

Strategic Plan Refresh Board Meeting: 5/28/26



ISSAQUAH
SCHOOL DISTRICT 411

Today's Agenda

1



Guiding documents and approach

District Vision, Mission, and Results. Approach to the refresh

2



Timeline and engagement

Review development timeline and engagement

3



First read of draft plan

Hear board discussion on first read of the draft strategic plan

Guiding Documents and our Approach

Vision, Mission & Goals for Students



Vision: All students thrive as they engage in meaningful learning that unlocks their passion and potential to positively impact the world.

R1 Mission: Our students will be prepared for and eager to accept the academic, occupational, personal and practical challenges of life in a dynamic global environment.

R2 Academics & Foundations

Upon graduation, students will be academically prepared and confident to pursue higher education or specialized career training.

R3 Civic Engagement

Students will live as responsible members of society, demonstrating integrity and compassion.

R4 Life Management & Personal Awareness

Students will live healthy, satisfying, and productive lives.

Our Strategic Plan is the "How"



Vision/North Star: The way in which an organization will change the world

ISD Mission and Results: ISD areas of knowledge and skill that all students must master by graduation to successfully live and compete

Priority Areas: Areas for the next 3 years of where you will focus common energy, each with a clear connection to delivery

Metrics: The way you will measure your progress

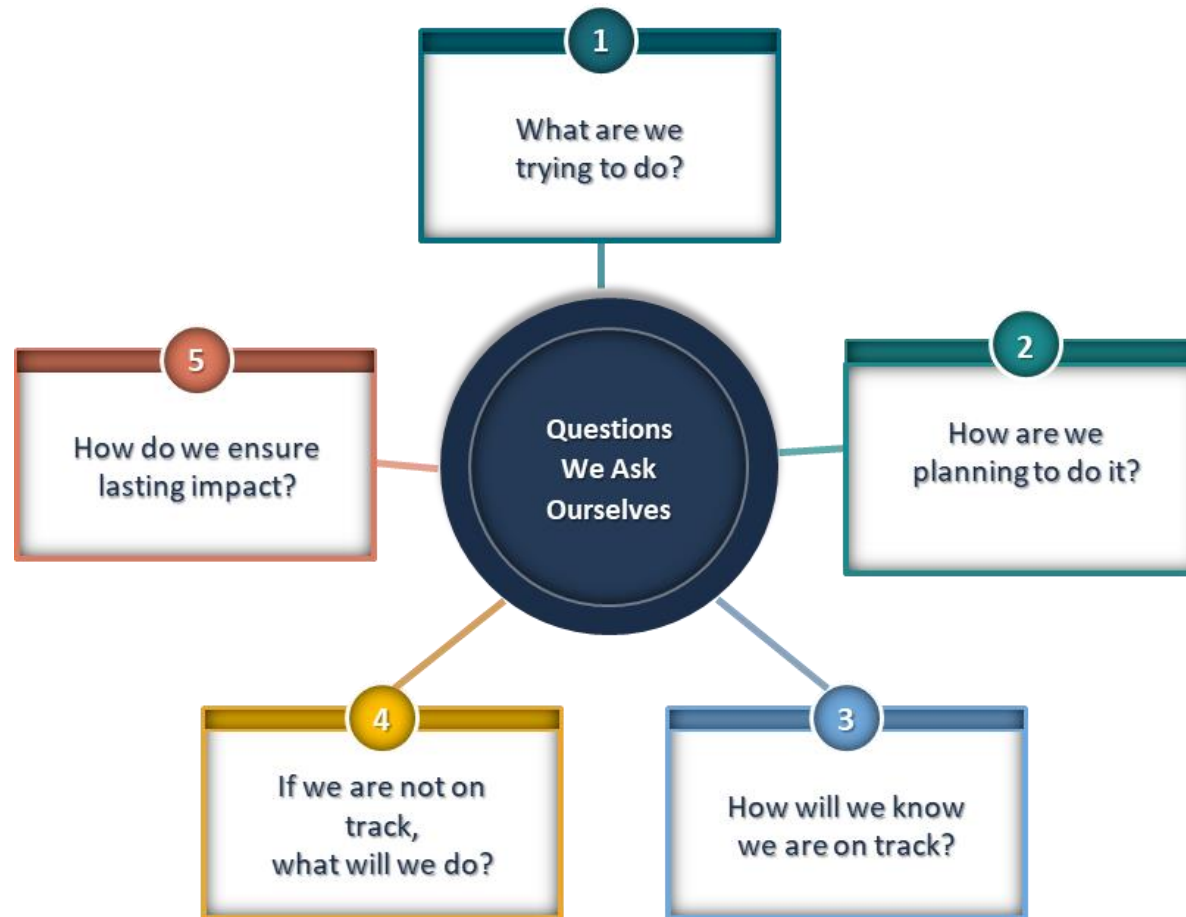
Strategies: The set of ISD actions to achieve the goals

Workstreams: Key initiatives and implementation plans

Insights and lessons learned over the past 3 years

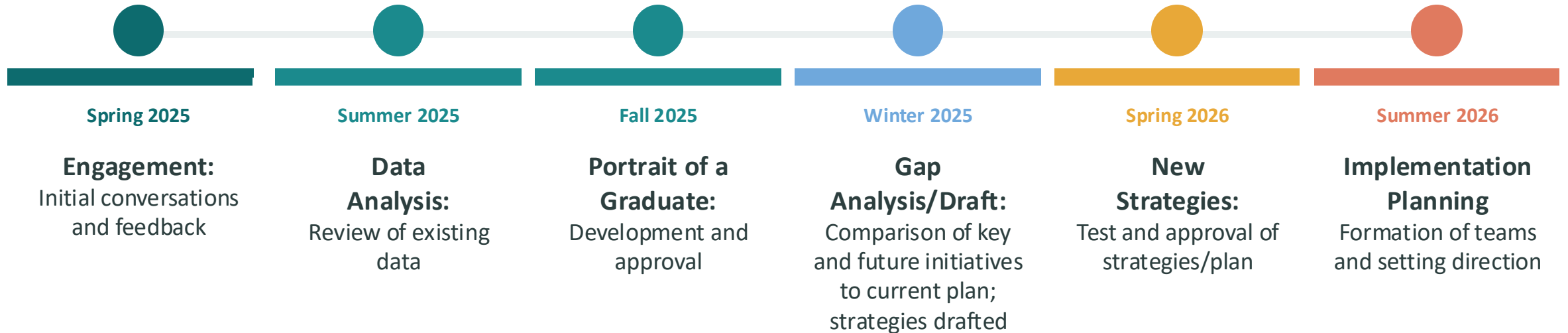
- **Focus through fewer strategies** – Focusing on a prioritized set of high impact strategies that can be measured
- **Appropriate Grain Size** - Finding the right level of scope and scale of impact
- **Move away from technical to adaptive strategies** – Assuming we address technical solutions as part of the cadence of continuous improvement and engage in deeper level work to improve the system long-term and consider change curve
- **Connection to the instructional core** – Ensuring the district is both creating positive conditions and removing barriers to support what happens daily in classrooms and across learning sites
- **Equity and engagement is cross-cutting** – Continuing to weave equity throughout, not treating it as separate
- **Drawing on best practices** – Centering on authentic community voice, using the Empathy interview and other community engagement design processes – Cambiar ED

Delivering on Results and Five Questions



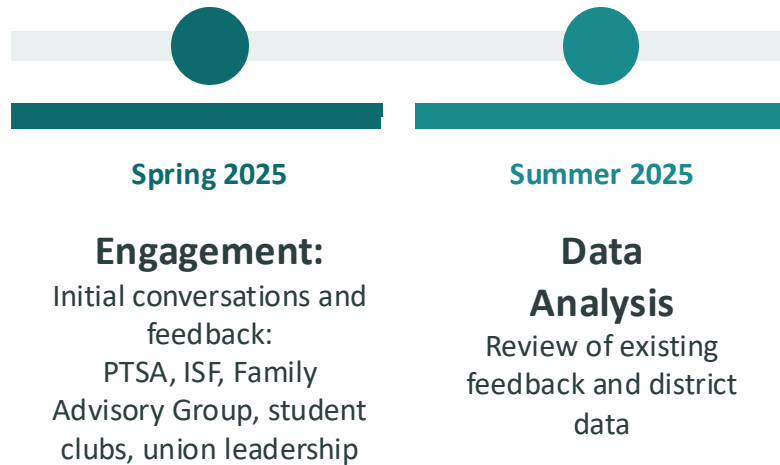
Timeline, Engagement, and Themes

Strategic Plan Refresh Timeline



Key Inputs: Results, current ISD strategic plan, graduation standards, national best practices, XQ EOAA report, empathy interview insights, past community surveys, newly adopted Portrait of a Graduate, long term financial information and forecasts, enrollment information, student mental health focus, MTSS implementation, New High School work

Themes: Spring and Summer 2025



Emerging Themes

- Student well-being & mental health
- Communication and transparency
- Diversity, equity and inclusion
- Academic opportunity and future readiness
- Teacher and staff support
- Community partnerships and resources
- Operational excellence
- Student voice and leadership

Themes: Portrait of a Graduate, adopted Fall 2025

Portrait of a Graduate



Our Vision: All students thrive as they engage in meaningful learning that unlocks their passion and potential to positively impact the world.

Our Mission: Our students will be prepared for and eager to accept the academic, occupational, personal and practical challenges of life in a dynamic global environment.

Agency to Learn



Graduates demonstrate passion, persistence, growth mindset, executive functioning and resiliency in their learning to adapt to changes and prioritize wellness.

Critical Thinking



Graduates show inquiry, creativity and systems thinking to solve complex problems and develop new opportunities to better the world.

Effective Communication



Graduates communicate with purpose across different audiences and modalities to foster discourse and human connection.

Collaboration & Influence



Graduates participate on teams in different roles, cultivate effective teams and build inclusive social networks to accomplish shared goals.

Interpreting Information & Data



Graduates gather, analyze and synthesize various types of data, leveraging emerging technology to maintain integrity in the context and use of information.

Fall 2025

Portrait of a Graduate:

Development and approval

Every ISD Student. Every Day.

11/19/25 V4

Themes: Fall and Winter Engagement 2025



Fall 2025

Winter 2025

Portrait of a Graduate:

Development, engagement and approval. Visited 29 sites across the district.

Gap

Analysis/Draft:

Comparison of key district initiatives to current plan; strategies drafted

Portrait of a Graduate Emerging Themes:

- Mental health
- Life skills/real world connection
- Listening skills
- Capacity concerns with new initiatives
- Alternative pathways
- Joy of learning/personal exploration
- Balance of technology usage
- Accessibility
- Implementation and integration

Key Initiatives not prominently represented in current Strategic Plan:

- Technology reorganization
- New High School
- Enrollment work
- Portrait of a Graduate
- Customer service focus
- Elementary/secondary programming

Spring Engagement 2026



Spring 2026

**New
Strategies:**
Continue to
refine/test and
approval of
strategies/plan

Engagement

- School Board
- Site visits across the 29 learning sites and district departments
- PTSA and parent groups
- Community groups
- Students
- District Administrator meetings

Student Voice

Over the past two years, we have engaged with our community, prioritizing the voices of our students. Through conversations with students, design sprints, prototyping sessions, and innovative pilots, we have gathered meaningful insights about what our young people want and need from their high school experience.

Students consistently express a desire for a school that is **collaborative, relevant, and inspiring**. They want learning that is **hands-on** and **project-based**, where **creativity** and **critical thinking** are central and where lectures and passive seat time are rare. They envision a school where they are **known, supported, and challenged** in a school that embraces their personal **goals** while **preparing** them for **their future**.

Key Inputs: Empathy Interviews, Focus groups, Design sprint sessions, Thought Exchange survey data, XQ Student Journeys Workshops, Administrator School Innovation Tours & School Visits, and Student Voice Project

Number: 550+ students

Parent Voice

Safety & Crisis Readiness

- Need for stronger safety protocols and better preparation for crisis situations

Parent & Student Voice

- Earlier involvement in major decisions; families want to be heard before decisions are made, not after.

Technology & Academic Impact

- Over-reliance on technology seen as a contributing factor to declining test scores; concern about balance of digital vs. foundational learning.

Communication Gaps

- Families not consistently receiving timely, clear, or accessible information from the district and schools.

Post-COVID Disconnect

- Reduced engagement and connection since the pandemic; families and students feel less connected to school communities.

Key inputs:

- PTSA General membership meeting 2.26.26
- PTSA Face 2.6.26
- Parent Survey – 2579 respondents; 11.16.25 - 12.5.25

Number: 2,620+ parents and caregivers

Staff Voice

Staff Capacity and Workload

- New strategic priorities require real tradeoffs, not additions — the “do this also” pattern is unsustainable and directly impacts student outcomes.

Student Behavior and Mental Health Support

- Rising behavior and mental health needs are a general education responsibility, yet staffing and caseload capacity remain well below actual need across sites.

Curriculum Pacing and Teacher Flexibility

- Pacing pressure is leaving some students behind and reducing teacher professional judgment — staff want district-supported flexibility, not just permission.

Key inputs:

- School site visits: 29; and departments

Number: 695+ staff members

Staff Voice

Inclusion and UDL Implementation

- UDL and inclusion are valued but under-resourced — teachers are carrying the translation work alone, and co-teaching staffing has not kept pace with growing IEP/504 populations.

Student Agency, Engagement, and Learning Design

- Students are most engaged through choice, hands-on learning, and real-world connection — but access to interest-based opportunities is often inequitable due to outside-school-day scheduling.

Family and Community Partnership

- Schools cannot solve every challenge alone; families need district-provided resources and clearer communication to be genuine partners in student success.

Key inputs:

- School site visits: 29; and departments

Number: 695+ staff members

District Administrators

School Improvement Plans

- Strategies need to be actionable at the building level, and should connect to School Improvement Plans.

Equity

- Equity must be named, not implied. Integration without explicit naming risks invisibility

MTSS

- MTSS appears in two priority areas without differentiation. The plan needs to clarify it's the same framework applied across both priority areas and how they connect.

Community Trust

- Community trust should be foundational. It should be a value held independent of its benefits.

Engagement

- Engagement must be two-way, not just outbound. Storytelling and showcasing is broadcast. Constituents want dialogue — listening, responding, and closing the loop.

Key inputs:

- Meetings on 2.10.26; 3.10.26

Number: 80+ at each meeting

Board Retreat Feedback

Clarity & Precision of Language

- The plan needs sharper, more accessible language — more concrete articulation of *what* will actually happen. Strategies must move from directional to actionable.

Whole Child & Student Wellbeing — With Accountability

- Wellness and the full student experience must be explicitly centered — but the plan must also honestly examine how *the system itself* may be contributing to poor student mental health. This is not just additive language; it requires a diagnostic lens.

Joy & Learning Design — Grading & Homework as Levers

- Joy for learning serves as the human proxy for reducing student stress. The homework and grading strategy needs to be specific and structured around three clear purposes: remediation, exploration, and acceleration.

Integration Over Silos

- Cross-cutting strategies connect Priority Areas 1 & 2, signaling interdependence. Fewer, more precise strategies are better than a broad list — quality and coherence over quantity.

Key inputs:

- Meetings on 4.1.26

Number: 5 board members present

Board Retreat Feedback

Trust Requires Named Constituent Groups

- "Trust" language is currently too generic. The priority area must be explicitly organized around staff, students, and families — with strategies that meaningfully increase parent and student voice, not just reference them.

Operations as Customer Service & Enabling Conditions

- Operational work is reframed as infrastructure supporting the instructional core. The orientation should be customer service — responsive, human-centered support for students, families, and staff — not a parallel programmatic priority.

Equity as Explicit Commitment

- Equity references must be woven in directly and visibly — stated commitments in the plan's language, not background values assumed to be understood.

Key inputs:

- Meetings on 4.1.26

Number: 5 board members present

District Administrator Meeting on 5.19.26

Administrative staff were asked:

- Are there other metrics we should consider?
- What is one thing that most excites you about our overall direction?
- What big questions do you still have?

Three themes emerged from the feedback:

- Joy, Hope, and Student Well-Being
- Trust, Belonging, and Culture
- Plan Implementation, Usability, and Staff Understanding

Overall – good to go forward and excitement in prioritization and focus on instructional core!

Key inputs:

- Meetings on 4.21.26 and 5.19.26

Number: 80+ at each meeting

District Administrator Meeting on 5.19.26

What is landing well

- Consolidation from 18 strategies across five priority areas to a tighter, more actionable framework — described as "more accessible" and "more streamlined."
- The explicit naming of joy, hope, play, and belonging as strategic priorities — widely described as exciting and long overdue.
- The integrated approach to MTSS and PBIS as a systemic framework.
- The holistic, student-centered framing of the plan overall.
- Thoughtful consideration of where people are emotionally — the process itself was affirmed as respectful and well-designed.
- Homework and grading being addressed directly within the plan — seen as a meaningful and timely commitment.

Emerging Questions/Next Steps

- Consistency and Individualization: How do we find the right balance between alignment in curriculum and MTSS implementation, while also making room for UDL differentiation and flexible time for play and social emotional connection?
- Elementary student interest-following: Administrators acknowledged this as genuinely challenging at the elementary level and asked for further exploration of how to honor student interests within developmental constraints.
- MTSS/RTI integration: The move toward MTSS was frequently cited as exciting. One concern: MTSS team capacity is being stretched, limiting bandwidth for co-curricular or student-generated clubs.
- Connection to School Improvement Plans (SIPs) and moving to implementation

Draft Priority Areas and Strategies

Priority Areas, Strategies and Operational Excellence

Priority Area 1: Student Well-Being

- S1 Advance a welcoming and positive climate and culture for students of all backgrounds to engage purposefully and productively in school.
- S2 Implement a multi-tiered system of support that addresses the full range of students' learning abilities, strengths, identities and styles.
- S3 Cultivate a sense of hope and joy for learning and provide more room for students to grow and explore passion and interests.
- S4 Continue to build community partnerships to support students and their families to meet basic needs.
- S5 Promote opportunities for students to find community inside and outside of school.

Priority Area 2: Learning Opportunities

- S6 Design learning experiences that support diverse career pathways and develop the durable skills so students are future ready.

Priority Area 3: Trust

- S7 Center on student voice to improve engagement and relevance in learning.
- S8 Engage staff to improve the student experience and bring forward ideas to deepen belonging.
- S9 Broaden opportunities for all families and community members across the district to engage and build stronger connections with our schools.

Commitment to Operational Expectations and Excellence

The ISD will operate with excellence and integrity — supporting our people continuously improving our systems, stewarding public resources responsibly, and aligning our services and spending to what students and families need most.

1. Support the learning of our staff and diversify our workforce to reflect student and family demographics.
2. Provide superior customer service to our students, staff, families and community.
3. Enhance staff and student understanding and ethical use of emerging technology, including AI.
4. Showcase the stories, strengths, and experiences of our students and staff.
5. Allocate resources effectively and equitably, and use continuous improvement methods.

P1 & P2 Cross-Cutting Strategy Details

Priority Area 1: Student Well-Being

Description/Goal: Students will feel safe, supported, valued and connected, and have access to resources that support their well-being. Students will experience strong mental and physical health, and feel positive about being in school.

Priority Area 2: Learning Opportunities

Description/Goal: Students will have access to the resources to achieve key academic milestones. Resources will support a range of post-high school education and career opportunities, while decreasing disproportionality in academic outcomes. Students are highly engaged and have opportunities to pursue their interests and passions, with equitable access to achieve their goals.

- S1** Advance a positive and welcoming climate and culture for students of all backgrounds to engage purposefully and productively in school.
- Create and sustain positive, culturally responsive school climates where students feel safe and experience belonging and connection through consistent implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) expectations and proactive classroom management strategies, restorative practices for relationship repair and accountability, and trauma-informed adult responses.
 - Schools will develop, implement, and sustain plans that honor student identities, promote emotional and physical safety, and engage student voice in creating inclusive communities.
- S2** Implement a multi-tiered system (MTSS) of support that addresses the full range of students' learning abilities, strengths, identities and styles.
- Strengthen Tier 1 instruction by identifying and integrating high leverage instructional strategies that address the continuum of learning needs, aligned to Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and CAST.
 - Develop and implement a districtwide Integrated MTSS framework with tiered academic, social-emotional and positive behavioral supports, incorporating social-emotional learning curriculum, evidence-based interventions and data systems to match students with appropriate supports.
 - Establish, sustain and measure the impact of classroom-based and supplemental interventions.
- S3** Cultivate a sense of hope and joy for learning, and provide more room for students to grow and explore passions and interests.
- Utilize homework and grading at high school as key levers for supporting students to learn, fail forward, and ensure this does not limit activities that support their interest and passion.
 - Collaborate with staff to identify barriers and develop opportunities for students to enjoy learning and reduce stress at all grade levels.
 - Support innovative practices at the elementary and middle school levels to cultivate a joyful and play-based efforts.

P1 & P2 Strategy Details

Priority Area 1: Student Well-Being

S4 Continue to build community partnerships to support students and their families to meet basic needs.

- Build a comprehensive and equitable mental health continuum of supports through data-informed decision making, intentional community partnerships, and innovative approaches that expand access, strengthen effectiveness, and respond to the diverse needs of students.
- Ensure families of all backgrounds have access to engage and contribute their expertise in support of their child's success in school.

S5 Promote opportunities for students to find community inside and outside of school.

- Increase support for students engaging in non-academic opportunities and develop systems that allow staff to ensure every student has a community of people with shared interests and space or venue to explore those interests.

Priority Area 2: Learning Opportunities

S6 Design learning experiences to support diverse pathways for career and the development of durable skills so students are future ready.

- Identify and enhance classroom learning where durable skills are explicitly taught and fostered.
- Identify opportunities to develop and implement career exploration at all levels.
- Implement a new High School and Beyond Plan scope and sequence that meaningfully engages students in setting post-high school goals and developing a learning plan that supports their goals.
- Develop partnerships that connect to career interests and support employment opportunities.

P3 Strategy Details - Trust

Priority Area 3: Trust

Description/Goal: Our students, staff, families, and broader community will be empowered as partners in shaping the future we aspire to build together. We will co-create a path forward that advances the Board's vision and goals for student success.

S7 Center on student voice to improve engagement and relevance in learning.

- Engage our students regularly to meet their needs and strengthen their daily school experiences.
- Open spaces for learning and listening with our students to inform future decisions and direction related to district programming and the student experience.

S8 Engage staff to improve the student and staff experience and bring forward ideas to deepen belonging.

- Dialogue with all staff and employee groups to listen and learn about their experiences and insights.
- Build the capacity of our staff to invest in their growth and contribute to a climate of belonging.

S9 Broaden opportunities for families and community members across the district to engage and build stronger connections with our schools.

- Build on expanded opportunities for families and the community to inform budget and resource allocation, capital projects and program decisions.
- Launch and embed engagement efforts with constituents to help the district navigate the short and long-term challenges.

Systemwide Health Indicators & Metrics

Systemwide Health Indicators & Metrics

Priority Area	System Health Indicator/Metric	Note
Student Well-Being	% of students who report feeling a sense of belonging or fitting in at school	Part of R1 report previous - 3 year cycle
	% of students who report feeling emotionally safe/supported at school	Part of R1 report previous - 3 year cycle
	% of students who report that they feel safe during school	Part of R1 report previous - 3 year cycle
	% of students attending 90% or more of school days	Part of R1 report previous - 3 year cycle
	% of students who have an adult that they can go to for help	New
	% of students who report my school supports my mental health and well-being	New
	% of students participating in extracurricular, athletic or work-based learning experiences in school or the community	New
Learning Opportunities	% of 3rd graders scoring proficient in literacy (level 3 or 4)	Part of R1 report previous - 3 year cycle - Modified
	% of 8th graders scoring proficient in math (level 3 or 4)	New
	% of students passing Algebra 1 (A, B, C letter grades)	New
	% of students who graduate in 4 years or continuing	Part of R1 report previous - 3 year cycle
	% of students passing all classes - Ninth Grade on Track Rate	New

Systemwide Health Indicators & Metrics

Priority Area	System Health Indicator/Metric	Note
Trust	% of staff who report feeling a sense of belonging at work	Part of R1 report previous - 3 year cycle
	Increase in Staff Net Promoter Score	New
	Staff Confidence in School Administration (aggregated across the district by level), District Administration, Board	New
	Increase in Family Net Promoter Score	New
	Family Confidence in School Administration (aggregated across the district by level), District Administration, Board	New

***Student data is disaggregated into groups: All, Black-Indigenous-People of Color (BIPOC), Students with Disabilities (SWD)**

Next Steps

Next Steps

Board Meeting

Second read/possible action on draft priority areas and strategies

June 9

Thank You!

- For more information on our current 3-year strategic plan please visit our website: [ISD strategic plan](#)
- [To review data connected to our current 3 year strategic plan please visit our System Health Indicators: Microsoft Power BI dashboard.](#)



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