

2021

Entry Plan Report

Findings and Strategic Priorities for the Salem Public Schools

DR. STEPHEN ZRIKE | SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

SALEM PUBLIC SCHOOLS | 29 Highland Avenue / Salem, MA 01970

OUTLINE FOR ENTRY PLAN REPORT

INTRODUCTION

CONTEXT: CURRENT STRATEGIC PLAN

ENTRY PLAN PROCESS

- *Approach*
- *Stakeholders*
- *Review Process*

ENTRY PLAN FINDINGS

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- *Priorities & Initiatives*
- *Draft Metrics*

NEXT STEPS



INTRODUCTION

The 2020-21 school year has been unlike any other for everyone – our students, families, teachers, staff, and community. We have faced unprecedented challenges that have changed all of our lives – for some of us, it has impacted our physical and mental health and/or led to economic instability or devastation. Some of us have experienced the loss of loved ones. We also know that we are witnessing learning loss and potentially greater opportunity gaps as this pandemic has had different impacts on our communities largely due to underlying inequities in our systems.

Amidst all these challenges, we have also come together to form relationships, design creative solutions for our students, and integrate technology in new ways, all while maintaining our critical health and safety standards to help protect and support our community. Through it all, we have focused on what is most important – our students. While I never anticipated entering a community under these circumstances, I am incredibly proud to work in a system that has come together as we have this year.

It is also essential to recognize that COVID-19 is not the only pandemic facing our system and our students. Over the past year, our country's reckoning with structural racism and the deep divisions within our country have only intensified. Our students and families are facing the consistent presence of traumatic events in our news. These realities impact students, families, staff, and schools. As a district, we are also working to increasingly examine the ways in which the systems and structures in the Salem Public Schools result in our students experiencing the impacts of racism. We must continue to center our work to be an anti-racist organization, and equity will be a critical lens throughout both this document and our work as a district.

As we have navigated this extraordinary school year, I have had the honor to get to know this city, our students, our families, and our staff. Over my first six months here, I outlined and completed an entry plan to ask questions, understand strengths, identify opportunities, and genuinely do my best to get to know Salem Public Schools. What I have found is a system and a city that have amazing pride, a relentless commitment to children and a strong will to be great. Additionally, there is a healthy sense that we still have important work to do in order to deliver on our promise to every child who attends our schools.

My goal with this report is to share my findings from my entry plan and set out strategic priorities for our district. My findings and these priorities will live within the context of Salem Public Schools' existing five-year strategic plan that was designed to encompass 2017 to 2022. Important work was done to craft this plan, and my intention is not to set a new direction. Rather, I have had the opportunity to engage with our stakeholders about the many ways in which Salem Public Schools have delivered on that plan, to examine where there are opportunities to improve, and to understand where we need clarity, direction, and a call to action in order to deliver for our students. These priorities and the draft metrics included seek to provide just that.

CONTEXT: CURRENT STRATEGIC PLAN

Part of what drew me to this district was the existence of the 2017-2022 strategic plan and a bold vision **to ensure that all students will be locally engaged, globally connected and fully prepared to thrive in a diverse and changing world**. That plan was developed through an extended engagement process with multiple stakeholders, citywide conversations, working groups, focus groups, a steering committee, and was ultimately ratified by the School Committee. Below is a summary of the four pillars and a series of "Conditions for Success": (1) Create a Vibrant K-12 Teaching & Learning Ecosystem; (2) Reimagine the High School Experience; (3) Nurture Staff Leadership & Empowerment; and (4) Strengthen Family & Community Engagement. The full strategic plan can be found here: [Salem Public Schools Strategic Plan 2017-2022 June 8 2017.pdf \(salemk12.org\)](https://www.salemk12.org/files/2021/06/Salem-Public-Schools-Strategic-Plan-2017-2022-June-8-2017.pdf)

This strategic plan formed the framework through which I have organized my findings from my entry plan, to reflect on where we are as a district three years into this plan and empower us as a system to prioritize and drive strategic action moving forward.

VISION STATEMENT

All students will be locally engaged, globally connected, and fully prepared to thrive in a diverse and changing world.

Great Schools



Create a Vibrant K-12 Teaching & Learning Ecosystem

Goal #1: Ensure that all Salem teachers employ the most effective, engaging, and relevant instructional practices to promote high levels of learning for all students.

Goal #2: Strengthen Salem's K-12 curriculum to ensure that all students are locally engaged, globally connected, and fully prepared for the future.

Goal #3: Ensure effective and purposeful technology use in the schools and classrooms to support students' learning.

Goal #4: Foster a culture of innovation that provides equitable access to powerful learning experiences.



Reimagine the High School Experience

Goal #1: Redesign programming and the instructional core around student-centered learning principles to better prepare students for college and career in the 21st century.

Goal #2: Implement structures and processes that will ensure that every student has a voice and opportunities for authentic leadership in and out of school.

Goal #3: Create a college and career going culture throughout Salem high schools by facilitating college and career awareness activities.



Nurture Staff Leadership & Empowerment

Goal #1: Engage all staff in shaping their own professional growth and development in order to best serve Salem's children.

Goal #2: Build a leadership pipeline from within the Salem Public Schools.

Goal #3: Intentionally recruit, select, onboard, develop, and support new and existing staff as well as increase the diversity of our staff to drive positive student outcomes and achievement.

Goal #4: Increase the cultural competence of all staff.



Strengthen Family & Community Engagement

Goal #1: Make family and community engagement an essential element of Salem Public Schools' work.

Goal #2: Harness the power of the community to share ownership of children's holistic well-being and growth every day.

CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS

Effective Communications (Internal & External)

Strong Infrastructure & Resources

Equitable & Innovative Policies (District & School Level)

Healthy District and School Climate and Culture

ENTRY PLAN PROCESS

APPROACH

The purpose of the entry plan process was to (1) accelerate my transition to the district by allowing me to quickly learn about the current strategic efforts in SPS (2017-2022 strategic plan); (2) assist me in establishing a strong community presence; and (3) provide me with a comprehensive understanding of the district's strengths, challenges and opportunities for continuous improvement.

As the leader of an organization with instruction as its core mission, it is imperative that I spend considerable time in schools learning from and with students, teachers, principals and parents. I visited every school and spent significant time in classrooms both virtually and in-person in order to have a thorough understanding of teaching and learning in the Salem Public Schools.

I also conducted a series of one-on-one, focus group and/or informational meetings with various constituents of the Salem Public Schools from July through February. Despite the challenges of the pandemic, I am grateful for the countless formal and informal opportunities to learn about this district. The wealth of information I obtained during these meetings was captured by asking some or all of the following questions:

What should I know about the Salem community?

What is working well in the Salem schools?

What are areas of growth for our schools?

What advice do you have for me as superintendent?

STAKEHOLDERS

During this time, I had the opportunity to meet with individuals and groups from every stakeholder group from whom I sought to learn. Thank you to all those who have participated, and to all those who have found ways to raise their voice to shape my learning. In both formal and informal settings, I had the opportunity to meet with diverse groups within each of these categories (right):



REVIEW PROCESS

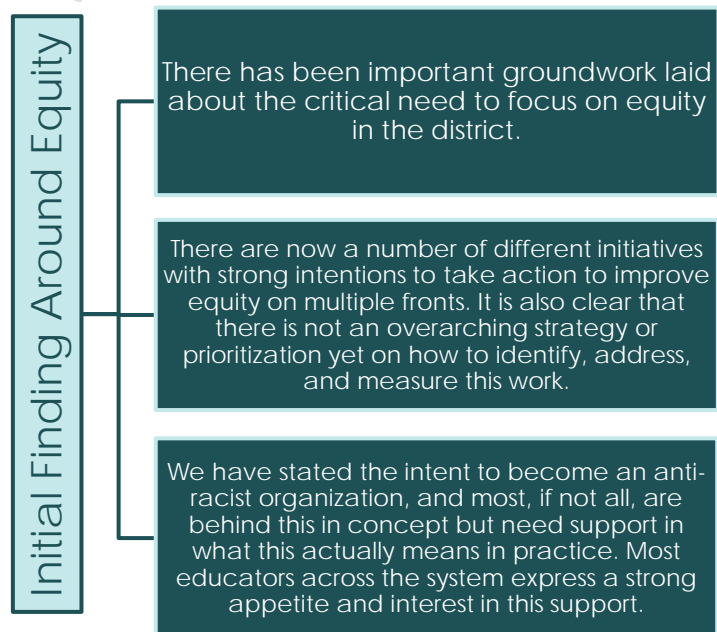
It is important to me to synthesize and share my findings, a commitment I made from the start of this process. These findings are organized into strengths and opportunities under each of the four priorities of the 2017-22 strategic plan and an additional bucket for the Conditions for Success. As the findings emerged, I had the opportunity to share early drafts with the Executive Team, the Teaching & Learning Team, school leaders and union leadership. The School Committee also reviewed and discussed the findings at our retreat in February. These findings remain in draft form and are informing our strategic work as a district. I continue to welcome feedback. Specifically, in the coming weeks, I plan to solicit input from our staff, families and students to further refine my entry findings.

ENTRY PLAN FINDINGS

Overall Finding: Centering Equity in Our Work

One of the consistent pieces of feedback on the current strategic plan is the fact that equity is not more clearly named and consistently focused upon in the plan, despite what we know were strong intentions to do so. Equity must be the lens through which we examine everything we do. It is not a separate pillar, but rather the operating principle through which we ground our improvement.

In this process, it must be our goal not only to have adults embody this equity work, but also to empower our students (and their families and the community) to own their learning and



be active participants in designing the system they deserve.

For a complete list of my findings for all of the priorities of the strategic plan, please see Appendix 1. I want to acknowledge that it is the natural disposition of educators to always seek to improve, and we as a community have ambitious goals for what we want to offer our students. As a result, it is often easier to identify the opportunities than celebrate strengths, as is reflected in these findings. As I have said already, Salem has many strengths! They may not all be captured in Appendix 1, and I look forward to the opportunity to continue to spotlight our collective strengths even as we focus on the ways in which we are not yet meeting our goals as a system.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The purpose of this process is to provide clarity and focus for me as a new superintendent so that I am able to lead our district to ensure we provide every student the opportunities they deserve. In order to do that well, I need to clearly articulate our priorities as a district to ensure that every stakeholder – our educators, leaders, teams, students, families, and community – knows, understands, and holds us accountable to improving as a district.

To develop these priorities, I began with the four pillars of the original strategic plan and reflected on the findings shared above. The current strategic plan represents important work that has led to improvements across our system. It is also a robust plan that incorporates 13 goals and 52 strategies. Every one of the goals and strategies is important, and we are still taking the broader work into consideration. What follows is an effort to prioritize and focus within those strategies, narrowing down to four strategic priorities and 12 initiatives to enable those priorities to happen. We then worked with our teams to ask a few guiding questions:

Has there been important work done that needs clarity and acceleration?

Are there strategic areas of work that are currently gaps that we have not yet addressed as a system?

Are there systems or structures that hinder our ability to progress as a district?

In this process, we must remain focused on what is most important for our students' experience each day in our schools. At the same time, we must also recognize that the elements of our system create the conditions for, or inhibit, success in every school. The Public Education Leadership Project out of Harvard captures the interplay and relationship.

[\(Public Education Leadership Project Coherence Framework\)](#)

I also want to be clear that I believe a significant amount of important work is happening towards many of these priorities in the district. They grow out of the current strategic plan and build upon the efforts of the district. They also reflect the reality that changes in leadership and strong intentions still require clarity and alignment to achieve the impact we seek. For example, the district truly has undertaken important work on equity. At this time, that work lives in many different teams, projects, and places. What I hope is that these priorities, and the steps we are taking to create alignment in our strategy, priorities, and the organization itself, will reinforce and clarify our efforts so that we all row in the same direction. There is so much important work to do in public education and right here in Salem, and we will only achieve the system our students need to thrive if we do so by moving forward together.

"The organizational elements of a district – its culture, structure and systems, resources, stakeholders and environment – must be managed in a way that is coherent with an explicit strategy to improve teaching and learning in every classroom, in every school"

For clarity, I wanted to share a few definitions, adapted from John Kotter's¹ and Curtis and City's² work on leading and accelerating change, to explain the terminology below and provide clarity to the distinction between priorities and initiatives:

Strategic Priorities

- *The most important levers (3-5) the system can pull to drive improved instruction and student learning. These levers should be big and substantive enough to drive the system's focus for 3-5 years. These can also be called "big rocks."*

Strategic Initiatives

- *The specific projects or initiatives the system will undertake to bring the strategic objective to life. These projects may take three months or several years. The emphasis is on initiatives and/or projects rather than individual action steps.*

PRIORITIES & INITIATIVES

Based on my learning from my entry plan, our collective understanding of what is needed specifically in Salem, deep dives into our district's data, and our belief in what it will take to deliver on that promise for our students, the following priorities are my draft to guide our pathway forward:

I deeply believe that the work to realize our goals as an anti-racist organization and ensure equity in every element of our system must be owned and led by every individual. As a result, there is no single priority focused on equity or a single person who is responsible for this work. My goal is to have the work to ensure equitable access, opportunities, and outcomes for every child and adult in our system live in everything we do. I do not believe that we know all the answers of how to achieve this yet, but we must be determined to identify, iterate, and implement actions, policies, and practices that bring this commitment to life. Over the next few months, I look forward to co-developing an SPS Equity Statement that will live as the lens through which all of our work should be examined.

¹ Kotter, J. P. Leading Change. Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1996.

² Curtis, and City, Strategy in Action, Boston: Harvard Education Publishing Group, 2009

Priority 1:
Build a robust talent development system for all staff

A. Diversify the workforce by building a strategic approach to talent: Strengthen the recruitment, induction, ongoing development, career pathways, and retention of educators to ensure that SPS has a workforce that reflects the racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity of our students.

B. Cultivate culturally and linguistically responsive, social justice-driven staff: Ensure that all staff have the skills and mindsets to identify and dismantle systems of oppression, address biases, and implement culturally and linguistically responsive practices.

C. Position schools as the unit of change: Grow leader capacity to drive improvement and change at the school and classroom level.

Priority 2:
Strengthen the pre-K to post-secondary experience

A. Expand high-quality early childhood education: Partner with community organizations to develop and implement a plan to increase access to high-quality learning experiences for Salem children, including expanding bilingual options.

B. Focus on developing independent learners: Develop students' ability to engage with cognitively demanding work, while holding high expectations for all, using culturally relevant pedagogy, and providing access to grade level content and skills.

C. Center equity within a shared vision of the high school experience: Clearly define, communicate, and implement high school redesign to increase equity and opportunity for all students.

Priority 3:
Effectively meet the social/emotional and behavioral needs of all students

A. Empower students: Increase opportunities for students to lift their voices and strengthen agency and ownership of their educational experiences.

B. Engage families as partners: Build educator capacity to authentically engage with families as partners. Provide multiple, accessible opportunities for parents, schools and the district to participate in two-way communication through a variety of tools and strategies.

C. Align structures for students' social-emotional supports: Define a coherent, multi-tiered and restorative system of support for all students.

Priority 4:
Design and implement data-informed systems that ensure equitable use of resources and accountability for outcomes

A. Allocate resources strategically and operate efficiently: Leverage our resources, assets, and operational practices to improve outcomes for students.

B. Create strong systems of accountability: Establish clear goals and measures at the district, school and classroom levels to ensure investments are leading to desired results.

C. Develop effective data systems: Improve accessibility of academic, non-academic, financial, human resource and operational data for all staff. Ensure all personnel have the capacity to utilize data to monitor and analyze student achievement in order to develop short- and long-term goals and action plans.

These priorities are not exhaustive, but rather represent key areas of focus for us as a district that we believe are most important to focus on next and to commit our precious resources. As expected, they are reflective of many of the goals and strategies in the 2017-2022 strategic plan. This is an effort to synthesize and prioritize within the plan. I look forward to continued feedback on this work, especially as we do the work to turn them from statements on a page to the work of the district.

DRAFT METRICS

Beyond strategy and priorities, it is essential that we are able to see these efforts turn into results for our students. We must be able to measure that progress. I believe the work of measuring, holding ourselves accountable, and reflecting on our progress ought to be work we do together with our community. To develop this list, we collaboratively sought to identify metrics that identified what the successful implementation of these priorities would look like. I am proposing, for your feedback, the following overall metrics as the report card for our work.

METRICS: OUR NORTH STAR

1. Increase the percent of educators and staff who represent the racial, ethnic and linguistic diversity of students, including retention of the staff we have
2. Increase the percent of educators and staff who represent the racial, ethnic and linguistic diversity of students, including retention of the staff we have
3. Increase the percent of educators and staff who represent the racial, ethnic and linguistic diversity of students, including retention of the staff we have
4. Increase the percent of three and four-year-old children in high-quality pre-kindergarten seats
5. Decrease student chronic absenteeism as measured by the percent of students who are absent 10%+ days of the year
6. Decrease the number of suspensions and close the gaps in disproportionality of suspensions based on student race
7. Increase the percent of students who feel their teachers care about them (as measured by Panorama survey)
8. Increase the percent of students who report that their identity and culture is respected and embraced at school (as measured by Panorama survey)
9. High School outcomes:
 - a. Increase the percent of students who graduate in 4 years
 - b. Decrease the percent of students who dropout on an annual basis
 - c. Increase the percent of students accessing advanced coursework
10. Overall performance as measured by MCAS:
 - a. Increase the outcomes of our lowest performing students, as measured by the new school accountability reporting by the Department of Elementary & Secondary Education
 - b. Increase the percent of students who are at or above grade level in math, ELA, & science
 - c. Increase the percent of schools who meet/exceed DESE performance targets

These metrics, once fully adopted, will be the overall measure of our progress. Once we receive more feedback, we will turn the final list into a dashboard that shares updated data and targets for each of these measures. As Priority 4C states above, we also want to ensure that we are making data-driven decisions at every stage in Salem. Finally, we will work to build out more specific leading indicators and overall metrics for each of the priorities to share as we share that work.

NEXT STEPS

This document represents a snapshot in time as I committed to provide at the conclusion of my entry plan; however, I hope that it will be just the beginning of many more conversations as we continue to work together to deliver the opportunities our students deserve. I genuinely want your feedback on the priorities, initiatives, and metrics. Here are a few ways you can share your thoughts:

- I will be presenting this material at the School Committee meeting on March 1st. As always, we welcome public comment and feedback.

- Here is a Google form that you can use to share your thoughts (it is your choice whether you identify yourself): <https://forms.gle/NVMuv25HggKk8Oyt7>
- If you are interested in participating in focus groups or additional conversations, you can email superintendent@saalemk12.org or complete the form and just include your name and interest at the bottom.

Beyond these priorities, I also look forward to launching a series of open discussions with our community about how we can learn from this unprecedented year and work to turn the corner of the COVID-19 pandemic. We know that this year has been unlike any other, and we believe that through the struggle there has also been a lot of learning and growth. We hope to work with our community to reflect on our collective experience with an eye towards building a better system of schools together.

DRAFT

APPENDIX

1: Create a Vibrant K-12 Teaching and Learning Ecosystem

Strengths

- Clear and integrated instructional priorities

- Focus of driving change is at the school-level, including investing in school-based staff
- Response to COVID since March and integration of technology into learning
- Staff flexibility to pivot to multiple instructional approaches during the 20-21 SY
- Strong research-based, standards-based curriculum
- Access to educator-developed curriculum maps (ATLAS)
- Investment in high-quality coaching in multiple content areas
- Wealth of internal and external professional development aligned to instructional priorities
- Educators who are passionate about working in Salem and dedicated to the students they serve
- Launch of a dual language program, the strongest model to support the language development of ELs
- Substantial literacy progress across the system
- Strong relationships and partnerships exist with community organizations who are eager to support the city's children



Opportunities

- Opportunity for greater depth of instruction and focus on critical thinking
 - Inequity of time on learning across schools
 - Staffing levels enable the ability to more effectively create additional opportunities for personalized and small group instruction than are consistently happening
- More time for common planning consistently across elementary schools
- SPS does not yet have school-based and district performance targets widely understood by all
- Continue to shift special education services to move beyond compliance to accelerate outcomes for students with disabilities
- Expand and grow additive models of language development (such as dual language)
- Enhance alignment between school day and out of school day programming
- Provide students with more instruction around media literacy so that they can better discern the validity of information
- Learn from and continue building on the successes from our current remote/virtual environment
- Strengthen systems so that academic data is better organized and aligned to SPS/school academic strategic priorities and goals
 - Opportunity to provide more support and guidance to staff to analyze and act on high-leverage academic data
- Performance gaps exist across subgroups at all grade levels
 - Percent of students who are on-track to be college and career ready is not high enough at each grade level
 - Math and science performance at the middle and high school levels have been rather flat or declining
- Need for a stronger focus on early education:
 - Collaboration and alignment with citywide partners
 - Common definition of "quality"
 - Thoughtful efforts to expand access (including bilingual education offerings)

2: Reimagine the High School Experience

Strengths

- Expansion and commitment of early college programming
- Progression of courses linked to 3 pathways
- Introduction of the Barr model to support the social and emotional needs of students
- Strong community commitment to career vocational and technical programs
- Opportunities to accelerate students who are over-aged and under-credited
- A wealth of course options across multiple content areas
- Existence and legacy of strong arts programming
- Creation of STEP program which has allowed many out-of-district programs to return to SPS
- Success of the post-high program for students aged 18-22



Opportunities

- Strengthen the transition from 8th to 9th grade and build a clear pathway 6-12
- Need for a clearer vision/portrait of a graduate: what do we expect of all students at the conclusion of their high school careers?
- Confusion about what high school redesign is trying to achieve and how it is linked to the vision of a graduate
 - Create a clear vision for what success is and how we scaffold to get there
 - Stronger link is needed to workforce development: All students provided with signature workplace experience
 - Opportunities to expand access and enhance the quality of career vocational and technical (CTE) offerings
 - Enhance opportunity and access to early college, advanced placement courses, enrichment and extracurricular opportunities to students and populations traditionally underserved
 - Create a schedule (start/end times, daily blocks, etc.) that provides students with greater access to learning in core content areas
- Need for clarity about how the different high school campuses and programs work in concert with one another
- Persistent gaps in outcomes for ELs and other subgroups: attendance, behavior/discipline, academic outcomes, dropout rate, graduation rate
- Strengthen connection and relationships between students and their school
- State of the facilities at all high school campuses
- Examine connection of middle school programs to high school pathways

3: Nurture Staff Leadership and Empowerment

Strengths

- Salem State Teacher Leader Fellowship
- Strong commitment by all stakeholders to diversify the staff
- Recent elevation of long-time Salem educators to administrative positions
- Many special education administrators earned their licenses while employed at SPS
- Collaboration and partnership with bargaining units
- Strong menu of professional development and learning offerings provided to staff
- Awareness across the organization that staff health and wellness is essential to the strength of our schools
- Well-developed district induction and mentoring program for new teachers
- Recent hiring of new paraprofessionals who are bilingual and people of color
- Increased focus on employee health and wellness



Opportunities

- Schools as the nucleus of change: more effectively harness the voice and input of staff in the change/improvement process at school and district level
- Superintendent and Asst. Supt. truly serving as leadership and development coaches for principals- stronger investment in the growth and development of school leaders
- Recruitment, on-boarding and retention of staff of color
- Develop strategic talent pipelines, development, and retention programs:
 - Development of pipelines to elevate students (grow your own) and paraprofessionals into the teaching profession
 - Strengthen administrative pipeline to develop a strong bench of candidates to assume school and district leadership positions
 - Ensure that staff at all levels of the organization have the opportunity to grow as professionals
 - Retention of all high-quality educators at all levels of the organization
- Focus on staff wellness and its connection to better serving our students
- Continue to improve communications within schools and across the district
- Develop shared accountability across the organization for student outcomes
- Create more opportunities for school leaders to learn from and with each other
- Strengthen communication and prioritize dialogue between school administration and staff

4: Strengthen Family and Student Support

Strengths

- Improved communications with families through the use of ParentSquare, use of social media and weekly newsletter
- A more efficient enrollment and assignment process
- City Connects as a robust wraparound support to our students/families struggling with social and emotional needs
- District investment in mental health supports for students through adjustment and guidance counselors
- Professional workforce has participated in multiple trauma workshops
- High school efforts to open community satellite office that has reengaged learners
- Strong student culture at two alternative high schools



Opportunities

- Better coordination of student services (SEL supports, discipline, counseling, attendance, homeless, etc.)
- Percent of students in Salem who do not attend SPS – improve retention of residents by ensuring that programming meets the needs of more students and families
- Strengthen systems so that academic data is better organized and aligned to SPS/school strategic, non-academic priorities and goals
- Provide more support and guidance to staff to analyze and act on high-leverage, non-academic data
- Transform PIC into a genuine family resource center and relocate to a more central location
- Strengthen the focus of family and community engagement staff to build the capacity of educators to strengthen relationships with their students and families
- Need for a strategic and aggressive vision for family engagement (PK-Grade 12)
- Build a system for translation and interpretation that better serves our non-English speaking families
- Provide more opportunities for families to develop their capacity around the use of technology
- Improve attendance support to schools and families to curb high rates of chronic absenteeism across the district
- Need for a District discipline philosophy that is restorative, universally owned and aligned to the district's code of conduct and school-based expectations for behavior
- More training for staff on how to be more trauma sensitive and de-escalate when students present with significant trauma
- Explore job expectations and descriptions for adjustment counselors so that they have time in their schedules to work with students in crisis
- Review the impact of the current SEL curriculum and its alignment to the district's SEL approach
- Examine the inequities that exist with SPS assignment policy

5: Conditions for Success

Strengths

-
- Resources allocated to improve security through access control and monitoring systems at all SPS schools
 - Existence of a District Safety Committee with representation from all schools, and city emergency support personnel; and building-based safety committees at all schools
 - More effective oversight and use of student information system (SIS) and financial management system
 - Comprehensive, well-funded capital improvement program for school buildings and grounds
 - Significant investments in upgrading HVAC systems throughout all school buildings in response to pandemic
 - Improved relationships and collaboration between school and city financial and operational departments
 - Strong partnerships with outside agencies and community organizations
 - Effective system and infrastructure for obtaining, managing, and leveraging grant funding
 - Strong commitment throughout the organization (including School Committee) to dismantle inequities that exist in SPS



Opportunities

- Redesign SPS website to be more accessible and to be the “hub” of information for families
 - Need for resource allocation that supports the strategic plan and addresses inequities across the system
 - More clarity needed to define central office job description roles and responsibilities
 - Strengthen the cross functionality and alignment of central office departments that are currently siloed from one another
 - Ensure that data systems are integrated and effectively communicating with each other
 - Develop an explicit plan to address years of deferred maintenance across our facilities
 - Continually improve our efforts to provide consistent and ongoing maintenance and custodial supports to our schools
 - Establish shared accountability for improving student non-academic and academic outcomes (not solely MCAS)
 - Address siloing, inconsistency and competition that exists across elementary schools
 - Maximize Chapter 70 and Chapter 74 funding to ensure there is strong evidence of impact relative to strategic priorities and goals
-