Rebuilding DPSCD Brick by Brick
Where We Started

As Michigan’s largest public education system, Detroit Public Schools Community District (DPSCD) is often in the spotlight. We’re proud to share our trajectory – where we started, how we’ve worked to overcome adversity and where we’re headed.

- In 2017, DPSCD returned to local control with seven-member locally elected school board.
- Appointed the second longest standing superintendent, Dr. Nikolai Vitti, to be a change agent for the DPSCD.
- Engaged the community, teachers, and students to establish a Blueprint Strategic Plan and use it as a guidepost to rebuild DPSCD.
Beginning to Rise

Blueprint 2020 Priorities

• OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT
  Dramatically improve the academic experience of all students to ensure they are college and career ready.

• TRANSFORMATIVE CULTURE
  Transform our culture so that students, families, community members, and staff feel safe, respected, and connected.

• WHOLE CHILD COMMITMENT
  Champion a whole child approach that unlocks students’ full potential.

• EXCEPTIONAL TALENT
  Build an excellent team of dedicated staff to serve our students.

• RESPONSIBLE STEWARDSHIP
  Manage and deploy our resources responsibly, transparently, and equitably to support our students’ success.

Approach to Driving Improvement

• If you set ambitious, feasible and highly measurable common goals for school improvement with aligned accountability frameworks;

• And if you centralize and optimize the budget and allocation plan to align with that framework;

• And if you aggressively pursue fully staffed status;

• And if you adopt and develop teachers using highly aligned instructional materials;

• And if you build capacity in the principalship to implement and monitor well-defined school improvement strategies;

• Then performance will improve.
### Outstanding Achievement

- Outperformed State, County, and City Charters on M-STEP Improvement in 2023
- Achieved highest literacy proficiency in over a decade, including the highest ever College and Career Readiness rate in ELA
- Exited 35 schools from state Partnership status
- Improved graduation rate post-pandemic by nearly 10% points
- Expanded access to accelerated courses, including AP and Dual Enrollment courses available across schools
- Reestablished Gifted and Talented Education
- Launched a dedicated Newcomer program for recently arrived immigrant students
- Invested millions of dollars annually on high quality curriculum materials and classroom libraries
- Added Academic Interventionists, structured literacy intervention programs and tutoring funds across schools

### Transformative Culture

- Established PTAs and SACs across schools
- Added a Parent Outreach Coordinator role at each school
- Introduced a consistent process for volunteering and increased volunteerism
- Brought in Faith-Based partnerships to schools
- Introduced Parent Academy reaching hundreds families per year
- Created a family resource center
- Launched “Let’s Read” to bolster community involvement to support literacy
- Adopted Anti-Racist and Sanctuary District resolutions
- Revised the Code of Conduct with stakeholder input with a focus on behavioral supports and restorative practice
- Introduced Parent Listening sessions and 5 Things Weekly Newsletter to make direct connections with families
- Built a student and staff Hub (intranet) to share knowledge, information, and promote best practices, students, and staff
**Whole Child Commitment**

- Restored and maintained Art or Music and Physical Education in all schools
- Restored recess
- Expanded athletics programming K-12 and participation in Special Olympics
- Offered student mental health services at all schools
- Added counselors and nurses to every school
- Launched Health Hubs districtwide to provide mental health, dental, vision and medical support to families, along with basic needs
- Introduced a Student Leadership Council with two Student Board Seats
- Expanded access to STEM and Social Studies Enrichment, like oratorical and debate
- Introduced Cultural Passport and reinvested in Evening of Fine Arts
- Increased breakfast and lunch participation districtwide
- Expanded school gardens and farm to table food programs

**Exceptional Talent**

- Added hundreds of school-based positions while drastically reducing vacancies, including at hard to staff schools
- Increased all staff salaries, including teacher salaries by an average of ~20K and $15K bonuses for ESE teachers
- Built a grow-your-own certification program, On the Rise Academy, responsible for developing over 100 new teachers
- Introduced teacher leadership roles, including Master Teachers and New Teacher Mentors
- Launched a professional development catalog with tens of thousands of unique enrollments each year
- Received national and state recognition for excellence via the Urban Superintendent of the Year, MI Teacher of the Year, and MI Social Worker of the Year
Reduced Financial Review Committee Oversight
Achieved 0 Audit Exceptions
Adopted a balanced budget for 7 consecutive years
Recognized as a model district for COVID relief funding nationally
Allocated $840M for facilities investments
Went from 6:1 to 1:1 on student to device ratio
Invested $61.5M in security systems, PA systems, and network improvements
Reduced average vendor payment from 90 days to ~20
Adopted new data systems, including an upgraded Student Information System, best in class data systems and new data collection mechanisms to assess progress
Introduced innovative district vehicle program to serve homeless and ESE students while reducing costs

The headlines about DPSCD have changed since 2016 – and the results have changed, too. We still have significant work to do, but our students are rising and the future is bright.
The District has made significant strides in math proficiency, despite having one of the highest populations of students eligible for free or reduced lunch.
Change in Reading Achievement 2022-2023

The District has also made strong progress in reading achievement, outpacing the state average.

Change in Reading Achievement 2022-2023
by proportion FRPL in Michigan districts

Source: Education Recovery Scorecard, by Harvard CEPR and Stanford SEDA.
Notes: All estimates are based on published state assessment results, which have been rescaled to grade equivalents using state scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress.
For historical comparability, the proportion of students receiving free or reduced price lunch reflects the estimated number of students in households with incomes below 185% of the federal poverty level in Census data.
Some districts may have higher rates of federally subsidized lunch recipients due to the community eligibility provision. The sample of districts shown have been limited to districts with reliable estimates.
Labeled points represent districts with at least 600 tested students per grade. The regression line displays the overall trend within the state.
For details on the methodology see https://edopportune.org/methods.
I. Equitable & adequate school aid.
   • Address hold harmless associated with local millage funding or increase per pupil funding to the highest generating per pupil amount.
   • Provide additional funding for students with greatest needs through weighted student formula, including ESE, ELL, and At-Risk through poverty status.
   • Establish reoccurring facility funding for school districts.
   • Remove all restrictions on state categorical funding.

II. Remove all vestiges of emergency management, including the FRC, and statute language allowing for its possible return.

III. Establish a statewide student database system to track enrollment, attendance, discipline issues, behavioral health needs, and student performance. Include a statewide employee database to track student performance, evaluations, and disciplinary history.

IV. Provide greater flexibility for subject time allocation and high school course requirements to address intervention and career preparation.

V. Remove “partnership school status” or lowest performing schools based on lowest 5% criteria and focus identification on failure to show improvement on both proficiency and growth models.

VI. Require kindergarten attendance for students and families and increase family accountability for student attendance K-12.

VII. Remove restrictions on school districts to prioritize minority vendors as contractors.
Thank you for taking time to review a snapshot of DPSCD. Please visit detroitk12.org for more information on why developing equitable funding is not just a plea, all children deserve an excellent education. Join us, as we ensure all students rise!

DPSCD Blueprint 2027