

Fremont Public Schools Strategic Plan Summary Document 2024-2029

Vision:

Our vision is a nurturing community of lifelong learners who positively impact our world.

Letter from Board President and Superintendent

Fremont Public Schools 2024-2029 Strategic Plan: Participants Help Shape the Vision and Goals for the Future of Fremont Public Schools.

This document contains the 2024-2029 Fremont Public Schools Strategic Plan. We're excited about this plan and the possibilities it provides for our students, parents/guardians and community to improve education within our District.

Seven community, parent/guardian and staff forums and an electronic survey resulted in 417 people providing input for the planning process. A Strategic Planning Team of 38 community members, parents/guardians, staff and students participated in an all-day planning retreat on March 23, 2024.

Throughout the planning process the community expressed high expectations of Fremont Public Schools becoming a high-performing school district and giving students opportunities to develop and grow. Even though some of the goals are extremely high, they reflect the strong desire that has been expressed to embrace change and improve the school system. There were several clear and consistent themes that emerged from this process.

- Fremont Public Schools has tremendous school pride, a dedicated and caring staff, and a commitment to academic growth and developing students to become the best version of themselves.
- Investing in opportunities for students and staff to grow and learn in a safe and nurturing environment must be a top priority.
- As a district, we must prioritize outcome-oriented investment by engaging and aligning internal (students, parents/guardians, staff and the school board) and external (taxpayers, community organizations, businesses, non-profits, government agencies, elected officials) stakeholders around common goals and strategies to improve academic achievement and student success.
- We are thrilled to continue on our mission to foster a supportive, student-centered, learning-focused community where all may thrive.

Jennifer Scott Board of Education President

Brad Reyburn, Superintendent

Introduction

Strategic Planning is the process of determining where an organization wants to be at some point in the future, and how it will get there. In the current environment where schools are challenged to do more each year, planning for the future is more important than ever. An effective strategic planning process results in stakeholders focusing on critical priorities that will meet the mission of a quality educational program for all students.

In Fall 2023 the Fremont Public Schools Superintendent and the Board of Education made a commitment to create a three to fiveyear strategic plan. The School Board created a partnership with the Michigan Association of School Boards to serve as facilitators for this project. The district, under the leadership of the Board of Education President and Superintendent, completed a process that was data-driven, inclusive of district stakeholders and focused on the priorities that will help the district succeed.

There were several criteria relative to the strategic planning process established by the School Board and the leadership team:

The process must be inclusive where all stakeholders have an opportunity to provide structured input.

- The School Board must be an integral part of the process, providing input, support, and commitment.
- There must be clarity in the respective roles of the School Board, administrators, staff, parents/guardians and community.
- There is alignment between the strategic planning process, current strategic initiatives, and critical issues facing the district.
- Timelines, responsibilities and reporting schedules must be built into the planning processes.
- There must be ongoing communication about the planning process with all internal and external stakeholders.

This strategic plan is a living document. It will serve as a 'road map' to future planning, resource allocation, staff development and decision-making over the next several years.

As part of the planning process, the mission statement, and belief statements were developed. Based on qualitative and quantitative data and utilizing the mission and belief statements; strategic goals and objectives were developed. Regular monitoring of progress and renewal is critical to the plan's success.

The Strategic Plan Process

This overview describes the planning process, including the survey, data analysis, planning team roles and responsibilities, and timelines.

Stakeholder Input

Input from students, parents/guardians, community and staff were gathered through a comprehensive electronic survey as well as a series of community, student and staff forums. The community engagement process was conducted to:

- Identify and assess strengths
- Gauge values and perceptions of the community
- Provide an opportunity for input
- Identify areas for improvement
- Gather data to use as a decision-making tool
- Develop communication plans and tools

The response rate of 417 indicates that the school community cares about the future of the district and desires to engage in the process of creating the future (see Attachment 1 for summary).

Local Area and School Demographic Data

An analysis of district demographics and quantitative data was completed. The analysis included demographic, enrollment, educational, financial and personnel trends over the previous five years, 2018-2022, as applicable, in comparison with districts selected by the Board and Administration and state averages, where available

(see Attachment 2 for the data analysis summary). The reference districts used for Fremont Public Schools were Allegan Public Schools, Big Rapids Public Schools, Greenville Public Schools, Ludington Area School District, and Oakridge Public Schools.

Strategic Planning Team

A Strategic Planning Team was formed to take a primary role in developing the strategic plan. The team consisting of 38 parents/ guardians, community members, board members, students and staff members, were selected with input from the Board of Education and key stakeholder groups. The team participated in a retreat workshop to develop a mission statement, vision, beliefs, and strategic goals. During the retreat the team reviewed and discussed relevant quantitative and qualitative data as essential elements in the formation of goals and objectives contained in this document (see team members on page 7).

Through this strategic planning process, the Fremont Public Schools Board of Education, Administration, Staff, and Community have illustrated a high level of care for the school, the community, and the students.

—Greg Janicki, MASB Facilitator



Retreat Workshop

A retreat workshop was held on March 23, 2024 The workshop included:

- An overview of the strategic planning process and timelines
- An environmental scan
- Superintendent report of current and planned initiatives
- An analysis of demographic, quantitative and qualitative data
- A review and renewal of the vision, mission and belief statements
- The establishment of strategic goal areas and key objectives
- Development of goal statements

Strategic Planning Team Members

Julie Anderson	Kortney Karp	Jennifer Scott
Fran Clemence*	Sara Krohn	Scott Sherman*
Carrie Crosley	Zach Lienau*	Pete Slovinski
Jodi Ferris*	Paul Mellema	Brooke Tanner
Curtis Franks	Brandon Miller*	Heidi Vissa
Eric Geers	Carrie Miller-TerVeer*	Justin Visser
Rick Girgenti*	Steve Paulsen	Steve Vissia
Chris Gleason	Kristin Prins	Rich Wheater
Jared Hanna	Kim Rasch	Ed Wosinski*
Nicole Hansen	Brad Reyburn*	Deb Wosinski
Lola Harmon-Ramsey	D'Ann Rohrer	Wes Zerlaut*
Nathan Hulst	Tracy Sanchez*	Walls David
Dan Hunt	Bob Schultz	

* Attended both retreat and implementation meeting

Fremont Public Schools 2024-2029 Strategic Plan

Vision Statement:

Describes what you want to happen in the long term. It's a statement about your hopes and expectations for the future. The vision statement below was validated during the Strategic Planning Team Retreat Workshop:

The Vision of Fremont Public Schools is:

"Our vision is a nurturing community of lifelong learners who positively impact our world."



Mission Statement:

Establishes, in the broadest terms, the purpose of a school district. It should answer the question "What ultimate end will the district pursue and in the broadest sense, how?" The following mission statement was renewed during the Strategic Planning Team Retreat Workshop:

The Mission of Fremont Public Schools is:

"Fremont Public Schools will foster a supportive, studentcentered, learning-focused community where all may thrive."



Beliefs:

The basic beliefs/core values of the district—those things that we believe of utmost importance, providing guidance for how we behave and relate to others. The following beliefs were developed during the Strategic Planning Team Retreat Workshop:

We Believe:

- all students have the capacity to learn.
- learning is lifelong and is the cooperative responsibility of students, staff, parents, and community.
- in evidence-based research and best practices.
- students learn best in a caring, engaging, and safe environment.
- in empowering students to set high expectations for academic and lifelong success.
- education should address the needs of the whole child.

2024-2029 Strategic Goals

Strategic Goals: Areas of priority importance in which the district will focus their work (1-5 years). Strategic goals achieve the organization's vision, mission and beliefs. Objectives are SMART—**S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant and **T**imely

The Strategic Planning Team, at the March 2024 retreat, developed goal statements and specific objectives. The goal areas are categorized below:

<u>2024-2029 Goals</u>

- Academics/Programs
- Learning Environment and Culture
- **Communication and Community Engagement**
- Personnel and Leadership
- Operations/Finance

Following the retreat, administrators were charged with developing specific objectives based on strategic goal areas identified by the team.

Goal Area 1: ACADEMICS/PROGRAMS

Strategic Goal Statement: Fremont Public Schools will offer engaging and challenging learning opportunities that motivate and support students to become lifelong learners.

Priority Objectives:

- Develop a plan for ELL (English Language Learners) services for district students.
- Create a system for providing classroom instructional techniques to staff.



Goal Area 2: LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE

Strategic Goal Statement: Fremont Public Schools will provide a safe, caring, and engaging environment for all.

Priority Objectives:

- Implement K-12 SEL (Social Emotional Learning) program.
- Provide student support services to ensure a safe and caring environment for all.



Goal Area 3: COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Strategic Goal Statement: Fremont Public Schools will enhance community engagement with intentional, consistent communication.

Priority Objectives:

• Establish a cohesive communication protocol with parents and community.



Goal Area 4: PERSONNEL AND LEADERSHIP

Strategic Goal Statement: Fremont Public Schools will attract, develop, and retain high-quality staff members who inspire lifelong learning.

Priority Objectives:

• Launch a formal plan for staff recruitment and retention.



Goal Area 5: OPERATIONS

Strategic Goal Statement: Fremont Public Schools will be a fiscally responsible district that considers short- and long-term goals with a forward-thinking mindset.

Priority Objectives:

- Renew sinking fund.
- Explore building replacement and renovation plan for aging buildings in district.

Strategic Plan Implementation

The implementation plan will be developed collaboratively by the superintendent and key staff members. Alignment with current school improvement plans will be an integral part of the implementation plan. The district priority goals/objectives identified during the strategic planning retreat will be translated into action plans with measurements, timelines, responsibilities and a board monitoring calendar. A meeting was held on April 23, 2024, to begin this work. Ongoing team meetings with continue to plan, monitor and adjust priority objectives.

Recommendations for keeping the momentum of the process are the following:

- 1. Finalize Goals/Objectives/Action plan
 - Measurements
 - > Timeline
 - Responsibility
 - Resources
- 2. Develop reporting/board monitoring calendar
- 3. Develop communication plan
 - Community
 - ➤ Staff
- 4. Schedule Mid-year progress report
- 5. Schedule Annual Plan update

STRENGTHS

ACADEMICS/PROGRAMS

- Variety of programs
- Strong academics
- Student supports/interventions
- Career tech

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE

- Student-centered/student first
- School pride
- > Small town
- Positive school culture

COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- School-to-parent communication
- Sense of community/community support
- Communication (general)

PERSONNEL AND LEADERSHIP

- Dedicated/caring staff
- Quality teachers
- Supportive administration
- Staff teamwork/collaboration
- > Cohesive school board

OPERATIONS/ FINANCE/FACILITY

- Good facilities
- Funding/finances
- > Safety

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

ACADEMICS/PROGRAMS

- Special education support/NCRESA support
- Broader curriculum
- Gifted/accelerated programs
- Life skills courses
- Aligned curriculum
- > Art/music programs

COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Communication (general)
- Communication between schools
- Transparency (decision making)

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE

- Reduced bullying
- Smaller class size
- Consistent discipline
- Increased behavioral supports
- Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

PERSONNEL AND LEADERSHIP

- Special education staff increase
- Increased staff
 professional development

OPERATIONS/ FINANCE/FACILITIES

- Facility upgrades (Daisy Brook and Quest)
- Technology upgrade/plan
- General infrastructure upgrades
- Busing in town
- Program funding equity
- Safety/security protocols

BARRIERS

ACADEMICS/PROGRAMS

- Requirements/regulations
- > NCRESA relationship

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE

- The way we've always done it/Old ways
- Time available

<u>COMMUNICATIONS AND</u> <u>COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT</u>

- Community buy-in
- Communication/ miscommunication
- Community engagement

PERSONNEL AND LEADERSHIP

- > Staffing availability
- > Staff buy-in
- Staff burn out
- Consistent leadership
- Decision making

OPERATIONS/ FINANCE/FACILITY

- Funding/financial constraints
- Facilities/space
- Resource allocation/equity

VISION

ACADEMICS/PROGRAMS

- Growth oriented
- Life-long learning
- > Academic excellence
- Individualized education

<u>COMMUNICATIONS AND</u> <u>COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT</u>

- Community involvement
- Community partnerships

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE

- Character development
- > Supportive
- Inclusive/welcoming
- Prepared for the future
- Well-being

PERSONNEL AND LEADERSHIP

- > Collaborative
- Forward-thinking
- > Quality

OPERATIONS/ FINANCE/FACILITY

- > Technological
- > Safe

Data Driven Strategic Planning: Fremont Public Schools

Based on analysis of data in this report, the following points are highlighted concerning **Fremont Public Schools**:

In general, the data revealed that when compared to state averages and the reference districts selected for this report, **Fremont** emerges as a district facing challenges with low academic performance.

DEMOGRAPHICS

- Approximately 32.2% of residents attended some college or earned an Associate's Degree. In addition, 23.6% of residents have a Bachelor's degree or higher. The combined total of 55.8% is below the state average of 62.8%. (B-1, B-2)
- The percentage of pre-school aged children attending public pre-school ranked fifth among the reference districts at 70.6%, and is above the state average of 67.7%. The percentage of district-resident children enrolled in the District Schools K-12 is 80.6% and ranked last among the referenced districts and is below the state average by 9.1%. (B-3)
- The district's 2021 average (mean) household income of \$70,673 ranks forth among the reference districts and is below the state average of \$80,803. (B-4)
- Enrollment at the District has decreased from 2,139 in 2019 to 2,036 in 2022. However, 2023 district enrollment was up 58 students from 2022. (B-5, B-6)
- The District has 21 students who choose to attend either other districts or charter schools. Holton (9), Allegan (3), and Hesperia (2) enroll the greatest number of the Districts' resident students. There are approximately 60 Schools of Choice students enrolled in the District's schools, with Holton (30), Shelby (8), Reeths-Puffer (5), and Oakridge (4) having the greatest number of students enrolled. Out-going student numbers have increased slightly since 2018 while incoming as decreased. (B-7, B-8)

DEMOGRAPHICS (continued)

- At 59.7%, the percentage of the District's students eligible for lunch assistance in 2023 ranked forth among the reference districts and above the statewide average of 50.5%. Free and reduced student lunch eligibility peaked in 2022 at 68.6%. (B-9, B-10)
- The district's 2022 4-year cohort graduation rate of 83.2% ranked third among the reference districts and was slightly above the statewide average of 80.5%. (B-11)
- The state's 4-year cohort graduation rate increased three of the past four years, declining by 1.6% in 2022, while the District's 4-year cohort graduation rate fluctuated during that time and increasing by 2.7% from 2022 to 2023. (B-12)
- For the class of 2016, the percentage of enrollment in college for that fall was 63.5%. After a five-year period 24.8% earned a 2-year or 4-year degree. (B-13)
- The demographics of the district's student population is similar to the reference districts with little change in the past five years. The 2022 demographic data is as follows: 89.2% White; 7.0 Hispanic; 1.6 Multiracial; 1.0% African-American; 0.9% Asian; 0.2% American Indian; and 0.2% Native Hawaiian. (B-14, B-15)
- The District's student's chronic absence rate of 28.1% is up 7.6% from 2021. It ranked last among the reference districts and was 10.4% below the state average. (B -16, B-17)

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

- The District's students scored above state averages in ELA in grade 4, 6, 7, and 8 on the 2022* MEAP/MME/SAT, except in grades 3 and 5. In addition, ELA scores have generally increased since 2018. (C-2,C-3, C-5, C-6, C-8, C-11, C-13, C-14, C-16, C-17, C-22, C-23, C-27, C-28, C-30)
- The District's students scored above state averages in math at all assessed grade levels except 3rd grade on the 2022* MEAP/MME/SAT. In addition, math scores have fluctuated year-t-year the past five years. (C-1, C-3, C-4, C-6, C-7, C-11, C-12, C-14, C-15, C-17, C-21, C-23, C-27, C-29, C-30)
- The District's students scored above state averages in science at all assessed grade levels on the 2022 MEAP/MME/SAT, except 5th grade (C-10, C-11, C-19, C-20, C-25, C-26)

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE (continued)

- The District's students scored above state averages in social studies at all assessed grade levels on the 2022 MEAP/MME/SAT, except 5th grade. (C-9, C-11, C-18, C-20, C-24, C-26)
- The District's 2022 SAT College Readiness scores increased to 33.1% in 2022 from 23.3% in 2021 and ranked first among the reference districts. (C-29, C-30)
- AP passing scores range from 18% to 30% in 2022. (C-31)
- Dual enrollment participation dropped to 25 in 2022 from a peak of 40 in 2019. (C-32)

FINANCE

- The District's 2022 Foundation Allowance of \$9,150 per student is identical to the reference districts. The district has received increases the last four years, increasing by \$1,279 over the period. (D-1, D-2)
- General fund expenditures of \$12,155 per student rank forth among the reference districts, and \$517 below the state average of \$11,638. Expenditures have increased from \$9,796 in 2018 to \$12,155 in 2022. (D-3, D-4)
- The District's instructional spending has increased the last five years. At \$8,602 per student in 2022 it ranked first among the reference districts and is also \$1,365 above the state average of \$7,237. (D-5, D-6)
- The District's instructional support spending of \$492 per student ranks last among the reference districts and is significantly below the \$1,319 state average. It has decreased from its high of \$658 in 2021. (D-7, D-8)
- Business and administration spending of \$1,630 per student increased over the last five years and is above the state average of \$1,540. It ranks second (tie) among the reference districts. (D-9, D-10)

FINANCE (continued)

- In each of the last five years revenues have exceeded expenditures. This has resulted in an increase in the Fund Balance over that time. (D-11, D-12)
- The district's Fund Balance has increased from its low of 6.9% in 2017 to 17.2% in 2021. (D-13, D-14)
- The district's cumulative student gain of 58 students since 2019 has resulted in an increases of revenue of \$530,700. (D-15)
- The potential revenue per millage of property tax levied in 2021 ranked third of the reference districts for both homestead and non-homestead properties combined. The district's homestead and non-homestead tax is below the state average. (D-16)

PERSONNEL

- Staffing FTE has remained relatively stable from 2019 to 2023. At 265 for 2022, it ranks third (tie) among the reference districts. (E-1, E-2)
- At 22, the district's student teacher ratio was the third highest (tie) among the reference districts. The district's student-teacher ratio is equal to the state average and has slightly decreased from a high of 24 in 2018. (E-3, E-4)
- The average teacher salary ranks second among the reference districts at \$67,537 and is above the state average salary of \$64,237. The district's salary increased by \$5,091 over the 2018 average. (E-5, E-6)
- 52% of the District's teachers have a Master's degree or higher. (E-7)
- 61% of the teachers have been with the district less than 10 years. (E-8)
- In 2021, Teacher Effectiveness ratings were 14.6% Highly Effective, 85.4% Effective. (E-9)
- In 2021, Administrator Effectiveness ratings were 60% Highly Effective, 40% Effective. (E-10)

The Wave | In the arena of education, what are incoming and outgoing trends, ideas, practices, paradigms, etc.?

EMERGING

- Adaptive assessments
- Competency-based learning
- Developing career readiness
- ESL (English as a Second Language)
- Equity of technology
- Online classes
- Online testing
- Portrait of a graduate
- Research-based best practices
- School safety-- Student Resources Officer
- SEL (middle school and high school)
- Technology management
- Technology opportunities
- Transportation issues
- Weighted grading
- Whole child learning
- Whole student care

ON THE HORIZON

- Artificial intelligence
- Artificial intelligence tech trends
- Changing world
- Coding
- Evidence-based practices
- Flexibility
- Four-year-old preschool for all
- Independent study
- Learning framework
- New sports, clubs, facilities
- NIL (Name, Image, and Likeness)
- Technology
- Tech/web-based learning

ESTABLISHED

- Curriculum
- Dual enrollment
- Low socio-economic supports
- Interventions
- Mainstream (special education)
- Nutrition
- Researched practices
- Restorative justice
- SEL (Social Emotional Learning)
- SEL elementary
- SEL focused with academics
- Strategic planning
- Technology as a tool for learning
- Understanding of mental health needs

DISAPPEARING

- Brick and mortar sense of community
- Direct parent involvement
- Family capacity/dynamics
- Homework
- Missing human connection
- Physical textbooks
- Prescriptive discipline
- Social skills, adults plus kids
- Traditional learning structures
- Whole language model

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

ELEMENTARY

Points of pride:

• M-STEP math scores 4th and 5th grade (47.4%/32.2%)

- K-5 math adoption (Bridges)
- K-5 ELA programs pilot/adoption
- Parent engagement



ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE – Cont'd

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Points of pride:

• At or above state average at all grade levels in all subject areas

- 50% is not good enough
- Math improvement is big need
- Math intervention



ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE – Cont'd

HIGH SCHOOL

Points of pride:

• Highest achieving school in area and cohort

- Enrollment in higher-level classes
- Increase college readiness/life readiness
- Increased standardized test scores



ENROLLMENT AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Points of pride:

• Our students are coming to school at a higher rate than other districts

- Attendance rate is still low. 3/10 students are chronically absent and it is increasing
- We have a large percentage of students choosing private schools
- The percentage of students lost to other districts is still too high; we lost 21 students to other districts

FINANCE/PERSONNEL

Points of pride:

- Increased fund equity (financial)
- Recruiting young teachers (personnel)

- What happens when ESSER money dries up
- Cost to pay teachers will go up as staff gets older
- Housing in the area
- Increased mentoring
- Retaining staff past 3-5 years



ACADEMICS AND PROGRAMS

- ESL English as a Second Language (19)
- Develop tools/programs/resources for teachers (e.g. K-5 math, instructional coaching, etc.) (14)
- Develop programming for special populations (e.g. ELL, language impairments, gifted, etc.) (7)
- Spanish immersion program (6)
- Choir program (4)
- Mental strength training (4)
- More opportunities for upper-end kids K-12 (4)
- Consistent high expectations and accountability (2)
- Learning framework district wide (2)
- Guest speakers with career focus (1)
- Bridges (K- 5 math)
- Middle school exams
- Senior year experience
- Xello (career readiness)

*Number reflects total votes for this objective by retreat attendees

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

- Improving school lunches (11)
- Job-embedded instructional coaching (7)
- Two SROs (Student Resource Officers) (7)
- Monitor PBIS and RP (2)
- Daily first impressions (1)
- Develop SEL initiatives that encompass common language across athletics, etc. (1)
- Mentoring-teacher, administrator, and teacher assistants (1)
- Early elementary collaboration between teachers
- Offer parent education around the seven factors and how discipline decisions are made
- SEL fidelity
- More counselors in rooms

*Number reflects total votes for this objective by retreat attendees

COMMUNICATION and COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Power school (12)
- Adapt to how parents are communicating (5)
- Retain our public relations person (3)
- Stakeholder partnerships (3)
- Class/course offerings (2)
- Community events (2)
- Communicate how the money is being used (1)
- Fireside chats (1)

*Number reflects total votes for this objective by retreat attendees

OPERATIONS/FINANCE/FACILITIES

- New Daisy Brook and Quest (22)
- Athletic fieldhouse (17)
- Bond for new Daisy Brook and middle school (8)
- K-12 dedicated funding for technology (8)
- In-town busing (6)
- Succession plan for buildings and fields (5)
- Lights at soccer field (4)
- Renew sinking fund (3)
- Asphalt repair
- Middle school playground
- Proactive vs. reactive

*Number reflects total votes for this objective by retreat attendees

PERSONNEL & LEADERSHIP

- Instruction rounds (6)
- Staff and team building opportunities (6)
- Effective professional development and eliminate half days (5)
- Redo posting "why Fremont" (3)
- System of staff development (new staff being trained up) (1)
- Growth mindset
- Internal advancement
- K-12 department collaboration
- Non-faculty appreciation
- Staff rewards for referrals of new staff
- Subs for observations
- Succession plan for administrators

*Number reflects total votes for this objective by retreat attendees