

KENNETT CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL



Listen, Learn, Lead: Entry Plan Report January 2025



INTRODUCTION

- Thriving educational community
- Tradition of excellence, resilience and civic pride
- Commitment to fostering community engagement, promoting diversity and ensuring fiscal responsibility

INTRODUCTION

- Listened and learned from all stakeholders
- Brought together the insights gathered over the past months
- Foundation of comprehensive action plan

INTRODUCTION

- Several urgent challenges
- Opportunity, communication, policy alignment, resource allocation
- Profound demographic and cultural shifts

METHODOLOGY

Qualitative data included but were not limited to:

- Stakeholder input from over 70 one-to-one interviews
- 102 focus group participants
- Meetings with key constituencies
- Meetings with the past 4 superintendents
- Extended school visits in all six buildings
- Attendance and observation at community and District events

METHODOLOGY

Quantitative data included but was not limited to:

- Over 3000 pages of reports and documents
 - keys to understanding academic performance
 - Infrastructure assessments
 - Financial health of the District
- Survey responses from more than 1000 stakeholders

METHODOLOGY

Software called MAXQDA

- Expands amount of information that can be reviewed
- Decreases the amount of time necessary to find comparisons and themes
- Provides a check and balance system against confirmation bias

METHODOLOGY

Data Sources: Stakeholder Input

- **Students:** captured aspirations and challenges
- **Parents:** hopes for equity and quality
- **Educators:** professional development and communication
- **Community Leaders:** productive discussions

METHODOLOGY

Data Sources: Quantitative Data

- Academic performance
- Demographic information
- Community survey
- Financial documents
- Infrastructure assessments

METHODOLOGY

Data Sources: Historical Analysis

- Listen Learn Lead Framework
- Prior strategic plans grounded the analysis in KCSD's evolving priorities.

METHODOLOGY

Diverse Input

- Lived experiences, perspectives, and aspirations
- Nuances of multiple groups
- Results reflective of the district's multifaceted reality

METHODOLOGY

Balanced perspective highlights actionable strategies to:

- Address opportunity gaps
- Improve communication
- Optimize resources

Recommendations are data-driven and culturally and contextually relevant, fostering trust and engagement among stakeholders.



FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS: STRENGTHS

STRENGTHS

Strong traditions, community pride, and celebrated diversity

Celebrated events like the Mushroom Festival and High School graduations strengthen community bonds. An alumnus reflected,

“KCSD traditions are the glue that holds us together.”

Strong traditions, community pride, and celebrated diversity

- **Academic excellence**
- **Inclusive practices**
- **Robust community involvement**
- **Diverse student body**
- **Innovation**
- **Culturally rich and supportive educational landscape**

STRENGTHS

Committed educators and supportive parents

Educators consistently go above and beyond. A parent stated:

“Our teachers are the heart of this district.”

Committed educators and supportive parents

- **Highly committed to children and the community**
- **Parents and staff partner for the benefit of students**
- **Parents trust the educators who work with their children**
- **Strong foundation of dedication among educators**

STRENGTHS

**Recognized excellence in extracurricular programs,
including athletics and the arts**

**Programs in arts, athletics, and STEM provide students with
diverse opportunities. A community member commented:**

"Kennett is the center of the social life of the town... it's not just football games on Friday nights. The sense of pride in our students, whether it's athletics or arts, is a hallmark of our community."

Recognized excellence in extracurricular programs, including athletics and the arts

- **Most expressed satisfaction with these programs**
- **Recognition of programs' value**
- **Vital components of the District's identity**
- **Diverse extracurricular opportunities**
- **Pillars that uphold KCSD legacy**
- **Part of well-rounded education**

STRENGTHS

Vibrant partnerships with local organizations

An administrator reflected:

“The strong sense of community pride includes partnerships with organizations like the YMCA and public library, which enhance the resources available to our students.”

Vibrant partnerships with local organizations

- **Strong community spirit and historical connections**
- **Relationships are essential in creating opportunities for students**
- **Strengthen ties with underrepresented community segments**
- **Cohesive community working together**

STRENGTHS

Mary D. Lang Kindergarten Center

Serves as a welcoming hub for early education, setting a strong foundation for young learners. A parent explained:

“The Kindergarten Center has a fun-based foundation and creates a strong sense of community among students and staff. It’s a critical first step in their educational journey.”

Mary D. Lang Kindergarten Center

- Nurturing, collaborative, and foundational environment
- Fosters strong relationships among students, staff, and families
- Sets the stage for students' future success
- Culture of excitement and joy around learning
- Pivotal role in establishing strong peer bonds
- Preservation and enhancement is a priority for stakeholders

STRENGTHS

Fiscal health

Strong fiscal procedures, checks and balances, and adequate operating reserves. A board member noted:

“Our financial procedures, supported by long-standing leadership in the business office, have consistently ensured fiscal responsibility and stability.”

Fiscal Health

- Strong fiscal health
- Reliable revenue, prudent debt servicing, effective asset management, and disciplined financial controls
- Stable financial foundation
- Financially robust and responsibly managed institution
- Enhance communication and transparency
- Build trust



FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS: CHALLENGES

CHALLENGES

Equity gaps in academic performance, resource distribution, and program access

Significant disparities in access to advanced programs, extracurricular activities, and resources persist. A student shared:

“Sometimes, it feels like only certain kids get the best opportunities.”

Equity gaps in academic performance, resource distribution, and program access

- **Challenges in achieving equitable outcomes for all**
- **Academic disparities**
 - **limited access to quality early education**
 - **inadequate bilingual instructional resources**
 - **insufficient teacher training to support diverse learners**
- **Attendance barriers for some students**

Equity gaps in academic performance, resource distribution, and program access

- **Disparities in resource allocation**
- **Inequities in English Language Development**
- **Inconsistent curriculum standards**
- **Must address gaps**

CHALLENGES

Variability in facilities quality and access to advanced academic opportunities across schools

Uneven investment creates inequities across schools. A community member emphasized:

“We need safe, modern buildings for all our kids.”

Variability in facilities quality and access to advanced academic opportunities across schools

- **Notable variability in quality of facilities and access to advanced academic opportunities across its schools**
- **Clear needs for infrastructure improvements**
- **Disparities in academic opportunities for struggling and advanced students**

CHALLENGES

Turnover rates among key staff positions

Turnover that disrupts continuity of programming and specific departments. A teacher stated:

“The constant turnover in leadership disrupts continuity and trust.”

Turnover rates among key staff positions

- **Turnover in the District is consistent and slightly lower than other PA schools and public education as a whole**
- **Turnover rates among key staff positions reveals challenges**
- **Difficulties in retaining paraeducators and ELD teachers**
- **Frequent changes in leadership has created a sense of disrupted continuity**
- **Lack of institutionalized succession planning and knowledge transfer**
- **Inconsistencies in strategic vision**
- **Eroded trust among staff and community members**

CHALLENGES

Insufficient systemic support for student mental health and behavioral needs

Lack of a clear behavioral MTSS system. A staff member stated:

“We lack sufficient resources for behavioral health, leaving teachers without the tools they need to support struggling students.”

Insufficient systemic support for student mental health and behavioral needs

- **Noted an increase in student behavioral issues (COVID)**
- **Some schools struggle with inconsistent support mechanisms**
- **Systemic gaps in the integration of SEL programs**
- **High caseloads and insufficient staffing**

CHALLENGES

Addressing the needs of the middle

Students in the middle are often overlooked. A parent commented:

“Middle-tier students often fall through the cracks because resources and focus are frequently directed toward the highest achievers or those with the greatest needs.”

Addressing the needs of the middle

- Critical challenge
- Gaps in support for middle-tier learners
- Need intentional strategies, systemic alignment, and equitable resource allocation
- Emphasis on personalized, interest-driven learning pathways and innovative teaching methods

CHALLENGES

Lack of a guaranteed, viable curriculum

Lack of horizontal and vertical alignment of curriculum. A teacher explained:

“We need a guaranteed, viable curriculum and improved systems for alignment across grades. Current gaps in structure are affecting outcomes.”

Lack of a guaranteed, viable curriculum

- **Persistent challenges in maintaining a guaranteed, viable curriculum across grade levels and content areas**
- **Misalignments in the curriculum, particularly during key transitions between elementary and middle school**
- **Lack of teacher input during program adoption**
- **Shared frustration with the absence of transparency in curriculum decisions across all stakeholders**
- **Key priority**

CHALLENGES

Outdated policies and lack of procedures, protocols, systems, and structures

Policies have not been updated in a systematic way. An administrator explained:

“Policies have not been updated in a systematic way.”

Outdated policies and lack of procedures, protocols, systems, and structures

- **Mixed perceptions about the effectiveness of the current systems**
- **Outdated policies and fragmented procedures**
- **Reactive rather than proactive**
- **Insufficient training for new hires**
- **Absence of centralized procedures has created confusion**

CHALLENGES

Communication

Inconsistent updates and unclear messaging erode trust. A parent observed:

“We’re invested in our schools, but it feels like decisions happen without us.”

Communication

- Critical area of focus
- Some strengths (newsletters, teacher communication)
- Too frequent in some instances
- Inconsistencies across schools in platform use
- need for unified communication practices and clearer expectations
- More insight with communication audit



FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS: OPPORTUNITIES

OPPORTUNITIES

Bilingual programs and promoting cultural immersion initiatives

Enhancing language resources to meet the needs of English Learners. A parent remarked:

“Bilingual education is a bridge for so many families.”

Bilingual programs and promoting cultural immersion initiatives

- **Significant opportunities to enhance bilingual programs and promote cultural immersion initiatives**
- **Leverage multicultural strengths**
- **Help bridge divides between student groups**
- **Deepen community connections and promote a shared understanding**

OPPORTUNITIES

Leveraging community partnerships

Collaborating with local organizations to enhance resource availability, program offerings and enrich student experiences.

Leveraging community partnerships

- **Deepen collaboration with local stakeholders, enhance inclusivity, and support student success**
- **Create and sustain partnerships, collaborate with local service providers, and foster family involvement in the school community**

OPPORTUNITIES

Strengthening district-wide alignment in policies and professional development

Investing in the science of reading, enhancing instructional strategies for variety, culturally responsive training, and innovative pedagogy. A staff member explained:

“Improved literacy instruction and culturally relevant pedagogy are critical areas for development.”

Strengthening district-wide alignment in policies and professional development

- **Significant opportunities to improve district-wide alignment in policies and professional development**
- **Strong desire for teacher-led, collaborative professional learning tailored to the district's specific needs**
- **Embedding social-emotional learning into instruction and increasing training on diversity and cultural responsiveness**
- **Fostering cross-departmental collaboration, shared accountability, and regular data-driven reviews**

OPPORTUNITIES

Investing in equitable upgrades across schools

Addressing disparities, both real and perceived, across schools. A parent commented:

“Greenwood and other facilities need equitable upgrades to match the resources and morale of better-supported schools.”

Investing in equitable upgrades across schools

- Pressing concern
- Addressing these gaps requires a strategic plan for equitable resource allocation, ongoing collaboration among stakeholders, and leveraging internal expertise for cost-effective professional development.

OPPORTUNITIES

Improving transparency

Building trust through open communication, accountability, and shared decision-making. A staff member commented:

“We need stronger communication and accountability to build trust within the community and staff”

Improving transparency

- Central concern
- Misaligned messaging between departments, lack of clarity in decision-making, and insufficient visibility into district-wide plans
- Addressing transparency requires establishing robust two-way communication systems, clear accountability structures, and proactive engagement with staff, students, and families

OPPORTUNITIES

Strategic Planning

Leveraging the strengths of the District to acknowledge and plan for challenges and improved outcomes in a structured, time-bound, and measured way. An administrator commented:

“A structured, time-bound approach to district-wide improvement will ensure measurable outcomes and alignment with community values.”

Strategic Planning

- Significant opportunities for strategic planning, particularly in addressing academic opportunity, infrastructure, and data-driven decision-making
- Equity and inclusion particularly for underserved communities and in progress infrastructure improvements are necessary



RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

Develop and Implement a Comprehensive Strategic Plan

Create a district-wide strategic plan that aligns with KCSD's goals for equity, inclusivity, and academic excellence. This should include input from diverse stakeholders and establish measurable benchmarks for progress in academic achievement, resource allocation, and infrastructure improvements.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Perform an Opportunity Audit

Conduct a comprehensive opportunity audit to identify disparities in academic outcomes, resource allocation, and access to programs. Use the findings to develop actionable strategies that address systemic inequities and create a more inclusive learning environment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Develop a Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum

Create a horizontally and vertically aligned curriculum to ensure consistency and equity in learning opportunities across all grade levels and schools. Include teacher input in the development process and provide comprehensive training for effective implementation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Enhance Equity in Academic Opportunities

Address disparities in advanced academic programs and extracurricular access by increasing resources for underrepresented groups, such as economically disadvantaged and English Learner students. Implement targeted interventions to improve literacy and numeracy for these subgroups.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Invest in Consistent Professional Development

Offer district-wide, teacher-led professional development focused on equity, the science of reading, cultural responsiveness, and differentiated instruction to support diverse learners effectively.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Improve Communication and Transparency

Standardize communication practices across all schools and platforms. Establish regular updates on district initiatives, progress reports, and accessible information for non-English-speaking families to build trust and engagement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Strengthen Systems, Policies, and Procedures

Update outdated policies and create standardized procedures to improve consistency and efficiency. Establish clear protocols for curriculum adoption, behavioral support systems, and decision-making processes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Expand Bilingual and Cultural Immersion Programs

Invest in bilingual education and cultural immersion initiatives to bridge language gaps and promote inclusivity. Recruit bilingual educators and develop programs that celebrate KCSD's cultural diversity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Address Facilities Disparities

Prioritize infrastructure improvements to modernize outdated schools and ensure equitable facilities across the district. Include community input to address perceived and real inequities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Enhance Mental Health and Behavioral Support Systems

Implement a district-wide, multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) for behavioral health and socio-emotional learning. Increase staffing for counselors and provide professional training on mental health interventions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Focus on "Middle-Tier" Students

Develop strategies to engage and support students performing at average levels by offering differentiated instruction, project-based learning opportunities, and personalized learning pathways to prevent them from being overlooked.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Leverage Community Partnerships

Deepen collaboration with local organizations, businesses, and nonprofits to enhance resources for STEM, arts, and career-readiness programs. Expand partnerships to support underserved student populations and increase community involvement.

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