

SUMMER 2023

District 38 Strategic Plan Update

ALL STUDENTS. OUR STUDENTS.

CALENDAR

July 28

Confirm Residency
Intake Days
8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

August 3

Confirm Residency
Intake Days
1:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

August 10

Board of Education
Building and Finance
Committee Meeting
9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

August 25 - August 30

Teacher In-Service Day
No School

August 31

Board of Education
Meeting
5:30 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.

September 5

First Day of K-8 Student
Attendance 8:10 a.m. -
12:00 p.m.

Note: Meet and Greet is
from 8:10 a.m. - 9:10 a.m.
at student drop-off

A variety of transformative changes have been initiated over recent years at The Joseph Sears School. One paramount effort in supporting students' academic achievement has been the crafting of District 38's new strategic plan toward implementing our vision and mission. Specifically, this roadmap articulates goals and action plans housed within six pillars to improve performance in all areas and increase efficiencies. All efforts are tied back to our students achieving the *Portrait of a Sears Graduate*.

This latest iteration of the District's strategic plan began in the fall of 2021 and has been a Sears school community collaborative effort. Through partnerships with many groups that included parents, staff, and students, feedback was gathered through visioning sessions, outside audits, and additional work completed by the staff and the Board of Education. The vision of actualizing our *Portrait of a Sears Graduate* and our Four Cornerstones of Responsibility, Kindness, Honesty, and Respect has been central to these efforts.

The new strategic plan outlines six key pillars:



Academic Achievement

This pillar aims to craft a student-centered education rooted in best practices and quality learning experiences with a commitment to adhering to curriculum standards while maintaining a common curriculum by grade and subject area tailored to each individual or student group.



Whole Child

A welcoming environment must be fostered for students to learn and grow. Our new strategic plan outlines strategies and executable goals within this pillar to help District 38 establish a safe, kind, inclusive learning community that promotes the social-emotional well-being of all students.



Learning Environment

By implementing the multi-stage Master Facilities Plan, new flexible learning spaces are being established to help create a safe, supportive, and innovative learning environment that encourages all students and staff to work together toward shared goals. This pillar emphasizes the importance of physical safety and security standards and reviewing these improvements via a set schedule.



Staff Development and Retention

District 38 understands the importance of investing in our educators' professional development to equip them with the tools necessary to meet every student's needs. The ultimate objective is to further the District's vision and strategic plan goals to benefit our students. In short, this pillar aims to foster a professional community that will attract, develop, and retain a diverse staff of student-centered, continuous learners.



Stakeholder Partnerships

Cultivating and maintaining relationships within the school community is of the utmost importance to District 38, as outlined by the stakeholder partnership pillar. Our greater community offers expertise and exceptional talent that can be leveraged to maximize our student's experience at The Joseph Sears School. The District's goal, through this pillar, is to continue to develop and retain these trusting relationships to further the objectives set out toward elevating the student experience.

See **STRATEGIC PLAN**, page 4

Master Facilities Plan Update

HOMEcoming CELEBRATION TO UNVEIL NEW SPACES

This summer, Phase II of the Master Facilities Plan (MFP) continues at The Joseph Sears School with numerous transformative upgrades to the schoolhouse. These improvements include completing the addition, creating grade-level band hubs and staff collaboration workspaces, improvements to the Main Office, and new heating and cooling throughout the original building. These enhancements will be celebrated for our school community from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Homecoming on September 30, commemorating the 125th anniversary of The Joseph Sears School. This event culminates years of transformative building upgrades centered around improving student learning. These spaces include the new Cafenarium, Learning Center, and Outdoor Gardens. During the Homecoming festivities, there will be a rededication of outdoor items that hold a special place with the community and a tour of the cutting-edge facilities. This exclusive tour offers a firsthand glimpse into the exciting future that awaits our students. A community kickball game and spirit wear sale will also be a part of the Homecoming fun.

We hope you will join the celebration! We look forward to showing you the new areas and highlighting how they will assist our students in achieving the *Portrait of a Sears Graduate*.



Kenilworth School District 38 Board Member Lisa Graham, Board President Bill Graham, and Superintendent Kate Donegan take in a sneak peek of Phase II of the Master Facilities Plan construction.



Board of Education Welcomes New Members

On April 26, 2023, new board members Mrs. Lisa Graham, Mr. Eric Hayes, and Mrs. Kate Tarbert took the Oath of Office and joined the Kenilworth District 38 Board of Education (BOE). The District would again like to thank former board members Dr. Lisa Metzger-Mugg, Ms. Mia Casey Sachs, and Mr. John Gottschall for all they have contributed to the District. During their tenure, The Joseph Sears School underwent many transformative changes that set the foundation for realizing our new strategic plan. Their contributions to our District and school are invaluable.



Mr. Eric Hayes

Elected Term: 2023–2027

Eric and his wife, Bridgette, have lived in Kenilworth since 2018. They have two sons, Christophe and Henrik. Eric works as a Partner at Kirkland & Ellis LLP. Eric enjoys being an active parent in the local community.



Mrs. Lisa Graham

Elected Term: 2023–2027

Lisa and her husband, Ryan, have lived in Kenilworth since 2015. They have two children, Cora and Patrick. Lisa is a proud alum of The Joseph Sears School. Lisa works for Exelon Corporation and is currently the Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of Commonwealth Edison, its largest subsidiary.



Mrs. Kate Tarbert

Elected Term: 2023–2027

Kate and her husband, Heath, have lived in Kenilworth for two years, moving from Washington, D.C., in April of 2021. They have two sons: Ben and Nathaniel. Kate works as an attorney and an independent contractor. Kate serves as vice president of the Board.

Celebrating Milestones: 2022–2023

This past school year, numerous teachers at The Joseph Sears School celebrated career milestones for their years of service. We are thrilled to honor these exemplary teachers for their efforts toward furthering our student's education. We were also proud to celebrate the valuable contributions and achievements of Ann Rice's 33-year career at The Joseph Sears School, culminating in her retirement at the end of the 2022-2023 school year. Congratulations to all of our educators!

10 Years

Jim Beavin
Natalie McLemore

20 Years

Michelle Harradine
Blythe Szafoni

Retirement

Ann Rice

Pictured from left to right: Michelle Harradine, Jim Beavin, Ann Rice, Blythe Szafoni, Natalie McLemore





THE JOSEPH SEARS SCHOOL

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Ms. Kate Donegan, Superintendent
Dr. Stephanie Helfand, Principal
Mx. Sophie Leventhal, Dean of Students
Mr. Martin Heffner, Assistant Principal
Dr. Carrie De La Cruz, Director of Student Services
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Congratulations to The Joseph Sears School Class of 2023!

On behalf of the entire District 38 school community, we would like to congratulate and extend our best wishes to The Joseph Sears School Class of 2023. We wish you the best as you move on to the next chapter of your educational journey. Once a Panther, Always a Panther!



STRATEGIC PLAN (CONTINUED)



Fiscal Alignment

This pillar has been designed to provide financial transparency and to outline the District's fiduciary responsibility by informing the school community of how taxpayer dollars are allocated towards educational initiatives, operational expenses, and investments in long-term physical and technical infrastructure. The District's goal is to ensure that taxpayer dollars fund student-centered, high-return programs and are invested in a safe, healthy, and future-focused environment.

All initiatives and work completed in the schoolhouse should increase students' learning and achievement. District 38's new strategic plan provides a documented and aligned plan to help the District complete and achieve our mission and vision. The goals and strategy of the strategic plan will remain the same for three to five years. However, the action plan housed within the strategic plan will be reviewed and updated annually, along with a presentation on metrics and progress to date.

In days to come, we're excited to share more details and answer your questions on this crucial road map for the future.