

MCKENZIE SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

STRATEGIC PLAN

2025-2030

Nearly 1,250 students attend the McKenzie Special School District (MSSD) and we employ over 165 staff. Our schools: McKenzie Elementary School (grades PreK-4); McKenzie Middle School (grades 5-8); McKenzie High School (grades 9-12).

The Tennessee Department of Education accredits all schools and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools accredits secondary schools. The McKenzie Board of Education and its staff support the schools.

MISSION

McKenzie Special School District, in partnership with the entire McKenzie community, will empower every student to become a life-long learner who is a responsible, productive, and engaged citizen within the global community. It is the purpose of MSSD to provide the highest quality of education possible for all students. A 100% graduation rate will be the benchmark for the minimal accepted education.

VISION

The McKenzie Special School District will be a premier educational institution, source of pride and innovation, and the cornerstone of emerging economic opportunities producing a twenty-first century workforce.

BELIEF STATEMENTS

- Children are our first priority. We base every decision and action on the needs of our students.
- Each student is a valued individual with unique physical, social, emotional, intellectual, and cultural needs.
- Educated citizens are critical to our society; therefore, learning is our second priority.
- Education is helping students become lifelong learners while providing them learning for life.
- Education is a partnership among students, families, schools, and the community.
- All students can and will learn; however, students learn in diverse ways and require a variety of teaching strategies.
- Students learn best in environments that are positive, disciplined, consistent, foster respect for authority, and encourage learning.
- Every student, teacher, and administrator has the right to a safe and secure learning environment.
- Highly qualified, effective teachers and administrators are vital to the success of our students.
- Teachers and administrators are professionals who work continuously to upgrade their knowledge and engage in activities that enhance their effectiveness as educators.
- Technology is an important part of the learning process.
- Both college AND career readiness are equally essential for a successful educational experience.
- Our schools are a vital resource to the city of McKenzie.



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CORE VALUES

R – RELATIONSHIPS – *We believe in establishing positive, caring relationships based on trust and respect among all stakeholders.*

E – HIGH EXPECTATIONS – *We believe maintaining rigorous standards and high expectations for all students are the key to academic excellence and lifelong learning.*

B – BOLDNESS – *We believe in developing a culture of empowerment with a commitment to developing confident, goal-oriented students.*

E – EQUITY – *We believe in providing all students with a balanced curriculum aligned with quality instruction.*

L – LEADERSHIP – *We believe leaders guide and facilitate others to make a positive difference in their own lives and to contribute to a larger good.*

S – STUDENT FOCUS – *We believe that ALL decisions should be student-centered and reflect both academic and social/emotional needs.*

INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

■ **ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE**

- **FOCUS:** Prepare all students for success in an ever-changing world.
 - We will increase literacy achievement and growth across all grades.
 - We will increase numeracy achievement and growth across all grades.
 - We will emphasize course offerings for early postsecondary and ACT success.
- **ACTION STEPS**
 - Implement high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) in all grades and ensure teachers are trained to utilize materials effectively.
 - Establish supports in content areas utilizing the TN Instructional Practice Guide (IPG) tool to ensure high quality, standards-based instruction utilizing the HQIM available.
 - Provide research-based literacy and math interventions, as appropriate, to address student needs in Tier I, II, and III instruction.
 - Prioritize career exploration and STEM learning at all grade levels.
 - Focus on work-based learning, industry certification, and dual-enrollment opportunities for high school students through the CTE program.

■ **EXEMPLARY EDUCATORS**

- **FOCUS:** Build a team of highly qualified teachers and support staff.
 - We will recruit, hire, and retain high-quality personnel.
 - We will promote the education profession to current students.
 - We will provide opportunities to develop teacher leaders.
- **ACTION STEPS**
 - Actively promote MSSD in the community and at college/career fairs to recruit top candidates for the district.
 - Provide high-quality professional development for all staff that focuses on best practices in the classroom and effective delivery of instruction daily.



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- Utilize available resources to assist teachers and staff in their classroom practices (i.e. Kids First, Northwest CORE, etc.)
- Build positive teacher-student relationships that encourage students to consider teaching as a profession.
- Promote opportunities for teacher-leaders to garner experiences that advance their knowledge and understanding of building-level and district-level responsibilities, and grow their leadership pedagogy.

■ **PURPOSEFUL INVOLVEMENT AND SUPPORT**

- FOCUS: Develop meaningful alliances in support of education and educational opportunities.
 - We will promote school system initiatives in the community and celebrate success.
 - We will communicate effectively with stakeholders.
 - We will promote and expand partnership opportunities with local businesses and employers.
- ACTION STEPS
 - Actively engage a variety of community stakeholders in the process of educating our students, and encourage participation of those stakeholders in the process.
 - Focus on celebrations of successes within the system and garner feedback on ways to improve our processes.
 - Maintain open lines of communication with parents, students, staff, and stakeholders throughout the school year.
 - Encourage local businesses to be involved in the process of educating students, and seek opportunities for businesses to support the work taking place (i.e. tours, speaking engagements, work-based learning options, etc.).

OPERATIONAL GOALS

■ **SCHOOL BOARD AND DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION**

- FOCUS: Continually provide leadership and support necessary to help all in the school system to achieve its mission.
 - We will provide straightforward, honest, and timely communication about all of the work of the school board.
 - We will work to ensure that the rules and policies we enact are effective in supporting student success.
 - We will establish policies to ensure that all students have access to great teachers and great leaders.
- ACTION STEPS
 - Continually communicate with the community on board operations, including board policies, procedures, finances, and operational protocols.
 - Maintain relations with the Tennessee School Board Association, Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents, and other similar organizations to stay



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apprised of board policy updates, changes in legislation, and other critical updates that may impact school board operations.

- Actively monitor policies and procedures that impact the school system and how teachers and staff operate on a daily basis.

■ **FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

- FOCUS: Continually evaluate the overall financial structure of the school system.
 - We will provide adequate, essential resources for programs and supports so that all students can succeed.
 - We will pursue and efficiently manage internal and external school funding.
 - We will calculate, estimate, and continue to adjust funding opportunities.

➤ ACTION STEPS

- Ensure that district financial decisions are aligned with the ultimate goals of the district—a focus on students first and their academic successes.
- Monitor district finances to ensure alignment with internal and external funding sources.
- Explore funding opportunities (i.e. grants) that can support the work of the district each year.

■ **BUILDING AND FACILITIES**

- FOCUS: Continually upgrade facilities and work for the implementation of the overall building program and long-range goals.
 - We will take active steps to ensure that classrooms and schools are safe, secure, and conducive of high-quality instruction.
 - We will put into place a comprehensive facility plan to address building and facility needs.
 - We will develop a process that builds internal and public support for facility needs, including bond issues and capital improvement plans.

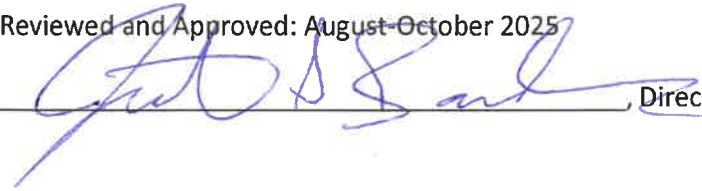
➤ ACTION STEPS

- Consider buildings' needs that focus on students and staff safety, including building updates/upgrades that heighten security in and around each building.
- Each year, a comprehensive facilities assessment will take place, with administrator input, to consider needs at each building, which helps formulate a plan for future improvements.
- Engage a variety of stakeholders in the process of publicly supporting capital improvement plans, including open meeting conversations and workshops that encourage stakeholder input, as available.



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Plan Reviewed and Approved: August-October 2025


_____, Director of Schools

Updated (2026) _____

Updated (2027) _____

Updated (2028) _____

Updated (2029) _____



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Strategic Five-Year Plan Committee

Dr. Justin Barden, Director of Schools

Leighann Horne, P-6 Instructional Supervisor/Special Education Supervisor

Ladona Herrin, 7-12 Instructional Supervisor/Federal Programs Supervisor

Brad Davis, Finance Director

Dr. Dianne Anderson, Technology Supervisor

Greg Jones, School Nutrition Supervisor

Bobby Osborn, Maintenance Supervisor

Susan Dyer, CTE Supervisor/Community Relations Liaison

George Ognibene, School Liaison/Transportation Supervisor

Angie Hollowell, School Board Administrative Assistant

Kelly Allen, Coordinated School Health Supervisor/Lead District Nurse

Kelly Spivey, McKenzie High School Principal

Josh Kee, McKenzie Middle School Principal

Tonya Brown, McKenzie Elementary School Principal

