



CLIMBING TOGETHER

SALEM-KEIZER PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2025-27 PLAN

INTRODUCTION

We are proud to present ***Climbing Together***, Salem-Keizer's 2025-27 Plan. In the fall of 2024, we started collecting information about our community's hopes and expectations for Salem-Keizer Public Schools. Based on the leadership and vision of the Salem-Keizer School Board of Directors, community feedback and a review of K-12 research, we've developed a compact two-year vision and plan for our district.



Our team is committed to providing a great school experience for every student and a great workplace for every staff member. We look forward to being part of the work described in this plan and celebrating our successes along the way.

In commitment,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andrea R. Castañeda".

Andrea Castañeda, Superintendent

OUR CORE VALUES

Our core values serve as a north star, guiding our actions and decision-making. These values were chosen based on the feedback of almost 1,700 members of our community.

Students at the Center: We prioritize student needs in our decision-making and actions. Being student-centered requires us to listen to student perspectives, study student outcomes and align our resources to student needs.

Excellence: We set high standards for everyone, and we support one another in reaching those standards. High standards, coupled with support, inspire a virtuous cycle of growth and achievement.

Equity: We see each student as an individual deserving of a tailored school experience that affirms their identity and story, cultivates their strengths and interests, and supports their growth through challenges and opportunities.

Relationships: We thrive when we build meaningful connections with each other. Mutual respect, trust and care between students, families, staff and the broader community are essential for effective learning.

Community: We create a place where everyone feels seen, heard and welcomed. Students, families, staff and neighbors are all viewed as contributors to our schools.





BOARD GOALS

Our board goals establish the most important outcomes for Salem-Keizer Public Schools and put students at the center of our work. The strategies in this plan either directly target improving these goals or address key enabling conditions that our students, families and staff have elevated.

“The coming years hold great promise as we build upon strategies to address these core priorities, refine our systems and do everything possible to engage and support our students, families and staff. Together, we will write a story of growth, success and opportunity for every student in Salem-Keizer.”

Cynthia Richardson, School Board Chairperson



STUDENT OUTCOMES

Student outcome percentage gains from starting point percentage through each school year.
Percent of gain is indicated in parenthesis.

Student Outcome	Starting Point	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	Total Gain
Regular attenders	53.4%	54.4% (+1%)	55.4% (+1%)	56.4% (+1%)	57.4% (+1%)	59.4% (+2%)	6%
Third Grade Literacy	26.3%	27.3% (+1%)	28.3% (+1%)	30% (+1.7%)	32% (+2%)	34% (+2%)	7.7%
Ninth Grade on Track	78%	80.1% (+1.8%)	82.1% (+2%)	84.1% (+2.3%)	86.6% (+2.5%)	89.1% (+2.5%)	11.1%
Four-Year Cohort Graduation	79.8%	81.3 (+1.5%)	82.8 (+1.5%)	84.6 (+1.8%)	86.6% (+2%)	88.6% (+2%)	8.8%
Sense of Belonging (Grades 3-5)	61%	62% (+1%)	63% (+1%)	64.5% (+1.5%)	66% (+1.5%)	67.5% (+1.5%)	6.5%
Sense of Belonging (Grades 6-12)	33%	34% (+1%)	35% (+1%)	36% (+1%)	37% (+1%)	38.5% (+1.5%)	5.5%

GOALS

Third Grade Literacy	Ninth Grade on Track to Graduate	Four-Year Graduation	Regular Attenders	Student Sense of Belonging
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THEORY OF ACTION

This plan lays out a vision for improvement and achievement based on a simple theory of action.

IF SALEM-KEIZER PUBLIC SCHOOLS:

Strengthens the core district systems that serve students, staff and families,

and

Creates and maintains a safe, healthy teaching and learning environment,

and

Establishes a clear, shared and unwavering focus on student academic and social growth,

and

Provides our staff the tools, training and time necessary to serve our students well;

then...

***Our district will be stronger, and our student outcomes
will begin to improve within two years.***



OUR THREE STRATEGIES

ELEVATING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

- ⬆ High-quality instructional materials and aligned instructional frameworks
- ⬆ Comprehensive and useful classroom assessments
- ⬆ Meaningful professional development at every level

IMPROVING STUDENT AGENCY AND WELLNESS

- ⬆ Effective responses to student behavioral, social and emotional needs
- ⬆ Understanding and engaging students, families, and communities
- ⬆ Improve special education services

STRENGTHENING OUR FOUNDATIONAL CONDITIONS

- ⬆ A modernized data system that works for schools and staff
- ⬆ Improving human resource systems for staffing
- ⬆ Aligning resources to student and school needs
- ⬆ Safe schools for all

STRATEGY ONE: STRENGTHENING OUR FOUNDATIONAL CONDITIONS

WE ARE STRENGTHENING KEY DISTRICT SYSTEMS to improve our professional culture and core business practices for students, families and staff.

The Foundational Conditions strategy builds a strong organizational foundation through enhanced professional culture, safety, staffing systems and data-driven leadership. At its core, this strategy aims to create an environment where employees feel supported, engaged and equipped to serve students effectively. The Foundational Conditions strategy establishes critical organizational systems and processes to support the district's educational mission. This strategy recognizes that strong operational foundations are essential for creating an effective learning environment.

INITIATIVE ONE: A modernized data system that works for schools and staff

At the heart of this initiative is empowering our staff with the right data at the right time, all in one place. These activities will enable more effective monitoring of student progress and interventions to help our educators focus their time and energy on supporting students.

- Activity 1:** Develop new tools and processes to improve access to accurate data and timely insights for teachers, support staff, principals and department leaders to make data-driven decisions.
- Activity 2:** Bring together all critical student data into a single dashboard aligned to holistic multi-tiered systems of support across PK-12.
- Activity 3:** Build strong district leadership routines for data review and reflection that ensure we are effectively executing our most important work and driving a focus on our outcomes.

INITIATIVE TWO: Improving human resource systems for staffing

This initiative focuses on increasing the transparency and predictability in school staffing. By creating more efficient and equitable systems for resource distribution, school leaders are better able to develop strong, stable school communities. As a result, students, families and staff will experience more consistent and equitable learning environments across our schools.

- Activity 1:** Increase the predictability of school staffing through enhanced and expanded pathway programs and partnerships.
- Activity 2:** Improve the efficiency of hiring practices to create and maintain stable school communities.
- Activity 3:** Improve the equitable alignment of staff allocations to student, school and department needs.

STRATEGY ONE: STRENGTHENING OUR FOUNDATIONAL CONDITIONS



INITIATIVE THREE: Aligning resources to student and school needs

This initiative aims to create safe, welcoming and well-maintained schools by improving facility planning and budget management. A long-term facilities plan will identify necessary upgrades to better support student learning, along with a simpler system for tracking facility maintenance. Additionally, clearer budgeting processes will ensure that resources align directly with student and staff needs. As a result, staff, students and families will benefit from improved school environments, greater transparency and confidence that district resources effectively support their school communities.

Activity 1: Conduct a facilities master plan to assess our facilities and plan for the future.

Activity 2: Strengthen budget development, monitoring tools and processes that maximize the efficacy and efficiency of our limited resources.

INITIATIVE FOUR: Safe schools for all

This initiative builds on existing safety practices to further protect students and staff. By using data to better understand and prevent student and staff injuries, and by enhancing security measures like cameras and weapons detection systems, schools will proactively maintain safe learning environments. Students, staff and families will experience increased confidence that their schools and learning environments are safe and secure.

Activity 1: Analyze data to understand trends in student-caused injuries to predict and prevent harm.

Activity 2: Improve the physical security of schools through enhanced layered security systems and staff training.

2 STRATEGY TWO: IMPROVING STUDENT AGENCY AND WELLNESS

WE ARE BUILDING AND REFINING NEW SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES to improve and expand our capabilities to support and empower all of our students.

ALIGNED STUDENT OUTCOMES

- ▲ Regular Attenders
- ▲ Sense of Belonging
- ▲ Student Behavior

Our Student Agency and Wellness strategy puts students, families and schools at the heart of all our supports. We make listening to students and acting on their input a top priority. This strategy also improves teamwork by aligning departments and support teams and improves our processes to be more consistent, open and responsive to what students, families and schools need.

INITIATIVE ONE: Effective responses to student behavioral, social and emotional needs

We know that helping students learn and access education is closely tied to supporting their feelings and mental health. To provide better support, we are creating a complete student wellness team that brings together mental health staff and learning specialists. This approach, which includes building stronger social and emotional skills in elementary schools, will improve teamwork and create a reliable response to urgent needs in our schools—one that considers all parts of what students need while staying consistent across the district.

Activity 1: Train new multidisciplinary response teams to deliver support for behavior and social-emotional skills to classrooms and students.

Activity 2: Standardize social-emotional learning time in elementary schools with a clear scope and sequence.

INITIATIVE TWO: Understanding and engaging students, families and communities

Supporting our students and families starts with building understanding through authentic engagement. This initiative ensures we leverage our data—from student feedback in our school climate surveys to our daily attendance—to help us respond to how students feel about teaching, learning, school climate and belonging. As we get better at understanding and using this feedback, we will be better able to respond to the needs of our students and share key findings with our community, creating a shared responsibility for keeping students engaged and successful.



STRATEGY TWO: IMPROVING STUDENT AGENCY AND WELLNESS

- Activity 1:** Provide tools, training and systems to interpret and act on student feedback data and develop action plans to increase students' sense of belonging.
- Activity 2:** Increase effectiveness and usefulness of direct-to-student/family supports by streamlining and integrating centralized services.
- Activity 3:** Expand parent and community shared responsibility for student attendance through improved communication.

INITIATIVE THREE: Improve special education services

To enhance clarity and alignment of support to students, we are developing a Continuum of Student Supports—a framework that helps administrators and special educators match students with the most supportive programs that best serve their needs. This includes establishing a transparent and consistent placement process, standardizing documentation for all interventions and expanding program capacity to better meet demand. Our goal is to ensure that every student is placed in an environment that best supports their learning, emotional and behavioral growth.

- Activity 1:** Improve the process for identifying and placing students in the least restrictive special education programs.
- Activity 2:** Expand the capacity of behavior trainers who work directly with building-based staff to understand and productively address student behavior challenges.
- Activity 3:** Relocate and expand the Behavior Intervention Center to a Behavioral Health Center to improve our most intensive student supports.



STRATEGY THREE:

ELEVATING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

WE ARE STRENGTHENING PK-12 ALIGNMENT OF SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES for curriculum, instruction, assessment and teacher growth.

ALIGNED STUDENT OUTCOMES

- ▲ Third Grade Literacy
- ▲ Ninth Grade On Track
- ▲ High School Graduation
- ▲ Grade-Level Proficiency in Language Arts and Mathematics

We believe that all students deserve access to rigorous, engaging instruction supported by high-quality materials and delivered by well-prepared educators. By strengthening the alignment between curriculum, instruction, assessment and professional growth, we are building a system where excellence is the standard across our entire district. We are investing in our educators to meet the unique needs of each learner while maintaining consistently high expectations.

INITIATIVE ONE: High-quality instructional materials and aligned instructional frameworks

High-quality instructional materials are one of the most powerful levers for improving student learning, particularly when paired with effective teaching and support systems. We are conducting a districtwide adoption of high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) across all core content areas and grade levels. This initiative represents a shift to a more coherent system that supports all learners, including our rapidly expanding Dual-Language program, centered upon the four domains of literacy that all students need to engage in content across all subjects: reading, writing, listening and speaking. By establishing clear instructional visions and frameworks, we are not just providing new materials but defining the “Salem-Keizer way” of teaching and learning.

Activity 1: Build a single instructional vision and framework that guides how grade-level instruction happens in each academic discipline.

Activity 2: Select, adopt and begin to implement new, high-quality curricula in math, social studies and literacy by 2027.

Activity 3: Increase teacher training to focus on curriculum internalization and implementation.

INITIATIVE TWO: Comprehensive and useful classroom assessments

With our renewed focus on instructional materials comes the need for a cohesive assessment system that provides meaningful data to inform teaching. We will build a comprehensive system that ensures information about standards proficiency is systematically captured and utilized across all schools. This initiative will establish consistent interim assessments and strengthen data analysis practices districtwide.

Activity 1: Adopt literacy and math benchmark assessments for assessed grade levels.

Activity 2: Engage in improvement cycles of PK-12 assessment practices to inform instructional shifts.

STRATEGY THREE:

ELEVATING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

INITIATIVE THREE: Meaningful professional development at every level of the system

The success of our academic excellence strategy depends on robust professional learning opportunities for all staff. We are committed to providing increased professional development time focused on new instructional materials, effective data practices and collaborative problem-solving. By strengthening professional learning communities and ensuring adequate collaboration time, we will support continuous improvement in teaching practices across the district.

- Activity 1:** Provide professional learning that trains teachers on key instructional practices aligned with the math and literacy instructional frameworks.
- Activity 2:** Provide professional learning that trains our classified staff on key practices aligned to our instructional frameworks and that support the academic, behavioral and social-emotional needs of our students.
- Activity 3:** Ensure adequate teacher collaboration time for planning and internalizing lessons, analyzing and responding to assessment data and refining instructional practices.





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