



The Research Bureau

*In Collaboration with:*



*With the Support of:*



# *Defining our Path*



## A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR EDUCATION IN WORCESTER

### *2018-2023*

# Our Strategic Vision

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Worcester Public Schools will be a national leader in education, offering **high-quality learning experiences**, ensuring that **all young people are prepared to thrive**, and equipping them to become **engaged citizens in their community**.

# Worcester Public Schools in 2023

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## ■ All Students Will

- Have access to high-quality learning experiences which leverage effective approaches.
- Have access to rigorous and personalized learning supported by technology.
- Gain a holistic set of skills and be supported by a network – inclusive of their families and the community – to realize their personal, academic, and professional goals.
- Be supported by effective educators who demonstrate leadership and commitment to enhancing student learning and development.
- Learn in an efficient and fiscally sound district.

# Focus Areas and Improvement We Expect

## Our Focus Areas

- Culture of Innovation
- Academic Excellence
- Welcoming Schools
- Investment in Educators
- Technology & Operations

WPS Students Will...	Current	2023
Meet or Exceed Expectations on MCAS ELA at 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	31%	<b>47%</b>
Enroll in Postsecondary Opportunities	65%	<b>76%</b>
Reduce Chronic Absenteeism	17%	<b>14%</b>
Access Technology	1:4	<b>1:1</b>
WPS Will...	Current	2023
Increase Per Pupil Expenditure by	NA	<b>8%</b>
Increase Number of High Performing Schools by 20%	NA	<b>20%</b>
Increase Diversity of New Hires by 25%	NA	<b>25%</b>

# Culture of Innovation

## Objectives:

- Embrace a culture of innovation that develops and pilots evidence-based approaches and allocates resources to address chronic achievement gaps and underperforming schools.
- Increase the capacity of school leadership to leverage existing resources for school improvement.
- Identify demonstrated best practices regionally and across the globe that can be adapted to Worcester's unique conditions to alleviate achievement gaps.

## •Example Initiatives:

- Target District Supports for High Needs Schools (Superintendent Schools)*
- Enhance School Leader Training Initiatives*
- Support New Learning Experiences for Veteran Leaders*
- Sustain High Performance in Thriving Schools*

Strategy in Action

*Incubation Hub*

Create a network of schools that will pilot and measure evidence-based practices that can be scaled through the district

# Academic Excellence

## Objectives:

- Increase opportunities for students to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills and demonstrate knowledge.
- Develop students' digital competence and ensure access to digital learning and computer science (DLCS) curricula.
- Increase career awareness and exploration at all grade levels through a coordinated and tiered career learning program.
- Leverage Worcester's distinct community assets to increase choices in learning opportunities and academic support through partnerships with higher education and community organizations.

## •Example Initiatives:

- Expand Early Learning Interventions (K-6)*
- Implement Career and Academic Plans and Mentoring*
- Increase Access to Digital Learning Options and Courses for Students*
- Increase Availability of and Access to Career and Community-Based Learning Experiences*
- Diversify and Increase Available Electives*

## Strategy in Action

### *Enrichment Academy*

Increase experiential and accelerated learning options by creating a yearlong enrichment program supported by private and public partnerships

# Welcoming Schools

## Objectives

- Prioritize development of systems that support a shared vision for social and emotional development across the district.
- Implement comprehensive, district-wide approach to monitoring and measuring social and emotional growth and school climate.
- Foster and monitor positive school climate through articulation of shared values/goals and implementation of effective practices in schools.
- Increase opportunities for family engagement and participation in decision making at the school level.

### •Example Initiatives:

- *Engage Working Group to Design and Implement Whole-Child Support System*
- *Increase Availability of Wrap-Around Services and Staff Capacity to Address Trauma*
- *Monitor and Take Action to Improve Differences in Outcomes Among Student Groups*
- *Develop a Bilingual Parent Advisory Council*
- *Increase Collaboration of Parents and Teachers*
- *Measure Social-Emotional Learning and School Climate*

strategy in Action

*Tackling a National Challenge*

disproportionate application of disciplinary measures to students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds. Addressing potential bias and resolving non-violent confrontations prior to the application of disciplinary measures for these subgroups offers an opportunity for WPS to substantially reduce overall disciplinary actions and address long-term inequitable



# Investment in Educators

## Objectives:

- Review teacher recruitment and retention approach and implementation strategies that will increase access to a highly qualified, diverse teacher workforce.
- Increase educator capacity to provide high-quality instruction and address student needs by offering diverse professional development opportunities and positive supports.
- Provide pathways for educators to demonstrate mastery and advance in their professional development.
- Prioritize and provide supports to develop digital competence and confidence among all educators and leaders in the district to ensure the effective use of technology for teaching, learning, and communication.

## •Example Initiatives:

- Increase the Number of Highly Qualified Teacher Candidates
- Expand and Enhance Recruitment of Diverse Educator Candidates and Develop a Teacher Residency Program for WPS
- Ensure Peer Learning Opportunities District-wide
- Create General Classrooms with Effective Co-Teaching Models for English Language Learners
- Employ District Liaison for Educator Instruction in Digital Learning and Computer Science
- Develop Career Advancement Opportunities for Educators and Provide Variety in Continued Learning Opportunities

## Strategy in Action

*Collaborative and Diverse Educator Workforce*  
Enhance recruitment and retention strategies to maximize attraction of a teacher workforce representative of the student population. Simultaneously, build the capacity of existing educators to collaborate for the education of all students



# Technology & Operations

## Objectives:

- Coordinate and align school administration, governance, and municipal processes to prioritize and support education improvements for the success of all students.
- Identify and establish support for fiscal strategies that enhance and scale improvements with demonstrated effectiveness.
- Establish a strategic communication and outreach approach that promotes district opportunities and establishes Worcester as a leader in urban education.
- Establish the infrastructure necessary to support technology access and integration across the district.

## •Example Initiatives:

- Launch Campaign for Increased State Funding for School District (Chapter 70 Reform)*
- Review and Improve Governance Operations for Efficiency*
- Increase Opportunities for Community Engagement in Policy Discussions*
- Establish District Culture and Operations Around Technology*
- Increase Student Access to Devices in All Grades*
- Improve Wireless Access in School Buildings*

## Strategy in Action

### *Enhanced Policy Discussion and Fiscal Support*

Host quarterly policy forums open to the public which discuss the ways that district policies and governance entities can better support the improvements needed in education. An initial focus will be ways to address underfunding in the school district.

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*For more information:*

[www.worcesterschoolsstrategicplan.wrrb.org](http://www.worcesterschoolsstrategicplan.wrrb.org)