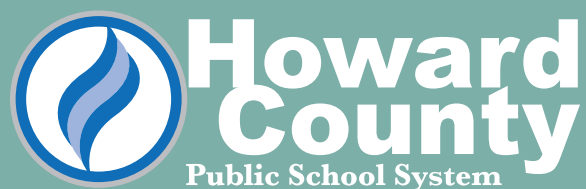


Strategic Call to Action
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Learning and Leading with Equity
“The Fierce Urgency of Now”



Michael J. Martirano, Ed.D., Superintendent



A message to the HCPSS Community

Our Strategic Call to Action, *Learning and Leading with Equity* serves as the foundation for all Howard County Public School System decisions and places students at the heart of everything we do. This strategic plan reflects the priorities of our students, staff, families and community supporters, because each play an important role in fulfilling our mission, vision and goals.



Our Strategic Call to Action, *Learning and Leading with Equity* serves as the foundation for all Howard County Public School System decisions and places students at the heart of everything we do. This strategic plan reflects the priorities of our students, staff, families and community supporters, because each play an important role in fulfilling our mission, vision and goals.

This document describes the student-centered practices, inclusive relationships, and responsive and efficient operations that support our 15 desired outcomes. It identifies our measures of success; focuses on a nurturing learning environment that supports intellectual, physical, social and emotional well-being; and leads to outcomes that empower students and staff members to grow and thrive.

We cherish all children and are passionate about giving students the best chance in life. We are committed to equity, integrity and fiscal responsibility, and know that our greatest strength lies in relationships. This plan affirms our underlying values and inspires innovative approaches that offer great promise to every stakeholder.

Our system has many great assets, including an outstanding staff and community, access to resources and deeply committed Board of Education members. By effectively channeling our strengths, we will nurture and prepare every child to achieve and thrive.

Michael J. Martirano
Superintendent

“In order to teach a child well, you must know a child well.”

Vision

Every student and staff member embraces diversity and possesses the skills, knowledge and confidence to positively influence the larger community.

Mission

HCPSS ensures academic success and social-emotional well-being for each student in an inclusive and nurturing environment that closes opportunity gaps.

Four Overarching Commitments

VALUE

Every HCPSS stakeholder feels happy and rewarded in their roles and takes pride in cultivating the learning community. We are establishing a school culture where every child feels appreciated and students have a meaningful voice in decisions. Community-building experiences are included in classroom routines throughout the school year. We are committed to further building trust with parents, guardians and community members as our active partners in education.

ACHIEVE

An individualized focus supports every person in reaching milestones for success. For students, this means providing high-quality education that meets individual needs, using assessments that direct instructional planning, and preparing students for meaningful employment. For staff, it means having access to professional learning opportunities that help them become most effective in their roles.

CONNECT

Students and staff thrive in a safe, nurturing and inclusive culture that embraces diversity. We support students' social-emotional development and build healthy school relationships through restorative practices. We reflect diversity and inclusion through our curriculum and staff hiring.

EMPOWER

Schools, families and the community are mutually invested in student achievement and well-being with exemplary and equitable graduation rates and college credit or industry certification opportunities. All students entering kindergarten will be ready to learn and special education services will be consistent across the county. Educators and community members will work together to eradicate bullying and keep all children safe.

The **connections** we establish by **valuing** our students, families and colleagues will **empower** our children to **achieve** success. All operations will be responsive, accountable, efficient and student-centered. Schools, families and community partners, working together, will deliver on these four overarching commitments through a focus on *student-centered practices, inclusive relationships, and responsive and efficient operations*.

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STUDENT-CENTERED PRACTICES



Students are at the forefront of every strategy and decision. The values, opinions, beliefs and perspectives of individual and groups of students are actively pursued to inform instructional approaches and enhance the school environment. High-quality learning experiences are grounded in diverse and standards-based curriculum, assessments that inform instruction and multiple pathways to achievement. Equitable supports ensure every student achieves personalized goals. High-quality special education services are consistently delivered across the county and reflect the input and collaboration of families.

EQUITY provides the access, opportunities and supports needed to help students, families and staff reach their full potential by removing barriers to success that individuals face. It does not mean equal or giving everyone the same thing.

Desired Outcomes

- Students acquire the skills, attributes and knowledge necessary to become global citizens and obtain meaningful and rewarding employment in a dynamic, international workplace.
- Each and every student receives a high-quality education through access to individualized instruction, challenges, supports and opportunities.
- Student voice is infused throughout the educational experience to inform teaching and create learning experiences that engage and inspire all students.
- Graduation rates among all high schools and demographic groups are at exemplary levels.
- All students have authentic learning experiences, including equitable opportunities to earn college credit or industry certification, to prepare students for future careers and life.
- High-quality special education services are delivered in a consistent and collaborative manner.

INCLUSIVE RELATIONSHIPS

VALUE

As a people-centered organization, HCPSS values every student, employee and community member, and welcomes their diverse and unique perspectives. Students experience a well-rounded education in a supportive and restorative culture that values connections, relationships and partnerships between home, school and the community. As a child's first teacher, parents and families play a significant role in education, beginning at birth and continuing throughout high school and beyond.



Desired Outcomes

- Students' mental health and social-emotional learning are nurtured through skill development, collaborative dialogue and a restorative culture in our classrooms and communities.
- All students see diversity and inclusion reflected in the curriculum and respect the contributions of all populations.
- Collaboration with families and the greater community prepares all students to be ready to learn.
- Transparent, open and accessible communication helps to ensure that parents, guardians and community members trust in the integrity of the school system and are active and valued partners.

INCLUSION is making sure all individuals are engaged participants in the learning environment and community. All students, families and staff members feel valued, respected, appreciated and involved. Individuals see their unique identities reflected in all facets of education including staffing, curriculum, instruction and activities.



CONNECT

RESPONSIVE and EFFICIENT OPERATIONS

The HCPSS organizational culture prioritizes the mental and physical well-being of students, employees and community members. Transparent, effective and fiscally responsible organizational processes ensure that educational resources are equitably allocated and accessible, and support the achievement of all students and staff. Classroom staff and curricula reflect the diverse backgrounds, heritage and perspectives that thrive within our community.



DIVERSITY is recognizing, accepting and respecting that individuals come from many different life experiences with various frames of reference and perspectives. While diversity values unique perspectives and individual differences, it also values the commonalities we all share. Diversity includes, but is not limited to, race/ethnicity, gender, gender identity, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, language, culture, religion/beliefs, mental and physical ability, age and national origin.

Desired Outcomes

- Operations and practices are responsive, transparent, fiscally responsible and accountable, with students at the heart of all decisions.
- Organizational culture and climate are supportive and nurturing and provide a safe and healthy environment for all students and staff.
- All teachers and staff feel valued, are effective in their roles and have equitable access to additional opportunities through professional learning and leadership development.
- Curriculum is based on standards and best practices, implemented with fidelity, and aligned with meaningful assessments that provide actionable data for instructional planning.
- Highly qualified staff reflect the diversity of the student and community population.



VALUE

ACHIEVE

CONNECT

SCTA PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Performance measures monitor our progress in achieving our desired outcomes and state accountability targets, which have standard definitions and calculations. Measures are aligned across all system divisions and offices and in School Improvement Plans. SIPs include goals for academic achievement and school quality, including post-secondary preparation and discipline.

Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) – The KRA assesses a student’s preparedness in social foundations, language and literacy, mathematics, physical well-being and motor development when entering kindergarten.

Students with Access to and Who Completed a Well-Rounded Curriculum – While the state considers students who are enrolled and meet standards in certain courses by grade level to have access to a well-rounded curriculum, HCPSS also will monitor the diversity in course content and offerings.

“On Track” at Grade 9 – The state considers ninth-grade students to be “on track” if they are earning at least four credits in any of the following courses: mathematics, English language arts, science, social studies and/or world language. HCPSS also will monitor “on track” at Grade 9 as students earning credits in one English language arts and four additional credits toward meeting graduation requirements.

Post-Secondary Readiness – The state defines post-secondary readiness as showing proficiency in at least one of the following areas: state assessment, AP exam, SAT, Career and Technology Education (CTE), dual enrollment, and Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB).

Graduating in Four and Five Years After Entering Grade 9 The four-year graduation rate is the percent of students who graduate within four years, and the five-year graduation rate includes those students who graduate within five years.

Proficiency on State Assessments – The state defines proficiency as when students perform at a level that demonstrates grade-expected academic knowledge, skills and practices in English language arts/literacy, mathematics and social studies. Measures will be added for proficiency in science.

Narrow State Assessment Performance Gaps by Half by 2030 – The state defines performance gaps as the difference between the current percentage of students meeting or exceeding proficiency and the highest performing students meeting proficiency within a student group.

English Learners’ (ELs) English Proficiency Progress The state defines progress toward English language proficiency as the amount of growth on the ACCESS 2.0 (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State) for English Learners.

Climate Survey – The state is designing a legislated climate survey, on which students and staff members will report on various aspects of school climate, such as relationships, trust, engagement, environment and safety. The survey will inform HCPSS of the degree to which a supportive and nurturing climate is experienced by all students, as well as the extent to which HCPSS provides safe and healthy environments for students and staff.

Chronic Absenteeism – Chronic absenteeism is defined by the state as a student being absent for 10 percent or more of the school days during the school year.

Disproportionality in Discipline Practices – The state defines disproportionality in discipline practices as having students in a specific group demonstrating a significantly higher rate of out-of-school suspension compared to all other students in the school and compared to the statewide suspension rate.

Staff Diversity – HCPSS defines staff diversity as workforce demographics that reflect student and community demographics.

School Improvement Plans (SIPs) and School Plans SIPs include goals for academic achievement, school quality, discipline disproportionality and post-secondary preparation indicators such as SAT, ACT and AP exam scores; state assessment results; dual enrollment college credit; Career and Technology Education (CTE) industry certification; and ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery) results. School plans include goals for equity, student voice and restorative culture.

Division Plans, Projects and KPIs – Each system-level division and office produces a plan, aligned to SCTA desired outcomes, that includes key performance indicators and projects to drive divisional goals and improvements.

Strategic Call to Action Summary



Howard County
Public School System

Learning and Leading with Equity

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