



# Strategic Plan Progress Reports

Year 3 2024-2025

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## Strategy 1 - EC-12+ Academic Achievement

### Goal:

- We are committed to strengthening academic achievement outcomes in pre-kindergarten through post-secondary to help each student find their individual success.

### Success Measured:

- Beginning in June of 2025, the professional development evaluation instrument will show increase in positive feedback.
- Beginning in June of 2025, annual data reports will show an increase in the numbers of Pre-K students served by Derby Public Schools.
- By June of 2025, Derby takes a leadership role to work with the state and other school districts to implement statewide data collection of graduates who enlist in the military upon graduation.
- Annually prioritize Building Needs Assessment (grades K-12) goals to identify and determine attainable school resources, academic progress, and individual needs for each school.
- By June of 2025, the district will integrate the Individual Plan of Study (IPS) Senior Graduation Portfolio in place of the senior project into the High School curriculum.
- By June of 2025, Chronic Absenteeism data will be reported by school quarterly and a goal identified by each social worker and administrator to decrease absenteeism and increase instructional time.

### **Report 1**

Strategy 1 met on October 1 and October 29, 2024 to work towards our year three strategic plan goals.

During the meeting on October 1, we focused on our chronic absenteeism goal to decrease absenteeism and increase instruction time, by reviewing state definitions of chronic absenteeism and examining our current attendance rates by building (KSDE Absenteeism Counts and Definitions). Next, the committee members shared attendance initiatives at their buildings (By District and Building rates). Committee members discussed trends across groups of students, including resident/non-resident, homeless students, ELL students and others who may need additional assistance. The additional committee member recommendation of analyzing resident/non-resident trends and identifying student groups who need support was noted as a next step.

During the October 29 Strategy meeting committee, members worked on the professional development goal. Committee members reviewed the professional development (PD) survey the committee created during the 2023-2024 school year. The sample spring 2024 survey results were analyzed and the survey slightly revised to ensure it provided feedback to measure slightly nuanced and targeted professional development for each group of educators. After reviewing the survey, committee members determined question 1 (*The training session(s) provided were specific to my work or content area and provided me with useful information*) will be used to measure if teachers felt sessions were relevant and nuanced by position. The committee also determined that survey question 6 (*The session presented information we can use to plan student support now and/or in the future.*) and question 2 (*The Goldilocks question: The information provided during today's session was...too big, too little, just right*) will be used to measure if the professional development sessions are appropriate and targeted. Committee members reviewed the professional development sessions planned November 1, 2024 and January 6, 2025 and determined that both days would be used to provide the committee with feedback. The next committee meeting is scheduled for November 19, 2024.

## Report 2

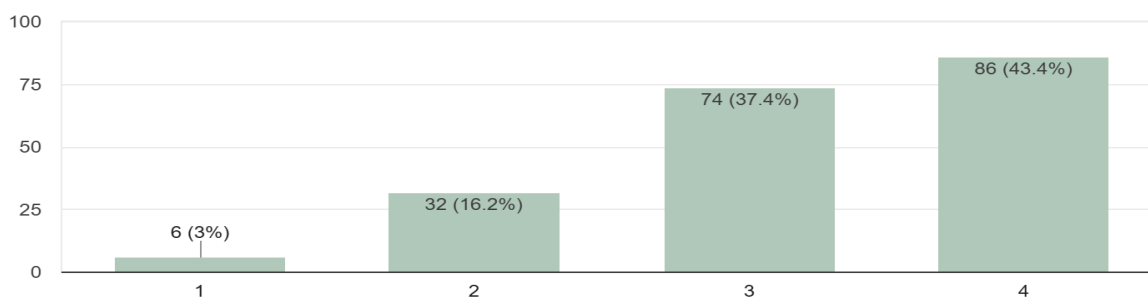
The Strategy 1 committee met on November 19, 2024 and January 23, 2025. During the November 19, 2024 meeting we previewed the middle of the year surveys to ensure the questions aligned with the improved professional development (PD) goals the committee is measuring. Committee members worked to create more defined expectations for the “highly relevant, specific, and nuanced” verbiage in the PD goal. The questions were aligned to ensure they measure participants' feeling of being relevant for their professional development learning needs, and specific and nuanced to their role (and/or career) within their school.

The question focused on measuring “highly relevant” was the focus of this question for the January 2, 2024 PD Day with 43.4% of staff selecting the highest category and 80.8% of staff selecting the highest two categories. 4 is extremely engaging and relevant, and 1 is not engaging or relevant.

 [Copy chart](#)

7. Was the training engaging and relevant?

198 responses

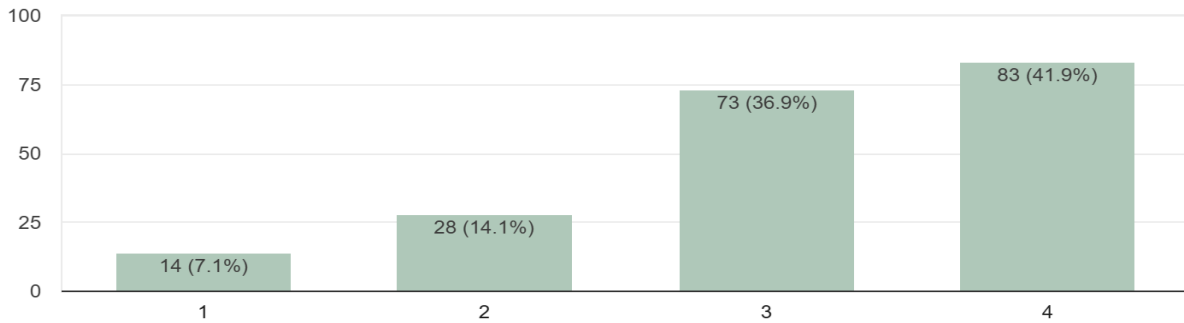


The question reviewed centered around specific topics related to the session being valuable. Data from the January 2, 2024 Needs Assessment PD Day showed that 41.9% of staff responded with the highest category of value and 78.8% responded in the top two categories. (5 is extremely valuable and 1 is not valuable).

#### 4. How valuable was the training you attended?

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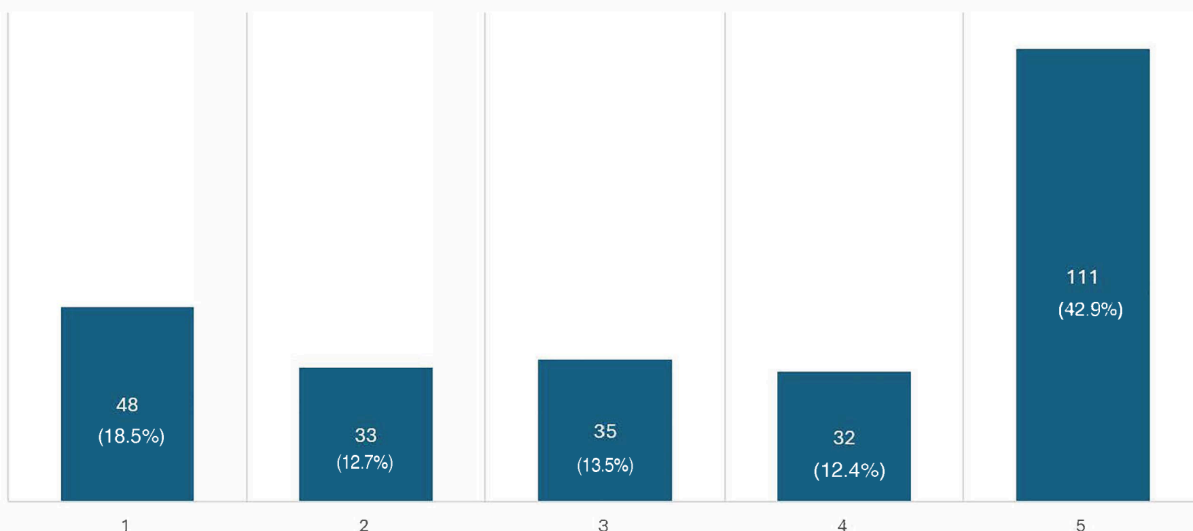
198 responses



The question selected to represent “Highly nuanced” aligned to the PD being specific to their current role. The committee had questions on which staff grouping or roles didn’t feel their PD was highly nuanced and spent some time reviewing the staff cheat sheet calendar to see which staff might have been attending or missing on a PD day. The question on how applicable was the training to your current position was used to measure the highly nuanced portion of the goal. 42.9% of staff responded by selecting the highest rating and 55.3% of staff responded in the top 2 categories. (5 is strongly agree and 1 is strongly disagree).

The training session(s) provided were specific to my work or content area and provided me with useful information (5 is high and 1 is low).

■ 259 Responses



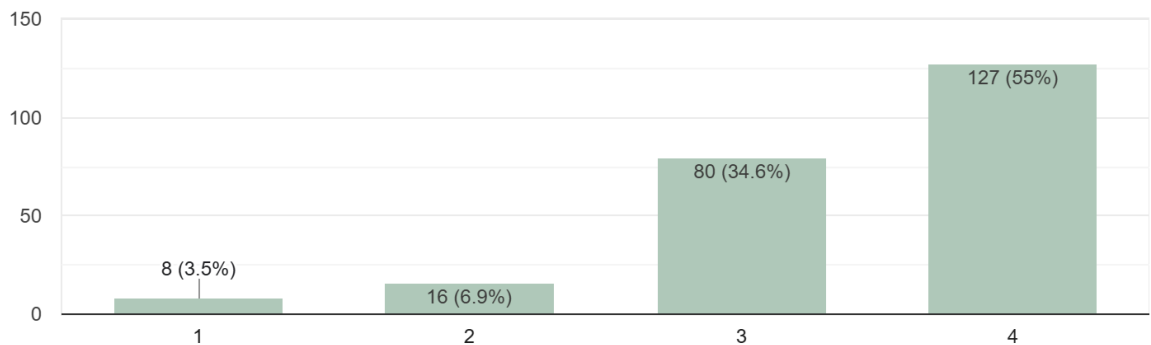
During the November 19 meeting, committee members also reviewed the Individual Plan of Study goal: “By June of 2025, the district will integrate the Individual Plan of Study (IPS) Senior Graduation Portfolio in place of the senior project into the high school curriculum”. Committee members reviewed the revised English 12 pacing guide adopted in spring of 2024 and the IPS KansasStar Rubric to look at the Senior Graduation Portfolio. Next, committee members reviewed samples of students' graduation projects related to a career they wanted to explore and the student’s graduation portfolio in Xello and rated them. Committee members were excited to see this innovation to the Senior Project and the addition of the graduation portfolio as a way to improve students’ career plans and have them leave the high school with post-secondary plans and resources.

During the January 23 meeting Committee members looked at the professional development survey from the January 6 professional development day and reviewed chronic absenteeism quarter 2 trends.

For the January 6 professional development day, they reviewed each aligned PD survey question. The question focused on value showed 55% selected the top and category 89.6% responding in the top two categories, a 10.8% increase. The question on relevance showed 90.5% selecting the top two categories showing a 9.7% increase. Finally, the question on nuanced and related to their specific position showed 49.3% selected the highest category and 81% selected the highest 2 categories, showing a 25.7% increase. 4 is extremely valuable and 1 is not valuable.

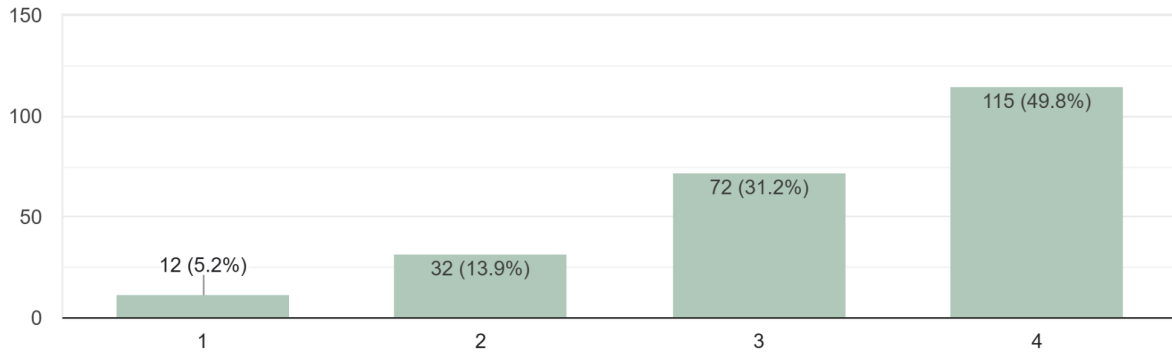
Please rate the value of your Character Strong training sessions? (4 is high and 1 is low) [Copy chart](#)

231 responses



The training session(s) provided were specific to my work or content area and provided me with useful information? (4 is high and 1 is low)

231 responses



The draft of the Chronic Absenteeism data for quarter 2 was shared with committee members and questions were asked about non-resident transportation and attendance rates, the impact of viruses currently circulating through schools, and families with persistent absenteeism. Committee members looked at their top three students and charted the most prevalent reason (or root cause) for their absences and strategies to address them. Strategy 1 will continue to work towards each goal, and the next meeting is scheduled for February 25, 2025.

### **Report 3**

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## Strategy 2 - Culture, Climate & Equity

### Goal:

- We are committed to creating a safe and positive culture by intentionally embracing our differences, providing equal opportunity for all, and inviting widespread participation for all educational stakeholders regardless of each person's unique characteristics, thoughts and/or opinions.

### Success Measured:

- Beginning annually in November of 2024, feedback from the administration and council will be provided with results discussed at a school board meeting. It will include general feedback/best practices from each school's culture committee and the district survey results, including parent/caregiver and student participation, gathered each October.
- By June of 2025, a status report from the administration and council will be made to the board regarding the impact of the diversity and bullying training, trends in discipline data, and trends in nicotine and drug use in our schools.

### **Report 1**

During the September 3, 2024 Strategy 2 Committee meeting, introductions were made and the approval of meeting norms to be carried over from last year was confirmed. The committee looked at the definition of climate and culture to guide our conversation this year.

*The main difference between school culture and climate is that the culture is the values and beliefs behind the school; it is the building's mission statement or overall feel. A school's climate reflects directly on the students and their relationships with the teachers and staff and can vary daily.*

We then viewed and discussed the items that are coming up:

- Beginning annually in November of 2024, feedback from the administration and council will be provided with results discussed at a school board meeting. It will include general feedback/best practices from each school's culture committee and the district survey results, including parent/caregiver and student participation, gathered each October.
- During Fall Parent/Teacher Conferences the district will administer an annual school culture survey for each individual school. These will be made available via Skylert email and on devices available at the school during Conferences. This will measure the overall culture and climate at each school and gather anonymous feedback from students and parents/caregivers about ways we can improve the culture and climate of each school. Sending the survey in October will provide students and parents/caregivers the opportunity to become more familiar with their school. The survey at the elementary level will be given to grades 3-5.
  - Surveys were ready at Elementary Schools for Parent/Teacher Conferences October 22 and October 24, 2024 for parents to view and sign permission slips.

- Middle School/High School: start early, specific classes will give the survey, and a timeline has been created.
- The week of October 28, 2024 the survey was given.
- The survey is also available in Spanish.
- Communicate with principals on how the survey will be viewed by parents at Parent/Teacher Conferences and get permission slips signed.

The Strategy 2 Committee looked ahead at the subject matter we will discuss at our future meetings.

Diversity Training for Staff: (bring back expectations from the district guidelines).

Bullying Training:

- Character Strong bullying prevention lessons for students
- Staff Training

Discipline Trends (Skyward the last five years)

- We are currently asking: What type of data would we use to gather discipline information?

## **Report 2**

The Strategy 2 committee met on December 12, 2024 for our second meeting. Our primary focus was on bullying training for staff and students. Questions that guided our meeting are the following:

### **1. What methods are promoted in your buildings to report bullying behaviors?**

#### ***High School***

- See Something, Say Something
- Staff volunteers to go with the student to report an incident for support
- skyward reports

Students at the high school generally feel comfortable talking with adults about bullying. They are also open to meeting with the administration and having their educator/trusted adult go with them. Clubs and activities also help to promote that trusted adult relationship. High school should also implement bullying lessons for students.

#### ***Middle School***

There is a Google form at Derby Middle School that students and staff can fill out; this would be helpful for all classified staff.

#### ***Elementary***

- Bullying lessons where they learn precisely what bullying is
- paper forms provided in classrooms for students to fill out
- anonymous reporting box in classrooms

### **2. Ideas for more effective communication with staff and students on bullying:**

- Need more education for students/ staff on unkind behavior vs. bullying
- Careful language when discussing specific incidents
- Open communication with students/staff/families
- Trusted adults for students

### ***High School***

More information could be provided about the specific roles/contacts for administration (i.e., who is the point person for different issues). We already have internal documents for staff about this: repackage them for everyone so that the chain of command is followed and communication is much more transparent for all parties involved (would also be helpful for middle school).

### ***Middle School***

There is a google form that students and staff can fill out when a bullying incident occurs. All staff have access to the google document that keeps track of these incidents.

### ***Elementary***

Some classes have a box that students can drop a message into to report an incident anonymously. Most incidents are reported directly to a trusted adult. From feedback, we have found that reporting the incident directly to an adult makes them feel safe and heard.

## **3. What methods are being promoted to parents to report bullying behaviors?**

All levels (high school, middle school, elementary) reported similar methods of promoting the report of bullying behaviors to parents. Site councils discuss how to report bullying, but they could use other methods to report it to more parents, such as Back-to-School meetings, conferences, and social media messaging that expresses open communication between parents/teachers regarding bullying. More parents are aware of the See Something Say Something app due to the question implemented in the Strategy 2 Climate, Culture, and Equity parent survey.

## **4. What proactive approaches have occurred to communicate this year that bullying is not tolerated in school?**

### ***High School***

Intercom announcements and communication to parents about zero tolerance of bullying is in place. There is an app called See Something, Say Something that is accessible to all students if they wish to report inappropriate behaviors. Examples from other students include: Be like Boston.

### ***Middle School***

Social work services highly connect the Character Strong traits to the sessions with students. We work heavily on relationship building- which involves kindness, forgiveness, patience, respect, selflessness and honesty. We also work hard on committing and engaging in their education and being present when they are here. We talk about character strong traits in small group sessions to help with social skills, and offer opportunities to role play in order to be ready for real life scenarios. This reminds students to implement positive relationships and uplift one another.

### ***Elementary***

Character Strong contains lessons that are directly related to anti-bullying. Staff have conversations with students and parents when bullying occurs. Schools place no bullying posters throughout the buildings so students have a visual of the 0 tolerance policy on bullying.

## **5. Positive Takeaways:**

### ***District-Wide***

Our social-emotional curriculum Character Strong professional development was provided district-wide, so everyone is proactive about building relationships and allows all staff to be mindful of how students treat one another.



### ***High School***

Derby High School's Diversity Club actively promoted October as Bullying Prevention and Awareness Month by having a friendship bracelet table and anti-bullying slogans on the bracelets. They also used Character Strong anti-bullying posters which were displayed during December for International Day of Disability Awareness.

### ***Middle School***

Character Strong initiatives have been used at the middle school level to promote kindness through organizations such as Student Council (STUCO) and Students Against Destructive Decisions.

### ***Elementary School***

Elementary used positive sticky notes of affirmation. At schools, they discuss the difference between bullying and tattling, and who to talk to. Character Strong announcements in the morning have a positive impact. When problems arise, they are addressed via the announcements as a whole. During the school day, administrators have heard students talking about right from wrong, and being kind to one another. Students are coming up with ideas on their own to help others feel they are in a positive environment.

Overall, there has been a positive impact on schools and knowledge of bullying behaviors. With a strong social-emotional learning curriculum such as Character Strong, we are now in front of the bullying situation. We are learning not how to react, but how to respond.

### **Report 3**

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## Strategy 3 - Student and Staff Supports for Special Services

Goal:

- Optimally allocate resources - staff, program structure, training, etc. - to ensure all needs of students receiving special services are fully met.

Success Measured:

- By May 2025, explore, identify, and communicate ways to increase inclusivity district-wide for students with exceptionalities, setting benchmark goals with identified areas with emphasis on professional learning, transitions, IEP/504 implementation, and facilities. These findings will be reported to the board.

### **Report 1**

Strategy 3 held its first meeting of the year on September 16, 2024. We started with introductions and discussed our reasons for being a part of this team. Each member shared personal motivations that highlight the importance of our work. After this, we set some ground rules for how we would communicate, make decisions, resolve conflicts, and follow majority rules.

Next, we began our work for Year 3. The Special Services Parent Advisory Council (SSPAC) presented a report to our committee. The SSPAC is responsible for overseeing the initiatives related to Strategy 3. This year, their goal is to increase parental involvement. They currently have 44 members from each school, except for Cooper. We are happy to report that the SSPAC has been successful in achieving their goal, as shown by the higher attendance of new members at meetings.

We then outlined our goal for this year: By May 2025, Strategy 3 plans to find, identify, and share ways to improve inclusivity for students with exceptionalities across the district. We will focus on specific areas including:

- Professional Learning
- Transitions
- IEP Implementation
- 504 Implementation
- Facilities

At this point, we engaged in an activity to gather input from stakeholders and recorded their ideas. After this collaborative session, we organized our thoughts under the five focus areas mentioned earlier.

As a committee, we reviewed the feedback collected on sticky notes, and any additional comments were included. The Special Services team documented this information to help with goal-setting on November 4.

Looking ahead to our meeting on November 4, we will use the information gathered in September to start creating measurable goals. The meeting will begin with a review of our ground rules and an introduction of any new participants. We will also welcome the SSPAC to share their important work with

the committee. Following that, we will have a short session on SMART Goals, which stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-Framed.

During the meeting, we will discuss our goals within the five focus areas set by our overall annual goal. We will work together to create a collective goal for each area across the district. It is important for us to focus on the overall vision instead of individual agendas, set both short-term and long-term targets, create realistic timelines for systemic changes, and discuss how we will achieve these goals.

If time allows, we will also conduct a quick survey to understand the committee's views on aligning district program names. Right now, "Curriculum Modified" is only used in secondary schools, while elementary schools call it, "Interrelated." Additionally, elementary schools have three different names for our low-incidence programs, while secondary schools use the term "mixed abilities." This inconsistency can create confusion, which we want to avoid.

Lastly, we suggest forming a subcommittee to look into possibly revising how we provide services at Derby High School. This subcommittee would help us identify service models that could reduce challenging behaviors, retain teaching staff, improve student achievement, and decrease the time spent in "special education classrooms" while focusing on the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).

## **Report 2**

Strategy 3 held its second meeting on November 4, 2024. We reviewed our norms during that meeting and began working on SMART goals. SMART stands for:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Relevant
- Time-bound

Following a presentation on SMART goals, we divided into interest groups to work on the five focus areas. Each team drafted a goal that hit each section of the SMART goal template and then used that information to complete a draft goal we will begin working with during our December meeting. We also provided time to preview two sub-committee tasks, reviewing the classroom-type names across the district, aligning them, and reviewing the service delivery model at Derby High School. Volunteers for those subgroups emailed Dr. Gresham with their interest and will begin to meet before winter break.

Strategy 3 held its third meeting on December 2, 2024. During that meeting, the groups presented their previously drafted SMART goals to the entire group. Edits, based on other people's suggestions, were reviewed until a final goal was constructed. Specifically, we worked on the IEP Implementation goal. The Strategy 3 team would like to propose that all students on an IEP have their accommodations tracked by staff beginning in the 2025/2026 school year in a way that can be quantified.

This process will continue until all five goals have been finalized. We also set up the dates to meet as a sub-committee. The Derby High School classroom service model and the classroom type name committees met in December, and both agreed that we needed to explore the proposed options. Future dates will be set with the group.

The proposal is that we create a district-cohesive classroom-type system to name our categorical classrooms. Currently, we have two different names for the same program at the elementary and secondary levels. Interrelated at the elementary school is the same as curriculum modified at the secondary level. We want to ensure that only one name is used across the district. We would also like to change the name of PBIS to something that does not conflict with the vocabulary in Character Strong and other evidence-based practices. Confusion may abound if we use PBIS as an evidence-based strategy in social-emotional learning while also having it as the label for a classroom type. Finally, we want to ensure that we are using the Mixed Abilities term across the district for our combined type of low-incidence programs. This will not supersede the current Life Skills, Structured Learning, and Functional Classrooms. It is not a replacement for those classrooms; it is to ensure that our vision of low-incidence classrooms in all buildings has a common naming procedure.

### **Report 3**

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## Strategy 4 - Student and Staff Mental Health & Wellness Supports

### Goal:

- Create, implement and maintain evidence-based mental health programs and services, for all district employees and students, that promote positive change in health and wellness knowledge, skills and behaviors.

### Success Measured:

- By June of 2025, an annual Mental Health Committee data report will be given to the Board. The report will include data on: discipline referrals, percentage of students in Tier 2 and Tier 3 on the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) screener, and number of students that participated in a risk assessment, staff opportunities for and participation in wellness activities, student and staff absenteeism.

### **Report 1**

Strategy 4, Student and Staff Mental Health & Wellness Supports committee has met two times so far this year on September 10 and October 29, 2024. Membership of this committee consists of 46 individuals, including students, parents, classified and certified staff, Board of Education members, and community stakeholders. In addition to the dates listed above, this committee is scheduled to meet four additional times to complete the tasks to reach committee goals on November 26, 2024; January 14, 2025; February 25, 2025; and April 8, 2025. Additional dates will be added if needed. The primary goal of this committee for Year 3 is creating an annual Mental Health Committee data report to be given to the board that will include data on discipline referrals, percentage of students in Tier 2 and Tier 3 on the Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) screener, and number of students that participated in the a risk assessment, staff opportunities for and participation in wellness activities, student and staff absenteeism.

The first committee meeting included introductions, a belief statement, and accountability measures were reviewed. Team protocols were established to guide the work of the committee during the year. The committee selected the following: Trust and contribute to the process, be respectful to everyone's time, stay positive, be respectful, and be kind. More values are: Agree with kindness, be a polite listener and speaker, and create a safe place. While the committee has a single goal this year, the committee discussed the purpose of the goal, which is to determine important data markers that will be used to demonstrate improvement in mental health and wellbeing. Guiding questions for the discussion included why the data was needed, what needs to be in place to collect data, what is missing or needed to collect the data, and how will the plan be created to meet the goal.

During the second committee meeting in October, team protocols were shared and the Educational Moment focused on a video clip, [KINDNESS](#) as shared through the newly implemented Social Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum, Character Strong. The committee briefly discussed the video clip and district staff shared insight of the curriculum implementation so far this year. The committee will collect and report out the data. A tabletop activity, Deconstructing the Goal, was the main activity for this session as

the group split into groups of four to complete a graphic organizer. This was used to assist with breaking down the goal, seeking common language, determining what information is needed, and tools needed for measurement. Additional areas that emerged through discussion included risk assessments and the importance of districtwide tools, consistent protocols, and follow through. The committee will continue to examine suggestions made through meetings regarding the development of possible recommendations.

## **Report 2**

The Student and Staff Mental Health & Wellness Supports committee has met four times so far this year on September 10, October 15, November 26, 2024, and January 7, 2025. The committee will meet at least two more times before we wrap up the goals for 2024-2025. The committee continues to focus on the primary goal of this committee for Year 3 with creating an annual Mental Health Committee data report to be given to the board that will include data on discipline referrals, percentage of students in Tier 2 and Tier 3 on the Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) screener, and number of students that participated in the a risk assessment, staff opportunities for and participation in wellness activities, student and staff absenteeism.

At the beginning of each committee meeting the belief statement, goal and accountability measures are reviewed. Team protocols that were established to guide the work of the committee are reviewed prior to each meeting. The committee selected the following: Trust and contribute to the process, be respectful to everyone's time, stay positive, be respectful, and be kind. Additional values are agreed with kindness, be a polite listener and speaker, and create a safe place. This is important as diverse perspectives must be expressed and valued.

An educational moment is shared at the beginning of each committee meeting to encourage learning and understanding of a variety of components supporting Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and Social Emotional Growth (SEG). During the third committee meeting in November, the committee participated in an activity, "How do you know"? Examples of student written expression on paper and a drawing were examined, discussed, and outside of context could be examples of internalized and externalized behaviors that could be potentially harmful to the student or others. Upon evaluation and investigation, the words were lyrics to a song that a student was listening to, and the picture was a student drawing a picture of his family snorkeling. Following the discussion in October, administrators and social workers do not have a district screening tool to initiate the investigation of encounters such as this. This educational moment demonstrated situations that are common in our schools today.

The committee started deconstructing the annual goal based upon the areas established in the goal were discipline referrals, percentage of students in tiers two and three based upon the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Screener, students participating in risk assessments, participation in wellness activities, and student and staff absences. Considerable discussion, follow up and discussion focused on this process. Some critical points that were determined via the committee included:

1. Data needs to be consistent in data source and collection to guide processes and accountability.

2. Data should not require in depth collection, analyzation, and conclusions, but rooted in our student and district collection methods used for state and federal reporting and accreditation for the district.
3. Seek to strengthen and improve areas in need of additional tools, resources, or procedures to improve student and staff outcomes.

Deconstruction of the goal continued from November into January. Student discipline data should be consistent and collected through Skyward following typical processes set forth for annual reporting. The concern for reporting in May is that this data is not collected and finalized until June. As the committee examined other areas, timelines are not in sync with the annual reporting of data to the Board of Education unless it is one year in arrears, or the report deadline is changed. Another example was the district report for participation in the Wellness Committee which was completed in October. New information will not be available until October 2025. This is an area that will require more discussion before a recommendation can be made.

The Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Screener that will measure SEG will be through Character Strong, which is the newly implemented SEL curriculum. This measure will be consistent in collection districtwide, but again, data will not be readily available until June 2025 for the school year. The area that continues to garner significant focus is that the district needs a districtwide risk assessment that is inclusive of internalized and externalized behaviors and structures for consistent reporting. The new Panorama Education program is a vital tool in the collection of data, which will allow for evaluating trends and outcomes in many areas but is not inclusive of highly confidential student data such as this.

During the month of January, considerable discussion emerged following the data regarding the low participation of staff wellness, which was reported as 20% in October 2024. District staff expressed concerns about workload, “extra” work, and expectations that are expressed with intensity such as addressing student performance outcomes with students received from open school boundaries, struggling students, and absenteeism. It was noted that while the district tried to remove some items off the plate, the new state mandate for LETRS training increased the workload significantly with time away from the classroom, creating substitute plans, and homework for the training, in addition to often reteaching information from being out of the classroom. While many new initiatives are good, the time and stress are being felt by staff.

Lastly, it was determined that student and staff absenteeism can be collected, but once again, this information is not typically collected and analyzed until June. There were expressed concerns regarding how to track the absences of staff regarding earned time off and designated family, emergency, and medical leaves. Further discussion is needed to establish a recommendation for consistent reporting of information. This committee continues to have strong diverse attendance with different perspectives. Continued focus with overall goals, learning, and discussion will continue to further this committee towards its year end goals.

### **Report 3**

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## Strategy 5 - Facilities & Partnerships

Goal:

- Continually develop partnerships and update facilities to ensure equity and safety for everyone.

Success Measured:

- By June of 2025, a Master Facilities Plan and exploration of demographic study will be presented to the Board of Education.

### **Report 1**

We have reviewed all of the findings from the tours of the district the committee completed last year in preparation for the Boundary & Capacity Study (and Master Plan). One thing stood out when we reviewed the list - these are mostly what we “need” items, based on what we have now. They were not necessarily new concepts or looking at what changes are needed to improve the teaching and learning environment or how education could be delivered. They are all good things brought up, but they were primarily surface level needs. It will be important to go deeper during facilitation to have real discussions around these topics.

We have been working to get consultants on board for the Boundary and Capacity Study. We anticipated this would begin sooner than it has, and were basing our first meeting of the year on that fact to share out what we would be doing and what will be required from the committee.

However, there has been a lot of work happening as this consultant selection process is evaluated. We have had many discussions with the City of Derby about what they are seeing for land development and new communities coming to the City of Derby. Here is a chart of what they are seeing right now:

	Current Status of Lots		
	For Sale/Under Construction	Almost Ready for Sale	Not Ready for Sale
<b><u>Current Developments in Derby</u></b>			
El Paso Heights (Woodlawn & 95th South)	6	9	33
Oak Forest (Duplexes) (Behind Sonic)	0	0	4
Dove Hollow Addition (Rock & Chet Smith)	0	0	115
Foxfire (55th St.)	15	29	58
Sterling East (East Madison City Limits)	125	0	74
Cedar Ranch (East Madison)	36	19	22
Courtyards at Crosswater (East Meadowlark by St. Mary’s)	0	0	105
Sky Ridge (North Rock Rd & 55th SE Corner)	0	0	143
Spring Ridge Addition (East Meadowlark, South side)	11	26	62
<b>Total lots when completed:</b>	<b>892</b>		



The City of Derby is reporting that they expect growth to exceed their 20 year projects of 1.2% by a significant margin in the coming years. Building permits are up 15% this year over years past. There is also a variety of housing types coming to the market that Derby has not seen before - townhouse, courtyard homes, etc. It will take the work of a skilled demographer to interpret the impact that these housing types will have on the student population.

Once the decision is made on the Boundary & Capacity study, this will chart the path forward for the committee's work this year.

The committee also continues to work with the Curriculum Department to enhance and provide more work-based learning, shadowing, and internship opportunities for our students.

## **Report 2**

The committee met with Russell Baldwin, District Athletic Director, as well as coaches from many of the sports teams. Those coaches that could not attend provided information to Mr. Baldwin. During this meeting the different sports (including marching band), shared the needs of their programs with the committee. These needs ranged from artificial turf fields, to better storage for band needs. This meeting was necessary to get an understanding of the needs of each area as we are about to begin working on the Master Plan for the District over the next 18 months. Below are items that will be reviewed during the Boundary and Capacity Study and Master Plan process.

### **Fields & Courts**

- **Soccer:** The preference for playing surface is turf; The field needs a locker room, storm protection, practice space, and expanded seating.
- **Tennis:** Urgent resurfacing of the tennis courts is needed at Derby North Middle School. Derby High School's courts require minor upgrades and have a long-term goal to expand to 12 courts.
- **Baseball/Softball:** Turf would be preferred for weather resilience. The field contains an outdated press box/concessions booth. A goal for a four-plex (2 baseball, 2 softball) was discussed.

### **Indoor Sports & PE**

- **Volleyball/Basketball:** Need for a competition gym at Derby High School and drop-down net system.
- **Natorium:** There is a need for a district-owned facility. The current one is too small.
- **Wrestling & Weight Room:** There has been massive growth in girl's wrestling, which has caused a need for two wrestling rooms. A larger weight room is also needed.
- **PE/Fitness:** Derby High School has insufficient locker space, and needs better supervision. The fitness center would be a dream space for the district athletics, which should be open to staff after hours.

### **Other Upgrades**

- **Derby High School Site:** There is potential for two practice fields, a band field, and expanded Panther Activity Center.

- **Lighting:** Upgraded lighting is needed at the Derby High School field and band practice areas.
- **Storage:** The band needs more on-site storage for props.
- **Concessions:** There is a need for an ice machine/water at the tennis courts.

#### **Key Takeaway**

- Most of these upgrades align with 5A & 6A school standards.

The goal for 2025 needs to be modified due to the timeframe of the Capacity & Boundary Study, as well as the Master Plan, which will now extend into 2026. The original target was to complete the Master Plan by June 2025. However, the timeline has shifted due to the time required for the selection process to engage a consultant. Over the past few months, the Board has conducted a thorough review of proposals, held discussions to evaluate potential firms, and finalized the selection of a consultant to lead this critical work.

Looking ahead, the Board of Education will hold a workshop on February 20, 2025 to establish formal goals and provide overarching direction for the study. Once underway, the Capacity & Boundary Study will assess current enrollment trends, building capacities, and projected growth to guide future boundary adjustments and facility planning. Simultaneously, the Master Plan will take a comprehensive look at the district's long-term facility needs, considering factors such as building conditions, modernization efforts, programmatic space requirements, and future growth. Community engagement and stakeholder input will play a key role throughout the process, ensuring that the final recommendations align with the district's educational goals and the needs of students, staff, and families.

#### **Report 3**

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## Strategy 6 - Personnel Retention, Recruitment & Development

Goal:

- Attract, develop, and retain our team of staff who support our educational community.

Success Measured:

- By June of 2025, a presentation will be made to the Board assessing our Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Challenges (SWOC) related to identifying and attracting a comprehensive applicant pool.

### **Report 1**

The Strategy 6 committee met on September 24, 2024. This report will provide an update on our committee's work toward improving recruitment, retention, and development strategies for district personnel. Through our strategic planning efforts, we are taking key steps to assess and enhance employee engagement. We are focusing on compensation, benefits, and overall satisfaction—critical areas for sustaining a high-performing workforce.

Our primary focus has been preparing for the 2025 Employee Engagement and Satisfaction Survey, a cornerstone tool for gathering actionable insights. Following last year's successful implementation, we reviewed feedback and identified several areas for continued improvement:

- **Health Insurance and Benefits:** While we've made substantial strides in enhancing employee benefits, especially health insurance, continued attention to this area remains a priority.
- **Compensation:** Salary and wages remain essential focus areas, with our district setting the ambitious goal of ranking in the top three within our region.

For this year, the proposed survey dates are January 6-21, 2025 with strategic communications planned to maximize staff participation, including all-staff emails, paper copies, and time allotted during inservice days. Additionally, we are exploring incentive options such as building competitions to increase engagement and ensure we capture a representative response.

In addition to the survey, we conducted focus groups designed to further uncover trends around recruitment and retention. These sessions brought together a diverse mix of employees including recent hires, long-term employees, retirees, and individuals with varied district connections. We heard from over 50 different individuals in a series of short sessions scheduled November 5 through November 8 at various times of the day. The goal is to gather nuanced feedback on what draws employees to Derby Public Schools, factors influencing retention, and potential barriers we can address.

We are on track to present a comprehensive analysis by June 2025, including a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges (SWOC) analysis, as part of our ongoing commitment to building a robust applicant pool and fostering an engaged, satisfied workforce.

## **Report 2**

The Strategy 6 committee continues to focus on enhancing recruitment, retention, and employee engagement strategies. During the November 21 meeting, committee members celebrated district staff achievements, recognizing the outstanding contributions of educators across the district.

Recruitment and hiring trends remain a key focus. Word-of-mouth continues to be the primary source of applicants, and while classified hiring has seen some success, flexibility and pay remain key factors influencing candidate decisions. To strengthen recruitment efforts, the committee is benchmarking salaries and benefits across all employee groups, with the goal of positioning Derby Public Schools among the top three in salary competitiveness within the region.

New this year, Derby Public Schools partnered with Gray Media Group (KWCH) to enhance recruitment and employment efforts through innovative, targeted advertising campaigns. Together, we have developed solution-driven strategies, including display and video ads tailored to internet users' behaviors, interests, and locations. This provides a great opportunity to broaden our recruitment pool through targeted advertisements and a larger reach. By showcasing diverse roles—from teaching to transportation and food service—we highlight unique reasons to join our team, such as inspiring the next generation, bringing children to work while driving a bus, or enjoying part-time opportunities in retirement. This collaboration is designed to set our campaigns up for success, attracting talented individuals who are ready to make a difference in our schools. The curated ads were also provided to the district so we could use them in social media advertisements or on our employment web page. The advertisements went live in January 2025 and we are eager to track the analytics and gauge the success of this recruitment approach.

Employee recognition is also a priority, with ongoing discussions about cost-effective ways to honor years of service. One innovative initiative involves a Derby High School student currently participating in work-based learning with the district's communications department. As the student representative on the committee, she is designing a sticker and card to be used for employee milestone recognitions, reinforcing the importance of appreciation in fostering a positive work culture.

The Employee Engagement and Satisfaction Survey was open from January 6-21, and so far, 585 responses have been received. The results will be analyzed and shared with the board in June, providing valuable insights into employee experiences and areas for improvement.

Through recent focus groups, employees highlighted the district's strong sense of community, the supportive and family-oriented environment, and career development opportunities as key reasons they stay. However, they also emphasized the need for improvements in compensation, communication, staffing levels, and mental health resources. The committee is using this feedback to shape future initiatives and ensure a more engaging and supportive work environment.

Looking ahead, the committee will continue to research best practices for recruitment and retention, refine employee recognition programs, and explore strategies to enhance overall employee satisfaction.

By proactively addressing challenges and fostering a culture of appreciation and support, Derby Public Schools aims to maintain a high-performing and engaged workforce.

**Report 3**

