

2023-2028



WORCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**STRATEGIC PLAN**

*Our Promise to the Future*



**WORCESTER**  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

# SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

## Rachel H. Monárrez, PhD

### Welcome to the Worcester Public Schools (WPS) Strategic Plan: Our Promise to the Future!

The WPS Promise was developed through an extensive listening and learning process. The WPS Promise is a roadmap that aligns our collective shared aspirations for the youth of Worcester. Our focus on fostering future-ready skills, embracing technological advancements, and cultivating a culture of lifelong learning underscores our dedication to preparing all scholars for academic success and for the dynamic challenges of the world beyond the classroom walls. Moreover, the plan places a paramount emphasis on access, opportunity and equity, acknowledging and addressing the unique needs of all our youth. The WPS Promise represents our collective dedication to educational excellence, innovation, and the unwavering belief that every child in our district deserves the opportunity to thrive. Together, we have laid the foundation for a future where our scholars can excel, lead, and contribute meaningfully to the global community.

From here, anywhere...together!

*Rachel H. Monárrez*

Rachel H. Monárrez, PhD

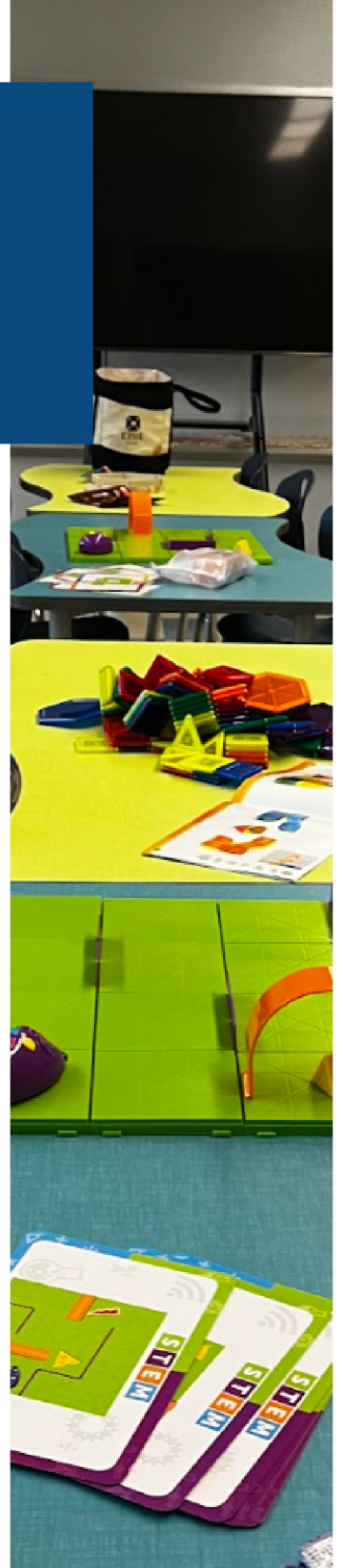
From Here, Anywhere...

*Together*



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## School Committee Members

Mayor Joseph M. Petty, Chair

Laura B. Clancey  
Susan Mailman  
Jermaine Johnson

Molly O. McCullough  
Jermoh Kamara  
Tracy O'Connell Novick



## Superintendent

Rachel H. Monárrez, PhD

20 Irving Street  
Worcester, MA 01609




**CURIOUS LEARNER**



**EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATOR**



**EMPOWERED INDIVIDUAL**



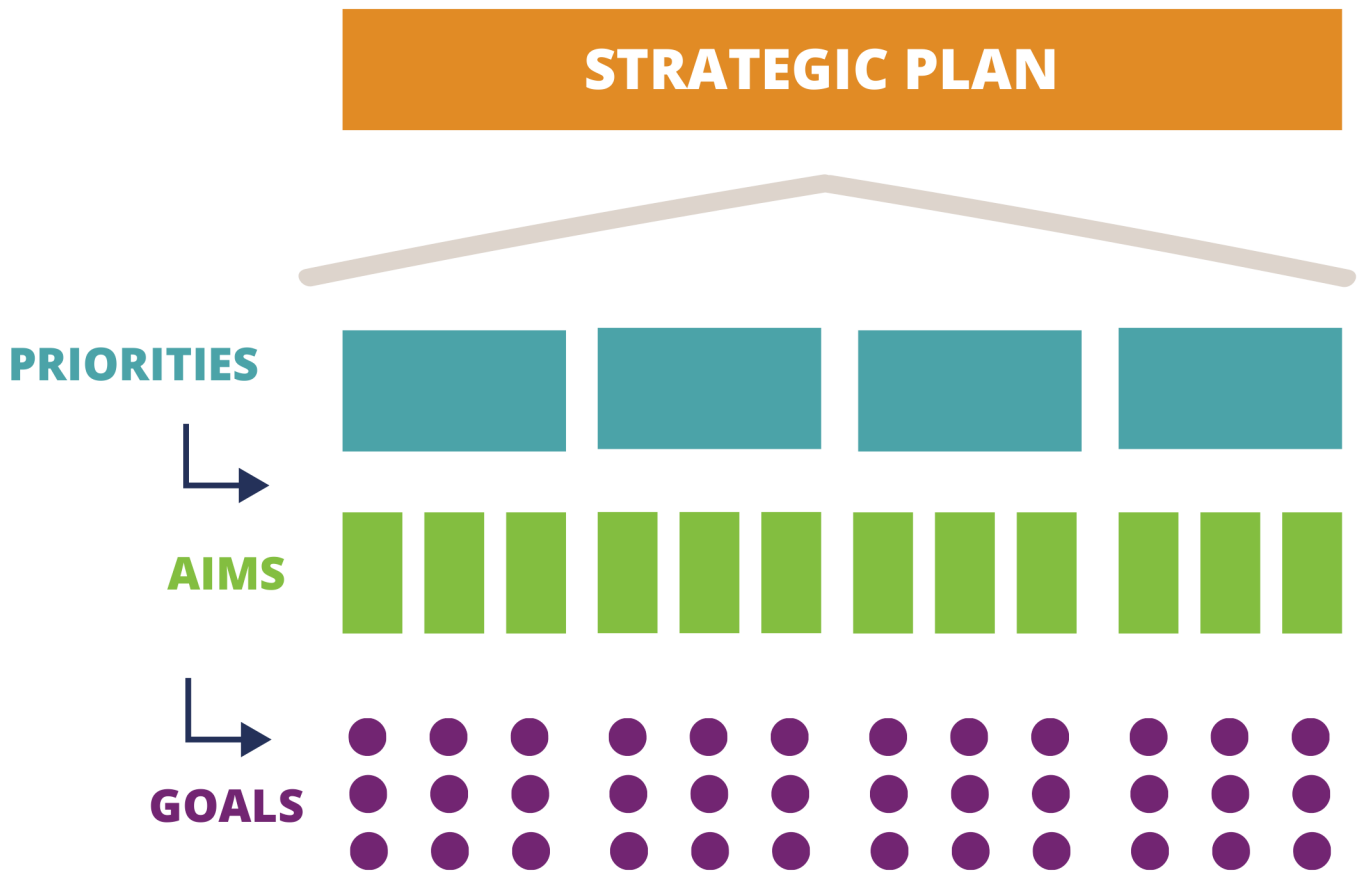
**PROBLEM SOLVER**



**ENGAGED COMMUNITY MEMBER**

# THE STRATEGIC PLAN STRUCTURE

Our strategic plan follows a structured framework comprising aims, specific goals under each aim, and key performance indicators (KPIs) for each goal. The aims encapsulate our core aspirations, while the goals offer clear, attainable milestones. KPIs provide measurable benchmarks to track our progress, ensuring transparency and accountability. Annual implementation goals will be developed as the district's operational plan achieve these aims. This concise structure facilitates focused and comprehensive improvement across various aspects of our educational landscape, guiding our journey toward excellence.



# THE STRATEGIC PLAN PROCESS



Over the past year, we heard from the entire community— through surveys and committee meetings,—that our strategic planning priorities revolve around authentic learning and innovative programming for students that takes place within a caring, equitable learning community.



With Hanover Research, we administered a strategic priorities survey and conducted data analysis to understand our areas of success and areas of growth. The data suggested that that we focus on equitable educational opportunities for all students from Pre-K through Grade 12, expand family and community engagement opportunities, strengthen school-related environments where everyone feels valued, safe and they belong, invest in our employees and our facilities, and focus on mental and physical health of students, staff, and caregivers.



Secondary research studies have also guided our process for developing this strategic framework. We have looked at best practices and peer benchmarks to identify key priorities and aims aligned with our community, and goals and metrics aligned to standards of practice.



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

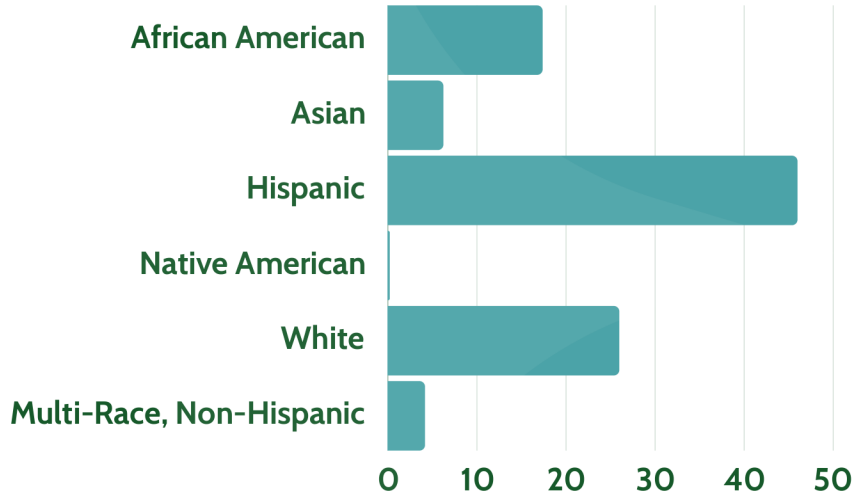


Our mission is to provide all students the opportunity to advance their scholarship with a rigorous core curriculum and high-quality instruction. This enables students to discover the expanse of their academic talents, shape the quality of their character, and develop the confidence to become conscientious, reflective citizens who are empowered to better our community and our world.

*\*New Vision, Mission and Core Values are in progress*

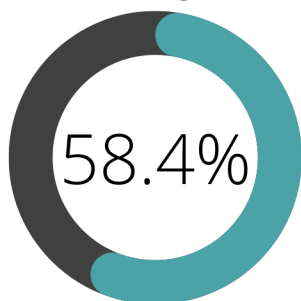
# DISTRICT DATA REVIEW

  
**24,980**  
 scholars



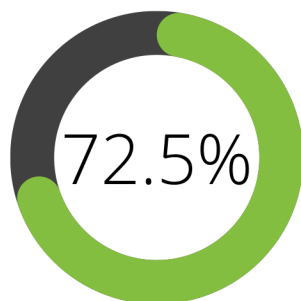
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (2023). Enrollment data.

First Language  
Not English



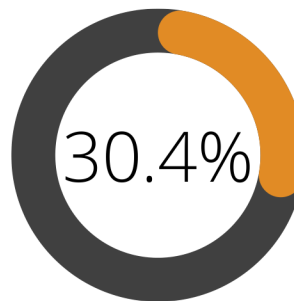
14,578

Low Income



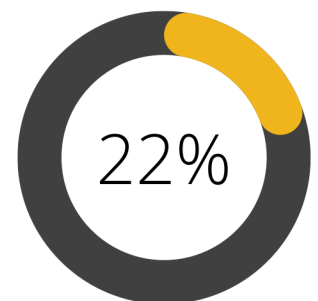
17,630

English  
Learners



7,599

Students with  
Disabilities



5,494

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (2023). Enrollment data.

# OVERVIEW OF DISTRICT KEY PRIORITIES



**Equitable Resources  
& Educational Programs  
(EQ)**



**Family & Community  
Engagement  
(FC)**



**Culture  
& Climate  
(CC)**



**Acquire & Retain  
Talent  
(AT)**



**Health  
& Wellness  
(HW)**



**Modernized & Safe  
Facilities  
(MF)**





# KEY PRIORITY

## EQUITABLE RESOURCES & EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS


**Worcester Public Schools is committed to developing an equitable, systematic approach to educational programming that delivers high-quality instruction, that equips all students with essential skills, and that opens doors to expanded opportunities for engagement and learning from Pre-K through grade 12.**

# KEY PRIORITY




## EQUITABLE RESOURCES & EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS




### GOAL EQ 1

 EQ 1. By the end of the 2027-28 school year, schools will implement the WPS Instructional Framework.



#### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

-  EQ 1.1. Percentage of leaders and educators agreeing that they understand how to use (i.e.: application/put into practice) the instructional framework
-  EQ 1.2. Percentage of educators planning lessons utilizing the instructional framework
-  EQ 1.3. Percentage of classrooms in each school demonstrating the use of the instructional framework, including four WPS dimensions of instructional practices


### GOAL EQ 2

 EQ 2. By the end of the 2027-28 school year, schools will narrow the opportunity gap for the historically underserved.



#### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

-  EQ 2.1. Percentage of students reporting rigorous and culturally responsive instruction
-  EQ 2.2. Percentage of 3rd, 5th, and 8th grade Hispanic/Latino students, English Learners, and students with disabilities will be at/above benchmark [meet/exceed] in reading and math

### GOAL EQ 3

 EQ 3. By the end of the 2027-28 school year, schools will increase the percentage of students meeting grade-level expectations.

#### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

-  EQ 3.1. Percentage of 3rd, 5th, and 8th graders at/above benchmark [meet/exceed] in reading and math [meet/exceed] in reading and math
-  EQ 3.2. Percentage of English Language Learners (ELLs) meeting their annual progress towards English Language Proficiency target

## AIM 1


Enhance and provide equitable and consistent learning experiences to prepare scholars for lifelong success (PreK-12).

# KEY PRIORITY





## EQUITABLE RESOURCES & EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS




### GOAL EQ 4

 EQ 4. By the end of the 2027-28 school year, increase the number of advanced coursework/program opportunities for high school students.



#### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

-  EQ 4.1. Number of students completing career and technical education coursework and pathway programs
-  EQ 4.2. Number of seats available for advanced coursework and Chapter 74 courses
-  EQ 4.3. Number of students participating in advanced coursework- including AP, Dual Enrollment, etc
-  EQ 4.4. Number of students participating in co-curricular and enrichment programs


### GOAL EQ 5

 EQ 5. By the end of the 2027-28 school year, increase the number of pathway-related exploratory opportunities or learning experiences for middle school students.



#### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

-  EQ 5.1. Number of students participating in co-curricular and enrichment programs in middle schools
-  EQ 5.2. Number of students participating in exploratory opportunities

### GOAL EQ 6

 EQ 6. By the end of the 2027-28 school year, increase readiness at targeted grade levels.

#### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

-  EQ 6.1. Increase the number of students participating in pre-kindergarten programs
-  EQ 6.2. Percentage of students entering K, 3, 5, 7, and 9 on grade level

## AIM 2


Expand opportunities for College and Career Readiness (CCR) for all learners (PreK-12+) to ensure scholars can exercise agency in determining their educational path.

# KEY PRIORITY

## EQUITABLE RESOURCES & EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS



### GOAL EQ 7

 EQ7. By the end of the 2027-28 school year, all schools will implement the WPS Vision of a Learner.

#### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- EQ 7.1. Percentage of principals are confident in their understanding of how to support teachers in implementing the Vision of a Learner
- EQ7.2. Percentage of educators are confident in their understanding and ability to put the Vision of a Learner into practice
- EQ 7.3. Percentage of educators planning lessons that integrate the skills and dispositions of the Vision of a Learner
- EQ 7.4. Number of students participating in performance assessments at Vision of a Learner defined milestones
- EQ 7.5. Number of “Spark” trained teachers

## AIM 3

Grow and create equitable future-ready learning environments and opportunities to ensure our scholars are prepared for the evolving world.





# KEY PRIORITY

## FAMILY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Worcester Public Schools is committed to fostering authentic, effective, consistent, and inclusive two-way communication and engagement among families, schools, and the community. The more engaged we are with one another, the better the outcomes for our scholars.




## KEY PRIORITY

### FAMILY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT




## AIM 1

Strengthen relationships with caregivers to maximize student achievement and growth.

## GOAL FC 1

 FC 1. By the end of the 2027-28 school year, schools will fully implement the WPS Family and Community Engagement Framework to ensure all families feel welcomed, included, and have a sense of belonging in their school community.


### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

-  FC 1.1. Number of parents/caregivers participating in and attending school events: PTO, Site Council, and Family Engagement Groups, Know Your School night
-  FC 1.2. Number of parents/caregivers participating in parent-teacher conferences
-  FC 1.3. Number of parents reporting they feel connected and feel welcomed in schools




## AIM 2

Grow a culture that ensures all scholars, families, and staff feel empowered to engage authentically in the educational process.

## GOAL FC 2

 FC 2. By the end of the 2027-28 school year, schools and the district offices will improve two-way communication to help families in understand expectations, in track student progress, and in seeking support for their children.

### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

-  FC 2.1. Number of direct messages between schools and parent/caregivers in the district communication platform
-  FC 2.2. Percentage of parents who have download the district communication app and the student information parent portal app
-  FC 2.3. Percentage of educators meeting proficiency in the Family & Community Engagement standard of the state's evaluation rubric



## KEY PRIORITY

### FAMILY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## GOAL FC 3



By the end of the 2027-28 school year, schools and families will have equitable access to resources, services, and programs through community partners, regardless of their school or home zip code.

### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS



FC 3.1. Percentage increase in the number of Memorandum of Understandings between schools and community partners



FC 3.2. Equitable distribution of community partnership resources by need

## AIM 3

Leverage community partnerships to provide equitable access to community resources, services, and programs.





# KEY PRIORITY

## CULTURE & CLIMATE

Worcester Public Schools is committed to providing and sustaining environments in which all members of our school communities grow and thrive (students, faculty, staff, and families), in environments where they feel value, they feel safe, and they belong.






# KEY PRIORITY

## CULTURE & CLIMATE





### AIM 1

Increase all school community members' feelings of value, safety, and sense of belonging across all schools and grade levels.

### GOAL CC 1

 CC 1. By the end of the 2027-28 school year, schools will fully implement the WPS Family and Community Engagement Framework to ensure all families feel welcomed, included, and have a sense of belonging in their school community.


#### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

-  CC 1.1. Percentage of students, faculty/staff, and families self-reporting a positive sense of belonging
-  CC 1.2. Percentage of self-reported positive perceptions of school safety (students, faculty/staff, families)
-  CC 1.3. Percentage of student attendance rates for chronic absent
-  CC 1.4. Reported incidents of bullying (in-person and online)



### AIM 2

Enhance the use of culturally responsive pedagogy to connect learning to students' backgrounds, experiences, and interests.

### GOAL CC 2

 CC 2. By the end of the 2027-2028 academic school year, schools will implement the WPS Instructional Framework to ensure that historically underserved students feel connected to the learning environment.

#### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

-  CC 2.1. Percentage of students self-reporting that they see their backgrounds and culture represented in their learning and school community
-  CC 2.2. Percentage gap of students' and teachers' perceptions of cultural awareness so they are more aligned with one another



## KEY PRIORITY

### CULTURE & CLIMATE

## GOAL CC 3



CC 3. By the end of the 2027-2028 academic school year, schools will implement a restorative practice model to ensure that school communities grow and thrive.

### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS



CC 3.1. Total number of out-of-school student suspension



CC 3.2. Number of teachers being trained in restorative practice

## AIM 3

Expand the use of restorative practices to create a more equitable learning environment for all students.





# KEY PRIORITY

## ACQUIRE & RETAIN TALENT

WPS is committed to prioritizing, valuing, and compensating our staff by creating and ensuring a culture of inclusivity and growth for all.

# KEY PRIORITY


## ACQUIRE & RETAIN TALENT





### AIM 1

Increase the diversification of staff to be more representative of our students.

### GOAL AT 1

 AT 1. By the end of 2027-28, narrow the gap between overall student and staff diversification to ensure all of our students.


#### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

-  AT 1.1 Percentage of new instructional staff from underrepresented backgrounds
-  AT 1.2. Percentage of new operational/non-instructional staff from underrepresented backgrounds




### AIM 2

Increase retention of staff to ensure access to high-quality instruction.


### GOAL AT 2

 AT 2. By the end of the 2027-28 school year, increase the annual retention of staff from 80% to 85%.



#### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

-  AT 2.1. Percentage of staff from underrepresented backgrounds assuming leadership roles
-  AT 2.2. Percentage of instructional staff retained from year to year
-  AT 2.3. Percentage of operational/non-instructional staff retained from year to year

### GOAL AT 3

 By the end of the 2027-2028 school year, all hiring managers will fully implement the WPS Human Resource Guidebook to ensure consistency in supporting the growth and retention of staff.

#### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

-  AT 3.1. Number of grievances filed
-  AT 3.2. Percentage of staff reporting positive culture and growth in their schools/sites




## KEY PRIORITY

### ACQUIRE & RETAIN TALENT




## AIM 3

Increase students' access to the WPS employment pipeline to ensure all WPS students have opportunities both within and outside of WPS.

## GOAL AT 4

 AT 4. By the end of the 2027-28 school year increase students' access to the WPS employment pipeline to ensure all WPS students have opportunities both within and outside of WPS.

### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

-  AT 4.1. Number of programs that build skills needed for WPS employment areas
-  AT 4.2. Percentage of students enrolled in programs that build skills needed for WPS employment areas
-  AT 4.3. Number of new WPS employees who had participated in WPS pipeline programs





# KEY PRIORITY

## MODERNIZED & SAFE FACILITIES


Worcester Public Schools is committed to ensuring that each of our school facilities has the infrastructure to support equitable access to a 21st-century teaching and learning environment.




# KEY PRIORITY

## MODERNIZED & SAFE FACILITIES


### GOAL MF 1

 MF 1. By the end of the 2027-28 school year, increase spending on operations and maintenance to the foundation budget level as supported by state and local funding.


#### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

 MF 1.1. Maintenance & operations cost ratio to foundation budget allocation

### GOAL MF 2

 MF 2. By the end of the 2027-28 school year, increase funding for building safety, repair, and renovation projects for underserved communities.

#### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

 MF 2.1. Level of funding for facilities improvements from local, state, and federal sources

## AIM 1

Increase spending on facilities to better repair and maintain the schools, grounds, and district buildings.




# KEY PRIORITY

## MODERNIZED & SAFE FACILITIES




### GOAL MF 3

 MF 3. By the end of the 2027-28 school year, update the district facilities master plan.

#### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

 MF 3.1. Deferred Maintenance cost for the district


### GOAL MF 4

 MF 4. By the end of the 2027-28 school year, develop a framework of a common vision of what future-ready schools look like.


#### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

 MF 4.1. Cost per classroom to update to future-ready

### GOAL MF 5

 MF 5. By the end of the 2023-24 school year, develop a 5-year capital plan using cost analysis of current building operations to prioritize projects.

#### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

 MF 5.1. Maintenance and operations cost per student

## AIM 2

Expand identification and prioritization of building renovation and replacement projects to support future-ready learning spaces for students.




# KEY PRIORITY


## MODERNIZED & SAFE FACILITIES




### GOAL MF 6

 MF 6. By the end of the 2027-28 school year, initiate an action plan for all urgent building repair and maintenance requests within 72 hours.


#### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

 MF 6.1. Percent of urgent building repairs completed an action plan within 72 hours

### GOAL MF 7


 MF 7. By the end of the 2027-28 school year, implement and train key stakeholders in the full use of a computerized maintenance management system.

#### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

 MF 7.1. Work order response time

 MF 7.2. Work order completion time

### GOAL MF 8

 MF 8. By the end of the 2027-28 school year, implement the recommendations of the district's school safety audit using a prioritization and funding schedule.

#### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

 MF 8.1. Project completion based on priority ranking

## AIM 3


Increase responsiveness to repair and maintenance of schools, grounds, and district buildings.




# KEY PRIORITY

## MODERNIZED & SAFE FACILITIES

### GOAL MF 9

 MF 9. By the end of the 2027-28 school year, develop a community-wide inventory of higher education, industry, and cultural partners and the associated spaces within their organizations for potential learning spaces.

#### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

 MF 9.1. Number of new community spaces

## AIM 4

Expand future-ready opportunities for students through alignment and partnership with community-based learning resources and spaces.





# KEY PRIORITY

## HEALTH & WELLNESS


Worcester Public Schools is committed to prioritizing equitable services and programs that focus on the mental and physical health and wellness of staff, students, and caregivers within our educational community.



# KEY PRIORITY

## HEALTH & WELLNESS


### GOAL HW 1

 HW 1. By the end of the 2027-28 school year, schools will implement a comprehensive and evidence-based K-12 counseling model.

#### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

 HW 1.1. Number of schools providing evidence-based counseling services

### GOAL HW 2

 HW 2.1. By the end of the 2027-28 school year, historically underserved scholars will have accessed counseling services.

#### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

 HW 2.1. Number of students referred to wellness services

 HW 2.2. Number of students accessing wellness services

## AIM 1

Build a systematic health and wellness approach to authentically engage historically underserved scholars.






# KEY PRIORITY

## HEALTH & WELLNESS


### GOAL HW 3

 HW 3. By the end of the 2027-28 school year, schools will fully implement the WPS Health and Wellness Roadmap to ensure all scholars, staff, and caregivers have access to high-quality wellness opportunities.

#### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- HW 3.1. Number of physical health opportunities available for scholars, staff, and caregivers
- HW 3.2. Number of social emotional services provided for scholars, staff, and caregivers
- HW 3.3. Number of wellness opportunities for scholars, staff, and caregivers

### GOAL HW 4

 HW 4 By the end of the 2027-28 school year, increase spaces that promote health and wellness through working with community partnerships.

#### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- HW 4.1. Number of out of school time opportunities offered
- HW 4.2. Number of engaged community partnerships

## AIM 2

Strengthen the impact of wellness opportunities for scholars, staff, and caregivers by decreasing systemic and institutional barriers.



# The Strategic Plan Advisory Taskforce Members

## Steering Committee

Rachel Monárrez, PhD, Superintendent

Brian E. Allen, Deputy Superintendent, Finance and Operations

Marie Morse, EdD, Assistant Superintendent, Teaching and Learning

Chair: Paul Matthews, Executive Director - Worcester Regional Research Bureau

Vice Chair: Jennifer Davis Carey, Executive Director- Worcester Education Collaborative

## Community Taskforce Members

Viviana Abreu-Hernandez, Vice President - Quinsigamond Community College

Che Anderson, Assistant Vice Chancellor for City & Community Relations –UMass Chan Medical School

Chantel Bethea, FACE Roundtable Representative/Parent

State Representative David LeBoeuf, 17th Worcester District

Kathy Chen, Director of STEM Education Center - Worcester Polytechnic University

Joseph Corazinni, Vice President for Government and Community Affairs - Clark University

Kim Davenport, Chair of the Board - Worcester Education Collaborative

Eve Gilmore, Executive Director – Edward Street Child Services

Anastasia Garcia, FACE Roundtable Representative/Parent

Liz Hamilton, Executive Director – Boys and Girls Club of Worcester

Noreen Johnson-Smith, President and CEO - EcoTarium

Jason Homer, Executive Director – Worcester Public Library

Susan Hunt, Government & Community Relations - College of the Holy Cross

Paul LaCava, Professor – Quinsigamond Community College

Mary Jo Marion, AVP for University and Community Engagement - Worcester State University

Eric Mendelson, Citywide Parent Planning Advisory Council Co-Chair/Parent

Karen Pelletier, Executive Vice President - Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce

Kimberly Salmon, AVP Community Relations - The Hanover Insurance Group

Reverend Clyde Talley - Belmont Street Church

Tuyet Tran, Executive Director - Southeast Asian Coalition of Central MA

Jeanine Went, Executive Director - Higher Education Consortium of Central Massachusetts

John Yormie - African Community Education

## Acknowledgments

Our deepest gratitude to the individuals and organizations who made this process possible and participated in the planning effort. text

# The Strategic Plan Advisory Taskforce Members

## WPS Taskforce Members

AiCo Abercrombie, Human Resource Director  
Marco Andrade, PhD, Research & Accountability Director  
Annie Azarloza, Chief Academic Support Officer  
Jessica Boss, Principal - Chandler Elementary Community School  
Tammy Boyle, Principal - Jacob Hiatt Magnet School  
Sara Consalvo, Administrative Director of Finance  
Jeff Creamer, Principal, South High Community School  
Brenda Diggs, Principal - The Gerald Creamer Center  
Craig Dottin, Principal - Vernon Hill School  
Lucas Donahue, Principal – Elm Park Community School  
Fjodor Dukaj, Principal - Clark Street Developmental Learning School  
Triada Frangou-Apostolou, Human Resource Director  
William Foley, Executive Director of Schools – Burncoat Quadrant  
Magdalena Ganas, EdD, Curriculum & Professional Learning Director  
Dan Hayes, Teacher – West Tatnuck School  
Rich Ikonien, Facilities Director  
Ellen Kelley, Executive Director of Schools – Doherty Quadrant  
Yeu Kue, EdD, Chief People Officer  
Laurie Kuczka, Head Start Director  
Christopher Kursonis, College & Career Readiness Director  
Sarah Kyriazis, EdD, Educational Technology Director  
Jessica Mandes, Multilingual Education Director  
Matthew Morse, EdD School Safety Director  
Tammy Murray, Special Education & Intervention Services Director  
Dan O'Brien, Chief Communications Officer  
James Olson, Educational Technology Coach  
Patricia Padilla, Principal - Woodland Academy  
Kelli Shea, Teacher – Burncoat High School  
Timothy Sippel, EdLD, Executive Director of Schools – South Quadrant  
Ishmael Tables, Principal - Union Hill School  
Kareem Tatum, EdD, Executive Director of Schools – North Quadrant  
Thomas Toney, Administrative Director of Positive Youth Development  
Gregory Tremba, Principal - Forest Grove Middle School  
Bob Walton, Information Technologies Director



From Here, Anywhere...

*Together*

Phone  
**508.799.3115**



Website  
**[www.worcesterschools.org](http://www.worcesterschools.org)**



Worcester Public Schools  
**20 Irving Street, Worcester, MA 01609**

