

SCHOOL PAGES

Winter 2022-23



A Message from Superintendent Eric Melbye



District Sets Sights on Strategic Planning



I'm often asked, "What's your vision?" followed by, "Where do you see Bloomington Public Schools in the future?" Great questions, right?

To the first question, my response without hesitation is leading a learning organization dedicated to our community's most precious resources ... it's youth and their future.

Perhaps influenced by the dialogue between Alice and the Cat in Lewis Carroll's book "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland," the oft-cited quote "if you don't know where you are going, any road will take you there" gave me pause to reflect on the second question.

It is true that as superintendent I have the opportunity to influence the direction of education. I'm also a firm believer that when we collaborate with those most responsible for the educational and social and emotional well-being of our students - parents, caregivers, teachers, school leaders and support staff - we are doing right by them.

The questions ultimately sparked a motivation to consider how to bring our future into better focus. Because if we have a vision for what we want Bloomington Public Schools to be and do for our community's precious resources, then together a guiding coalition can shape and define the best route for us to reach our goals.

Strategic planning offers the roadmap to think and act strategically, develop effective strategies, establish priorities, improve

organizational performance and build teamwork amidst a rapidly changing environment.

Throughout the process, stakeholders shape the goals, objectives and outcomes of the "strategic plan." Along the way, stakeholders learn how Bloomington Public Schools work, how finances are spent and, most importantly, the needs of the district.

School and district teams have been actively recruiting a diverse group of interested parties who wish to be part of the Strategic Planning Team that will begin work in late January. Stakeholders will include a cross-section of parents and caregivers, high school students, licensed and non-certified staff, business, community, faith and interest group representatives, bargaining unit leaders, and management.

Parent, caregiver and staff participants will represent general and special education classes and programs, from early childhood to age 21, and diverse populations of our community.

Developing a Strategic Plan is a collaborative effort, with a meaningful outcome dependent on the ideas and expertise of our stakeholders. To that end, we will provide multiple opportunities for everyone's voice to be heard.

Thank you for partnering with us as we chart a dynamic course for the educational future of our students.

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Thank You Voters!

On behalf of our School Board and team of dedicated leaders, teachers and support staff, thank you for supporting the renewal of the Safe & Innovative Schools capital projects referendum.

Your support reaffirms what our community values:

- ★ Supporting and updating safety, security and technology equipment
- ★ Adopting emerging safety and security technologies
- ★ Supporting technology driven programming aligned with the district technology plan

These values support our goals to ensure Bloomington students have the opportunity to thrive and be career and college ready in safe, supportive, inclusive and innovative learning environments.

We are truly honored by the trust and continued support of our school district by a community that believes in strong schools focused on academic achievement for all children. We will continue to work hard to maintain your confidence in how we manage our financial resources.

A special thanks and appreciation to our school referendum teams and the Yes4BPS Committee - co-chairs Paige Rohman and Curtis Griesel - and all the volunteers - parents, current and retired staff, and community residents who gave of their time and talents to get out the vote, and build public awareness for the referendum. Your tireless energy showed Bloomington's children how much we care.

Sincerely,

Dr. Eric Melbye
Superintendent of Schools

2023-24 Calendar

The Bloomington School Board recently approved the 2023-24 school year calendar, highlighting holiday breaks, professional development and elementary assessment days.

The calendar can be viewed on the Bloomington Public Schools website.

bit.ly/bps-calendar



Find Your Community Here

We take pride in the diversity of our students and staff that reflects our community and the world around us.

OUR SCHOOLS

2

Early Childhood Centers

10

Elementary Schools

3

Middle Schools

2

High Schools

2

Alternative Learning Centers

1

K-12 Online School

OUR STAFF



1890

Total number of EC-21 licensed and non-licensed staff

681

EC-21 casual/reserve staff

1365

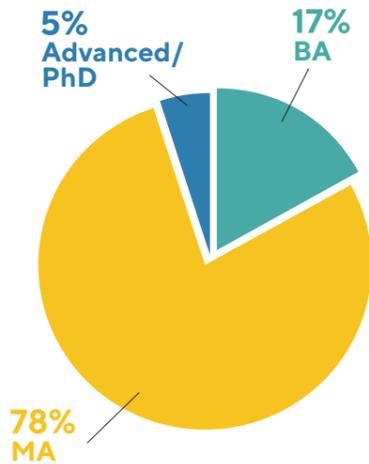
Female (72%)

525

Male (28%)

15%

Percentage staff of color (of total EC-21 staff)



Percentage of teachers with Bachelor's (BA), Master's (MA) or Advanced/PhD degrees

“

This is a calling. Now more than ever we are called to serve our communities. This is key to building positive relationships.

— Principal Roberto Cantu, Poplar Bridge Elementary School

OUR STUDENTS

4,049 + **2,255** + **3,498** = **9,802**
 ELEMENTARY (K-5) MIDDLE (6-8) HIGH SCHOOL (9-12) TOTAL K-12 ENROLLMENT

Nearly 2,500 students are also served by the district in early childhood, preschool, alternative and post-high school special education programs.

The 2022 enrollment report now available on the district's website at bit.ly/bps-enroll-report22 provides more information on the district's demographics, year-to-year comparison of K-12 enrollment, ethnicity, and free and reduced lunch counts.

Highlights of the report include:

- The 680 students in kindergarten is down slightly from a year ago, and is 20 students less than historical trends.
- Racially and ethnically diverse students grew one percent over last year, now accounting for 55 percent of all students.
- Students qualifying for free/reduced lunch, a federal socioeconomic indicator for poverty, is 47 percent, up 11 percent over last year. The increase is due in part to improved efforts to ensure qualified families receive benefits.
- District programs continue to attract students from outside the district. Nearly 10 percent of current K-12 students are open-enrolled, up 132 students from last year and the highest count over the last 10 years.

Other highlights can be viewed at bit.ly/bps-enroll-report22



Kindergarten Welcome Nights

Join us at a kindergarten welcome event to learn about your school, meet the principal and school staff and learn about the kindergarten experience: bit.ly/bps-kinder-23

Hillcrest Community School
Feb. 7
4:30-5:30 p.m.

Oak Grove Elementary School
Jan. 31
6-7 p.m.

Valley View Elementary School
Jan. 26
6-7 p.m.

Indian Mounds Elementary School
Jan. 19
6-7 p.m.

Olson Elementary School
Jan. 26
6-7 p.m.

Washburn Elementary School
Jan. 24
5-6 p.m.

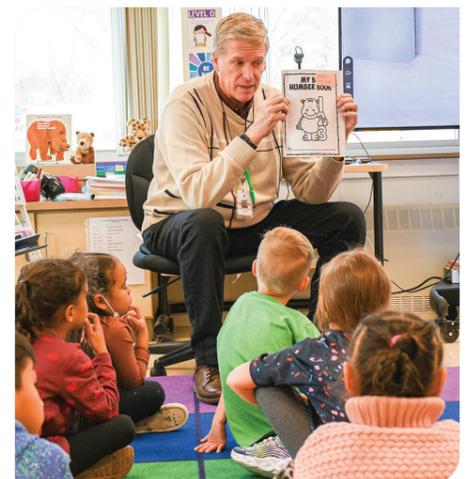
New Code Academy
Jan. 31
6-7 p.m.

Poplar Bridge Elementary School
Jan. 17
6-7 p.m.

Westwood Elementary School
Feb. 2
6-7 p.m.

Normandale Hills Elementary School
Jan. 26
6-7 p.m.

Ridgeview Elementary School
Jan. 24
6-7 p.m.



Inspired to Achieve

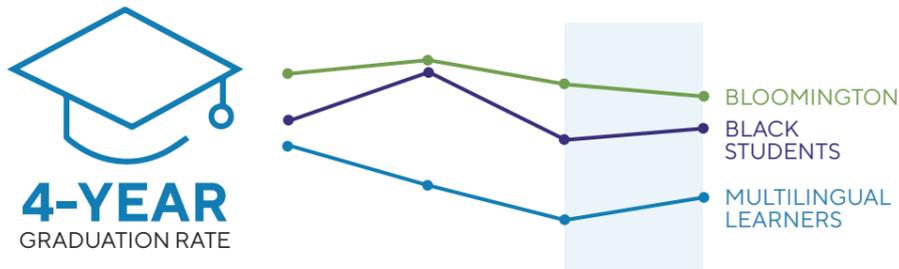


Graduation Rates

Bloomington Public Schools' seven-year graduation rate of 90.9 percent continues to outpace the state's seven-year average. Jefferson and Kennedy high schools achieved 95.3 and 89.6 percent seven-year graduation rates, respectively.

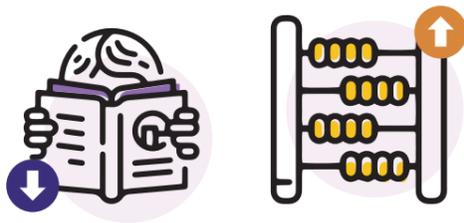
Measuring the seven-year rate demonstrates the impact of the district's vision and strategy to ensure students graduate career and college ready. Students are eligible to defer their high school diploma until their Personal Growth Plan goals are met, remaining enrolled in district programs up to age 21.

Like many districts, the four-year graduation rate dipped amid the disruptions of the pandemic, with the 2021 four-year rate decreasing by 2.7 points compared to the previous year. Four-year graduation rates improved by five points for multilingual learners and 2.5 points for Black students.



Attendance and Achievement

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) math scores increased slightly compared to the previous year while reading scores dipped by less than one percent; the latter was on pace with a statewide drop in MCA reading scores.



Attendance had a significant impact on math and reading proficiencies, an analysis of BPS student data revealed. The number of students meeting or exceeding reading and math state standards was more than 20 points greater for students attending 90 percent or more school days than students attending less than that benchmark.



	ATTENDANCE	READING	MATH
90%+	90%+	53.9	41
<90%	<90%	33.5	18.8

Serving All Learners



ARTFUL LEARNING

Hillcrest Community School is home to Minnesota's only Artful Learning program, embedding arts-based learning into every content area.



COMMUNITY EDUCATION

High-quality lifelong learning opportunities for all ages, enriching the lives of our diverse community.



COMPUTER SCIENCE FOR ALL

As Minnesota's leader in K-12 computer science education, our students learn transferrable skills like computational thinking and creative problem solving.



EARLY LEARNING AND PRESCHOOL

Four-star Parent-Aware rated Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE), and preschool programs.



GIFTED AND TALENTED

Families from Bloomington and across the Twin Cities choose our nationally-recognized Gifted and Talented programs to help highly academic and creatively gifted students continue to grow and be challenged.



NEW CODE ACADEMY

A MDE certified full-time, online K-12 school that offers a robust, personalized curriculum with a computer science focus. Open to all K-12 students in Minnesota.

How are we addressing pandemic gaps?

As the data shows, two-plus years of interrupted schooling had a significant impact on students and staff. We are addressing gaps in achievement and increased mental health concerns observed in students of all ages, by:

- Using data to drive instruction and better understand our student's academic story before and after the pandemic.
- Doubling down on fundamental skills in math and reading with a focus on comprehensive phonics instruction in elementary school.
- Adding school-based therapists at every school for mental health support.
- Using Social Emotional Learning (SEL) practices and coaching support.
- Implementing restorative circles and practices.
- Expanding extended day and summer programming.
- Supporting new teachers to navigate post-pandemic schooling.



91% Parents rate the quality of education as excellent or good.

93% Parents believe our community receives a good value from its investment in BPS.

81% Community trusts the district to make the right decisions.





IN THE KNOW

WINTER, SPRING CLASSES AVAILABLE

Bloomington Community Education Winter and Spring catalog of classes and programs is now available. Consider joining a class and engaging in lifelong learning experiences this season. The catalog includes the following categories:

- Youth and adult enrichment
- Aquatics classes
- Early learning services

Registration is now open, with courses running from January through early-June.

bit.ly/ce-winter-22

REGISTER FOR PRESCHOOL

Registration opens Jan. 23 for Fall 2023 preschool. Bloomington Public Schools offers half-day preschool for 3 and 4-year-olds, Step into Preschool for children with late summer or early fall birthdays and before- and after-preschool childcare at some locations. View program details and register today.

bit.ly/bps-preschool-register

FAMILY HOMEWORK CONNECTION

Volunteer Connection offers free homework help for all students at Penn Lake and Oxboro public libraries. The program assists students in completing homework, practicing reading and studying math. Parents must be present for K-8 students to attend:

- **Oxboro Library**, 8800 Penn Ave S. Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 4:30-6:30 p.m.
- **Penn Lake Library**, 8801 Portland Ave S. Monday evenings from 4:30-6:30 p.m.

bit.ly/bps-volunteer



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POINTS OF PRIDE



Juniors **Owen Baker** and **Anna Feeken** (Jefferson) and **Lila Coval** and **Angel Romero-Valencia** (Kennedy) are this year's Excellence in Community, Education and Leadership (ExCEL) Award nominees. Each year, high school juniors are recognized for their involvement in school activities, volunteer efforts and leadership qualities: bit.ly/bps-22excel



Jefferson seniors **Darian Whittet**, **Amal Mohamed** and Kennedy sophomore **Addison Wendt** qualified to compete in the MSHSL Debate state tournament,

Jan. 13-14: bit.ly/bps-bloom-debate

■ **Kennedy High School** hosted a free college fair for Bloomington students, in partnership with the Minnesota Association Counselors of Color. Representatives from nearly 60 public and private colleges and universities were present.

■ **Eighth-grade Nobel students** at Valley View Middle School held their annual Empty Bowls event to raise awareness of hunger in our community. Students served a meal in handmade bowls created by students. All proceeds were donated to the local nonprofit 'Good in the Hood.'



■ **Early Learning Advisory Council** raised \$5,535 to purchase new gross motor equipment for Southwood Center. The equipment encourages students' movement and coordination by using hand- or foot-eye coordination skills.



■ **Kennedy High School girls' swim and diving team** received an all-team Academic Gold award from the Minnesota State High School Swimming and Diving Coaches Association (MSHSCA) acknowledging the student-athletes' team average GPA of 3.89.



■ **Coach Todd Walsh** earned the Section 2A Coach of the Year award. Walsh is in his 23rd season leading the Kennedy swim and dive program.

■ **Kennedy High School soccer program** saw major success this season:

- Seniors **Isabella Lone** and **Makenzie Kane** were selected to the girls' Class AA all-state first and second teams respectively.
- Seniors **Diego Perez** and **Santiago Singer** were selected to the boys' Class AA all-state first and second teams respectively.
- **Lone** and **Perez** were Class AA Mr. and Ms. Soccer finalists.
- Senior **Lizbeth Dominguez Castillo** and sophomore **Macie Miller** were named to the Class 3AA all-tournament team.
- Seniors **Maisie Pederson** and captain **Ruthie Gyasi** made the Class 3AA all-academic team.
- Girls and boys soccer head coaches **Mario Lone** and **Dan Bushendorf** were named Section 3AA Coach of the Year respectively. Boys assistant coach **Brent Fairman** was named Section 3AA Assistant Coach of the Year.
- Kennedy Girls varsity team earned a silver all-academic team award.

■ **Jefferson High School cross country** senior runners **Megan Lee** and **Adam Lueth** finished first at the 2022 MSHSL Section 3AAA Championship meet. The boys' and girls' teams placed second and third respectively, earning a state tournament slot for the boys' team. Along with Lee and Lueth, senior **Caroline Hemann** and freshman **Avery Rich** advanced to the state meet. The boys' team placed 11th at state.



■ Paraprofessional **Leticia Alvarez**, student advocate **Kassie Ariza** and Kennedy's **Student Voices of Unity Club** partnered with the City of Bloomington to contribute ideas for the redesign of public parks and prepare feedback in a recent transit study of 98th Street and I-35W: bit.ly/khs-svu-blm