

Kalamazoo Public Schools

Every child. Every opportunity. Every time.

STRATEGIC PLAN

2025-2030

Overview

Kalamazoo Public Schools Strategic Plan, adopted in 2025, outlines the district’s priorities for the next five years and will guide the decisions, strategies and funding necessary to achieve those goals. This plan was created through a collaborative effort between the Board of Education, district leadership, staff, parents, students, and community members. This student-centered plan includes six goal areas that builds a comprehensive process to meet the needs of our students and to ensure their success as independent thinkers and world citizens.



Mission

At KPS it is our mission to nurture the dreams of all students and empower all students to contribute to a better world.

Vision

Every child. Every opportunity. Every time.

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Message from the Superintendent



It is an honor to lead Kalamazoo Public Schools. KPS has a dedicated Board of Education, faculty, and staff who work diligently to provide our 12,000-plus students with a high-quality education. As we continue our instructional focus, I am pleased to present the Strategic Plan for 2025 to 2030. The plan is the result of research, stakeholder input sessions, and collaboration with our senior leadership team.

The strategic planning work culminated in the development of six pillars with goals, strategies, and measures to monitor progress.

The plan was developed with a student-centered lens adhering to our motto of Every child. Every opportunity. Every time. This plan will guide KPS's work into the next decade.

I am proud of the commitments made in this plan, but the real value of this document lies in its implementation — and it is only by working together that we will be able to create truly meaningful change for our students. I am confident that with the partnership of the entire Kalamazoo community, we can guarantee that our students will graduate from our schools ready to achieve their dreams and empowered to contribute to a better world.

Sincerely,

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

Dr. Darrin Slade
Superintendent

2025 Board of Education

KPS wants to express our sincere gratitude to the Board of Education for offering direction and guidance on this plan. Because of board members' vision and tireless devotion to uplifting KPS students, the district has been able to develop the goals and the strategies necessary to implement the plan.



Tianna Harrison
President



Carol McGlenn
Vice President



Jennie Hill
Secretary



Karla Murphy
Treasurer



Takisha Johnson
Trustee



Yvonne Payton
Trustee



Patti Sholler-Barber
Trustee



Note: Board Officers are elected every January.

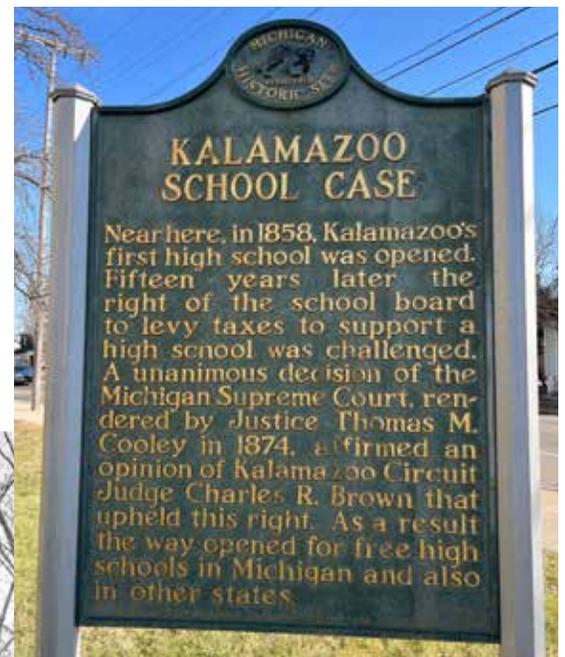
History of Kalamazoo Public Schools

With more than 12,000 students enrolled in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade, Kalamazoo Public Schools is the 11th largest of more than 537 districts in Michigan. KPS is one of Kalamazoo County's largest employers, with over 1,800 teachers, bus drivers, secretaries, custodians, administrators, maintenance workers, food service employees, and other support staff.

Kalamazoo played a role in the history of K-12 education in the United States through a lawsuit known as the Kalamazoo School Case. In 1858, Kalamazoo's first high school was opened. Fifteen years later, the right of the school board to levy taxes to support a high school was challenged. The Michigan Supreme Court's decision supporting the levy of taxes to fund public education had a profound effect on education in Michigan. The number of high schools in the state increased from 107 in the early 1870s to 278 by 1890. A plaque

in front of Old Central High School (which is now the Community Education Center) commemorates the Kalamazoo School Case.

Kalamazoo Public Schools has 17 elementary schools and four middle schools. High school students can choose between two traditional settings or two alternative settings. KPS also offers a virtual secondary program. The district covers the majority of the City of Kalamazoo as well as sections of Kalamazoo, Comstock, Oshtemo, and Texas townships.

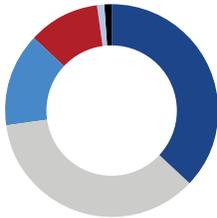


Kalamazoo High School Building No. 2, built in 1881-82, and far left, a grammar school built in 1891. Both sat on the location now occupied by the Community Education Center.

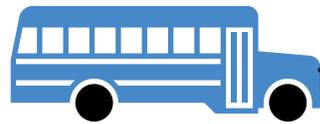
Kalamazoo Public Schools Today



12,276 STUDENTS ENROLLED



- AFRICAN AMERICAN, 37%
- WHITE, 36%
- HISPANIC/LATINO, 11%
- TWO OR MORE RACES, 14%
- ASIAN, 1%
- AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE, 1%



1.5 MILLION MILES
DRIVEN ANNUALLY

115 BUSES
COVERING
86 UNIQUE
ROUTES

7,000+
STUDENTS EACH DAY



9.4% Rise

IN GRADUATION RATE
OVER LAST YEAR



5

WORLD
LANGUAGES
TAUGHT

60+ LANGUAGES SPOKEN
BY KPS STUDENTS

767
TOTAL
TEACHERS



501
WITH MASTER'S
DEGREE OR
ABOVE



2M+
MEALS SERVED
EVERY YEAR



\$210M TO
8,100+ GRADUATES

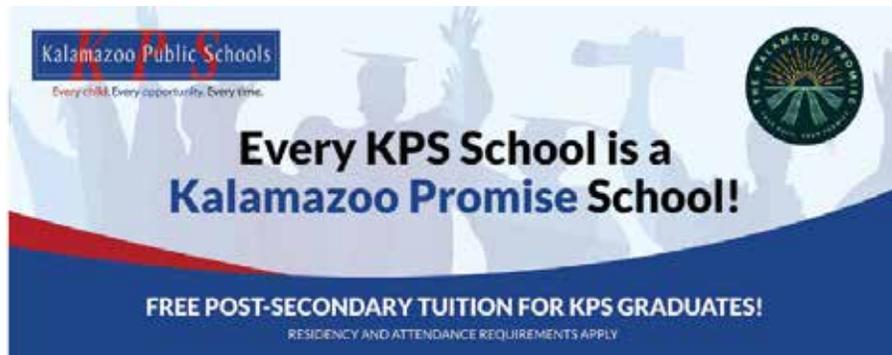
10 YEARS TO USE
BENEFITS AFTER
GRADUATION



The Kalamazoo Promise

The first of its kind, The Kalamazoo Promise scholarship began in 2005 with a group of anonymous donors who recognized that college tuition poses a hurdle in determining young people's futures. The Kalamazoo Promise is available to Kalamazoo Public School's graduates meeting enrollment and residency requirements.

It provides up to 100 percent tuition and fees for post-secondary education at over 60 eligible Michigan institutions, from colleges and universities to trade schools and vocational programs. To date, more than 8,100 scholars have been awarded more than \$210 million in scholarships.



Strategic Planning Process

During April and May 2024, Superintendent Dr. Darrin Slade led over 60 Strategic Planning SWOT analysis sessions at schools and in the community.

A SWOT analysis is a way of identifying an organization's Strengths and Weaknesses, potential Opportunities, and Threats.

- **Strengths** (internal): *What do we do well?*
- **Weaknesses** (internal): *What can we improve?*
- **Opportunities** (external): *What can we take advantage of?*
- **Threats** (external): *What issues could impact us?*

Attendees completed an individual SWOT analysis and shared their thoughts with the superintendent. Participants were also asked to share three possible goals for the Strategic Plan.



Individual forms were collected and reviewed by senior leadership. The input provided during the SWOT analysis sessions helped inform this Strategic Plan.

Several common themes emerged from the sessions. For example, our diversity, compassionate and hard-working staff, and supportive parents were frequently identified as strengths. Lower class sizes and more alternative programming were identified as areas for improvement.

As this plan was drafted, feedback was received from the Board of Education, Instructional Leadership Team, Parent Advisory Council, and Teacher Advisory Council. Six community meetings were also held prior to the plan's adoption to receive additional feedback. The Board of Education adopted the Strategic Plan on August 7, 2025.



COMMON THEMES

Strengths

- Dedicated and engaged teachers and staff
- Strong relationships between staff, administration, and students
- Many opportunities for students (e.g., A/T, ATYP, special education services, multilingual learners, homeless support, advanced placement, dual enrollment, world languages)
- Support from The Kalamazoo Promise, Communities in Schools (CIS) and other partners
- Strong community support for bonds and millages
- Improved climate and culture
- Diversity
- Improved behaviors

Weaknesses

- Budget constraints
- Lack of air conditioning in facilities
- Limited in-school and out-of-school experiences
- Students graduating without clear pathways or plans
- Absenteeism
- Large class sizes
- Climate concerns
- No alternative classrooms for students in elementary or middle school
- Inconsistent enforcement of rules across schools
- Challenges with going paperless and ensuring access for all parents
- Compensation
- Negative perceptions

Opportunities

- Field trips and community partnerships
- Parent training and support programs
- Increased collaboration with local businesses for financial literacy
- Robotics programs
- Before and after school daycare
- Local higher education institutions
- New KRESA Career Connect Center

Threats

- Internet safety issues
- Social media
- Drug awareness and lack of parental accountability
- Negative perceptions of academic quality
- AI and technological changes impacting education
- Staff burnout
- Teacher shortage
- Increased mental health needs
- Violence in the community





Strategic Plan Pillars

KPS has identified six critical areas the district will focus on over the next five years. Each of the pillars contains a goal statement, strategies that will be used to achieve the goal, and the measures of success.

Improving student achievement in all areas and maintaining safe and orderly learning environments will continue to be the district's top priority.



Academic Excellence



Family and Community Engagement and Collaboration



Safe and Supportive Environment



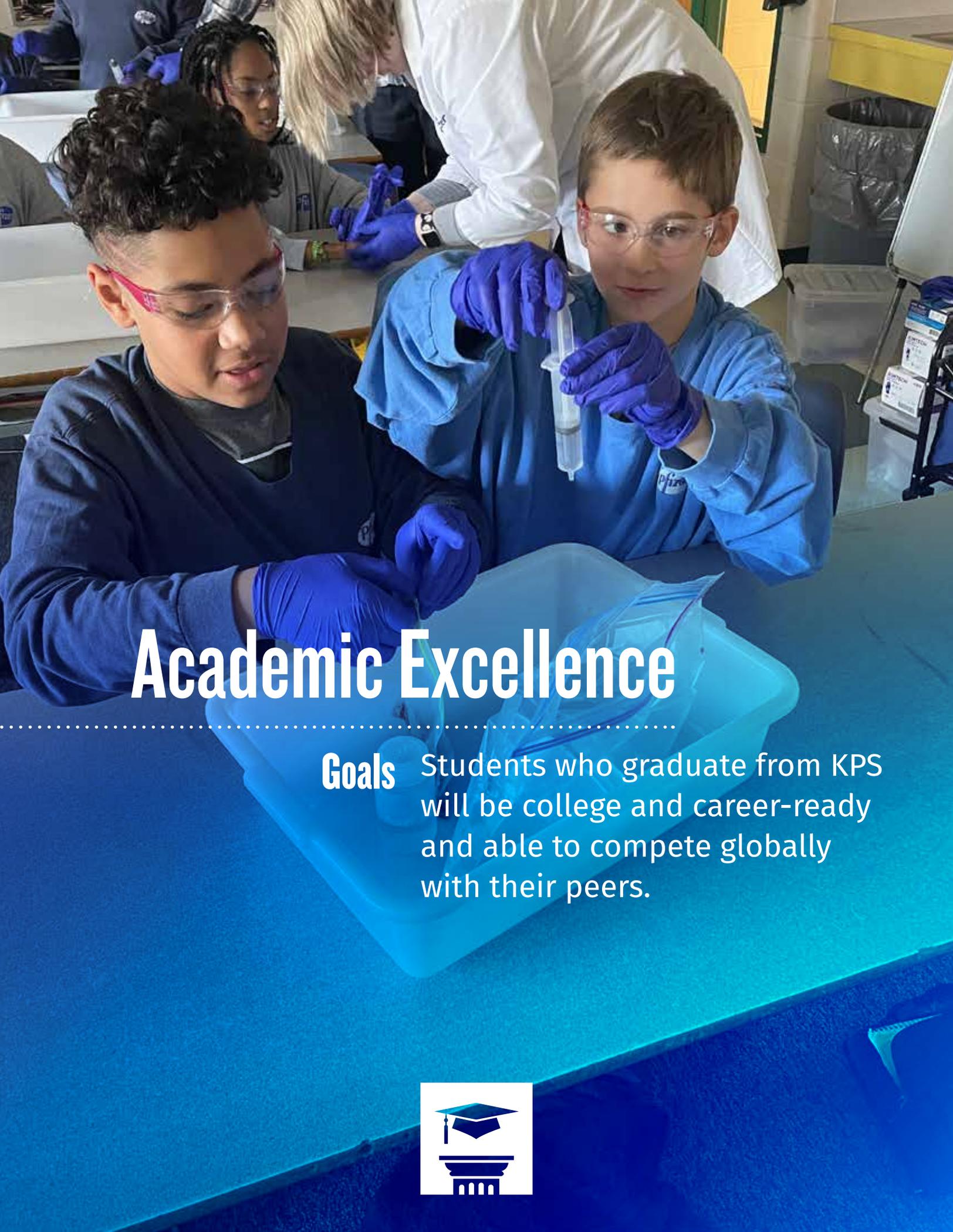
Fiscal Responsibility



Operational Effectiveness



Quality Workforce

A photograph of two young students in a science laboratory. They are wearing blue lab coats and purple gloves. One student is holding a syringe and looking at it intently, while the other looks on. In the background, other students and a teacher in a white lab coat are visible. The scene is lit with a blue tint.

Academic Excellence

Goals Students who graduate from KPS will be college and career-ready and able to compete globally with their peers.



Strategies

- Monitor the fidelity of the curriculum(s) implementation and assessments.
- Provide ongoing professional development to staff related to high-quality instructional strategies and delivery methods to ensure student mastery of identified skills and enhanced rigor in all content areas.
- Provide focused instructional professional development that centers on all district student groups.
- Establish and maintain structures, strategies, and practices that consistently monitor student progress towards graduating in four years once they enter high school.
- Monitor and incorporate internships, problem-solving experiences, and opportunities to earn career certificates and/or college credit into career pathway course sequences.
- Collaborate with stakeholders to audit and revise existing curriculum and instructional resources to identify strengths and weaknesses.
- Effectively implement the district's attendance policy at all schools.
- Increase support for students with chronic attendance issues.
- Promote early childhood education opportunities.
- Provide instruction on digital citizenship.
- Utilize a continuum of instructional models to ensure that the academic needs of all students are met.
- Ensure that KPS consistently utilizes evidence-based, best-practice research to deliver, plan, promote, and monitor high-quality instruction (teaching and learning) and student mastery.



Measures of Success

By the 2029-2030 school year

- Increase school-specific and subgroup reading, math, science, and social studies proficiency scores to at least the state average as measured by state assessments.
- Increase student participation in honors and Advanced Placement classes, dual enrollment, and career and technical education by 20%.
- Increase and improve student achievement levels for historically under-performing subgroups. Significant growth in all student achievement measures is expected for these identified groups in all schools.
- Consistently monitor student progress and gauge school/district staff performance with benchmark and state reading, math, science, and social studies data.
- Continue to expand programs and opportunities for gifted and talented students.
- Fully implement school-level processes to support effective and efficient behavior modification systems (i.e., counseling, trauma, substance abuse, anger management, and alternative education programs.)
- Students will demonstrate on-track attendance as measured by state-reported chronic absenteeism rates (absent less than 10% of enrolled days per school year) at or above the state average.
- Kalamazoo Central and Loy Norrix will increase four-year graduation rates to at or above the state average.
- Increase opportunities for non-traditional pathways to high school completion.





Family and Community Engagement and Collaboration

Goals Partner with families and the community to build trust, commitment, resources, unity, and expanded learning opportunities.



Strategies

- Provide various ways for families to engage with schools, including in-person meetings and events, virtual meetings, and volunteer opportunities that fit different schedules and preferences.
- Provide opportunities for families and community members to provide input on new initiatives or programmatic changes.
- Provide timely information to families and the community about school events, programs, and opportunities for involvement through newsletters, social media, school board meetings, websites, and other district communications platforms.
- Provide translation and interpretation services to families.
- Partner with local health and social service agencies to provide comprehensive support for students and families, including access to health care, food programs, clothing pantries, mental health services, and other resources.

- Inform parents about how to access students' grades and attendance in the parent portal.

- Ensure the district webpages can be translated into various languages and adhere to web content accessibility guidelines (WCAG).

- Seek parent engagement opportunities with community partners and host events in our buildings.
- Engage with multicultural events and celebrations for students, staff, and community.



Measures of Success

By the 2029-2030 school year

- Increase participation in orientations, open houses, parent-teacher conferences, and other school and district-sponsored events.
- Establish parent organizations at all schools.
- Increase attendance at Parent Advisory Council (PAC) monthly meetings with the superintendent.
- Track the number and quality of resources shared and services provided to evaluate the effectiveness of community partnerships.
- Increase usage of the PowerSchool parent portal.
- Provide consistent communication with parents using a variety of district communication platforms.





Safe and Supportive Environment

Goals Students will be welcomed, respected, supported, and valued in a safe learning environment.



Strategies

- Use surveys, reports, and other data to identify areas of need.
- Offer ongoing training for staff on trauma-informed practices, conflict resolution, restorative practices, and crisis intervention.
- Collaborate with local organizations, mental health providers, and public safety to enhance safety and support services.
- Continue security infrastructure upgrades, including cameras and secure entrances.
- Strategically allocate resources to support the implementation of safety and support programs.
- Conduct annual school climate surveys to gather feedback from students, staff, and parents on inclusivity, respect, and safety.
- Hold regular meetings of the district emergency management team to review and update plans and procedures.

- Prioritize best practices that support positive behaviors.
- Provide opportunities for student input on school climate.
- Measure student progress in social-emotional learning competencies through pre-and post-assessments, surveys, or observation rubrics.



- Implement and enforce the districts' discipline code and policy consistently to maintain safe and conducive learning environments for students and staff.
- Improve students' total school experience.

Measures of Success

By the 2029-2030 school year

- Reduce the number of safety incidents.
- Reduce the number of behavioral incidents.
- Reduce the suspension and expulsion rates.
- Assess the effectiveness of regular emergency drills based on response times, protocol adherence, and participant feedback.
- Achieve 100% compliance with emergency drill schedules and protocols.
- Track the number of students accessing mental health resources.
- Increase the number of students reporting feeling safe and valued at school as measured by student perception survey data.
- Conduct annual emergency procedures training for all employee groups.





Fiscal Responsibility

Goals Maximize the use of resources equitably through careful planning and financial stewardship.



Strategies

- Align financial resources with the district’s goals.
- Plan and prepare a balanced budget to ensure the district’s financial stability.
- Engage with state organizations and legislators to advocate for equitable funding to meet the needs of a diverse student population.
- Provide efficient and effective processes and oversight to ensure fiscal responsibility.
- Update the long-range capital needs plan, including maintaining the safety and security of all stakeholders.

- Regularly review and update the district’s facility needs assessment to prioritize long-range spending.



Measures of Success

By the 2029-2030 school year

- Prioritize restricted funding sources to ensure optimal utilization of available resources.
- Establish training programs for staff on budgeting and resource allocation to increase accountability through fiscal awareness.
- Establish a balanced budget and maintain a positive fund balance.

- Ensure awards of federal, state, and local funds meet the needs of district programs.
- Receive an annual audit with an unmodified opinion.
- Work toward passage of bond authorizations to fund capital needs plan.





Operational Effectiveness

Goals Implement and maintain innovative and effective systems, structures, and technologies to support student success.



Strategies

- Upgrade and maintain modernized facilities that maximize student learning, prioritized by areas of need.
- Improve technology, network, cybersecurity, and communications infrastructure in all schools.
- Ensure district buildings, buses and infrastructure minimize impact on the climate and environment and meet clean air, clean buildings, and clean transportation standards.
- Ensure that food services provide students with high-quality, efficient, and nutritious meals.
- Develop comprehensive data-driven systems to inform decision-making and prioritize areas of need, such as:
 - a. Bond Cycles
 - b. Millage Cycles
 - c. Ticketing Systems
- Continually improve services and support to all buildings.
- Ensure the district meets safety and accessibility standards and makes necessary upgrades in all sites, buildings, classrooms, and workspaces.
- Secure additional sources of revenue funding to support district operations.



Measures of Success

By the 2029-2030 school year

- Adhere to timelines of current bond cycles for transportation, facilities, and technology.
- Follow timelines for purchases of infrastructure and upgrades.
- Conduct stakeholder surveys to measure operational effectiveness.
- Continue to pass bonds to support construction and technology.
- Retain staff in operational departments to ensure continuity.





Quality Workforce

Goals Effectively recruit and retain a highly qualified, diverse workforce committed to serving all students.



Strategies

- Recruit and retain staff who reflect the diversity of the district's community, students, and families.
- Provide meaningful, continuous learning and relevant professional development for all staff members.
- Provide staff wellness opportunities that are responsive to the district's staff needs.
- Offer excellent compensation and benefits packages.
- Create a safe and culturally responsible environment that values staff input and insights.
- Expose students to the profession of teaching.
- Retain grow-your-own programs for teachers.



Measures of Success

By the 2029-2030 school year

- Increase the number of new applicants from underrepresented groups in our population through various recruitment and hiring events.
- Increase the number of evidence-based professional development opportunities for all employee groups, allowing for continual learning and growth for all stakeholders.
- Increase the number of wellness and community events, including social, physical, and mental health services.
- Continue to provide excellent compensation and benefits packages that are at or above comparable school districts in the area and adhere to sound financial decisions for the district.
- Increase staff satisfaction ratings as measured by an annual input survey.



Glossary of Terms

Accountability

Holding governing bodies, districts, schools, staff, and students responsible for student achievement as well as the efficient and effective use of resources. It also implies public reporting of measures and results.

Achievement Gap

Persistent differences in achievement among different groups of students, as indicated by scores on standardized tests, teacher grades, and other data. This usually refers to disparities in achievement levels of various student groups based on income, race/ethnicity, special education needs, or English language proficiency.

AP/Advanced Placement

A series of voluntary exams based on college-level courses taken in high school.

Benchmarks

A detailed description of a specific level of student achievement expected of students at particular ages, grades, or development levels; academic goals set for each grade level.

Career Pathway

Career pathways are designed to prepare students for employment and provide a clear path to the next level of education and training.

CTE/Career & Technical Education

A curriculum that broadly examines professional and vocational opportunities and concentrations within several clusters of career skills and interests.

Career Readiness

Helps students understand career opportunities, the post-secondary education needed, and how to plan to achieve their goals.

Chronic Absenteeism

Absent for more than 10% of enrolled days per school year, or more than 18 days.

Digital Citizenship

The practice of using technology responsibly and respectfully.

Dual Enrollment

When a high school student enrolls in college classes to earn college credit while still attending high school.

EDP (Educational Development Plan)

A tool that helps students prepare for their careers and plan for their post-secondary education.

EFA (Education for the Arts)

Kalamazoo RESA's arts education program. EFA offers arts-intensive classes in theater, musical theater, music, dance, visual arts, digital arts, and film/video arts.

EL (English Learner)

A student who uses a language other than or in addition to English.

E/MC (Early Middle College)

A five-year program in Michigan that allows students to earn a high school diploma and a college credential at the same time.

Fastbridge

Reading and math assessment used in elementary schools

Grow Your Own (GYO)

A pathway for school support staff to earn initial teacher certification or for certified teachers to earn additional endorsements .

GSRP (Great Start Readiness Program)

A state-funded, high-quality preschool program for qualifying four-year-old children.

IEP/Individualized Education Plan

A written plan created for a student with learning disabilities by the student's teachers, parents or guardians, the school administrator, and other interested parties. The plan is tailored to the student's specific needs and abilities and outlines goals for the student to reach.

KAMSC

Kalamazoo Area Math and Science Center

M-STEP (Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress)

A computer-based assessment designed to gauge how well students are mastering state standards.

MAP

Measure of academic progress; an assessment tool

MI School Data (mischooldata.org)

The State of Michigan's official public portal for education data.

MTSS

Multi-tiered System of Support

NWEA

An academic assessment that measures student growth and proficiency and provides insights to tailor instruction.

PAC (Parent Advisory Council)

A monthly advisory council for the superintendent with one representative from every school.

PowerSchool

A Student Information System (SIS) used by KPS for grades and attendance. Parents can view grades and attendance in the Parent Portal.

Professional Development

Learning opportunities that help employees enhance their knowledge, skills, and expertise.

PSAT

The Preliminary SAT/National Merit Qualifying Test is a standardized test administered by the College Board. Scores are used to determine eligibility and qualification for the National Merit Scholarship Program.

SAC (Student Advisory Council)

A monthly advisory council for the superintendent with representatives from high schools.

SAT

This test is widely used as a college entrance examination. Scores can be compared to state and national averages of seniors graduating from any public or private school.

SEL (Social Emotional Learning)

SEL is an educational method that helps students develop skills for school and life.

Subgroup

Groups of students who share similar characteristics such as gender, race, socioeconomic, or disability status.

SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats)

A SWOT analysis is a framework used to evaluate an organization's competitive position and to develop strategic planning.

TAC (Teacher Advisory Council)

A monthly advisory council for the superintendent with one representation from every school.

Title I

A federal program that provides funds to improve the academic achievement for educationally disadvantaged students.

Title IX

This provision of the Education Amendments of 1972 provides "no person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal assistance..."



Elementary Schools (Grades PK–5)

Kalamazoo Public Schools

Every child. Every opportunity. Every time.

Arcadia Elementary School (269) 337-0530 | 932 Boswell Lane

Edison Academy (269) 337-0550 | 831 Lake St.

El Sol Elementary School (269) 337-0230 | 604 W. Vine St.

Greenwood Elementary School (269) 337-0560 | 3501 Moreland St. (Grades PK–3)

Indian Prairie Elementary School (269) 337-0590 | 3546 Grand Prairie Ave. (Grades PK–3)

King-Westwood Elementary School (269) 337-0610 | 1100 Nichols Road

Lincoln International Studies School (269) 337-0640 | 912 N. Burdick St.

Milwood Elementary School (269) 337-0660 | 3400 Lovers Lane

Northeastern Elementary School (269) 337-0690 | 2433 Gertrude St.

Northglade Montessori Magnet School (269) 337-0700 | 1914 Cobb St.

Parkwood-Upjohn Elementary School (269) 337-0720 | 2321 Park St.

Prairie Ridge Elementary School (269) 337-0630 | 2294 S. 9th St.

Spring Valley Center for Exploration (269) 337-0750 | 3530 Mt. Olivet Road

Washington Writers' Academy (269) 337-0770 | 1919 Portage Road

Winchell Elementary School (269) 337-0780 | 2316 Winchell Ave.

Woods Lake Elementary: A Magnet Center for the Arts (269) 337-0790 | 3214 Oakland Dr.

Woodward School (269) 337-0810 | 606 Stuart Ave.



Middle Schools (Grades 6–8)

Hillside Middle School (269) 337-0570 | 1941 Alamo Ave.

Linden Grove Middle School (269) 337-1740 | 4241 Arboretum Pkwy.

Maple Street Magnet School for the Arts (269) 337-0730 | 922 W. Maple St.

Milwood Magnet School (269) 337-0670 | 2916 Konkle St.

High Schools (Grades 9–12)

Kalamazoo Central High School (269) 337-0300 | 2432 N. Drake Road

Kalamazoo Innovative Learning Program (KILP) (269) 337-0540 | 600 W. Vine St.

Loy Norrix High School (269) 337-0200 | 606 E. Kilgore Road

Phoenix High School (269) 337-0760 | 1411 Oakland Dr.

Programs

Kalamazoo Area Math and Science Center (KAMSC) (269) 337-0400 | 600 W. Vine St.

KPS Virtual Program (Grades 6–12) (269) 337-0540 | 600 W. Vine St.

Progress Monitoring the Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan will be monitored four times during the school year by the senior leadership team. Progress related to the Strategic Plan will be shared twice a year with the board and community, and two times a year with the Parent Advisory Committee and the Teacher Advisory Committee. Two general community meetings will be held each year to share progress on the Strategic Plan.

District Senior Leadership Team

- Dr. Darrin Slade, Superintendent
- Dr. Micole Dyson, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Instruction and Leadership
- Craig McCane, Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Instruction and Leadership
- Reuquiyah “Rikki” Saunders, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services and Leadership
- Terri Aman, Director of Transportation and Operations
- Susan Coney, Chief of Marketing and Communications
- Kelly Davis, Executive Personnel Specialist
- Lisa Dewey, Director of Student Services
- Ian Haight, Director of Technology Systems and Services
- Geoff Howe, Director of School Improvement, Title I and Assessments
- Karen Jackson, Director of Facilities
- Dr. Angela Justice, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development
- Laura Kayser, Chief Financial Officer
- Steve Leland, Director of Human Resources
- Kim Morey, Resident District Manager of Food Services
- Don Webster, Chief of Safety and Security

Thanks / Acknowledgements

The district wants to thank the Kalamazoo Public Schools family for the contributions and inspiration that helped produce the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan. It is designed around our motto of Every child. Every opportunity. Every time.

Kalamazoo Public Schools

Every child. Every opportunity. Every time.

Kalamazoo Public Schools
1220 Howard Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49008

(269) 337-0100

Dr. Darrin Slade, Superintendent

www.kalamazoopublicschools.com

 @KPSschools

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