



YPSILANTI COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
STRATEGIC PLAN
2025 - 2030



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Dear Grizzly Nation

We are excited to invite you to explore the culmination of our collaborative efforts, the Ypsilanti Community Schools' Strategic Plan for the next five years. This plan is not just a document; it is our shared roadmap toward a brighter future, designed to ensure that each and every scholar, family, and staff member thrives in a district committed to innovation, excellence, and equity.

This is a pivotal moment for Ypsilanti Community Schools! With the invaluable input from our scholars, parents, educators, and community leaders, we have crafted a bold vision for what education can and should be in our district, and this journey is a collective effort. Achieving our ambitious goals requires the collaboration of our scholars, staff, parents, neighbors, businesses, and community leaders. Together, we will take meaningful steps toward realizing our vision. Our Strategic Plan is anchored by three key priorities:

1. Accelerating Academic Excellence
2. Advancing Future-Ready Preparedness
3. Allocating Resources Equitably

Imagine an Ypsilanti Community Schools where every scholar leaves our schools equipped to make a difference in the world. Picture schools where every child feels seen, heard, valued, supported, and inspired to dream big. Visualize a community united in its commitment to the success of our scholars. This is the Ypsilanti Community Schools we are building together because we ARE "Risk Takers, Barrier Breakers and Change Makers!"

We warmly invite you to engage with our strategic plan, available on our website and at local schools. We encourage you to read it, share it, and discuss it with others. Most importantly, we invite you to become an active participant in this exciting journey. Whether you volunteer at a school, join one of our committees, or simply encourage a scholar in your life. Your involvement is vital.

The future of Ypsilanti Community Schools shines bright, and with your partnership, our future will shine even brighter. Thank you for your continued trust, passion, and commitment to our scholars and schools.

Together, we will achieve greatness. Always remember we are... "Stronger Today, Stronger Tomorrow, Stronger Together!"




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VISION

Ypsilanti Community Schools envisions a future where every scholar thrives academically and personally within a trusted and socially just district. We are dedicated to fostering a strong sense of connection among families and scholars, ensuring that everyone feels valued and included. Our commitment to excellence is reflected in our consistently well-managed and organized approach, making YCS the preferred choice for education in our community.

MISSION

The purpose of YCS is to develop mindful, engaged scholars with the skill set, work ethic, and attitude to contribute to a community that honors diversity, equity and justice.



EQUITY STATEMENT



YCS is committed to providing an equitable and inclusive learning environment where all scholars, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, or learning style, have the opportunity to thrive. Equity is not just a goal; it is a fundamental principle that guides all of our decisions and actions.

We strive to:

- Address opportunity gaps and ensure that all scholars have access to high-quality education.
- Create a welcoming and inclusive school climate where all scholars feel valued and respected.
- Provide culturally responsive instruction that meets the diverse needs of our scholars.
- Build strong partnerships with families and the community to support scholar success.



FAMILY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

At Ypsilanti Community Schools, we believe family and community engagement is essential to creating an inclusive environment where every scholar can thrive. Our community-centered approach values the voices, expertise, and cultural wealth of our families, recognizing them as vital partners in their scholar's education.

To achieve academic excellence, we promote equity and inclusivity through culturally responsive teaching and leadership. By ensuring all voices are heard and respected, we work to dismantle deficit-based narratives and strengthen the partnerships that unite our community. At YCS, we also recognize the importance of ongoing reflection and adaptation in our engagement efforts by doing the following:

- Reflect on practices and seek family feedback to better serve our diverse community.
- Build equitable partnerships that empower families and drive systemic transformation.
- Foster a culture of trust, respect, and shared responsibility for scholar success.
- Honor the histories, experiences, and aspirations of our families and community.

When families and communities are truly engaged, scholars thrive—creating a brighter future for all. Together, we will ensure every family feels valued, respected, seen, and heard.

COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

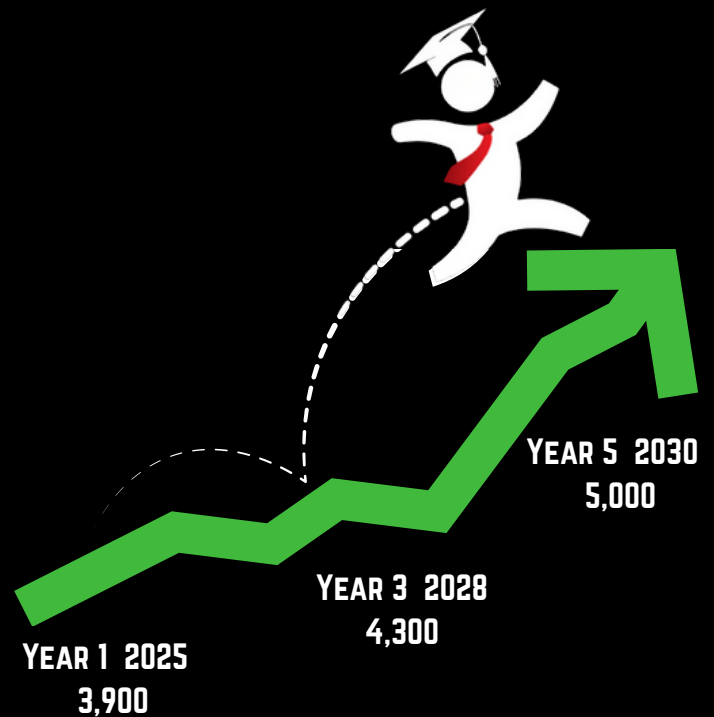


At YCS, we are anchored in a collegial, collaborative, and professional culture of collective responsibility. We prioritize creating a safe, orderly, and respectful environment for our scholars and staff, where everyone feels seen, heard, valued, respected, and cared for.

- **Equity as Our Foundation:** At YCS, we have a unique approach to decision-making. All our decisions are made through an equity lens, ensuring that the allocation of District and Building-Level resources is based on the unique needs of our scholars. We firmly believe that equitable access to resources is crucial for fostering an inclusive educational environment.
- **Leveraging District Resources:** Our schools effectively leverage resources from the district through our District Network. Building Leaders utilize our Talent Management Infrastructure, Leadership Network, Instructional Infrastructure, and Intense Student Support Network to address the non-academic needs of our scholars. This comprehensive support system is designed with a safety net that embodies the norms of pastoral care (care, support, safety, and membership), ensuring that every scholar receives the social, emotional, health, and nutritional support necessary to graduate from YCS future-prepared.
- **Driving Success Through Leadership:** At YCS, our building Leaders play a crucial role in leveraging district systems. They lead through research-based instructional leadership routines and teacher-collaborative routines for success. They employ our three drivers: the Problem-Solving Driver System, the Communication Driver System, and the Performance Management System, to ensure equitable resources for their scholars, staff, and school programs.
- **Effective Communication:** At YCS, we are committed to fostering effective communication. Our District Communication Driver System clarifies how information and vision flow throughout our organization. It provides ongoing learning opportunities for leaders in effective communication, creates pathways for internal information flow, and publishes essential information about our vision, plans, and performance metrics. We are dedicated to developing relationships that ensure our communications are responsive to diversity, inviting participation from various stakeholders, and collecting information that can inform district policies and procedures.
- **Our Commitment to the Future:** At YCS, we are dedicated to listening to our community and communicating a clear vision for the future. Together, we will continue to foster an environment where every facility is future-ready, and every scholar is equipped to succeed and thrive, guided by our unwavering commitment to equity and support.



WATCH US GROW SCHOOL ENROLLMENT



FINANCIAL GROWTH

- ✓ Growth of Fund Balance
- ✓ Continue to Garner Alternative Funding



PORTRAIT OF A YCS GRADUATE



LEAD LEARNER

- **Visionary:** Inspires self and others to pursue knowledge and growth.
- **Mentorship:** Actively supports peers in their learning journeys, fostering a culture of shared success.

CURIOUS INQUIRER

- **Inquisitive Mindset:** Constantly seeks answers to questions and explores new ideas and ways of thinking. Learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.
- **Research Skills:** Proficient in gathering, analyzing, and synthesizing information from diverse sources.

REFLECTIVE THINKER

- **Self-Aware:** Engages in introspection to understand strengths and areas for improvement.
- **Critical Analysis:** Evaluates experiences and information critically, making informed decisions based on reflection.

CREATIVE INNOVATOR

- **Imaginative Problem Solver:** Generates original ideas and approaches to challenges.
- **Risk-Taker:** Willing to experiment and embrace failure as a stepping stone to success.

ADAPTIVE COLLABORATOR

- **Flexible Team Player:** Adjusts to various roles within a team, contributing effectively to group objectives.
- **Effective Communicator:** Listens actively and articulates ideas clearly, fostering open dialogue and cooperation with diverse groups of people.

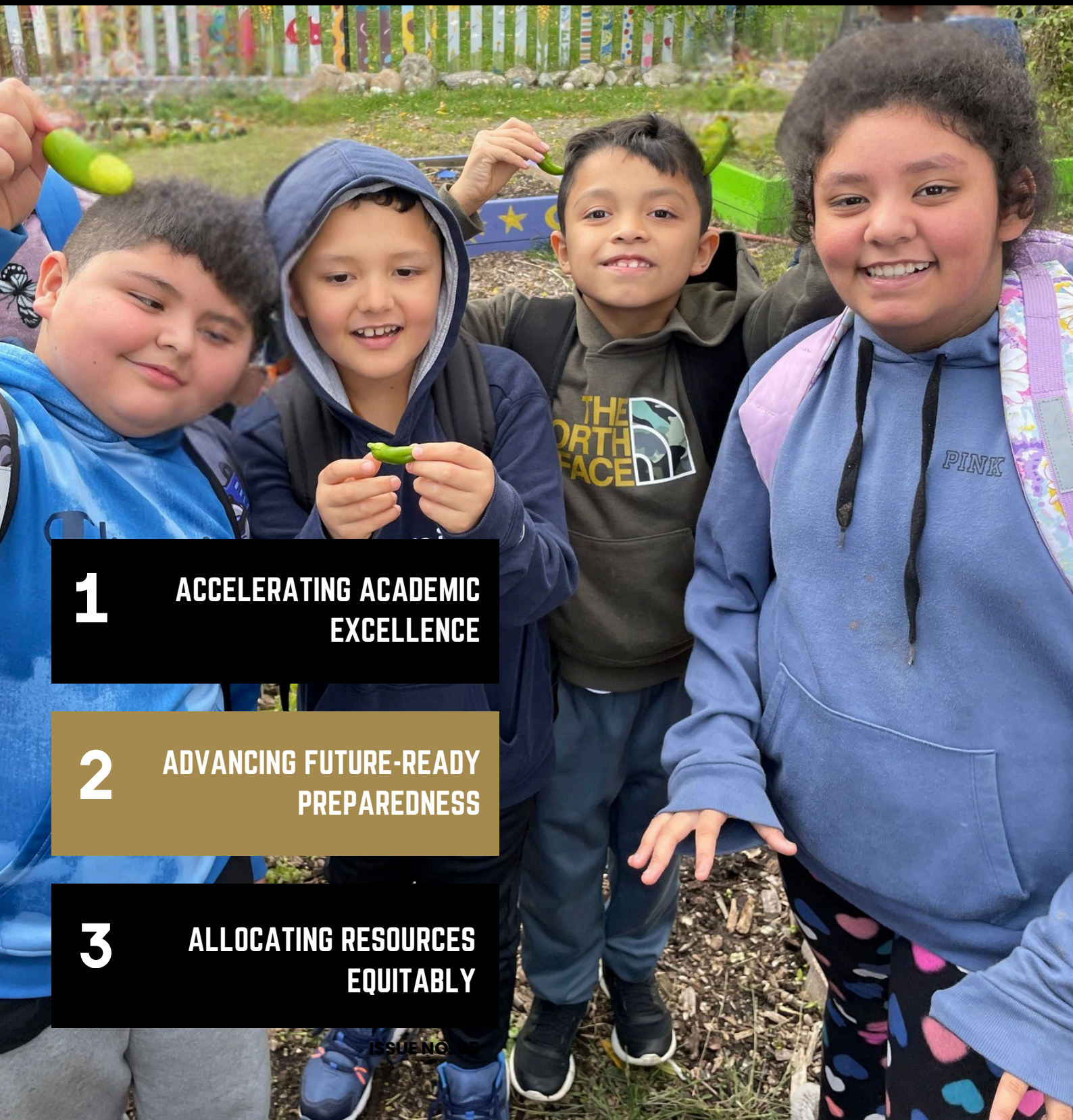
FUTURE-READY DESIGNER

- **Forward-Thinking:** Anticipates future trends and prepares accordingly, designing solutions for tomorrow's challenges.
- **Sustainable Mindset:** Incorporates principles of sustainability and ethics into design processes, ensuring responsible innovation.





YCS PRIORITIES



1

**ACCELERATING ACADEMIC
EXCELLENCE**

2

**ADVANCING FUTURE-READY
PREPAREDNESS**

3

**ALLOCATING RESOURCES
EQUITABLY**

ISSUE NO. 10

PRIORITY 1

Accelerating Academic Excellence



This priority refers to fostering high academic achievement through a rigorous curriculum and a highly engaging learning environment, where our scholars serve as lead learners and demonstrate mastery of competency-based learning expectations, while also addressing the individual needs of each scholar to ensure they thrive and grow.

Why is this important?

Accelerating academic excellence is crucial as it empowers scholars to achieve high levels of mastery in a rigorous and engaging learning environment, ensuring they thrive individually while preparing them for future success and positive contributions to society.

Goal 1.1: Increase the percentage of scholars reading at or above grade level by the end of third grade.

Goal 1.2: Increase the percentage of scholars meeting or exceeding proficiency on state standardized assessments in all content areas in grades 3-8 and 11.

Goal 1.3: Increase the percentage of scholars meeting or exceeding proficiency on the NWEA Norm-Reference assessments in reading and mathematics in grades K-11.

Goal 1.4: Increase the percentage of Multilingual Learners meeting or exceeding proficiency on the WIDA Assessment in all grade levels.

Goal 1.5: Increase the number of scholars who use executive function skills to self-regulate and self-direct their learning.

Goal 1.6: Increase the number of teachers who use proactive circles and other restorative practices to build community, belonging, and reduce behavioral interruptions that disrupt instruction.

Goal 1.7: Increase secondary student participation in state assessments.

Goal 1.8: Increase voice, choice, and agency by creating psychologically safe spaces of belonging where scholars can learn, lead, and thrive.

Goal 1.9: Increase staff/scholar relationships by holding explicit anti-racist discussions, practices, and taking actions to ensure respect for all of our scholars.

Goal 1.10: Increase the number of scholars and staff who leverage artificial intelligence practices and other innovations to expand their thinking, explore new ways of learning, and find ways of collaborating in the creation of new ideas.



MICIP ALIGNMENT

PRIORITY 1

Accelerating Academic Excellence



Teaching for Learning:

- **Mastery of Competency-Based Learning:** Ensure our scholars' mastery of competency-based learning expectations by implementing ambitious teaching practices and utilizing formative assessments to engage students actively in their learning journey, ensuring they demonstrate proficiency before progressing.

Instructional Infrastructure:

- **Enhanced Scholar Engagement:** Focus on student engagement by aligning instructional practices with naturalistic intelligence and providing place-based experiential learning STEM opportunities that encourage innovation and real-world application, thus enriching the learning experience and promoting deeper understanding.

Intense Student Support Network:

- **Rigorous Multi-Tiered Support System:** Provide a comprehensive multi-tiered system of support that provides targeted interventions at Tier 2 and Tier 3, ensuring that all scholars receive the necessary resources and assistance tailored to their individual needs, fostering an inclusive environment for academic success.
- **Culturally Relevant Communication:** Ensure all communication with families is accessible and culturally relevant, utilizing multiple languages and formats to engage families effectively and respect their cultural contexts.

Inclusive Engagement Opportunities:

- Provide a variety of engagement opportunities that are designed to be inclusive and reflective of the diverse cultural practices and values of our families, encouraging their active participation in the educational process.

Feedback and Collaboration:

- Actively seek input from scholars and families through surveys, focus groups, and community meetings to inform decision-making and program development, ensuring that their voices are heard and valued in shaping our educational environment.

PRIORITY 1

Accelerating Academic Excellence



Talent Management:

- **Inclusive Recruitment Strategies:** Expand targeted recruitment initiatives that reach diverse candidate pools, including partnerships with organizations, universities, and job fairs that focus on underrepresented groups.
- **Bias-Free Hiring Processes:** Utilize structured interview processes and training for the hiring committees to reach candidates that are local, virtual, and global.
- **Supportive Retention Programs:** Continue to innovate and expand mentorship and professional development programs that support the growth and advancement of diverse staff members, fostering an inclusive culture that values their contributions and encourages long-term retention within the organization.
- **Supportive Retention Programs:** Explore the ever-changing landscape of credentialing to include new grade bands, technology-based areas such as drone and aviation, and other advanced career opportunities. Develop ways to retain staff by creating flexible learning opportunities and workplace environments.

Instructional Leadership Routines:

- **Regular Walkthroughs and Observations:** Retool the framework to elaborate and refine frequent walkthroughs and observations to gather data on instructional practices, providing timely feedback that promotes reflective teaching and continuous improvement among staff.
- **Targeted Coaching and Mentoring:** Implement targeted coaching and mentoring programs that support educators in their professional growth, focusing on personalized strategies and resources that align with their individual needs and goals.
- **Modeling Best Practices:** Actively model effective instructional strategies and adult learning principles during professional development sessions, demonstrating best practices that educators can incorporate into their own teaching and learning environments.

PRIORITY 2



Advancing Future-Ready Preparedness

This priority emphasizes equipping our scholars for success by promoting goal setting, micro-credentialing, dual enrollment, and CTE certifications, while also offering opportunities such as the Seal of Biliteracy, International Baccalaureate (IB), STEM programs, Middle College, Spanish Immersion, Newcomer Centers, Magnet Schools, and integrating innovative approaches like Artificial Intelligence, Place-Based Education, internships, community service, makerspace, and fostering naturalistic intelligence.

Why is this important?

Advancing future-ready preparedness is essential as it equips scholars with diverse skills and experiences—through goal setting, micro-credentialing, and innovative programs—ensuring they are not only academically proficient but also adaptable and competitive in an ever-evolving global landscape.

Goal 2.1: Increase our overall high school graduation rate.

Goal 2.2: Increase the percentage of high school scholars who graduate in four years.

Goal 2.3: Increase the percentage of scholars who access and demonstrate proficiency in Career and Technical Education (CTE), Dual Enrollment programs, and International Baccalaureate (IB) as defined by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE).

Goal 2.4: Increase the percentage of Preschoolers who are ready to enter Kindergarten prepared.

Goal 2.5: Increase family engagement by building strong and effective partnerships with families to help our scholars thrive.

Goal 2.6: Increase instructional coaching support for our teachers by intentionally using evidence-based coaching practices.

Goal 2.7: Increase the number of weekly classroom walkthrough observations through the use of the iObservations tool.

Goal 2.8: Increase the use of evidence-based coaching practices provided by the building instructional coach weekly to support teachers.

Goal 2.9: Increase the number of staff who use the Collaborative Learning Cycle in their Building Network Teams to measure, evaluate, and monitor their MICIP effectiveness.

Goal 2.10: Increase the number of scholars and staff who use artificial intelligence tools and innovation to leverage and grow their thinking and drive their actions.



MICIP ALIGNMENT

PRIORITY 2



Advancing Future-Ready Preparedness

Teaching for Learning:

- Continue to design and implement a diverse, guaranteed, and viable curriculum that incorporates innovative learning opportunities, such as micro-credentialing and dual enrollment, the use of artificial intelligence, and new ideas to ensure that all scholars have equitable access to programs that prepare them for future success.

Instructional Infrastructure:

- Develop an instructional infrastructure that supports the integration of specialized programs and learning opportunities, providing the necessary resources and technology to facilitate equitable access for all scholars.

Intense Student Support Network:

- Establish a robust support network that identifies and addresses the unique needs of each scholar, offering tailored interventions and resources to ensure equitable participation in innovative learning opportunities and programs.

Talent Management:

- Continue to offer a comprehensive teacher mentoring and onboarding program, job-embedded coaching, and professional learning opportunities to ensure that all educators receive training on culturally responsive teaching practices that promote equity and inclusivity in the classroom that including future innovations to remain relevant in an ever-changing employment landscape.

Instructional Leadership Routines:

- Create and sustain instructional leadership routines that prioritize the equitable implementation of innovative programs, including regular feedback and support for educators, to enhance instructional practices and ensure all scholars are prepared for a rapidly changing world.

PRIORITY 3



Allocating Resources Equitably

This priority focuses on being intentional in securing equitable resource allocation across all areas—including technology, human resources, transportation, food service, custodial support, operations, and teaching and learning—so that every scholar is well-served, while also leveraging alternative funding sources to enhance our educational offerings.

Why is this important?

Allocating resources equitably is vital to ensure that every YCS scholar receives the necessary support and opportunities for success, regardless of their background, while maximizing the impact of available resources through our strategic funding initiatives.

Goal 3.1: Increase the retention of instructional and non-instructional staff.

Goal 3.2: Increase the number of diverse staff to reflect the diversity of our scholars in the district.

Goal 3.3: Decrease the percentage of scholars who are chronically absent.

Goal 3.4: Increase scholars' and staff access to social-emotional, behavioral, and mental health support.

Goal 3.5: Increase scholars' health support in schools by intentionally reducing scholar-to-service staff ratios.

Goal 3.6: Ensure equitable and transparent funding and resource distribution that meets the needs of scholars.

Goal 3.7: Equip scholars with modern learning spaces that support the right technological infrastructure and resources needed for success in an Artificial Intelligence environment.

Goal 3.8: Increase the number of scholars and staff who are actively engaged in the implementation of pilots, innovation, teacher action research, artificial intelligence, place-based experiential learning, and Magnet Schools.

Goal 3.9: Ensure that facilities are secured, fully equipped with the right modern infrastructure and maintenance practices to create a clean, safe, and healthy learning environment for scholars and staff.

Goal 3.10: Increase the use of artificial intelligence tools to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of services and resources throughout the district.



MICIP ALIGNMENT

PRIORITY 3



Allocating Resources Equitably

Teaching for Learning:

- Continue to identify resources and funding to develop, improve, and implement a guaranteed viable curriculum that integrates equitable access to resources and technology, ensuring all scholars can engage in high-quality learning experiences tailored to their individual needs and backgrounds.

Instructional Infrastructure:

- Establish resources and funding to support a robust instructional infrastructure that provides equitable access to necessary educational tools and support services, enabling all educators to deliver effective instruction and fostering an inclusive learning environment for every scholar.

Intense Student Support Network:

- Create a comprehensive support network that offers targeted interventions, financial support, and resources for scholars requiring additional assistance, ensuring that all scholars receive the personalized support they need to thrive academically and socially, regardless of their circumstances.

Talent Management:

- Continue to fund and support the recruitment, retention, and development of a diverse workforce that reflects the community we serve, providing ongoing professional development and resources to ensure all staff members are equipped to support equitable learning outcomes for every scholar.

Instructional Leadership Routines:

- Implement and support consistent instructional leadership routines that prioritize equitable resource allocation and support for educators, including regular walkthroughs and observations, coaching, and mentoring, to enhance teaching practices and promote an environment where all scholars can excel.

THEORY OF ACTION



IF YPSILANTI COMMUNITY SCHOOLS...

- Accelerates learning through innovation and high standards with input from scholars, staff, and community leaders for ALL scholars;
- Empowers leaders and educators to use their voice and choice to meet scholars' needs;
- Implements a scholar-led assessment system to ensure the mastery of competency-based measures;
- Provides quality professional learning opportunities for all staff;
- Aligns resources equitably to support schools based on their unique needs;
- Ensures effective use of district resources in schools;
- Meets MICIP expectations intentionally across all schools;
- Delivers necessary services and interventions for scholar and staff success;

THEN...

- All YCS scholars and staff will have their individual needs met, be challenged, and grow.
- Our community will strive for excellence through innovation and equitable practices, fostering a sense of belonging for all.
- Transformative programs will attract and retain scholars and families, while educators continuously strengthen their practices to support diverse needs.

FIVE YEAR OUTLOOK



As we look ahead to the next five years, YCS is committed to cultivating a dynamic educational environment that emphasizes STEAM, International Baccalaureate (IB) programs, and Dual Language Immersion/Multilingual Learning through experiential learning experiences. This vision aligns with our three strategic priorities: **Accelerating Academic Excellence, Advancing Future-Ready Preparedness, and Allocating Resources Equitably.**

We will continue to enhance our culturally-responsive and highly engaging place-based curriculum by integrating rigorous **STEAM initiatives, IB frameworks, and Dual Language Immersion/Multilingual Learning** that challenge our scholars to think critically and creatively. Our focus will include innovative curriculum development through place-based and project-based learning, ongoing professional development for educators, and data-driven strategies to monitor and adjust instructional practices effectively to meet the educational needs of our scholars. To equip our scholars for success in a rapidly changing world, we will prioritize expanding our partnerships with local businesses, post-secondary institutions, and other organizations as we continue to leverage Artificial Intelligence, new technologies yet to be developed, and the future-ready digital tools that our scholars will need to be ready to lead and transform the future.

We will continue to co-design PreK-12 experiential learning pathways that engage our scholars as lead learners, thinkers, creators, collaborators, innovators, and change makers of the future. Recognizing that equitable resource allocation is vital for achieving our goals, we will ensure funding is directed toward innovative and transformative programs that support STEAM, IB, and Dual Language Immersion/Multilingual pathways.

Our commitment to these educational experiences will not only accelerate academic excellence but also prepare our scholars to thrive in a global society, creating an inclusive and empowering experience that equips every scholar for a successful future.



KEYS TO SUCCESS

Ypsilanti Community Schools (YCS) is embarking on a transformative journey to turn vision into action over the next five years (2025 to 2030). Guided by our commitment to equitable, innovative, and exceptional education, we will advance with focus, discipline, and accountability to ensure sustainable success for every student.

-  **Sustainability Planning:** Crafting detailed plans that outline leaders, resources, progress metrics, and potential challenges for each action.
-  **Initial Launch:** Piloting and monitoring strategic actions to refine them before district-wide implementation.
-  **Full Implementation:** Executing well-supported initiatives across the district for meaningful, measurable impact.
-  **Sustained Success:** Committing to ongoing monitoring and refinement to maintain the long-term effectiveness of our efforts.

Driving Success Through Leadership and Collaboration

Dedicated teams, equipped with passion and expertise, will lead each priority area, ensuring every strategic step aligns with our goals. Our goals will be established and monitored, while strategies for systemic improvement will guide the execution of the YCS Strategic Plan. Open communication and collaboration will serve as our foundation, with regular updates and feedback shaping decisions that impact our scholars, staff, Board and the wider community.

Strategic Resource Alignment and Adaptability

People, funding, facilities, and time will be strategically aligned to sustain the plan's viability. Implementation will unfold through a measured approach, with continuous monitoring and adaptability ensuring progress toward our long-term goals.

This Strategic Plan will guide us to ensure that our scholars strive, drive and thrive.
We Are Stronger Together!

STRATEGIC PLAN PROCESS



The YCS Strategic Plan was developed through a collaborative process that included extensive community engagement. Key activities included:

- **Community Surveys:** Online and paper surveys were distributed to parents, scholars, staff, and community members to gather input on their priorities for the district.
- **Focus Groups:** Focus groups were conducted with diverse groups of stakeholders, including scholars, parents, teachers, administrators, and community leaders.
- **Town Halls:** Town hall meetings were held to provide the community with an opportunity to learn about the strategic planning process and provide feedback.
- **School Site Councils:** Input was gathered from school site councils to ensure that the needs of individual schools were reflected in the plan.





STRATEGIC PLAN CONTRIBUTORS

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OUR SCHOOLS



Early Learning Centers

Beatty Early Learning Center

Ford STEAM Early Learning Center

Perry Early Learning Center

Elementary Schools

Erickson Elementary School

Estabrook Elementary School

Holmes STEAM Elementary School

Ypsilanti International Elementary School

Ypsilanti Puentes Multilingual School

Middle Schools

Ypsilanti Community Middle School

YPSI Connected Community School (K-8)

High Schools

Ypsilanti Community High School

A.C.C.E. (Achieving College & Career Education)



THANK YOU!!

“Stronger Together”

**is more than a tagline to us
– it is our unwavering commitment to
every student, educator, and community member.
Through academic acceleration, innovation,
and collaboration, we are not just preparing
for the future...we are creating it.**

**Together, we will ignite potential,
inspire excellence,
and build a legacy that endures.**

**Together, YCS will achieve our vision
– and leave a lasting mark of EXCELLENCE
for generations to come.**

