

Memo



To: Board of Education

From: Dr. Karla Guseman, Superintendent

Date: July 21, 2026

Re: Strategic Plan Progress and Action Plan Update

The Board of Education approved the work or continuation of work on the following action plans within the JTHS Strategic Plan at the May 19, 2026, Board of Education meeting:

- Action Plan 1-2: Establish organizational procedures which are inclusive of all stakeholder groups and work to address current practices which result in disproportionate negative outcomes based on the race and culture of the student.
- Action Plan 2-2: Provide supportive programming that improves the success of all student subgroups to increase the graduation rate and post-secondary success.
- Action Plan 3-1: Strengthen students' academic and developmental college and career readiness skills through the completion of a personalized, student-centered Post-Secondary Plan.
- Action Plan 3-2: Increase the attendance rate to 90% or greater by implementing proactive, positive and collaborative approaches and programs.
- Action Plan 3-4: Educate staff on equitable grading practices and implement equitable grading in all content areas.
- Action Plan 4-3: Structure the school day to provide flexible scheduling options and targeted support to meet the individualized needs of students and foster a collaborative and supportive environment for staff.

As a result, all but four action plans have either been operationalized or remain in progress since the adoption of the current Strategic Plan in December 2022. Our JTHS administrative team reviewed the four remaining action plans and based on our review, I recommend that Action Plans 1.3, 2.3 and 3.3 are deemed operationalized and Action Plan 2.5 be adopted and absorbed by the Action Plan 3.1 leadership team as it aligns to the steps within that action plan. Attached to this memo you will find the progress for all four of these action plans.

Upon approval, we will continue to work on the Action Plans in progress throughout the 2026-2027 school year and prepare to move into our next Strategic Planning Process in June 2027 pending Board approval.

Thank you.

Action Plan 1.3 Progress (2026-2027 School Year)

Strategy: We will, in partnership with families and community, implement a systemic approach to culturally sustaining experiences and restorative justice to deliver an equitable educational experience while expanding the diversity of our faculty and administration in order to remove systemic educational barriers.

Specific Result: Implement comprehensive processes which are designed to increase staff efficacy and provide opportunities to increase the diversity of staff within the school district.

Owners: Not Adopted – Operationalized



1. Update the district's staffing process to incorporate a review of all staffing groups (Teachers, Pupil Personnel Services (PPS)/Related Services Staff, Administrators, Paraprofessionals, Liaisons, etc.) to ensure that students have equitable access to the support they need to be successful in school.	- Complete. - o All staffing groups are reviewed as part of the staffing process.
2. Update all job descriptions to clearly define the competencies educators must have to meet the academic, cultural, and social-emotional needs of students.	- Complete.
3. Implement mandatory Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training for all staff which includes systems of accountability when equitable practices are not followed, particularly for administrators. • Develop an anonymous reporting system for staff, students, and parents to report microaggressions and racism when they occur so that incidents can be investigated and addressed appropriately.	- Complete. - o Director of Equity & Strategic Partnerships provides training to staff. - o Microaggression Staff Reporting Form has been created, is promoted, and is prominently displayed on the District's Intranet.
4. Restructure the New Employee Orientation programs to incorporate staff in all positions and to offer additional inclusive support for people from historically underrepresented groups.	- Complete. - o New Employee Orientation Program has been established for all employee groups. - o Includes the sharing of resources, support, career advancement and educational opportunities.
5. Ensure all members of the administrative team attend anti-racism leadership training.	- Complete - o All staff receive Implicit Bias Training. - o This is also a dedicated session in the Cohort designed for New JTHS Administrators each year.

6. Develop intentional and inclusive (teachers/staff members) recruitment efforts to identify more teachers of color. • Targeted partnerships with teacher preparation programs • Frequent exchanges with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Hispanic-Serving Institutions • Encourage and incentivize staff of color to reach out to their network to recruit peers	- Complete ○ Submitted a formal Letter of Support (June 16, 2026) from Superintendent Dr. Karla Guseman for USF's Project ARRISE to partner in the development of a recruitment, mentorship, and professional development collaboration aimed at growing a diverse pool of highly qualified special education teachers. ○ Active curricular partnerships with Joliet Junior College (JJC), Lewis University, and the University of St. Francis (USF), and ISU to build a localized pipeline of teacher candidates through courses and student teaching placements. ○ Concentrated HR recruitment effort toward educational institutions with an explicit focus on historically serving institutions, including HBCUs and Hispanic-Serving Institutions, to diversify the applicant pipeline.
7. Develop programs to encourage and incentivize students and paraprofessionals with a variety of aspects to their identities to become licensed educators.	- In Progress ○ Submitted a formal Letter of Support (June 16, 2026) from Superintendent Dr. Karla Guseman for USF's Project ARRISE to partner in the development of a recruitment, mentorship, and professional development collaboration aimed at growing a diverse pool of highly qualified special education teachers.
8. Develop and implement a program for staff members who aspire to obtain a leadership position in the district and encourage staff members of color to pursue positions in administration.	- In Progress. ○ A formal, structured leadership development program has not yet been established; current efforts rely on an informal but active culture of support within district leadership. ○ District leaders consistently promote internal advancement opportunities and engage staff — including staff of color — in direct, one-on-one conversations to encourage them to pursue administrative pathways. ○ Staff members currently have access to cross-departmental shadowing and substitute opportunities, allowing them to gain exposure to leadership functions and

	administrative responsibilities outside their primary role. ○ These informal practices are laying the groundwork for a more intentional, formalized leadership pipeline, with future steps focused on converting current encouragement-based efforts into a structured program with clear pathways, mentorship, and milestones.
9. Establish procedures and protocols which allow for willing staff members who utilize their language and cultural skills to support students and families to receive compensation when the work expands the responsibilities they have in their job.	- Complete. ○ Contracts revised to compensate for language utilization.
10. Ensure that all staff who resign or retire from the district are encouraged to participate in a thorough exit interview and survey to respond to questions created by a diverse and representative committee of stakeholders. • Develop a method to report on findings and share plans to discuss and address concerns	- Complete. ○ All staff are provided with this opportunity ○ Findings are shared amongst administration
11. Evaluate the action plan annually.	Continue to evaluate progress annually.

Action Plan 2-3

Strategy: We will establish a culture and organizational structure that will foster a positive, safe, inclusive, and supportive climate that engages all stakeholders.

Specific Result: Recruit, develop, and retain high quality staff through support programs, mentorship, and high-quality professional development.

Owner(s): Not Adopted – Operationalized



Action Step	Progress
1. Create and administer a survey to all staff on recruitment, retention, wellness/staff social-emotional learning (SEL), and Development to provide data in which to focus on moving forward and cross reference to the mission of the school district.	- Complete. - o Staff complete the Hanover survey. - o Survey questions are customizable and include facets of SEL, recruitment, retentions, etc.
2. Create a recruitment and retention team with representation from the Teacher's Union and other JTHS union groups, School Board, administrators, students, parents, and community partners, that: • Seek to recruit and diversify our staff. • Promotes the profession of teaching among minority students. • Utilizes survey data to identify additional areas of focus for the recruitment team. • Provides strategic communication to all staff regarding upcoming opportunities. • Collaborates across departments to meet the needs of staff. • Provides a progress report or needs assessment on progress of the team for the district twice a year which includes successes, opportunities for growth, data to adjust and monitor the action plan.	- In Progress. - o This Action Step can be completed without the formation of a formalized recruitment and retention team as most of these steps are in progress. - o Strategic communication is sent to employee groups regarding educational opportunities and career advancement, including programs with a focus on minorities. - o Hanover survey data is analyzed and discussed by administration, including cross department collaboration. - o Cross Reference Action Plan 1.3 Progress Step 6.
3. Create a mentoring program that: • Aligns with induction and mentoring program. • Differentiated to support the demographics of staff. • Provides strategic communication to all staff regarding upcoming opportunities. • Collaborates across departments to meet the needs of staff. • Provides a progress report or needs assessment on progress of the team for the district. twice a year which includes successes, opportunities for growth, data to adjust and monitor the action plan.	- In Progress - o Completed for Certified staff. - o Development of a mentoring program for classified staff is a future area of focus.
4. Create a professional development team that:	- In Progress.

• Partners with surrounding higher education institutions to create opportunities for leadership both inside and outside of the classroom to grow our own staff. • Aligns professional development with enhanced school day structure. • Provides staff development for all staff (certified and classified) to address the outcomes of the survey that is differentiated and supported through ongoing follow-through and feedback which is individualized by school • Provides strategic communication to all staff regarding upcoming opportunities. • Collaborates across departments to meet the needs of staff. • Provides a progress report or needs assessment on progress of the team for the district twice a year which includes successes, opportunities for growth, data to adjust and monitor the action plan.	○ The District Leadership Team promotes and seeks out opportunities for leadership advancement to grow our own. ○ School Day Structure Committee is currently meeting to examine the use of flex time. Professional development is a focus. ○ Hanover employee survey data is analyzed and discussed amongst leadership. ○ Strategic communication to staff takes place in a variety of formats, including electronic and face-to-face.
5. Create a wellness/staff SEL team that: • Integrates opportunities for staff recognition. • Ensures opportunities for staff support-meeting staff where they are with what they need. • Utilizes available resources such as those from our insurance provider as well as any community resources to integrate access and opportunity to meet staff needs. • Provides strategic communication to all staff regarding upcoming opportunities. • Collaborates across departments to meet the needs of staff. • Provides a progress report or needs assessment on progress of the team for the district twice a year which includes successes, opportunities for growth, data to adjust and monitor the action plan.	- In Progress ○ JTHS has an established Health & Wellness Committee. ○ Incentives for health and wellness are available through the district's Health Insurance providers. ○ The Employee Assistance Program is available to all employees free of charge and is promoted throughout the district. ○ Strategic communication to staff takes place in a variety of formats, including electronic and face-to-face.
6. Provide a consistent design/schedule for professional development/time for all staff to understand the vision and create buy in by: • Small groups (possibly circle format). • Providing opportunities to ask questions to the teams. • Discuss and document thoughts. • Reflection time. • Collaborates across departments to meet the needs of staff. • Provides a progress report or needs assessment on progress of the team for the district twice a year which includes	- In Progress ○ Director of Equity & Strategic Partnerships and the Director for English are undergoing diversity training in the wake of Phil and Billy's retirement. Training will be provided internally by JT leadership with a focus on diversity, equity, inclusion, and an awareness of implicit bias. ○ Professional development time and structure is being examined in coordination with the flex time committee

successes, opportunities for growth, data to adjust and monitor the action plan.	○ What's on the Horizon sessions were held for all staff groups by Superintendent Dr. Karla Guseman. The sessions provided a forum to receive information, ask questions, and provide feedback. The sessions also served to clarify misconceptions held by staff.
7. Develop a system of communication that keeps all stakeholders updated with developments in action plan items utilizing internal and external communication structures.	- Complete ○ A formal system of reporting on strategic planning progress is in place to keep the Board of Education and all stakeholders informed of developments on action plan progress. Annually in May, administrators report progress on the action plans that are in progress for that school year. These progress reports include the Superintendent's recommendations regarding the adoption of new action plans for the upcoming school year, as well as recommendations on whether action plans currently in progress should remain in progress or become fully operationalized.
8. Collaborate with our sender districts to build the support programs, mentorship opportunities and high-quality professional development to meet the needs of all staff supporting the Joliet community.	- In Progress. ○ Superintendent Dr. Guseman is planning a K-12 Education Summit, bringing together the superintendents and members of their respective Boards of Education from JTHS and its sender school districts. Held on a yearly or biennial basis, the summit's first topic will be school safety, fostering collaboration, communication, and connections among JTHS and sender district leadership.
9. Evaluate the action plan annually.	

Action Plan 2-5

Strategy: We will establish a culture and organizational structure that will foster a positive, safe, inclusive, and supportive climate that engages all stakeholders.

Specific Result: Embed Social-emotional Learning (SEL) Standards within all core curricula.

Owner(s): Not Adopted – In Progress



Action Step	Progress
1. Create an SEL Curricular team of counselors, social workers, and content experts from each core area. The content experts should serve as the representation for the various content level Instructional Leadership Teams (ILTs) and the SEL Curricular team.	- In Progress. - o The Student Support Services Team is working on adopting a Tier 1 SEL curriculum for the use of all students to be used during homebase in the flex time starting in the 2027-28 school year. Most of the items on 2.5 are already in progress or planned with 4.3's Flex time homebase.
2. Audit the curriculum and instructional practices in our core areas: • Identify areas of strengths and the areas that need improvement in regard to SEL. • Find opportunities to embed SEL standards within our core courses. • Collaborate with Content ILTs to embed SEL standards within our core curricula scaffolded by grade level. Include implementation guidance for instructional level, bilingual, and Adaptive Vocational Academic Center (AVAC).	
3. Evaluate the data collected by the Panorama SEL survey to determine our areas of most need: • Self-Efficacy (executive functioning) • Self-Management • Social-Awareness • Emotional Regulation • Social Perspective-Taking	
4. The SEL Curricular team will use SEL data (i.e., Panorama) to identify three main areas to target. • Create long term and short-term SMART goals for educators delivering the lessons and for student SEL growth. - o Example of a short-term goal for Educators. "90% of staff members will feel comfortable delivering an SEL lesson."	

○ Example of a short-term goal for students, “30% of our students will identify as increased capability in those 3 targeted areas.	
5. Deliver training for JTHS Staff: • The benefits of merging SEL instruction with Core instruction • Effective SEL instruction in the classroom. • Using SEL data (i.e., Panorama) to deliver universal (tier 1) instruction and interventions	
6. The SEL Curricular team will create a regular schedule to: • Analyze collected data from the panorama survey • Survey staff and students on the implementation of embedded SEL standards. • Monitor fidelity of the universal (tier 1) SEL delivery • Make adjustments to the embedded SEL curriculum.	
7. Engage our stakeholders, including students, regarding topics of discussion through newsletters, JTHS website, and other methods of delivery.	- In Progress. ○ JTHS communication includes SEL focused content. ○ Community Connections Expos include SEL resource providers and workshops focused on mental health. ○ JRECC presentations and partners include SEL programming and providers.
8. Evaluate on an annual basis.	

Action Plan 3-3

Strategy: We will implement a holistic approach to supporting students through family, community, and student engagement, targeted supports, and flexible learning opportunities to improve student attendance and academic performance.

Specific Result: Improve family engagement by more readily responding to the various needs of all families.

Owner(s): Not Adopted – Operationalized



Action Step	Progress
1. Survey families to identify their various needs. Surveys should assist in determining and addressing barriers of family engagement. Perform additional means to get strong survey fulfillment, which may include-text surveys, focus groups, and door to door feedback.	- Complete. - o Data collected by Family Engagement Liaisons includes details of interactions, including barriers that exist and resources needed. - o Panorama Survey data for parent/guardian surveys is analyzed and examined.
2. Identify community partners, influencers, parents, and community leaders who will aid in communication sharing as well as developing ideas for improved family engagement and sharing community needs.	- Complete. - o A structured community engagement process exists through the Community and Alumni Relations Office. The engagement has resulted in an active partner database of over 900 individuals - o Community engagement is celebrated and highlighted annually at the Salute to Service Partnership Recognition Event. - o Structured community engagement includes: the Community Partnership Recruitment and CED Internship Breakfast, JRECC, Community Connections Expos, State of the District Address, Cultural celebrations, open houses and more.
3. Develop a Family Advisory Board to develop the culture for Parent University. • Ensure the Family Advisory Board includes diverse membership. • Include training for members of the board so they are equipped to lead. • Create workshops aimed to educate, solicit feedback, and share data.	- Complete. - o This action step was reimagined to encompass the two Community Connections Expos that take place annually
4. Ensure each school has an information directory where parents/families can get answers to questions more readily available. There would also need to be a service level agreement (SLA)	- In Progress. - o JTHS Community and Alumni Relations is investigating an AI platform that would

instituted where a response is guaranteed within two business days.	readily answer questions in real-time. A quote has been obtained and implementation is being investigated.
5. Identify and offer families support designed to engage/target families who are least likely to participate and engage the school.	- In Progress. ○ The ALOP Program was implemented and is being refined and evaluated to address chronic absenteeism and the academic performance among those who are least likely to engage in school.
6. Explore various and diverse school events and programs that can be conducted offsite and strategically located at community centers or community venues that are closer to where students live.	- Complete. ○ JTHS continually seeks to build partnerships onsite and offsite. ○ The MLK Day of Service is currently being redesigned to a Juneteenth event where offsite service projects will be a focus, along with projects on-site that celebrate cultural diversity, while teaching the significance of the Juneteenth Holiday.
7. Consider partnering with various public transit authorities to provide reduced cost transport.	- Complete. ○ This has been completed through Business Office personnel.
8. Explore a strategy for providing onsite childcare at school-sponsored events.	- Complete. ○ JTHS offers childcare at signature events such as the Community Connections Expos. The use of these services is very low as children usually accompany their parents throughout the school. JTHS will continue to collect data on childcare use when offered at events.
9. Build better relationships in the community by recommending staff and administration to serve locally through boards, associations, etc. This would include having representation from the school district on major community organizations and churches.	- Complete. ○ JTHS leadership is well represented within the community through boards, associations and churches. This includes but is not limited to: Rotary, Kiwanis, African American Business Association of Will County, Spanish Community Center, YMCA, Visitation and Aide Society,

	Chamber of Commerce, Council for Working Women, Joliet Area Historical Museum, Joliet Public Library, CED, Three Rivers Manufacturing Association, Troy and D86 school boards, and more.
10. Further develop, sponsor, and host family events that will be fun in nature but also provide valuable resources onsite at the events (and at the school) where families can come to spend time with family, friends, school personnel but also gain insight on valuable information and resources necessary to improve the quality of life for the family.	- Complete. ○ JTHS continually seeks to develop and create fun events such as Trunk or Treat, Christmas at the Castle, Campus Showcases and cultural celebrations such as the Kermes, and the new Community Connections Expos. ○ A “Get Involved at JTHS” webpage was created to communicate these offerings to students, families, staff, and the community.
11. Explore, research, and implement new levels of technology that will ensure better engagement and communication of information to families	- In Progress. ○ JTHS Community and Alumni Relations is investigating the use of AI functionality within the Finalsite Website platform to assist in finding information more readily.
12. Evaluate plans on an annual basis.	