SCHOOL DISTRICT 197

West St. Paul + Mendota Heights + Eagan Area

isd197.org



2025-2026

School District 197 Annual Report

From the Superintendent

Dear School District 197 Community,

I am pleased to share this year's Annual Report and build on where we left off last year. A year ago, I wrote about early results from our work with the science of reading, a new math curriculum on the horizon, and the belief that a test score tells only part of a child's story. This report lets us measure our progress against those words.

Last year, our first signs of reading growth came from kindergarten. This year, that progress extended through third grade. We set a goal to increase the percentage of third graders meeting the low-risk reading benchmark from 57% to 59%. We reached 64%. Students in grades 1–3 all showed growth from fall to spring. On the new MCA reading test, School District 197 again ranked first in reading proficiency among our 10 comparison districts. That success reflects the dedication of our teachers, who completed extensive training and continue refining their classroom practices. I'm proud of them.

Last year, I also shared that a new math curriculum was on the horizon. As with every adoption, we piloted the selected materials first so teachers could give feedback on engagement, usability and alignment with state standards. Their input is helping us get the rollout right. A curriculum our students will use for years deserves that care.

Some of this year's most encouraging results come at the beginning and end of a student's time with us. In preschool, the share of children meeting literacy expectations grew from 21% in the fall to 77% in the spring. At Two Rivers High School, enrollment of students of color in rigorous courses rose from 33% in 2021-22 to 41% this year, while Hispanic students completing a college-level course increased from 21% to 28%, exceeding our goal. Students earned 428 industry certifications, and we launched a year-round Ojibwe language course supported by a state grant.

Not every goal was met, and you deserve to see those results too. Our graduation rate held at 89%, above the state average of 85%, but short of our 91.5% goal. Students of color made gains in reading and math, but not enough to close the reading gap. Closing these gaps remains our highest priority, and we will continue reporting on our progress openly.

I still believe tests capture only part of what matters, which is why I agreed to serve on the Minnesota Department of Education's assessment task force this fall. It's also why this report highlights 72 athletics, activities and clubs with more than 2,500 registrations, and 398 children who received early childhood screening.

Our mission calls for caring relationships, equitable practices and high expectations for all. The pages that follow show what that looks like when staff, families and community work together. Thank you for your continued trust and partnership.

Sincerely,
Peter Olson-Skog, Ph.D., Superintendent
School District 197 - West St. Paul, Mendota Heights, Eagan

About School District 197

Our district is comprised of 10 close-knit schools serving over 5,000 students from the communities of Eagan, Inver Grove Heights, Lilydale, Mendota, Mendota Heights, Sunfish Lake, and West St. Paul.

Our vibrant school community is filled with a variety of academic, athletic, and artistic opportunities for students at every age. The district is committed to working with parents and families to improve learning and achievement for all students.



1897 Delaware Ave., Mendota Heights, MN 55118 ■ 651-403-7000 ■ isd197.org

2025-26 DISTRICT PROFILE

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS

1 Early Learning Center + 5 Elementary Schools + 2 Middle Schools + 1 High School + 1 Special Education Transition Program = 10

K-12 STUDENT ENROLLMENT

4,073 Resident student enrollment + **1,084** Non-resident student = **5,157** Total Student Enrollment

BY GRADE LEVEL

- **1,934** Elementary (K - 4)
- **1,533** Middle School (5-8)
- **1,690** High School (9-12)

ETHNICITY INFORMATION

- **1%** American Indian
- **2.86%** Asian
- **12.8%** Black
- **29.3%** Hispanic
- **8.4%** Multiracial
- **0.04%** Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- **45.6%** White

OUR EDUCATORS

For reporting purposes, the district reported the following information about equitable access to excellent teachers: less than 1% ineffective teachers, 15% inexperienced (less than 3 years) teachers, and less than 1% out of field.

- **85%** of educators have more than three years of experience
- **54%** of educators have 10 or more years of experience
- **80%** of educators have a master's degree or higher
- **96%** of licensed educators have a license in the subject area they are teaching

Our Mission

School District 197 is committed to caring relationships, equitable practices, and high expectations for all.

We Believe:

Relationships

- People thrive when they feel connected, trusted, and affirmed.
- Communication and collaboration strengthen school, family, and community relationships.

Equity

- Our diversity makes us stronger.
- Seeking to understand each other strengthens the individual and community.
- We are all accountable for removing barriers and creating equitable systems.

Achievement

- High expectations and personalized support are critical for student success.
- Innovative environments promote curiosity, creativity, and courageous action.
- Everyone has the ability to continually grow.





Strategic Plan Goals and Results

The state of Minnesota requires an annual report and plan, which we are pleased to complete and present to the public each year. This 2025-2026 annual report provides our community members with the opportunity to learn about and provide feedback on the district and school goals for instruction and achievement for all students.



Curriculum Advisory Committee

The committee addresses continuous improvement, community involvement, and annual public reporting on curriculum, instruction, and student achievement. This committee is comprised of parents, community members, teachers, administrators, and district office staff to ensure a range of issues and viewpoints are examined and discussed. The 2025-2026 committee members are listed below.

Name	Role
Cari Jo Drewitz	Director
Katie Quinlan	Coordinator
Miles Lawson	Coordinator
Randi Walz	School Board
Scott Schwister	Parent
Jason Laux	Teacher
Abby Hendricks	Parent
Matthew Schempp	Parent
Tom Benson	Principal
Mario Watson Sr.	Parent
Laura Blanks	Parent
Brenda Corbett	Community Member
Jody McPhearson	Parent
Amelia Berry	Parent
Megan Ahlberg	Principal
Nicole McMahon	American Indian Parent Rep
Anne Miller	Parent
Stacy Danov	Parent

Students provide input to the curriculum team and CAC through the following groups: TRHS Student Curriculum Advisory, FHMS Student Curriculum Advisory, HMS Student Curriculum Advisory, Native Student Curriculum Advisory, Secondary Student Listening Sessions

Strategic Plan Goals and Results

(At a Glance) *The following chart outlines School District 197 goals, strategies to achieve goals, and results*

District Strategic Goals	2025-2026 School District 197 Goals	2025-2026 School District 197 Results	2025-2026 School District 197 Strategies to Achieve Goals
1. All children are ready for school	The percentage of students in the district's four-year-old preschool program who meet developmental expectations in the areas of literacy and social/ emotional development will increase by 2% in each area by spring 2026.	**Goal Met** Social emotional - 75% Literacy - 77%	Social Emotional · Implemented AMAZEworks curriculum to allow students to see themselves in our curriculum. · Used Conscious Discipline strategies to help understand emotions, identify emotions and regulate emotions. · The first 6 weeks of school we focused on getting to know our students and their families through activities and communication. · Teachers established routines and consistent schedules to enhance students' feelings of safety. · Used Conscious Discipline Strategies to form our school family- school jobs, greetings, pictures for schedules and routines, wish well. Literacy · Staff implemented LETRS strategies throughout the year. · Strategies were taught through play-based activities and during classroom routines. · Staff increased writing experiences in their classes.
2. All students read well by third grade	The percentage of the third grade cohort of students who will meet the low risk or lowest risk target on aReading in grade 3 will increase by 2% from 57% spring 2025 to 59% in spring 2026.	**Goal Met** - 64%	· Implemented Magnetic Reading Foundations in all K–2 classrooms to strengthen foundational skills instruction. · Staff applied learning from science of reading professional development to strengthen literacy instruction across K–4 classrooms. · Strengthened small-group literacy instruction to provide more targeted reading support based on student data. · Strengthen K–4 intervention by increasing multisensory learning opportunities within current instructional resources.
3. All racial and economic gaps between students are closed.	The gap between students of color and white students in grades 1-8 will decrease 2% from 29% in fall 2025 to 27% in spring 2026 by increasing the percent of students who meet the low risk or lowest risk target on aReading of the groups as follows: · White students will increase 2% from 76% in fall 2025 to 78% in spring 2026. · Students of color will increase 4% from 47% in fall 2025 to 51% in spring 2026. The gap between students of color and white students in grades 1-8 will decrease by 2% from 33% in fall 2025 to 31% in spring 2026 by increasing the percent of students who meet the low risk or lowest risk target on aMath of the groups as follows: · White students will increase 2% from 80% in fall 2025 to 82% in spring 2026. · Students of color will increase 4% from 47% in fall 2025 to 51% in spring 2026.	**Reading - NOT MET** White students Fall: 76% l Spring: 79%, 3% increase - Met Students of color Fall: 47% l Spring: 50%, 3% increase - progress, Not Met Reading Gap: Fall: 29% l Spring: 29% **Math - NOT MET** White students Fall: 80% l Spring: 80% No change - Not Met Students of color Fall: 47% l Spring: 48% 1% increase - progress , Not Met Math Gap: Fall: 33% l Spring: 32% Gap narrowed 1% - Not Met	· Used FastBridge reading data to identify student needs and plan whole-class and small-group instruction. · Piloted Capti assessments and use of data to inform 4-9 reading intervention. · Professional development on culturally responsive strategies such as talk structures, belonging, and high expectations. · Piloted selected math materials to identify strengths, challenges, and alignment to best-practice math instruction. · Teachers participating in the math pilot provided feedback on usability, instructional routines, student engagement, differentiation, assessment options, and alignment to the Minnesota math standards. · District teams reviewed teacher feedback, student needs, standards alignment, and implementation considerations to inform future math curriculum decisions. · Adjusted math pathways and added new courses to provide more on-ramps for accelerated learning.

Strategic Plan Goals and Results

(At a Glance) *The following chart outlines School District 197 goals, strategies to achieve goals, and results*

District Strategic Goals	2025-2026 School District 197 Goals	2025-2026 School District 197 Results	2025-2026 School District 197 Strategies to Achieve Goals
4. All students graduate from high school	The four-year graduation rate at Two Rivers High School will increase from 89.5% in 2024 to 91.5% in 2025. The percentage of students in grades 9-12 who pass all of their courses in both semester 1 and semester 2 will increase 2% from 72% in 24-25 school year to 74% in 25-26 school year.	**Goal Not Met** - 89% Graduation Rate **Goal Met** - 76% Course passing	• Conducted a comprehensive review of our 5th–12th grade counseling program—using student, staff, and community feedback—to ensure all students receive the guidance they need to stay on track for graduation. • Updated the curriculum, student portfolios, and online college-and-career planning tools in the Warrior Seminar to better prepare high schoolers for life after graduation. • Implemented a "Direct Admissions" system that allows eligible seniors to automatically receive and accept college admission offers without having to complete traditional, lengthy applications. • Added more opportunities for students to earn recognized professional credentials—such as Google IT, OSHA-10 safety, and Acer repair—helping them gain real-world skills before graduating. • Identified key gaps in health education (such as nutrition, substance use prevention, and emergency response) to improve middle school health classes and better support student well-being.
5. All students are ready for career and college	The percentage of Hispanic students enrolled and successfully completing a college-level course will increase from 21% in spring 2025 to 23% in spring 2026. The percentage of students with a cumulative GPA of 2.7 or higher will increase from 62% in spring 2025 to 64% in spring of 2026.	College-level course completion **Goal Met** - 28% Cum GPA **Goal Not Met** - 62%	• Established a Technology Student Help Desk at Two Rivers High School, giving students hands-on experience with technology repairs and customer service. • Expanded the Career and College Center with new equipment, career exploration lessons, and field trips to introduce students to career opportunities. • Hosted 22 college and career visits, helping students explore options ranging from four-year colleges and technical schools to military careers. • Expanded opportunities to earn college credit in high school, adding courses in job search skills, U.S. history, psychology, political science, and Ojibwe. • Developed a new Personal Finance and College & Career Financial Planning course to prepare students for financial decisions after graduation. • Began developing Personal Learning Plans for students receiving special education services, connecting their interests and goals with career exploration and work-based learning opportunities.
6. All students are prepared to be lifelong learners	By the 2025-2026 school year, at least 30% of Black, American Indian and Hispanic students will be enrolled in at least one rigorous course (AP, CIS and concurrent enrollment).	**Goal Partially Met** 24-25 data Black: 26% American Indian: 22% Hispanic: 22% 25-26 data Black: 34% American Indian: 31% Hispanic: 28%	• Launched and maintained a year-round Ojibwe language course for students, and secured a state grant of about $433,000 to continue restoring and supporting Native language education. • Mapped out a Computer Science track—taking students from introductory coding and mechanical systems all the way to advanced AP courses, Networking, and Cybersecurity—to help more students prepare for advanced STEM classes. • Increased student participation across all Centers for Advanced Professional Studies (CAPS) programs, giving more students hands-on career training. • Launched a new Youth Skills Training grant program to connect students with real-world, paid hands-on industry experience and career pathways. • Supported additional Special Education staff at Two Rivers High School in earning Work-Based Learning credentials, helping them better guide students into career paths. • Expanded access to professional career certifications with increased participation from Special Education students and students of color.

District Goal #1:
All Children Are Ready for School

Parents are a child's first and most important teacher. Strong, school-based early learning environments and programs are intended to support and enhance their role and to provide rich educational experiences for early learners. Research has demonstrated that high-quality early learning experiences close achievement gaps for children before they begin their K-12 education.



Early Childhood Screening

Early Childhood Screening is a free service of School District 197 for children between the ages of three and five and is best completed at age 3. During screening, a nurse checks a child's vision, hearing, and speech as well as cognitive, social/emotional, and muscle development. Immunization records and general health and nutrition practices are also reviewed. Screening helps ensure that children are ready for school success.

The total number of children screened increased. Referrals were made to help identify children who may have concerns in the areas of vision, hearing, cognition, communication, motor skills, or social skills.



Of the 398 children screened, 173 had one or more referral areas.

Early Childhood Family Education

Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) is a program that offers parents and their children from birth to prekindergarten opportunities to grow and learn together in a supportive and stimulating environment. The program continues to thrive, as student and adult participation holds steady.

238 children participated

209 adults participated

45 classes offered

District Goal #1: All Children Are Ready for School

School District 197 Preschool provides a bridge to school through half-day and full-day classes that offer rich learning experiences in well-equipped classrooms. All staff are trained in early childhood education. Preschool programming in School District 197 has a strong focus on pre-academic skills.

Our programs lay the foundation for future school success by encouraging:

- Emotional, social, and physical development
- Language development
- Pre-reading skills
- Pre-writing skills
- Mathematical and scientific thinking (including math curriculum used with the children in the district from age 3 through grade 5)
- Enthusiasm for social studies, music, and art



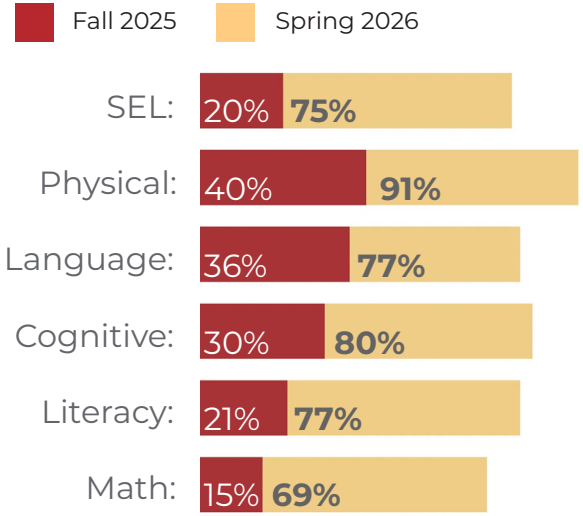
58 students age 3

194 Children enrolled in School District 197 Preschool

136 students age 4

Meets/Exceeds Expectations

All children were assessed at entry to the program in the fall, with a final assessment in the spring.



59% of kindergarten students were reading at grade-level in spring 2026



Kindergarten

Kindergarten provides an essential bridge between pre-kindergarten and the primary grades. It enables children to develop academic, social, and emotional skills they need to be successful. Students in Kindergarten move throughout leveled book sets that systematically teach reading skills. Students are assessed on these skills every four weeks throughout the year. The end of year placement determines whether or not a student is reading at their expected grade level.

District Goal #2: All 3rd Graders Can Read at Grade Level

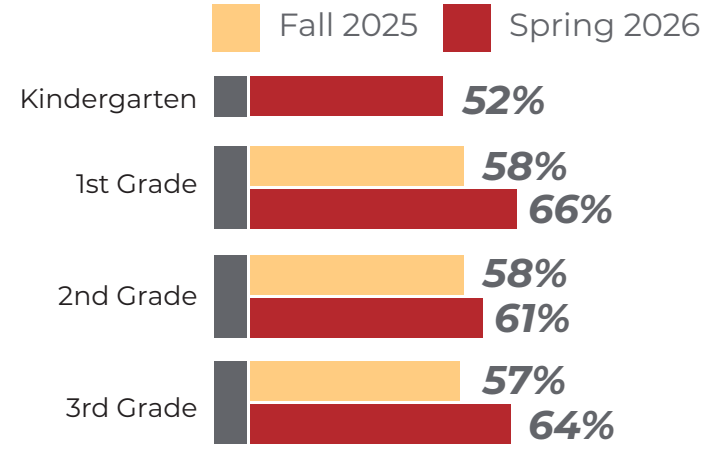
As part of our commitment to ensuring all students read at or above grade level by the end of third grade, the district has set clear goals and implemented strong practices for grades E-3. Our teams regularly oversee the School District 197 Literacy Plan, promote communication between schools and leadership, and strengthen family partnerships.

With the 2023 READ Act (Minnesota Reading to Ensure Academic Development Act), we're enhancing these efforts. The READ Act requires science of reading training for teachers to help all students achieve grade-level reading. School District 197 began adopting these practices in 2020 and continues to refine strategies, including adding professional development days to support staff.

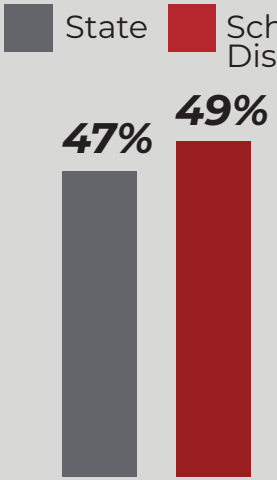
In the spring of 2026, the MCA IV Reading assessment was implemented. The MCA IV reading assessment is aligned to the 2020 Minnesota English Language Arts standards. We're proud of our progress and continue to be ranked #1 in reading proficiency among 10 comparison districts.

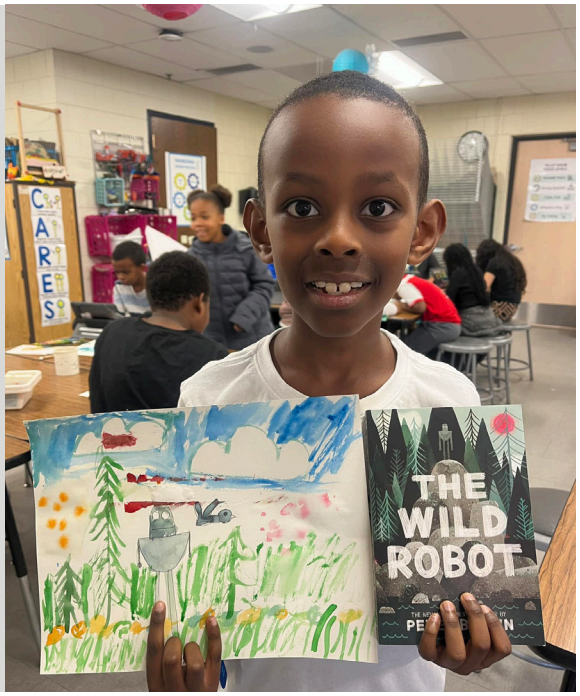


School District 197 uses FastBridge assessments at each grade level to screen all students in literacy and math. This data helps teachers determine which students may need intervention support. The data below shows the percentage of students meeting the low-risk target in literacy.



2026 Grade 3 MCA Test Scores

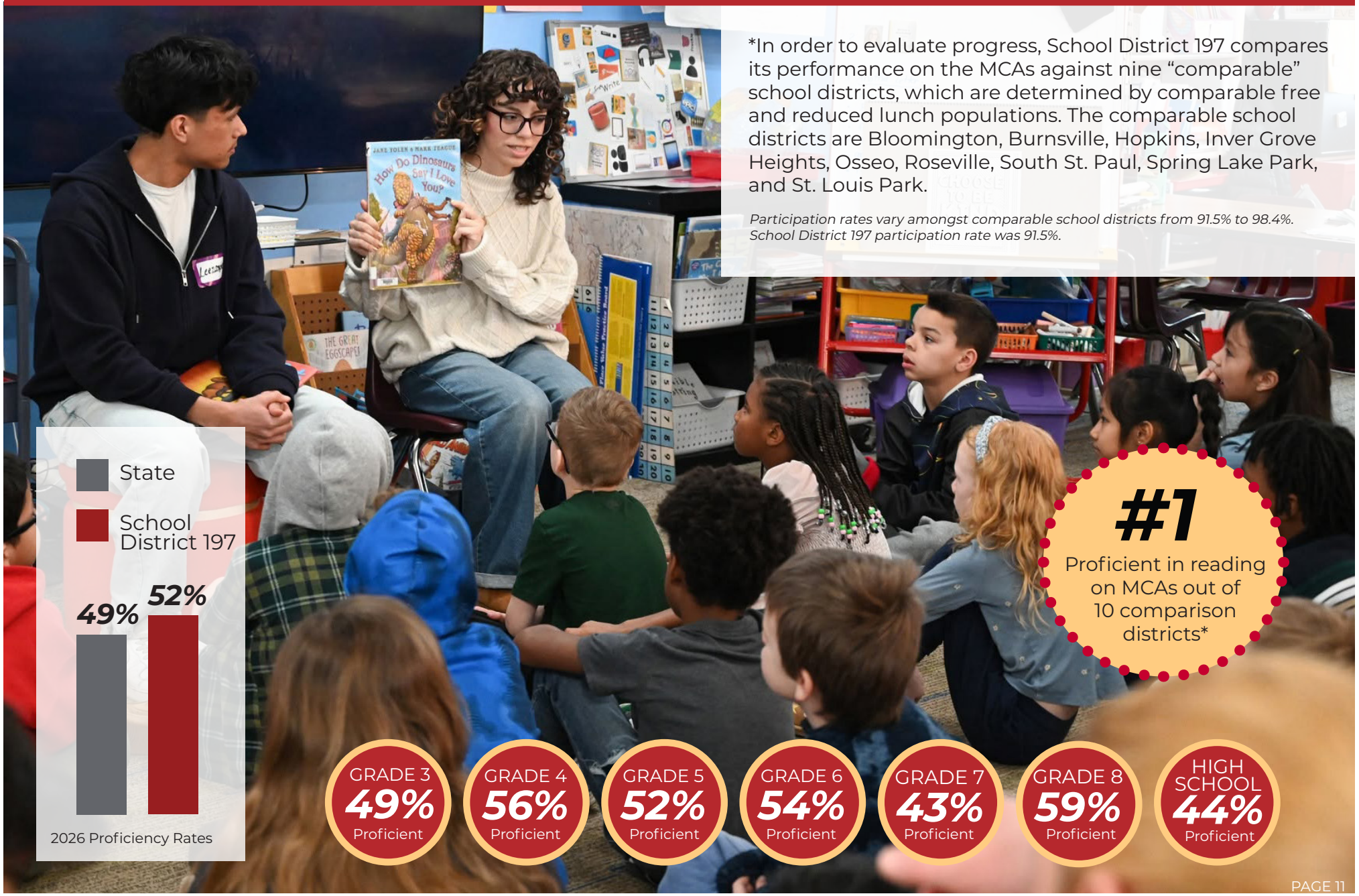




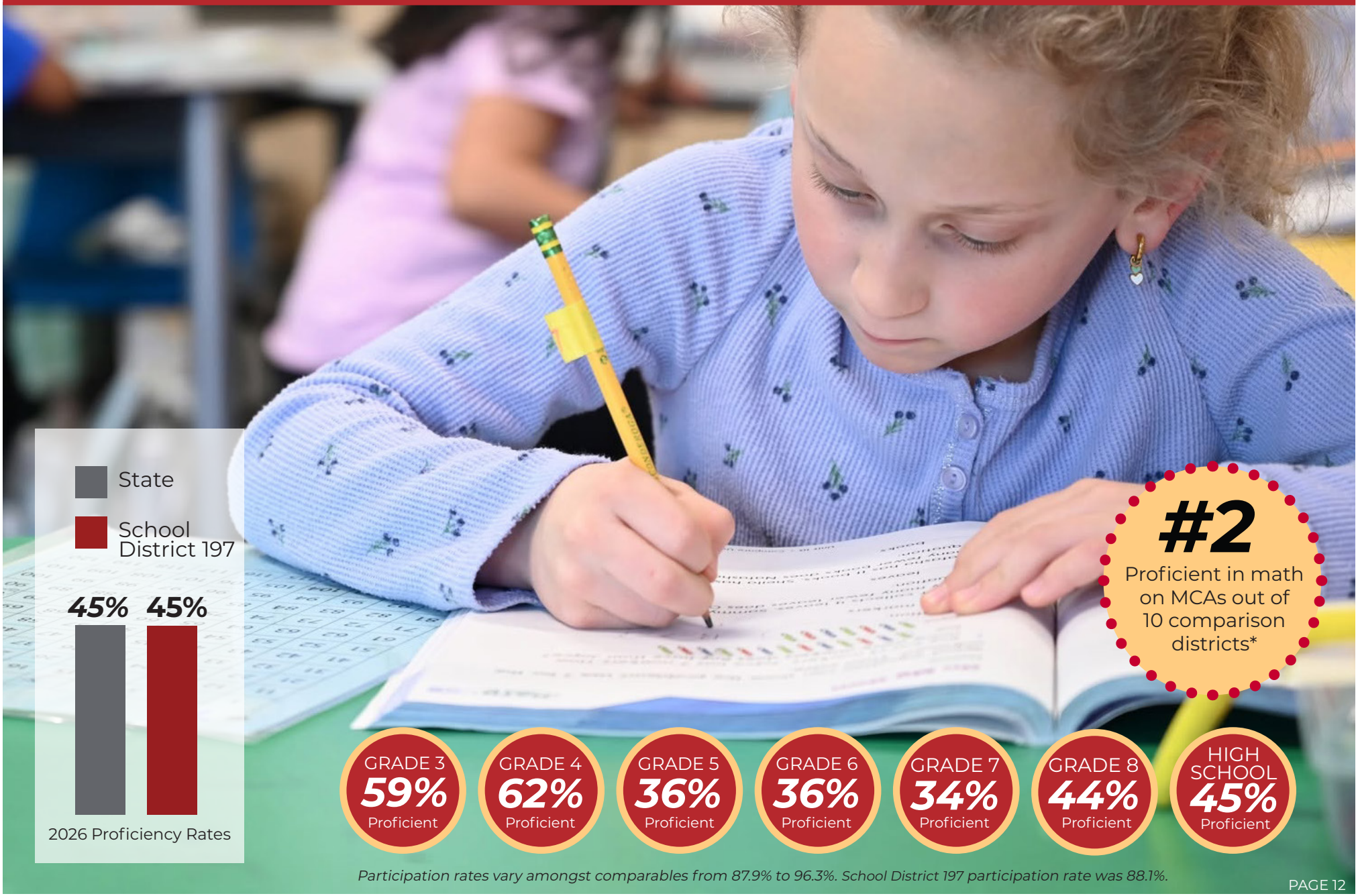
District Mission: High Achievement for All in READING

*In order to evaluate progress, School District 197 compares its performance on the MCAs against nine "comparable" school districts, which are determined by comparable free and reduced lunch populations. The comparable school districts are Bloomington, Burnsville, Hopkins, Inver Grove Heights, Osseo, Roseville, South St. Paul, Spring Lake Park, and St. Louis Park.

Participation rates vary amongst comparable school districts from 91.5% to 98.4%. School District 197 participation rate was 91.5%.

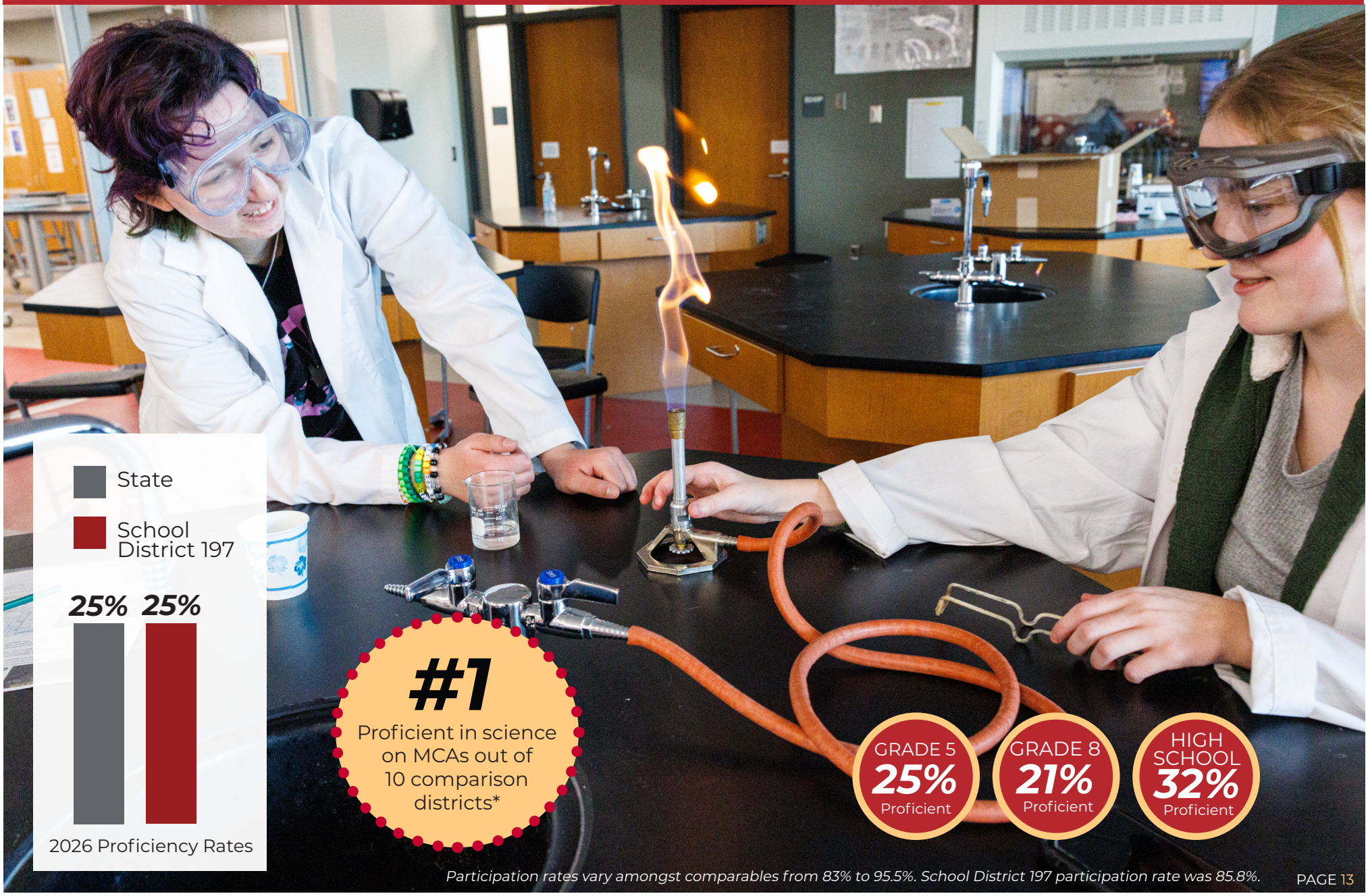


District Mission: High Achievement for All in MATH



Participation rates vary amongst comparables from 87.9% to 96.3%. School District 197 participation rate was 88.1%.

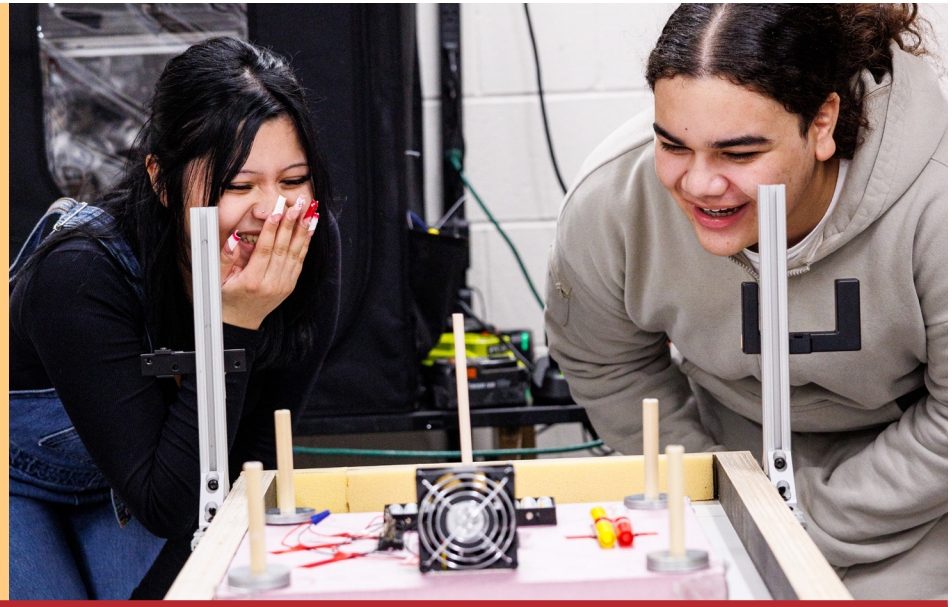
District Mission: High Achievement for All in SCIENCE



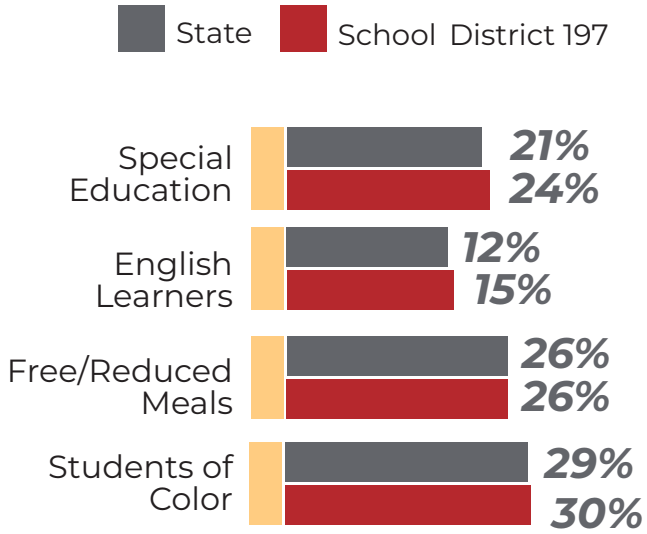
Participation rates vary amongst comparables from 83% to 95.5%. School District 197 participation rate was 85.8%.

District Goal #3:
Narrow the Achievement Gap

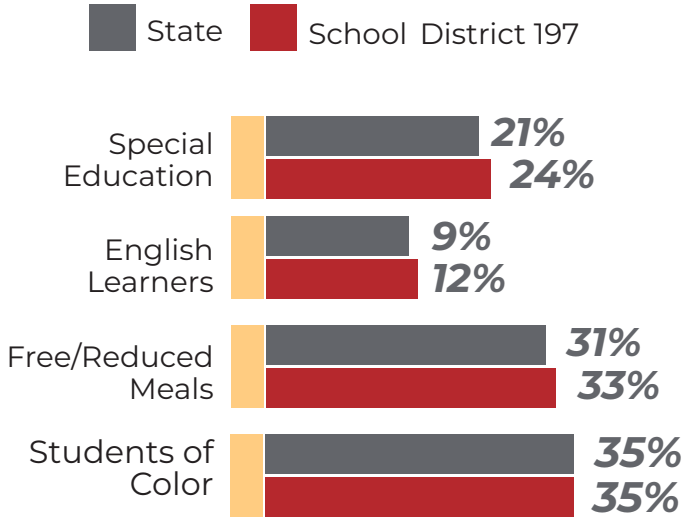
The School District 197 Achievement and Integration Plan addresses the district's goals related to pursuing racial and economic integration, increasing student achievement, creating equitable educational opportunities, and reducing academic disparities based on students' diverse racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds. In most student groups, School District 197 students are proficient at higher rates than the same groups statewide. Despite this, the achievement gap persists and widens in some cases. The closing of the achievement gap remains a high priority for the district.



2026 Proficiency Rates in Math for Grades 3-8 & 11



2026 Proficiency Rates in Reading for Grades 3-8 & 11

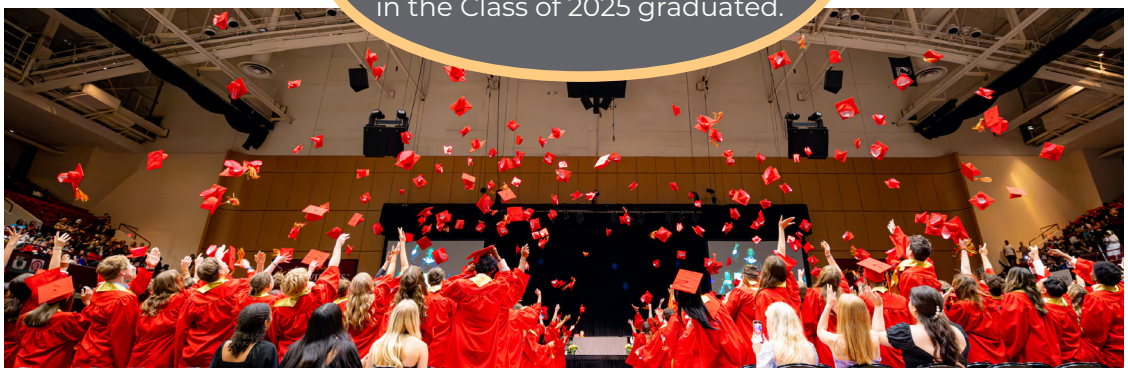


Closing the achievement gap has been a focal point for School District 197 well before the state made it a priority. To measure the degree to which strategies to close the achievement gap are effective, the district compares the performance of four different groups on both the MCA math and MCA reading tests. For more information, see the School District 197 Achievement & Integration plan at isd197.org.

District Goal #4: All Students Graduate from High School



80%
OF HISPANIC STUDENTS
in the Class of 2025 graduated.



Ensuring all students graduate on time is imperative to both School District 197 and the state of Minnesota. We are proud of the many initiatives and programs in place to support student success.

Students who graduate in four years

School District 197	89%
State Average	85%

The Power of Participation

Participation in athletics, activities and clubs is strongly associated with better attendance, higher levels of achievement, and aspirations to higher levels of education.



Athletics, Activities & Clubs

72 Offered

2,513 Registrations

*A student may be counted more than once if registered for more than one activity.

District Goal #5:
All Students Ready for Career and College

Advanced Placement Courses

14 Offered

432 Students Enrolled

Concurrent Enrollment Courses

24 Offered

441 Students Enrolled

Centers for Advanced Professional Studies (CAPS)

5 Offered

39 Students Enrolled

Post-Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO)

10 Institutions

64 Students Enrolled

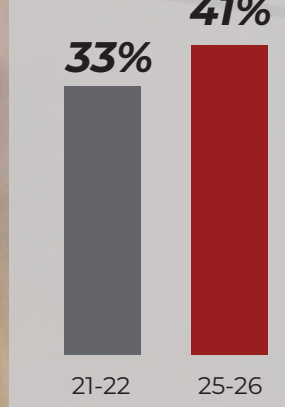
Industry Certifications

16 Courses

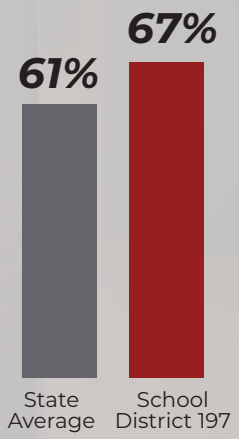
428 student certifications earned

Students of Color Enrolled in Rigorous Courses

In School District 197



Students in Class of 2024 Enrolled in College Following Graduation



District Strategic Framework
Implemented 2025-2026 Strategic Actions

1 Establish a district-wide system of social-emotional learning and support

Explicit SEL Instruction
Providing students with consistent opportunities to cultivate, practice, and reflect on social and emotional competencies in ways that are developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive.

Objectives:
- Design and develop the proposed high school personal finance course to intentionally integrate SEL competencies—such as self-management, responsible decision-making, and self-awareness—through planned units on budgeting, saving, goal setting, and financial planning, in preparation for 2026 implementation.
- Implement direct instruction on emotional well-being at the Branch Out Transition program for our learners aged 18-22 years old.

Integrated SEL with Academic Instruction
Integrating SEL objectives into instructional content and teaching strategies for academics as well as music, art, and physical education.

Objectives:
- Increase the use of the CharacterStrong curriculum resources across classrooms, including the incorporation of visuals and embedded strategies in specialist areas (music, art, and physical education).
- Develop an "Executive Functioning Skills Toolbox" to support students' self-regulation, planning, and task completion.
- Implement AMAZEworks curriculum in the elementary special education program classrooms. (also in equity targets)

Youth Voice and Engagement
Honoring and elevating a broad range of student perspectives and experiences by engaging students as leaders, problem solvers, and decision-makers.

Objectives:
- Expand data review sessions with students at the middle and high school levels using survey data.
- Gather feedback from 9th-grade students on a quarterly basis to inform the social and emotional support needs of students transitioning to high school.

District Strategic Framework
Implemented 2025-2026 Strategic Actions

1 Establish a district-wide system of social-emotional learning and support

Supportive School and Classroom Climates
Creating schoolwide and classroom learning environments that are supportive, culturally responsive, and focused on building relationships and community.

Objectives:
- Implement the School District 197 Teacher Evaluation Rubric and train administrators to observe and provide actionable feedback on SEL-related indicators. (also in equity targets)
- Facilitate middle school professional development sessions focused on the Ready for Rigor framework to strengthen culturally responsive teaching and classroom climate. (also in equity targets).

Focus on Adult SEL
Providing staff with regular opportunities to cultivate their own social, emotional, and cultural competence, collaborate with one another, build trusting relationships, and maintain a strong community.

Objective:
- Offer adult SEL learning opportunities through newsletter resources, coaching, staff wellness initiatives, and site-based practices.

Supportive Discipline
Creating discipline policies and practices that are instructive, restorative, developmentally appropriate, and equitably applied.

Objectives:
- Build school-based capacity for restorative practices through peer-led training and ongoing staff development opportunities.
- Develop and implement sensory and movement-based regulation strategies in collaboration with district occupational therapists.

District Strategic Framework
Implemented 2025-2026 Strategic Actions

1 Establish a district-wide system of social-emotional learning and support

Continuum of Integrated Supports
Ensuring that SEL is seamlessly integrated into a continuum of academic and behavioral supports, which are available to ensure that all student needs are met.

Objective:
- Conduct a comprehensive secondary school counselor program review to align supports, identify gaps, and ensure equity of access. (also in CCR targets)

Authentic Family Partnerships
Providing families and school staff with regular and meaningful opportunities to build relationships and collaborate to support students' social, emotional, and academic development.

Objective:
- Develop a family SEL engagement guide with strategies for supporting social-emotional development at home.

Aligned Community Partnerships
Ensuring that school staff and community partners are aligned on common language, strategies, and communication around all SEL-related efforts and initiatives, including out-of-school time.

Objective:
- Provide SEL training on trauma-informed practices and "safe space" strategies to School Age Care staff.
- Share information and gather feedback on SEL implementation through the School Health Advisory Committee (SHAC).
- Create and distribute informational resources on district SEL efforts for community partners, including coaches, activity advisors, and external collaborators.

District Strategic Framework
Implemented 2025-2026 Strategic Actions

1 Establish a district-wide system of social-emotional learning and support

Systems for Continuous Improvement
Ensuring implementation and outcome data are collected and used to continuously improve all SEL-related systems, practices, and policies with a focus on equity.

Objective:

- Use student, staff, and family survey data to inform decision-making and enhance program effectiveness.

District Strategic Framework
Implemented 2025-2026 Strategic Actions

2 Build equitable systems and support throughout the district

Diverse Classrooms and Schools
Implement a plan to increase inclusion in high school activities, which includes four recruitment events, the development of an activities board, and advertising on the school's visual displays.

Objectives:
- Increase the number of historically marginalized students (students of color, students who are English Learners, students with IEPs) who are engaged in opportunities for career exploration and preparation. Examples include:
  - In paid internships
  - Earning industry-relevant certifications
  - Enrolled in work-based learning at TRHS

Teacher and Leader Quality and Diversity
School District 197 commits to recruiting, hiring, and retaining a diverse, culturally responsive, and equity-minded workforce. This includes ongoing professional development focused on equity, gender inclusion, racial consciousness and cultural responsiveness.

Objectives:
- Create a required virtual staff training for licensed staff on our Equity Policy.
- Provide training on supporting Native American students to new teachers.
- Update and deliver the Supporting 2SLGBTQ+ People training to licensed staff.
- Provide 40+ school board members, district leaders, site administrators, teachers, and American Indian Parent Advisory Committee (AIPAC) members the opportunity to attend an immersive learning experience called Learning from Place: Bdote.
- Offer sites the opportunity to develop specific staff experiences to learn a new language.
- Implement the updated School District 197 Teacher Evaluation Rubric (including cultural competence) and train administrators to observe and provide actionable feedback on indicators. (also in SEL)

District Strategic Framework
Implemented 2025-2026 Strategic Actions

2 Build equitable systems and support throughout the district

Equitable Resource Allocation
School District 197 commits to prioritizing the allocation of resources, including but not limited to, curriculum, facilities, staffing, support services, technology, transportation, and activities, in a manner that ensures all students, including historically marginalized students, have the access and opportunity necessary to succeed.

Objectives:
- Implement a sliding scale fee for student parking passes at the high school.

Equitable Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment
Aligned to our curriculum review cycle, School District 197 commits to selecting and implementing curriculum that is culturally relevant and representative of our student population. We also commit to including equity in the rubrics used in our decision-making process for curriculum adoption. School District 197 commits to culturally affirming, inclusive, and responsive instructional practices and to equitable assessment and grading practices that foster motivation, are bias-resistant, and accurately reflect student learning.

Objectives:
- Implement an Ojibwe course offering at the high school.
- Engage secondary teachers in ongoing professional development on the Ready for Rigor Framework for Culturally Responsive Teaching. (also in SEL)
- Implement District 197's AMAZEworks supplemental curriculum in Special Services center-based programs. (also in SEL)
- Complete a comprehensive review of K-8 Special Education instructional practices in literacy.
- Implement evidence-based curriculum/resources aligned to the Science of Reading in special education services for students with disabilities in grades K-8.
- Explore equitable grading practices with secondary school leaders.

District Strategic Framework
Implemented 2025-2026 Strategic Actions

2 Build equitable systems and support throughout the district

Equitable Learning in Classroom and Other School Environments

School District 197 commits to culturally affirming, inclusive, and responsive community building and behavior management practices. Our physical spaces and routines will be reflective of the diversity of our students' identities. We also commit to building strong, supportive relationships with each student while holding them accountable to high expectations. School District 197 commits to behavior support and discipline practices that reduce disparities in suspensions. When there is harm, we commit to interrupting the harm regardless of the intent, while also committing to restoring relationships within the classroom and school.

Objectives:

- Disseminate updated Gender Inclusion procedures through licensed staff training, the staff hub, and meetings with school administrators and counselors.
- Provide professional development to general education staff on accommodations and modifications for students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and 504 plans.
- Develop a 2SLGBTQ+ Inclusive School self-reflection tool for sites to use.
- Develop a document outlining equity considerations for staff to use when planning for the start of the school year with students and families.

Equitable Student Leadership and Voice

School District 197 commits to seeking to gather and understand student perspectives (including those from historically marginalized groups) in decision making processes, creating spaces for student groups, and providing leadership opportunities.

Objectives:

- Increase the number of student ambassadors to the Beyond Our Walls Summit to at least seven.
- Create a student advisory group to meet with Nutrition Services to provide input and feedback on menu offerings.

District Strategic Framework
Implemented 2025-2026 Strategic Actions

2 Build equitable systems and support throughout the district

Equitable Family Partnerships

School District 197 commits to building two-way linguistic and cultural bridges between the School District and the various communities it serves. We will seek representation reflective of our student demographics on District advisory committees, provide spaces for family groups, provide cultural liaisons, provide family education, and provide interpretation and translation tools and resources. We commit to using these resources to better understand the perspectives, goals, and priorities of the communities we serve and to seek ongoing input and feedback.

Objectives:

- Train and certify bilingual staff to be reserve interpreters to ensure effective communication with multilingual families during high-demand events.
- Provide non-English speaking families with opportunities to give feedback on our language access services.
- Develop a Language Access Plan to document and promote our district's commitment and strategies to ensure equitable access to families who are non-English speaking.

District Strategic Framework
Implemented 2025-2026 Strategic Actions

3 Increase E-12 opportunities for career exploration and preparation

Course, School and Structural Support
Reducing barriers to improve student outcomes for underrepresented student groups.

Objectives:

- Through the curriculum review process, ensure course sequences will reduce barriers to participation in courses associated with college credit or industry relevant certification.
- Explore the creation of pathways with MS electives to streamline scheduling, staffing and student access.
- Develop a group of staff and students to discuss and explore end of course evaluations.
- Conduct a 5-12 counseling program review. (also in SEL)
- Develop Artificial Intelligence (AI) guidelines for schools to use when developing student expectations.
- Implement the direct admissions process.
- Implement foundational literacy curriculum.
- Integrate college and career planning into personal finance courses.
- Align and refine the Warrior Seminar curriculum.
- Implement the Ojibwe language course in 2025-2026.
- Develop a sustainable approach to maintaining an annual native language experience.

District Strategic Framework
Implemented 2025-2026 Strategic Actions

3 Increase E-12 opportunities for career exploration and preparation

Direct Student Supports
Reducing barriers to improve student outcomes for underrepresented student groups.

Objectives:
- Establish formal middle school student focus groups for feedback.
- Establish an American Indian student focus group related to curriculum.
- Continue to refine and develop sustainable procedures for students making transitions from Pre-K to elementary, elementary to middle school, from middle school to high school, as well as with our postsecondary and labor partners.

Career and College Readiness
Expanding opportunities for students to earn college credit, career-based certifications, and internships.

Objectives:
- Prepare, implement, monitor and adjust new middle school electives.
- Expand and diversify the college visits at Two Rivers.
- Develop training for families on Naviance.
- Complete installation of technology student help desk at Two Rivers by spring 2026.
- Complete installation of the tech warrior repair workshop.

Career and Technical Education Pathways
Aligning and expanding opportunities for students to explore Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways.

Objectives:
- Implement Natural Resources, Sustainability & Food Systems CAPS class.
- Create a career and college center in the work based learning classroom.
- Identify an advanced computer science course for implementation in 26-27.

SCHOOL DISTRICT 197

West St. Paul + Mendota Heights + Eagan Area

Together, We Thrive.

