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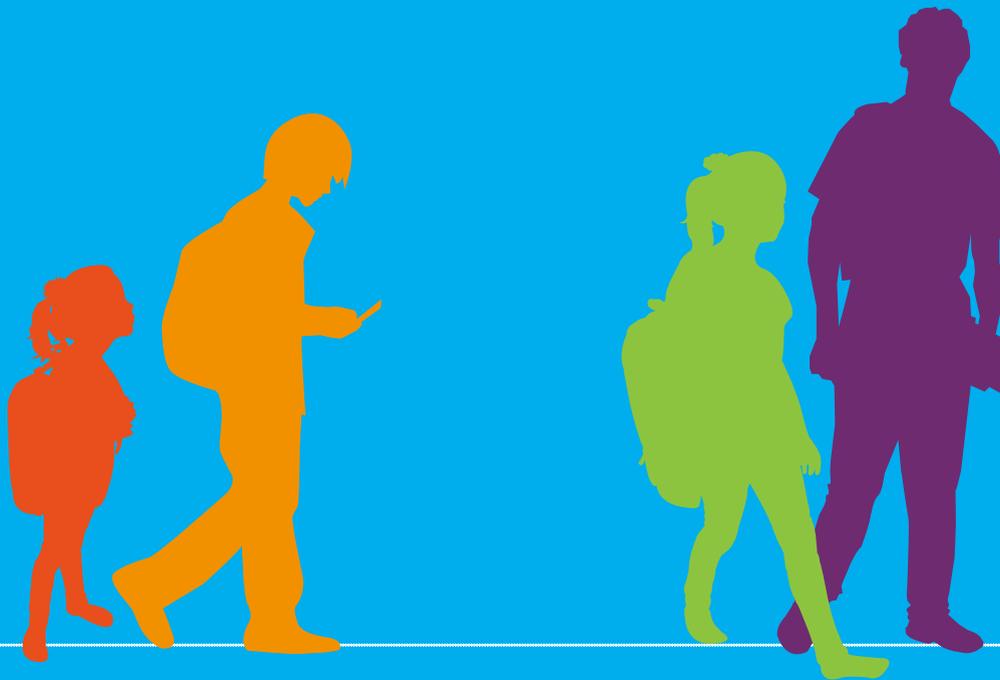
# MISSION AND VISION

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Tulsa Public Schools is the destination for extraordinary educators who work with our community and families to ignite the joy of learning and prepare every student for the greatest success in college, careers and life.

Our mission is to inspire and prepare every student to love learning, achieve ambitious goals and make positive contributions to our world.

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**THIS WORK IMPACTS FIVE YEARS IN THE LIFE OF A CHILD**

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2016

2020

# INTRODUCTION

You are reading the future of Tulsa Public Schools. This document is Tulsa Public Schools' plan for placing every child on a pathway to realize his or her full potential. As your eyes scan these pages, you will notice that you are not looking at a traditional strategic plan. Our roadmap reflects new thinking about the kinds of changes that must happen in our schools, classrooms and mindsets—thinking that requires a high bar on a wide variety of pursuits.

Our plan is based on the input of thousands—teachers, families, students, community members, staff and administrators—and the most current research and thinking on how to ensure excellence in every school. Together we captured a bold new vision for public education. Our approach is based on the belief that the entire Tulsa Public Schools community must be learners, contributors and designers for our students to be successful.

*This is what we mean:*



Through learning, application, reflection and persistence we grow every day. We understand that challenges and learning are important opportunities to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for success.



We are participants in and contributors to the well-being of our schools and larger communities. Because we have responsibilities to each other and our world, we are leaders who seek progress, affect change and foster success in others.



We solve problems and bring ideas to life. Educators, staff and students are engaged and successful with the authority, time and support necessary to reimagine, innovate and iterate.

This plan will guide the district's decision-making for the next five years, including where to focus, how to approach our work and how to best allocate people, time and money. The plan charts our path to making Tulsa Public Schools the destination for excellence.



# OUR VALUES



## EQUITY

All children deserve the opportunity to develop their full academic and social potential. Valuing equity means that we must provide resources and supports matched to student need, for every student in every school. Our diversity is a community treasure, and we must foster an inclusive environment by examining biases and resolving unfair practices.



## CHARACTER

We are honest, trustworthy and have high standards of behavior. We make decisions, take action and approach our work based on what is best for our students and their success. We do the right thing even when it is hard. We face difficulty with courage and have the moral fortitude to act in accordance with our beliefs. While we do not always agree, we treat one another with kindness and respect.



## EXCELLENCE

Tulsa needs and expects world-class public schools. We work hard together and expect a lot of one another because high standards produce exemplary knowledge, skills, abilities and mindsets. Achieving excellence means striving for it every moment of every day. It means sweating the small stuff while we focus on the big picture with determination and persistence.



## TEAM

We care for one another, support the personal and professional development of one another, and work together to improve our community. Together we celebrate success, learn from struggles and invest in the development of our teams and team members. While we value our work together and invest mightily in it, we also honor and respect the commitments our team members have to their families and communities outside of work.



## JOY

We love to have fun! Play is invaluable for students and adults alike. Joy at school and at work makes us more productive, because when we create, innovate and imagine, our motivation grows. At Tulsa Public Schools, we foster exuberant classrooms, schools and places of work where children and adults pursue their passions and are relentlessly curious. We want to ensure that everyone knows the excitement that comes from working deeply on a problem, task or concept and experiencing breakthrough moments.

**BELIEFS DESCRIBE  
WHAT WE HOLD AS  
INHERENT TRUTHS.**

# OUR BELIEFS

## **OUR STUDENTS CAN**

Every child can learn. Every child has talent. Every child has value. Great education is demanding and engaging, structured and joyful, challenging and supportive. To succeed in a competitive world and to serve as the next generation of leaders, students must engage in their education, own their learning and feel accepted and supported in our schools.

## **OUR TEACHERS MAKE IT HAPPEN**

Extraordinary teachers are the heart of successful schools. They must continually hone their craft and content knowledge to design engaging learning and facilitate success in every student. We require much of our teachers, and we must provide the conditions and work environments that promote professional satisfaction and student achievement. This means that our entire community must value, respect, and support teachers as the irreplaceable professionals they are.

## **OUR PRINCIPALS ARE KEY**

Principals' responsibilities are strategic, vast and intense. As leaders, they must be visible, hire the right staff, cultivate talent, build relationships with families and communities, foster positive and safe school culture and ensure results. As such, the education service center must support principals' growth as instructional leaders and be their primary support system in strengthening the quality of teaching and learning in all classrooms.

## **OUR DISTRICT IS "ALL IN"**

Effective teams collaborate and continually assess and improve their service to schools. They attend to present needs while preparing for the future. This means our employees and board must work together, reflect, adjust, think ahead and innovate in service to powerful teaching and learning.

## **OUR COMMUNITY IS ESSENTIAL**

Our children and schools need all of us—educators, families, and community partners. High quality schools are vital to the health of our community. We must engage our families and all of Tulsa by embracing transparency, holding ourselves accountable to high standards, proactively communicating and working as a team united in the success of every student.





# WE ARE LEARNERS

## WE WILL LEARN, APPLY, REFLECT, ADJUST AND PERSIST TOGETHER.

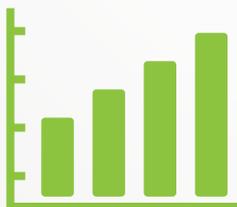
**STUDENT GROWTH:** Our students—from pre-kindergarten to twelfth grade—will develop the mindsets, knowledge, skills, and habits to achieve academic, career and life success.

**MASTERFUL TEACHING:** Teachers will work together to ignite the joy of learning by building their collective knowledge and continuously expanding their mastery of content and the instructional practices needed to provide powerful and engaging instruction to students with diverse needs and interests.

**INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP:** School leaders will hone their abilities to instill a shared vision of academic success for every student, build talent, develop instructional leadership teams of teachers and staff, and cultivate communities of learning and support throughout each school.

**SUPPORTIVE LEARNING:** As a collective, we will provide resources and supports matched to student need to ensure that all students—including those who are struggling and those who are thriving—receive what they need to develop their full academic and social potential.

**SERVICE TO SCHOOLS:** District support staff will develop their competencies and improve their approach to serving schools, students, and families, and align their work in support of exceptional teaching and learning for every student.



## KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- student achievement data
- school health indicator data from the University of Oklahoma's Center for Education Policy
- student survey data
- professional performance measures
- professional learning data



## WE ARE CONTRIBUTORS

**WE WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE WELL-BEING AND SUCCESS OF OUR STUDENTS AND SCHOOLS.**

**SAFE, SUPPORTIVE, JOYFUL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS:** Students, teachers and leaders—working with families and community partners—will foster safe, supportive, and joyful learning environments that emphasize acceptance and inclusion for all students in all schools.

**STUDENT CULTURE OF CARE AND RESPECT:** Students will positively contribute to their communities by respecting themselves and others; displaying empathy, acceptance, and kindness; and solving disagreements respectfully and peacefully. Educators and support staff will model the same care and respect.

**TALENT:** District support staff and school leaders will develop and retain top-caliber talent who share our mission, vision, values and beliefs and create work environments that promote professional satisfaction and student success.

**CULTURE OF SERVICE AT THE EDUCATION SERVICE CENTER:** District support staff will adhere to a standard of excellence as they serve and partner with schools, students and families through proactive communication, as well as practices and policies that are transparent, responsive, flexible, collaborative and focused on improved learning and teaching.



## KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- customer service survey
- human capital pipeline data
- student survey feedback
- English language learner/special education support data
- school health indicator data from the University of Oklahoma's Center for Education Policy
- discipline data



## WE ARE DESIGNERS

**WE WILL IMPROVE LEARNING, SOLVE PROBLEMS AND BRING IDEAS TO LIFE THROUGH INNOVATIVE AND INTENTIONAL DESIGN.**

**STUDENT OWNERSHIP OF LEARNING:** Students will think, question, assess, create and apply their learning and solve real-world problems.

**CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT:** Teachers, leaders and all staff will instill a culture of continuous improvement throughout the district in which we assess, reflect and adjust to meet our goals.

**PERSONALIZATION:** Teachers and leaders will foster and increase opportunities for personalized learning experiences that meet the needs, interests and aspirations of individual learners.

**INNOVATION:** Students, teachers, leaders and all district staff will solve problems and address challenges using an approach that is user-centered and allows for imaginative and explorative thinking and collaboration.



## KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- customer service survey feedback
- professional performance measures
- student survey feedback
- measures developed to capture the frequency and success of innovation and design



## SCHOOL TEAMS

### TO SUPPORT OUR WORK AS LEARNERS...

- Teachers will provide learning to all students that is broad, deep, interdisciplinary and connected to ambitious goals.
- School teams will address and support the needs of all students, including English language learners and students with disabilities.
- Principals and assistant principals will connect with families and the community to promote and support student success.
- Principals and assistant principals will structure professional learning time to increase collaboration within and between schools and provide more opportunities for teachers to design and deliver professional learning.
- Principals and assistant principals will provide rich instructional feedback and coaching, informed by student achievement data, to grow and sustain extraordinary teaching and learning.

### TO SUPPORT OUR WORK AS CONTRIBUTORS...

- School teams will facilitate and implement strategies that promote accepting and culturally responsive learning environments.
- School support teams comprised of school leaders, staff and external partners will assist students struggling to meet academic, behavior and attendance goals, and will build positive, empowering cultures in schools that embrace all students, families and communities.
- School teams will model the behavior we expect from students in our classrooms and hallways.
- Principals and assistant principals will retain and develop mission-driven teachers and attract promising new teachers.
- Principals and assistant principals will leverage instructional leadership teams of teachers and staff to cultivate greater instructional expertise in their buildings.



### **TO SUPPORT OUR WORK AS DESIGNERS...**

- School teams will use student data, best practices and their professional performance measures to reflect, grow their expertise and improve teaching and learning.
- Teachers will monitor individual student achievement and design instruction to accelerate growth for every student.
- Teachers will help students “own” their learning and foster creativity, innovation, problem solving, and critical thinking in the classroom and in extracurricular endeavors.
- School teams will innovate by understanding the needs of students and families, working together, thinking outside the box, applying their best thinking and improving upon their efforts.



## STUDENTS, FAMILIES AND THE COMMUNITY

### TO SUPPORT OUR WORK AS LEARNERS...

- Students will attend school on time every day, work hard, and stay engaged; and families will support them in doing so.
- Families and students will create morning and evening routines and read together every day.
- Parents and caregivers will talk with their children about their day.
- Parents and caregivers will connect with their children's teachers.
- Community members will volunteer their time, resources and talents by mentoring students, reading with students and participating in one or more of the community partnerships at Tulsa Public Schools.
- Businesses will partner with us to provide students with brief yet powerful practical work experiences in their field of study.



### TO SUPPORT OUR WORK AS CONTRIBUTORS...

- Students will be leaders for a positive culture in their school, demonstrating respect, fairness and kindness to each other, and speaking up if they see or experience bullying.
- Families will set examples for students by solving problems peacefully.
- Families will engage with school organizations and participate in school events.
- Community service organizations will partner with us to align services and approaches to serving students and families and ensure families are aware of how they can get assistance.
- Families, students and community members will advocate for educational matters at the state and local level; and policy makers will fund public education as among the highest priorities of government.
- Families, students and community members will support school teams, events, and extracurricular activities.
- Our community partners will collaborate to share and expand successes.
- Families will set examples for students by solving problems peacefully.
- Community members might consider a career at TPS and help us open the doors to students' dreams and aspirations.

### TO SUPPORT OUR WORK AS DESIGNERS...

- Students will get involved in decision-making about their learning, create short- and long-term learning goals and monitor/improve upon their own performance.
- Families, community members, and partners will provide thoughtful, constructive feedback on how we can improve and will work with us while we make the improvements necessary to design and scale new school and teaching models.
- Business and community service organizations will share successful design innovations that have had the greatest impact on strong organizational performance to inform our design thinking.



## THE EDUCATION SERVICE CENTER

### TO SUPPORT OUR WORK AS LEARNERS, DISTRICT SUPPORT STAFF WILL...

- Provide teachers with deep, broad, inter-disciplinary curricula that connect learning from prekindergarten to twelfth grade and prepare students for college and career success in a world of constant change.
- Ensure teachers have a deep knowledge of content and learning goals as well as the instructional practices and social/emotional knowledge and supports needed to ensure excellence and equity across the district.
- Ensure school teams have access to professional learning to support positive and productive classroom behaviors.
- Partner with community organizations to expand evidence-based supports and services for students needing special assistance.
- Foster advanced coursework, world languages and STEAM (science, technology, engineering, the arts, and math) and extracurricular opportunities for students in every school by ensuring the appropriate policies and conditions for their success.
- Ensure that professional feedback and feedback tools foster reflection and growth aligned with improved student learning and success.
- Create high-quality professional learning and ensure it is designed and delivered in a collaborative fashion, available in a variety of approaches (including feedback and coaching loops), and tailored to the individual needs of each teacher and leader.



### **TO SUPPORT OUR WORK AS CONTRIBUTORS, DISTRICT SUPPORT STAFF WILL...**

- Provide timely, proactive, aligned and targeted assistance for schools in their support of students struggling to meet academic, behavior and attendance goals.
- Develop and implement a district-wide structure (framework) to build and sustain positive cultures in our classrooms and schools.
- Build an organizational environment that promotes employee engagement and collaboration, where strengths are leveraged, and where every team member is valued, empowered and supported.
- Develop strong pipelines to recruit a talented and diverse team of leaders and teachers through internal cultivation, preparation programs and focused mentorship.
- Develop career pathways and compensation and benefits structures to attract, retain, and value the teaching profession.
- Foster a culture among district support staff of excellence, service, partnership and flexibility and prioritize resources equitably based on student and school needs.
- Provide clean, safe and well-functioning facilities that match the needs of schools and support improvements in student learning.

### **TO SUPPORT OUR WORK AS DESIGNERS, DISTRICT SUPPORT STAFF WILL...**

- Use data strategically and consistently to measure progress, identify key areas for improvement and determine readiness for innovation.
- Expand high-quality school choices in all communities through new school strategies and models, as well as customized supports tailored to communities' needs.
- Foster the use of technology as a tool for accelerating and customizing student learning and supporting teachers' work in the classroom.
- Provide school teams with opportunities to innovate and create environments that best meet the academic and social/emotional needs of their students, including expansion of personalized learning environments.
- Identify, support and, as appropriate, scale the best ideas that emerge from the innovation and design work of our teachers, leaders and schools.

# HABITS OF SUCCESS

## **WORK HARD.**

Successful people work hard—often doing more than is expected. They take responsibility for their effort, results and behavior. Successful people do their best and persevere when things get difficult. They have self-control and determination.

## **BE CURIOUS.**

The world is full of fascinating people, places, experiences and phenomena. Successful people are full of curiosity, wonder and awe about everything around them. They know that it is okay not to know something and eagerly inquire to find out more. Successful people ask questions, consider possibilities, imagine new realities, innovate and create solutions.

## **SOLVE PROBLEMS.**

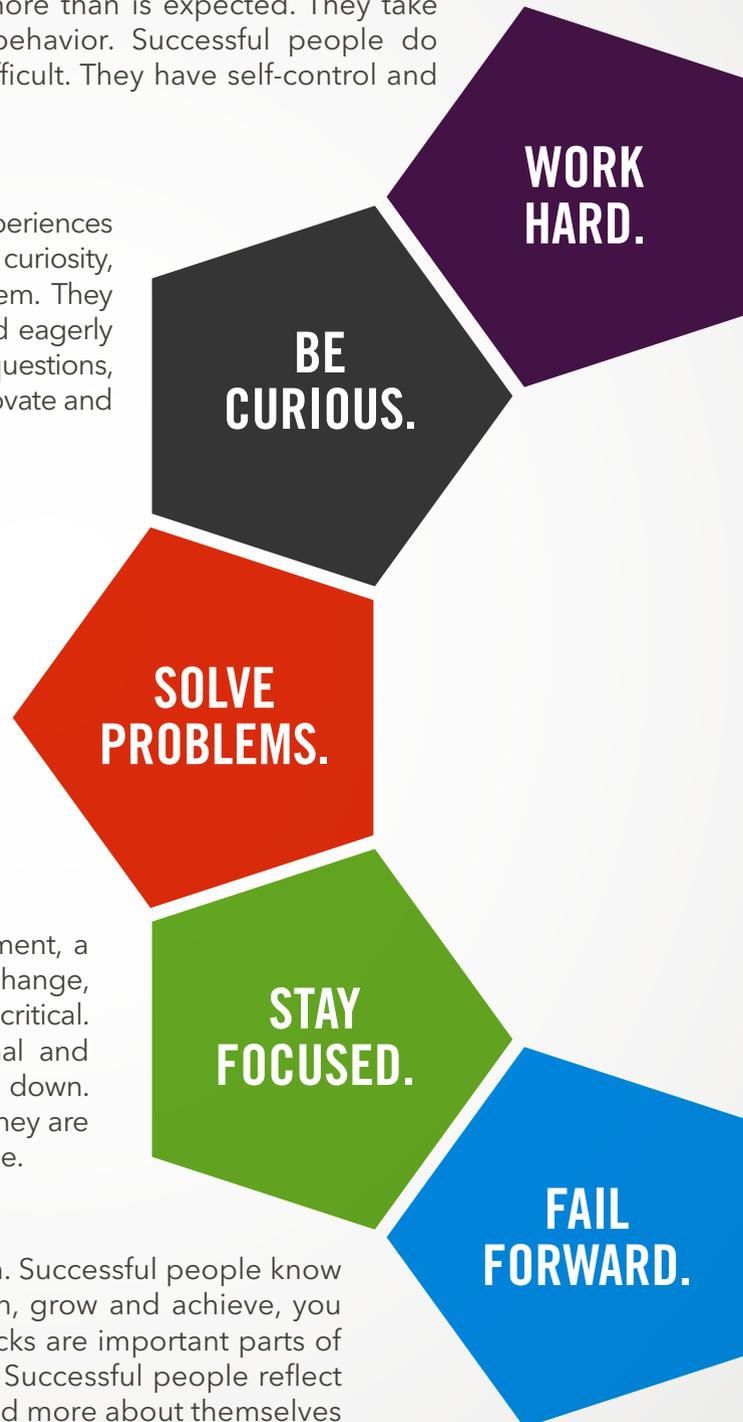
There are solutions all around us to the simple and complex challenges in the world. Successful people notice and identify problems and design possible ways to resolve them. They collaborate with others to make things better. Successful people also solve problems with others by accepting differences with grace and dealing peacefully with anger and disagreements.

## **STAY FOCUSED.**

Successful people have a purpose—for a moment, a task, a day or their lifetime. While purpose can change, intentionality about what you are undertaking is critical. Successful people set goals for their personal and academic or professional lives and write them down. They have clear yet flexible direction for what they are accomplishing and stay focused on that purpose.

## **FAIL FORWARD.**

Mistakes are wonderful opportunities to learn. Successful people know that when you take responsible risks to learn, grow and achieve, you will experience failure. They know that setbacks are important parts of life and use them as lessons and motivation. Successful people reflect on their experiences and, as result, understand more about themselves and about how they can do even better in the future.



**OUR HABITS OF  
SUCCESS DESCRIBE  
THE BEHAVIORS THAT  
HELP US THRIVE.**

**BE  
KIND.**

**BE KIND.**

Being a kind, courteous person is a sign of strength. Successful people treat others—from family and friends to strangers on the street—with care, grace and respect. They have empathy—putting themselves in the shoes of others to understand their circumstances. Successful people listen carefully to others and lose and win courteously. They follow the Golden Rule of treating others as they would want to be treated.

**WELCOME  
CRITICISM.**

**WELCOME CRITICISM.**

Because successful people are learners, they embrace criticism. They are hungry for feedback and eagerly use it to improve. Successful people have a positive attitude toward criticism and receive it with a focus toward doing better in the future. They seek input from others, reflect on its meaning and move forward with renewed readiness to achieve.

**GIVE  
BACK.**

**GIVE BACK.**

Everyone can give to others regardless of his or her own circumstances. Successful people live with gratitude for what they have and contribute what they can of their time and resources to make the world a better place. They have an open mind and compassion for others and do whatever they can to contribute positively to the community and to the world.

**HAVE  
FUN.**

**HAVE FUN.**

Even in the most difficult of circumstances, successful people can find joy. They seek fun in the large and small moments of life. Successful people see the humor around them and are able to laugh easily—especially at themselves. While they are serious when necessary, successful people are having a blast with life.

**STAY  
HEALTHY.**

**STAY HEALTHY.**

Successful people take care of themselves. They eat right, exercise and get the right amount of sleep for their productivity. Successful people manage their emotions and handle stress appropriately. They live in a balanced way ensuring time for family, friends and fun.

# - TULSA PUBLIC SCHOOLS BY THE NUMBERS -

## SCHOOL YEAR 2015-2016



3 EARLY  
CHILDHOOD  
SCHOOLS

51 ELEMENTARY  
SCHOOLS

12 MIDDLE AND  
JUNIOR HIGH  
SCHOOLS

10 HIGH  
SCHOOLS

8 ALTERNATIVE  
SCHOOLS

9 SPECIAL  
FACILITIES  
SERVED

6 DISTRICT-  
AUTHORIZED  
CHARTER  
SCHOOLS

31%  
HISPANIC

26%  
AFRICAN AMERICAN

79 DIFFERENT  
LANGUAGES  
SPOKEN AMONG  
OUR STUDENTS



39,451  
STUDENTS

1%  
ASIAN

9%  
TWO OR  
MORE RACES

26%  
WHITE

6%  
NATIVE AMERICAN

76%  
OF STUDENTS  
QUALIFY FOR FREE  
OR REDUCED LUNCH

18%  
OF STUDENTS  
ARE ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE LEARNERS

17%  
OF STUDENTS  
QUALIFY FOR SPECIAL  
EDUCATION SERVICES

29%  
OF STUDENTS HAVE A  
LANGUAGE OTHER THAN  
ENGLISH SPOKEN IN  
THEIR HOME



6,747  
TOTAL EMPLOYEES



2,865  
TEACHERS



146 PRINCIPALS/  
ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS

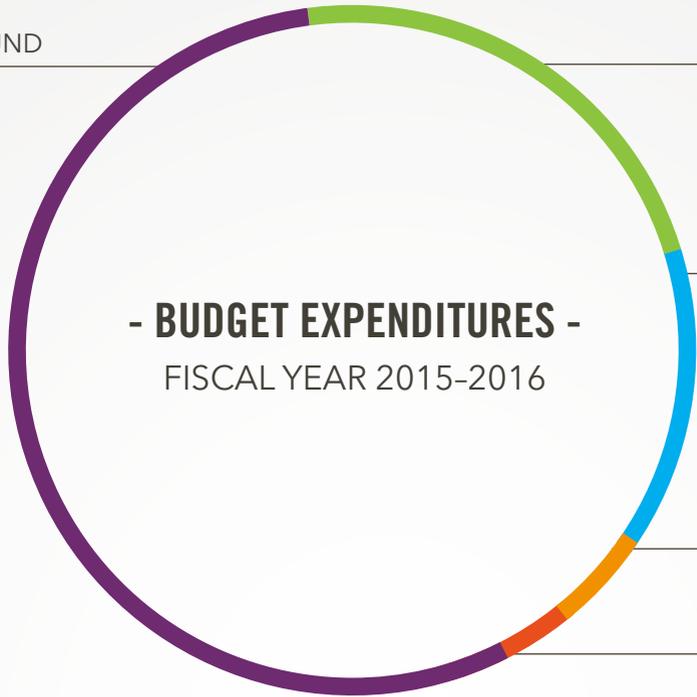
**56%** GENERAL FUND  
\$305,343,421

**21%** DEBT SERVICE  
\$116,654,573

**14%** CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS  
\$75,761,712

**5%** CHILD NUTRITION  
\$28,445,937

**3%** BUILDING FUND  
\$17,893,789



**55%** INSTRUCTION

**8%** STUDENT SUPPORT

**7%** INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF SUPPORT

**7%** SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

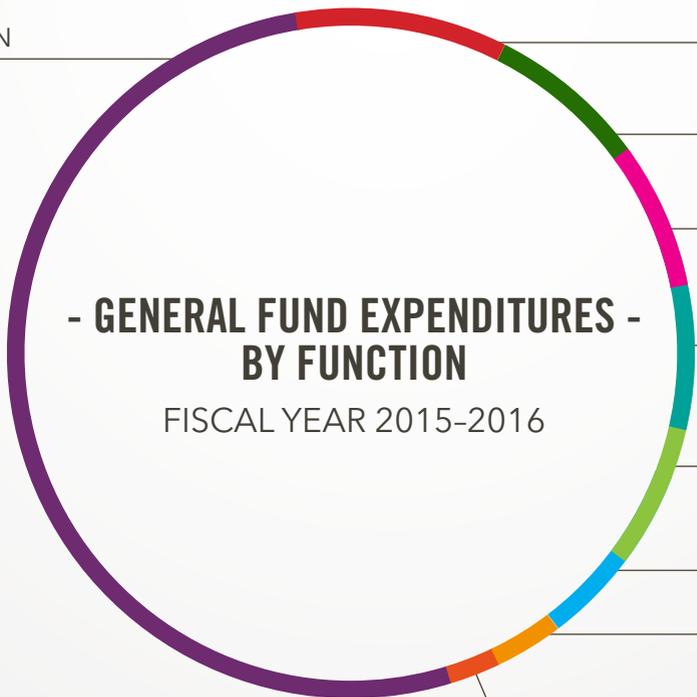
**7%** OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE

**7%** CENTRAL SERVICES

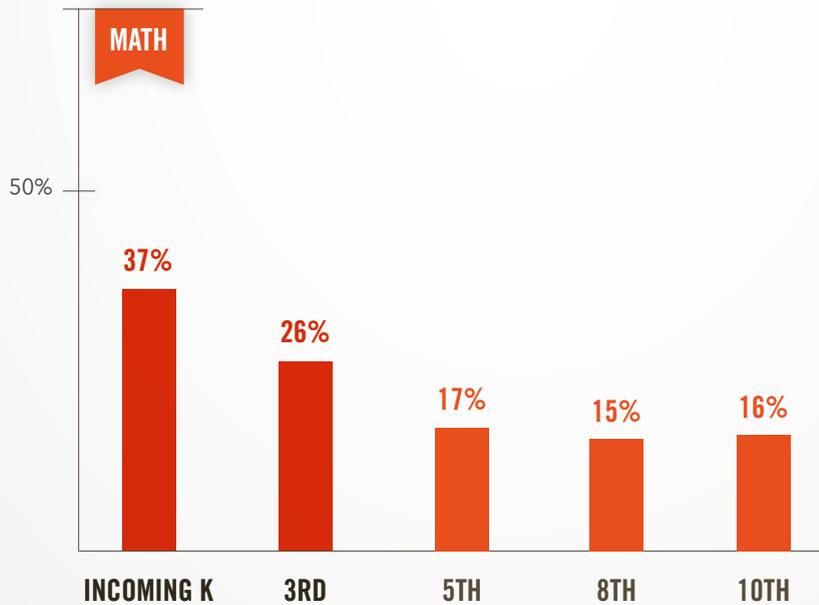
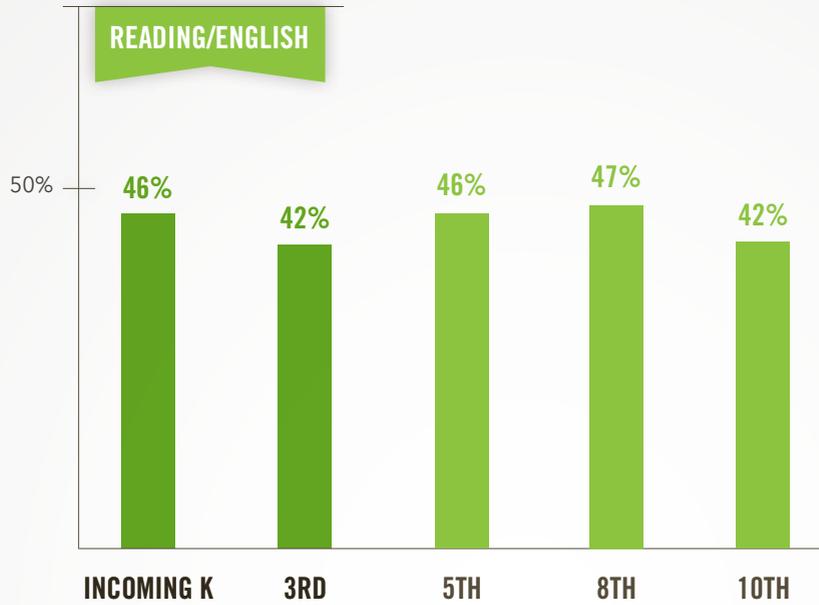
**4%** STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

**3%** OTHER

**2%** GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

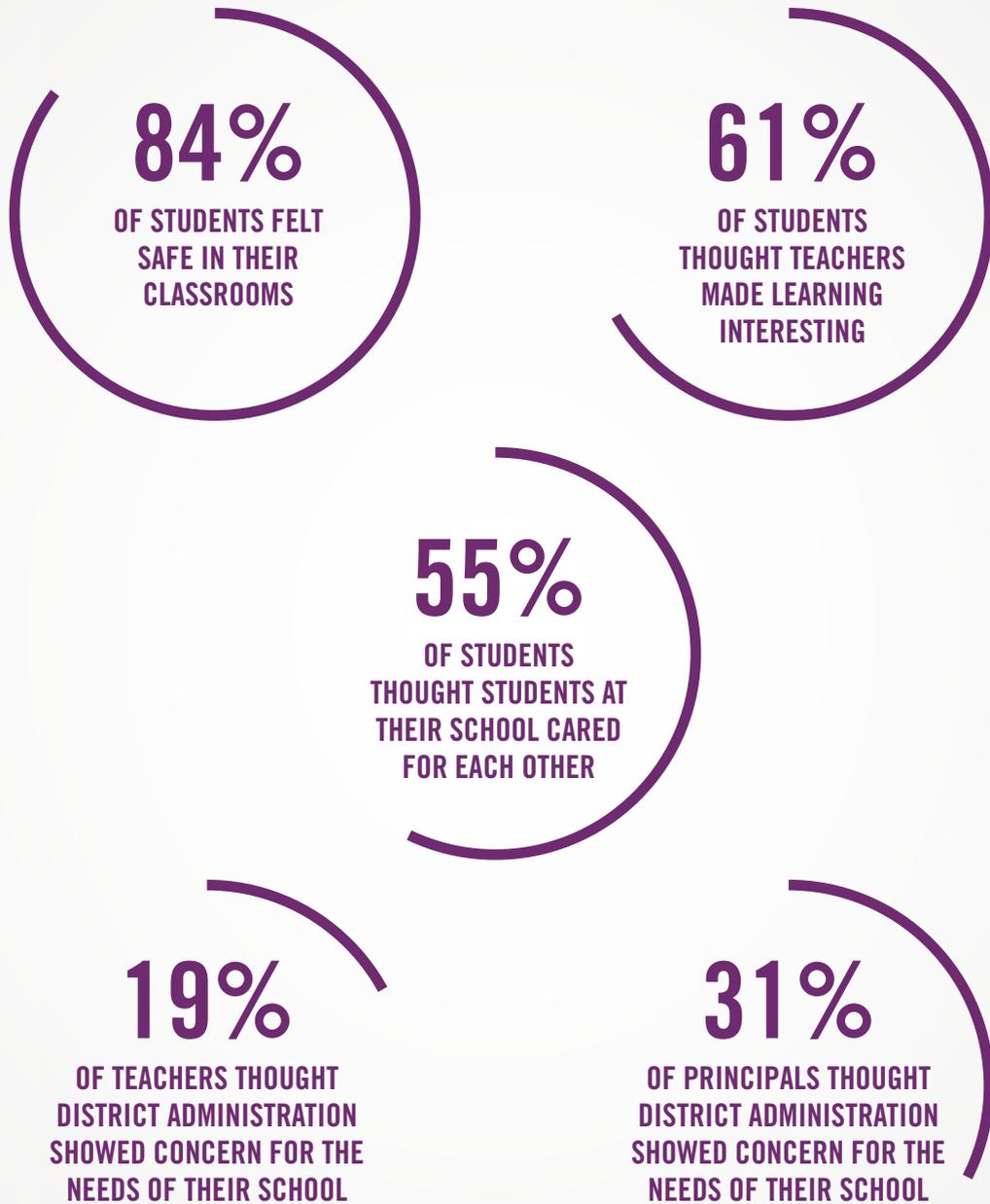


## - STUDENTS MEETING COLLEGE-CAREER READY THRESHOLD - SCHOOL YEAR 2014-2015



Incoming K and 3rd grade report NWEA/MAP reading and math;  
5th and 8th grades report Scholastic Math/Reading Inventory;  
10th grade reports ACT Plan English and math.

**- CLIMATE AND CULTURE SURVEY -**  
SCHOOL YEAR 2014-2015



Data collected by the University of Oklahoma's Center for Education Policy  
for their 2015 report of school health indicators.

## NEXT STEPS

Our strategic plan describes our path toward the future of Tulsa Public Schools. The document builds upon our successes and reflects our challenges, guiding us to be a district of excellence where students and educators are inspired and prepared to reach ambitious goals and make positive contributions to our world.

By implementing this plan, Tulsa Public Schools will become the destination for top educators and a proof point for what is possible in urban education. We will do this by embracing innovation and supporting the design and implementation of new learning models for our students, classrooms, teams, schools and the district while we continuously improve teaching and learning for all. The collective power of our efforts will result in each student graduating ready for success in college, careers and life. We call this our theory of change.

To be effective, we will hold ourselves accountable and will communicate transparently to all Tulsans about our progress. We will develop annual action plans aligned with the strategic plan and publicly share them prior to the start of each school year. They will include prioritized strategies, performance targets and deadlines. We will use the action plans and our performance data to regularly measure our success, adjust our work as needed and report our progress publicly to our board of education and our community.

## CALL TO ACTION

You are essential to the success of public education in Tulsa. Whoever you are, wherever you live and work, whatever lens you look through, you have a vested interest in the results of public education. Tulsa, like thousands of communities across the nation, is defined by the success of our public schools. We are living in a time like no other, with demands on families that now translate into greater demands on teachers and schools. We must address these challenges with hope and commitment.

Exceptional public education contributes to the vitality of our children, families and community. We invite you to find your place in support of Tulsa Public Schools.

Contact us at [getinvolved@tulsaschools.org](mailto:getinvolved@tulsaschools.org) to become a part of the excellence.

Together we will make our vision real.



Dear Tulsans-

“Destination Excellence” is a great title for this plan because extraordinary learning happens every day at Tulsa Public Schools, and we are committed to providing excellence for all students. We have amazing teachers, leaders and team members throughout our district. Our journey is not complete, however, and with this plan, we aim to inspire, motivate and energize the Tulsa Public Schools family to continue the journey to excellence—together—with a renewed sense of urgency and focus.

This plan represents hundreds of hours of engagement with teachers, families, students, community members and administrators, including many conversations about their hopes and dreams for our schools. The development of this plan included extensive reviews of student and community needs, relevant district and school-based data, as well as the most recent research and practices on how to ensure excellence at every school.

Creating the 2016-2020 five-year strategic plan for our district required a great deal of time and energy from all Tulsa Public Schools Board of Education members and many deeply invested community members. Our shared goal is to place every child on a pathway to success to realize his or her full potential, and we are extremely grateful for your engagement and enthusiasm throughout the strategic planning process.

We hope that you will stay engaged in the work of public education and continue to participate actively with Tulsa Public Schools throughout the implementation of our plan. Together, we have crafted a new vision for our district, and as a community, we will bring this plan to life.

Best,

Dr. Lana Turner-Addison  
Board President  
Tulsa Public Schools

Dr. Deborah A. Gist  
Superintendent  
Tulsa Public Schools

My Teacher inspires me.  
Mi Profesor me inspira.  
I love my Teacher.  
Me gusta mi profesor.



TULSA

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

[www.tulsaschools.org](http://www.tulsaschools.org)

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