

## DEAR GRIZZLY FAMILY:

The 2025-26 school year is off to a strong start, thanks to your partnership and commitment to your child's education. Over the past few weeks, our classrooms have been filled with excitement, curiosity and new opportunities for growth. Our scholars are already making strides in their learning, and we look forward to building on the momentum we've created as a team. Thank you for your support in getting this school year off to a positive and productive start.



September marks the beginning of National Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15 - October 15). At YCS, we are proud of the many diverse backgrounds that enrich our schools every day, each contributing a unique perspective and experience to our community. The new Ypsilanti Puentes Multilingual School has been an exciting addition to the district, and it has been wonderful to see our scholars grow in confidence with their bilingual skills while exploring and embracing new cultures. I hope you will join me this Hispanic Heritage Month in continuing to learn from and celebrate one another.

As Fall quickly approaches, Homecoming is right around the corner! We look forward to celebrating with the community and welcoming back alumni of Ypsilanti Community Schools on Friday, October 10th. Join us in wearing your gold and black as we cheer on our Grizzlies. Additional information regarding school themes and celebrations will be available soon.

Among the many things we are excited about this school year is the introduction and implementation of our five-year strategic plan. The strategic plan is a great tool to reference as you follow the growth of the district over the next five years. The plan is anchored by three key priorities, including *accelerating academic excellence*, *advancing future-ready preparedness*, and *allocating resources equitably*. We encourage you to read it and engage with it as we work together to take meaningful steps towards district-wide success. The strategic plan will be on our website shortly.



I want to take a moment to highlight a proposal that will be on the ballot later this fall for families across Washtenaw County, including in Ypsilanti. On November 4, 2025, voters residing within the Washtenaw Intermediate School District's (WISD) service area will be asked to consider a 1 mill tax that would support the expansion of Career Technical Education (CTE) learning experiences from preschool through high school graduation.

**CTE helps students understand why they learn what they learn from PreK-12. It opens doors to college, careers, and beyond.** By engaging students through hands-on, applied, and experiential learning, they can explore who they are and what brings them joy, all while earning stackable credentials in high school as they prepare for fulfilling college and career pathways. You may know some of our district's CTE programs, such as Automotive Tech. Collision Repair, Cosmetology, Culinary Arts, and Drone & Aviation Tech.

**If a CTE millage is approved by voters, students in preschool, elementary, middle, and high school would benefit from new programs and the expansion of existing programs.**

Washtenaw County's CTE framework would be from PreK-12, with age-appropriate experiences that build on each other as students grow and learn:

- **PreK: Wonder** – Children utilize play and imagination, sparking curiosity about how the world works.
- **Grades K-5: Awareness** – Students discover personal interests and a sense of self, expanding their view of what is possible.
- **Grades 6-8: Exploration** – Students explore their interests and skills, and match them to potential career pathways.
- **Grades 9-12: Preparation** – Students connect academic content to careers through real-world, applied, and experiential learning and plan for their future.

We will be sharing more information about the CTE millage proposal across the district over the coming weeks, but I encourage you to take a little time to learn more at [www.washtenawisd.org/ctemillage](http://www.washtenawisd.org/ctemillage).



Lastly, as we get settled into the year, I want to emphasize the importance of attending school *all day, every day*. Consistent attendance is essential to every scholar's long-term success and academic growth. Your encouragement and involvement make a tremendous difference in helping our scholars feel engaged and motivated to succeed. Together, we will ensure every scholar has the opportunity to thrive in a supportive environment. Thank you for saying *YES* to *YCS*!

Sincerely,

Dr. Alena Zachery-Ross

Superintendent

