

The Future for Walla Walla Public's Schools

After nearly ten months of substantial community, staff, and stakeholder engagement to inform the district's strategic planning efforts, the Walla Walla Board of Directors recently defined a clear and affirming direction for the future of our school system. A courageous and bold course of action, at the April 18th Board Meeting the directors voted unanimously to target resources, efforts, and energy directly to the core improvement opportunities identified by their constituency.

This recent decision provides the critical framework as we collectively strive to achieve our new vision towards developing Washington's most sought-after graduates. These strategic investments will help ensure core tenants are achieved, resulting in increased Latino student performance and family outreach, quality instructional resources and training are made available to staff, enhanced student behavioral supports are provided to meet the social/emotional needs of pupils, and expanded opportunities for student engagement are achieved both inside and outside the classroom.

As the district begins to implement the four pillars of its new strategic plan, students, staff and community will begin to take notice of the collective improvement efforts.

Following are some of the exciting strategies, programs, and investments the district will be implementing starting next school year:

- Significant efforts are being applied to enhance learning outcomes for Latino students in order to close the achievement gap, including expanded leadership and Latino outreach personnel, additional supports for culturally-relevant activities across campuses, and targeted student program investments.
- Specially-trained staff are being hired to support student social, emotional and behavioral needs in order to provide acute prevention, student crises response, staff training, and access to critical school-based health centers and community resources.
- Necessary investments will be made to ensure staff are equipped with the latest research-based curriculum, technology, and requisite training in high leverage teaching strategies, including additional support for fine arts, sciences, and stem-related fields.
- Noteworthy enhancements to engage all students are being put in place, including afterschool, summer school, and extra/co-curricular programming, implementation of middle school competitive soccer, enhanced middle school electives and Spanish language opportunities, support for additional student clubs and organizations, and the elimination of middle school pay-to-participate fees to improve access for all.
- Enhanced student safety measures that include increased campus security, surveillance, and improved training related to suicide prevention, ACES, and safety response.

This is an exciting time for students, staff, and the community of Walla Walla as we carry forward our mission to ensure all students receive high quality instruction in an aligned and coherent system while addressing their social and emotional needs in a safe and engaging environment.