



Excellence for All

STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW | JUNE 2008

“At Seattle Public Schools, we believe that every student in every school can excel—and it is our responsibility to ensure that every student has that opportunity. While we have strengths to build on, we also must improve in many areas to make this vision a reality.”

Maria Goodloe-Johnson, Ph.D.,
Superintendent



OUR COMMITMENT: All Students Achieving

To realize this vision, we must be clear that success means all students achieving. We must hold ourselves accountable for achievement and growth at all levels from kindergarten through 12th grade, judging our success by both closing the achievement gap and accelerating learning for all students.

Over the next five years, our goals include:

- 88 percent of third-grade students meet or exceed reading standards (up from 72 percent in 2006–2007).
- 80 percent of seventh-grade students meet or exceed math standards (up from 53 percent in 2006–2007).
- 75 percent of students graduate from high school in four years (up from 62 percent in 2006–2007).

STRATEGIES FOR ACTION: Delivering on our Commitment to Excellence

We have developed clear goals for our academic achievement. We have reviewed our academic programs and operations to understand what we must do to achieve our goals. And we have developed a set of strategies that describe what we will do over the next several years to build the foundation to meet our commitment of excellence for all students in Seattle Public Schools.

Ensure Excellence in Every Classroom

- Strengthen our teaching of math and science, and build on our strength in reading and writing.
- Develop assessment tools to consistently track student progress and use data to drive improvements.
- Create a system that recognizes high-performing schools and helps struggling schools.

In order to achieve this goal, SPS will:

- Adopt an “aligned curriculum” in math and science.
- Develop district-wide assessments in math and reading.
- Develop a school performance framework.

SPS TODAY

- Largest school district in the state
- 45,300 students
- 8,000 staff
- 93 schools
- More than 100 languages
- 39 percent free or reduced-price lunch
- \$556 million 2008-2009 budget

SPS POINTS OF PRIDE

- Students outperform state average or are at par in 13 out of 20 areas tested on WASL
- Financial management earned highest ratings from Standard and Poors and Moodys
- 32 National Merit Semifinalists 2007
- Two International Baccalaureate high schools and expanding international schools program
- Jazz band, orchestra and other music programs consistently win national and regional first place awards

Strengthen Leaders System-Wide

- Retain and hire the best teachers and principals.
- Hold all employees to high expectations, and support them in meeting those expectations.
- Implement effective performance evaluations at all levels.

In order to achieve this goal, SPS will:

- Improve our hiring process.
- Expand mentoring programs for new teachers and principals.
- Develop a comprehensive evaluation system.

Build an Infrastructure That Works Well

- Adopt and adapt technologies to allow for more efficient student assignment.
- Develop budget protocols and evaluation tools to ensure efficiency and efficacy.

In order to achieve this goal, SPS will:

- Update district technology.
- Develop a budget process to ensure that resources meet goals.

To support the successful implementation of these three strategies, SPS must:

Improve Our Systems

- Advance project management to improve execution of district strategies.
- Use data effectively to guide performance evaluations and spending choices.
- Increase and improve professional development to help staff develop new skills.

Engage Stakeholders

- Treat staff as key stakeholders.
- Increase and improve family engagement.
- Conduct effective outreach to engage community leaders.
- Focus on collaborative partnerships.
- Improve customer service throughout the district.