements Personnel

Name	Position	Program	FTE
Carl LaGrone	Assistant Principal		
Christine Schene	Dean of Students		
Dino Moler	Special Education Department Lead		
Janell McGovern	Assistant Principal		
Linda Koyen	Math Coach		
Sarah Gillespie	Math Department Lead		
Sarah Peterson	Principal		
Shelby Vitkus	Team Lead/Teacher Clarity		

Name	Position	Program	FTE
Theresa Shirley	ELA Department Lead		

Community Outreach Activities

Activity	Date	Lesson Learned
6th Grade Ice Cream Social	August 12, 2026	
Back To School Night and Family Resource Fair	August 27, 2026	
SNJ STEM Night 6th Grade	October 21, 2026	
Data Chats- Student-Led Conferences	November 18, 2026	
Family Resource Night 9th Grade Transition Night	February 25, 2027	
Data Chats- Student-Led Conference	March 17, 2026	
5th Grade Future Golden Bear Night	May 18, 2027	
8th Grade Promotion - Celebration	June 3, 2027	