

Mingus Union

High School District #4

Strategic Plan

2026-2029

Mingus Unified High School District

Mingus Union High School District #4 has a rich history rooted in community collaboration and a strong commitment to student success in the Verde Valley. Serving the Cottonwood, Camp Verde, Beaver Creek, and Sedona areas as a Title I district, Mingus Union traces its origins to the mid-20th century, when three separate high schools - Jerome, Clarkdale, and Cottonwood - came together to better serve students. Jerome and Clarkdale first consolidated in 1950 to form Mingus High School, followed by the addition of Cottonwood High School in 1958, creating today's unified district. The school itself has evolved alongside the community, relocating from Clarkdale to Jerome and ultimately to its current home in Cottonwood in 1972. While district boundaries have shifted over time, Mingus Union High School District has remained focused on providing rigorous academics, a variety of extracurricular opportunities, and strong career and college pathways, all while honoring its deep ties to the communities it serves.

Mission Statement:

Mingus Union High School District cultivates academically prepared students who are empowered through robust opportunities and rigorous, engaging curriculum to be citizens who elevate their communities.

Vision Statement:

Engage Minds. Empower Students. Elevate Communities.

Portrait of a Graduate Characteristics:

- Innovative
- Ethical
- Self-Sufficient
- Collaborative
- Resilient
- Engaged

Areas of Focus:

Student Achievement: Increase growth and proficiency in all students.

Climate and Culture: Foster a safe and supportive learning environment through student well-being, staff development and the recruitment and retention of high-quality educators.

Engagement and Partnerships: Strengthen connections with families and community partners to create an engaging, supportive environment.

Financial Responsibility: Ensure transparent and responsible management of district finances that supports and enhances student achievement, school culture and community partnerships.

Focus Area 1: Student Achievement

Goal: Increase growth and proficiency for all students.

Objective 1.1: Academic Growth and Proficiency - By 2029, Mingus UHSD will improve the **percentage of students** reaching ACT Benchmark scores in reading by 18% (37%), in English by 18% (46%) and in Math by 27% (38%) At least 85% of students will meet **at least** one year of academic growth annually as measured by the NWEA.

Strategies	Tactics	Implementation Year
Strengthen Tier 1 instruction; Implement targeted interventions	<p>1.1.1 Teacher uses classroom level data to guide instruction</p> <p>1.1.2 Provide teachers with AVID training and strategies to implement in the classroom</p> <p>1.1.3 Administer NWEA 3 times per year, tracking growth of students by percentile ranking</p>	SY 25-26
Strengthen data-driven instruction and expand intervention systems	<p>1.1.4 Implement Institutionalize and embed fall/winter/spring progress monitoring based on NWEA data analyzing data in teacher Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)</p> <p>1.1.5 Implement Provide professional development on creating targeted intervention plans</p> <p>1.1.6 Begin process of creating Create and implement targeted intervention plans for every student based on various data sources, including NWEA data</p>	SY 26-27, SY 27-28
Expand intervention systems	1.1.7 Create and implement targeted intervention plans based on NWEA data	SY 27-28
Refine instruction systems and incentives	<p>1.1.8 Review and adjust curriculum and intervention plans</p> <p>1.1.9 Implement Execute comprehensive, school wide incentive programs for students who demonstrate growth</p>	SY 28-29

	from the ACT ASPIRE test administered freshman year to the ACT, administered junior year	
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Focus Area 1: Student Achievement

Goal: Increase growth and proficiency for all students.

Objective 1.2: Access to Advanced Opportunities - By 2029, enrollment in Career and Technical Education (CTE), Advanced Placement (AP), Honors, and Dual Enrollment courses will increase by 15%

Strategies	Tactics	Implementation Year
Increase pathway exposure	<p>1.2.1 Create Expand and grow and host course fairs to recruit students into CTE, AP, Honors and Dual Enrollment classes, and gather baseline attendance data</p> <p>1.2.2 Strengthen VACTE partnership</p>	SY 25-26
Improve enrollment systems	<p>1.2.3 Create parameters to identify students for suggested enrollment in advanced courses</p> <p>1.2.4 Analyze and adjust master schedule as needed to maximize access to CTE, AP, Honors and Dual Enrollment courses</p>	SY 26-27
Optimize participation for all students	<p>1.2.5 Progress monitor Schedule regular progress monitoring of enrollment data in AP, Dual Enrollment, Honors and CTE courses</p> <p>1.2.6 Expand Analyze cumulative course fair attendance data to identify areas of improvement and restructure as needed</p> <p>1.2.7 Continue to adjust master schedule as needed</p>	SY 28-29

Focus Area 1: Student Achievement

Goal: Increase growth and proficiency for all students.

Objective 1.3: Graduation and On-Track Indicators - By 2029, graduation rates will rise from 85.5% to 92%

Strategies	Tactics	Implementation Year
Strengthen intervention and early-warning systems	<p>1.3.1 Gather baseline attendance & credit data for students not on track to graduate Establish a grade-level early warning and intervention system that uses attendance and credit-accrual data to identify students off track to graduate.</p> <p>1.3.2 Improve tracking of students who leave Mingus before graduation to decrease dropout rates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strengthen partnership with Grad Solutions• Train all staff and implement existing tracking documents <p>1.3.3 Implement Expand and strengthen Freshman Houses framework</p>	SY 26-27

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with Center for High School Success (CHSS) to decrease the number of students who need credit recovery 	
Evaluate impact	1.3.4 Review graduation trends & refine pathways	SY 28-29

Focus Area 1: Student Achievement

Goal: Increase growth and proficiency for all students.

Objective 1.4: English Learner (EL) Success - By 2029, the percentage of Mingus UHSD English Learner (EL) students scoring proficient (on AZELLA) will be 10% higher than the state average, with all EL students showing one year of language proficiency growth.

Strategies	Tactics	Implementation Year
Build data systems	1.4.1 Create baseline data for students entering EL program as freshman <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop progress monitoring checkpoints 	SY 25-26
Strengthen EL support	1.4.2 Create and implement incentive program to motivate students to test out of EL 1.4.3 Provide targeted EL professional development for certified staff 1.4.4 Create peer tutoring program to utilize students who are approaching proficiency to incentivize test out successfully	SY 26-27

Strengthen support and expand family engagement	1.4.5 Establish partnerships to help EL families bridge the gap between home and school (advocacy) 1.4.6 Analyze and refine EL professional development for certified staff	SY 27-28
Evaluate Language Programs	1.4.7 Review, assess and report 4-year EL trends 1.4.8 Refine EL professional development	SY 28-29

Focus Area 2: Climate and Culture

Goal: Foster a safe and supportive learning environment through student well-being, staff development and the recruitment and retention of highly-qualified educators.

Objective 2.1: Student Safety and Climate Improvement - By 2029, student-reported sense of safety will increase by 20% based on data from a research-based survey.

Strategies	Tactics	Implementation Year
Improve climate data systems	2.1.1 Administer Youth Risk Behavior Survey/AZ Youth Survey and other surveys, as appropriate 2.1.2 Consistently Complete annual safety audits	SY 25-26
Strengthen consistency	2.1.3 Create and administer professional development on discipline matrix and train staff on consistent documentation and reporting of disciplinary incidents	SY 26-27

	<p>2.1.4 Create Formalize and implement supervision plan ensuring staff are assigned to high traffic areas before/after school, during lunch and passing periods</p> <p>2.1.5 Analyze data from office referrals to ensure consistent implementation of discipline matrix</p>	
Refine safety practices	<p>2.1.6 Review annual survey data</p> <p>2.1.7 Refine professional development plan and create and implement a plan to address concerns</p> <p>2.1.8 Continue to analyze data from office referrals and training on discipline matrix/reporting practices and refine best practices based on results</p>	SY 27-28
Evaluate impact	<p>2.1.9 Continue to analyze office referrals and training on discipline matrix based on results</p> <p>2.1.10 Review and refine supervision plan</p> <p>2.1.11 Ensure consistent use of Student Information System (SIS) to log incidents</p>	SY 28-29

Focus Area 2: Climate and Culture

Goal: Foster a safe and supportive learning environment through student well-being, staff development and the recruitment and retention of high-quality educators.

Objective 2.2: Professional Growth - By 2029, 100% of certified staff will engage in appropriate professional development aligned to instructional needs., ~~including content specific professional development, classroom management, etc.~~

Strategies	Tactics	Implementation Year
Identify professional development needs	2.2.1 Utilize self-assessment tools and feedback from evaluators and instructional coaches to help identify individual staff professional development needs 2.2.2 Develop a systematic school-wide professional development plan to address the professional needs of teachers	SY 25-26
Build school-based professional development systems	2.2.3 Finalize schoolwide professional development plan and implement school based professional development	SY 26-27
Implement professional development pathways	2.2.4 Launch professional development pathways, including internal and external opportunities	SY 27-28
Evaluate impact	2.2.5 Review professional development outcomes and adjust to staff needs as necessary	SY 28-29

Focus Area 2: Climate and Culture

Goal: Foster a safe and supportive learning environment through student well-being, staff development and the recruitment and retention of high-quality educators.

Objective 2.3: Increase Student Participation - By 2029, student participation in arts, athletics, and activities will increase by 10%.

Strategies	Tactics	Implementation Year
Establish baseline	<p>2.3.1 Conduct participation audit</p> <p>2.3.2 Analyze master schedule to optimize students' ability to participate in elective courses/extra-curricular activities without disrupting ability to participate in AP/Honors/Dual Enrollment/CTE Courses to the greatest extent possible</p> <p>2.3.3 Create plan to grow Involvement Fair</p> <p>2.3.4 Develop a plan to partner with feeder schools, including music, art, athletics and extra-curriculars</p>	SY 25-26
Strengthen feeder connections	<p>2.3.5 Implement partnership with feeder schools</p> <p>2.3.6 Adjust master schedule to optimize students' ability to participate in elective courses/extra-curricular activities</p>	SY 26-27

	<p>2.3.7 Continue participation audit – identify groups of students with low participation in extra-curricular/elective courses</p> <p>2.2.8 Develop plans to reach low-participation groups of students</p>	
Continuous expansion	<p>2.2.8 Add clubs/programs based on level of demand</p> <p>2.2.9 Implement outreach plan to low-participation groups</p>	SY 27-29

Strategic Plan Core Team Members

- Kevin Murie - Commander Cottonwood PD
- Beth Canedy - Owner, Rag Time
- Paul Karratti - Faith Leader
- Jonathan Canning - Mingus Union High School Parent
- Mikel Swank - Mingus Union High School Parent
- Lacey Edwards - Mingus Union High School Parent
- Dean Holbrook – Yavapai College
- Dave Beery - Principal, Mingus Union High School
- Katherine Forbes – Dean of Students, Mingus Union High School
- Ashley Gonzalez – Alumni, Class of 2025
- McKenna Cook – Student, Class of 2028
- Amy Badger - Science Teacher, Mingus Union High School
- Klint McKean – English Teacher, Mingus Union High School
- Chad Elmer – CTE Director, Mingus Union High School
- Mayra Garcia Hernandez – School Counselor, Mingus Union High School
- Jennifer Doerksen – Nurse, Mingus Union High School

Project Team Members:

Areas 1 and 2:

Student Achievement (Guiding Coalition)

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Areas 3 and 4:

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Financial Responsibility (Site Leadership Team)

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Chad Scott
Shannon Anderson

