CINCINNATI PUBLIC SCHOOLS

2026–2030 Strategic Plan



ONE DISTRICT. ONE PROMISE. EVERY STUDENT.

Ensuring the Best of CPS for Every Student

ONE PLAN FOR EVERY STUDENT



THE BEST OF CPS FOR EVERY STUDENT

Across Cincinnati, CPS students are learning from talented educators, finding programs that open doors and getting support from adults who know them well. Families see the difference those experiences can make. The next step is to make those opportunities more consistent across CPS.

The 2026–2030 Strategic Plan focuses the District on what shapes a student's future most: strong teaching, preparation for life after graduation, help when barriers arise, and the people and systems schools rely on.

Each year, the District will set targets, track progress and tell the public what is improving, where gaps remain and what will happen next.

More than 1,500 students, families, educators, staff and community partners helped shape the plan. We are grateful for their contributions.



"The best of CPS must reach every student. This plan is how we will create the conditions to make that commitment the reality across schools."

Shauna Murphy, Superintendent



"The Board adopted this plan with confidence in our students, respect for the people who serve them and a firm commitment to keep the District focused on its goals."

Cincinnati Board of Education

STRENGTHENING EVERY SCHOOL FOR EVERY STUDENT

PROGRESS GIVES CPS SOMETHING TO BUILD ON

CPS students are gaining ground. On the 2025–26 Ohio School Report Card, the District earned 3 stars overall, 4 stars in Progress, 3 stars in Gap Closing and 4.5 stars on the Career-Technical Planning District Report Card. More than half of CPS schools improved in both Achievement and Gap Closing.

Students, educators, families and partners worked hard for those gains. The results show that CPS can improve while welcoming every child and serving students with a wide range of needs.

THE NEXT CHALLENGE IS CONSISTENCY

CPS offers strong instruction, advanced learning, career pathways and student support. The next challenge is making sure programming and enrollment give students a clear route to those opportunities and that support responds to their needs. Chronic absenteeism continues to interrupt learning, and rising costs are forcing CPS to make careful choices about what it can fund and expand.

The Strategic Plan keeps CPS focused on the work most likely to improve students' daily experience and long-term results. It also directs more help to the schools and students who need it most.



CPS SCHOOLS BY STAR	Stars	Schools	% Students
Significantly exceeds	5.0	1	7.5%
Exceeds	4.5 4.0	1 6	1.8% 11.0%
Meets	3.5 3.0	5 17	8.1% 25.6%
Needs support	2.5 2.0	22 7	33.2% 9.3%
Needs significant support	1.5 1.0	3 0	3.6% 0.0%

53.9%

of students attend schools that meet or exceed state standards

33.2%
attend 2.5-star schools, the rating immediately below "Meets"

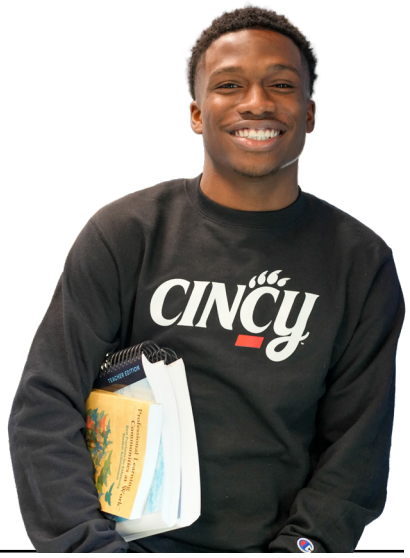
9.3%
attend 2-star schools, rated "Needs Support"

3.6%
attend schools needing significant support

THE PROMISE AND THE 2030 COMMITMENT

THE CPS PROMISE

A CPS graduate is ready, resilient and rooted in community.



READY
Prepared to succeed in college, a career pathway, the military, an apprenticeship or a venture of their own.

RESILIENT
Able to adapt, persist through challenges and continue moving toward a meaningful future.

ROOTED IN COMMUNITY
Connected to Cincinnati and prepared to contribute to the community that helped shape them.

OUR 2030 COMMITMENT

By 2030, every CPS student will attend a school where they:

- Are known, valued and supported
- Are taught by excellent and well-equipped educators
- Have equitable access to learning that builds the academic skills, habits and personal beliefs that prepare them to step confidently into their future

CPS will create the conditions for learning and hold itself accountable for the student outcomes they produce. Together with families, partners and the Cincinnati community, we will make the CPS Promise real.

The Promise says what every graduate should carry forward. The 2030 Commitment says what CPS must provide along the way. Families should be able to count on both in every school.

THE RESULTS THAT WILL DEFINE SUCCESS

WHAT PROGRESS MUST LOOK LIKE BY 2030

The plan focuses on what matters most in a student's experience: what they learn, whether they feel connected to school, whether they graduate and how ready they are for what comes next. CPS will also track the gaps among schools and student groups. Districtwide progress does not mean enough if some students are still falling behind.



MEASURE	BASELINE	2027	2028	2029	2030
Third-grade ELA proficiency	58.9%	61.0%	64.0%	67.0%	72.0%
Algebra I proficiency	48.1%	49.2%	50.5%	51.8%	53.0%
College, Career, Workforce and Military Readiness	64.5%	81.5%	85.0%	89.0%	94.0%
Weighted graduation rate	83.9%	84.0%	86.0%	90.0%	94.0%
Chronic absenteeism	46.2%	43.5%	41.5%	40.0%	<39.0%
Elementary student well-being	69.0%	72.0%	75.0%	77.5%	80.0%
Secondary teacher-student relationships	83.3%	85.0%	86.7%	88.3%	90.0%
Students attending a school rated at least 3 stars	53.9%	63.0%	72.0%	81.0%	90.0%

PRIORITY 1

EQUITABLE ACCESS TO HIGH-QUALITY INSTRUCTION

Every student's progress begins with what happens in the classroom each day. CPS has put strong curriculum and instructional materials in teachers' hands. Now educators need the time, training and support to use those resources well, so high-quality instruction reaches every student in every classroom.

WHAT STUDENTS AND FAMILIES SHOULD NOTICE

Students should get challenging, grade-level instruction and understand what they are expected to learn. When they need help, schools should respond early.

HOW CPS WILL MOVE THE WORK FORWARD

The Shared Instructional Model will give educators, school leaders and central-office teams a common picture of strong teaching. Through the Professional Learning System, teachers will have time and support to build content knowledge, plan lessons and improve their practice. Network Support and Progress Monitoring will help leaders see where instruction is working, where it varies and which schools need help now.

WHAT BEGINS IN 2026-27

- CPS will publish curriculum maps and pacing guides in prioritized grades and subjects.
- School and central-office leaders will learn to use the Shared Instructional Model and a common classroom observation tool.
- Tiered coaching and monthly school data cycles will give educators timely feedback and lead to documented changes in instruction.

HOW WE WILL KNOW IT IS WORKING

CPS will track how many students consistently receive high-quality instruction. It will specifically monitor critical academic milestones, including third-grade English language arts proficiency, Algebra I proficiency and student growth during the year. Results will show where progress differs across schools and student groups.



PRIORITY 2

EQUITABLE ACCESS TO POST-SECONDARY OPPORTUNITIES

2

Students should not have to wait until senior year to think seriously about what comes after graduation. They need time to discover their interests, understand their choices and build the knowledge and experience their next step will require.

WHAT STUDENTS AND FAMILIES SHOULD NOTICE

As students move through CPS, they should learn what they are good at and where those strengths could take them. By high school, they should have a plan, challenging courses and pathways, and chances to learn in workplaces and community settings. By graduation, they have a clear path to success.

HOW CPS WILL MOVE THE WORK FORWARD

The Clear K–12 Path to Graduation will connect early awareness with exploration, planning, preparation and the move beyond high school. CPS will look at student access to pathways, Advanced Placement courses, credentials and work-based learning. Then the District will address barriers such as schedules, prerequisites, transportation, counseling and limited program space. Partnerships with employers, colleges and community organizations will connect classroom learning with opportunities beyond graduation.

WHAT BEGINS IN 2026–27

- CPS will map the experiences and decisions students should encounter from elementary school through graduation.
- Students and families will receive grade-level roadmaps showing what preparation looks like at each stage.
- The District will analyze access, determine counseling capacity and document which partnerships are reaching students.

HOW WE WILL KNOW IT IS WORKING

The College, Career, Workforce and Military Readiness (CCWMR) measure and the weighted graduation rate will show whether more students are leaving CPS prepared. The District will also track pathway participation, credentials earned, access to work-based learning, and gaps among schools and student groups.



PRIORITY 3

EQUITABLE ACCESS TO WHOLE-CHILD SUPPORTS

3

Strong teaching cannot help a student who is often absent, disconnected from school or unable to get the support they need. Attendance, behavior, relationships, mental health and basic needs often overlap. Schools need a clear way to understand what is getting in the way and respond early.

WHAT STUDENTS AND FAMILIES SHOULD NOTICE

Students should know what is expected, have strong relationships with adults and get support before a problem grows. Families should know who to call.

HOW CPS WILL MOVE THE WORK FORWARD

The District will make expectations and responsibilities clearer across CPS. A tiered attendance approach will help schools spot concerns early, understand why a student is missing school and respond to the actual need. Social-emotional learning will be part of the school experience across grade levels. Stronger Community Learning Center coordination and referral systems will help students and families reach mental-health and community support faster.

WHAT BEGINS IN 2026-27

- CPS will clarify behavior expectations, responsibilities and escalation points and train school leaders to apply them consistently.
- Every school will have clear ownership for attendance, with common tools for early outreach and more intensive support.
- The District will set common expectations for social-emotional learning and strengthen Community Learning Center coordination and referrals.

HOW WE WILL KNOW IT IS WORKING

CPS will track chronic absenteeism, student wellbeing and relationships between students and teachers. It will also look at how quickly schools reach out about attendance issues, whether referrals lead to help, and how suspensions and other removals from class differ among student groups.



PRIORITY 4

DISTRICT SYSTEMS, STRUCTURES AND WAYS OF WORKING TO SUPPORT EQUITABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES

4

Schools cannot do their work without the right people, tools and support behind them. Strong instruction depends on skilled educators and efficient systems. Pathways depend on schedules, partnerships and steady investment. Whole-child support depends on people and services working together.

WHAT STUDENTS AND FAMILIES SHOULD NOTICE

Students should attend schools with stable staffing, dependable services and the tools educators need. Families should get clear answers and timely help. School leaders should know which decisions they can make and where to turn when a problem requires District action.

HOW CPS WILL MOVE THE WORK FORWARD

CPS will identify staffing needs sooner, improve hiring and retention for hard-to-fill jobs and build stronger paths into leadership. The District will clarify which decisions belong to schools, networks and central office, then use regular reviews to resolve problems. CPS will weigh budgets, facilities plans, technology and major contracts against the four priorities and what they deliver for students and schools.

WHAT BEGINS IN 2026–27

- CPS will identify workforce gaps, turnover patterns and hard-to-fill positions by role and school.
- The District will clarify decision responsibilities and establish regular leadership reviews.
- School resource reviews and a four-year view of staffing, finances, facilities and technology will guide future decisions.

HOW WE WILL KNOW IT IS WORKING

CPS will track permanent-teacher staffing, vacancies, how long hard-to-fill jobs stay open and families' experience with the District. It will also review resources, vendor performance and District support to see whether central systems are helping schools deliver the first three priorities.



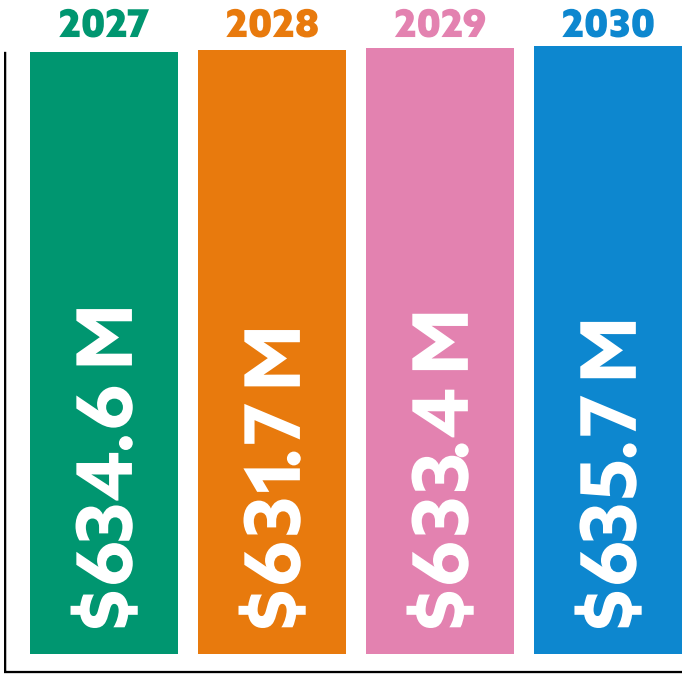
HOW THE PLAN WILL GUIDE RESOURCES

PUT FUNDING BEHIND THE PRIORITIES
CPS begins this plan with a balanced 2026–27 budget, but costs are expected to rise faster than revenue. The work still has to move forward. CPS will be clear about what it can do with current resources, what requires more funding and what may need to change or stop.

BEGIN WITH EXISTING RESOURCES
CPS will start with the work current staffing and funding can support. The most urgent priorities come first. When the evidence points to a better use of time or money, CPS will move resources. Some work may begin in selected grades, subjects or schools before it expands. Work that does not advance the priorities may be reduced, delayed or stopped.

ACCELERATE WITH ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
More revenue would let CPS bring effective work to more students sooner and expand access to staff, services, pathways and technology. It could also cover needs CPS cannot absorb without weakening essential services. Each proposed investment must show its cost, expected result, timeline and how it will be sustained.

A PUBLIC FUNDING COMMITMENT
Revenue is projected to remain nearly flat through 2030. We will protect investments tied to student outcomes and redirect resources from work that isn't making an impact. Strategic Plan implementation will match available, recurring resources.



FROM PLAN TO PROGRESS

The Strategic Plan sets the direction through 2030. Each year, CPS will name the actions, targets, owners, milestones and funding decisions that move the work forward. That yearly focus keeps the plan connected to what schools and students need now.

2026–27
BUILD THE FOUNDATION
Define common approaches, assign owners, set baselines, build tools and launch the work.

2027–28
IMPLEMENT CONSISTENTLY
Use the same approaches across schools and act quickly when implementation varies.

2028–29
EXPAND WHAT WORKS
Strengthen, adapt or expand what works and move resources away from what does not.

2029–30
DEMONSTRATE RESULTS
Measure progress toward the goals, sustain effective work and set the District's next commitments.

HOW CPS WILL STAY ACCOUNTABLE

The Board will adopt annual targets and review progress on a public schedule. During the year, schools, networks and central-office teams will monitor progress so they can act before annual results arrive. CPS will report what changed, where progress stalled and what it learned.



CINCINNATI PUBLIC SCHOOLS

2026–2030 Strategic Plan

BUILT WITH INPUT FROM ACROSS THE CPS COMMUNITY

CPS built this plan by listening to the people who experience our schools, help lead the work and have a vested interest in student success.

1,500+	7	37	1,028	300+
Participants	School Visits	Classrooms Observed	Staff Survey Responses	Town Hall Participants

FOLLOW THE WORK

Read the full Strategic Plan, view the public scorecard and find upcoming progress reports at:

www.cps-k12.org

ONE DISTRICT. ONE PROMISE. EVERY STUDENT.

CPS will report its progress, say when the work is off track and explain what it will do next. The focus will remain on stronger results for students.