



**KANSAS CITY
KANSAS PUBLIC
SCHOOLS**

**ENVIRONMENTAL
SCAN**

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	2
Executive Summary	6
Findings.....	7
Key Finding 1: A Proud and Diverse District with a Dedicated Staff	7
Key Finding 2: Cautious Optimism About Current Leadership.....	7
Key Finding 3: Issues with District Focus, Integration of Initiatives, and Clarity of Roles and Responsibilities	7
Key Finding 4: Lack of Familiarity Regarding Strategic Direction	8
Key Finding 5: Organizational and Climate Quandaries.....	8
Key Finding 6: Lack of Comprehensive and Cohesive Communication Strategy	8
Key Finding 7: Better Data to Support Measurable Targets and Ongoing Feedback.....	8
Key Finding 8: Strengthen Special Education Services.....	8
Key Finding 9: Areas Targeted for Review by KCKPS.....	9
Key Finding 10: Achievement Measure – Room to Grow but Consider Comparisons.....	9
Recommendations.....	9
Key Recommendation 1: Targeted Manageable Changes That Can make a Difference.....	9
Key Recommendation 2: Alignment and Focus	10
Key Recommendation 3: Building the Culture	10
Key Recommendation 4: Transformation Required	10
Introduction and Methods.....	12
Key Finding 1: A Proud and Diverse District with a Dedicated Staff	16
Finding 1.1 – Proud alumni	17
Finding 1.2 – Diversity is a strength and cultural backgrounds are respected	18
Finding 1.3 – Proud and dedicated staff.....	18
Key Finding 2: Cautious Optimism About Current Leadership.....	20
Finding 2.1 – Constituents are cautiously optimistic: Leadership is off to a good start	20
Finding 2.2 – Will the good start last?	20
Key Finding 3: Issues with District Focus, Integration of Initiatives, and Clarity of Roles and Responsibilities	22
Finding 3.1 – There are many reform initiatives underway within the district. These initiatives add to local school endeavors, but there is too much going on.....	22
Finding 3.2 – District-wide initiatives are not well known and/or not fully implemented with limited follow-up.....	23
Finding 3.3 – There is little integration of reforms into a cohesive strategic plan.....	24
Finding 3.4 – The Strategic Priorities are not aligned with the Strategic Framework.....	25

Finding 3.5 – Roles and responsibilities for those leading district-wide reform are unclear.....	25
Key Finding 4: Lack of Familiarity Regarding Strategic Direction	27
Finding 4.1 – Many constituents are unaware of the Strategic Plan.	27
Finding 4.2 – District administrators were particularly skeptical of the Strategic Plan.	28
Finding 4.3 – Efforts at monitoring the Strategic Plan and other initiatives are not well coordinated.	28
Finding 4.4 – COVID-19 has altered key priorities.	30
Key Finding 5: Organizational and Climate Quandaries.....	32
Finding 5.1 – Trust levels are low, most notably about Central Administration.....	32
Finding 5.2 – Several areas, notably Special Education and Human Resources, need adjustments and development.....	33
Finding 5.3 – There is a lack of clarity regarding central roles.....	33
Finding 5.4 – Safety for students, along with racial discrimination and sexual harassment among students, is a concern.	34
Finding 5.5 – Turnover, especially at senior administrative levels, is a continuing concern.	34
Finding 5.6 – Participants reported positive overall sentiments of the work environment.	35
Key Finding 6: Lack of Comprehensive and Cohesive Communication Strategy	36
Key Finding 6.1 – There are concerns regarding Central Administration communication with school- based personnel regarding reforms/initiatives.	36
Key Finding 6.2 – Building leaders get multiple weekly newsletters with district information – some report it is appreciated but can be cumbersome and could be more focused.....	37
Key Finding 6.4 – Families whose primary language is not English appreciate efforts to translate messaging but feel more can be done at first points of school-based contact (front office staff)...	38
Key Finding 7: Better Data to Support Measurable Targets and Ongoing Feedback.....	40
Key Finding 7.1 – Teachers, principals, and district administrators report using data to drive their decisions, though some concerns were identified.	40
Key Finding 7.2 – Some optimism regarding district-wide improvements with data through adoption of FastBridge and the ATLAS Protocol.	41
Key Finding 7.3 – The quality of data provided is inconsistent, in some cases unclear or completely lacking.	41
Key Finding 7.4 – There is a need for measurable and shared goals for initiatives to allow for follow- up and consideration of outcomes and adjustments to practice.	42
Key Finding 8: Strengthen Special Education Services.....	43
Finding 8.1 – Staff turnover and shortages in special education are big challenges.	43
Finding 8.2 – District personnel were consistent in their message that special education services are problematic.....	44

Finding 8.3 – Trust and communication issues between district administrators and special education teachers/related service providers are significant.	44
Finding 8.4 – Potential compliance challenges were raised.	45
Finding 8.5 – Questions regarding the value of participating in the multi-district Wyandotte County Special Education Cooperative.	45
Key Finding 9: Targeted Areas for Review	46
Finding 9.1 – Early Release Wednesday supported by survey data.....	46
Finding 9.2 – Appropriate district comparisons for KCKPS are needed	47
Finding 9.3 – Surveys suggested need for technology professional development.....	47
Finding 9.4 – Issues with library staff integration and support	48
Key Finding 10: Achievement Measures – Room to Grow but Consider Comparisons	49
Finding 10.1 – Attendance improved until COVID-19	49
Finding 10.2 – Graduation rates improved until COVID-19	50
Finding 10.3 – High school mathematics achievement fell during COVID-19.....	51
Finding 10.4 – Recent elementary school cohorts achieved at lower levels than previous cohorts in mathematics.	52
Finding 10.5 – High school English/ELA Level 1 scores (limited ability) are declining.	53
Finding 10.6 – Uneven progress in elementary school cohorts with reading.....	54
Finding 10.7 – Statewide achievement comparisons show KCKPS has lower achievement, but these comparisons are problematic	55
Finding 10.8 – There are better comparisons districts nationwide from mid-size cities similar to KCKPS in terms of size, demographic make-up, and SES	56
Finding 10.9 – Nationwide comparisons show KCKPS students are achieving higher than KCKPS peers in mathematics	57
Finding 10.10 – Nationwide comparisons show KCKPS students are achieving lower than KCKPS peers in English/Language Arts.....	58
Recommendation 1: Targeted Manageable Changes That Can Make a Difference	60
Recommendation 1.1 – Give the new district administration time and support needed to succeed.	61
Recommendation 1.2 – Celebrate district successes at all levels more visibly – use the alumni base to help spread the word.	61
Recommendation 1.3 – Continue Early Release Wednesday but allow for defined autonomy for the use of the time and strengthen the professional development provided.....	61
Recommendation 1.4 – Provide timely and useful professional development on the use of technology.	61

Recommendation 1.5 – Identify similar school districts from across the country and use them to allow for more meaningful performance comparisons. We recommend several mid-sized city school districts: (1) New Haven, CT (2) Bridgeport, CT (3) Hartford, CT (4) Tyler, TX.	62
Recommendation 2: Alignment and Focus	63
Recommendation 2.1 – Clarify the roles and responsibilities of Central Administration and determine the best administrative size and structure for KCKPS. Develop an organizational chart of all central administrators and offices with clear roles, responsibilities, reporting lines, and access points for all identified positions.	63
Recommendation 2.2 – Develop processes and procedures for district departments with a focus on clear access points to district administration.	63
Recommendation 2.3 – Revise the District Strategic Plan (or Guiding Document) integrating and aligning it to the KESA Accreditation Plan.....	63
Recommendation 2.4 – Limit the number of major reforms and initiatives the district is implementing at any one time and have all reforms align with the Strategic Plan guided by a clear theory of change.	64
Recommendation 3: Building the Culture.....	65
Recommendation 3.1 – Build a culture of trust and safety.	65
Recommendation 3.2 – Build a culture of ongoing two-way communication.....	66
Recommendation 3.3 – Identify and use clear goals, measures of performance, and feedback loops to make appropriate adjustments to practice.	66
Recommendation 4: Transformation Required	68
Recommendation 4.1 – Reform Special Education.....	68
Recommendation 4.2 – Resolve issues with Human Resources.....	69
Appendix A: Survey Responses	71
Appendix B: Survey Question List	89
Appendix C: Interview Protocols.....	97
References	100



**EXECUTIVE
SUMMARY**

Executive Summary

Like most school districts, Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools (KCKPS) has its share of strengths, challenges, and areas for further development and improvement. One unique issue that has influenced the district is the amount of turnover in the Superintendent's office over the past four years. Including Dr. Lane's retirement in June 2018, there have been four Superintendents in the district since then. Such a degree of turnover would be highly disruptive for any period but given all the stress and turmoil the COVID-19 pandemic created since March of 2020, the school district has faced greater uncertainty than most no matter the local circumstances and challenges. Based on the data we collected, the district should consider making some changes moving forward to best serve the students and personnel in Kansas City, Kansas (KCK) and improve outcomes. But given the context and ability to maintain efforts in serving the students and community in KCK, this reality of ongoing service is a testament to the dedication and quality of district personnel.

This report continues the Executive Summary by describing the 10 findings and multiple recommendations presented across four broad areas. Then the report contains a more detailed review of each of the findings and recommendations, followed by appendices with survey instruments, interview protocols, and selected data tables.

Based on surveys, interviews, and reviews of appropriate documents, this environmental scan identified 10 key findings related to the issues proposed for review:

Findings

Key Finding 1: A Proud and Diverse District with a Dedicated Staff

- 1.1 – Proud alumni
- 1.2 – Diversity is a strength and cultural backgrounds are respected
- 1.3 – Proud and dedicated staff

Key Finding 2: Cautious Optimism About Current Leadership

- 2.1 – Constituents are cautiously optimistic: Leadership is off to a good start
- 2.2 – Will the good start last?

Key Finding 3: Issues with District Focus, Integration of Initiatives, and Clarity of Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1 – There are many reform initiatives underway within the district. These initiatives add to local school endeavors, but there is too much going on.
- 3.2 – District-wide initiatives are not well known and/or not fully implemented with limited follow-up.
- 3.3 – There is little integration of reforms into a cohesive strategic plan.
- 3.4 – The Strategic Priorities are not aligned with the Strategic Framework.
- 3.5 – Roles and responsibilities for those leading district-wide reform are unclear.

Key Finding 4: Lack of Familiarity Regarding Strategic Direction

- 4.1 – Many constituents are unaware of the Strategic Plan.
- 4.2 – District administrators were particularly skeptical of the Strategic Plan.
- 4.3 – Efforts at monitoring the Strategic Plan and other initiatives are not well coordinated.
- 4.4 – COVID-19 has altered key priorities.

Key Finding 5: Organizational and Climate Quandaries

- 5.1 – Trust levels are low, most notably about Central Administration.
- 5.2 – Several areas, most notably Special Education and Human Resources, need adjustments and development.
- 5.3 – There is a lack of clarity regarding central roles.
- 5.4 – Safety for students, along with racial discrimination and sexual harassment among students, is a concern.
- 5.5 – Turnover, especially at senior administration levels, is a continuing concern.
- 5.6 – Participants reported positive sentiments about the work environment.

Key Finding 6: Lack of Comprehensive and Cohesive Communication Strategy

- 6.1 – There are concerns regarding Central Administration communication with school-based personnel regarding reforms/initiatives.
- 6.2 – Building leaders get multiple weekly newsletters with district information – some report it is appreciated but can be cumbersome and could be more focused.
- 6.3 – District communications and school-based communications over electronic and social media can get overwhelming, especially for parents and families, notably for those with multiple children attending KCKPS.
- 6.4 – Families whose primary language is not English appreciate efforts to translate messaging but feel more can be done at first points of school-based contact (front office staff).

Key Finding 7: Better Data to Support Measurable Targets and Ongoing Feedback

- 7.1 – Teachers, principals, and district administrators report using data to drive their decisions, though some concerns were identified.
- 7.2 – Some participants expressed optimism regarding district-wide improvements with data through adoption of FastBridge and the ATLAS Protocol.
- 7.3 – The quality of data provided is inconsistent, in some cases unclear, or completely lacking.
- 7.4 – There is a need for measurable and shared goals for initiatives to allow for follow-up and consideration of outcomes and adjustments to practice.

Key Finding 8: Strengthen Special Education Services

- 8.1 - Staff turnover and shortages in special education are big challenges.

- 8.2 – District personnel were consistent in their message that special education services are problematic.
- 8.3 – Trust and communication issues between district administrators and special education teachers/related service providers are significant.
- 8.4 – Potential compliance challenges were raised.
- 8.5 – Questions were voiced regarding the value of participating in the multi-district Wyandotte County Special Education Cooperative.

Key Finding 9: Areas Targeted for Review by KCKPS

- 9.1 – Early Release Wednesday supported by survey data
- 9.2 – Appropriate district comparisons for KCKPS are needed
- 9.3 – Surveys suggested need for technology professional development
- 9.4 – Issues with library staff integration and support

Key Finding 10: Achievement Measure – Room to Grow but Consider Comparisons

- 10.1 – Attendance improved until COVID-19.
- 10.2 – Graduation rates improved until COVID-19.
- 10.3 – High school mathematics achievement fell during COVID-19.
- 10.4 – Recent elementary school cohorts achieved at lower levels than previous cohorts in mathematics.
- 10.5 – High school English/ELA Level 1 scores are declining (which is good).
- 10.7 – Recent elementary school cohorts achieved at higher levels than previous cohorts.
- 10.8 – Statewide achievement comparisons show KCKPS has lower achievement, but these comparisons are problematic.
- 10.9 – There are better comparisons districts nationwide from mid-size cities similar to KCKPS in terms of size, demographic make-up, and SES.
- 10.10 – Nationwide comparisons show KCKPS students are achieving higher than KCKPS peers in mathematics.
- 10.11 – Nationwide comparisons show KCKPS students are achieving lower than KCKPS peers in English/Language Arts.

Recommendations

Key Recommendation 1: Targeted Manageable Changes That Can make a Difference

- 1.1 – Give the new district administration time and support needed to succeed.
- 1.2 – Celebrate district successes at all levels more visibly – use the alumni base to help spread the word.
- 1.3 – Continue Early Release Wednesday but allow for defined autonomy for the use of the time and strengthen the professional development provided.
- 1.4 – Provide timely and useful professional development on the use of technology.

1.5 – Identify similar school districts from across the country and use them to allow for more meaningful performance comparisons. We recommend several mid-sized city school districts: (1) New Haven, CT (2) Bridgeport, CT (3) Hartford, CT (4) Tyler, TX.

Key Recommendation 2: Alignment and Focus

2.1 – Clarify roles and responsibilities of Central Administration and determine the best administrative size and structure for KCKPS.

Develop an organizational chart of all central administrators and offices with clear roles, responsibilities, reporting lines, and access points for all identified positions.

2.2 – Develop processes and procedures for district departments with a focus on clear access points to district administration

2.3 – Revise the District Strategic Plan (or Guiding Document) integrating and aligning it to the KESA Accreditation Plan

2.4 – Limit the number of major reforms and initiatives the district is implementing at any one time and have all reforms align with the Strategic Plan guided by a clear theory of change

Key Recommendation 3: Building the Culture

3.1 – Build a culture of trust and safety.

Trust and safety were significant issues in the district. Specifically, the trust of central administration and safety for students was a key issue. Changing the culture will require time and effort.

3.2 – Build a culture of ongoing two-way communication.

The district does a lot of communication, and information is shared across all constituents. But concerns were raised about communication, most specifically regarding reform implementation by district administrators responsible for the efforts. District administrators should be open to having school professionals visit with them about concerns and administrators should visit schools to understand local needs.

3.3 – Identify and use clear goals, measures of performance, and feedback loops to make appropriate adjustments to practice.

Questions emerged about the quality and usefulness of data often shared with schools, timeliness of receiving data, and feedback loops for responding to data with questions that arise. Changing the culture around data use and effectiveness will take time and encompass multiple efforts.

Key Recommendation 4: Transformation Required

4.1 – Reform Special Education.

KCKPS is currently a part of the Wyandotte County Special Education Cooperative. Some concerns about the equity in terms of costs and services received by the partners were raised. Regarding services, issues with staffing, communication, training, trust, respect, compliance, and related concerns were reported at varying levels of severity by those working in the schools.

4.2 – Resolve issues with Human Resources.

This evaluation did not directly review the Human Resource (HR) operation in KCKPS (another contractor conducted a review). HR is an area that could benefit from attention and further development.



INTRODUCTION AND METHODS

Introduction and Methods

The School of Education and Human Sciences at the University of Kansas contracted with the Board of Education of USD 500 – the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools (KCKPS) to conduct an environmental scan of the work and operations of the school district. The goals set out for the project included:

1. Identify and understand the current district academic structure and operation, including varying reform initiatives underway.
 - a. Utilizing the organizational structure report for Kansas Association of School Boards (KASB), examine and analyze the operating procedures, and review how various offices across the district are integrated, including:
 - i. Special Education
 - ii. Instructional Technology
 - b. Identify ongoing reform projects including data being collected, program effectiveness, responsible unit, collaboration with other academic efforts, etc.
 - c. Review data the district is collecting and how are the data utilized and shared. What are the continuous improvement/quality assurance processes in place?
 - d. Inquire into specified areas for examination, such as Special Education, Instructional Technology, Secondary school course equity, and libraries.
2. Review communication systems and strategies being employed.
 - a. Analyze communication processes and information sharing strategies.
3. Examine the integration of programs and services in USD 500.
 - a. How well are students being served?
4. Collect data examining the management of culture in the district specifically in the areas of sexual harassment, racial discrimination, and workplace safety and security.
5. Analyze the Strategic Plan and various analyses of its implementation and effectiveness.
6. Identify benchmark districts so current practices can be compared with similar school districts across the U.S.
7. Understand perceptions of USD 500.
 - a. Gather input from students, teachers, staff, administrators, school board members, and parents/community members regarding perceptions of the district, how well it is serving the schools and meeting the strategic priorities and themes.
8. Provide recommendations for potential changes and plan for moving forward.

The contract was finalized on November 22, 2021. To gather data and conduct the environmental scan, surveys were created and administered in eight languages, individual and focus group interviews were conducted, and existing documents and available data were analyzed. In addition, data were secured from the Stanford Center for Education Policy Analysis

(SEDA) to identify potential benchmarking districts that could be used for comparative purposes.

In all, surveys were administered to and at least partially completed by 3,204 KCK students, personnel, and parents. There were also 717 open-ended comments. The counts and survey response rates are as follows:

<i>Participant Group</i>	<i>Total Responses</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>% Responded</i>
Building Administrators	90	95	94.74
District Administrators	17	96	17.71
Teachers and certified staff	883	1984	44.51
Classified Staff	894	1723	51.89
HS Students	539	6353	8.48
Parents	781	22761	3.43

Focus group interviews were conducted with a total of 100 individuals associated with the school district. Specifically, the interviews included:

- School Board members (7)
- High School Students (5)
- Teachers, Professional, and Certified Staff (22)
- Building Administrators (11)
- District Administrators (17)
- Parents (23)
- Community Members (5)
- District Alumni (10)

In addition, feedback was sought from representatives from two groups currently engaged with the district, the National Center for Urban School Transformation (NCUST) and the Kansas Technical Assistance Network (TASN), through interviews and electronic open-ended surveys. Multiple meetings were also held with the district superintendent, Dr. Anna Stubblefield, and two with district administrators.

Other data reviewed included reports from the Kansas State Department of Education, a 2020 Data Profile Report compiled by Greenbush Service Center, the analysis of Superintendent Stubblefield's Town Hall meetings held in 2021, Kansas Education Systems Accreditation (KESA) reports, Strategic Plan Monitoring reports prepared by the Greenway Strategy Group, the KCK Literacy Audit (2015, prepared by AIR - American Institutes for Research), and other reports and documents compiled by the school district and staff.

According to the most recent District Accountability (2020-2021) and Licensed Personnel and Non-Licensed Personnel (2021-2022) reports, KCK Public Schools includes approximately 21,990

students, 1,969 teachers and certified professional staff, 116 central office administrators, 102 building administrators, and 1,198 non-licensed personnel. It is a highly diverse school district with about 54% of students identifying as Hispanic, 25% African American, 10% White, and 11% Other. About 88% of students are on free or reduced lunch programs. The district reports 65 languages are spoken and represented across the district. There are no districts in the state of Kansas of comparative size, ethnic diversity, and socio-economic make-up.



FINDINGS

Key Finding 1:

A Proud and Diverse District with a Dedicated Staff

Community members, teachers, and district alumni all expressed a great deal of pride for the school district and city. Participants noted that the racial and ethnic diversity of the district is an asset that the district should celebrate and promote. Participants expressed that their positive sentiments for the district were sustained even when they were not happy with leadership or were concerned with the challenges the district was facing. We heard from teachers who loved the schools and the community so much that they wanted to stay and be part of solutions to district challenges rather than to leave. We describe three findings in this area.

Finding 1.1 – Proud alumni

Pride for the KCK school district was most evident in the responses given during focus group interviews. Alumni of the district stated the district was the foundation for their success when asked, “What are you most proud of as a KCKPS alum?” Quotes such as, “I am one of many alumni doing amazing things” and “I am a reminder that you can” came from focus group interviews. One alum, who now is a teacher, mentioned this feeling of pride in one of our focus groups:

When outsiders hear of KCK sometimes it's not always the positive that they refer to. And so, I will say: I'm proud to be a graduate of KCK. I'm proud to be a graduate of Schlagle High School because the belief, the perception is that students that come from this area that come from those schools *can't* and I am a reminder, [the other participant] is a reminder, and many others [are reminders] that *you can* and that has to be reflected upon.

I tell my students and parents I'm from the Dotte [Wyandotte]. I'm Dotte born and raised. And so just knowing that no, it wasn't easy, [you] didn't have things handed to you could have gone so many other ways. But we still stayed the course. We did that on our own, however, we had a community that supported and believed in us. We had our parents pushing us and we had great teachers and counselors and principals and staff and custodians...that pushed us and saw something in us and challenged us to be better than we are to be better each day.

Another participant, who has worked in cities across the United States, but has since returned to the area said, “My entire family has done well, and we've all gone through those schools. Everybody did well. And I don't necessarily mean well as in money. I mean, well, as in finding whatever it is, you're supposed to be doing.”

These quotes are not isolated. This feeling of pride emanated across alumni. This is not to say that these individuals felt that the district had no challenges. Rather, it suggests that graduates

of the district have pride in the district and hope to see the district overcome any challenges they currently face.

Finding 1.2 – Diversity is a strength and cultural backgrounds are respected

Participants expressed the feeling that diversity is a strength of the district and cautioned the district not to lose sight of this strength. Some felt that the district may even be in the processes of “running from that” a little bit. They emphasized embracing and supporting diversity even more because it is a core strength the district possesses. This sentiment was strongly expressed by one community member who noted that the district has grown to be more racially and ethnically diverse now than ever:

I think a major strength is diversity. As I stated, I grew up in Wyandotte County, and I've been here a good while, for most portions of my life. At one time, it wasn't diverse like it is now. And we have to take advantage of that. When I talk about diversity, I'll have to mention that ethnicity is involved here. With me growing up here, it hasn't always been like that. It has always been Black, White basically. Now that has changed dramatically. And that's a strength, but it won't be a strength if we don't take advantage of it. It's right there for us. It'll get away from us.

Another participant, an alum, added:

The diversity of Kansas City, Kansas is what makes it what it is. And it was diverse, even back in the day. But now it's kind of like in your face. And I think sometimes [the district] seem[s] to kind of run from it. That's just my feeling about that. They just seem to run away from it sometimes. And then also, I think with, with an area that has lost a bit of its population, because, again, when we were children, and when we were growing up, it was a very thriving community. And now it's, it's it really hurts me to see some areas that are now just kind of like shells of itself. And again, I think that if you have good schools, good quality schools, what have you, people will come.

The surveys suggested that the district does honor the diversity and the cultural backgrounds of students, teachers, and leaders. According to the survey data, there were high levels of agreement to the statement “my cultural backgrounds are respected at my school” across participant stakeholder groups: students had 72% agreement or strong agreement, teachers and certified staff had 82.8%, classified staff had 81.6%, and building administration had 85.7%. This is an encouraging sign, suggesting that the district knows of the diversity and makes sure to respect cultural differences at the school level.

Finding 1.3 – Proud and dedicated staff

The pride for KCKPS also emerged in staff interviews and data. While pride was not a question on any of the surveys, we found mention of pride for the district in the comments left by respondents. Comments such as, “I love KCKPS”, “Our school is amazing,” and “I work at a great

school with great administration” were a few of the comments given from parents and staff. Another teacher noted that this pride sustains them even in challenging times, saying:

I love this community. I'm not leaving until they throw me out of here. But what the thing is at the end of the day, they got to take better care of us. Our county, our city deserves better.

One sign of this dedication is that 883 teachers and certified staff and 894 classified staff responded to the surveys that we administered. These are 44.51% and 51.89% of each group. This is an incredible response rate, as surveys like these typically have much lower response rates. In addition to the willingness of staff to fill out surveys, they left more than 500 total comments to add to the survey responses. Some of these comments were several paragraphs long. This overwhelming response from staff suggests that they care enough about the condition of KCKPS to voice their opinion, and not just in terms of rushing through a survey for compliance reasons. They care enough to write detailed messages that describe their perceptions.

In particular, teachers in KCK are a dedicated group. The median number of years of experience the faculty have in the district is six years, the mean being more than nine. Of all the classified staff and teachers in the district, 64.2% have been in the district for more than five years and 50.7% have been in the district for more than 10 years.

To put these numbers in context, a recent study on the teacher labor market shows about 57% of the public teaching force across the United States had more than 10 years of experience, but about 44.6% of new teachers across the United States leave the workforce within the first five years (Ingersoll et al., 2018).

These comparative numbers suggest that in some cohorts the district is losing more teachers than the national average and in some they are losing less. From the teachers who stay, as indicated in our interviews, they stay because of the care they have for the community and are often committed despite encountering past difficulties with district leadership. The current leadership should recognize this commitment. Meanwhile, schools are diverse, and most students feel that this diversity is respected. A committed staff and a diverse school community are assets that KCK public schools cannot afford to overlook.

Key Finding 2: Cautious Optimism About Current Leadership

KCKPS has had four superintendents or interim superintendents since 2018. This level of leadership churn is difficult for all—staff, students, parents, and community. Additionally, the impact COVID-19 had, and continues to have on our public schools, cannot be ignored. Even given all this, we found cautious excitement and optimism for Dr. Anna Stubblefield in the comments gathered from the focus group interviews and surveys. Many people expressed that they liked the direction of the district under Dr. Stubblefield’s leadership. Words used to describe Dr. Stubblefield included vision, transparency, openness, and visible. There were two major findings about the current leadership.

Finding 2.1 – Constituents are cautiously optimistic: Leadership is off to a good start

The sentiments of cautious optimism came through during several focus groups that we held. Members of the School Board appreciate the methodical approach that current district leadership is taking in assessing the issues of the district and listening to stakeholders on how to fix the problems that exist. They are not rushing to make quick fixes, rather they are, as one Board member said:

She's doing it right. She's, she's looking at all of our departments, all of our internal structures and processes and people and making sure that people are placed in the right spots that fit their skill set and what they want to do and, and if they're not, then how do we coach them up? Or how do we shift them around? And we've seen some of that, and looking at departments to make sure that, okay, like, why are we doing things this way? Or why not? I think having these conversations, doing this type of analysis, I think that is super important that, that we're taking the time to kind of take a step back and look at the big picture and all the mechanics of what's happening, to understand where the holdups are.

Other Board members agree, really appreciating the time the new leadership is spending listening to stakeholders across the district:

One of the things that I have a great deal of respect with Dr. Stubblefield is she is moving in the right direction to listen to the constituents, meeting the students, the parents, and even the community, and then putting in a plan in to place as to how we can move in a more positive direction.

Finding 2.2 – Will the good start last?

This optimism is expressed across many stakeholders throughout the district, but it is a cautious one, mainly due to the amount of turnover the district has seen during the last five years. There has been so much turnover, that it is hard to keep track, or as one district administrator said:

We are, what, [at our] fifth superintendent in four years or something crazy like that. Not only that, everything the Chief of HR, Deputy Superintendent, all those. So having district with that, for now almost 15 years and I'm more confused than ever.

Leaders in the building reflected this cautious optimism, keeping a more measured tone with their assessment of the new leadership's first year. One principal said it was too early to tell if new leadership is effective, saying "It's I don't know yet. It's kind of hard to tell yet. It's her first year. Some decisions and some things are being done. I appreciate this. There's been more communication and more transparency." While others like what the new leadership is doing, but have caution because they are worried that even if leadership do a great job, they are going to leave in a few years, and are particularly grateful for those who stay:

You know, I think, for me, in my third year, third superintendent, I saw healing last year with Dr. Miguel when she came in, and she did some efforts to try to do that, and kind of put people at ease. And she's still in the district, and she's awesome. And an awesome asset. I feel like Dr. Stubblefield has doubled down on that. You know, I always was told that, you know, a good leader always comes in in the first like year or so they make some changes, but they're primarily observing. And then, you know, communicating about those observations, and I think Dr. Stubblefield has been doing that. So, I'm really hopeful moving forward. But like, you know, from an anxiety standpoint, I worry like, is she going to be here for at least for three to five years. You know, cuz that worries me. Cuz I feel like we're in a good place moving that way. But what I don't want is for it to get blown up again.

Community leaders, reflecting on a longer time span with the district, say that consistency can happen. They have seen it before in KCK and think that consistency helped in the past:

And I think what USD 500 always had going for it is consistency, specifically for leadership, right. And I do have the perspective because of where, where I work, and where we operate in a bi-state area to look at different districts and see how there has been turmoil in other places, and it happens for a variety of different reasons. But I think consistency and leadership, direction, you know, strategy, like matters in any organization, but it matters, it really matters in the school district.

While the first year under new leadership has drawn praise, stakeholders are not fully ready yet to embrace the new leadership because they are worried that the good times will not last very long. This makes perfect sense, as they have experienced much instability at the high levels of leadership in recent times.

Key Finding 3:

Issues with District Focus, Integration of Initiatives, and Clarity of Roles and Responsibilities

A district as diverse as KCKPS, with 54 schools (including pre-schools and alternative programs), almost 3,400 certified and other employees, and approximately 22,000 students, has a lot going on. The sheer number of school reform efforts underway across the schools is enormous. The Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Education Resource and Initiative Inventory conducted in 2021 identified 478 distinct efforts in effect. While this number includes all efforts at individual schools, the large number of district wide reform initiatives is disquieting. Certainly, the educational and learning challenges facing KCKPS demand exploring and utilizing approaches that work to help students, but no school or district has the capacity to do so many things at once, even with the best of intentions and potential promise for any single reform. As one teacher succinctly said during an interview, “I’m concerned that we are being asked to prioritize too many new strategies and initiatives.” As detailed below, our study revealed five findings in this area.

Finding 3.1 – There are many reform initiatives underway within the district. These initiatives add to local school endeavors, but there is too much going on.

Employees across the district want what is best for the KCKPS students. Nearly 70% of the high school students surveyed agreed that they receive the support services and resources needed to be successful. At the school level, nearly 70% of teachers agreed their building has clear goals that can be analyzed and have progress reported; almost 83% of building administrators agreed with this. Clearly, the will to support students is ubiquitous across the district.

However, when it comes to reform efforts and district-wide initiatives for change, more than good will is needed. Successful implementation of reforms requires buy-in, understanding of the issue being ameliorated, and multiple investments and resources like time, money, training, ongoing support, oversight, feedback, and correction to be successful.

Comments by teachers highlight the frustration so many expressed that doing too much engenders:

It is all too much. The constant change of what we are teaching. The constant change of curriculum.

So many initiatives but not rolled out slowly or thoughtfully.

The district keeps putting more and more on the teachers without proper training, resources, or support.

This is too many changes happening at the same time

Finding 3.2 – District-wide initiatives are not well known and/or not fully implemented with limited follow-up

We asked teachers and certified staff, building administrators, and district administrators how familiar they were with eight of the district-wide reforms and initiatives. For teachers, 43.3% were familiar with the district Strategic Plan, 48.6% the science of reading and structured literacy, 57% the focused model of instruction with Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) and Co-teaching Alignments. The five others were all above 70% familiarity. For building administrators, 49.5% were familiar with the Strategic Plan, only 38.7% with the science of reading and structured literacy, 58.1% with culturally relevant, inclusive, and sustaining practices. All the others were rated with 62-64% familiarity. District administrators were most familiar with the MTSS framework and culturally relevant inclusive and sustaining practices (both at 70%), but only 30% were familiar with the science of reading and structured literacy, 35% with the Focused Model of Instruction with SIOP and Co-teaching Alignments, 50% with the Strategic Plan and with the use of district provided Guaranteed Viable Curriculum (GVC) and resources, 65% with behavioral and social emotional learning and with trauma-sensitive and resilient schools. For many of the key reforms underway, including the Strategic Plan, less than 60% of the members of key constituencies were not familiar with initiatives, in some cases less than half. Implementation success is impossible with such large numbers of players unfamiliar with the work.

Certainly, several of these initiatives may be specific to varying school levels and not involve or be relevant to all those surveyed, but the lack of familiarity across groups with key efforts being implemented by the district likely underscores that too much is happening at once. Perhaps more troublesome, it may indicate that the effective implementation of key reforms is lacking. Indeed, interviews highlighted that while there is a lot happening, this often comes at the expense of not receiving the requisite support, training, data, and guidance needed for success. It is significant that among teachers and certified professional staff only about half (50.7%) of those responding indicated that they agreed they were familiar with varying reforms and initiatives in the district that might strengthen their student's performance. Only 26% of teachers, 37% of building administrators, and 27% of district administrators agreed that there is adequate training and support to implement district reforms or initiatives. District office departments shared limited knowledge to what other departments may be implementing other than MTSS and expressed concern about a lack of tangible academic goals that would guide their district's curriculum and instruction work. Such lack of understanding and support suggests that successful reform implementation is unlikely. And while multiple reforms are being implemented, along with the lack of training and knowledge about reforms, interview data revealed that many teachers were not clear who to go to for questions, direction, or assistance.

Finding 3.3 – There is little integration of reforms into a cohesive strategic plan.

We asked survey questions about goal clarity and how well reforms were integrated into a cohesive plan. For teachers and certified staff, the response to the question about the district having clear goals that can be analyzed with progress being reported showed that only 53.4% agreed or strongly agreed. For building administrators this was at 62%, but for district leaders only 33.3%. More specifically, on the question regarding reforms and initiatives across the district being integrated into a cohesive plan, the teacher/certified staff level of agreement was at 23.2%, building administrators at 41.4%, and district administrators only at 20%.

It was evident that there is not a cohesive guiding strategy bringing all the reform efforts together. As one group of outside experts working with KCKPS indicated, what is also lacking is a defining theory of change guiding the multiple efforts underway. This refers to a clear understanding of the change process and the necessary ingredients for success. The district needs to understand what needs to be done to ensure change is implemented as designed. During interviews with teachers, building administrators, district administrators, and outside groups we often heard about how siloed the district is and how offices do not necessarily communicate particularly well. Note these comments:

The issue is that the district is often siloed and divided by initiatives and therefore it is difficult to maximize efforts and reduce the variance of implementation from school to school to know what is effective and what is not effective.

KCK is a reactionary system, that operates in siloes.

We are constantly in a reactionary mode.

We seem to start new programs before we ever see the data about the prior program.

After working in this district for several superintendents and leadership teams, I can say that communication and authenticity are the two most lacking elements in the central office.

I have to make a point to watch the Board meetings to know what's going on.

There was an added concern about communication from the district administration regarding reforms, with only about 1/3 of teachers and just over half of building and district administrators suggesting this is done effectively. Additionally, comments from teachers shared a breakdown in communication from District Office down to the teacher level, noting that purpose for change was often lost or not communicated. The lack of integration of reforms creates a situation where successful implementation of initiatives is very challenging.

Finding 3.4 – The Strategic Priorities are not aligned with the Strategic Framework.

This finding directly examines the Strategic Plan. A number of those we interviewed highlighted that the Strategic Plan does not focus enough on student achievement whereas the Strategic Framework does. Many were not even aware of the specifics of the plan. We heard comments from building administrators suggesting that decisions about it were made centrally, “but weren’t well communicated to the schools.” Others were not even certain if it was being assessed.

In our analysis, the Strategic Plan in place has four strategic themes and three Strategic Plan Framework Priority Student Outcomes that are all very broad and not seemingly well integrated. We reviewed the current Strategic Plan, and the separate priorities do not appear well integrated with the framework. There are suggested targets for the three Priority Student Outcomes, but it appears that few if any of those in schools are aware of or use these in their work. One criticism we heard was that the Plan was developed with mostly central administrators and not much involvement of those in schools. One of the experts from an outside group working on other initiatives explained, “there is not an instructional framework that articulates the features of excellent instruction in KCK schools.”

We observed in the analysis of the Strategic Plan that there is no ability to discern progress or quantifiable goals to be reached and within what timeline (if any) these areas should show growth.

Finding 3.5 – Roles and responsibilities for those leading district-wide reform are unclear.

What was clear is that there is a problem with clarity of roles and responsibilities for district staff. Perhaps telling in this regard, there is no clear and precise organizational chart with a description of roles and responsibilities clearly set out. As a result, KCKPS educators do not necessarily know who to contact with specific concerns and questions related to reform efforts. In the district administrator survey, only about 1/3 agreed that staff at all levels are informed of their roles and responsibilities in supporting and implementing reforms and initiatives. Among the most common refrains we heard during interviews was that it was unclear who to go to for help. In one interview with six district administrators, all agreed with a statement one made that there is not any clarity about definitions regarding roles and responsibilities. Part of this was due to rapid turnover in many offices and the concomitant loss of memory and knowledge that vacancies often cause. But there was a sense that many expressed that it was unclear who to contact if a teacher or someone involved in a reform initiative had a question needing resolution.

Moreover, there was some tension expressed about how the district has gone about implementing reforms and changes, much of it related to the lack of clarity. Note these comments from our open-ended survey responses with teachers and certified professionals:

The district makes decisions and drops deadlines and changes on schools and staff in a way that does not show respect for them.

There is confusion from administration and staff around CKLA and its implementation. Initiatives are started and teachers are not adequately informed of them. Then there is lack of follow-through.

Nothing is proactive or discussed. Concerns and issues go on for months, and teachers are blamed.

There is no accountability in the district for following through on plans or initiatives.
None!

Our organizational structure at District Office is a joke.

We are no longer allowed to walk through the District Office halls or come by and visit.
That was a change made by the prior superintendent.

These data suggest that there are issues across the district with focus, integration of reform initiatives, and clarity of roles and responsibilities in carrying out reforms.

Key Finding 4:

Lack of Familiarity Regarding Strategic Direction

Strategic plans provide focus and direction for any organization. A strong strategic vision and plan helps an organization identify and focus on its key needs. This planning allows all major efforts of the organization to meet the identified goals and needs. While KCKPS does have a strategic plan built with the support of external consultants prior to the pandemic, there was not great familiarity with the plan or its components across district stakeholders. The lack of awareness impacts the success of the plan and hinders collective focus on strategic goals. Four findings are offered related to the district's strategic direction.

Finding 4.1 – Many constituents are unaware of the Strategic Plan.

Stakeholders across the district did not feel they had a strong grasp on the district's Strategic Plan. Of all the reforms that respondents were asked to rate in terms of familiarity, the Strategic Plan consistently scored at the bottom. Only about half the district and building administrators said they were familiar with the Plan, and only 43.3% of teachers said they were familiar with the Strategic Plan.

The issues of the district's Strategic Plan were especially apparent in how the district administrators viewed how the Strategic Plan was supported at the building level. Nearly 67% of district administrators either said they felt building administrators were able to support the implementation of the Strategic Plan, and 42.8% of leaders said they either strongly disagreed, disagreed, or did not know if the district monitors the Strategic Plan. Interestingly, the overwhelming majority of building leaders and teachers agreed that their building aligned with the Strategic Plan, even though they were not sure what the Plan was or how it was monitored. Building administrators agreed or strongly agreed with this alignment question at a 77.7% rate, while teachers were at 63.8%. Related to this, 57.2% of building administrators agreed or strongly agreed that the district monitors their school's implementation of the Strategic Plan.

The survey concerns regarding the Strategic Plan were explained in the comments made during interviews. A district level administrator summarized it this way:

I think if you ask people in the system ... what is their understanding of the Strategic Plan? A lot of them would say, I don't know what that really is, or I know we have one because they've mentioned it in maybe a board meeting, or a meeting here and there. But it is not the driver of the work in this system.

This confusion over strategic planning emerged in teacher and professional staff interviews as well. Teachers have had varying levels of understanding about the Strategic Plan over the years, saying things like, "I know, it's changed quite a few times in the 11 years I've been here. And I feel like at the beginning, I knew it pretty well. I don't feel like we've really gotten an update"

and, “I've been here eight years now. And I have noticed it changed quite a bit. But if I were to rattle it off for you right now, I couldn't.” One of the outside consultants we interviewed summarized the problem administrators revealed by explaining, “the current Strategic Plan is broad and vague and was made in isolation.” Another group working in multiple KCK schools indicated that, “we have not seen implementation of a strategic plan in the schools with which we work.”

Finding 4.2 – District administrators were particularly skeptical of the Strategic Plan.

The building and district leaders, those ostensibly most responsible for the implementation and monitoring of any district plan, were very critical in their assessment of the KCKPS Strategic Plan. Again, only about half of the building and district administrators indicated in the survey that they were familiar with the Strategic Plan.

The sentiments of the district and building administrators echoed those of the teachers. One leader explained, “If you asked me to articulate what the district's Strategic Plan would be, I mean, I know, I could probably pick out some words...but I can't articulate what that plan looks like.” A principal stated:

You know when [the other interview participant] was talking about the Strategic Plan, I Googled it. And I was like, ohhh, I have seen some of those things...but it's not, it's not anything that I see brought front and center through curriculum instruction during PD, it's not anything that, you know, even in my building.

One administrator simply stated, “I don't feel like I'm in my role, I'm given enough training and understanding of the Strategic Plan.” Another district administrator put it this way, “It's kind of like in other districts, (the Strategic Plan) has as its focal point teaching and learning. It's not necessarily the focal point here in KCK.”

Survey data highlight the concerns administrators had regarding the Strategic Plan. Only 46.7% of the district administrators agreed or strongly agreed with the survey question that various district departments support the implementation of the Strategic Plan and only 33.3% felt that building administrators support the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

Finding 4.3 – Efforts at monitoring the Strategic Plan and other initiatives are not well coordinated.

Due in part to the widespread turnover in district personnel, the excessive number of initiatives currently in place in the district, and the lack of or confusion regarding success metrics, monitoring of the Strategic Plan and other district initiatives are not well coordinated. Survey data showed that only 13.3% of district administrators and 57.1% of building administrators agreed that the Strategic Plan was monitored. In addition, there is no consistent collection of relevant data to measure progress of the Strategic Plan or the success of other goals and initiatives (further discussed in Finding 7).

What was very clear is that district reforms and initiatives are not integrated into a cohesive plan. According to survey data, only 20% of district administrators and 23.2% of teachers and certified staff believed that reforms and initiatives in the district are integrated into a cohesive plan. Yet, 77.1% of building administrators indicated that their building goals, initiatives, and strategic plan were aligned.

One outside consultant summarized the problem given the many ongoing initiatives and lack of coordination: “It is difficult to maximize efforts and reduce variance of implementation from school to school to know what is effective and what is not effective.” Teachers, too, were vocal in their concerns about the lack of planning and coordination. Note these comments, typical of many:

What I dislike about this district is that every new thing seems to be an afterthought. No decisions are planned in advance, and everything is delivered last minute to teachers...new mandates and new curricula or ways of teaching are not properly introduced, and we are not given proper training on anything.

The district makes decisions and drops deadlines and changes on schools and staff. I feel that the district office tends to work in siloes without discussing programs, initiatives, rollouts, or anything in a larger group so that the information comes without fully developed plans, awareness of other demands on teachers and very poor support.

District administrators shared some similar concerns, but the issues of the lack of coordination and alignment were powerful. Some examples include:

You have got people just doing kind of what they want to do and focusing on particular, on certain areas and making those decisions. ...it's kind of like they want sometimes to appear to understand and want to be in compliance. But once you leave the building, they go back to doing some of the old practices that they should not engage in. And that is something that I worry about building to building because it does look different, and it has a great implication.

I think one area that we certainly could strengthen is identifying one systemic approach. There is little alignment of the Strategic Plan and school improvement. There is a strategic plan, it is just that people don't know what it is. It is not in every conversation.

A School Board member summarized the problems in a succinct way:

They've just got to figure out how to make it (strategic plan) work. It looks good on paper, because you've got to have a plan. But how do you work the plan? We've been

so busy putting out fires, because we dealt with COVID. And then we dealt with COVID again.

Finding 4.4 – COVID-19 has altered key priorities.

As the School Board member quoted in the prior section clearly indicated, COVID-19 has had a big impact on the schools. As one school board member indicated regarding the Strategic Plan, “COVID has changed everything.” To provide education to all students during the pandemic, priorities of the district changed and understandably went through dramatic alterations. Staffing shortages, illness, remote learning, technology challenges, social-emotional needs, providing special services, and concerns of staff for their own safety and health were on the forefront of educator’s minds over the past two years. While this is no surprise to anyone who has been engaged with schools during the pandemic, we highlight some of the issues and concerns by sharing comments from our interviews and comments in response to open-ended survey questions:

Last year when remote, our admin changed students’ teachers several times, and parents did not like having 3-4 different classroom teachers for their students. There were even classes that were set by administration to be for special education students only, and ELL only, when we returned to In-Person, which does not provide FAPE for students.

In December, the special education staff at our school was told that we would be put on a rotation for substituting for General Education teachers. We asked them how we would make up service minutes for our students, and we were told we’d just “figure it out later”. We asked about not holding substitute or teaching licenses (I am a Speech Language Pathologist, so I don’t hold a teaching license), and we were told that, that doesn’t matter.

When I say that I feel unsafe and not in agreement with district policy, it is due to COVID-19 protocols. Do you all realize that we have about 1/3 of staff out sick at almost every building?! That we are operating with about 1/3 of students gone? We are no longer mitigating for this virus- we are allowing it to explode in our schools and take out our students and staff.

I am tired of covering for other teachers, having no plan time, having no substitute teachers, having extra students in each class and worrying that my asthmatic self is going to land in an ER because my school district leaders are sitting idle as we pass COVID around to each other.

I also feel that nobody is acknowledging the pandemic anymore. We are not safe, kids are not safe, and safety protocols are not being followed. In fact, they are twisting them

to keep kids and adults in the building even when they are sick. It's disturbing that we are having attendance contests during a pandemic, when people should be encouraged to stay home when they are sick. And lastly, it also is disturbing that the GVC has not changed to allow for most students missing last year. It's like the elephant in the room. How are we supposed to carry on and keep teaching to the same standards when most kids are a year behind on everything and have trauma from the pandemic. It's really disheartening and that's why teachers are feeling burned out!!

Working at the school is made significantly more difficult by a severe shortage of staff. Students are struggling both academically and socio-emotionally, and we are unable to provide them with adequate support. Students' struggles were increased by the pandemic and being in online learning for a year. These difficulties have also led to increased behavioral struggles for many students.

We need to be responsive to how the stress and trauma of the pandemic is affecting learning, not only for our students but for educators as well.

These quotes emphasize that COVID-19 has taken a toll on a district in ways that likely alter its strategic direction. At this point, participants were not sure of the direction prior to the pandemic. As we emerge from the pandemic to our new normal, KCKPS may wish to reassess its strategic priorities and determine an effective method of communicating these priorities to district stakeholders.

Key Finding 5: Organizational and Climate Quandaries

Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools have a long and storied history. As pointed out earlier, employees, students, staff, parents, community members, and alumni are proud of the district, employees work extremely hard to support the success of students, and all revel in the diversity that the district represents. Our data support this sense of dedication and commitment, desire for success, and pride at being associated with KCK. All groups we surveyed indicated that their cultural backgrounds were respected. In addition, there is a sense of hope related to the new district administration. At the same time, however, there are cultural concerns related to trust and safety, especially in certain areas, that also pervade the district's culture. The KCK cultural paradox is a combination of support and pride stacked against issues that undermine the overall culture. Our study found six areas related to organization and climate as detailed below.

Finding 5.1 – Trust levels are low, most notably about Central Administration.

Regarding trust, we learned that while at the school level trust was strong, it was on issues between the Central Administration and the schools, teachers, staff, and students that some degree of trust breaks down, most notably regarding implementing district wide reform initiatives. The lack of a clear understanding of who is responsible for specific reforms was consistently identified. No clear organizational chart with an explanation of roles and responsibilities exists. Feedback on reforms and initiatives was often described as non-existent or sporadic. The lack of clear goals, measures, and understanding of reforms is a powerful constraint for building trust and a stronger culture. Some of this relates to the sheer number of reforms being implemented. One teacher's comments from the survey addressed these issues between schools and Central Administration:

I am cautiously optimistic about so many things. In this period of transition (rebound, renew and reimagine) there appears to be very little honest and transparent conversation about how to address critical issues that face students and staff every day. I am encouraged by many of the initiatives that the district has started, however the resistance of district level leadership to openly acknowledge, discuss or proactively seek solutions regarding the challenges and barriers facing staff and students at this time is a long-standing pattern that is demoralizing at the building level.

At the school level, the data display that trust problems were not consistently concerning across the district. With students, for example, 57% indicated they agreed or strongly agreed that they enjoyed going to school, and 64% indicated they strongly agreed or agreed that they trust their teachers. Interestingly, only 48.5% of students strongly agreed or agreed that they trust administrators.

With teachers, nearly 76% reported they agreed or strongly agreed that they enjoyed working in their school most days, while 63% said the same about their school having a collaborative work culture. Nearly 70% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they trust their building administrators, but this support falls to 33.6% regarding district administrators. This same local versus central difference was reported by parents as well, as 71% indicated they agreed or strongly agreed that they trusted their student's teachers, 70% trusted their student's principal, but that support fell to 51% for district administrators. As a teacher expressed in the survey comments, "central office has become an unwelcome place for teachers. It is weird that we are treated as outsiders even though it is OUR central office."

For classified staff, this pattern continued, with 85% agreeing or strongly agreeing that they enjoy working for the school district. But this percentage fell to 59% indicating they strongly agreed or agreed that they trust the district administration.

Regarding building administrators, 92% indicated they enjoyed working at their school most days, and for them, 71% agreed or strongly agreed that they trust the district administration. For district administrators, nearly 86% reported they enjoyed working for the district, and 73% trust the district administration. Interestingly, only 46.7% of the district administrators indicated that the district had a collaborative work culture.

What appears to be at play is a sense that trust levels at the school level are strong, but likely as a result of all the reforms in play, the lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities, and the large turnover over the past few years in administrative leadership roles, the levels of trust of the Central Administration are weakest and need development.

Finding 5.2 – Several areas, notably Special Education and Human Resources, need adjustments and development.

Certain specific areas in the district were specifically problematic and impacted the levels of trust strength of the culture. Special Education, addressed separately in this report, has significant challenges. The Office of Human Resources, reviewed by another outside contractor, was another area where trust and lack of understanding was highlighted. The individual efforts of employees were typically not the concern – instead, it was the culture in place, the processes followed, staffing shortages, and the resulting concerns with trust impacting these offices' performance.

Finding 5.3 – There is a lack of clarity regarding central roles.

As noted in the discussion regarding Finding 3, the lack of clarity of roles and responsibilities of Central Administration is a long-standing problem in the district. It has become part of the culture. The lack of any kind of clear organizational chart exemplifies the substance of the problem. One teacher explained how this impacts her work, "Employees are being pulled in ten different directions at once...We are told X initiative is a priority by one person, then told the same about five different initiatives by five different people, all in a short period of time." An

outside consultant explained, “I have noticed that sometimes communication is also lacking due to a lack of clear hierarchy or organizational chart. People are unsure of whom they should be communicating with, when, and how often.” Another group told us, “There has been a lot of transition, people coming and going, and a lot of knowledge gets lost.” One outside expert remarked that, “leadership instability precludes constructive momentum.” In one interview, we were told that “We need all the right people in the room. But some people seem not to be coming to meetings...this hurts alignment, communication and problem solving.” In another interview, the discussion summed up the lack of clarity issue this way, “District leaders are not aligned in how they work with schools to bring about change.”

Finding 5.4 – Safety for students, along with racial discrimination and sexual harassment among students, is a concern.

Most employees reported feeling safe in KCK schools at fairly high levels. However, only 47% of students indicated they agree or strongly agree that they feel safe at school. Forty percent disagreed/strongly disagreed and 10% did not know. Thus, less than half of students appear to feel safe. We also asked questions regarding racial discrimination and sexual harassment. While any level of concern in these areas is worthy of review, understanding, and action, the biggest concerns were at the student level – instances of student-to-student racial discrimination and student-to-student sexual harassment. Perhaps not surprisingly, questions about levels of racial discrimination and sexual harassment produced the largest percentage of “Don’t Know” responses to our surveys. But 58.7% of students reported they were aware of instances of racial discrimination by students and 52% aware of instances of sexual harassment by students. Notably, only 21% of students reported that adults notice if someone is being bullied at school. We have no data to suggest that KCKPS differs from other school districts in these areas and appreciate that students can be hard on one another. Efforts underway in the district addressing social emotional issues may positively impact these matters as those curricula address issues related to many of these behaviors. But that part of the culture related to bullying, safety, racial issues, and sexual harassment needs to be constantly monitored and addressed.

Finding 5.5 – Turnover, especially at senior administrative levels, is a continuing concern.

Several of the findings alluded to the impact of the turnover the district has experienced as a significant problem impacting the culture of the district. Certainly, the turnover at the Superintendent level is a major concern, and the fear that this Superintendent will abandon the district as well, as described in Finding 2, underscores the cultural norm that has evolved. But it is not just the Superintendent. Other district level administrators have come and gone, and each time that happens, there is a loss of knowledge about what was happening. Teachers in KCKPS, just as is happening across the country due to concerns arising from the pandemic, are threatening to leave teaching. Responses to our open-ended survey questions revealed that this is a serious problem. In the survey, about 22% of teachers and professional staff indicated they disagreed that they enjoyed working at their school each day. The concerns appear to be strongest in certain areas, including Special Education. Among teachers, only 37% agreed that

they understood the districts processes for carrying out policies, and only half were familiar with reforms that might strengthen student performance. These are elements of the culture that impact turnover and demand attention.

Finding 5.6 – Participants reported positive overall sentiments of the work environment.

At the school level, the data display that trust problems were not consistently concerning across the district. With students, for example, 57% indicated they agreed or strongly agreed that they enjoyed going to school, and 64% indicated they strongly agreed or agreed that they trust their teachers. Interestingly, only 48.5% of students strongly agreed or agreed that they trust administrators.

With teachers, nearly 76% reported they agreed or strongly agreed that they enjoyed working in their school most days, while 63% said the same about their school having a collaborative work culture. Nearly 70% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed they trust their building administrators, but this support falls to 33.6% regarding district administrators. This same local versus central difference was reported by parents as well, as 71% indicated they agreed or strongly agreed that they trusted their student’s teachers, 70% trusted their student’s principal, but that support fell to 51% for district administrators.

Eighty-five percent of classified staff agreed or strongly agreed that they enjoy working for the school district, and 59% indicated they strongly agreed or agreed that they trust the district administration. Building administrators enjoyed working at their school most days, and for them, 71% agreed or strongly agreed that they trust the district administration. For district administrators, nearly 86% reported they enjoyed working for the district, and 73% trusted the district administration. Yet only 46.7% indicated that the district had a collaborative work culture.

Trust at the school level overall is strong. But likely related to all the reforms in play, the lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities, and the large turnover over the past few years in administrative leadership roles there are some trust concerns. The levels of trust of the Central Administration are weakest and need development. Notably, only half of teachers and professional staff indicated that their school had an effective process for making group decisions and solving problems. National data suggests that work environment, more than salary, is a key contributor impacting teacher turnover (Ingersoll, 2017; Ladd 2011). The district must address an array of variables in strengthening the districts’ work environment.

Key Finding 6:

Lack of Comprehensive and Cohesive Communication Strategy

Communication in a district like KCKPS is multi-faceted and complex. District leaders communicate to schools, personnel, families, and constituents. Building leaders do the same in their schools and for their audiences. Teachers and other professional staff communicate to students and their families. With the growth of social media, communication may be verbal, through printed materials, more commonly nowadays through some form of electronic means or social media. District and school websites, for example, carry an array of information for all those directly involved with schools and anyone with the capacity to access online information.

For those associated with KCKPS, communication is impacted by the reality that multiple languages are spoken across the district and in the homes of students, and the access to appropriate technology and internet service is affected by the socio-economic status of many constituents.

Across all groups we found some elements of success, but significant concerns about communication specifically related to reforms and initiatives promulgated by Central Administration regarding planning, development, implementation, and feedback. Many of the issues were consistent with other findings developed in this report. Below we identify four findings related to communication.

Key Finding 6.1 – There are concerns regarding Central Administration communication with school-based personnel regarding reforms/initiatives.

The district needs to address communication issues, most notably about reform expectations and HR policies and processes. Our focus regarding communications was on communications from the Central Administration to schools. Only 33.9% of teachers, 52.8% of building administrators, and 26.7% of district administrators agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “The district office effectively communicates about reforms and/or initiatives for buildings.” No doubt this weak communication impacted the findings from the survey responses from teachers about their familiarity with reforms and initiatives that could impact student performance, (50.7% agreed they were familiar) and understanding of the district’s processes for carrying out policies (37.2% agreed they understood these). One group of outside consultants put it this way, “Communication is a struggle for this district in many ways...typically it is either a lack of communication or the communication is not timely or complete.” Note these comments from teachers underscoring the frustrations related to communication:

I am really frustrated at the lack of communication to teachers about district initiatives and the complete lack of effective training.

I am appalled at the lack of communication and disconnect between departments in the district.

The departments at central office are not organized well and do not communicate with each other.

The biggest issue in the district is communication. Initiatives are started and teachers are not adequately informed of them. There is a lack of follow-through.

We are told what to do by administration by email or trickle-down communication in very vague generalized terms.

Some identified issues related to the two-way communication process between the district and schools and teachers, meaning a lot comes from Central Administration but feedback loops are not always clear. One group described it as a two-way communication problem. Others talked about weak communication that is not shared in a timely fashion or full information does not get shared. One group suggested it may be due to an unclear hierarchy or communication chart. That leaves individuals unsure of who to be communication with, how they should be communicating, and how often. Another group simply explained, “people need feedback.” Still another argued that the district needs to increase its communication and level of transparency.

Attendance at district called meetings was mentioned as another concern, as well as clarity about meeting facilitation and where follow-up responses or feedback should go. This ties in with the lack of an organization chart with responsibilities clearly set out. But in interviews with multiple groups and data gathered from outside groups working with the district, a consistent problem highlighted was communication related to district reform policies or initiatives. It was also suggested that more communication about district successes would be helpful.

We did not specifically review the HR department or role, as a separate analysis of that work was conducted for the district. But in our interviews, concerns about communication related to HR were raised by multiple groups.

Key Finding 6.2 – Building leaders get multiple weekly newsletters with district information – some report it is appreciated but can be cumbersome and could be more focused.

Principals and building leaders reported getting multiple weekly messages/newsletters with information and calendars. These communications were generally appreciated and informative. Some found them long and overwhelming with too much information that can get lost. A few suggested a different format might make them shorter and less onerous to go through to find the information that was most pertinent or needed. For example, with short descriptions of items and URLs to longer explanations or websites. Given how COVID-19 has forced so much information to be shared electronically, it was suggested that these lengthy e-mailed news sharing messages may be losing the intended impact for some given how much everyone is inundated with electronic messages.

Key Finding 6.3 – District communications and school-based communications over electronic and social media can get overwhelming, especially for parents and families, notably for those with multiple children attending KCKPS.

Families get information from the KCKPS website, school websites, Central Administration, as well as from their children’s schools and teachers. For many this is very positive. These can come in a variety of electronic or social media formats. Schools send multiple messages to families regarding students and school issues and social media is utilized.

This can become a lot of messages, especially if families have multiple children. About 10% of those who responded to the Superintendent’s Listening and Learning Town Halls indicated that communication was a problem. One parent described it as frustrating with so much coming every day. There were some who shared specific concerns with communication to parents, asking for better coordination of communication about school events including the Parent Teacher Association (PTA).

Key Finding 6.4 – Families whose primary language is not English appreciate efforts to translate messaging but feel more can be done at first points of school-based contact (front office staff).

Across the one-on-one interviews we conducted with parents through a translator, as well as two focus groups we held with parents, we found that the parents use social media and a telephone translation app to communicate with building staff. These communication tools have helped alleviate the barriers related to parents whose home language is not English. Some comments shared with us by translators during interviews included:

She said that she gets good communication from his school because she receives text messages or calls. If something happened at his school, they let the parents know. If the student is missing classes, they call them wondering if the kid is okay, or what's going on.

She says that she likes the system that the school has about communication...She doesn't know if this is new. But right now, she knows that there is an app. It's called Infinity Campus. So, she loves it because she can check everything about her student.

The challenges with language barriers and communication are difficult to overcome. The parents recognized this and explained an appreciation of the efforts of the district. Of course, no translation program is perfect, so there were instances in our conversations where parents felt that they had difficulties with primary points of contact at the building level. Nothing can replace the interpersonal interaction of a bilingual staff member. An interview with one bilingual speaker in the parent focus group captured this concern that also emerged in the one-on-one interviews:

My first language is Spanish, like, I feel I can speak English with some mistakes, but I do my best. And I feel kind of sad for the families that can't communicate, had that

communication with the school and feeling that the first call will be to the secretary. And sometimes the secretaries are not nice to parents... Second, I know there is a lot of bilingual people that would like to have a job with the district. So, I'm talking about Spanish, in this case, a bilingual, you know, kind of where we left Kansas City is kind of a, you know, a lot of Latino people. So as the [other interviewee] was saying, we need representation.

Key Finding 7:

Better Data to Support Measurable Targets and Ongoing Feedback

Another purpose of the KCKPS environmental scan was to better understand how data were used in the district to help drive decision making. Surveys and focus group interviews included questions for teachers, principals, and administrators about how data were used. As background to understanding the results, it is important to realize that the Department of Evaluation, Research, and Assessment (DERA) has had significant leadership turnover. Multiple directors served in this role the past several years, which makes consistency of data use challenging.

Below we identify and discuss four major findings related to the district's use of data and several related concerns.

Key Finding 7.1 – Teachers, principals, and district administrators report using data to drive their decisions, though some concerns were identified.

On the survey teachers, principals, and administrators all reported significant use of data to drive decisions. However, the focus group interviews suggested mixed views of how data were used. Teachers and building leaders indicated they were using qualitative data, such as feedback from supervisors/administrators, feedback from parents, and feedback from students. In interviews, teachers discussed the use of Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) to discuss student results and instructional changes they made; however, there was some frustration with the state of student performance data from the district. Teachers also expressed frustration with lack of time to consider how assessment data can inform instruction to improve student outcomes as is evidenced by what this teacher shared:

There are no benchmarks of progress as a district, and in the past all benchmarks connected to test scores and not community building or community engagement. A lot of the MTSS/district data PDs are demoralizing, and we over-test students and teachers without providing adequate time for them to go to data and make instructional moves in meaningful ways - which is what teachers should be doing on Wednesdays for PD.

District leaders also indicated the goal is to become a more data driven school district. In the past, they looked at semester or annual data, which created a lag effect. By the time they looked at data, any changes they made were delayed until the next year. An administrator described that the district is:

Very much in a transition...from looking at data as something that I look at in a team setting at the end of the year, or quarterly, because we're told to, and to make a plan for how to impact lag data, to actually switching to be data driven.

Key Finding 7.2 – Some optimism regarding district-wide improvements with data through adoption of FastBridge and the ATLAS Protocol.

The switch from Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Testing to FastBridge appeared to be a positive development that will hopefully help teachers and schools become more data driven. District administrators spoke about the FastBridge system in the context of supporting data-driven instruction. In a focus group interview, one administrator commented:

We're using data pretty well to drive our instruction. As a district, I think an example of that is our new FastBridge system that we have. It's our second year of using it. And we're starting to get an understanding of it, or we're still kind of in that learning phase. And I think it can be really beneficial. And we're just waiting for that to come.

Key Finding 7.3 – The quality of data provided is inconsistent, in some cases unclear or completely lacking.

Changes in leadership and staff in the DERA was reported as a challenge for providing accessible and usable data for administrators, principals, and teachers. One outside consultant working with KCKPS summed up the issue by explaining that, “Data has been something that has been lacking in this district over the years.” District administrators, principals, and teachers described difficulty in making informed data-based decisions because the data to address important questions are either not collected or lack integrity. An administrator spoke about this when they said:

Data in terms of what we pulled at least in my department is...not good...there's not a lot of integrity to it. And we're working on cleaning it up. So, it's hard to inform any type of decision with something that isn't really hitting the questions that we're asking or the information that we need to track.

Across groups, district personnel expressed concerns about the validity and reliability of the data collected by the district. Principals and teachers shared that data were collected and used at the building and classroom levels for decisions within PLC's. However, they shared that they had limited support for using district data that were meaningful and aligned with instructional and learning goals. This administrator's thoughts supported the finding that there are challenges with district data:

I think in terms of schools, they definitely have systems and ways of tracking their own data. But I would say systematically and across the board, I think it's something that we're trying to implement. So, we're trying to get the focus to be there for any decisions that are made. But I do think we still have pockets that don't really utilize data in making decisions. And you know, I think if you would ask for certain types of data in our district, I think you would not be able to get it.

Some departments, such as HR and Transportation have collected their own data and have used those data for tracking their operations. In HR, changes in leadership and large turnover in the district required a focus on keeping data up-to-date and accurate. District

administrators indicated that in addition to employee turnover in DERA as a challenge, the student database system was changed which resulted in disruptions in the availability of data. DERA and other departments have engaged in on-going work to improve data collection and quality, and the results from focus groups corroborated the recommendation that the work to improve data quality continues.

Key Finding 7.4 – There is a need for measurable and shared goals for initiatives to allow for follow-up and consideration of outcomes and adjustments to practice.

Results from surveys and focus group interviews supported the need for data collection and data use to be aligned with measurable goals. District leaders and principals reported some uncertainty in how data were used to measure progress toward district and building goals. The district has an instructional leadership team comprised of administrators, instructional coaches, and teacher leaders but structures across the district for using data to measure progress toward goals were unclear. In focus group interviews, district administrators discussed the need to re-establish structures for analyzing and using data to monitor goals and determine where to focus improvement efforts. The following comment by an administrator confirmed that structures for using data to make adjustments to practice are unclear:

I'm not sure what or if we have a norm right now...to really think about building level data and outcomes that we have and [then] plan the next year accordingly in terms of...how the school is going to make those decisions.

District administrators, principals, and teachers reported using data to drive decisions. However, they also indicated that district goals are not clear. When asked in the survey if the district has clear goals that can be analyzed and monitored, only one-third of district administrators indicated they agree or strongly agree (33%), just over one-half of teachers agree or strongly agree (53%), while nearly two-thirds of building administrators agree or strongly agree (62%). Additionally, district and building administrators shared that the Strategic Plan lacks targeted goals for curriculum and instruction. From the perspective of one administrator, "There's really nothing in the strategic plan right now outside of raising student achievement in reading and math as a goal that really drives the work because the action steps aren't actionable enough for curriculum and instruction."

The district has experienced significant employee turnover at multiple levels during the past several years. The turnover has disrupted the clear articulation of goals as is evidenced by the comment made by a teacher:

There has been so much change at the District Level over the past 5 years that it is hard to evaluate anything with consistency. Goals, district focus, priorities, curriculum, resources, etc. have all shifted so much over the past few years. The entire district seems disorganized without leadership.

Key Finding 8: Strengthen Special Education Services

District administrators in Special Education (SPED) are relatively new to their positions (began in 2021). In their roles as new leadership, they spoke of numerous changes, challenges, and goals for special education programs in the district. For example, changes include adoption of CompuSPED (a new computerized IEP [Individualized Education Plan] system), doubling the number of Special Education coordinators (from 6 to 13), and staffing vacant related services positions (hiring virtual psychologists and use of contract firms for other personnel vacancies).

District Special Education Administrators identified a number of challenges they are acting to address. Identified ongoing challenges include recruiting and retaining qualified teachers and related services personnel. It was noted that more than 200 new special education staff have been hired since this Administration began their tenure in 2021. Administrators noted they had taken on recruitment and hiring rather than relying on HR. They also stated that they became aware of a lack of trust between the community and families, and the District's Special Education programs and personnel. In response, they have been holding parent empowerment training sessions and have set up a parent hotline. Another challenge confirmed by administrators and raised by building personnel is the over-referral of students to special education, and students not receiving the appropriate level of supports. Sometimes over-referral was perceived as resulting in students placed in special education without addressing inclusive education adaptation in general education. Other comments reflected beliefs that students in special education were not receiving appropriate services because of delayed decision-making or because of differing opinions between school staff and coordinators about the level of supports some students need.

Goals for improvement of special education services noted by District Special Education Administrators included expansion and improvement in co-teaching at the elementary level, improved transition services at the secondary level, and restructuring in Early Childhood Special Education with more staff and more co-taught classrooms.

Below we identify five key findings related to special education in KCKPS.

Finding 8.1 – Staff turnover and shortages in special education are big challenges.

One issue that was raised consistently by special education teachers and related service providers was hiring qualified staff and retaining qualified staff who have institutional memory of practices and procedures that were felt to be highly effective. Specifically, the mass resignation at the end of Spring 2021 by 22 of 28 psychologists because of their stated concerns (to the SPED Directors, District Administration, HR, and the School Board), and a lack of response to those concerns have heightened a worry expressed by personnel through either survey comments or focus groups. The consensus was that more resignations among teaching

staff and related services personnel have occurred this year, and more are coming at the end of this school year because identified concerns about poor communication, lack of respect or attention given to voiced concerns, and threats to job security or being given poor evaluations have exacerbated identified problems. It was evident that a deep divide between special educators at the building level and district administration exists and is problematic. On a positive note, special educators felt supported by their building administrators and saw them as their primary source of support.

Finding 8.2 – District personnel were consistent in their message that special education services are problematic.

The degree of concern about special education services was consistent. Indeed, 48% of teachers, 30% of building administrators, and 47% of district administrator disagreed or significantly disagreed with the statement that students requiring special education were getting the support and services they need. The substantial concerns about special education reflected in these data were confirmed by survey comments, and by the interview data collected from four focus groups held with special education teachers and related services providers.

While the new leadership reflections and parts of the survey data were positive, and leadership’s comments captured challenges ahead, a series of significant concerns were raised by professional and other staff that demand immediate attention.

Finding 8.3 – Trust and communication issues between district administrators and special education teachers/related service providers are significant.

The issues raised consistently and most emphatically were about the lack of, or consistency of communication and the creation of a hostile work environment between district Special Education Administrators (directors and coordinators) and special education teachers and related service providers. “The culture is fear based”, said one related service provider. “Morale is extremely low throughout the special education department and many individuals are looking for employment elsewhere” said a teacher reflecting many comments about the loss of qualified personnel last year and expected this year. “It feels heavy handed, authoritarian,” said another teacher. “The special education coordinators along with the director do not communicate effectively with each other or as a cohesive group of professionals in training and leading the special educators” said another, reflecting a repeated belief that communication from leaders has been inconsistent, not timely, or non-existent on policies and procedures. One other person shared:

There is very little communication, and we often feel out of the loop as policies and practices seem to change regularly without staff being informed. If we express concerns or ask questions, we are made to feel like our voices do not matter at all.

Another frequently repeated concern was a lack of training for the newly adopted (summer 2021) CompuSPED IEP system.

Finding 8.4 – Potential compliance challenges were raised.

Concerns about compliance were raised in multiple focus groups and in survey comments. Procedures for identifying students with IEPs as they transfer schools or districts were found lacking and identified as a concern a number of times. "Students are falling through the cracks. Information about transfer students is not shared." Also, delays in assessment for determining placements, placement changes, or IEP meetings/communication with parents were brought up. As an example, one teacher brought up a student that "teachers, the school psychologist, and parents felt would benefit from a specialized setting, and after they collected data for eight weeks substantiating the recommendation, it took nine months to make the placement change". Another teacher described "'head scratcher' decisions that did not address student needs" and "did not do right by students and families". It was noted frequently that newly hired personnel did not seem informed about Kansas Special Education laws.

Finding 8.5 – Questions regarding the value of participating in the multi-district Wyandotte County Special Education Cooperative.

District administrators and special education teachers and related service providers were asked about the Wyandotte County Special Education Co-op and how it contributed to Special Education services in KCKPS. The consensus response from all who had knowledge, or an opinion felt the co-op structure benefited the small district partners most, and that, in fact, KCKPS ended up serving students from the small partner districts with the greatest support needs in behavior and in needing intensive specialized educational/academic support. However, consultation and collaboration among administrators across districts was considered a plus for all.

Key Finding 9: Targeted Areas for Review

In consultation with district leadership, several areas were identified for specific review as part of the environmental scan. Specifically, these include understanding the attitudes regarding Early Release Wednesday, understanding the nature of comparisons made for KCKPS outcomes, exploring the adequacy of technology in the district, and feedback regarding libraries. The findings in each area are presented below.

Finding 9.1 – Early Release Wednesday supported by survey data

A common survey question asked all groups if they thought the Wednesday Early Release program was valuable. All groups except for one were more than 50% positive about the program – students (90.4%), parents (63.5%), teachers/certified staff (57.1%), building administrators (64.5%), and district administrators (46.6%). Certainly, this is not nearly full support from the professionals in the schools, but a favorable expression about its value. But there were those against the program, and numerous concerns raised even by those ostensibly supportive of the program. Much of this related to how time was used for the teachers and other professionals and the schedule for students. Some felt that the professional development provided was not as good as it should be, some found the quality of professional development very inconsistent, and others felt that schools and teachers need greater autonomy in how the time was used. One teacher explained the concerns as follows:

I feel that the district likes to lay a lot of responsibility on the teachers without adequate training, plan time, chances to discuss with colleagues, etc., because we have mandated professional development over which we are given no choice on topics. In most professions, the professional is allowed to choose their development based on their needs.

Another teacher criticized Early Release Wednesday by explaining:

If Wednesday PD was guaranteed to be taught by knowledgeable presenters on currently needed topics that would inspire better teaching practices, then my vote is to keep it. But doing PD through a bunch of Canvas courses or otherwise online, self-paced courses just not it. If inspiring PD can't be guaranteed every Wednesday, it would be better to have normal school days.

A common concern echoed by many was that the Early Release Wednesday is not particularly effective. The time with students is not well thought out. Another offered that too many students and teachers do not value Wednesdays. Some lamented the constant changes in how the time was used. One teacher summed up the experience with Wednesday Release this way,

“I have received no professional development on a Wednesday that was valuable. It is often just time filler.”

Finding 9.2 – Appropriate district comparisons for KCKPS are needed

No district in Kansas resembles the make-up of KCK across relevant variables such as enrollment, demographic make-up, socio-economic status, etc., resulting in difficult and possibly misleading comparisons on academic performance and other measures to other KS districts.

Finding 10 details comparisons we made with other diverse districts in Kansas, specifically Wichita, Topeka, Garden City, Turner, and Dodge. Suffice to say that Wichita is more than double KCK’s size in terms of enrollment, Topeka about half, and Dodge, Garden City and Turner all significantly smaller. KCKPS’ demographic mix is very unique, with the smallest percentage of White students, more than half its students from Hispanic backgrounds, and the largest percentage of students on free or reduced lunch. There are no mid-sized cities and school districts in Kansas that truly compare with the make-up of KCK across multiple variables.

Finding 9.3 – Surveys suggested need for technology professional development

Teachers and certified staff, building, and district administrators reported high levels of agreement about teachers having adequate technology to do their job. In response to the survey question about teachers and staff having adequate technology to do their job, nearly 72% of teachers, 82.5% of principals, and 66.6% of district administrators agreed. However, in terms of the training provided by the district when new technology is provided, the results were dramatically different. Only 41% of teachers, 39.6% of principals, and 26.7% of district administrators agreed that teachers and staff get adequate training to utilize the technology provided by the district.

Teachers in the focus group interviews indicated they needed more professional development on new technology. Canvas was recently adopted district wide, and teachers indicated they could use more help integrating canvas into their courses. Perhaps the introduction of Canvas during the years of the pandemic is part of the issue, but many comments about the lack of training and support for Canvas by teachers underscores the concerns about adequate training for technology the district introduces. Note these comments, typical of many that were provided in response to open-ended survey questions:

The district purchased Canvas. We had training at the beginning of the year during COVID and since then new staff and returning staff are expected to use links, training through Canvas to figure it out. Confusion is out there as to how Canvas should be used as the way some staff are presenting it.

Expectations for Canvas use are unclear. Some teachers/schools are using it, some are trying, others are not. I feel like Canvas is difficult to teach with in Elementary...

The training usually consists of watching videos. That is not training.

Finding 9.4 – Issues with library staff integration and support

There were no survey questions asked about libraries to the various groups involved in data collection. However, through open-ended responses to the survey and information shared in focus groups, several issues emerged regarding libraries.

Interview data revealed an issue about library time and coordination. One person indicated that librarians needed time to better coordinate between the classroom teachers and the library sessions for students. Library time occurs at the same time as PLC time for classroom teachers in some schools, which makes it difficult to coordinate and plan with teachers. It was also pointed out that there is no longer any library curriculum. Apparently, the amount of library time is up to each librarian with no coordination and consistency across the district. It was mentioned that the past practice under former leadership of having Project Lead the Way in the libraries is no longer an emphasis and not taught in many schools.

From other comments by librarians in the open-ended survey, issues of confusion were shared. One explained, “I think the relationship between the public schools and the library could be stronger. There is a lot of confusion over what policies apply to school staff versus library staff.” A good deal of the concerns shared by the librarians related to personnel matters. The librarians appear to be excluded from benefits afforded others in the district – vacation days, remote work options, salary equity, etc. Morale concerns for those working in the library system were emphasized given the varying circumstances described.

Key Finding 10:

Achievement Measures – Room to Grow but Consider Comparisons

This section explains achievement indicators and describes where KCKPS has been during the last 5-10 years (depending on the measure) and considers ways to think about achievement moving forward. These data are not collected from surveys or interviews, but instead from state and national databases.

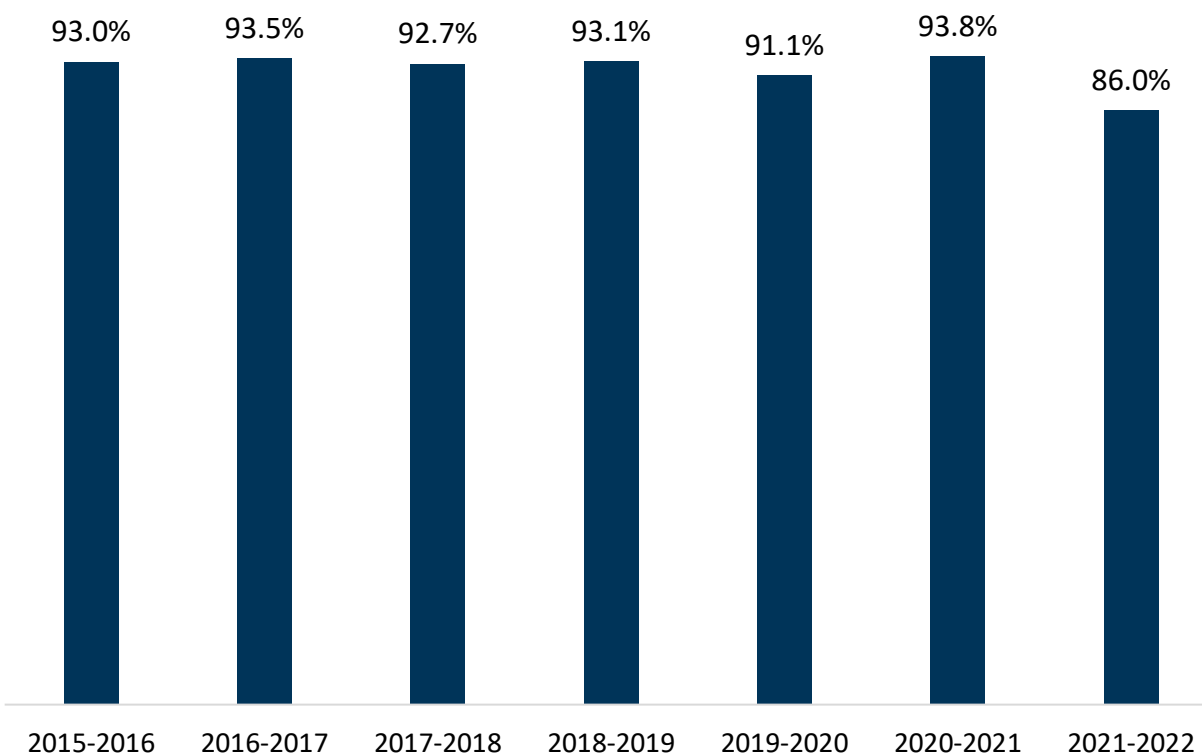
The racial and economic composition of KCKPS is unlike any other district in the state of Kansas. As a result, statewide comparisons are problematic. We show some of these comparisons and then consider more appropriate national comparisons. The comparisons may point to ways KCKPS could learn different approaches and potentially collaborate with other districts when outliers appear, specifically in terms of positive achievement trends in districts with similar characteristics. We emphasize that achievement measures are complex, so the nuances of any findings should be taken in their totality considering an array of factors, rather than in isolation. What these comparisons show is that KCKPS has successes and challenges depending on the measure. has successes and challenges depending on the measure.

Taking all the measures together, the district had promising trends in attendance and graduation until the COVID-19 pandemic began in March of 2020. After that, the district saw declines in graduation and attendance. Mathematics achievement has declined in recent years but is still comparable or better than comparison districts across the country. Reading has improved in recent years, but lags comparable districts nationwide.

Finding 10.1 – Attendance improved until COVID-19

Daily school attendance in KCKPS has declined in the most recent available data, likely a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The attendance rate is shown in Figure 10.1. In 2020-21, average daily attendance was at 86%. However, prior to this school year, the district regularly had an average attendance rate between 90 and 95%.

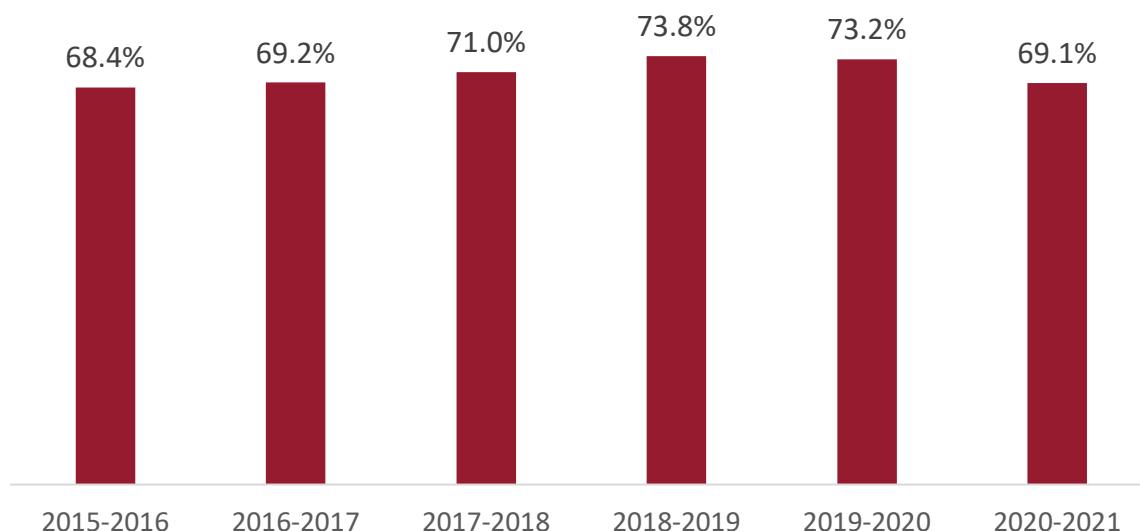
Figure 10.1 – KCKPS District Attendance Rate



Finding 10.2 – Graduation rates improved until COVID-19

As shown in Figure 10.2, the district's four-year graduation rate grew steadily from 2015-16 to 2018-19 and then started to decline slightly in 2019-20 and again in 2020-21. In 2015-16 the four-year graduation rate was 68.4% and increased to 73.8% in 2018-19. This number fell to 73.2% in 2019-20 and then to 69.1% in 2020-21. The recent drops occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic.

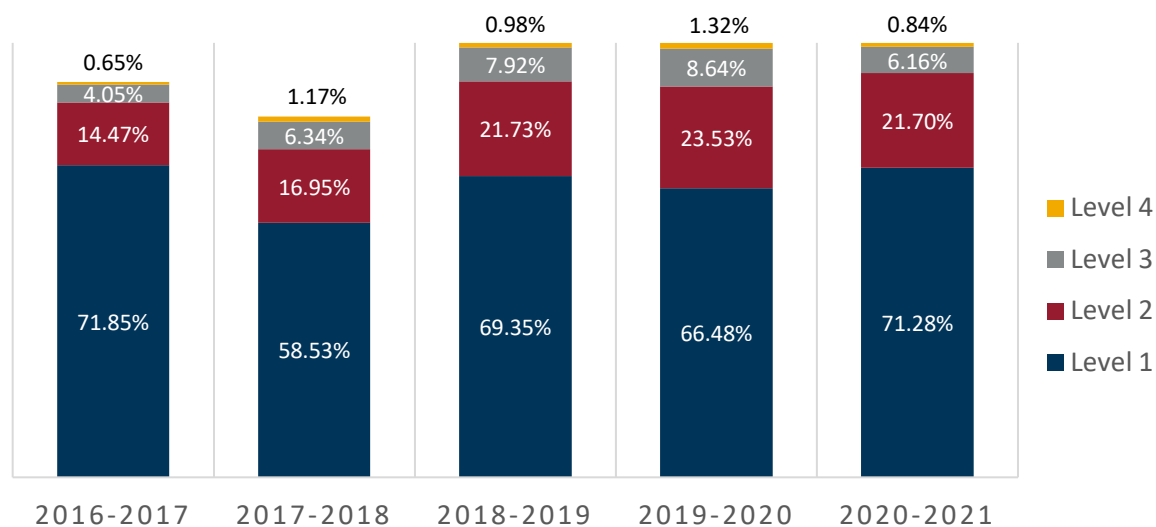
Figure 10.2 – KCKPS Four-Year Graduation Rate



Finding 10.3 – High school mathematics achievement fell during COVID-19

The data for high school mathematics comes from the Kansas State Department of Education publicly available achievement data. These data indicate a percentage of students per level of achievement based on state assessments. Figure 10.3 shows that in the year 2020-21, 71.28% of high school students scored at the lowest level, the highest amount since 2016-17. The issue of learning loss or interrupted learning during COVID-19 is a national concern, and something the district must focus on in future years.

Figure 10.3 – KCKPS High School Mathematics Levels According to Kansas Assessments



Note: **Level 1** indicates that a student shows a limited ability to understand and use the English Language arts skills and knowledge needed for Postsecondary Readiness. **Level 2** indicates that a student shows a basic ability to understand and use the English Language arts skills and knowledge needed for Postsecondary Readiness. **Level 3** indicates that a student shows an effective ability to understand and use the English Language arts skills and knowledge needed for Postsecondary Readiness. **Level 4** indicates that a student shows an excellent ability to understand and use the English Language arts skills and knowledge needed for Postsecondary Readiness.

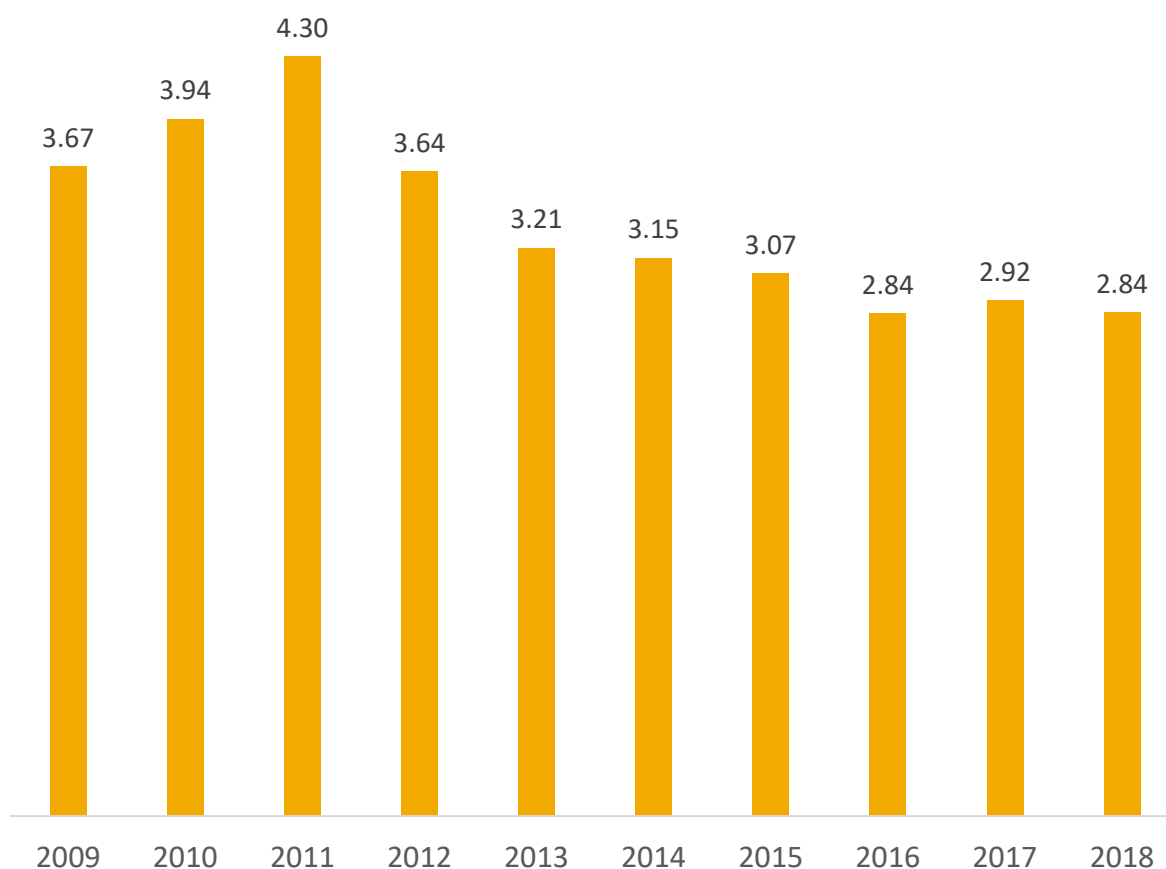
Finding 10.4 – Recent elementary school cohorts achieved at lower levels than previous cohorts in mathematics.

There are better available data to analyze elementary achievement. The Stanford Education Data Archive (SEDA) contains a dataset in which national educational policy analysts normed all statewide tests to National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) indicators, allowing for fair comparisons of tests across states and across years. Prior to this, comparing one test in one state to another state (or from one year to the next) was impossible because it did not consider the variable difficulty and differences among the tests utilized in different states. Using NAEP to balance all tests on a single scale alleviated this concern.

The balancing occurred with tests from third to eighth grade and goes back as early as 2007. Therefore, we used these data to understand the trajectory of students from third to eighth grade, considering each group a “cohort” starting at third grade. We use these data to consider achievement between cohorts, and as we will show later, KCKPS compared to like districts across the country. We provide a snapshot of where each cohort was performing at fifth grade according to these SEDA data (note: 2012 fifth grade data were missing, so we imputed the level as the average of the cohort’s score from fourth grade and sixth grade).

The fifth-grade data shown in Figure 10.4 indicate that more recent cohorts achieved at lower levels than earlier cohorts relative to the national average. The scores were normed so that a “5” in fifth grade is national average. While students grew and learned throughout their elementary school years, recent students have fallen short of previous cohorts.

Figure 10.4 – KCKPS Fifth Grade Mathematics Levels According to SEDA

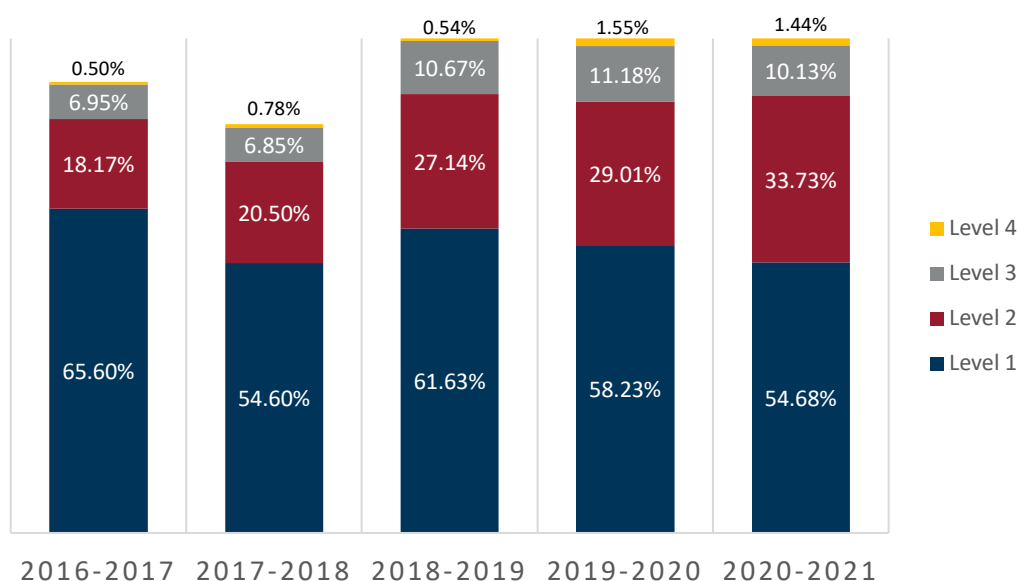


While the mathematics trends are concerning due to the declines over the recent years, these findings should be considered in the context with other comparison districts. As we show in a later area in this section, understandings mathematics achievement, at least with the data we have at the elementary level, is not that simple, and the outcomes change in terms of KCKPS's performance when considering appropriate comparison districts nationwide.

Finding 10.5 – High school English/ELA Level 1 scores (limited ability) are declining.

The trends in English/ELA proficiency contrast slightly with those in mathematics. As shown in Figure 10.5, there has been a slight decline in the Level 1 scores in the most recent year, with a rise in Level 2 scores. Levels 3 and 4 were similar across the past three years, underscoring the growth that is needed going forward. However, it is an encouraging sign that the number of students at Level 1 is declining, suggesting that the district improved its performance with students who had been at lower levels.

Figure 10.5 – KCKPS High School English/ELA Levels According to Kansas Assessments

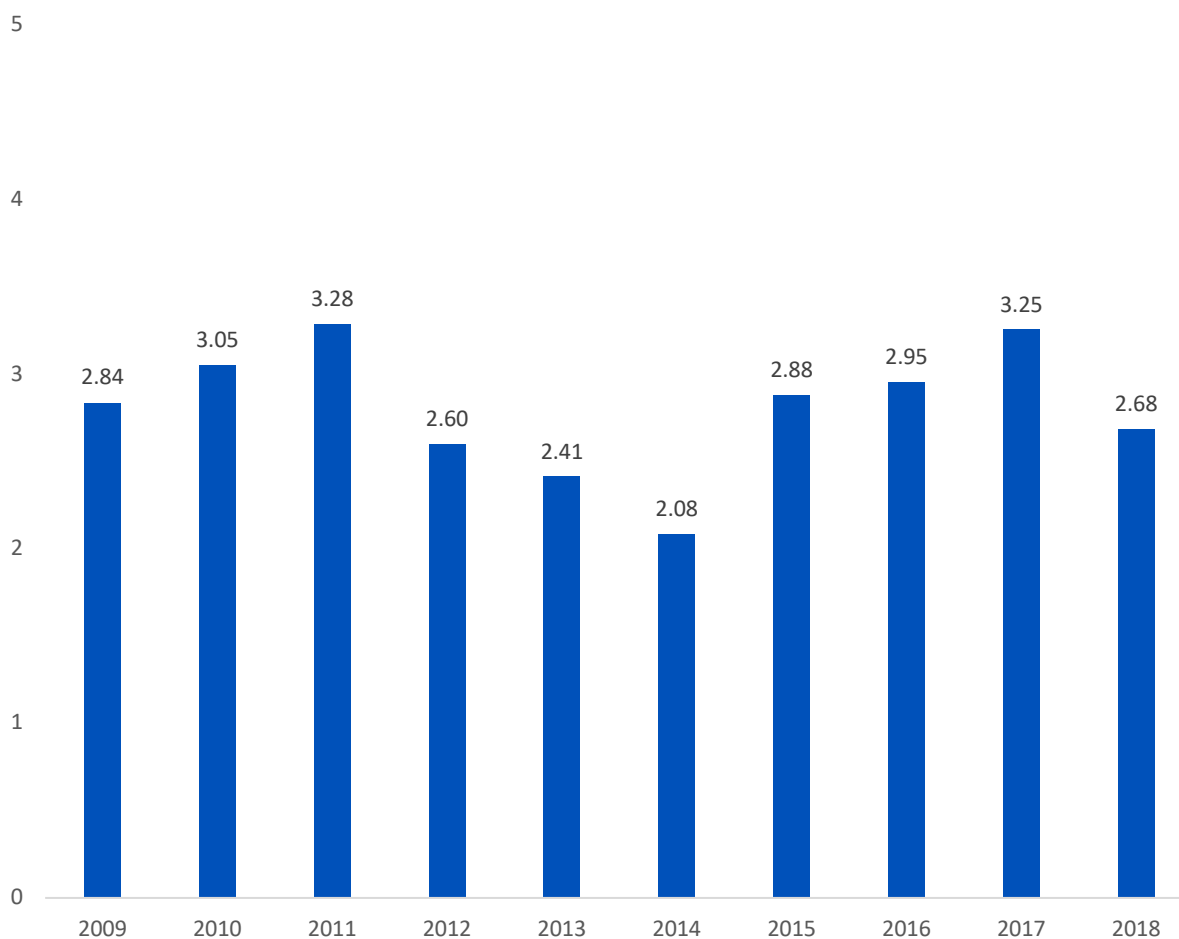


Note: **Level 1** indicates that a student shows a limited ability to understand and use the English Language arts skills and knowledge needed for Postsecondary Readiness. **Level 2** indicates that a student shows a basic ability to understand and use the English Language arts skills and knowledge needed for Postsecondary Readiness. **Level 3** indicates that a student shows an effective ability to understand and use the English Language arts skills and knowledge needed for Postsecondary Readiness. **Level 4** indicates that a student shows an excellent ability to understand and use the English Language arts skills and knowledge needed for Postsecondary Readiness.

Finding 10.6 – Uneven progress in elementary school cohorts with reading

As shown in Figure 10.6, there have been inconsistent patterns regarding elementary/ELA achievement rates. Recent cohorts had higher achievement rates than in the few years preceding them, but these rates have not returned to levels seen from 2009-11. Despite some positive years and some negative years of growth, the data suggest in all cases that the KCKPS consistently fell well below the grade level average across the United States (below a five, which is the national average). KCKPS also has performed lower than nationwide peer districts, as explained in a later section.

Figure 10.6 – KCKPS Fifth Grade Reading/ELA Levels According to SEDA



Finding 10.7 – Statewide achievement comparisons show KCKPS has lower achievement, but these comparisons are problematic

No districts in KS compare well with KCKPS on key demographic and other variables such as enrollment, demographic make-up, and percentage of free and reduced lunch (a measure of socio-economic status). This makes comparisons of student achievement and other outcomes problematic and likely unfair. For example, in preparing a District Profile for a prior KCKPS administration, Greenbush Education Service Center provided an array of data comparing KCKPS to Shawnee Mission, Turner, and Bonner Spring school districts, all quite different in size and make-up.

Given this proviso, comparisons to other diverse school districts in Kansas show that KCKPS has weaker outcomes in terms of graduation rates, ACT scores, and achievement on state assessments. Figure 10.7 displays comparisons of KCKPS with Dodge City, Gardner, Wichita, Topeka, and Turner school districts. These districts are all relatively diverse, but the diversity is different than that in KCKPS. For example, the percentage of white students in KCKPS is 10%,

while those numbers range from 16% to 35% in the other districts. Another difference relates to relative wealth, as the students in KCKPS have the highest percentage of students on free or reduced lunch than any of the others. Similarly, while KCKPS is less than half the enrollment of Wichita Public Schools, it ranges from about double to five- and one-half times the size of the others. Comparisons must be understood in the context of significant differences. Nonetheless, the achievement of KCKPS students in terms of graduation rates, ACT scores, and achievement on state assessments is weaker than all the other diverse districts within the state that are compared in Figure 10.7.

Figure 10.7 – KCKPS Comparisons with Other Diverse Kansas School Districts

District/ % Free/Reduce	Enrollment % B/Hisp/W	Graduation Rate	ACT Scores	% Level 3 &4 KS Tests
KCK 87.7%	21,990 25/54/10	70.2	15.2	Math = 7.6 ELA = 14.4 Sci = 12.8
Wichita 77.1%	46,987 36/20/31	79.3	16.9	Math = 11.6 ELA = 20 Sci = 19
Topeka 77%%	12,439 33/17/35	80.2	18.4	Math = 18 ELA = 22 Sci = 24
Dodge 79.5%	6,930 2/79/16	91.2	16.8	Math = 18 ELA = 20 Sci = 18.6
Garden City 66.6%	7,239 3/21/19	86.5	17.6	Math = 17 ELA = 22 Sci = 21
Turner 71.4%	3,865 12/47/33	71.5	17.5	Math = 15.7 ELA = 21.6 Sci = 17

Finding 10.8 – There are better comparisons districts nationwide from mid-size cities similar to KCKPS in terms of size, demographic make-up, and SES

When comparisons are made to districts more like KCKPS from outside the state, these more meaningful achievement comparisons are less negative. Figure 10.8 captures five districts comparable to KCKPS across the United States. These districts were selected based on their mid-sized city classification paired with school demographic indicators. We also include the percentage of students with an IEP for reference, but it was not used in the classification.

Figure 10.8 – KCKPS Comparisons with Similar U.S. Mid-Sized City School Districts

District	Enrollment	% IEP*	% Hispanic	% Black	% Hispanic and Black	% White	% Free & Reduced Lunch
KCKPS	23,690	14.5%	53%	26%	79%	9.8%	77%
New Haven, CT	20,468	16.7%	46.8%	36%	82.8%	12.4%	63.7%
Bridgeport, CT	20,111	21.8%	51.5%	32%	83.5%	12.0%	71%
Hartford, CT	18,081	24.3%	54%	29%	83%	9.5%	75.3%
Tyler, TX	18,260	9.1%	46.9%	27.4%	74.3%	21.0%	75%

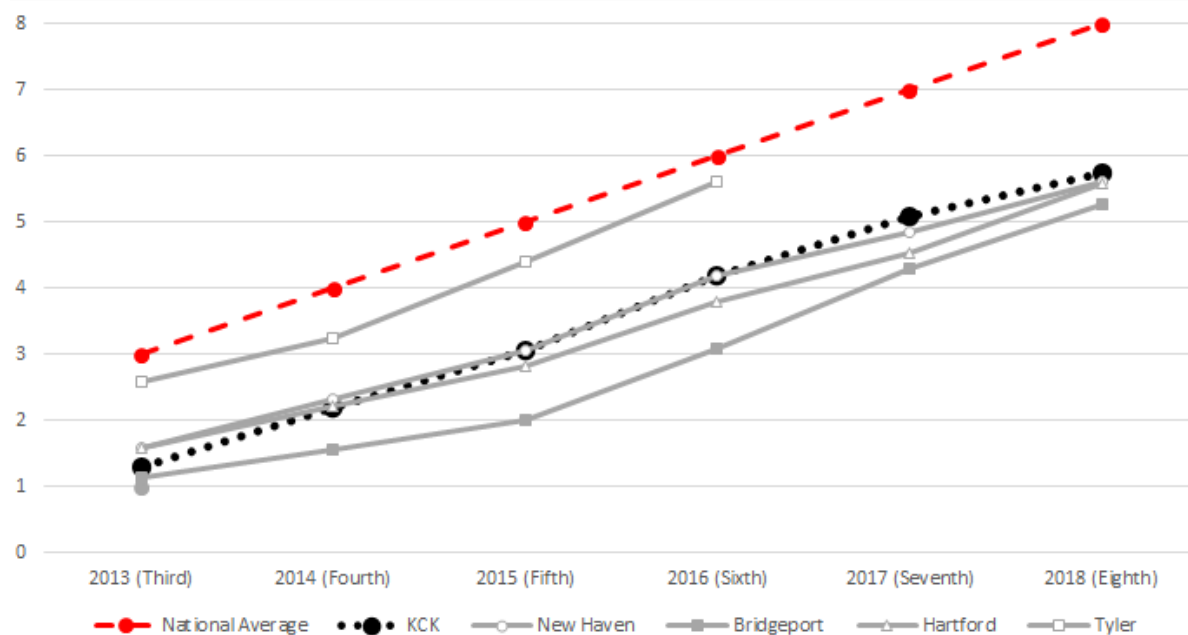
*Nationally (2019) the figure was 14% (IES – Conditions of Education)

Finding 10.9 – Nationwide comparisons show KCKPS students are achieving higher than KCKPS peers in mathematics

Figure 10.9 displays comparisons on math assessments with four other districts and the national average. This figure focuses on the elementary level and is using the SEDA data presented in 10.4 and 10.6. Figure 10.9 is a snapshot of achievement levels of current high school seniors (projected to graduate in 2022) while they were in elementary school. It begins with these students in third grade and achievement levels in subsequent years (2014 in fourth grade, 2015 in fifth, 2016 in sixth, 2017 in seventh, and 2018 in eighth).

While all these districts fall below the national achievement mean on these math comparisons, KCKPS has higher achievement levels than three of the four comparative districts, lower than one. This figure shows that while other research makes comparisons to other districts in the state, the story about KCKPS may change when these comparisons are to like-districts nationwide. While the district has struggles in mathematics achievement, as mentioned earlier, these struggles are less than those in comparison to more similar districts across the United States.

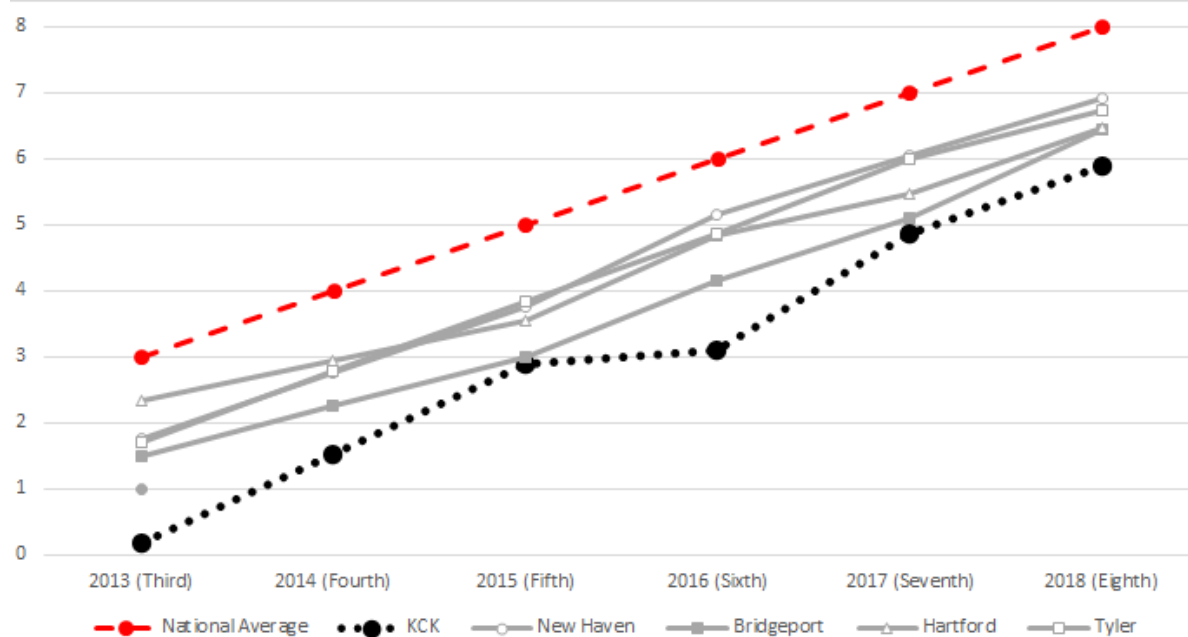
Figure 10.9 – Mathematics SEDA Benchmarked Graph with Current Seniors (2013 Third Grade Cohort)



Finding 10.10 – Nationwide comparisons show KCKPS students are achieving lower than KCKPS peers in English/Language Arts

In ELA comparisons shown in Figure 10.10, much as with the elementary data previously described, KCKPS is the lowest of the five districts compared across all comparison years. Again, all the districts had achievement levels well below the national average. However, as mentioned in the earlier sections, KCKPS has seen some improvements in its ELA scores in the more recent years. This suggests that while KCKPS has lower achievement levels nationwide than like districts in this area, it is an area the district is working on and improving in recent years. It will be useful to continue these comparisons in future years.

Figure 10.10 – Reading SEDA Benchmarked Graph with Current Seniors (2013 Third Grade Cohort)



Together, these achievement findings show a complex story for KCKPS. Statewide comparisons suggest that the district under achieves, while comparisons with more similar districts nationally shows that KCKPS has some areas in which it out-performs those with comparable challenges. There is certainly room for growth, but achievement should not be measured on one indicator or one time point, and certainly, comparisons should be made with districts facing similar circumstances and conditions. As we show here, using multiple measures to nuance understandings of achievement provides a more realistic picture of the performance of KCKPS students. KCKPS seems to be improving in English/Language Arts overall, but still lags nationwide peers. Meanwhile, KCKPS has seen declines in mathematics, but still outperforms many nationwide peers.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1:

Targeted Manageable Changes That Can Make a Difference

Multiple areas were reviewed as part of this environmental scan. Several of the areas and issues emerged as targeted components the district could address to make a positive impact. Five specific areas were identified with recommendations for implementation.

Recommendation 1.1 – Give the new district administration time and support needed to succeed.

- A common refrain that all groups expressed was that the new administration is headed in the right direction, but changes in the district will take time. While some caution was expressed about how long the current superintendent will stay with KCKPS, making the positive changes suggested in this report and elsewhere will be challenging and will require patience. The administration needs support for changes to come to fruition.

Recommendation 1.2 – Celebrate district successes at all levels more visibly – use the alumni base to help spread the word.

- KCKPS does a lot of things well. It honors its' history and diverse make-up, employs dedicated faculty and staff who want the best for their students, and has numerous reform initiatives that are underway with the best of intentions dedicated to making improvements. Parents and community members are supportive. This report highlights areas for changes that could help the district improve. But the many positives happening in schools and across the district need to be celebrated more visibly. Public communication should have a focus on celebrating the good things going on across KCKPS.

Recommendation 1.3 – Continue Early Release Wednesday but allow for defined autonomy for the use of the time and strengthen the professional development provided.

- Early Release Wednesday was a specific area we were asked to consider. As reported in Finding 9.1, most all those in the district – students, teachers and professional staff, parents, and building administrators – agreed that early release should be continued. However, there were concerns raised by many about the use of time for classes on Wednesdays, the quality of professional development and follow-up provided, and the lack of local school and teacher autonomy in making the best use of the time. We recommend a plan that utilizes “defined autonomy” for local schools, where the key district wide issues can be addressed for some of the sessions, while allowing local autonomy for teachers and schools to address specific local needs.

Recommendation 1.4 – Provide timely and useful professional development on the use of technology.

- The survey specifically asked teachers and professional staff, building administrators, and district administrators about professional development (PD) for the technology provided by the district. There was a consistent level of concern raised about adequate

PD on technology. Only about 41% of teachers, 40% of building administrators, and 27% of district administrators agreed that teachers received adequate PD for utilizing the technology the district provides. We recommend making a concerted effort to strengthen the PD when new technology is provided. KCKPS is not unique in this disconnect between technology and the lack of PD to use technology. But as is true of all professional development, we recommend that teachers provide feedback on technology-related PD.

Recommendation 1.5 – Identify similar school districts from across the country and use them to allow for more meaningful performance comparisons. We recommend several mid-sized city school districts: (1) New Haven, CT (2) Bridgeport, CT (3) Hartford, CT (4) Tyler, TX.

- There is no school district in the state of Kansas with the unique demographic and other characteristics of KCKPS. Comparisons to dissimilar districts does not offer much direction for making improvements. KCKPS has challenges few other districts in Kansas face, such comparisons may create unfair perceptions, and not provide useful information for making improvements.
- A valuable way to underscore positive trends and find alternative ways of addressing issues and problems, is to compare to school districts which are similar in make-up to KCKPS. We recommend four such districts for consideration by KCKPS. These four districts have similar enrollment, demographic make-up, percentage of free and reduced lunch, and percentage of special education identified students. Some comparative performance data on standardized tests are provided, showing that KCKPS has areas where they compare well, and areas where improvement is needed. The use of identifying practices that are working well in these similar districts might benefit KCKPS. We recommend that the efforts of these four districts be considered as the KCKPS work to improve student outcomes.

Recommendation 2: Alignment and Focus

Consider adjustment in practices, to bring greater focus and integration of district initiatives. Revisit academics and instructional goals in the Strategic Plan and how initiatives could directly support the district goals. Recommendations for strengthening the districts alignment and focus are suggested across four areas:

Recommendation 2.1 – Clarify the roles and responsibilities of Central Administration and determine the best administrative size and structure for KCKPS. Develop an organizational chart of all central administrators and offices with clear roles, responsibilities, reporting lines, and access points for all identified positions.

- **Recommendation 2.1.a** – The organizational charts should be developed with broad input and shared and posted internally and externally for easy access. When developing the organizational chart and considering the organizational structure, alternative organizational structures should be considered that would better serve the success of KCKPS (e.g., flatter and less hierarchical models).
- **Recommendation 2.1.b** – Create opportunities for interaction and collaboration among district administration and school personnel.

Recommendation 2.2 – Develop processes and procedures for district departments with a focus on clear access points to district administration.

- **Recommendation 2.2.a** – Processes and procedures should be recorded, widely known, and communicated to all personnel. There should be consistency in how administrative offices operate across the district to help those they serve understand expectations.
- **Recommendation 2.2.b** – Establish an ongoing process for feedback about the efficiency and effectiveness of the organizational structure and chart.
- **Recommendation 2.2.c** – Create a system of establishing clear goals, measures, and targets to allow for ongoing assessment of all reforms and initiatives.
- **Recommendation 2.2.d** – Include processes for raising questions and concerns about the implementation, monitoring, and success of reform measures.

Recommendation 2.3 – Revise the District Strategic Plan (or Guiding Document) integrating and aligning it to the KESA Accreditation Plan.

- **Recommendation 2.3.a** – Explicit learning goals should be identified and widely understood. Make certain that any guiding documents align with teaching and instructional priorities:
 - Include building level personnel in the development of the plan
 - Identify district personnel to monitor implementation and progress
 - Strengthen transparency by publicizing and celebrating progress towards goals and areas for ongoing development

Recommendation 2.4 – Limit the number of major reforms and initiatives the district is implementing at any one time and have all reforms align with the Strategic Plan guided by a clear theory of change.

- **Recommendation 2.4.a** – Include, as a part of regular practice, aligning current district reforms under the Strategic Plan or other guiding documents with the expectation that any future initiatives at the building or district levels should be tied directly to the revised Strategic Plan or guiding document.
- **Recommendation 2.4.b** – Clearly display where all district initiatives fit into the Strategic Plan.
 - Compile a yearly assessment report should be compiled and published displaying performance, updates made, and future needs. Clear benchmarks for assessing progress should be clearly identified.
- **Recommendation 2.4.c** – School level improvement plans, and other reform initiatives should be directly aligned with the KCKPS Strategic Plan. Schools should prepare a yearly update of the performance – related to goals and targets – of their individual initiatives.

Recommendation 3: Building the Culture

The challenges of frequent administrative turnover, COVID-19, and the imperative to meet the needs of a diverse student body all combine to present challenges to having a culture that encourages success for all. At the same time, some of the district's practices have impacted the climate and culture that affects students, teachers, professional and certified staff, administrators, parents, and the community served. The cultural development needs for KCKPS fall into three broad areas, with multiple recommendations within each.

Recommendation 3.1 – Build a culture of trust and safety.

Trust and safety were significant issues in the district. Specifically, the trust of Central Administration and safety for students was a key issue. Changing the culture will require time and effort. Three recommendations are offered regarding building a stronger culture around issues of trust and safety.

- **Recommendation 3.1.a** – Some participants reported the current level of trust for the district administration is low. Having a superintendent in place for a longer time period will help. But reforms are less likely to be adequately implemented when the local school personnel believe their voices are not considered and when change is constant. School level personnel should:
 - Be directly involved in any change development process making certain that multiple voices are considered and that they identify that their needs are being addressed.
 - Have access to necessary training that is useful and provide timely and consistent feedback on performance.
 - Constructive feedback should be clear and targeted so modifications to practice can be made based on the data provided.
 - Successful reform implementation requires a clear theory of change driving all efforts. That theory of change should be discussed and understood.
- **Recommendation 3.1.b** – Address safety issues, especially for students, should be addressed. Identifying common problems will assist in developing strategies. To that end, student climate surveys should be implemented periodically to assess common safety issues needing remediation. Adults in school buildings should work cooperatively with students on approaches for addressing bullying behavior in individual schools.
- **Recommendation 3.1.c** – Address discrimination and harassment. Racial discrimination and sexual harassment by students on other students were both reported, and although no comparative data were collected, this finding may be consistent with other school districts. However, the issues are real for students in KCKPS, and likely impacts feelings of safety, and should be examined for commonalities so solutions can be developed. This could become a central part of the district's socio-emotional training and curriculum. At a minimum, student climate surveys should be administered periodically

to understand the situation confronting students. Advanced technology like apps for reporting racial discrimination, sexual harassment, and bullying could be made available to students to strengthen incident reporting. Programs for addressing student-to-student bullying should be examined, involving students in creating strategies and plans.

- **Recommendation 3.1.d** – Racial discrimination and sexual harassment involving adults on adults was not directly addressed in surveys and interviews for this study. Nonetheless, some workplace environment issues did emerge in interviews and responses to open-ended survey questions. We recommend that staff climate surveys be administered periodically to identify areas of concern for specific remediation and policy changes.

Recommendation 3.2 – Build a culture of ongoing two-way communication.

The district does a lot of communication, and information is shared across all constituents. But concerns were raised about communication, most specifically regarding reform implementation by district administrators responsible for the efforts. Participants noted that the district administration has not been communicating in a timely way, with adequate information for helping school personnel be successful. Three recommendations are offered regarding efforts to strengthen the culture for communication.

- **Recommendation 3.2.a** – Any reform effort or initiative undertaken by the district should include the development of a clear communication plan describing how relevant information about the reform, data on performance, and necessary professional development will be offered. Contact mechanisms for two-way communication should be clearly specified.
- **Recommendation 3.2.b** – District administration could benefit from a communication plan so the varying offices responsible for reform or other administrative requirements are communicating with one another. This could minimize communication overload and inconsistent messaging and break down the “siloes” that exist across the district.
- **Recommendation 3.2.c** – Communicators should be sensitive to how personnel receive their messages – are messages too long, too hard to find, etc. We recommend shorter messages with URL links to allow personnel to find and read information most relevant for them.
- **Recommendation 3.2.d** – District administrators should be open to having school professionals visit with them about concerns. They should also try to visit schools to make sure they understand local needs.

Recommendation 3.3 – Identify and use clear goals, measures of performance, and feedback loops to make appropriate adjustments to practice.

The district has been working on strengthening its’ collection and use of data. The FastBridge system and ATLAS Protocol were specifically highlighted. Staffing to support data gathering and distribution is an issue. Questions emerged about the quality and usefulness of data often shared with schools, timeliness of receiving data, and feedback loops for responding to data

with questions that arise. Changing the culture around data use and effectiveness will take time and encompass multiple efforts. Five recommendations are provided to strengthen the culture around data.

- **Recommendation 3.3.a** – For any reform or initiative, establishing clear goals at the outset with targets for measurable outcomes is important. These measurable outcomes should be clear with responsibility for collecting and sharing feedback identified.
 - Consider identifying and benchmarking goals and growth over time to reference, review, and measure progress on district and building goals.
- **Recommendation 3.3.b** – Data needs to be shared on a regular basis with users in the schools.
- **Recommendation 3.3.c** – Provide training to develop a better understanding of the data could be beneficial and should be provided.
- **Recommendation 3.3.d** – Feedback mechanisms for questioning data, how the data provided to local schools applies to their building circumstances, and the implications from data being shared with schools for potentially changing practice should be clearly explained.
- **Recommendation 3.3.e** – The district should develop a culture of data use, ongoing measurement, and feedback loops. Help instructional coaches and teachers understand the appropriate use of quantitative and qualitative data to improve their practice.
 - Consider re-establishing continuous improvement structures and processes that analyze and monitor progress toward goals.

Recommendation 4: Transformation Required

Two areas of distinct need for attention emerged – Special Education and Human Resources. This evaluation did not directly review the Human Resources operation (another contractor did). Thus, no specifics regarding HR are provided other than the reality that the need for changes emerged unsolicited in numerous interviews and open-ended survey responses.

Recommendation 4.1 – Reform Special Education.

KCKPS is currently a part of the Wyandotte County Special Education Cooperative, along with Bonner Springs and Piper School Districts. Some concerns about the equity in terms of costs and services received by the partners were raised. Regarding services, issues with staffing, communication, training, trust, respect, compliance, and related concerns were reported at varying levels of severity by those working in the schools. Five specific recommendations for change and improvement are offered.

- **Recommendation 4.1.a** – Review the relationship with the Wyandotte County Special Education Cooperative. Questions arose about the value-added from Co-op membership to KCKPS Special Education programs, particularly given the district needs that require sustained and focused attention. Finding ways for more substantive two-way collaboration were discussed in focus group interviews.
- **Recommendation 4.1.b** – Staffing shortages, retention issues, and work overload for special education teachers, Speech/Language Pathologists and others should be addressed through the Superintendent’s office. Not only is recruitment of qualified special education teachers and related service providers a chronic challenge (as it is across Kansas and nationwide), but retention of qualified staff has become a pressing concern. Trust and communication issues in this area have accelerated the resignations or retirements of school psychologists, special education teachers, and other related service providers. (See the following resource):
<https://cedar.education.ufl.edu/shortage-toolkit/> for developing local strategies).
- **Recommendation 4.1.c** – Trust and communication issues, and how professional staff are being treated and considered should be examined through the Superintendent’s office. These trust and communication concerns between district administration and building-based special education professionals and staff should be addressed to allow proposed changes and improvements to take root.
- **Recommendation 4.1.d** – A compliance monitoring system should be established or improved to ensure that students in special education or needing specialized education are receiving appropriate services and supports in a timely manner that meet legal requirements. (See the following resource for guidance:
<https://www.ksde.org/Agency/Division-of-Learning-Services/Special-Education-and->

[Title-Services/Special Education/Legal-Special-Education-Law/Kansas-Special-Education-Process-Handbook](#)).

- **Recommendation 4.1.e** – Ongoing professional development should be offered to professional staff when new systems are implemented. Special education teachers and related services personnel identified confusion during the school year about implementing the new IEP system, requiring considerable time in redoing work already performed. It is likely that multiple other professional development needs exist in this area.

Recommendation 4.2 – Resolve issues with Human Resources.

This evaluation did not directly review the Human Resource operation in KCKPS (another contractor conducted a review). We provide no specifics, other than highlighting that communication issues with the HR department came up unsolicited consistently in open-ended survey responses and interviews across multiple groups. This suggests that HR is an area that could benefit from attention and further development.



APPENDICES

Appendix A: Survey Responses

Student Survey (High School Students)

Question	Number Answered	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
I enjoy going to school most days.	537	68 (12.7%)	241 (44.9%)	111 (20.7%)	83 (15.5%)	24 (4.5%)
I feel safe at my school.	537	39 (7.3%)	212 (39.5%)	140 (26.1%)	72 (13.4%)	62 (11.5%)
My cultural backgrounds are respected at my school.	537	81 (15.1%)	299 (55.7%)	52 (9.7%)	32 (6.0%)	62 (11.5%)
Different cultural backgrounds are well represented in the curriculum in my courses.	537	63 (11.7%)	225 (41.9%)	100 (18.6%)	41 (7.6%)	95 (17.7%)
Adults notice if someone is bullied at school.	537	23 (4.3%)	101 (18.8%)	172 (32.0%)	107 (19.9%)	123 (22.9%)
My teachers take the time to get to know me.	537	55 (10.2%)	245 (45.6%)	133 (24.8%)	45 (8.4%)	48 (8.9%)
Overall, I trust my teachers at my school.	537	65 (12.1%)	269 (50.1%)	108 (20.1%)	43 (8.0%)	40 (7.4%)
Overall, I trust the administrators.	537	47 (8.8%)	212 (39.5%)	110 (20.5%)	77 (14.3%)	79 (14.7%)
I understand the district graduation requirements.	537	121 (22.5%)	270 (50.3%)	64 (11.9%)	23 (4.3%)	46 (8.6%)
I am aware that the district provides or offers ACT preparation.	537	113 (21.0%)	282 (52.5%)	54 (10.1%)	20 (3.7%)	56 (10.4%)
I am aware of the requirements needed to qualify for Kansas Board of Regents Scholarships.	537	55 (10.2%)	157 (29.2%)	120 (22.3%)	83 (15.5%)	110 (20.5%)
I am aware of the graduation requirements that qualify me for the Kansas Board of Regents Scholarships.	537	55 (10.2%)	161 (30.0%)	118 (22.0%)	78 (14.5%)	109 (20.3%)
I am able to get the support services and resources I need to be a successful student.	537	66 (12.3%)	295 (54.9%)	80 (14.9%)	37 (6.9%)	44 (8.2%)
I have access to rigorous courses.	537	71 (13.2%)	218 (40.6%)	61 (11.4%)	28 (5.2%)	142 (26.4%)
I am aware of instances of racial discrimination at my school by adults.	537	70 (13.0%)	168 (31.3%)	111 (20.7%)	38 (7.1%)	133 (24.8%)
I am aware of instances of racial discrimination at my school by students.	537	97 (18.1%)	207 (38.5%)	72 (13.4%)	27 (5.0%)	116 (21.6%)
I am aware of instances of sexual harassment at my school by students.	537	88 (16.4%)	176 (32.8%)	82 (15.3%)	40 (7.4%)	132 (24.6%)
I am aware of instances of sexual harassment at my school by adults.	537	53 (9.9%)	154 (28.7%)	97 (18.1%)	53 (9.9%)	163 (30.4%)
I believe that Wednesday Early Release is valuable.	537	355 (66.1%)	107 (19.9%)	20 (3.7%)	20 (3.7%)	20 (3.7%)

Student Survey (High School Students)

Question		Response					
Which of these most closely represent your gender? You can select more than one.	Number Answered	Woman	Man	Non-binary/ Agender/ Genderqueer	Two-spirit	Prefer to self-describe as:	Prefer not to say
	535	315 (58.9%)	160 (29.9%)	34 (6.4%)	5 (0.9%)	5 (0.9%)	16 (3.0%)

Question		Response								
Race/Ethnicity:	Number Answered	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latino	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	White	Multi-race	Other	Prefer not to say
	510	6 (1.2%)	45 (8.8%)	125 (24.5%)	165 (32.4%)	0 (0.0%)	84 (16.5%)	63 (12.4%)	9 (1.8%)	13 (2.5%)

Question		Response		
First Language:	Number Answered	English	Spanish	Other
	507	354 (69.8%)	110 (21.7%)	43 (8.5%)

Teacher and Certified Staff (Covered by the Master Contract)

Question	Number Answered	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
Our school district has clear goals we can analyze and report progress towards.	857	45 (5.3%)	412 (48.1%)	215 (25.1%)	99 (11.6%)	86 (10.0%)
My school building has clear goals we can analyze and report progress towards.	854	111 (13.0%)	468 (54.8%)	143 (16.7%)	87 (10.2%)	45 (5.3%)
My school building goals align with the district goals, initiatives, and/or strategic plan.	850	121 (14.2%)	421 (49.5%)	113 (13.3%)	45 (5.3%)	150 (17.7%)
The district office effectively communicates about reforms and/or initiatives for buildings.	852	34 (4.0%)	255 (29.9%)	286 (33.6%)	175 (20.5%)	102 (12.0%)
Reforms and initiatives across the district are integrated into a cohesive plan.	853	23 (2.7%)	175 (20.5%)	287 (33.7%)	222 (26.0%)	146 (17.1%)
There is adequate training and support to implement the district reforms or initiatives.	851	21 (2.5%)	198 (23.3%)	301 (35.4%)	240 (28.2%)	91 (10.7%)
I am familiar with the varying reforms and initiatives in the district that might strengthen my students' performance.	851	32 (3.8%)	399 (46.9%)	220 (25.9%)	85 (10.0%)	115 (13.5%)
I understand the district processes for carrying out policies.	850	37 (4.4%)	279 (32.8%)	284 (33.4%)	155 (18.2%)	95 (11.2%)
I am aware of instances of racial discrimination at my school by adults.	772	76 (9.8%)	189 (24.5%)	245 (31.7%)	154 (20.0%)	108 (14.0%)
I am aware of instances of racial discrimination at my school by students.	773	108 (14.0%)	318 (41.1%)	177 (22.9%)	80 (10.4%)	90 (11.6%)
I am aware of instances of sexual harassment at my school by students.	770	85 (11.0%)	244 (31.7%)	209 (27.1%)	124 (16.1%)	108 (14.0%)
I am aware of instances of sexual harassment at my school by adults.	772	28 (3.6%)	74 (9.6%)	276 (35.8%)	245 (31.7%)	149 (19.3%)
I ensure that the instructional materials used in my classroom reflect the racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds of all.	772	214 (27.7%)	452 (58.6%)	33 (4.3%)	15 (1.9%)	58 (7.5%)
My cultural backgrounds are respected at my school.	773	171 (22.1%)	469 (60.7%)	58 (7.5%)	29 (3.8%)	46 (6.0%)
I enjoy working at this school most days.	774	201 (26.0%)	383 (49.5%)	104 (13.4%)	64 (8.3%)	22 (2.8%)

Teacher and Certified Staff (Covered by the Master Contract)

Question	Number Answered	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
This school has an effective process for making group decisions and solving problems.	773	90 (11.6%)	299 (38.7%)	174 (22.5%)	157 (20.3%)	53 (6.9%)
This school has a collaborative work culture.	771	133 (17.3%)	353 (45.8%)	153 (19.8%)	109 (14.1%)	23 (3.0%)
Continuous professional learning is highly valued by faculty/staff.	774	101 (13.1%)	323 (41.7%)	191 (24.7%)	112 (14.5%)	47 (6.1%)
I feel safe at my school.	772	193 (25.0%)	397 (51.4%)	109 (14.1%)	53 (6.9%)	20 (2.6%)
Students with special needs (special education students) get the support and services they need at my school.	772	75 (9.7%)	281 (36.4%)	220 (28.5%)	154 (20.0%)	42 (5.4%)
I have adequate technology for properly doing my job.	775	128 (16.5%)	428 (55.2%)	145 (18.7%)	70 (9.0%)	4 (0.5%)
I get adequate training to utilize the technology the district provides.	775	46 (5.9%)	271 (35.0%)	269 (34.7%)	171 (22.1%)	18 (2.3%)
I am confident in my ability to use the technology the district provides.	773	132 (17.1%)	439 (56.8%)	140 (18.1%)	45 (5.8%)	17 (2.2%)
Overall, I trust my building's administration.	775	234 (30.2%)	307 (39.6%)	113 (14.6%)	86 (11.1%)	35 (4.5%)
Overall, I trust the district's administration.	772	39 (5.1%)	220 (28.5%)	226 (29.3%)	161 (20.9%)	126 (16.3%)
My students have access to a rigorous and appropriate college prep curriculum.	772	73 (9.5%)	318 (41.2%)	158 (20.5%)	60 (7.8%)	163 (21.1%)
My students have access to a rigorous and appropriate career-oriented curriculum.	770	61 (7.9%)	328 (42.6%)	156 (20.3%)	64 (8.3%)	161 (20.9%)
I believe that Wednesday Early Release is valuable.	774	188 (24.3%)	254 (32.8%)	143 (18.5%)	125 (16.2%)	64 (8.3%)
The following impact decision-making in my area: (rate each one):						
<i>Standardized test scores</i>	813	62 (7.6%)	349 (42.9%)	193 (23.7%)	149 (18.3%)	60 (7.4%)
<i>Evaluations/feedback from supervisors/administrators</i>	813	151 (18.6%)	493 (60.6%)	98 (12.1%)	47 (5.8%)	24 (3.0%)
<i>Feedback from students</i>	813	299 (36.8%)	425 (52.3%)	43 (5.3%)	6 (0.7%)	40 (4.9%)
<i>Feedback from parents</i>	813	135 (16.6%)	504 (62.0%)	86 (10.6%)	17 (2.1%)	71 (8.7%)
<i>Data I collect</i>	814	385 (47.3%)	372 (45.7%)	20 (2.5%)	11 (1.4%)	26 (3.2%)
<i>Research literature</i>	811	177 (21.8%)	483 (59.6%)	69 (8.5%)	20 (2.5%)	62 (7.6%)
<i>Other</i>	636	46 (7.2%)	163 (25.6%)	18 (2.8%)	9 (1.4%)	400 (62.9%)

Teacher and Certified Staff (Covered by the Master Contract)

Question	Reform/Initiative Selected
I am familiar with the following reforms/initiatives in the district (select all that apply):	
<i>MTSS framework</i>	641 (13.9%)
<i>Focused Model of Instruction with SIOP and Co-Teaching Alignments</i>	504 (10.9%)
<i>Use of district provided Guaranteed Viable Curriculum (GVCs) and resources</i>	686 (14.8%)
<i>Culturally relevant, inclusive, and sustaining practices</i>	631 (13.6%)
<i>Science of reading and structured literacy</i>	430 (9.3%)
<i>Behavioral and social emotional learning</i>	658 (14.2%)
<i>Trauma-sensitive and resilient schools</i>	693 (15.0%)
<i>The USD 500 strategic plan – district vision and goals</i>	383 (8.3%)

Question	Number Answered	Response					
		Woman	Man	Non-binary/ Agender/ Genderqueer	Two- spirit	Prefer to self- describe as:	Prefer not to say
Which of these most closely represent your gender? You can select more than one.	782	586 (74.9%)	133 (17.0%)	13 (1.7%)	3 (0.4%)	5 (0.6%)	42 (5.4%)

Question	Number Answered	Response								
		American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latino	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	White	Multi-race	Other	Prefer not to say
Race/Ethnicity:	761	3 (0.4%)	4 (0.5%)	86 (11.3%)	34 (4.5%)	0 (0.0%)	530 (69.7%)	23 (3.0%)	7 (0.9%)	74 (9.7%)

Teacher and Certified Staff (Covered by the Master Contract)

Question	Number Answered	Response		
		English	Spanish	Other
First Language:	757	740 (97.8%)	6 (0.8%)	11 (1.5%)

Question	Number Answered	Response			
		Classroom Teacher	Work in related services (e.g., school psychologist, speech pathologist, social worker, nurse, counselor, etc.)	Instructional Coach	Other
I currently am a:	755	510 (67.6%)	99 (13.1%)	49 (6.5%)	97 (12.9%)

Question	Number Answered	Response		
		Elementary School	Middle School	High School
I currently primarily work in:	731	396 (54.2%)	155 (21.2%)	180 (24.6%)

Question	Number Answered	Average	Mode	Minimum	Maximum
Years of experience in current school:	726	6.4	2	0	37
Years of experience in USD 500:	733	9.3	4	0	49.5
Total numbers of years of experience working in education:	735	15.2	4	0	53

Classified Staff

Question	Number Answered	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
I enjoy working for the school district.	854	300 (35.1%)	430 (50.4%)	58 (6.8%)	42 (4.9%)	24 (2.8%)
I work well with others in my work setting.	857	445 (51.9%)	377 (44.0%)	19 (2.2%)	10 (1.2%)	6 (0.7%)
Continuous professional learning is highly valued for my job.	853	264 (31.0%)	378 (44.3%)	104 (12.2%)	61 (7.2%)	46 (5.4%)
I feel safe at my job.	856	282 (32.9%)	406 (47.4%)	99 (11.6%)	38 (4.4%)	31 (3.6%)
I get adequate training for my job.	854	186 (21.8%)	423 (49.5%)	150 (17.6%)	73 (8.6%)	22 (2.6%)
Overall, I trust the district administration.	855	146 (17.1%)	359 (42.0%)	145 (17.0%)	88 (10.3%)	117 (13.7%)
My cultural backgrounds are respected where I work.	854	238 (27.9%)	459 (53.8%)	66 (7.7%)	33 (3.9%)	58 (6.8%)
I am aware of instances of racial discrimination at my school by adults.	849	98 (11.5%)	215 (25.3%)	183 (21.6%)	120 (14.1%)	233 (27.4%)
I am aware of instances of racial discrimination at my school by students.	849	91 (10.7%)	230 (27.1%)	166 (19.6%)	98 (11.5%)	264 (31.1%)
I am aware of instances of sexual harassment at my school by students.	846	76 (9.0%)	170 (20.1%)	188 (22.2%)	120 (14.2%)	292 (34.5%)
I am aware of instances of sexual harassment at my school by adults.	846	64 (7.6%)	120 (14.2%)	207 (24.5%)	161 (19.0%)	294 (34.8%)
I believe that Wednesday Early Release is valuable.	851	261 (30.7%)	237 (27.9%)	121 (14.2%)	89 (10.5%)	143 (16.8%)

Question	Number Answered	Response					
		Woman	Man	Non-binary/ Agender/ Genderqueer	Two-spirit	Prefer to self-describe as:	Prefer not to say
Which of these most closely represent your gender? You can select more than one.	845	618 (73.1%)	169 (20.0%)	5 (0.6%)	1 (0.1%)	13 (1.5%)	39 (4.6%)

Classified Staff

Question		Response								
Race/Ethnicity:	Number Answered	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latino	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	White	Multi-race	Other	Prefer not to say
	826	15 (1.8%)	16 (1.9%)	300 (36.3%)	119 (14.4%)	1 (0.1%)	266 (32.2%)	24 (2.9%)	12 (1.5%)	73 (8.8%)

Question		Response		
First Language:	Number Answered	English	Spanish	Other
	822	732 (89.1%)	71 (8.6%)	19 (2.3%)

Building Administrators

Question	Number Answered	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
Our school district has clear goals we can analyze and report progress towards.	72	8 (11.1%)	37 (51.4%)	18 (25.0%)	3 (4.2%)	6 (8.3%)
My building has clear goals we can analyze and report progress towards.	71	13 (18.3%)	46 (64.8%)	8 (11.3%)	1 (1.4%)	3 (4.2%)
My school building goals align with the district goals, initiatives, and/or strategic plan.	71	12 (16.9%)	43 (60.6%)	6 (8.5%)	2 (2.8%)	8 (11.3%)
The district monitors my school's implementation of the USD 500 strategic plan.	71	8 (11.3%)	33 (46.5%)	12 (16.9%)	5 (7.0%)	13 (18.3%)
Reforms and initiatives across the district are integrated into a cohesive plan.	71	3 (4.2%)	27 (38.0%)	23 (32.4%)	8 (11.3%)	10 (14.1%)
The district office effectively communicates about reforms and/or initiatives for buildings.	71	1 (1.4%)	37 (52.1%)	20 (28.2%)	10 (14.1%)	3 (4.2%)
There is adequate training and support to implement the district reforms or initiatives.	71	2 (2.8%)	25 (35.2%)	29 (40.9%)	13 (18.3%)	2 (2.8%)
I am familiar with the varying reforms and initiatives in the district that might strengthen students' performance.	71	4 (5.6%)	52 (73.2%)	7 (9.9%)	1 (1.4%)	7 (9.9%)
I understand the district processes for carrying out policies.	71	5 (7.0%)	39 (54.9%)	16 (22.5%)	2 (2.8%)	9 (12.7%)
I am aware of instances of racial discrimination at my school by adults.	62	7 (11.3%)	22 (35.5%)	20 (32.3%)	6 (9.7%)	7 (11.3%)
I am aware of instances of racial discrimination at my school by students.	63	7 (11.1%)	35 (55.6%)	15 (23.8%)	3 (4.8%)	3 (4.8%)
I am aware of instances of sexual harassment at my school by students.	62	10 (16.1%)	32 (51.6%)	11 (17.7%)	7 (11.3%)	2 (3.2%)
I am aware of instances of sexual harassment at my school by adults.	62	3 (4.8%)	11 (17.7%)	27 (43.6%)	13 (21.0%)	8 (12.9%)
The instructional materials in my school used in classrooms reflects the racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds of all.	63	3 (4.8%)	26 (41.3%)	20 (31.8%)	7 (11.1%)	7 (11.1%)
My cultural backgrounds are respected at my school.	63	14 (22.2%)	40 (63.5%)	5 (7.9%)	1 (1.6%)	3 (4.8%)
I enjoy working at this school most days.	63	29 (46.0%)	29 (46.0%)	3 (4.8%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (3.2%)
My school has an effective process for making group decisions and solving problems.	62	13 (21.0%)	40 (64.5%)	6 (9.7%)	1 (1.6%)	2 (3.2%)

Building Administrators

Question	Number Answered	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
My school has a collaborative work culture.	62	11 (17.7%)	44 (71.0%)	3 (4.8%)	1 (1.6%)	3 (4.8%)
Continuous professional learning is highly valued by faculty/staff.	63	8 (12.7%)	33 (52.4%)	14 (22.2%)	4 (6.4%)	4 (6.4%)
Students with special needs (special education students) get the support and services they need at my school.	63	9 (14.3%)	34 (54.0%)	13 (20.6%)	6 (9.5%)	1 (1.6%)
Teachers and staff have adequate technology for properly doing their respective jobs.	63	12 (19.1%)	40 (63.5%)	6 (9.5%)	3 (4.8%)	2 (3.2%)
Teachers and staff get adequate training to utilize the technology the district provides.	63	4 (6.4%)	21 (33.3%)	25 (39.7%)	10 (15.9%)	3 (4.8%)
I am confident in the ability of teachers and staff to use the technology the district provides.	63	7 (11.1%)	35 (55.6%)	15 (23.8%)	3 (4.8%)	3 (4.8%)
All students have access to a rigorous and appropriate college prep curriculum.	62	4 (6.5%)	32 (51.6%)	19 (30.7%)	0 (0.0%)	7 (11.3%)
All students have access to a rigorous and appropriate career-oriented curriculum.	62	3 (4.8%)	36 (58.1%)	19 (30.7%)	2 (3.2%)	2 (3.2%)
There is a strong level of trust among faculty and staff at my school.	63	6 (9.5%)	32 (50.8%)	19 (30.2%)	2 (3.2%)	4 (6.4%)
Students at my school trust the teachers and administrators.	63	11 (17.5%)	45 (71.4%)	6 (9.5%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (1.6%)
Overall, I trust the district's administration.	63	9 (14.3%)	36 (57.1%)	11 (17.5%)	1 (1.6%)	6 (9.5%)
I believe that Wednesday Early Release is valuable.	62	22 (35.5%)	18 (29.0%)	9 (14.5%)	8 (12.9%)	5 (8.1%)
The following impact decision-making in my area: (rate each one):						
<i>Standardized test scores</i>	69	7 (10.1%)	45 (65.2%)	12 (17.4%)	2 (2.9%)	3 (4.4%)
<i>Evaluations/feedback from supervisors/administrators</i>	69	12 (17.4%)	48 (69.6%)	5 (7.3%)	1 (1.5%)	3 (4.4%)
<i>Feedback from teachers</i>	69	24 (34.8%)	40 (58.0%)	2 (2.9%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (4.4%)
<i>Feedback from students</i>	69	15 (21.7%)	44 (63.8%)	3 (4.4%)	1 (1.5%)	6 (8.7%)
<i>Feedback from parents</i>	69	12 (17.4%)	44 (63.8%)	7 (10.1%)	1 (1.5%)	5 (7.3%)
<i>Data I collect</i>	69	25 (36.2%)	39 (56.5%)	2 (2.9%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (4.4%)
<i>Research literature</i>	69	9 (13.0%)	53 (76.8%)	2 (2.9%)	0 (0.0%)	5 (7.3%)
<i>Other</i>	40	1 (2.5%)	20 (50.0%)	1 (2.5%)	1 (2.5%)	17 (42.5%)

Building Administrators

Question	Reform/Initiative Selected
I am familiar with the following reforms/initiatives in the district (select all that apply):	
<i>MTSS framework</i>	60 (13.8%)
<i>Focused Model of Instruction with SIOP and Co-Teaching Alignments</i>	59 (13.6%)
<i>Use of district provided Guaranteed Viable Curriculum (GVCs) and resources</i>	61 (14.0%)
<i>Culturally relevant, inclusive, and sustaining practices</i>	55 (12.6%)
<i>Science of reading and structured literacy</i>	37 (8.5%)
<i>Behavioral and social emotional learning</i>	57 (13.1%)
<i>Trauma-sensitive and resilient schools</i>	59 (13.6%)
<i>The USD 500 strategic plan – district vision and goals</i>	47 (10.8%)

Question	Number Answered	Response					
		Woman	Man	Non-binary/ Agender/ Genderqueer	Two-spirit	Prefer to self- describe as:	Prefer not to say
Which of these most closely represent your gender? You can select more than one.	64	34 (53.1%)	22 (34.4%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	8 (12.5%)

Question	Number Answered	Response								
		American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latino	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	White	Multi-race	Other	Prefer not to say
Race/Ethnicity:	63	0 (0.0%)	2 (3.2%)	14 (22.2%)	5 (7.9%)	0 (0.0%)	30 (47.6%)	1 (1.6%)	1 (1.6%)	10 (15.9%)

Question	Number Answered	Response		
		English	Spanish	Other
First Language:	62	59 (95.2%)	3 (4.8%)	0 (0.0%)

Building Administrators

Question	Response			
I currently primarily work in:	Number Answered	Elementary School	Middle School	High School
	61	31 (50.8%)	13 (21.3%)	17 (27.9%)

Question	Number Answered	Average	Mode	Minimum	Maximum
Years of experience in current school:	59	7.1	3	0.5	40
Years of experience in USD 500:	61	15.5	3	1	43
Total numbers of years of experience working in education:	62	21.9	20	0	43

District Administrators

Question	Number Answered	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
Our school district has clear goals we can analyze and report progress towards.	15	2 (13.3%)	3 (20.0%)	8 (53.3%)	2 (13.3%)	0 (0.0%)
The various district departments support the implementation of the Strategic Plan.	15	2 (13.3%)	5 (33.3%)	4 (26.7%)	2 (13.3%)	2 (13.3%)
Building administrators support the implementation of the Strategic Plan.	15	1 (6.7%)	4 (26.7%)	6 (40.0%)	2 (13.3%)	2 (13.3%)
Monitoring of the Strategic Plan is consistent throughout the district.	15	0 (0.0%)	2 (13.3%)	8 (53.3%)	5 (33.3%)	0 (0.0%)
Staff at all levels are informed of their roles and responsibilities in supporting and implementing reforms and initiatives.	15	0 (0.0%)	5 (33.3%)	6 (40.0%)	3 (20.0%)	1 (6.7%)
I enjoy working in this district.	14	3 (21.4%)	9 (64.3%)	1 (7.1%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (7.1%)
I am treated with respect by the district.	15	2 (13.3%)	10 (66.7%)	3 (20.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
The district has an effective process for making group decisions.	15	1 (6.7%)	5 (33.3%)	7 (46.7%)	2 (13.3%)	0 (0.0%)
I am included in the decision-making process at the district.	15	1 (6.7%)	10 (66.7%)	4 (26.7%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
The district has a collaborative work culture.	15	1 (6.7%)	6 (40.0%)	6 (40.0%)	2 (13.3%)	0 (0.0%)
I trust the district administration.	15	3 (20.0%)	7 (46.7%)	3 (20.0%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (13.3%)
Continuous professional learning is highly valued by the district.	15	3 (20.0%)	9 (60.0%)	3 (20.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Students with special needs (special education students) get the support and services they need.	15	2 (13.3%)	4 (26.7%)	6 (40.0%)	1 (6.7%)	2 (13.3%)
Teachers and staff have adequate technology for properly doing their respective jobs.	15	2 (13.3%)	8 (53.3%)	2 (13.3%)	3 (20.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Teachers and staff get adequate training to utilize the technology the district provides.	15	1 (6.7%)	3 (20.0%)	9 (60.0%)	2 (13.3%)	0 (0.0%)
I am confident in the ability of teachers and staff to use the technology the district provides.	15	1 (6.7%)	6 (40.0%)	7 (46.7%)	1 (6.7%)	0 (0.0%)
The district office communicates effectively to building administrators about district-wide reforms for buildings.	15	1 (6.7%)	7 (46.7%)	6 (40.0%)	1 (6.7%)	0 (0.0%)
The district office communicates effectively to teachers about district-wide reforms for buildings.	15	1 (6.7%)	3 (20.0%)	9 (60.0%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (13.3%)
The district office communicates effectively to parents and the community about reforms or initiatives.	15	2 (13.3%)	5 (33.3%)	3 (20.0%)	3 (20.0%)	2 (13.3%)

District Administrators

Question	Number Answered	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
There is adequate training and support to implement the district reforms or initiatives.	15	2 (13.3%)	2 (13.3%)	8 (53.3%)	1 (6.7%)	2 (13.3%)
District and building administrators understand the district processes for carrying out policies.	15	2 (13.3%)	4 (26.7%)	8 (53.3%)	1 (6.7%)	0 (0.0%)
Reforms and initiatives across the district are integrated into a cohesive plan.	15	0 (0.0%)	3 (20.0%)	8 (53.3%)	3 (20.0%)	1 (6.7%)
Overall, I trust the district leadership.	15	2 (13.3%)	9 (60.0%)	3 (20.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (6.7%)
All students have access to a rigorous and appropriate college prep curriculum.	15	2 (13.3%)	7 (46.7%)	3 (20.0%)	2 (13.3%)	1 (6.7%)
All students have access to a rigorous and appropriate career-oriented curriculum.	15	2 (13.3%)	5 (33.3%)	4 (26.7%)	2 (13.3%)	2 (13.3%)
I am aware of instances of racial discrimination by adults in district schools.	15	0 (0.0%)	8 (53.3%)	2 (13.3%)	2 (13.3%)	3 (20.0%)
I am aware of instances of racial discrimination by students in district schools.	15	0 (0.0%)	9 (60.0%)	2 (13.3%)	1 (6.7%)	3 (20.0%)
I am aware of instances of sexual harassment by students in district schools.	15	0 (0.0%)	10 (66.7%)	1 (6.7%)	1 (6.7%)	3 (20.0%)
I am aware of instances of sexual harassment by adults in district schools.	15	0 (0.0%)	9 (60.0%)	1 (6.7%)	2 (13.3%)	3 (20.0%)
I believe that Wednesday Early Release is valuable.	15	2 (13.3%)	5 (33.3%)	4 (26.7%)	2 (13.3%)	2 (13.3%)
The following impact decision-making in my area: (rate each one):						
<i>Standardized test scores</i>	15	6 (40.0%)	5 (33.3%)	2 (13.3%)	1 (6.7%)	1 (6.7%)
<i>Evaluations/feedback from supervisors</i>	15	5 (33.3%)	9 (60.0%)	1 (6.7%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
<i>Feedback from teachers</i>	15	3 (20.0%)	6 (40.0%)	4 (26.7%)	1 (6.7%)	1 (6.7%)
<i>Feedback from students</i>	15	2 (13.3%)	8 (53.3%)	3 (20.0%)	2 (13.3%)	0 (0.0%)
<i>Feedback from parents/community</i>	15	1 (6.7%)	11 (73.3%)	1 (6.7%)	2 (13.3%)	0 (0.0%)
<i>Data I collect</i>	15	4 (26.7%)	11 (73.3%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
<i>Research literature</i>	15	5 (33.3%)	10 (66.7%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
<i>Other</i>	12	2 (16.7%)	3 (25.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	7 (58.3%)

District Administrators

Question	Reform/Initiative Selected
I am familiar with the following reforms/initiatives in the district (select all that apply):	
<i>MTSS framework</i>	14 (16.1%)
<i>Focused Model of Instruction with SIOP and Co-Teaching Alignments</i>	7 (8.1%)
<i>Use of district provided Guaranteed Viable Curriculum (GVCs) and resources</i>	10 (11.5%)
<i>Culturally relevant, inclusive, and sustaining practices</i>	14 (16.1%)
<i>Science of reading and structured literacy</i>	6 (6.9%)
<i>Behavioral and social emotional learning</i>	13 (14.9%)
<i>Trauma-sensitive and resilient schools</i>	13 (14.9%)
<i>The USD 500 strategic plan – district vision and goals</i>	10 (11.5%)

Question	Response						
Which of these most closely represent your gender? You can select more than one.	Number Answered	Woman	Man	Non-binary/ Agender/ Genderqueer	Two-spirit	Prefer to self-describe as:	Prefer not to say
	14	10 (71.4%)	3 (21.4%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (7.1%)

Question	Response									
Race/Ethnicity:	Number Answered	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latino	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	White	Multi-race	Other	Prefer not to say
	14	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (14.3%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (7.1%)	7 (50.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (28.6%)

Question	Response			
First Language:	Number Answered	English	Spanish	Other
	14	14 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)

District Administrators

Question	Number Answered	Average	Mode	Minimum	Maximum
Years of experience in current position:	12	9	2	0.5	37
Years of experience in USD 500:	11	11.2	NA	1	29
Total numbers of years of experience working in education:	12	21.6	24	6	40

Parents

Question	Number Answered	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
I have access to and understand the district graduation requirements.	778	163 (21.0%)	300 (38.6%)	113 (14.5%)	50 (6.4%)	133 (17.1%)
I am aware of the graduation requirements that qualify my student for the Kansas Board of Regents Scholarships.	778	134 (17.2%)	228 (29.3%)	169 (21.7%)	80 (10.3%)	148 (19.0%)
I have a voice in my student's education.	778	251 (32.3%)	327 (42.0%)	102 (13.1%)	53 (6.8%)	27 (3.5%)
My student is "on track" for graduation.	778	262 (33.7%)	305 (39.2%)	63 (8.1%)	30 (3.9%)	97 (12.5%)
My student is offered opportunities to visit colleges through the district.	778	110 (14.1%)	213 (27.4%)	114 (14.7%)	55 (7.1%)	266 (34.2%)
My student is offered opportunities for job shadowing through the district.	778	69 (8.9%)	136 (17.5%)	148 (19.0%)	70 (9.0%)	332 (42.7%)
I am aware that racial discrimination exists at my child's school by adults.	778	126 (16.2%)	191 (24.6%)	129 (16.6%)	76 (9.8%)	236 (30.3%)
I am aware that racial discrimination exists at my child's school by students.	778	152 (19.5%)	260 (33.4%)	84 (10.8%)	52 (6.7%)	208 (26.7%)
I am aware that sexual harassment exists at my child's school by students.	778	111 (14.3%)	211 (27.1%)	106 (13.6%)	60 (7.7%)	268 (34.4%)
I am aware that sexual harassment exists at my child's school by adults.	778	73 (9.4%)	116 (14.9%)	151 (19.4%)	80 (10.3%)	332 (42.7%)
My student has access to a rigorous and appropriate college prep curriculum.	778	87 (11.2%)	209 (26.9%)	122 (15.7%)	75 (9.6%)	262 (33.7%)
My student has access to a rigorous and appropriate career-oriented curriculum.	778	71 (9.1%)	215 (27.6%)	127 (16.3%)	71 (9.1%)	272 (35.0%)
My student has access to the supports and resources needed to do well in school.	778	148 (19.0%)	337 (43.3%)	100 (12.9%)	84 (10.8%)	87 (11.2%)
My student enjoys going to school in this district.	778	162 (20.8%)	329 (42.3%)	142 (18.3%)	96 (12.3%)	29 (3.7%)
My student feels safe going to school.	778	118 (15.2%)	336 (43.2%)	148 (19.0%)	110 (14.1%)	43 (5.5%)
Overall, I trust my student's teachers.	778	178 (22.9%)	378 (48.6%)	87 (11.2%)	44 (5.7%)	70 (9.0%)
I trust my student's principal.	778	202 (26.0%)	345 (44.3%)	69 (8.9%)	47 (6.0%)	94 (12.1%)
Overall, I trust the district administration.	778	101 (13.0%)	296 (38.0%)	123 (15.8%)	91 (11.7%)	142 (18.3%)
I believe that Wednesday Early Release is valuable.	778	217 (27.9%)	277 (35.6%)	103 (13.2%)	91 (11.7%)	67 (8.6%)

Parents

Question		Response					
Which of these most closely represent your gender? You can select more than one.	Number Answered	Woman	Man	Non-binary/ Agender/ Genderqueer	Two-spirit	Prefer to self-describe as:	Prefer not to say
	755	595 (78.8%)	110 (14.6%)	3 (0.4%)	3 (0.4%)	4 (0.5%)	40 (5.3%)

Question		Response								
Race/Ethnicity:	Number Answered	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latino	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	White	Multi-race	Other	Prefer not to say
	739	8 (1.1%)	26 (3.5%)	170 (23.0%)	246 (33.3%)	0 (0.0%)	203 (27.5%)	34 (4.6%)	6 (0.8%)	46 (6.2%)

Question		Response			
First Language:	Number Answered	English	Spanish	Burmese	Other
	739	516 (69.8%)	201 (27.2%)	4 (0.5%)	18 (2.4%)

Appendix B: Survey Question List

All questions on a Likert scale: 4- Strongly Agree, 3-Agree, 2-Disagree, 1-Strongly Disagree, Don't know

I. Student Survey (High School students)

1. I enjoy going to school most days
2. I feel safe at my school
3. My cultural backgrounds are respected at my school
4. Different cultural backgrounds are well represented in the curriculum in my courses
5. Adults notice if someone is bullied at school
6. My teachers take the time to get to know me
7. Overall, I trust my teachers at my school
8. Overall, I trust the administrators
9. I understand the district graduation requirements
10. I am aware that the district provides or offers ACT preparation
11. I am aware of the requirements needed to qualify for Kansas Board of Regents Scholarships
12. I am aware of the graduation requirements that qualify me for the Kansas Board of Regents Scholarships
13. I am able to get the support services and resources I need to be a successful student
14. I have access to rigorous courses
15. I am aware of instances of racial discrimination at my school from the adults
16. I am aware of instances of racial discrimination at my school from the students
17. I am aware of instances of sexual harassment at my school from the students
18. I am aware of instances of sexual harassment at my school from the adults
19. I believe that Wednesday Early Release is valuable
20. Which of these most closely represent your gender? You can select more than one.
 - a. Woman
 - b. Man
 - c. Non-binary/Agender/Genderqueer
 - d. Two-spirit
 - e. Prefer to self-describe as: [fill in space]
 - f. Prefer not to say
21. Race/Ethnicity:
 - a. American Indian or Alaska Native
 - b. Asian
 - c. Black or African American
 - d. Hispanic or Latino
 - e. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - f. White
 - g. Multi-race
 - h. Other
22. First Language
 - a. English
 - b. Spanish
 - c. Other

II. Teacher and Certified Staff Survey (Covered by the Master Contract)

1. Our school district has clear goals we can analyze and report progress towards
2. My school building has clear goals we can analyze and report progress towards
3. My school building goals align with the district goals, initiatives and/or strategic plan.
4. I am familiar with the following reforms/initiatives in the district
 - *MTSS framework*
 - *Focused Model of Instruction with SIOP and Co-Teaching Alignments*
 - *Use of district provided Guaranteed Viable Curriculum (GVCs) and resources*
 - *Culturally relevant, inclusive and sustaining practices*
 - *Science of reading and structured literacy*
 - *Behavioral and social emotional learning*
 - *Trauma-sensitive and resilient schools*
 - *The USD 500 strategic plan – district vision and goals*
5. The district office effectively communicates about reforms and/or initiatives for buildings
6. Reforms and initiatives across the district are integrated into a cohesive plan
7. There is adequate training and support to implement the district reforms or initiatives
8. I am familiar with the varying reforms and initiatives in the district that might strengthen my students' performance
9. I understand the district processes for carrying out policies
10. The following impact decision-making about my practice (rate each one):
 - a. Standardized test scores
 - b. Evaluations/feedback from supervisors/administrators
 - c. Feedback from students
 - d. Feedback from parents
 - e. Data I collect
 - f. Research literature
 - g. Other
 - i. Explain:
11. I am aware of instances of racial discrimination at my school from the adults
12. I am aware of instances of racial discrimination at my school from the students
13. I am aware of instances of sexual harassment at my school from the students
14. I am aware of instances of sexual harassment at my school from the adults
15. I ensure that the instructional materials used in my classroom reflect the racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds of all
16. My cultural backgrounds are respected at my school
17. I enjoy working at this school most days
18. This school has an effective process for making group decisions and solving problems
19. This school has a collaborative work culture
20. Continuous professional learning is highly valued by faculty/staff
21. I feel safe at my school
22. Students with special needs (special education students) get the support and services they need at my school
23. I have adequate technology for properly doing my job
24. I get adequate training to utilize the technology the district provides
25. I am confident in my ability to use the technology the district provides

26. Overall, I trust my building's administration
27. Overall, I trust the district's administration
28. My students have access to a rigorous and appropriate college prep curriculum
29. My students have access to a rigorous and appropriate career-oriented curriculum
30. I believe that Wednesday Early Release is valuable
31. Which of these most closely represent your gender? You can select more than one.
 - a. Woman
 - b. Man
 - c. Non-binary/Agender/Genderqueer
 - d. Two-spirit
 - e. Prefer to self-describe as: [fill in space]
 - f. Prefer not to say
32. Race/Ethnicity:
 - a. American Indian or Alaska Native
 - b. Asian
 - c. Black or African American
 - d. Hispanic or Latino
 - e. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - f. White
 - g. Multi-race
 - h. Other
33. First Language
 - a. English
 - b. Spanish
 - c. Other
34. I currently am a:
 - a. Classroom teacher
 - b. Work in related services (e.g., school psychologist, speech pathologist, social worker, nurse, counselor, etc.)
 - c. Instructional coach
 - d. Other
35. I currently primarily work in:
 - a. Elementary School
 - b. Middle School
 - c. High School
36. Years of Experience in current school? (Provide number of years)
37. Years of experience in USD 500 (Provide number of years)
38. Total numbers of years of experience working in education (Provide years of experience)

III. Classified Staff Survey

1. I am aware of instances of racial discrimination at my school from the adults
2. I am aware of instances of racial discrimination at my school from the students
3. I am aware of instances of sexual harassment at my school from the students
4. I am aware of instances of sexual harassment at my school from the adults
5. I believe that Wednesday Early Release is valuable
6. My cultural backgrounds are respected where I work
7. I enjoy working for the school district

8. I work well with others in my work setting
9. Continuous professional learning is highly valued for my job
10. I feel safe at my job
11. I get adequate training for my job
12. Overall, I trust the district administration
13. Which of these most closely represent your gender? You can select more than one.
 - a. Woman
 - b. Man
 - c. Non-binary/Agender/Genderqueer
 - d. Two-spirit
 - e. Prefer to self-describe as: [fill in space]
 - f. Prefer not to say
14. Race/Ethnicity:
 - a. American Indian or Alaska Native
 - b. Asian
 - c. Black or African American
 - d. Hispanic or Latino
 - e. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - f. White
 - g. Multi-race
 - h. Other
15. First Language
 - a. English
 - b. Spanish
 - c. Other

IV. Building Administrators Survey

- 1) Our school district has clear goals we can analyze and report progress towards
- 2) My building has clear goals we can analyze and report progress towards
- 3) My school building goals align with the district goals, initiatives and/or strategic plan
- 4) The district monitors my school's implementation of the USD500 strategic plan
- 5) I am familiar with the following reforms/initiatives in the district:
 - *MTSS framework*
 - *Focused Model of Instruction with SIOP and Co-Teaching Alignments*
 - *Use of district provided Guaranteed Viable Curriculum (GVCs) and resources*
 - *Culturally relevant, inclusive and sustaining practices*
 - *Science of reading and structured literacy*
 - *Behavioral and social emotional learning*
 - *Trauma-sensitive and resilient schools*
 - *The USD 500 strategic plan – district vision and goals*
- 6) Reforms and initiatives across the district are integrated into a cohesive plan
- 7) The district office effectively communicates about reform or initiatives for buildings
- 8) There is adequate training and support to implement the district reforms or initiatives
- 9) I am familiar with the varying reforms in the district that might strengthen students' performance
- 10) I understand the district processes for carrying out policies

- 11) The following impact decision-making about my practice (rate each one):
- a. Standardized test scores
 - b. Evaluations/feedback from supervisors
 - c. Feedback from teachers
 - d. Feedback from students
 - e. Feedback from parents
 - f. Data I collect
 - g. Research literature
 - h. Other
 - i. Explain:
- 12) I am aware of instances of racial discrimination at my school from the adults
- 13) I am aware of instances of racial discrimination at my school from the students
- 14) I am aware of instances of sexual harassment at my school from the students
- 15) I am aware of instances of sexual harassment at my school from the adults
- 16) The instructional materials in my school used in classrooms reflects the racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds of all
- 17) My cultural backgrounds are respected at my school
- 18) I enjoy working at this school most days
- 19) My school has an effective process for making group decisions and solving problems
- 20) My school has a collaborative work culture
- 21) Continuous professional learning is highly valued by staff
- 22) Students with special needs (special education students) get the support and services they need at my school
- 23) Teachers and staff have adequate technology for properly doing their respective jobs
- 24) Teachers and staff get adequate training to utilize the technology the district provides
- 25) I am confident in the ability of teachers and staff to use the technology the district provides
- 26) All students have access to a rigorous and appropriate college prep curriculum
- 27) All students have access to a rigorous and appropriate career-oriented curriculum
- 28) There is a strong level of trust among faculty and staff at my school
- 29) Students at my school trust the teachers and administrators
- 30) Overall, I trust the district's administration
- 31) I believe that Wednesday Early Release is valuable
- 32) Which of these most closely represent your gender? You can select more than one.
- a. Woman
 - b. Man
 - c. Non-binary/Agender/Genderqueer
 - d. Two-spirit
 - e. Prefer to self-describe as: [fill in space]
 - f. Prefer not to say
- 33) Race/Ethnicity:
- a. American Indian or Alaska Native
 - b. Asian
 - c. Black or African American
 - d. Hispanic or Latino
 - e. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - f. White
 - g. Multi-race

- h. Other
- 34) First Language
 - a. English
 - b. Spanish
 - c. Other
- 35) Years of Experience in current school? (Provide number of years)
- 36) Years of experience in USD 500 (Provide number of years)
- 37) Total numbers of years of experience working in education (Provide years of experience)
- 38) I currently primarily work in:
 - a. Elementary School
 - b. Middle School
 - c. High School

V. District Administrators Survey

1. Our school district has clear goals we can analyze and report progress towards
2. The various district departments support the implementation of the Strategic Plan
3. Building administrators support the implementation of the Strategic Plan
4. Monitoring of the Strategic Plan is consistent throughout the district.
5. Staff at all levels are informed of their roles and responsibilities in supporting and implementing reforms and initiatives
6. I enjoy working in this district
7. I am treated with respect by the district
8. The district has an effective process for making group decisions
9. I am included in the decision-making process at the district
10. The district has a collaborative work culture
11. I trust the district administration
12. Continuous professional learning is highly valued by the district
13. Students with special needs (special education students) get the support and services they need
14. Teachers and staff have adequate technology for properly doing their respective jobs
15. Teachers and staff get adequate training to utilize the technology the district provides
16. I am confident in the ability of teachers and staff to use the technology the district provides
17. The district office communicates effectively to building administrators about district-wide reforms for buildings
18. The district office communicates effectively to teachers about district-wide reforms for buildings
19. The district office communicates effectively to parents and the community about reforms or initiatives
20. There is adequate training and support to implement the district reforms or initiatives
21. District and building administrators understand the district processes for carrying out policies
22. I am familiar with the following reforms/initiatives in the district:
 - *MTSS framework*
 - *Focused Model of Instruction with SIOP and Co-Teaching Alignments*
 - *Use of district provided GVCs and resources*
 - *Culturally relevant, inclusive and sustaining practices*
 - *Science of reading and structured literacy*
 - *Behavioral and social emotional learning*
 - *Trauma-sensitive and resilient schools*

- *The USD 500 strategic plan – district vision and goals*
23. Reforms and initiatives across the district are integrated into a cohesive plan
 24. Overall, I trust the district leadership
 25. All students have access to a rigorous and appropriate college prep curriculum
 26. All students have access to a rigorous and appropriate career-oriented curriculum
 27. I am aware of instances of racial discrimination from the adults in district schools
 28. I am aware of instances of racial discrimination from the students in district schools
 29. I am aware of instances of sexual harassment from the students in district schools
 30. I am aware of instances of sexual harassment from the adults in district schools
 31. I believe that Wednesday Early Release is valuable
 32. The following impact decision-making in my area: (rate each one):
 - a. Standardized test scores
 - b. Evaluations/feedback from supervisors
 - c. Feedback from teachers
 - d. Feedback from students
 - e. Feedback from parents/community
 - f. Data I collect
 - g. Research literature
 - h. Other
 - i. Explain:
 33. Which of these most closely represent your gender? You can select more than one.
 - a. Woman
 - b. Man
 - c. Non-binary/Agender/Genderqueer
 - d. Two-spirit
 - e. Prefer to self-describe as: [fill in space]
 - f. Prefer not to say
 34. Race/Ethnicity:
 - a. American Indian or Alaska Native
 - b. Asian
 - c. Black or African American
 - d. Hispanic or Latino
 - e. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - f. White
 - g. Multi-race
 - h. Other
 35. First Language
 - a. English
 - b. Spanish
 - c. Other
 36. Years of experience in current position (Provide number of years)
 37. Years of experience working in USD 500 (Provide years of experience)
 38. Total number of years working in education (provide number of years)

VI. Parents Survey

1. I have access to and understand the district graduation requirements
2. I am aware of the graduation requirements that qualify my student for the Kansas Board of Regents Scholarships
3. I have a voice in my student's education
4. My student is "on track" for graduation
5. My student is offered opportunities to visit colleges through the district
6. My student is offered opportunities for job shadowing through the district
7. I am aware that racial discrimination exists at my child's school from the adults
8. I am aware that racial discrimination exists at my child's school the students
9. I am aware that sexual harassment exists at my child's school from the students
10. I am aware that sexual harassment exists at my child's school from the adults
11. My student has access to a rigorous and appropriate college prep curriculum
12. My student has access to a rigorous and appropriate career-oriented curriculum
13. My student has access to the supports and resources needed to do well in school
14. My student enjoys going to school in this district
15. My student feels safe going to school
16. Overall, I trust my student's teachers
17. I trust my student's principal
18. Overall, I trust the district administration
19. I believe that Wednesday Early Release is valuable
20. Which of these most closely represent your gender? You can select more than one.
 - a. Woman
 - b. Man
 - c. Non-binary/Agender/Genderqueer
 - d. Two-spirit
 - e. Prefer to self-describe as: [fill in space]
 - f. Prefer not to say
21. Race/Ethnicity:
 - a. American Indian or Alaska Native
 - b. Asian
 - c. Black or African American
 - d. Hispanic or Latino
 - e. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - f. White
 - g. Multi-race
 - h. Other
22. First Language
 - a. English
 - b. Spanish
 - c. Other

Appendix C: Interview Protocols

Students

1. What do you like about your school?
2. What would you change?
 - a. What isn't happening that you think should be?
3. How safe do you feel in school?
4. What do you like about your teachers?
5. What don't you like about your teachers or what would you change?
6. What do you like about your principal and school leaders?
7. What don't you like about your principal and school leaders or what would you change about them?
8. How are students of different cultures treated in your school?
 - a. By adults? By other students
9. How well do you think the district communicates with you and your family?
10. Do you get the help and support you need to be successful in school?

Teachers

1. How well do you know the district's strategic plan?
2. Have you ever used the current district strategic plan in your instruction or planning?
 - a. If so, how? If not, why not?
3. What are the key initiatives or reforms underway in your building?
 - a. Discuss if these reforms impacted your work?
4. How effective is your building leadership in communicating with you?
5. How effective is district leadership in communicating with you?
6. What data are provided to you that you use to improve your instructional practices?
7. Discuss the rigor and effectiveness of the curriculum provided to students
8. Discuss if special education students get the services they need?
9. What are the strengths of your school? Areas for Improvement? Greatest challenges?
10. What are the strengths of your district administration? Areas for improvement? Greatest challenges?
11. How well are students from different backgrounds treated in the school?

District Administration

1. Do you think the organizational structure of the district is efficient and effective?
2. How well do you think the district Strategic Plan is driving the curriculum and instruction in the district?
 - a. How do the various district offices support the implementation of the Strategic Plan at the building level?
 - b. How do the building administrators and teachers support the implementation of the Strategic Plan?
 - c. What is the strategic plan monitoring process?
3. How do buildings decide which reforms to emphasize?
4. How are the district processes for implementing policies articulated and explained to personnel?
5. How well are data utilized to improve work in the district?
6. How are you involved in decision making for the district?
7. Discuss if special education students get the services they need?
8. How much is continuous professional learning highly valued by staff?

9. Do students in different schools at the same level in your district take similar curriculum/classes?
 - a. What is the same? What is different? Why?
10. What are the strengths of the district? Areas for improvement? Greatest challenges?

Building Administrators

1. Describe the organization structure of the district.
 - a. Do you think it is efficient and effective?
2. How well do you think the district Strategic Plan is driving your curriculum and instruction in your district?
3. What is the strategic plan monitoring process?
4. What are the main initiatives or reforms underway in your school?
 - a. Why are these being emphasized?
5. How are the district processes for implementing policies articulated and explained to personnel?
6. How well are data utilized to improve work in your school?
7. How are decisions made in your school?
8. Discuss if special education students get the services they need?
9. How much is continuous professional learning is highly valued by staff?
10. What are the strengths of your school? Areas for improvement? Greatest challenges?
11. What are the strengths of the district administration? Areas for improvement? Greatest challenges?

Parents

1. What do you feel are the strengths of your child's school? How about the district?
2. What concerns do you have about your child's school? How about the district?
3. What are the current initiatives or reforms in your child's school?
4. Have these reforms changed your child's school in meaningful ways? If so, how? If not, why not?
5. Does your child like her or his school? Explain
6. How well does your child's school provide the services he or she needs to be successful?
7. Are you aware of problems with discrimination or sexual harassment in your child's school?
8. How well do you feel your child's school communicates with you? How about the district?

School Board

1. What do you see as the strengths of USD 500?
2. What do you feel are the biggest challenges? Areas for improvement?
3. What are the main changes that you feel need to be made quickly?
4. What long term changes need to be made?
5. Would you say communication in the district is effective in getting information to students, parents, teachers and administrators?
 - a. Explain
6. What are the most common concerns you hear about the district?
7. How effective do you think the Strategic Plan has been?
8. How do you feel students are treated in the district?
 - a. Are they respected?
 - b. Provide any examples?
9. How do you feel adults of varying races or cultures are treated in the district?
 - a. Are they respected?
 - b. Provide any examples?
10. Anything else you would like to discuss about the district?

Community

1. What do you see as the strengths of USD 500?
2. What do you feel are the biggest challenges and weaknesses?
3. What are the main changes that you feel need to be made quickly?
4. What long-term changes need to be made?
5. Would you say communication in the district is effective in getting information to students, parents, teachers and administrators?
 - a. Explain
6. Does the district communicate well to the community?
 - a. Please describe
7. What are the most common concerns you hear about the district?
8. How effective do you think the Strategic Plan has been?
9. How does the district involve input from the community when making decisions?
10. Do you feel students are treated with respect in the district?
 - a. By other students, adults?
11. Are people of your same race or culture respected by people in the district?
12. Do you feel children feel safe at school? Why or why not?
13. What is the number one concern that you, as a community leader, have right now with regards to the future of our youth?



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