

# **Morris School District**

## Strategic Planning Presentation

March 10th, 2025



*Rising Together, Ready for Tomorrow*

# Mission Statement



It is the mission of the Morris School District to empower each student to ascend academically, socially, and emotionally by providing equal access to continuous opportunities for achieving academic excellence, developing meaningful relationships, and becoming future ready.

# Goal Area 1: PreK - 5th

## Academic Programming, Teaching & Learning



Foster academic excellence through inclusive and culturally responsive teaching practice ensuring that all students regardless of background or ability receive equitable access to a rigorous curriculum and diverse learning objectives that prepare them for success in a global society.

### Action Steps

- Foster an environment where highly qualified teachers receive administrative support, along with the time and flexibility to design creative lessons that align with state standards.
- Implement structures that ensure vertical/horizontal alignment of academics and social-emotional learning between grade bands.
- Provide students the opportunity to learn and maximize their potential through effective teaching strategies and curriculum targeted to each student's level.
- Create flexible pathways that support bilingual students in their transition to general education classrooms promoting their academic and social success.
- Create additional magnet schools and specialized academics within MSD.

# Goal Area 1: 6th - 12th

## Academic Programming, Teaching & Learning



Fasten academic excellence through inclusive and culturally responsive teaching practice ensuring that all students regardless of background or ability receive equitable access to a rigorous curriculum and diverse learning objectives that prepare them for success in a global society.

### Action Steps

- Implement the new master schedule at FMS.
- Develop curricula and extension courses in elective areas to align and enhance 6-12 offerings.
- Collaborate with special education, bilingual, and ESL groups to ensure that all diverse students' needs are addressed in new schedule and offerings
- Continued expansion of the Pre AP program and identify an academic feeder program for FMS, such as the IB Middle Years Program
- Complete funding for all AP exams
- Expand professional development offerings to include state and national level conferences
- Leverage the Danielson Framework for Teaching to ensure retention of exceptional teachers

# Goal Area 2: PreK - 5th

## Learning Beyond the Classroom



To create a cohesive community that builds upon our combined strengths to offer more opportunities to learn within and beyond our curriculum resulting in more well-rounded experiences for students.

### Action Steps

- Host family events, workshops, and volunteer opportunities while partnering with local organizations, libraries, and businesses to strengthen school-community relationships and provide enrichment resources.
- Enhance field trips, after-school clubs, and hands-on projects to extend learning beyond the classroom and provide real-world applications for students.
- Strengthen social-emotional learning that fosters self-awareness, empathy, teamwork, and peer mentoring.
- Celebrate diversity and individual strengths by hosting multicultural events, integrating inclusive activities, and offering differentiated instruction that supports various learning styles.
- Encourage student voice and leadership by establishing student-led initiatives, service projects, or platforms for students to showcase talents through exhibitions, performances, and STEM fairs.
- Enhance communication through digital platforms, newsletters, and interactive meetings while creating systems for students, parents, and staff to share feedback and contribute ideas.
- Conduct regular assessments of community engagement and student enrichment opportunities, using surveys, observations, and performance data to refine and improve initiatives.

# Goal Area 2: 6th - 12th

## Learning Beyond the Classroom



To create a cohesive community that builds upon our combined strengths to offer more opportunities to learn within and beyond our curriculum resulting in more well-rounded experiences for students.

### Action Steps

- Expand dual enrollment programs with local colleges to provide advanced academic opportunities.
- Broaden vocational opportunities to include career-focused training and industry certifications.
- Develop corporate partnerships with organizations like Verizon STEM Labs, Bayer, and Johnson & Johnson to enhance STEM education.
- Strengthen community involvement through service-learning projects that connect students with real-world applications.
- Increase experiential learning opportunities for all academic levels, including Honors, Level A, Resource, and AP, to ensure hands-on, beyond-the-classroom experiences.

# Goal Area 3: Pre-K - 12th

## Building Optimal Environments for Learning



Make facility investments that improve our academic return on investment.

### Action Steps

- Conduct comprehensive building and grounds assessments to establish a baseline of facility conditions and identify areas for improvement.
- Gather input from key stakeholders, including caregivers, teachers, administrators, and students, to assess facility needs and priorities.
- Evaluate and prioritize identified needs and wants, obtaining cost estimates to determine feasibility and impact on academic outcomes.
- Enhance indoor physical learning environments by upgrading classrooms, labs, and collaborative spaces to support modern instructional needs.
- Develop and enhance outdoor learning classrooms at K-8 schools to promote hands-on, experiential learning opportunities.
- Upgrade sports fields and complexes to support physical education, athletics, and community engagement.
- Revitalize music, media, and theatre environments to enrich creative arts programs and provide high-quality performance spaces.
- Make final decisions on priority investments, determining the best funding approach (budget allocation or referendum) and outlining the next steps for implementation.

# Goal Area 4: Kindergarten - 5th

## Communication to Foster Community and Partnership



Strengthen and foster meaningful pathways within MSD and the greater community to create informed and intentional partnerships.

### Action Steps

- Establish a clean and user-friendly architecture for the district website to ensure information is relevant, accessible, and effectively communicates opportunities for engagement.
- Develop and implement clear protocols for social media usage to ensure content is timely, informative, and aligned with district goals.
- Strengthen partnerships with the MEF (Morris Education Foundation) to enhance funding opportunities, resources, and innovative programs that benefit students and educators.
- Actively promote collaborations with community organizations to expand learning opportunities, student support services, and civic engagement initiatives.



# Goal Area 4: 6th - 12th

## Communication to Foster Community and Partnership



Strengthen and foster meaningful pathways within MSD and the greater community to create informed and intentional partnerships.

### Action Steps

- Organize regular events where families can connect with the school community, learn about resources, and collaborate on student development initiatives.
- Build relationships with local businesses to create opportunities for student internships, job shadowing, and collaborative community projects.
- Develop a student-driven program that encourages community involvement, providing students with opportunities to engage in volunteer projects that address local needs.
- Develop a program where parent ambassadors serve as liaisons between the school and families, facilitating communication and supporting school events and initiatives.

# Goal Area 5: PreK - 12th

## Career Readiness Skills



Explore career pathways through self discovery and real life experiences so all students are prepared for their transition for high school.

### Action Steps

- Implement career assessment tools to help students identify their strengths, interests, and potential career paths.
- Organize career days, invite guest speakers from various industries, and offer virtual job shadowing experiences to expose students to diverse career options.
- Incorporate hands-on, real-world projects into the curriculum that allow students to apply career-related skills and explore their interests.
- Coordinate job-site visits and job shadowing programs to give students first-hand experience in different career fields and a better understanding of day-to-day work life.
- Develop internship programs for students to gain practical, on-the-job experience in their fields of interest.
- Build an accessible resource hub that provides detailed information on various careers, education pathways, necessary skills, and qualifications.
- Infuse career-related learning into core subjects, making connections between academic knowledge and real-world applications.
- Offer counseling services where students can receive guidance on career exploration, setting goals, and planning for their future education and career paths.