

# ANOKA-HENNEPIN SCHOOLS 2024-25 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES





# LEADING THE DISTRICT'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Anoka-Hennepin Schools' superintendent and six-member School Board lead the district's strategic priorities. Updates are shared at regular board meetings and online at [ahschools.us/strategicpriorities](https://ahschools.us/strategicpriorities).

Anoka-Hennepin Schools community,

There's little question that achieving the best possible results for students benefits from a system that provides structure, deploys resources and includes a system of evaluation to determine impact and results.

The Anoka-Hennepin strategic priorities system creates a shared expectation for how resources will be utilized along with a disciplined approach from governance, and implementation to measurement. Using a continuous improvement model that notes key dates for action steps throughout the year, the School Board works within a framework to align decisions to meet the mission and vision for the district.

Items selected for strategic priorities include significant staff and community input, including results from community surveys that provide a representative sampling of the wider district population.

As the district transitions leadership, the strategic priorities process provides a foundation that helps keep a positive momentum for our schools and one that is being considered by schools across the state and nation. In fact, Anoka-Hennepin has presented at both state and national education conferences regarding the strategic priorities process and outcomes.

Thank you for your review of these strategic priorities for the 2024-25 school year. From the School Board to the classroom, the district is working to ensure safe and welcoming schools, academic excellence for each student and operational stewardship in how the resources provided to the district are utilized to reach our mission.

Sincerely,



Cory McIntyre, Superintendent  
2024-2025

*The Anoka-Hennepin School District works to identify strategic priorities on an annual basis. The 2024-25 strategic priorities were identified in November 2023, and approved by the School Board in February 2024.*

## ANOKA-HENNEPIN SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS



Linda Hoekman  
**DISTRICT 1**



Zach Arco  
**DISTRICT 2**



Kacy Deschene  
**DISTRICT 3**



Matt Audette  
**DISTRICT 4**



Michelle Langenfeld  
**DISTRICT 5**



Jeff Simon  
**DISTRICT 6**

## SUPERINTENDENT



Cory McIntyre  
**SUPERINTENDENT**



ANOKA-HENNEPIN  
SCHOOLS  
*A future without limit*

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# A FUTURE WITHOUT LIMIT

*It is the vision of the Anoka-Hennepin School District to be a public school system of excellence, with high quality staff and programs and successful graduates. The primary mission of the Anoka-Hennepin School District is to effectively educate each of our students for success.*

Anoka-Hennepin Schools is a great place to live, work, and learn. Our communities work together to provide residents with safe and friendly neighborhoods, a wide range of business and economic opportunities, beautiful parks and abundant recreational activities and high-quality schools.

## Who we serve

The Anoka-Hennepin School District is Minnesota's largest, serving a diverse population of approximately 37,000 students, 7,150 staff members and 248,000 residents. Anoka-Hennepin has 25 elementary schools, six middle schools and five high schools, plus early learning, alternative, magnet, specialty schools and Community Education programs to serve all the needs of our learners.

## What we do

Anoka-Hennepin Schools staff play a critical role in preparing students for life. We are proud to work together in providing students a future without limit, and our staff make a difference in the lives of our students each day.

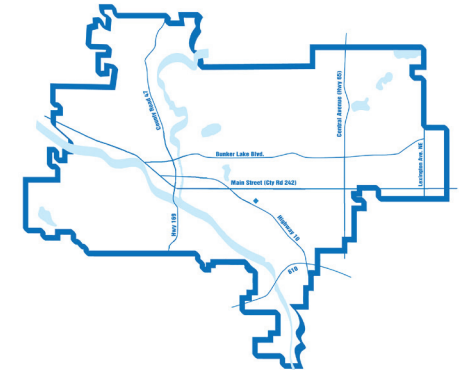


## Where we are

Spread out across 172 square miles, the school district is comprised of 13 suburban communities north of the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul:

## Who we serve

- Andover
- Anoka
- Blaine
- Brooklyn Center
- Brooklyn Park
- Champlin
- Coon Rapids
- Dayton
- Fridley
- Ham Lake
- Nowthen
- Oak Grove
- Ramsey



## ANOKA-HENNEPIN SCHOOL DISTRICT CABINET MEMBERS



**Dr. Mary Wolverton**  
Assoc. Superintendent  
Elementary Schools



**Becky Brodeur**  
Assoc. Superintendent  
Middle Schools  
and Student Services



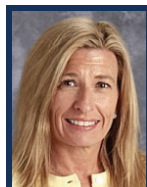
**Dr. Josh Delich**  
Assoc. Superintendent  
High Schools



**Tim Palmatier**  
General Counsel



**Greg Cole**  
Chief Operations  
Officer



**Michelle Vargas**  
Chief Financial Officer



**Dr. Joel VerDuin**  
Chief Technology and  
Information Officer



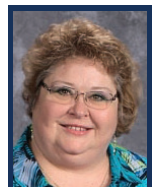
**Dr. Jennifer Cherry**  
Executive Director,  
Human Resources



**Michelle Trelstad**  
Executive Director,  
Community  
Education and  
Government Relations



**Jim Skelly**  
Executive Director,  
Communication  
and Public Relations



**Dr. Johnna Rohmer-Hirt**  
Executive Director,  
Research,  
Evaluation and Testing

# ANOKA-HENNEPIN SCHOOLS STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Making improvements in a school system with over 50 sites and more than 7,150 staff members requires intense planning and coordination. The Anoka-Hennepin School Board relies on a continuous improvement cycle and strategic priorities framework as a system to bring necessary resources to schools, and evaluate and monitor programming for effectiveness.

The continuous improvement cycle provides a framework, which places a value on time and is based on a school-year calendar cycle for decision making to allow staff members time to implement new initiatives.

## Three strategic priorities areas, three-step process

The School Board has established three broad strategic priorities areas listed below, along with a three-step process to guide priority items effectively through the process, listed in the next column:

- Maintaining safe and welcoming schools
- Improving academic performance
- Ensuring effective organizational support

Anoka-Hennepin's data-rich scorecard is used as a tool for the School Board to monitor performance across the district.

Strategic priorities are established and reviewed in alignment with School Board budgetary and operations calendars, ensuring energy is focused on the task prioritized, and assuring that the district has the necessary resources to achieve, sustain and monitor priorities.

## Continuous improvement process

Anoka-Hennepin's continuous improvement system provides structure and discipline, following an order and process for decisions, with the goal of improving outcomes for students:

- **Implementing:** Items in the implementing category are those being completed or have substantial priority in the current year, but may also take multiple years to complete.
- **Reviewing and planning for potential implementation:** Priorities are reviewed and planning is in process for potential future implementation.
- **Monitoring or considering:** Current programs being monitored for effectiveness or possible future priorities for consideration that have not risen to the level of review.

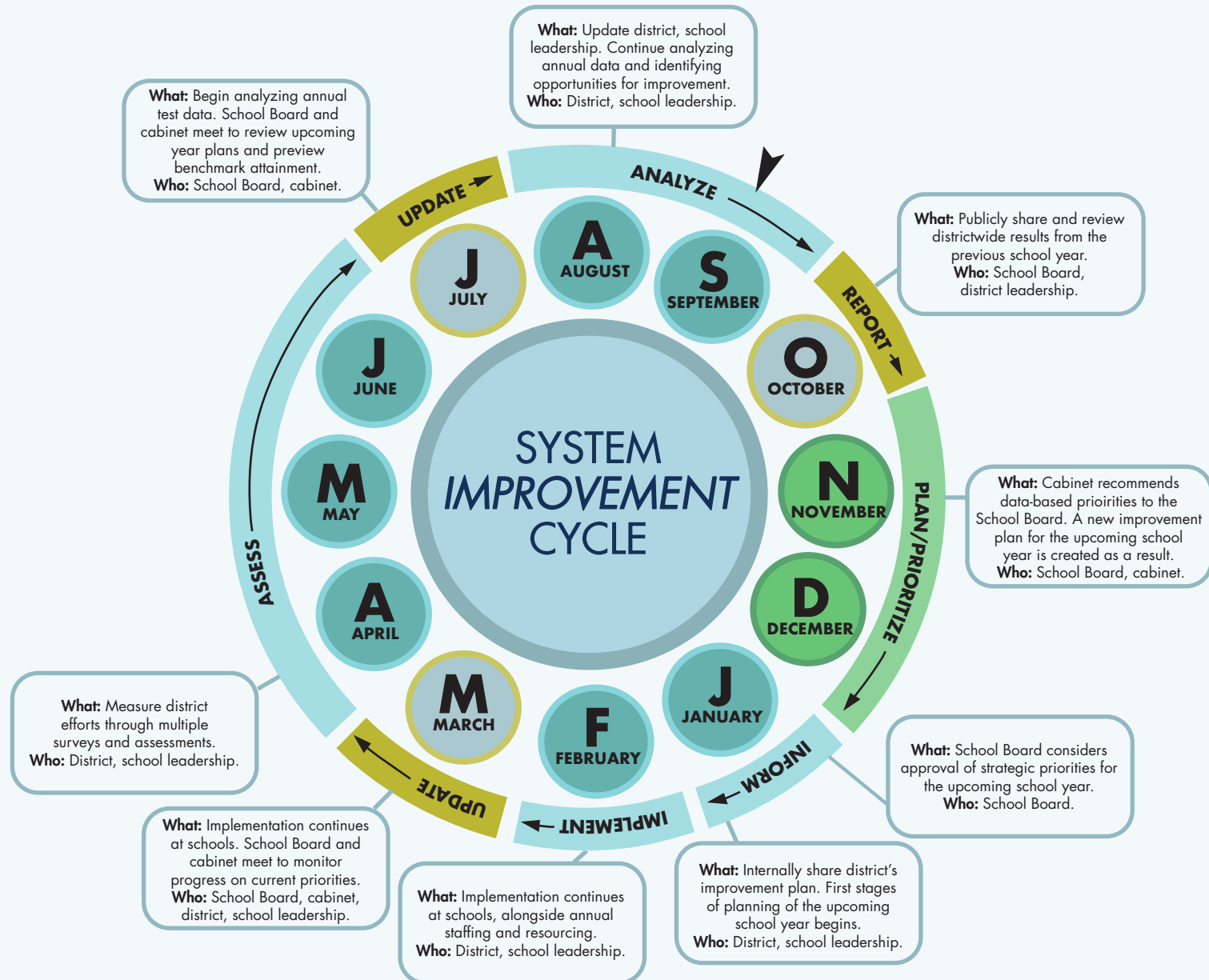
*A traditional planning model for districts includes an annual summer retreat to review data and actions from the previous year and actions to finalize plans for the upcoming year. This model leaves little time or ability to implement emerging ideas for the upcoming year. In addition, student performance data from the previous year is not often available to use in decision making.*

*The Anoka-Hennepin continuous improvement cycle has been presented at state and national leadership conferences for other districts to adopt as a "best practice" planning model to ensure efficient and effective allocation of resources and governance.*



[AHSCHOOLS.US/STRATEGICPRIORITIES](https://ahschools.us/strategicpriorities)

# ANOKA-HENNEPIN SCHOOLS CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT MODEL







## 2024-25 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

**MISSION:** To effectively educate each of our students for success.

**VISION:** To be a public school system of excellence, with high quality staff and programs and successful graduates.

**EQUITY COMMITMENT:** Anoka-Hennepin School District is committed to creating equitable learning environments which provide access, representation, meaningful participation, and highly positive outcomes for each student.

**IMPLEMENTING:** Changes that are happening during this school year. Changes may take multiple years to complete.

**REVIEWING AND PLANNING FOR POTENTIAL IMPLEMENTATION:** Studying our current program for possible improvements and making plans for potential implementation. Some of these items may move to implementation immediately while others may not lead to action.

**MONITORING AND CONSIDERING:** Items in this area fall into one of two categories. Some initiatives were recently implemented and are continuing to be monitored to ensure they are meeting intended outcomes (M). Others are potential areas of need that haven't risen to the level of review yet (C).

### SAFE AND WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

#### BEHAVIOR

- 1.1 Improve student engagement, connection and behavior

### INCREASED STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

#### LITERACY

- 2.1 Improve literacy at all grades
- 2.2 Prepare students to enter the workforce of the future: Portrait of a Graduate
- 2.3 Provide academic programming to support K-12 students impacted by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic
- 2.4 Improve instruction and comprehension at the secondary level

### EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

#### WORKFORCE

- 3.1 Improve employee recruitment and retention
- 3.2 Analyze district student enrollment trends.
- 3.3 Continue construction and facilities improvements.



Listed are anticipated action steps to address the priorities during the 2024-25 school year. These items are in addition to any other strategies currently in place or under development.

**IMPLEMENTING:** Changes that are happening during this school year. Changes may take multiple years to complete.

## SAFE AND WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

### 1.1 Improve student engagement, connection and behavior

1.1 Rationale: Students learn better when they are in a safe and supportive learning environment. Feedback from teachers, parents/guardians and students suggests that there are students needing additional support on a daily basis. Discipline data also shows disproportionately between student demographic groups.

#### Pre-Kindergarten (PreK)

- Enhance the classroom environment and improve the social emotional learning climate in preschool classrooms by implementing year 5 activities of the preK social and emotional learning framework that promotes young children's healthy development, and promotes positive behaviors in the preschool classroom. Seek input, feedback and recommendations from the PreK-K Committee to support the transitions and structures for student emotional and behavioral needs.

#### Elementary

- Review of iTeam referrals including processes, protocols, and systems to support interventions, Tier I and Tier II.
- Establish committees to gather input, feedback and recommendations to support the transitions and structures for student emotional and behavioral needs:
  - PreK-K committee.
  - Special Education.
  - K-3 non-exclusionary discipline legislation committee.

#### Secondary

- Maintain additional school guidance counselors and social worker support.
- Continued implementation of multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS).
  - Social emotional learning activities during middle school advisory.
  - Review and update school-wide behavior intervention plans and reset rooms at each school annually.
  - Monitor student intervention team referral process, protocols and evidence based interventions.
  - Implement MTSS intervention plan platform in Synergy to streamline intervention processes in a systemic effort to support students' social, emotional, and behavioral needs.
  - Increase communication with classroom teachers regarding student intervention plans and data collection.
  - Strengthen individualized student intervention plans to address academic and behavioral tier II and III needs.



Listed are anticipated action steps to address the priorities during the 2024-25 school year. These items are in addition to any other strategies currently in place or under development.

**IMPLEMENTING:** Changes that are happening during this school year. Changes may take multiple years to complete.

## INCREASED STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

### 2.1 Improve literacy at all grades

2.1 Rationale: Reading is an essential skill for students to be successful in every curricular area and a strong predictor for high school graduation and post-secondary enrollment, as well as a skill essential for success in life. Recent assessment data shows that 52.7% of Anoka-Hennepin students in grades 3-8 and 10 demonstrated grade level reading proficiency in 2023. This data also shows gaps in opportunity and achievement between student groups, which has persisted over time.

#### Pre-Kindergarten (PreK)

- Continue implementing Heggerty PreK Phonemic Awareness Curriculum in all PreK classrooms
- Train 75 more PreK teachers and one more Curriculum Director in LETRS

#### Elementary

- Utilize professional learning communities (PLC) for data analysis of diagnostic assessments.
- Maintain support for LETRS professional development.
- Bridge2Read pilot, grades K-2. Some sites grade 3.
- LETRS for Administrators.
- Integration of instructional practices (LETRS), (Bridge2Read pilot).
- READ Act committee.
- ELA study committee.

#### Secondary

- Develop implementation plans for Phase 1 professional development.
- Continue monitoring MDE for new information related to the READ Act at the secondary level.
- Carry out the levels of professional development.
  - Phase 1 completed by July 1, 2025.
    - Reading Intervention teachers.
    - Special Education teachers.
  - Phase 2 completed by July 1, 2027.
    - Classroom teacher responsible for reading instruction.
    - Teachers who work with English learners.
    - Teachers who work with students who qualify for the graduation incentives program under section 124D.68.
    - Instructional support staff who provide reading support.
    - Curriculum directors.
    - Employees who select literacy instructional materials for a district.

## EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

### 3.1 Improve employee recruitment and retention

3.1 Rationale: Current data on open positions, as well as surveys from staff, demonstrate that unfilled positions are creating challenges in programming as well as operations across the system. In addition, there is an increasing discrepancy between the demographic makeup of the labor force within our system and the surrounding community, indicating that we are not attracting our community members to work in our system at consistent rates across demographic groupings.

- Update substitute management system to effectively communicate internal and external needs.
- Implement electronic employee data form to improve employee onboarding experience.
- Expand Grow Your Own program offerings.
- Develop Stay Interview Cycle to inform employee retention initiatives.
- Revise job postings to include updated job descriptions.
- Revise employee applications tailored to specific job types.
- Reboot employee Performance Appraisal System to support performance growth for all employees.





Listed are anticipated action steps to address the priorities during the 2024-25 school year. These items are in addition to any other strategies currently in place or under development.

**REVIEWING AND PLANNING FOR POTENTIAL IMPLEMENTATION:** Studying our current program for possible improvements and making plans for potential implementation. Some of these items may move to implementation immediately while others may not lead to action.

## INCREASED STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

### 2.2 Prepare students to enter the workforce of the future: Portrait of a graduate

**2.2 Rationale:** The Anoka-Hennepin Portrait of a Graduate focuses on talents and skills such as leadership, empathy and adaptability. Many school districts and state education agencies are developing ways to emphasize these attributes alongside existing academic skills. It is important for all Anoka-Hennepin students to have opportunities to develop in these areas as we work to educate the whole child and educate each of our students for success.

- Internal analysis - further identify existing contributions to these skills and gaps (structural and ad hoc).
- Identify a plan of action for secondary schools that further incorporates Portrait of a Graduate skills into student experiences.
- Deepen understandings internally and with external groups on Anoka-Hennepins journey and commitment to this work.

**MONITORING AND CONSIDERING:** Items in this area fall into one of two categories. Some initiatives were recently implemented and are continuing to be monitored to ensure they are meeting intended outcomes (M).

## INCREASED STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

### 2.3 Provide academic programming to support K-12 students impacted by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic

**2.3 Rationale:** There is some indication that academic performance is beginning to improve in the area of math based on 2023 data, however, achievement rates are not yet aligned to pre-pandemic levels and reading performance continues to decline. Failure rates in secondary courses continued to decrease in 2023 as well, coming closer to mirroring rates from before COVID-19. Even though literacy rates have not improved, new legislation focuses attention on strategies to work to improve performance in this area, making it an ongoing priority for the district.

#### Elementary

Strategic focus on math and literacy proficiency rates, and growth data.

- Refine multiple-tiered systems of support (MTSS) structures.
- Tier I, whole group instruction and intervention.
- Tier II interventions, data analysis, and student identifications.

#### Secondary

- Maintain additional math and literacy coaches to supports strengthening classroom instruction.
- Maintain additional math, reading, and English Language Arts (ELA) teachers for both core classes and intervention.
- Continue to leverage the academic intervention teachers.
- Maintain additional staffing for English Learners.
- Review and implement multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS).
  - Improve practices and processes for tier I supports.
  - Strengthen individualized intervention plans to address academic & behavioral needs at the Tier II and III levels.



Listed are anticipated action steps to address the priorities during the 2024-25 school year. These items are in addition to any other strategies currently in place or under development.

**MONITORING AND CONSIDERING:** Items in this area fall into one of two categories. Some initiatives were recently implemented and are continuing to be monitored to ensure they are meeting intended outcomes (M).

## INCREASED STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

### 2.4 Improve instruction and comprehension at the secondary level

**2.4 Rationale:** As new materials and courses are introduced, recurring revision and review are necessary. Standards based practices (SBP) provide means for teams of teachers to use the same prioritized standards and proficiency scales to create consistency from teacher to teacher and from school to school, promoting consistency across the system related to what students should know and be able to do. These practices help to guarantee the same learning opportunities for all students. In addition, SBP equip and empower students and parents to be active participants in the learning process, as well as partners in monitoring progress toward proficiency expectations.

- Provide ongoing professional development related to foundational rationale, mindset, and implementation strategies of standards based practices.
- Focus on the priority standards.
- Review and revise common summative assessments to align to high priority benchmarks.
- Provide multiple ways for assessing learning.
- Maintain consistent site visits to monitor fidelity and curriculum implementation.
- Enhance communication regarding SBP for students, parents/guardians, staff and other stakeholders.

## EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

### 3.2 Analyze district student enrollment trends

**3.2 Rationale:** Recent enrollment shifts throughout the district have added complexity to the process of projecting enrollment for each school which, in turn, adds complexity to ensuring stability in staffing. Further, school choice, exercised through open enrollment options, impacts our enrollment. Anoka-Hennepin schools consistently lose more students to other school choice options than we gain in open enrollment. In order to provide the best educational experiences at every site, there was a need to gather additional data to inform the enrollment projection process. More robust demographic data also informs the continuous improvement and strategic planning process.

- Complete detailed internal analysis of open enrollment and in-district transfer trends.
- Commission study of incoming and outgoing open enrollment across the district.
- Commission district-wide demographic study.

### 3.3 Continue construction and facilities improvements

**3.3 Rationale:** The school district is responsible to preserve and protect the capital assets of the community. In the fall of 2017, the community supported a significant bond referendum intended to address facility concerns across the district. The final projects funded by this bond are media centers and science classrooms across the district. In addition, a facilities audit identified interior and exterior improvements at almost every school site that have been delayed due to a shortage of funding. The district is committed to address these needs proactively and prevent future cost increases for repair. Finally, the district has been working to upgrade outdoor facilities for several years and will be finalizing additional irrigation installations at a variety of schools to improve natural grass turf usage and appearance.

- Increase security district wide – Entrances, updated door security electronic panels, exterior doors (\$2.5 million).
- Monitor need for Dayton Elementary addition (\$10 million).
- Dayton Elementary School Classroom Walls (2 more phases).
- FY 2025 and FY 2026 LTFM Projects.

# CORE VALUES ARE THE FOUNDATION FOR OUR WORK

## RESPECT

To show consideration for self, others and property.

## RESPONSIBILITY

To carry out obligations in a dependable manner; to acknowledge the consequences and rewards of one's choices; to contribute to society.

## APPRECIATION OF DIVERSITY

To recognize and honor the dignity of each individual; to celebrate differences among culture, gender, ability; to work cooperatively with others and to resolve conflicts.

## INTEGRITY

To display honesty, perseverance, confidence and pride, trustworthiness, and the courage of one's convictions.

## COMPASSION

To show empathy, generosity, kindness, patience and sensitivity.

## MISSION

*It is the primary mission of the Anoka-Hennepin School District to effectively educate each of our students for success.*



**ANOKA-HENNEPIN  
SCHOOLS**  
*A future without limit*

## THIS IS HOW WE PUT CORE VALUES IN ACTION



**Lead:** Educators and staff promote the core values of character education as the foundation for ensuring a respectful learning environment. They strive for consistent application and implementation of anti-bullying and anti-harassment policies across all schools.



**Engage:** Educators and staff engage families and community as partners in anti-bullying and anti-harassment and focus on changing behaviors, not beliefs.



**Assess and Act:** District leaders solicit feedback from a variety of stakeholders (students, staff, families, and the broader community) and effectively implement programming to address identified needs.



**Data-Driven Continuous Improvement:** District leaders regularly assess culture and climate and the degree to which anti-bullying and anti-harassment efforts are successful. Data is used to inform decisions and create plans to promote continuous improvement.



**Safe and Inclusive Schools:** Educators and staff understand that each child is unique and need not sacrifice uniqueness nor risk their safety to enjoy their life and learning in our schools. The world of each child contributes to the quality of this place we call "school" and none shall be excluded.