

# MPS Board Strategic Planning Workshop 1.20.26

*Lee Ann Keller Rouse, CEO and Chief Strategy Consultant  
Michele Toyras, COO and Senior Consultant  
Tamara McGovern, CFO and Chief Data Strategist*



# Acknowledgements

*Strategic planning is only meaningful when it reflects the voices of the people it serves, and this work would not be possible without the time, insight, and honest feedback from our entire community.*

# Thank You!

- To **students and families**—thank you for sharing your experiences and aspirations.
- To **teachers, staff, and school leaders**—thank you for collecting and sharing feedback, and your thoughtful engagement throughout this process.
- To **community members, partners and leaders**—thank you for helping us understand the broader needs of the community we serve.
- To the **Planning Team** for your time, analysis, thoughtful debate, and commitment to moving this forward.
- To the **members of the Board**—thank you for your leadership, your guidance, and your dedication to ensuring that every decision truly supports student success.

Thank you for your partnership and for your belief in what can be achieved together.

## PURPOSE

- Review Strategic Planning Process
- Review/Discuss: Data Summary
- Review/Discuss: Graduate Profile
- Review/Discuss: DRAFT of Guiding Statements
- Review/Discuss: Emerging Themes and Strategic Framework

## AGENDA: Tuesday, January 20, 2026

- 7:20 p.m. Welcome, Agenda, Acknowledgements  
Overview of Planning Process/Timeline
  - 7:30 p.m. Environmental Scan Data Summary
    - External Snapshot
    - Stakeholder Feedback
  - 8:00 p.m. Profile of a Successful MPS Graduate
  - 8:25 p.m. Guiding Statements (Mission, Vision & Values)
  - 8:45 p.m. Emerging Themes & Draft Strategic Framework
  - 9:20 p.m. Wrap Up and Next Steps
- Adjourn

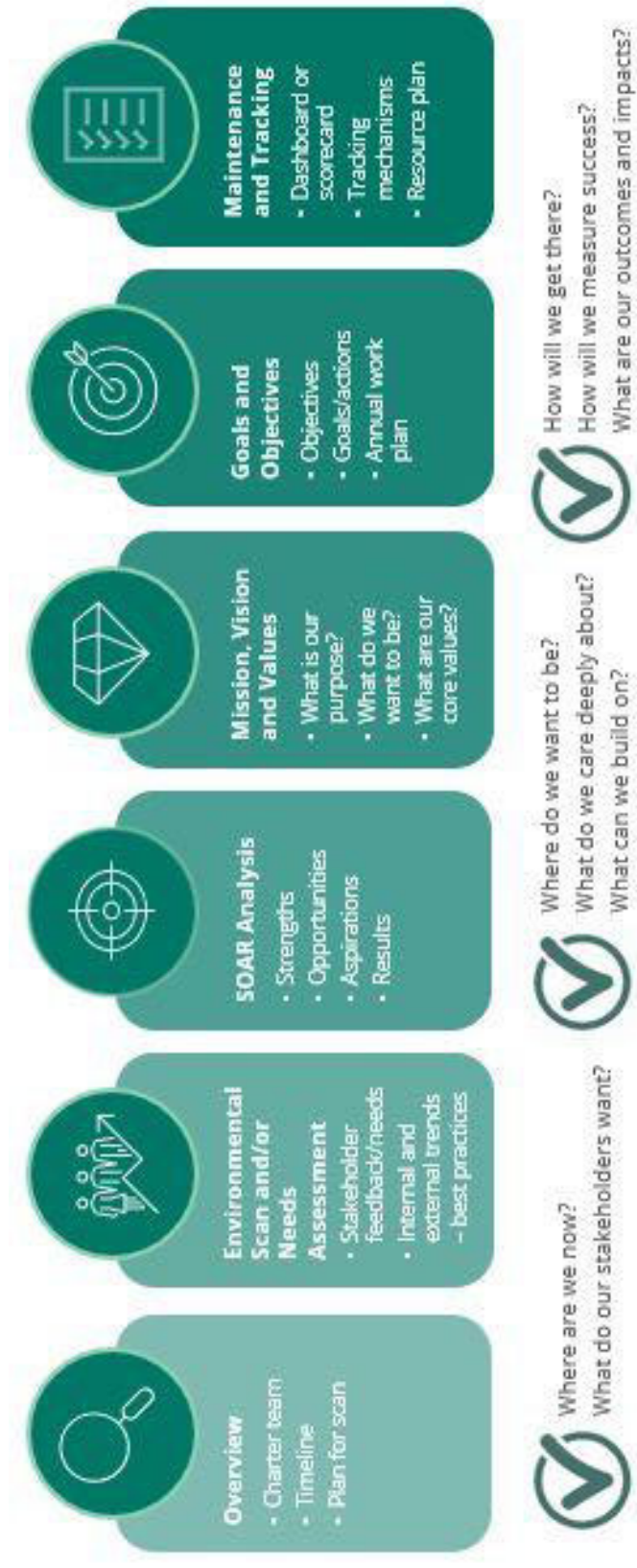


LEAN Strategic Planning

# OVERVIEW OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

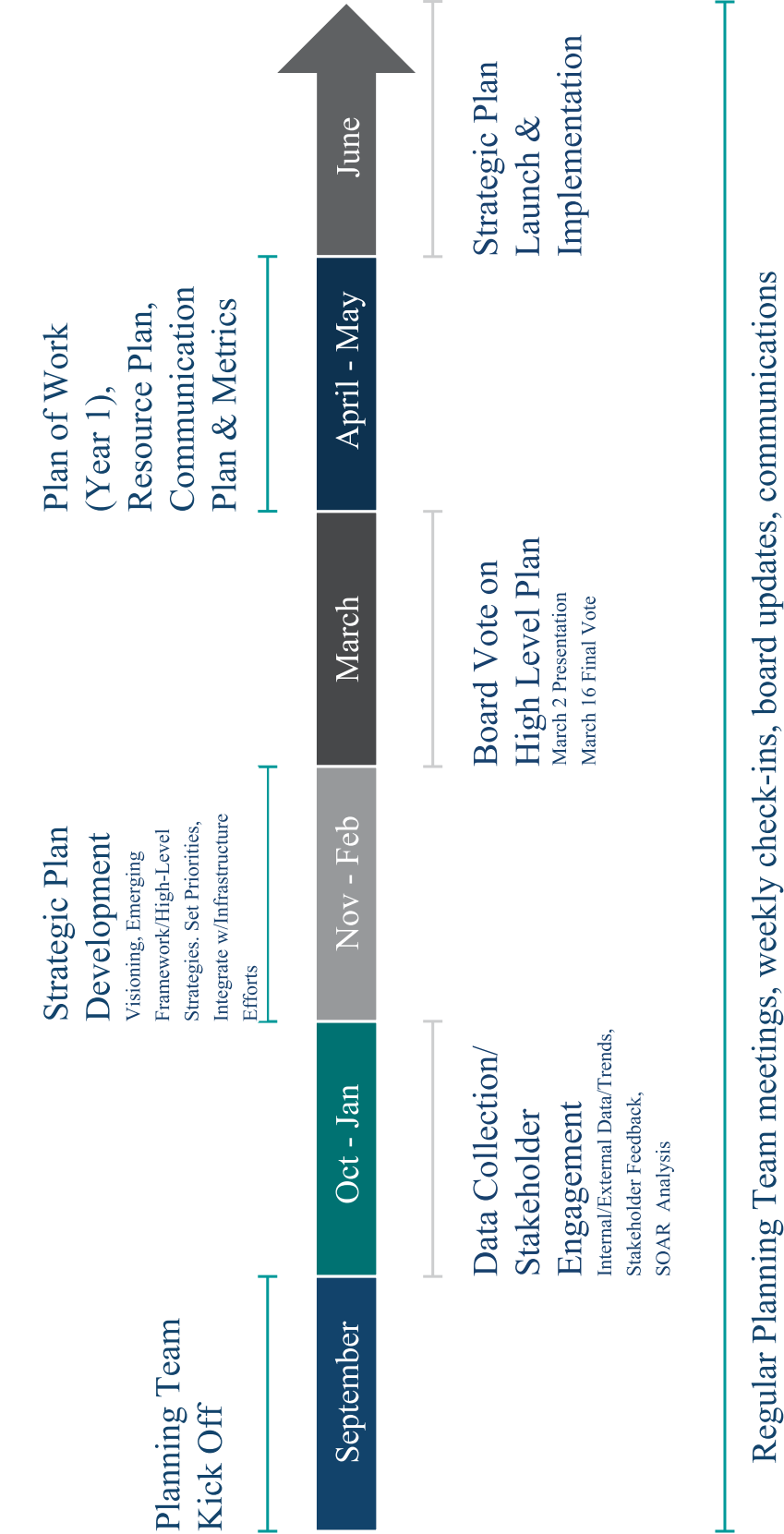


# OTI Lean Strategic Planning<sup>©</sup> Process



LEAN Strategic Planning

# MPS Strategic Planning Timeline





# MPS Vision Map

## Current Reality

1

How we understand our Current Reality

- Internal Data/Trends
- External Data/Trends
- Stakeholder Feedback
- Understand our Strengths & Opportunities

**STRENGTHS & OPPORTUNITIES**

3

Priorities/Goals

## Vision for Future

2

How we set our vision & aspirations for the Future

- Stakeholder Feedback/Visioning
- Strategic Discussions & Aspirations Making

**ASPIRATIONS MAKING**

**STRATEGY & RESULTS**

# ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN DATA

- EXTERNAL TRENDS
- STAKEHOLDER TRENDS





# External Trends



High school graduates will peak in 2025 at ~**3.9MM** and **DECLINE** steadily through 2041 due to lower birth rates post Great-Recession.

Students from low-income families face barriers like needing to work, caregiving responsibilities, or housing instability. These factors disproportionately affect graduation rates among marginalized groups.

**Policy/Accountability Trends:** Rethinking Graduation Requirements, Postsecondary Success Metrics, Equity-Focused Interventions, and Alternative Pathways/Credit Recovery

## Forces Impacting Public Education

- Declining Birth Rates
- Chronic Absenteeism
- Mental Health & Student Well-Being
- Economic Pressures (Funding Instability)

# SNAPSHOT

## PUBLIC EDUCATION TRENDS TO WATCH:

- **Student Academic Achievement and Readiness for Postsecondary Success**
  - Renewed emphasis on Literacy
  - Need for academic knowledge/skills, holistic and durable skills, and CTE
- **Artificial Intelligence in Education**
  - AI is being used for personalized learning, administrative efficiency, instructional support and interventions for at-risk students.
  - Districts are exploring AI tools for tutoring, grading, and curriculum design.
- **Hybrid and Flexible Learning Models**
  - Online and blended learning are now permanent fixtures, especially in high school and post-secondary prep; can also earn college credits and credentials.
  - Opportunities include infrastructure, teacher training, and equitable access.
- **Chronic Absenteeism**
  - Many districts report high levels of absenteeism, impacting achievement and funding. Nearly 28% of public school students in Michigan were chronically absent in 2025, missing nearly 18 days of learning.
  - Opportunities include attendance interventions and community engagement strategies.
- **Student Well-being and Mental Health**
  - Increased focus on social-emotional learning (SEL), mental health services, and trauma-informed practices.
  - Opportunities include hiring counselors, SEL curriculum, and wellness programs.
- **Equity and Inclusion**
  - Addressing disparities in access, outcomes, and representation is a top priority.
- **Teacher Retention, Attraction, and Development**
  - Staffing shortages and burnout are widespread.
  - Opportunities include professional development, leadership pipelines, and retention incentives.

# STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK SUMMARY



# Stakeholder Feedback Insights



Stakeholder Feedback is qualitative feedback and represents a moment in time; there is always some bias.



Perception may not be the actual reality; we need to distinguish between *perception* and *operational reality* and both matter. Perception drives *confidence*, and reality drives *performance*.



Communication and visibility help negate a difference in perception and reality; often communication has not kept pace with progress.



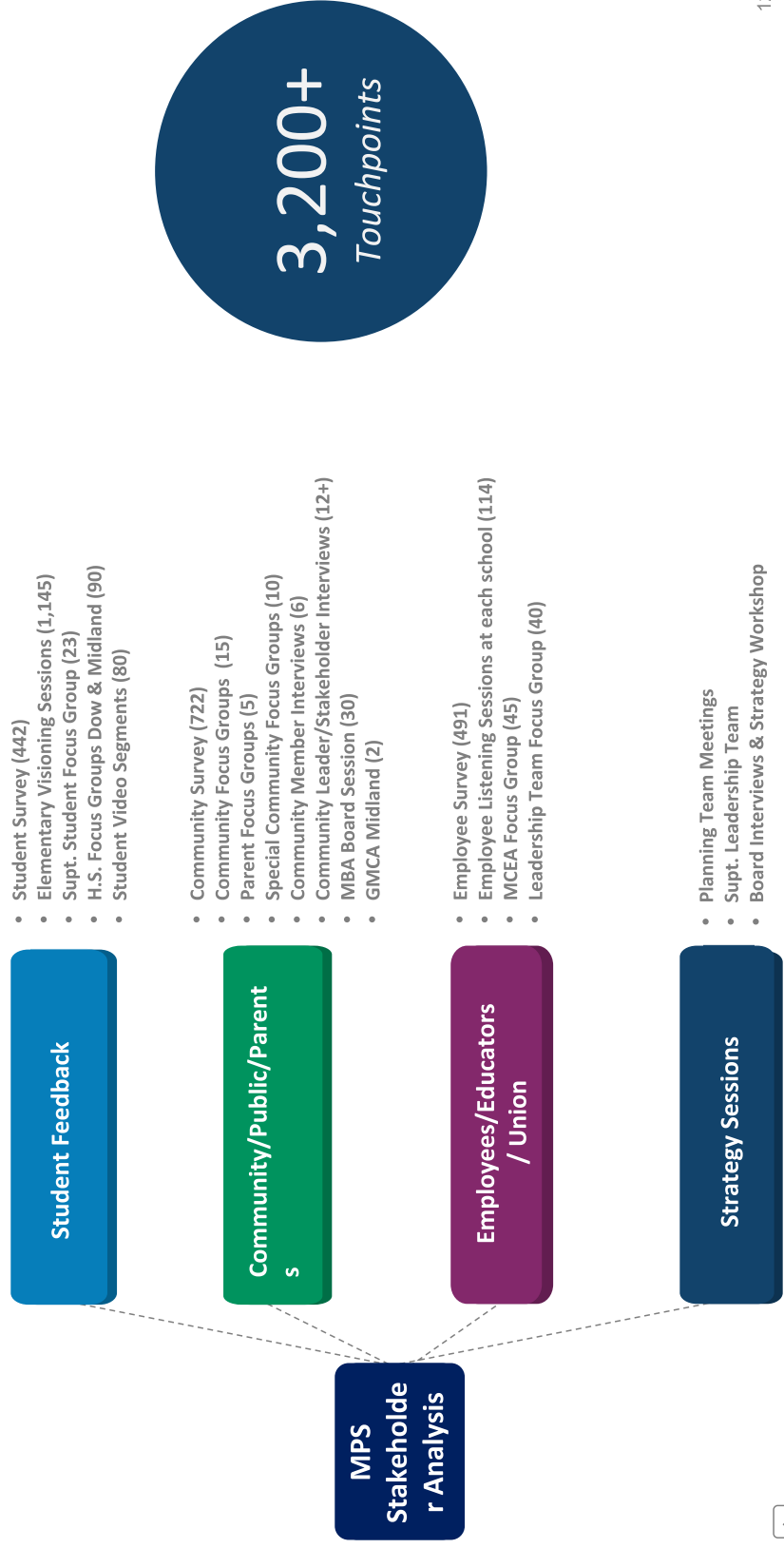
There may be *misalignment*, not *mismanagement*. Feedback tells us where expectations and deliverables are out of sync, which gives us a clear path to realignment.



Strategic Planning helps to turn feedback into action by validating what is real and correcting misperceptions, ensuring stakeholders see the impact of current work. Strategy sets priorities, increases transparency, and sets expectations.



# MPS Stakeholder Engagement Opportunities



# STUDENT FEEDBACK SUMMARY



# Student Feedback: Key Findings

## Summary of Key Findings



### **Aspirations: Ideal or Dream School.**

Students defined a “dream school” less by academics and more by supportive relationships, engaging learning, and a positive daily experience. Inclusion, belonging, and safety mattered across all grades, with older students placing greater emphasis on modern facilities and school culture. Students have a vision for more choice and agency in curriculum and daily life.



### **Strengths: What Students Like Best**

Relationships, especially friends and favorite teachers, are the strongest positive anchors in students’ school experience. Teachers and connection are core strengths of MPS, with academic rigor and choice playing a key role in the classroom and extracurricular activities.



### **Opportunities: Changes to Make School Better**

Students primarily want a healthier daily cadence (time, homework, exams), a friendly and inclusive climate, better food/facilities/tech and safety, richer and more flexible course options, and broader, well-supported access to clubs and sports.



### **Opportunities: Subject/Topics to Learn More About**

Students want more real-world life skills, expanded CTE, STEM and technical courses, diverse language and cultural studies, creative arts opportunities, and advanced academic topics.



# Student Feedback: Key Findings, cont.

## Summary of Key Findings



### **Opportunities: Making School More Enjoyable**

Students want school to be less stressful and more enjoyable through better balance, engaging learning environments, upgraded facilities, and an inclusive, respectful culture. They also asked for more time during the school day for homework support and greater consistency across schools and classrooms.



### **Opportunities: Infrastructure**

Students want more space and better layout, improved athletic and recreational facilities, more comfortable environments with natural light, practical safety and storage upgrades, and modernized specialized spaces.



### **Opportunities: Technology**

Students expressed a strong desire for expanded opportunities to use technology for problem-solving, with particular emphasis on the responsible and ethical use of artificial intelligence (AI). They want to be prepared for future careers and voiced concern about falling behind in a rapidly evolving technological landscape.



### **Opportunities: Extracurricular Activities**

Extracurricular preferences varied by grade level. Elementary students favored play-based sports and creative or STEM-focused clubs, while middle and high school students prioritized inclusive, participation-based sports and clubs centered on gaming and esports, identity or interest-based groups, and service activities.

# COMMUNITY FEEDBACK SUMMARY

(COMMUNITY/PUBLIC/PARENTS)



# Community Feedback: Key Findings

## Summary of Key Findings

### Strengths



Community members consistently highlight strong relationships with teachers and staff, noting a welcoming culture and student-centered environments. They value the breadth of academic offerings, including AP, IB, STEM, arts, athletics, and numerous extracurricular activities which they see as contributing to well-rounded and prepared students. Families also appreciate effective communication systems and active parent involvement through PTOs and volunteer efforts, which help reinforce connection and engagement across the district. Community leaders/businesses appreciate having a school system with a strong reputation as an asset to enhance attraction and growth.

### Opportunities: Student Learning and Equitable Access



Stakeholders prioritize equitable access to programs and opportunities across all schools, so students have comparable experiences regardless of building, including consistent access to technology and emerging tools such as AI. They also call for consistent academic expectations paired with strong student supports to address achievement gaps (e.g., literacy). Parents express strong interest in smaller class sizes and improved behavioral/mental health resources.

### Opportunities: Technology



Community members want intentional, ethical, and age-appropriate use of technology and AI to enhance learning, strengthen critical thinking, and support real-world application without replacing foundational skills or human relationships. Elementary school parents are concerned with maintaining the right balance of “screens”, focusing on using technology with purposeful intent.

# Community Feedback: Key Findings, cont.

## Summary of Key Findings



### **Opportunities: Community Engagement**

Parents and community members want a higher level of engagement with MPS and stronger alignment between schools and the community. They cite the desire for more volunteer opportunities and ability to provide helpful feedback. Community leaders want to have a strong partnership with MPS and work together on problem solving across the community and within MPS.



### **Opportunities: Clear and Consistent Communication**

Stakeholders emphasize the need for clearer, more transparent decision making and better communication practices to build trust and ensure community members feel informed and included.



### **Opportunities: Facilities and Infrastructure**

The community identifies aging facilities, inconsistent building conditions, and the need for long term, transparent planning as future opportunities. They want safe, modern, and well-maintained facilities guided by a clear and transparent long-term plan.



### **Aspirations**

Community members want modern, well-maintained, future-ready facilities that provide a sense of pride and align with the strong reputation MPS holds. They want MPS to provide coherent and clearly communicated pathways that prepare students for college, careers, trades, and life beyond high school. They see a district that prioritizes the whole child and works hard to close learning gaps. They envision increased real world learning, stronger partnerships with businesses and community organizations, and a district that strengthens civic engagement and contributes to Midland's long term vitality. A strong sense of shared purpose, rooted in collaboration, clarity, and community connection emerges as a defining aspiration.

# EMPLOYEE FEEDBACK SUMMARY



# Employee Feedback: Key Findings

## Summary of Key Findings

### Strengths



Employees consistently describe staff as highly dedicated, collaborative, and student-centered. Strong relationships among staff, students, and families are viewed as foundational to success. A broad range of academic programs, extracurricular activities, and whole-child supports are seen as core strengths of the district. Schools are perceived as welcoming, relationship-driven environments that foster community pride.



### Opportunities: Consistent Access/Closing Achievement Gaps

Employees want to see consistent access to programs and supports across schools. There is a strong call for equity in opportunities and systems that close achievement and resource gaps.



### Opportunities: Infrastructure and Facilities

Safe, reliable, and well-maintained facilities are a top priority. Employees call for modernized buildings, improved climate control, continued focus on safety, and spaces that support collaboration and technology integration. Equity in facility quality across schools is emphasized, along with transparent, data-driven planning for future models. Concerns include aging buildings and a need to upgrade to meet current student and learning needs.



### Opportunities: Communication & Trust

Staff want to have clear, consistent communication about decisions, priorities, and implications. Transparency in rationale, financial implications, and long-term planning are essential to building trust. Employees value meaningful opportunities for input and visible feedback loops that show how their voices inform outcomes. They want to see alignment of decisions with educational priorities.



# Employee Feedback: Key Findings, cont.

## Summary of Key Findings



### **Opportunities: Other**

Priorities include long-term financial sustainability, staff recruitment and retention, innovation in teaching and learning, and alignment between strategic goals and expectations at all levels. Employees cite the need for mental health and well-being supports to maintain work-life balance. Employees also stress the importance of experiential learning, internships, and opportunities for choice and voice in education.



### **Aspirations**

Employees envision graduates who are prepared for college, career, and civic life through rigorous academics, applied learning, and multiple pathways to success. They want schools to serve as hubs of community engagement, with facilities and programs aligned to modern instructional needs and workforce expectations. Equity, consistency, and high expectations for all students are central to this vision.



### **Results: Measures of Success**

Employees want metrics that go beyond test scores to include indicators of engagement, wellbeing, and readiness for life after graduation. Suggested measures include graduation outcomes, post-secondary enrollment, career certifications, and equitable access to programs. Transparency and timely reporting are viewed as essential for trust and improvement.

# STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

- BOARD FEEDBACK
- PLANNING TEAM MEETINGS
- SUPERINTENDENT TEAM MEETINGS



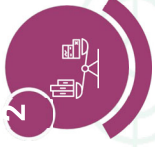
# Board Feedback: Key Findings

## Summary of Key Findings



### Strengths

Board members value strong staff commitment and dedication to students resulting in a caring culture. Broad student pathways (college, career, trades) and strong educational offerings (with emphasis on the high-school level) prepare students well for post-secondary opportunities. MPS provides inclusive environments for diverse learners and high-quality special education services and supportive elementary communities. Operationally, strengths also include financial discipline and a stable cash position.



### Opportunities: Equity and Access to Close Achievement Gaps

Socioeconomic gaps (especially for ALICE families) affect readiness and access and there is a need for better support for early learners—many kindergarteners lack preschool exposure. There is uneven access to supports, enrichment, and communication across buildings. Need to expand access to after-school supports, tutoring, and holistic student services. Desire to close achievement gaps by third grade and improve overall academic achievement, especially elementary literacy and middle school performance.



### Opportunities: Communication & Trust

Some board members want to continue to build on internal communication between board and leadership, ensuring that communications are timely and thorough. They also want to continue to build community trust and understand that there needs to be new communication methods beyond email to reach broader constituencies. There is a need to modernize and standardize communication expectations internally at the building level.



### Opportunities: Talent Recruitment

Improve talent recruitment and competitiveness in attracting educators.

# Board Feedback: Key Findings, cont.

## Summary of Key Findings



### **Opportunities: Infrastructure and Facilities**

Board members feel there is an urgent need for secondary building modernization - middle schools and high schools. There is interest in exploring a single high school model to expand opportunities and reduce duplication. They want to see updated labs, STEM spaces, art spaces, and flexible learning environments. Some elementary schools need continued updates so long-term planning may need to include additional elementary construction. Buildings must align with future academic pathways and community expectations.



### **Opportunities: Community and Partnerships**

MPS should be a central hub—identity, gathering space, and community connector. Partnerships with local businesses, non-profits and other community organizations will expand opportunities. Staff visibility in the community enhances trust and district reputation. Community collaboration is essential to support academic and operational goals.



### **Aspirations**

The board vision includes the following: being a destination district known for innovation and whole-child excellence, having a world-class high school offering robust academic, arts, and skilled-trades programs, a stronger sense of belonging for every student, and rich extracurricular and leadership opportunities. Additional aspirations include a deep community identity centered around public education and shared pride in MPS and being regionally recognized as a top academic district offering personalized learning pathways.



### **Results: Measures of Success**

Board members want metrics that include standardized test scores (though not the only measure), academic growth measures beyond absolute achievement, and postsecondary success and alumni outcomes data. They would also like to see measures on student belonging, well-being, and engagement metrics. Teacher/staff satisfaction and support indicators are important as well as community partnership metrics (participation, satisfaction, visibility).

# DRAFT Mission, Vision, and Values

## Mission Statement

MPS is committed to creating a safe, innovative, and student-centered learning community where every learner is challenged, supported, and inspired to reach their full potential.

## Vision Statement

Our graduates demonstrate exceptional knowledge, critical skills, and strong character necessary to achieve personal success and make a meaningful impact in their communities.

## Value Statements

### Growth and Achievement

*We aspire to excellence and encourage achievement, while providing the resources, guidance, and encouragement for every learner to find their own version of success.*

### Respect and Belonging

*We celebrate unique perspectives, uplift individuality, and treat every person with dignity and empathy in an environment where everyone feels welcome.*

### Resiliency

*We see challenges as opportunities, creating a space where all students and staff feel empowered to think critically, persevere courageously, and believe in themselves.*

### Trust

*We lead with integrity, communicate with transparency, and act with accountability, always honoring our commitments to students, families, and the community.*

### Innovation

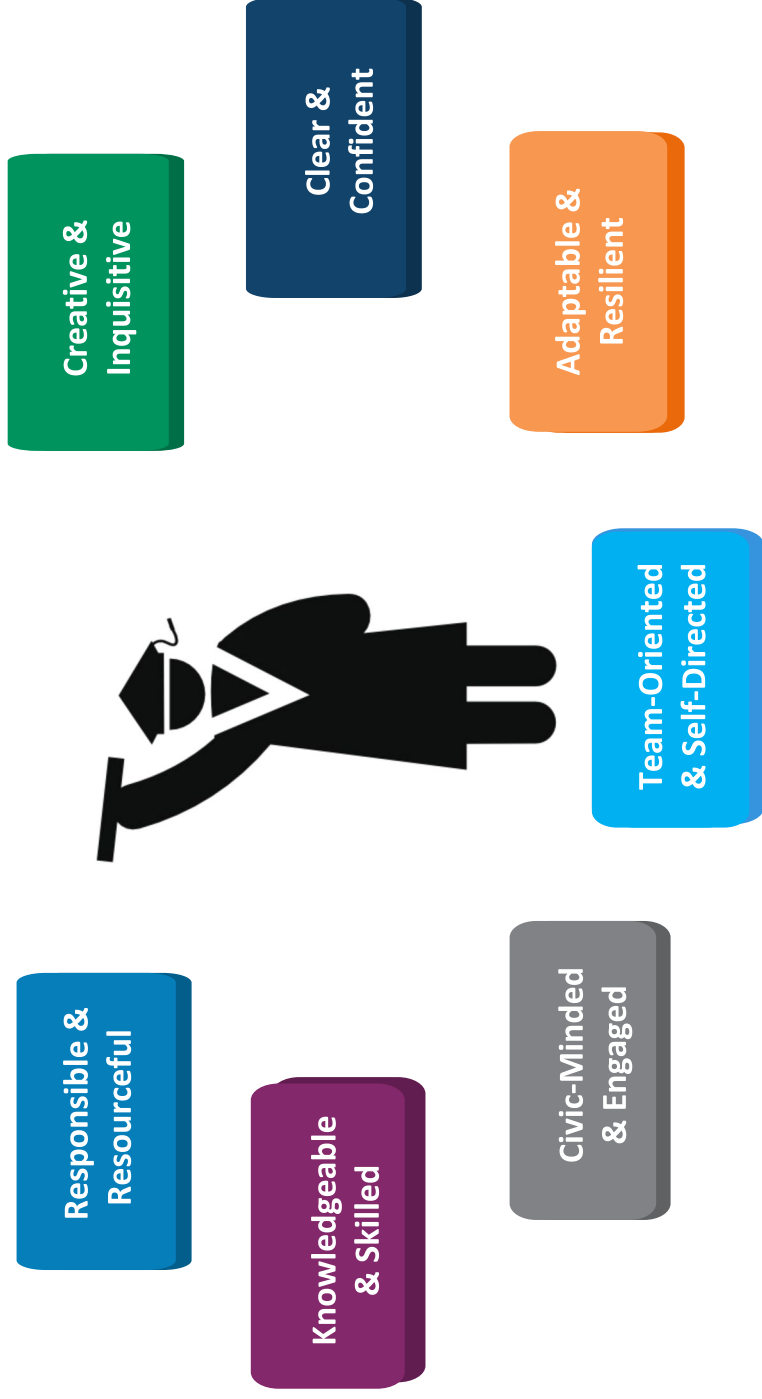
*We embrace bold ideas and thoughtful risk-taking, leveraging technology, resources, and partnerships to improve learning outcomes and best serve the needs of our students, staff, and school community in a constantly changing world.*

### Collaboration

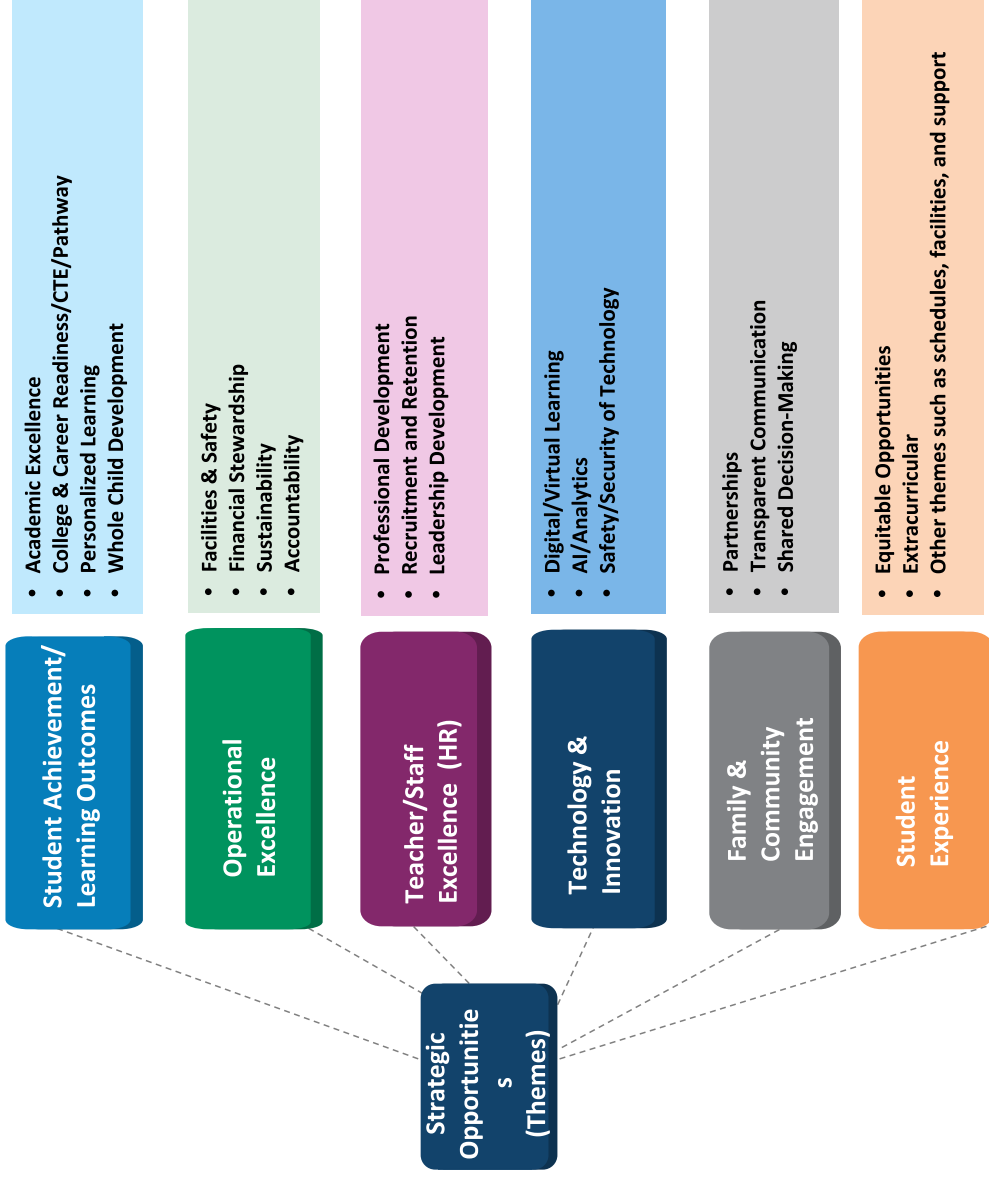
*We work intentionally to be a community-minded partner, championing relationships driven by innovation, teamwork, and collective action.*

# MPS Profile of a Successful Graduate

The MPS Profile of a Graduate embodies our vision brought to life: students who are purposeful, prepared, and inspired to thrive on any path they choose. It demonstrates our commitment to providing every graduate with the knowledge, skills, and mindset that will enable them to achieve lifelong success.







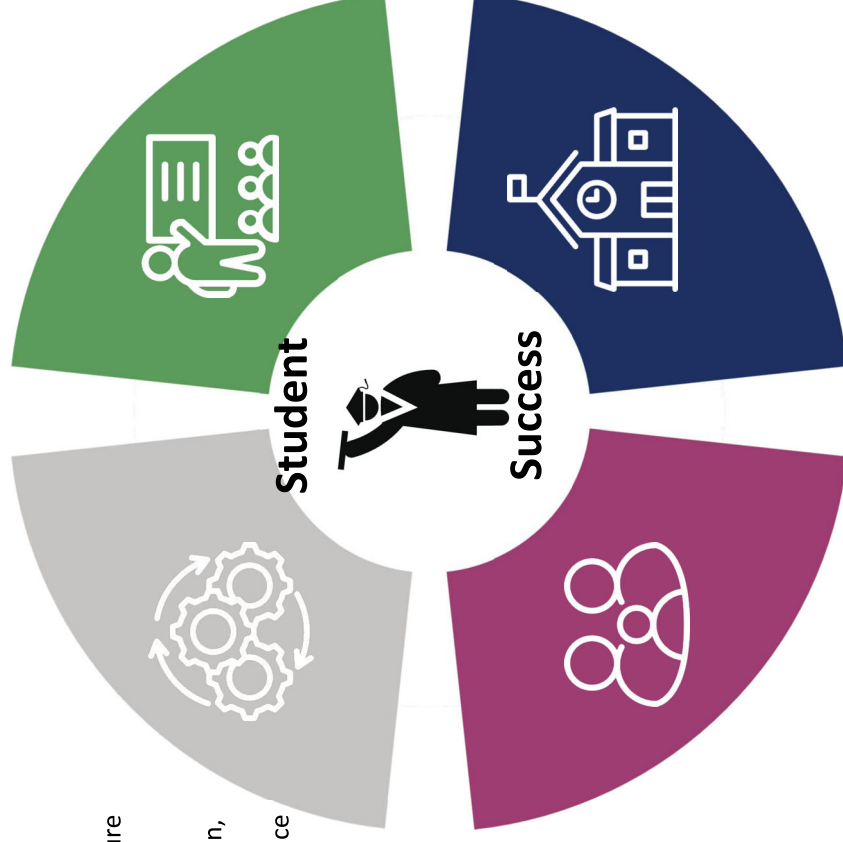
# MPS DRAFT Strategic Framework

## Operational Excellence

- Financial Stewardship & Sustainability (master plan for future growth and resource allocation)
- Accountability
- Teacher/Staff Excellence (Retention, Attraction, & Development)
- Technology (including AI, to enhance efficiency and effectiveness)
- Enhance Organizational Culture (aligned with core values )
- Timely and Transparent Internal Communication

## Family/Community Engagement

- Partner Institutions and Shared Problem Solving
- Community/Parent Engagement Opportunities
- Transparent Communication



## Teaching & Learning Excellence / Student Experience

- Student Achievement/Achievement Gaps (literacy focus)
- College and Career Readiness
- Curriculum, Instruction, Programming, Personalized learning, Digital/Virtual Learning, AI Use
- Equitable and Diverse Student Experiences and Opportunities
- Whole Child Development
- Staff Professional Learning & Growth
- Student Safety

## Infrastructure & Facilities

- Future-Ready, Safe, Innovative, Student-Centered Learning Environments
- Technology (to support teaching & learning and operations)
- Safety & Security (facilities, cybersecurity)

**Thank you**  
We welcome your  
questions and feedback.



LEAN Strategic Planning

