



**2023-2027**



# **STRATEGIC PLAN**

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## Message from the Superintendent



Dear Jersey City Public School Community,

On behalf of the Jersey City Public Schools, I am honored and proud to share the District's new Strategic Plan. This plan expresses the vision for our school family and the larger community. It is the **development of a roadmap for all stakeholders** in a joint effort to ensure the success of our scholars.

**Equity, Community, High Expectations, Inclusivity, Integrity and Teamwork are the core values of our organization.** The vision, mission, priorities, and measurable goals detailed in this document are aligned with the core values and

set the course for the next five years of continuous growth. The plan's development truly embodies and reflects more than a year of hard work and commitment as a collective educational partnership that includes families, staff, and community members.

The evolution of the Strategic Plan began with an invitation to all stakeholder groups to sit on the Steering Committee. Once formed, the Committee held monthly meetings and analyzed data to gain an understanding of the strengths and needs of the District from the perspective of internal and external members. Moreover, the Committee conducted surveys and arranged focus groups to gather additional viewpoints on the top priorities and goals that should be included in the new plan. The process aided in the creation of our Vision, Mission, and Core Values.

**This roadmap demonstrates the position of the stakeholders and translates them into a set of informed top priorities.** The work of the Committee concludes with the design, release, and implementation of the Strategic Plan, which will serve as the foundation for improved student outcomes in the years to come. Finally, it will demonstrate our aspirations for students who graduate from the Jersey City Public Schools as they enter the community as productive citizens.

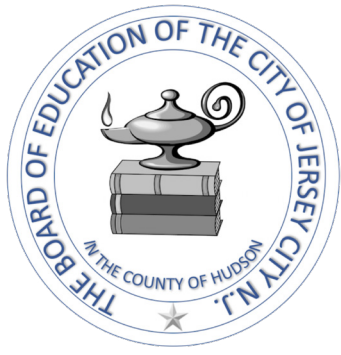
The Strategic Plan sets forth a shared vision that is purposeful and focused on setting high standards for our students and ourselves, always driven by the values of equity, integrity and community. We are held accountable by the measurable goals that enable student success.

As the Superintendent of Schools, I am presented with an incredible opportunity to take the culture of our District to the next level. **Within the next five years, we will create a school district that all families choose for the education of their children, and a district that will be recognized as a premier workplace in the region.**

I encourage you to take time to review the plan, ask questions and seek opportunities to contribute to and join us in the education of our children.

Respectfully,

Dr. Norma Fernandez  
Superintendent



# Message from the School Board

Dear JCPS Families and Staff,

We are proud to join Superintendent Dr. Norma Fernandez in presenting the District's Strategic Plan for the next five years. It has been a true privilege for us to be a part of the plan's development. During this process JCBOE trustees, parents, community partners, teachers, principals and members of the district administration collaborated to identify the vision, the mission, and the priorities for our district.

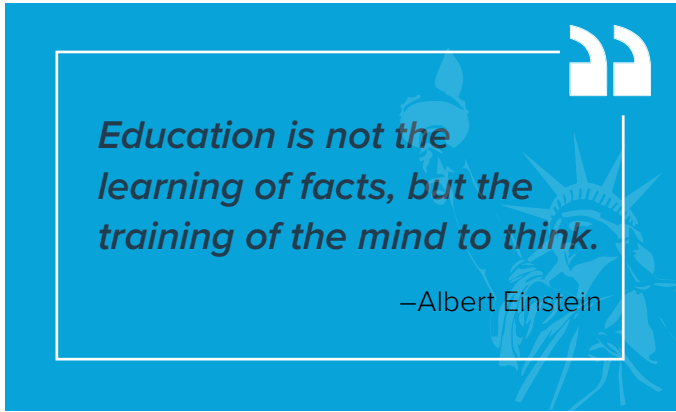
Despite challenges and obstacles, we are committed to the mission of preparing all Jersey City Public School scholars for academic and professional success. Just as Jersey City has been named the most multi-ethnic, multicultural and multilingual municipality in the United States, our Public Schools are a reflection of that incredible diversity. Each school represents a unique learning community with an equally unique set of needs. Our collective responsibility is to address and meet those needs so that all of our students, without exception, have access to equitable opportunities for success.

The Jersey City Board of Education is a policy-making governing body, composed of nine elected public servants who volunteer to support the school district through good governance, ensuring that the schools are well run. Collectively we represent public education, and act as a liaison between the schools and community by assisting in developing partnerships and facilitating communication.

This work is accomplished through monthly public meetings and committees, where board trustees engage in establishing policies and maintaining best practices throughout the district. In order to move our district forward the school board works with the Superintendent and the administrative staff, as one united team with a clear focus on the priorities set in the Strategic Plan.

Our united collaboration ensures that our scholars, our parent community, our teachers, and support staff are equipped with the best tools and resources for success.

Natalia Ioffe  
President  
Jersey City Board of Education



*Education is not the learning of facts, but the training of the mind to think.*

—Albert Einstein



# City Overview

## Demographics

Native American	0.6%
Two or more races	1.2%
White, non Latino or Hispanic	22.1%
Black	23.1%
Asian	26.1%
Hispanic or Latino	26.9%

Source: 2020 Census

# #2

**MOST POPULOUS CITY**  
in New Jersey

# #1

**MOST ETHNICALLY DIVERSE CITY**  
in the United States

Source: 2020 U.S. Census

Jersey City, New Jersey is the second most populous city in New Jersey and the seat of Hudson County. The 2020 U.S. Census showed the city's population as 292,449, growing at a rate of 1.51% annually. The population density is 19,835.1 per square mile, making it the 71st most populous incorporated place in the nation.

Jersey City is the most ethnically diverse city in the United States. It is a major port of entry for immigrants to the United States, with 43.5% of its population foreign born. 52.6% of people over the age of 5 speak a language other than English in the home. The median age of its citizens is 34. The per capita income is \$44,761 and the median income is \$76,444; 15.7% of the population live in poverty.

The city is an important transportation terminus and distribution and manufacturing center for the Ports of New York and New Jersey. Jersey City shares significant mass transit connections with

Manhattan. Redevelopment at the Jersey City Waterfront has made the city one of the largest centers of banking and finance in the United States, being given the name "Wall Street West."

Because we are such a large urban school district with an incredibly diverse population, we are often presented with a unique combination of extraordinary opportunities and complex challenges. It is clear that the JC Public School District must support and prepare its students to live and work in a world without geographic limits. Ensuring equity of opportunity and resources is paramount to student success. Celebrating the native language of its students while developing their fluency in a second and/or third language enhances their ability to compete in a global society.

*Redevelopment at the Jersey City Waterfront has made the city one of the largest centers of banking and finance in the United States, being given the name "Wall Street West."*



# District At-A-Glance >>

## Demographics

Native American	0.22%
Pacific Islander	0.96%
Multi Racial	1.7%
White	15.5%
Asian	17.16%
Black	27.8%
Hispanic	38.5%



**26K**  
Students



**63.6%**  
Economically Disadvantaged



**13.3%**  
English Learners



**1.0%**  
Homeless



**78%**  
Graduation Rate

The Jersey City Public Schools educates students in pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade, and its population reflects the diversity of the city it serves. The district is one of 31 former Abbott districts statewide, now referred to as “SDA Districts”, which requires the state to cover all costs for school building and renovation projects under the supervision of the New Jersey Schools Development Authority.

The Jersey City Public Schools offers a diverse array of schools. We have fourteen (14) Elementary Schools (Pre-K--5), thirteen (13) Grammar Schools (Pre-K-8), four (4) Middle Schools (6-8), six (6) High Schools (9-12), one (1) Secondary School (6-12), one (1) Alternative Program (serving grades 6-12), and four (4) Early Childhood Centers. At the secondary level, we offer comprehensive Middle and High Schools as well as district-wide selective programs to suit a range of interests and talents.

The Jersey City Public School District boasts two high schools ranked in the top ten of public

high schools in New Jersey: Dr. Ronald E. McNair Academic High School ranked as the number one high school and Infinity Institute ranked sixth out of three hundred twenty two schools statewide. William L. Dickinson High School is the oldest high school in the city and one of the largest schools in Hudson County in terms of student population. It opened in 1906 as the Jersey City High School, and is a four-story BeauxArts building located on a hilltop facing the Hudson River.

The student enrollment for the 2021 year was approximately 26,000. The City continues to attract immigrants and global employees; as a result, the racial and ethnic makeup of students and their demographics mirror the population of the city as a whole.

The Jersey City Public School system offers a multitude of programs and services to support all of its students, including English Language Learners, Students with Disabilities, Gifted Students and those interested in careers and technical training.





# Strategic Planning Process Overview >>

## Strategic Plan Committee

The development of the Jersey City Public Schools' strategic plan was a community-wide effort led by a strategically selected group of individuals. The committee consisted of a variety of district stakeholders and key local citizens including:

**29**  
Members



Teachers



Parents/  
Guardians



Administrators



Central Office  
Staff



Business  
Leaders

The committee met monthly to review research and data and develop draft content.

**4**

Focus  
Groups



reviewed the draft content produced by the committee. The Jersey City Board of Education used the groups' reactions and feedback to make revisions to the strategic plan they adopted.

The board and the superintendent would like to thank the members of the committee for their time, effort, and dedication to the planning process and the district.

- |                     |   |                       |   |                    |   |                        |
|---------------------|---|-----------------------|---|--------------------|---|------------------------|
| Dr. Janine Anderson | • | Tiffany Grant Simmons | • | Madonna Morris     | • | Aldo Sanchez-Abreu     |
| Ann Beirne          | • | Dr. Ruth Hypolite     | • | Jackson Niyamwange | • | Dr. Magda Savino       |
| Gekson Casillas     | • | Natalia Ioffe         | • | Dana Patton        | • | Paul Silverman         |
| Iraya Corley        | • | Blanca Jackson        | • | Jamie Principe     | • | Troy Smith             |
| Dr. Gerry Crisonino | • | Javia Jackson         | • | Kathleen Renz      | • | Jessica Taube          |
| Dr. Norma Fernandez | • | Gerald Lyons          | • | Lorenzo Richardson | • | Danielle Walker        |
| Andrette Fuqua      | • | Saudia Mallard        | • | Aimee Rodriguez    | • | Terry Watkins Williams |
| Dr. Joseph Galano   | • | Jaime Morales         | • | Ellen Ruane        | • |                        |

## Vision >>

Inspiring and preparing all Jersey City Public School scholars to confidently achieve their dreams and ambitions, address future global challenges, and reach their fullest potential in a diverse, ever-changing world.

## Mission >>

Jersey City Public Schools empowers all scholars within its diverse community with the foundational skills to be life-long learners and ensures their academic, social-emotional, and career success through safe environments and equitable access to opportunities.

## Core Values >>

### Equity

We believe that equity – providing each scholar with access to high-quality instruction, courses, and resources – is the foundation through which each scholar will have the opportunity to experience and the skills and mindset to access a future that allows for career and college success.

.....

### Community

We believe that a strong community is necessary for the success of the district and its students and that it is built upon the principles of trust, collaboration, and positive relationships.

.....

### High Expectations

We believe that high expectations for all of our students and staff are essential to the success of our district and future success of our graduates.

.....

### Diverse Culture

We believe that recognizing and celebrating the district’s rich, diverse culture is critical to ensuring that each stakeholder has a sense of belonging and significance.

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### Integrity

We believe that integrity is demonstrated through high levels of commitment and value-driven decision making that strives to do what is right for stakeholders.

.....

### Teamwork

We believe that collaboration as a team towards a common goal ensures that all levels of our operations run efficiently, equitably, and sustainably.

.....



# Portrait of a Graduate >>

Our Portrait of a Graduate reflects the 21st century skills, character traits, and social-emotional competencies that students need to succeed in college, career, and life.



## Critical Thinker

JCPS Graduates **will listen, speak, read, write, and think critically in order** to identify and resolve issues which may be pertinent **to their society** and the world around them.



## Collaborator

JCPS graduates will **employ effective communication skills** and understand how to connect with professional and personal entities as they work together to solve problems and resolve issues.



## Life-Long Learner

JCPS graduates will be intellectually curious, continuing to develop critical thinking, problem solving, and **effective** communication skills in order to harness information and empower themselves and those around them in a constantly changing world, **achieving personal fulfillment and satisfaction.**



## Technologically Savvy

JCPS graduates will be prepared to integrate technology into their daily lives to support their future success. **They will be able to work independently and with others to appropriately and effectively use technology.**



## Community Advocate

JCPS graduates will be champions for their communities **in order to bring about change and raise awareness for global causes.**



## Engaged and Invested

JCPS graduates will commit to making positive contributions to their family, profession, and community. **They will be resilient and determined to succeed.**





*Our goal is for ALL students to have an educational experience preparing them to thrive and excel in the future.*



## Summary >>>



### PRIORITY 1



#### Academics

**Goal 1:** All JCPS will demonstrate college and career readiness.

**Goal 2:** All JCPS students will maintain “on-track” to graduation status throughout high school.

**Goal 3:** The JCPS will effectively use data to drive academic achievement and inform effective instructional practices.



### PRIORITY 2



#### Wellness / Social-Emotional

**Goal 1:** Social emotional learning is embedded in the learning environment.

**Goal 2:** All teachers and administrators are trained in social emotional learning.

**Goal 3:** Implement tiered interventions and partner with a licensed mental health facility.



### PRIORITY 3



#### Equity

**Goal 1:** All Jersey City students and families will have equitable digital use and access to digital resources.

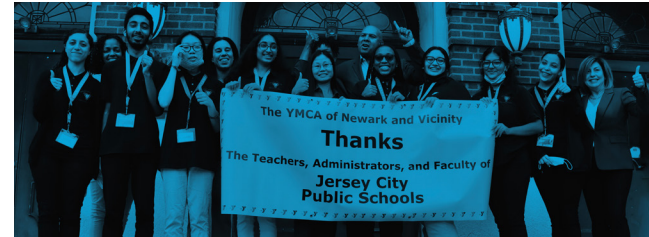
**Goal 2:** All Jersey City students will have equitable opportunities and access to academic resources that will engage and support their growth.

**Goal 3:** Provide equal access for underrepresented groups so they can meaningfully engage with the district.

## Family & Community Engagement

**Goal 1:** We will authentically engage families and the community in supporting schools to ensure the development of responsible, fulfilled and successful global citizens.

## PRIORITY 4



## Operations / Finance

**Goal 1:** Ensuring that all of our schools and departments are fully staffed with highly qualified/certified personnel.

**Goal 2:** Create a technology plan to maintain, standardize, and implement instructional technologies that are aligned to defined educational goals and curated with teaching and learning as the primary consideration.

**Goal 3:** Create a multi-year action plan to improve facilities using the Jersey City Public Schools Long Range Facilities Plan with financial allocations.

**Goal 4:** Define operational practices for all departments within the district with clearly articulated goals and actions each year that leads towards higher automation and increased efficiencies.

**Goal 5:** The Jersey City Public Schools will maintain a balanced budget that supports academic excellence, facilities, and fiscal responsibilities.

## PRIORITY 5







**Academics** 

**Goal 1: All JCPS will demonstrate college and career readiness.**

**INDICATORS**

- PSAT and SAT scores
- Effective Implementation of the NJSLs
- Strengthen CTE Pathways
- Expand Post Secondary Opportunities (Dual Enrollment, option 2)
- Implement high impact instructional innovations

**Goal 2: All JCPS students will maintain “on-track” to graduation status throughout high school.**

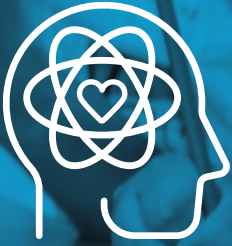
**INDICATORS**

- Credits earned each year go (“on-track” status)
- Graduation Rates (increased)
- Drop-out Rate (decreased)
- Attendance (increased)
- Flexible scheduling practices that meet student’s learning needs

**Goal 3: The JCPS will effectively use data to drive academic achievement and inform effective instructional practices.**

**INDICATORS**

- Targeted interventions that promote the academic success of all students who are struggling academically.
- District-wide interventions (Freckle, STAR). (Growth between pre and post)
- AP Tests (increased number of passing scores)
- District and State Assessments
- PSAT and SAT
- ACCESS for ELLs/DLM



## Wellness / Social-Emotional

INDICATORS

### Goal 1: Social emotional learning is embedded in the learning environment.

- Competent in the Executive Functioning Skills: Impulse control, Emotional Control, Flexible Thinking, Working Memory, Self-Monitoring, Planning and Prioritizing, Task Initiation, and Organization.
- Develop and practice conflict resolution skills.

INDICATORS

### Goal 2: All teachers and administrators are trained in social emotional learning.

- Staff participates in SEL training.
- All instructional staff will be trained in strategies and practices that promote social-emotional wellbeing.

INDICATORS

### Goal 3: Implement tiered interventions and partner with a licensed mental health facility to provide clinicians for individual, group and family therapy.

- Check-ins: survey students regularly to determine their mental health.
- Improved academic performance, attendance and behavior.



Equity 

INDICATORS

**Goal 1: All Jersey City students and families will have equitable digital use and access to the District's digital resources.**

- Home internet access
- Increase parents' use of technology and digital resources.
- Information in multiple languages posted across platforms using various forms of communication
- Effective digital citizenship skills

INDICATORS

**Goal 2: All Jersey City students will have equitable opportunities and access to academic resources that will engage and support their growth.**

- Accelerated Programs
- Partnerships with colleges and universities to offer college level courses or CTE programs to high school students.
- Underserved groups will have additional resources and/or programs
- Equitable staffing practices and resources

INDICATORS

**Goal 3: Provide equal access for underrepresented groups so they can meaningfully engage with the district.**

- Use translation services
- Provide varied modes of communication





## Family & Community Engagement

**Goal 1: We will authentically engage families and the community in supporting schools to ensure the development of responsible, fulfilled and successful global citizens.**

INDICATORS

- Families and schools have the tools and resources to amplify parent voice to support academic achievement.
- All schools will have an active school and district based Parent governance process that interacts with Senior District Leadership.
- Refine the comprehensive and integrated process for communication with internal and external stakeholders.
- Outreach to community stakeholders to develop partnerships.
- Develop a Parent Ambassador Program in each school.

*You cannot dream of becoming something you do not know about. You have to learn to dream big. Education exposes you to what the World has to offer, to the possibilities open to you.*



—Sonia Sotomayor





**Operations / Finance** >>

**Goal 1: Ensuring that all of our schools and departments are fully staffed with highly qualified/certified personnel.**

**INDICATORS**

- Streamline the employment process
- Increased communication, advertisement and hiring opportunities to fill vacancies
- Increased retention of new staff
- Support and mentor new hires to build capacity
- Offer a variety of professional development opportunities

**Goal 2: Create a technology plan to maintain, standardize, and implement instructional technologies that are aligned to defined educational goals and curated with teaching and learning as the primary consideration.**

**INDICATORS**

- Periodically update the Technology Plan
- Explore Innovative Technology Solutions
- Offer ongoing professional development to all staff

**Goal 3: Create a multi-year action plan to improve facilities using the Jersey City Public Schools Long Range Facilities Plan with financial allocations.**

**INDICATORS**

- Use the long range facilities plan as a guide for continuous modernization and expansion of facilities



**Goal 4: Define operational practices for all departments within the district with clearly articulated goals and actions each year that leads towards higher automation and increased efficiencies.**

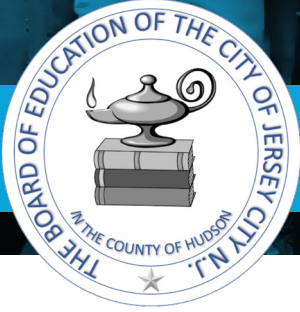
INDICATORS

- Department heads meet with their staff to conduct a job analysis within the department and create strategies that enhance efficiency and effectiveness.
- Department heads will collaborate with Senior Leadership to articulate expectations and responsibilities for each member of the department and monitor performance and efficiency regularly.

**Goal 5: The Jersey City Public Schools will maintain a balanced budget that supports academic excellence, facilities, and fiscal responsibilities.**

INDICATORS

- Utilize the Priorities within the JCPS Strategic Plan to assist in the development of a balanced budget.
- Utilize the Long Range Facilities Plan to reorganize and update/add to existing facilities.
- Hold meetings with Department Heads, Principals and Senior Leadership to inform budget development and prioritize spending.



## Board of Education >>

### Leadership 2022

**Gerald Lyons** – President

**Gina Verdibello** – Vice President,  
Instructional

**Natalia Ioffe** – Vice President,  
Non-Instructional

### Leadership 2023

**Natalia Ioffe** – President

**Noemi Velazquez** – Vice President

### Board Trustees 2022

**Younass Mohamed Barkouch**

**Alexander Hamilton**

**Paula Jones-Watson**

**Lorenzo Richardson**

**Lekendrick Shaw**

**Noemi Velasquez**

### Board Trustees 2023

**Younass Mohamed Barkouch**

**Paula Jones-Watson**

**Afaf Muhammad**

**Lorenzo Richardson**

**Lekendrick Shaw**

**Christopher Tisdale**

**Gina Verdibello**

### Superintendent of the Jersey City Public Schools

**Dr. Norma Fernandez**

# JERSEY CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS



@TheSchoolDistrictOfJerseyCity



@jcps\_district



@jcps\_districtsocialmedia



JCETV  
Communications JCPS



Communications JCPS

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