

2022-23 Year End Board Report

August 2023



Students First.
Equity.
Inclusion.
Social Justice.

STUDENTS FIRST



MISSION

To promote the continuous improvement of achievement for every student while providing high-quality service to our customers through leadership, innovation, and collaboration.

VISION

To be the leader in empowering, facilitating, and delivering a high-quality, boundary-spanning, educational system that educates all children through an equitable, inclusive, and holistic approach.

BOARD GOALS

Because we put students first, the Washtenaw ISD Board of Education has established these goals, adopting a lens of equity, inclusion, and social justice.



Goal #1 –

Lead, develop, and support a culture of equity and opportunity while disrupting systemic racism in coordinated efforts for underserved students from birth through college and career in Washtenaw County.



Goal #2 –

Cultivate and nurture an organizational culture of equity, inclusion, and social justice by leading sustained education, engagement, and action and intentionally disrupting systemic racism within WISD and our partnering schools and organizations.



Goal #3 –

Lead and advocate for policies and practices that support equity, and inclusion, and the disruption of systemic racism on the local, state, and national levels.

COMMITTED TO STUDENTS & FAMILIES



Washtenaw ISD's Board of Education is committed to resource allocation, policy, and practice designed to close the opportunity gap to ensure equitable educational access for all students, with a specific focus on achieving an equitable system for students in poverty, students with disabilities, and students of color.

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GOAL 1:

Lead, develop, and support a culture of equity and opportunity while disrupting systemic racism in coordinated efforts for underserved students from birth through college and career in Washtenaw County.



Assess, review and report on the needs of young people and their families through an equity, inclusion, and educational equity lens

Systems Mapping with Community Mental Health

Washtenaw County Community Mental Health (CMH), the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office (WCSSO), the Washtenaw County Prosecutor's Office, local community leaders, and the National Assessment Center worked together to create a map of the current juvenile justice system to identify gaps and opportunities to build diversion programming to disrupt the pathways to the justice system. The data revealed the need to create a local center to support youth and families that is culturally competent and trusted by the community it is intended to serve in order to build alternatives to the child welfare and justice system. Initial funding has been secured from the county government and a small launch is scheduled to target services and programming to communities in the 48197/98 zip codes. The local center will also be positioned to advocate and secure funding for program development to serve the intended youth and families to fill the local community gaps and needs as they are identified, playing a neutral systems role.

Aligning and Leveraging Resources

The Education Project (EP), formerly Education Project for Homeless Youth, underwent a system change to incorporate support for students identified as at-risk as indicated by McKinney Vento eligibility, attendance indicators, mental health requests, and other similar indicators. Changes included the addition of interns from Eastern Michigan University and the University of Michigan, funded by the Mental Health and Public Safety Preservation Millage, to perform case management, and integrating chronic absenteeism staff, Trusted Parent Advisors, and clinical social workers into a comprehensive case review process driven by a streamlined referral process. This change allowed the EP to more effectively support students who had needs in more than one category and wraparound them. The EP provided support to more than

800 youth and caregivers using this strategy. One parent of homeless students provided the following feedback on this new process, which allows for regular follow-up with families:

"I felt invisible when homeless - invisible to the world, but I was seen by you."

Through an increased focus on identifying support for youth with substance use disorders, the Community and School Partnerships (CSP) department identified a potential partnership with Project Success, an initiative operated by Chelsea Hospital. The purpose of Project Success is to provide direct support for youth with substance use disorders in schools while minimizing student discipline. This partnership resulted in a partnership between Project Success and both Whitmore Lake High School and Lincoln Consolidated High School.

Working to align other community partners to support adolescent mental health and substance use disorders has resulted in several additional partnerships working towards increased services for youth. A new partnership with Community Mental Health Partnership of Southeast Michigan (CMHPSM) has opened the door for new prevention, early intervention, and crisis support for youth with substance use disorders. Local substance use providers have convened with CSP staff to discuss youth needs for supports both in school buildings and in the community at-large.

Additionally, planning for two community presentations on local drug trends facilitated by Jermaine Galloway (aka "Tall Cop") in September 2023 has begun and been funded by CMHPSM. Similar partnerships to work systemically on mental health have also been in progress. Staff have been meeting with Michigan Medicine regarding the role of Regional Adolescent Health Services (RAHS) clinics in the schools and emergency psychiatric services to youth, Trinity Health to review their inpatient and partial inpatient options for youth, and other agencies such as UMATS, Home of New Vision, Corner Health and New Oakland to discuss other partnership options in the county.

Mental Health & Public Safety Preservation Millage Partnership

In August 2022, the Millage Advisory Committee voted to support a grant to WISD in the amount of \$2,312,658 to support a broad spectrum of mental health and substance use activities that were either already existing and needed sustainability funding or were new. Of the proposed activities, the following is an update of those performed during the 2022-2023 school year:

31n Match Direct Impact

Match funding received from the Millage was used to support case management services provided by master's-level social work candidate interns from Eastern Michigan University and

University of Michigan Schools of Social Work. These individuals assisted the 31n clinical team with providing 1:1 therapy and group Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. They also conducted needs assessments of more than 800 children and parents/caregivers identified as at-risk by districts.

Mini Grants

During the 2022-23 school year, 16 middle and high schools received a mini grant totaling more than \$40,000. Projects included, but were not limited to, the development of mental health libraries and speakers/assemblies to increase awareness.

Youth Mental Health First Aid

The millage continues to support the implementation of Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) program. During the 2022-2023 school year, WISD scheduled six trainings, with three completed. There were 35 school staff trained, representing PSAs, WISD, AAPS, WEOC, and community partners such as YMCA and Ozone House.

Substance Use Disorders

As indicated above, this first year saw a focus on development of relationships with providers in the community. Emphasis was placed on developing resources for outreach and awareness (Tier I) and identifying adolescent providers and/or barriers to services (Tier II). Partnership development included:

Handle with Care

Staff time to administer and train on Handle With Care (HWC) is also now a millage-funded initiative. During 2022-23, there were 690 HWC notices submitted representing 1,075 students. Law enforcement jurisdictions submitting reports included the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office, Ann Arbor PD, Pittsfield PD, Saline PD, Ypsilanti PD, Michigan State Police, U-M PD, and Milan PD for students in eight of nine districts, WEOC, WISD, 10 PSAs, and six non-public schools.

Strong Roots Cafes

Strong Roots Cafes is a follow-up to Mom Power, giving parents a chance to continue to convene, review strategies learned in the Mom Power curriculum, and develop a community of practice and support network. During the first three quarters of FY23, WISD conducted four Strong Roots Parent Cafes (SRPC) with 31 program participants, or 18 unduplicated participants.

Systems Outreach and Education

WISD team members conducted individual meetings with providers to develop relationships and discuss adolescent mental health needs and gaps in adolescent services. During the 2022-23 school year, 19 community partner agencies with more than 120 people were engaged during 24 different convenings.

Inter-Agency Student Support Coordinator

Due to timelines associated with both the formal contract for services with budget and human resource processes, an Inter-Agency Student Support Coordinator was formally approved in May 2023, with interviews occurring that same month. This position will offer individualized crisis level support and bridge needs between youth, family, school, CMH and other mental health providers, law enforcement, and other community partners as needed. An offer was made and accepted in June with the new Coordinator slated to begin in the 2023-24 school year.

Strengthen trust and relationships between WISD, Local Education Agencies (LEAs), and Public School Academies (PSAs)

Customized Professional Learning and Support

The Achievement Initiatives (AI) team continued to offer customized professional learning and support during the 2022-23 year, including targeted support provided to identified schools in the county. The Responsive Teaching Coalition at Lincoln Consolidated Schools is particularly noteworthy because it included the following monthly work with Lincoln's K-12 PLC leaders:



Assessment Literacy:

- Assessment Types / Balanced Assessment System (connect to Performance Matters)
- Developing Success Criteria/Learning Scales
- Assessment Design
- Formative Usefulness
- Using standards and assessment to inform instruction
- Planning for culturally and historically responsive instruction (connected to past work with standards)

Reflect/Process/Plan/Apply:

- Develop personal learning/application goals
- Process and connect multiple current/past learning experiences
- Apply learning to personal classroom practice (K-5 Mathematics focus)
- Prepare to support learning/application of PLC teams
- Reflect on application/implementation and share what we are learning through doing

The Responsive Teaching Institute with Dr. Terry Flenbaugh throughout the year with LCS also helped to provide additional coaching and support.

Early Literacy Diverse Text Sets

Success by 6 Great Start Collaborative received an early literacy hub grant from MDE. Our goal was to distribute books including diverse characters by diverse authors to families and child care providers. We partnered with Ypsilanti District library to distribute books to children and families during their summer pop-up libraries where we distributed 130 books. In addition, we partnered with Child Care Network to identify childcare providers who served low income families and supplied 15 providers with a box of 27 hardcover books. The eight preschool classrooms at Ford Early Learning Center also each received a box of 27 books to help replace some of the books lost in the fire. In the second phase of the grant, we partnered with WISD Early Childhood staff to design a training based on the Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy. In addition to the three hour training, each of the 25 childcare providers enrolled in the training received over \$400 of books and materials based on the early literacy essentials for their classrooms.



Preschool Inclusion

The Early Childhood department’s work around Preschool Inclusion has focused on informing stakeholders both at the administrative level, SEAM, and the provider level, Preschool Special Education Network. Both of these groups have gained insight into the current state of preschool inclusion at the state, ISD, and local level. They have received local data and training in accurate reporting of preschool environments so we can more effectively track our progress.

The Preschool Special Education Network has worked to build understanding and awareness of preschool LRE, transition practices that support children moving into more natural environments, and problem-solving local challenges with the provision of inclusive services.



Below is a 2022-2023 summary of children and families that participated in Early On programs:

Referrals Processed	Evaluations Completed	Current Enrollment	Percent MMSE
987	374	417	34%
Socialization Opportunities	Parent Support and Training	Child Outcomes	Family Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 playgroups per week; 3 locations • Motor group for pre- walkers and equipment users 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hanen Groups (2 sessions of each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It Takes Two to Talk ○ More Than Words 	<p><u>State Target Met</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive social emotional skills • Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills • Use of appropriate behaviors <p><u>Achievement of IFSP Outcomes - 95%</u></p> <p><u>Progress toward IFSP Outcomes - 100%</u></p>	<p><u>State Target Met</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know their rights • Effectively communicate needs • Help children develop and learn <p><u>Parent Satisfaction with Home Routines - 94%</u></p>

Strengthening Trust and Relationships with Public School Academies

A new county leadership group was formed that consists of all local district superintendents, public school academy leaders and ISD department leaders. This group met in April for a half day and began building relationships with one another, learned about ISD supports and resources, and reviewed several new initiatives. David Judd from the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) joined the group and reviewed state data collection protocols. This is planned to be an ongoing group that will meet several times a year and have a group email thread for questions and support.

WISD continues to maintain the countywide public health listserv for local districts, public school academies, and private schools.

Partner to improve access to services, supports and opportunities

My Future Fund Children's Savings Accounts

This was a building year for the My Future Fund program. In collaboration with Washtenaw County Government, WISD's countywide children's savings account initiative will give thousands of students a jump start on saving and planning for college and career training. In preparation, the My Future Fund program hired two staff members, convened the community advisory committee five times, presented to nine Boards of Education prior to their signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the program, created program rules, and developed outreach materials including a website. The My Future Fund program was introduced to 29 schools in May 2022. Over 7,000 rising 2nd-6th grade students will receive a My Future Fund account in the first round of allocations with an initial deposit of \$25 or \$500 depending on their eligibility.



Trusted Advisor Initiative

The Trusted Advisor (TA) initiative at its core works to support a culture of equity by directly supporting families from traditionally marginalized groups and by working to change the systems that have marginalized them. The research is clear that children are more likely to be successful in school and life with healthy and stable caregivers and families. In the last fiscal year, the TA initiative has garnered \$300,000 in grants to serve families with basic needs, provide support for those experiencing or at-risk for homelessness, and/or provide social emotional support for caregivers. Trusted Parent Advisors (TPAs) have hosted 62 peer-to-peer Parent Cafes, which have been attended by 109 caregivers. TPAs have provided direct service to 354 families in multiple ways, including warm handoffs to organizations, cleaning supply and book distribution and CPR training. The TA initiative contributed to the development of the Strong Roots Parent Café discussion prompt card deck and is currently participating in the pilot and research of Strong Roots Parent Cafes in collaboration with Zero to Thrive and Be Strong Families.

Mental Health Coordination

During the 2022-23 school year, WISD was able to secure additional investment for clinical mental health service expansion and systems-level work using state-appropriated 31n funding and match funding from the Washtenaw County Mental Health and Public Safety Preservation Millage. We had 3.25 FTE clinical staff providing direct service in the Lincoln, Milan, Whitmore Lake and Ypsilanti communities. At times, services were also provided to other communities in

coordination with the service providers. Approximately 85 youth were served more than 350 times, either individually or in a small group format, totaling more than 1,535 hours of clinical support.

Clinical case coordination also occurred with Washtenaw County Community Mental Health, as well as other community providers. By working with our local school districts, needs were identified to share funding to address systems-level needs. We will be expanding to add the following positions: Clinical mental health supervisor, three additional clinical staff with expanded contractual days, a crisis clinician working with Michigan Medicine Psychiatric Emergency Services and Trinity Health, and a LEA mental health coordinator. We also launched a substance use youth/mental health advisory with local district staff to help guide programming needs and coordination of services.

Adult Education

WISD continues to provide Adult Education in Ypsilanti in partnership with Washtenaw Community College, as well as with the Washtenaw County Sheriff’s Office and Ann Arbor Public Schools for programming in the Washtenaw County Jail. Total students for the 2022-23 school year was 240 with the following Educational Functioning Level (EFL) performance data*:

Provider	Registered	ABE/ASE Enrollment	ABE/ASE EFL Gains	ABE/ASE Attend. Hours	ESL Class Enrollment	ESL Class Enrollment	ESL EFL	Average Attend. Hours	Total Pre-Test	Post-Test Rate
WCC	199	67	32	88.48	135	41	81.98	182	109	59.9%
Wash. Co. Jail	41	41	0	19.50	0	0	0	16	0	0.0%
Total:	240	108	32	108	135	41	82	198	109	54.24%

Career and Technical Education

After a year and a half of discussion, review of local student data, job forecasting data, and issues of equity, all nine local district superintendents voted to share the costs of a county-level Career and Technical Education (CTE) Director position housed at Washtenaw ISD. The role will focus on creating a more equitable CTE system in Washtenaw County and provide more access for students who currently have limited access to CTE courses, internship and apprenticeship options. This position was drafted, created, posted, and filled in the second half of the year. Ryan Rowe was selected as our new CTE Director.



GOAL 2:

Cultivate and nurture an organizational culture of equity, inclusion, and social justice by leading sustained education, engagement, and action and intentionally disrupting systemic racism within WISD and our partnering schools and organizations.

Build trust and honor multiple perspectives across the district

Cybersecurity Risk Assessments

The Technology Department is working in coordination with all staff over the next nine months on the Risk Assessment Process. This includes reflecting on their individual risk in their positions, as well as to share voice and perspective on the status of their department's risk as it relates to hardware and software tools, business processes, and stakeholder engagement. The insight and knowledge gained through these discussions has proven valuable to educate each other and identify gaps and potential areas of focus. As the departments finish their initial risk assessment sessions, the Technology Department will present findings to the Board of Education and work with staff and supervisors to increase security for the agency and the data of our staff and students.

Equity Teams

Equity teams remain a key mechanism to address our racial development efforts at the team, school, and department level. Amy Olmstead-Brayton and Greg Myers facilitated three sessions for teams across the district during the winter and spring. We brought the facilitation in-house with a focus on providing space to build and strengthen a nurturing learning community focused on ensuring equity is a part of our ongoing work and using the Courageous Conversations About Race (CCAR) Protocol to engage in inquiry cycles that center race. Both Amy and Greg are certified practitioners of the Courageous Conversation approach and were able to bring tremendous skill to the facilitation of the equity teams.

We had participation from 12 active equity teams for our meetings this year with team-level work between sessions. These E-teams are responsible for:

- Engaging in a process of investigation to discover how race impacts their personal and professional beliefs and behaviors.
- Leading the school/central office staff in the examination of individual and institutional culture as it relates to equity and anti-racism.

- Establishing a professional learning community in which adults can effectively develop the skills and knowledge necessary to improve student performance and eliminate racial achievement disparities.

WISD's Vision, Mission and Values

The district dedicated time this year to work on our vision, mission, and values. This has been a process that intentionally lifted many voices in multiple different ways.

The vision work started with listening sessions with a number of community groups. The information from those sessions was brought forward to help ground the visioning writing process. We worked with ZingTrain to hold a vision writing session. Over 25 people from different roles and teams from the ISD as well as community and board members attended the vision session.

The mission development was also done with ZingTrain with a diverse group of staff, several community partners, and WISD board members. After groups blended their ideas into a mission statement, it was later further refined by a small subset of attendees.

The values were shaped by the original listening sessions and work that the Cabinet leadership team did to understand the community defined values. They selected 28 different values that we then brought to all staff on Opening Day. Our staff engaged with the values and identified those that most resonated with them. That narrowed it down to nine values that have become our draft values.

The values that had the most selections by staff were:

- Love, humanity, and empathy
- Centering students
- Communication
- Integrity
- Belonging
- Equity
- Positive relationships
- Multiple perspectives
- Interconnectedness

The components of the long-range plan will be pulled together over the summer for final draft and feedback in the fall.



Teacher Action Research

During the 2022-2023 school year, Ypsilanti Community Schools (YCS) teachers were invited to participate in an annual active Teacher Action Research (TAR) cycle to intentionally support them in shifting their mindset from a teacher evaluative-centered focus to a student-centered learning focus.

The Teacher Action Research experience created a safe space for teacher agency, provided a viable process for reflecting on and improving instruction, and served as evidence of student learning as a result of intentional examination and change in instruction through an equity lens. As literacy instruction through an equity lens was the focus for the 2022-23 school year, most teachers in TAR focused on reading or writing instruction, as this process can be the gateway to accessing content knowledge that is culturally responsive to the needs of the diverse student population. This included:

- Five whole group meetings held on district scheduled professional learning days.
- Weekly 1-1 meeting times with teachers for individual coaching and classroom visits (scheduled by the teacher).
- Provided weekly/bi-weekly TAR Tip video updates to teacher researchers.
- [Final celebration with Cornelius Minor in May 2022.](#)

Equity Transformation Cycle with the Early College Alliance

An Equity Transformation Cycle (Listen, Uncover, Reimagine, Move, based on Street Data) was led with the Early College Alliance (ECA) at EMU principal and teaching staff in the spring and summer of 2023 to look at satellite data with a focus on Black students in the ECA program. Teachers gathered data on student agency and were led in disaggregating data to identify the next steps for them. With the data, teachers identified an issue that was surfaced, considered why it was happening, involved students in a plan for action, and planned to continue implementing the action in the fall of 2023.

Preschool Inclusion

This school year, WISD's Early Childhood department has worked closely with Ann Arbor Public Schools to merge the Early On programs under the Washtenaw Intermediate School District. Starting in August 2023, all Early On services will be coordinated by the WISD Early Childhood Department countywide. This merger was accomplished with the collaboration of the AAPS and WISD. This affords each family and child in Washtenaw County the opportunity to receive coordinated services from a single provider no matter where they live.



Build organizational structures and routines to support engagement across teams

Office of the Ombuds

The Ombuds office continues to provide a place for staff to discuss conflicts or other challenges they are having at work. We have established meetings between the Ombuds office, Superintendent's office, and HR department in order to be more proactive in our support for staff. We have also established stronger protocols for follow up and resolution for the items that come to the Ombuds office.



ZingTrain Leadership with Cabinet

Zingerman's is a local business that engages in a service-oriented and shared leadership mindset and structure. Their leadership development training provides models and "recipes" for building a culture of appreciation using a service-oriented approach and a clear personal vision connected to the organizational vision, along with many other strategies to challenge traditional hierarchical models of leadership. This leadership training was done with the entire Cabinet leadership team to develop their own leadership skills, as well as be in community with one another and support one another as leaders. The leadership sessions ran monthly from October to June, and leaders practiced between sessions to help build skills. At the end of the experience the cabinet group was asked to share some of the leadership skills they most valued learning.

Those included:

- Understanding the urgency vs importance tension
- Check in and feedback protocol for use with team members
- Change implementation framework
- Five compelling reasons why protocol
- Belief action cycle
- Mindful self-management

We ended the year of learning with a walk in Ann Arbor to learn about the history of some of the original Black neighborhoods.



Restorative Practices

WISD worked with Dr. Keisha Allen, Black Family Development Inc.'s Training Division, to provide requested training on restorative practices. Sessions were held in February 2023, March 2023, and June 2023. We were able to offer two sessions of the Introductory Session and two sessions of Circles training, and 55 participants attended from various districts. We are working collaboratively with Wayne RESA because they use the same trainer to expand the

number of dates and sessions to accommodate our needs locally. Plans are being made to routinely offer the Introductory and Circles training approximately 3 times a year for local district participants.

Develop processes that encourage and promote staff voice in shaping organizational practices

WISD Policies and Practices Workgroup

We have formed a Policy and Practices Workgroup to review our policies, administrative guidelines, written procedures, and informal practices through an equity lens. We invited all staff to participate and over 40 people plus nearly all of the 30 cabinet members signed up to participate. This will allow us to form 4 working groups to address various policies and practices. The workgroup will engage for 3-5 years and one product will be a dynamic staff manual that documents key processes and procedures and how they align with our organizational policies. The group met as a whole and will be moving forward in smaller workgroups. We are working with our District Equity Leadership Team to plan and prepare for the working groups so we ensure that we are taking a strong equity approach.

Onboarding

One area in which we were intentional in lifting staff voices was in redesigning our onboarding process. After receiving numerous complaints from new staff that the onboarding and orientation sessions could be improved, we asked staff what they thought the process should look and feel like. Taking that information, we formed an Onboarding Committee made up of 17 staff members who volunteered to serve on the committee. The committee identified key ways we could lean into our equity, inclusion, and social justice commitments, address the technical needs, and create the kind of culture and support for new staff that they want. The committee met seven times to outline an onboarding process that starts when a job is offered and continues through the new employee's first year. The new process kicks off in August with a revamped orientation session for new staff, a September bus tour of our communities and services across Washtenaw County, and check-ins from our Ombuds office. We are committing to having our new staff feel welcomed and valued.

GOAL 3:

Lead and advocate for policies and practices that support equity, and inclusion, and the disruption of systemic racism on the local, state, and national levels.

Advocate

Special Education Funding Formula

The Special Education Funding Formula was reviewed by local superintendents, the Parent Advisory Committee, and the Michigan Department of Education. At this time, no changes were deemed necessary. The Funding Formula will continue to be evaluated by the local Special Education Directors and Superintendents, as well as WISD administration to ensure equity in special education programs and services for students within Washtenaw County.

State Cybersecurity Planning

The Technology Department continues to engage with state-level organizations to raise awareness around the importance of educating all stakeholders on cyber awareness and protecting their individual and agency-level data. Through the lens of equity, this is yet another layer of the digital divide. Not all stakeholders own a personal technology device or have regular access. When they must interact in societal systems, they may find themselves more vulnerable to attack and uncertain about what to do next. This is particularly of concern for our stakeholders in lower socioeconomic statuses and impacts our communities of color at a higher rate.

We must advocate for equitable funding and educational resources to fill this divide with not only devices, but experience and ongoing knowledge to protect and use these devices in a safe and secure manner. The Technology Department continues to participate in various groups focused on cyber hygiene and recently hosted tabletop exercises for local and regional districts. These opportunities to share experiences and solutions are invaluable as we look to protect all community members that engage with our systems. In addition, staff are representing our education sector on the MI CyberSecurity Plan development for the State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program (SLCGP). For more information, visit www.michigan.gov/cybergrants.

Instruction-Related State Policies and Practices

Members of the Achievement Initiatives team participate in various state task forces to support and advocate for equitable policies and practices for students across the state. The General Education Leadership Network (GELN) meets monthly and provides a space for updates related to policy directly from MDE. In addition, GELN has a Legislative work group that reviews legislation and advocates for policies that support all students across the state. The Director of Instruction participates in GELN and this legislative work group. Other members of the AI team participate on the following task forces: Early Mathematics, Early Literacy Essentials, Disciplinary Literacy, Newcomer Support Meetings, English Language Learners meetings, Michigan Moves Month planning committee, and Michigan School Health Coordinator Association (MiSHCA).

Birth Through Five MDE Early Literacy Committee

The state-level Birth Through Five MDE Early Literacy Committee met once during the past year. During this meeting, strategies were discussed to address needs across the state of Michigan and the use of Intermediate School Districts as connectors for this work. Additional work for the future will be determined, including during the next meeting scheduled for September 2023. For the Early Childhood Action Network (ECAN) Advocacy Committee, a year-long agenda set the approaches used to advocate with the Governor's Office and the Michigan Department of Education. This aids all intermediate school districts and educational service agencies across the state in making sure they elevate the needs of programs that aid children and families across the state with the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP), Great Start Collaborative (Success by Six), and Early On programs.

Engage in Intentional Practice

Talent Together

The Paraprofessional-to-Teacher Certification Pilot Project has shown that we are able to fill slots in higher education teacher certificate programs in the field of special education (with waiting lists) and meet our goals of diversifying the education profession. As we worked with colleagues around the state, we discovered there was significant interest in building systems similar to what we have done in our county, but accessible across the state of Michigan. That was the impetus for the Michigan Talent Together Initiative. Since its launch earlier this year, 48 ISDs have come on board to create a consortium of ISDs working together to build an apprenticeship approach to teacher certification focusing on access for a group of educators that typically cannot access the profession (due to geography, funding, income, etc.). After some challenges around the state grant for Grow Your Own programming, the initiative ended up getting funded for \$66.5 million by the state legislature. Nearly 1500 applications were received for the cohort. The first group will start in the program in the Fall of 2023. This is an

example of WISD leaders and local Washtenaw school district leaders successfully advocating for a statewide system that creates new pathways for becoming a teacher.

Washtenaw My Brother's Keeper

Washtenaw My Brother's Keeper (WMBK) has been playing an increasingly important role in our community. Jamall Bufford, WMBK Project Specialist, serves on a number of boards and committees and has helped develop numerous programs for young people. These programs have centered on young men and boys of color. The advocacy for boys and young men of color has led to the creation of four flagship programs:

Program	Description	Highlights
50 Strong Breakfast	The 50 Strong Breakfast is an opportunity for monthly intergenerational fellowship. Black and Brown men of all ages can come together to break bread, network, share ideas and resources, and community build. Though the perspective and voice of Black and Brown men are centered, our breakfasts are open to anyone in the community that wants to attend.	Averaged 47 attendees, 15 high school aged and younger
Formula 734	Formula 734 engages local high school age and older Black and Brown men to encourage them to be thoughtful music artists and reflexive community leaders. They document their ideas and performances in a music album and capture the process in an accompanying documentary. Once per week they meet to provide a space for the men to talk freely as they collaborate to produce music while sharing their views, and their fears on life and manhood.	There have been 3 cohorts with 31 participants and 8 have returned to help mentor following cohorts
Community Leadership Revolution (CLR)	CLR Academy is a free youth sports academy that provides consistent mentorship, coaching and guidance for kids K-8 with ongoing summer programming directly in the neighborhoods of the most underserved Black and Brown youth. It uses restorative justice circle work, conflict resolution and mindful techniques such as yoga, journaling and meditation while providing sports sampling, nutrition education and exposure to books and new activities all summer long.	218 youth have participated in CLR this year across 5 sites. The CLR group also distributed 300 turkeys and 300 gallons of milk to Sycamore Meadows and South Side residents.
Young Men of Purpose	In partnership with Mentor2Youth, Parkridge Community Center and Christian Love Fellowship Church, the Young Men of Purpose program aims to increase the number of young Black and Brown men in Ypsilanti Community Schools successfully persisting through middle school and matriculating to attend high school. The areas of focus are academics, social/life skills, community service, self-development, leadership, college & career readiness and high school transition.	77 students participated in the program. 68% had grades improve and 87% maintained good attendance while in the program.

The community supports this body of work through significant grants and other funding from Washtenaw County Government, the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office, Washtenaw ISD, the Ann Arbor Community Foundation, the Washtenaw County Prosecutor's Office, and Pittsfield Township. The new additional funding through Pittsfield Township came due to the advocacy for these efforts by key township board members.

Connecting Communities Grant and Feasibility Study

During the 2022-23 school year, WISD was awarded the Connecting Communities Grant from Scio Township to conduct a feasibility study to construct a pathway connecting Scio Ridge Drive to Wagner Road and down to the Scio Woods Farm subdivision located off of Scio Church Road. Along the way, the pathway would connect to the existing pathways around High Point School, allowing staff, students, and community members to access the WISD campus and beyond more easily. This pathway would also put an existing AAATA bus stop within a ¼ mile walking distance of WISD campus. The feasibility study was completed in June 2023.

The results of the study showed that the cost of constructing of the entire length of the pathway would exceed the funds available from the grant; however, if the scope was reduced from Scio Ridge Dr. to Wagner Rd., the estimated cost to construct the pathway would fall within the funds available from the Connecting Communities Grant. Lastly, the feasibility study revealed the need for easements from property owners to the east of WISD. We continue to work with the homeowner's association (HOA) to have discussions around this opportunity. Pending favorable conversations with the HOA, we intend to apply for the construction portion of the grant in late August 2023.

Leadership

Superintendent Naomi Norman

Naomi Norman serves on MAISA's Instruction Committee. She also is on the executive board and governing committee for Talent Together. She was named as one of 24 Google GSV National Education Innovation Fellows.

Deputy Superintendent Cherie Vannatter

Cherie Vannatter serves on SEILN Critical Shortage Workgroup, MDE Communications Workgroup, Finance Workgroup, and the Preschool Inclusion Workgroup. She is also on the K-12 Alliance Special Education Advocacy Group and part of the design team for Talent Together.

Associate Superintendent Brian Marcel

Brian Marcel is on the Michigan School Business Officials (MSBO) Board and is on a subcommittee related to Investing in MSBO Members, which assesses opportunities for

scholarships to various MSBO professional development sessions, workshops, conferences. He continues to advocate for equity factors being considered for the awarding of the scholarships. He is also working on options to recruit college graduates into considering school business as a career choice.

Merri Lynn Colligan, Chief Information Officer

Merri Lynn Colligan is a member of the Michigan Education Technology Leaders (METL) and serves on several task forces including Cybersecurity, MiConnect, Workforce retention, and MISEN (Michigan State Educational Network) advisory. In addition, she was President of the Michigan Association for Educational Data Systems (MAEDS) Board, and currently is on the CyberSecurity Planning Committee for the State and Local Cybersecurity Grant. She advocates for equal access to connectivity and digital instruction for all students and equitable support for districts in the areas of connectivity and secure data integrity.

Holly Heaviland, Executive Director of Community and School Partnerships

Holly Heaviland serves on the Washtenaw County Community Mental Health (WCCMH) Mental Health Millage Committee, representing K-12 educators. Millage-funded programs include a broad array of initiatives, but among the most important is access to mental health and substance use recovery services for all Washtenaw County residents who are having difficulty accessing private care, regardless of their insurance status or ability to pay for services. Holly works to align our K-12 mental health investments with emerging scopes of work for funded initiatives. Holly also serves as the Vice President of the Washtenaw Community College Foundation and a board member of Washtenaw Area Council for Children.

Cassandra Harmon-Higgins, Executive Director of Human Resources and Legal Services

Cassandra Harmon-Higgins continues to serve as a Director on the Michigan Association of School Boards (MASB) Michigan Council of School Attorneys (MCSA). The MCSA assists attorneys representing boards of education in Michigan by providing information and practical advice on legal issues and questions of school law.

Edward Manuszak, Executive Director of Early Childhood

Eddie Manuszak serves for the eighth year as the co-lead for the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) Early Learning Cohort. He also serves on the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Accreditation Council, and this term expires in June of 2024. He also serves on the National Advisory Committee of Foundations, Inc., which is a non-profit organization based out of Philadelphia that supports equity and equitable access to before and after school learning opportunities for all children. He also serves on the Region 8 leadership team as the Past-President for Michigan Association for School Administrators (MASA) this school year (2023-24). He also sits on the Washtenaw Community College Early Childhood Advisory Board and is a member of the Ann Arbor Kiwanis Club.

Jennifer Banks, Director of Instruction

Jennifer Banks serves on the Early Mathematics Taskforce, supporting professional learning around equity, inclusion and social justice for the taskforce. She also serves on the GELN participating on the Legislative subcommittee and the DEI Taskforce. Jennifer is one of the leads for the Culturally Responsive Mathematics workgroup for the MISTEM Math Action Area. Finally, she participates on design team of Talent Together, leading the Middle and High School pathways workgroup.

Ashley Kryscynski, Communications and Public Relations Specialist

Ashley Kryscynski serves on the Michigan School Public Relations Association (MSPRA) Executive Board as both Board Secretary and Co-Chair of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force. She is facilitating a book study with the MSPRA Board on “Courageous Conversations About Race,” by Glenn E. Singleton. She is also working alongside Melissa Cischke, who is co-facilitating a parallel book study for MSPRA membership, as part of Melissa’s commitment to the MSPRA DEI Task Force. Ashley was also invited to apply and accepted as a presenter for the National School Public Relations Association’s annual seminar.

Shannon Novara, Program Manager

Shannon Novara serves on the MDHHS statewide Handle with Care design team and has consulted with several other ISDs to support their local implementation, such as Oakland Schools.