



Puyallup School District Strategic Plan

September 2023 - June 2027



PUYALLUP
SCHOOL DISTRICT
A Tradition of Excellence

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Letter from the Superintendent



Dear Puyallup School District Community,

Our school district has a long-standing tradition of academic excellence and providing high-quality education and learning opportunities to students. However, as we have learned in recent years, it is increasingly important that we continuously improve and adapt to meet the changing needs of our students and community. With that in mind, I am proud to announce the launch of our district's new strategic plan, which will help guide us in this effort.

This strategic plan has been developed through a collaborative and inclusive process with input from a wide range of stakeholders, including teachers, staff, parents and guardians, students, community members and district leaders. When we began this process in the summer of 2022, a 17-member Steering Committee, which included leaders from district administration and schools, assembled to develop the strategic plan. The Steering Committee was chartered with developing new mission and vision statements, codifying a theory of action, developing district priorities, and identifying measurable goals. To accomplish this, the committee worked tirelessly to gather data, conduct research and engage in thoughtful discussions about the future of our schools. On behalf of the Board and myself, I am grateful for the time and energy that so many have put into creating a blueprint for supporting the highest levels of student success now and into the future.

This plan is designed to address the existing challenges and opportunities facing our district, with a focus on student success and well-being, academic excellence, quality programs, and exceptional student experiences. Serving as our compass over the next five years, this plan will allow us to inventory initiatives and identify where we need to put our time, resources, and focus. Aligning our most critical needs and priorities will allow us to prepare and empower every student to thrive in school, society, and beyond.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication to the success of our students. I am confident that this plan will position our district as a leader in education and will better serve the needs of students, families, and community. This plan is dynamic and may evolve based on data or changing situations, however it will be a powerful tool for us now in our ongoing efforts to improve schools and ensure that every student has the opportunities they need to succeed in school, work, and life. As you review this document, I encourage you to stay engaged and continue providing feedback so we can learn, grow, and move forward together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John A. Polm". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. John Polm
Superintendent, Puyallup School District

District Fast Facts (SY2021-2022)



22,606 Students

- 51.0% White
- 19.1% Hispanic/Latino of any race(s)
- 6.3% Asian
- 5.8% Black/African American
- 2.7% Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
- 1.0% American Indian/Alaskan Native
- 14.1% Two or More Races



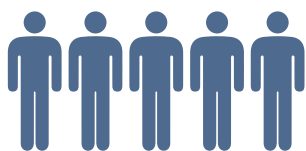
34 Schools

Student enrollment (by school level)

- 265 Pre-K
- 11,621 Elementary (K-6)
- 5,440 Junior (7-9)
- 5,280 High (10-12)



86.6% Graduation Rate



1,334

Classroom Teachers*



16.7 to 1

Student to Teacher Ratio*

*Classroom Teachers and Student to Teacher Ratio are SY2020-2021

Process Overview



Gather Input

Hosted three community meetings and gathered input from district leaders, principals, district staff, parents, students, and community members focused on their experience in the Puyallup School District through focus groups and interviews.

STEP
01



Form Steering Committee

Created a 17-member Steering Committee to develop a strategic plan (including leaders and staff from the central office, schools, parents, and the school committee).

STEP
02



STEP
03



Complete Needs Assessment

Gathered quantitative data provided by the district and state, supplemented by community input, to identify Puyallup's areas of strength and improvement.

Draft Components

Engaged in a multi-step process to draft the theory of action, key district priority areas, and related measures for monitoring progress.

STEP
04



STEP
05



Gather Feedback on Draft

Engaged the broader district community in a feedback gathering survey, conducted school leader focus groups, and facilitated board study session to elicit feedback on the drafted strategic plan.

Finalize Plan Based on Feedback

Incorporated community feedback and edits into a finalized strategic plan.

STEP
06



Mission and Vision



The mission and vision of Puyallup School District represent the long-term aspirations of the district.

MISSION

To **prepare and empower** every student to reach their full potential and to thrive in school, society, work, and life.

VISION

The Puyallup School District values academic excellence and ensures every student learns in safe and supportive environments in order to develop as critical thinkers ready to take on the world.



Theory of Action



Puyallup's Theory of Action reflects the fundamental beliefs of the district around what will lead to long-term success for students.

THEORY OF ACTION

If district leadership distributes resources in alignment with strong district priorities and values, including

- Allocating resources according to criteria based on school needs, size, and goals;
- Providing support and accountability from the district office;
- Giving school leaders clear expectations to decide how resources are used within the building for school culture, safety, and strong instructional practices

Then school communities will make positive, sound, and strategic decisions based on school needs, and academic and social-emotional outcomes for students will improve.

Priority Areas



Through the completion of a robust needs assessment and with the mission, vision, and theory of action as a foundational guide, five priority areas have been identified as areas of focus for the Puyallup School District over the next five years. By clearly identifying these five areas of focus, the district will be able to pursue an intentional and targeted approach to meeting the district's needs and allocating resources to meet those needs.

- 1 **Academic Achievement**
- 2 **Family and Community Engagement**
- 3 **Social-Emotional Supports**
- 4 **Staff Development, Culture, and Satisfaction**
- 5 **Facilities, Safety, and Security**



Priority 1: Academic Achievement



Academic Achievement

The district will emphasize access to and learning in early literacy and mathematics (PK-3) in order to establish foundational skills so all students are set on a successful course for graduation.

Puyallup School District believes that rigorous standards for academic achievement should remain at the forefront of our mission and priorities. Given the critical importance of early reading as a determinant for long-term success¹, the Puyallup School District will emphasize early literacy, specifically from kindergarten through third grade. Additionally, as math proficiency continues to lag behind reading, a focus on numeracy is also critical to achieving academic success for all students.

In order to monitor progress on how these early indicators are impacting students later in their academic careers, the district will also measure and track student proficiency levels and on-track-to-graduation metrics at the junior high and high school levels in addition to early literacy and numeracy metrics.

¹ The Annie E. Casey Foundation. *Early Reading Research Confirmed: A Research Update on the Importance of third-grade reading*. Baltimore: The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2013. Accessed January 25, 2023. <https://assets.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/AECF-EarlyWarningConfirmed-2013.pdf>

How We Will Measure Success:

- Percent of students, from all backgrounds, meeting or exceeding the benchmark on 4th-grade, 8th-grade, and 10th-grade STAR Math and Literacy assessments.
- Percent of students, from all backgrounds, who are on track to meet or exceed the four-year graduation requirements.



Priority 2: Family and Community Engagement



Family and Community Engagement

The district will clearly and efficiently communicate goals, priorities, and critical information in order to engage families and community partners in two-way communication.

The Puyallup School District continues to be deeply committed to partnering closely with families and our community to ensure that our students are able to achieve at the highest levels. This requires ongoing efforts to strengthen trust, transparency, and communication with families and community members. In addition to in-person events and engagements, Puyallup School District's robust set of digital tools enables the district to reach families in unique and effective ways.

How We Will Measure Success:

- Digital-Based Metrics:
 - Social media reach and engagement statistics
 - Website traffic as measured by Google search analytics
 - Broadcast system engagement as measured by reach and engagement statistics
- Number of communications translated into multiple student home languages.



Priority 3: Social-Emotional Supports



Social-Emotional Supports

The district will cultivate an inclusive and supportive school community in order to promote a sense of belonging and well-being for each student and staff.

The Puyallup School District understands how critical students' social-emotional well-being is to their ability to engage successfully in academic pursuits and growth. Simply put, for students to learn, they must first feel emotionally safe and cared for in school. In accordance with the Washington State Board of Education, guided by the Washington State Legislature (RCW 28A.300.477), the Puyallup School District is committed to a “whole-child approach toward providing Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) implementation that is equitable, trauma-informed, culturally sustaining, and universally designed.”

In addition to the well-being of students, the mental and emotional well-being of staff is also critical to their ability to effectively teach and support students. An emphasis on well-being will bolster staff effectiveness as well as their own sense of belonging in the district.

How We Will Measure Success:

- Percent of students receiving suspensions, referrals, and exclusionary discipline (disaggregating student discipline data).
- Percent of students who feel they are valued members of their school community as measured by a district-administered survey.
- District and staff perceptions of their own professional well-being as measured by a district-administered survey.



Priority 4: Staff Development, Culture, and Satisfaction



Staff Development, Culture, and Satisfaction

The district will continue to focus on attracting and developing a highly effective, representative staff while bolstering overall job satisfaction for all staff in order to ensure quality instruction.

Our staff and teachers are one of our greatest assets in the Puyallup School District. Continuing to strengthen our staff workforce will be essential to ensuring that students are poised to achieve in the long run. Developing best-in-class educators who can effectively meet the academic and social-emotional needs of students will be a continued focus of the Puyallup School District. We also know that a staff and teaching force that represents the students it serves is a key lever for student sense of belonging and academic success². The Puyallup School District is dedicated to continuing to engage in hiring practices that ensure we can achieve a representative staff.

² *Teacher Diversity and Student Success: Why Racial Representation Matters in the Classroom*, by Gershenson, Seth, Hansen, Michael, and Lindsay, Constance A. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press, 2021

How We Will Measure Success:

- Percent of staff who respond positively to questions related to teacher Effectiveness on a district-administered survey.
- Percent of staff who respond positively to questions related to feedback and support on a district-administered survey.
- Percent of staff who demonstrate growth on annual evaluations.
- Percent of staff whose demographics represent student demographics.



Priority 5: Facilities, Safety, and Security



Facilities, Safety, and Security

The district will ensure the timely repair and maintenance of schools and support facilities in order to maintain a safe work and learning environment for students and staff.

The Puyallup School District knows the critical role that our facilities and infrastructure play in our ability to educate and support students. Students and staff are able to succeed when their environment is clean, maintained, and welcoming. Most importantly, maintaining adequate facilities is critical to keeping both students and staff safe. Through the use of robust standards for excellence and a dedication to timely service, the Puyallup School District will ensure that students and staff are able to teach and grow in a positive physical environment.

How We Will Measure Success:

- Completion time and number of follow-up status inquiries for work orders after submission.
- Percent of families who respond positively to questions related to school safety on a district-administered survey.
- Percentage of students who are attending school in a permanent classroom facility.

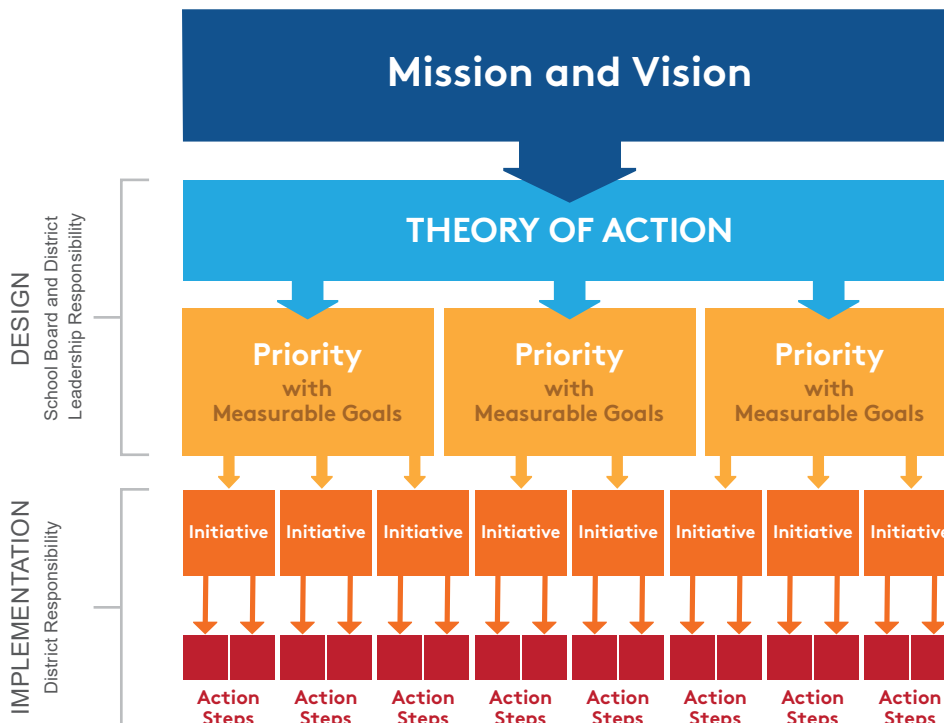


Next Steps - Implementation



Through the strategic planning process, we have written a district mission, vision, and theory of action that guide the identified priorities and the measures through which those priorities will be assessed. These strategic priority areas will ensure that challenging decisions about how to allocate resources - people, time, and money - will be made easier with strategic guidance from this plan. As the Puyallup School District continues to refine our strategic direction and monitor progress, district initiatives and their accompanying action steps will be analyzed and vetted. This process will require continued partnership with families, staff, and community members to build on and strengthen the excellent work happening in the district.

Framework*



*District Management Group's Framework for Strategic Planning

Community Engagement and Feedback



Prior to building the new strategic plan, Dr. Polm and his team solicited feedback from various stakeholders (referenced below) to understand the district's strengths and priority areas. This included staff, community members, students, and a steering committee to ensure that the plan would serve all members of our district and community.

September 2022

Stakeholder Input

Dates: September 19 - 27, 2022

- 24 focus groups
- 120 focus group participants
- 12 district office interviews

Community Engagement Survey

Administered September 15 and 26, 2022

- 790 responses
- 265 employees
- 605 family member and/or parents
- 22 community members
- 2 students

Community Engagement Sessions

Dates: September 20 and 21, 2022

- 2 virtual sessions
- 1 in-person session

Community Participants

- Parents
- School Board Members
- Advisory Council Members

District Participants

- Central Office Staff
- Principals
- Union Leaders
- Teachers and Staff
- Students

January 2023

Stakeholder Input

Dates: January 4 - January 31, 2023

- Board Study Session
- Principal Focus Groups
- Patron Tour
- Superintendent's Cabinet Workshop

Community Engagement Survey

Administered January 4 - January 31, 2023

- 908 responses*
- 341 employees
- 641 family member and/or parents
- 149 community members
- 44 students

*respondents could identify with more than one stakeholder group

Administrator Engagement Survey

Administered January 15 - January 31, 2023

- 51 responses

Community Participants

- Parents
- School Board Members
- Broader Community Members

District Participants

- Central Office Staff
- Principals
- Teachers and Staff
- Students

Steering Committee



To aid in the development of our strategic plan, a Steering Committee of leaders was chosen. The members (listed below) were responsible for making sure that our five-year strategic plan would be applicable to the community and all members of Puyallup School District.

Name	Role
Dr. John Polm	Superintendent
Dr. Vincent Pecchia	Assistant Superintendent of Operations
Laura Marcoe	Assistant Superintendent of Business and Support Services
Richard Lasso	Assistant Superintendent of Equity and Instructional Leadership
Amie Brandmire	Assistant Superintendent of HR and Employee Relations
Margaret Larkey	Executive Director of Technology
Sari Burnett	Elementary School Principal
Lisa Kusche	Secondary School Principal
Derrick Pete	Elementary School Principal
Joseph Romero	Board President
Julie Hunter	Executive Director of Secondary Education
Rebecca Williams	Executive Director of Elementary Education
Almai Malit	Executive Director of Equity, Student Success, and Strategic Engagement
Sarah Gillispie	Executive Director of Communications and Public Engagement
LaShawnda Baldwin	Director of Elementary Education
Mark Barnes	High School Assistant Principal
Dr. Vanessa Tucker	Community Member and Parent

Needs Assessment: Areas of Strength



In pursuit of identifying the most pressing areas of focus for the district, several areas of strength emerged. The Puyallup School District is proud of the work that has been done to contribute to these strengths and is dedicated to cultivating the conditions required to ensure they continue to be strengths for the district.

District Strengths

- **District Leadership Cohesion**

District leadership is closely aligned on the strengths and challenges in the district and has a strong working culture.

- **Fiscal Responsibility**

There is a strong history and reputation of fiscal responsibility in the district.

- **SEL Supports**

Investments in social-emotional learning, most notably additional SEL staff support, have been well-received in the district. An emerging focus on student voice and belonging is also a strength.

- **Technology**

Early investments in technology, specifically district wide 1:1 devices for students, allow for a more productive learning environment during the Covid-19 pandemic.

- **New Teacher Mentorship**

District leaders and school staff shared that new teachers receive additional support that is beneficial to their professional development in the first two years of teaching.

Glossary of Terms



Equity: the allocation of opportunities, resources, and supports to achieve an equal outcome for every Puyallup student, recognizing the different and unique backgrounds and circumstances each Puyallup student presents.

Measurable Goals: specific and measurable targets related to district priorities.

Mission and Vision: statements of our long-term district aspirations.

Priorities: broad areas of focus to achieve the district's Theory of Action.

Renaissance STAR Assessment: standardized test taken by 3rd through 10th-grade students in many states in the country that measures proficiency in several subject areas, most notably English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics (Math).

Steering Committee: a group of district stakeholders including parents, school committee members, principals, and district office leaders who bring content expertise and a variety of perspectives to the strategic planning process.

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL): the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions.

Theory of Action: foundational statement regarding what will be necessary to achieve long-term success in the district.



P U Y A L L U P

S C H O O L D I S T R I C T

A Tradition of Excellence

Puyallup School District Non-Discrimination Statement

Puyallup School District does not discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

The following employees have been designated to handle questions and complaints of alleged discrimination:

Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator: Gordon Brobbey, brobbg@puyallup.k12.wa.us, (253) 840-8863

504/ADA Coordinator: Eric Hogan, hoganew@puyallup.k12.wa.us, (253) 840-8848

Title IX Coordinator Staff: Amie Brandmire, brandmah@puyallup.k12.wa.us, (253) 841-8645

Title IX Coordinator Students: Gordon Brobbey, brobbg@puyallup.k12.wa.us, (253) 840-8863