

P.1 Organizational Description

P.1a(1) Educational Program and Service Offerings. Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) is the largest public school district in the state of Wisconsin with 156 schools, including neighborhood schools, specialty schools, comprehensive middle and high schools, traditional schools, instrumentality and non-instrumentality charter schools, alternative schools, and partnership schools. The district currently serves 69,115 students with a student population that surpasses 90% students of color, over 84% economically disadvantaged, over 20% students with special needs, and a growing English learner population of more than 13%.

As a result of the diverse academic and social-emotional needs of our students, professional development needs of staff, and support needed by families, key programming and services in the district are aligned to intentionally engage students in equitable practices utilizing an equity lens and culturally and linguistically responsive practices. Within MPS, an equity lens is defined as “a point of view used to acknowledge the disparities that impact historically marginalized groups and to identify priorities based on areas of greatest needs. These needs will drive district priorities for the most equitable distribution of resources, supports, and opportunities.” Culturally and linguistically responsive practices reflect “beliefs, methods, and practices that support and empower all students socially, emotionally, intellectually, and civically by leveraging students’ lived experiences and learning styles to ensure student achievement.”

In the 2018–2019 school year, due to ongoing concerns about student achievement, the district developed and began utilizing an Ambitious Instruction framework to drive key educational programs and services. After a thoughtful and critical review of our current educational practices and realization of the COVID-19 pandemic’s impact on student achievement and mental health, in the 2021–2022 school year the district continued work on Ambitious Instruction and added a focus on accelerating learning to ensure that all students are engaged in grade-level learning, utilizing the levers of explicit instruction, hands-on/minds-on engagement, and formative assessments to support increased student achievement. Ambitious Instruction: Accelerating Learning encompasses culturally and linguistically responsive practices, instructional technology, and district-adopted/supported materials. All traditional educational opportunities for students in pre-K–12 and specialty programs within MPS use the Ambitious Instruction: Accelerating Learning framework.

A multi-tiered system of support for students ensures that all students receive Tier 1 universal instruction at grade level across all content areas, with Tier 2 and Tier 3 support provided as needed to strengthen student achievement and address students’ linguistic, social, and emotional needs. Programs and services are further enhanced through the use of technology pre-K–12 utilizing a variety of software and hardware resources and/or equipment.

Examples of key instructional programs available for students include Head Start, special education for students with disabilities, programs and services for English learners, one-way and two-way bilingual dual-language programs, advanced academic programs (gifted and talented, Advanced Placement, and International Baccalaureate), world languages, language immersion programs, career and technical education, science, mathematics, social studies, literacy, early childhood, Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM)/Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM), ethnic studies, and performing and visual arts. High school students can also engage in dual enrollment, work

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study, and credit recovery online learning courses. Examples of services offered to support the delivery, enrichment, and/or enhancement of instructional programs include telepresence, the Home and Hospital Instruction Program, the 53206 Initiative, school counseling, and psychological services. Services offered to support student health and wellness, along with culturally and linguistically responsive practices, include the Lau Compliance Center, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), restorative practices, violence prevention, Black and Latino male achievement, gender and identity inclusion, Second Step, trauma-informed care, the Success Center, and behavioral reassignment services at designated school sites.

All instructional programs and services are aligned to the district's Five Priorities for Success: (1) Increase Academic Achievement and Accountability, (2) Improve District and School Culture, (3) Develop Our Staff, (4) Ensure Fiscal Responsibility and Transparency, and (5) Strengthen Communication and Collaboration. These priorities drive the work of staff members as they provide programs and services that meet the needs of students and families.

The Importance of Each of the Programs and Services to the Success of MPS. The academic programs offered in MPS serve a wide range of student needs and family interests. In addition, the academic programs for core curriculum across all grade levels, extracurricular programs, and opportunities are available to engage all students.

All educational programs offered in the Milwaukee Public Schools help to prepare students for the 21st century and beyond. Foundational literacies across the curriculum include literacy, numeracy, scientific literacy, digital literacy, financial literacy, and cultural and civic literacy. Competencies we want all students to acquire as a result of their engagement in Ambitious Instruction: Accelerating Learning include critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration. We also desire for our students to develop the ability and skills that promote curiosity, initiative, persistence/grit, adaptability, leadership, and social and cultural awareness.

Our diverse programs and services reflect the significant needs of our students and families that extend beyond academic needs and are reflected in the larger Milwaukee community. These issues include poverty, absenteeism, exposure to violence, segregation, and inequities based on opportunity. Our programs help students engage in learning in an equitable manner.

Key programs support the unique needs of students:

- PBIS, restorative practices, violence prevention, and social-emotional learning help students address issues that obstruct their education. These programs teach students the skills to manage personal and/or societal issues in the community in a positive and productive manner.
- Transportation allows access to programs across the district, not just those programs in the area where families live.
- The Community Eligibility Program provides free, nutritious meals at breakfast and lunch that allow students to focus on their education.
- Bilingual, English as a Second Language (ESL), and world languages programs provide support to a large population of students who otherwise would not be able to access their education in an equitable manner.



- Interventions and tiered instruction allow all students to receive grade-level instruction. When Tier 1 instruction is not sufficient to provide the needed academic support interventions, then Tier 2 or 3 instruction provides additional support to students.
- Professional development allows our staff to meet the diverse needs of our students.

The Modalities Used to Deliver Our Educational Programs and Services. MPS renders programs and services to three key groups. The first is the direct delivery of education and services to children. Instruction is based on the use of high-quality instructional materials in person, virtually, or through computer-based options. We deliver these services year-round in collaboration with school staff, vendors, families, and community partners. In addition, academic and behavioral support services are provided to children first in the classroom (Tier 1), then in smaller groups (Tier 2), then eventually via one-on-one services based on the level of need (Tier 3). Engagement of the family increases through these levels.

The second group is the services to staff. Programs and services are provided by contracted partners to help staff maintain their health and well-being. Services are available such as help desks and technological applications to support work. The professional development offered is critical.

The third is direct services to families to support families and children so that the students are prepared for school. Additional opportunities are available for parents to engage with schools and the district and to positively impact students. Each school has a parent coordinator to respond to the needs of families.

P.1a(2) Mission, Vision, Values, and Culture. Milwaukee Public Schools Administrative Policy 1.01 was updated in August 2017 during the last strategic planning process and states the mission, vision, core beliefs, and goals of the district. A slightly different version is found in Board Governance Policy BG 1.01 and BG 1.02 that was reaffirmed in November 2021. A third version was found in the Employee Handbook updated in June 2019.

Mission: Milwaukee Public Schools is a diverse district that welcomes all students and prepares them for success in higher education, post-education opportunities, work, and citizenship.

Vision: Milwaukee Public Schools will be among the highest-student-growth school systems in the country. All district staff will be committed to providing an equitable educational environment that is child-centered, supports achievement, and respects and embraces diversity. Schools will be safe, welcoming, well-maintained, and accessible community centers that meet the needs of all. Relevant, rigorous, and successful instructional programs will be recognized and replicated. The district and its schools will collaborate with students, families, and community for the benefit of all.

Core Beliefs:

- Students come first.
- Wherever students are learning is the most important place in the district.
- Educators and school staff have high expectations for all students and provide the foundation for their academic success.
- Leadership, educator development, and child-driven, data-informed decision making are keys to student achievement.
- Equity drives all district decision making.
- Involved families are integral to increasing student achievement.
- Student voice is encouraged and respected.

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- Quality community partnerships add value.
- Increased operational and financial efficiencies are consistently pursued to support learning opportunities for our students.
- Central Services supports student achievement, efficient and effective operations, and student, family, and community engagement.
- Public education provides the cornerstone of American democracy.

Goals:

- Academic achievement
- Student, family, and community engagement
- Effective and efficient operations

More staff are familiar with the Five Priorities for Success than the mission, vision, and core beliefs. The Five Priorities for Success are part of every presentation and meeting agenda in the district.



Our Core Competencies and Their Relationship to Our Mission.

Performing Under Pressure. Milwaukee Public Schools finds opportunities to engage students in their learning and prepare them for the 21st century and beyond.

Networking. The district works to develop relationships with local and national stakeholders, students, parents, community, and companies to provide opportunities for all students to enable them to be successful today and in the future.

Problem Solving. The district continually and intentionally strives to address the diverse needs of our students, staff, and families so that we are meeting the needs of the whole child—education, wellness, emotional stability.

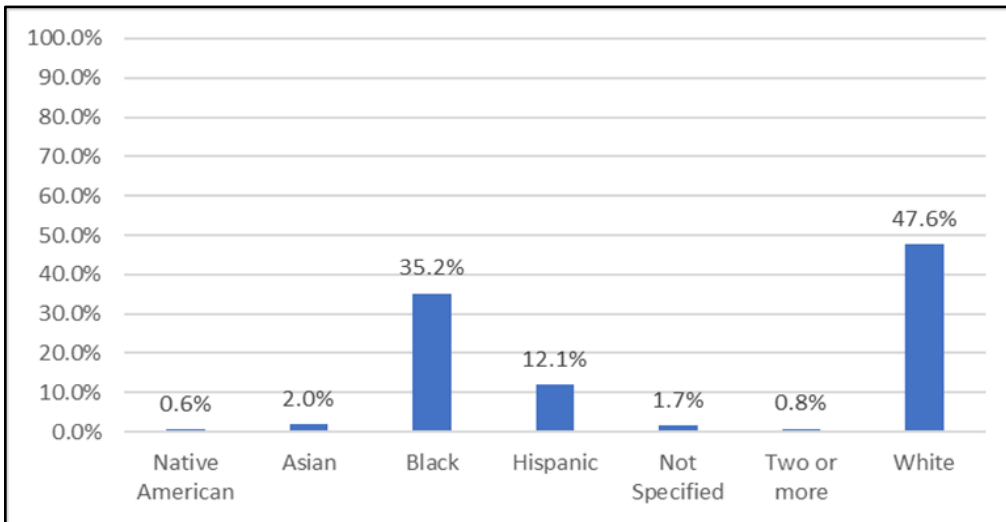
Cross-Collaboration. The district develops and strengthens collaborative relationships internally and externally with our diverse stakeholder groups to provide rigorous educational opportunities for all.

Adaptability. The district has shown during the past two years the ability to adapt to changing academic, cultural, societal, and political environments and do what was needed to educate and support our students and staff.



Integrity. The district relies on each person to work with integrity in all aspects of work and actions. The district also has checks and balances to ensure that integrity is maintained throughout all areas of the organization.

P.1a(3) Workforce Profile. Milwaukee Public Schools employs 8,593 individuals. The workforce is predominantly female (74%). The ethnic/racial demographics of the workforce are the following:



The employees of the district originally had to live within the city limits, but this requirement was lifted in 2013. Currently 72% of the workforce continues to be Milwaukee residents. The average hourly pay rate is \$36.65. Approximately 37% of the workforce is considered non-exempt, which means that these individuals are overtime-eligible.

Recent Changes in Workforce Composition or Needs. Teacher shortages are impacting urban districts at a greater rate than suburban districts. The district has had turnover in the last several years as a result of increased resignations and retirements. There has also been an increase in the requests for new positions as schools and departments need individuals with new skill sets to meet the needs of the district. As a result of COVID-19, hiring was dramatically changed, and the need for people to handle increased cleaning, implement preventive measures, manage technology overload, and cover during illnesses has been a challenge that must be answered to meet the needs of our students and maintain the key functions of the district.

As fewer individuals are graduating with teaching certificates, the district has established a program for developing teachers and recruiting to the district from outside Wisconsin. Our efforts to address this include a program that allows employees to pursue a teaching certificate. Human resources staff also has traveled to out-of-state locations, including many historically Black colleges and universities, to recruit qualified teachers. Teachers for high-need areas (math, science, special education, and bilingual education) continue to be difficult to hire. Recruiting and retaining teachers for our schools is a priority.

Workforce or Faculty/Staff Groups and Segments. The workforce segments are the classified and certificated employees. The classified staff includes all hourly employees and staff members who do not require a Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction license. The certificated staff includes all employees



who require a license from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction and the recreation professional staff, who are certificated based on another state statute. The district also provides a range of full-time and part-time positions and limited-term employees.

Educational Requirements for Different Faculty/Staff Groups and Segments. Within the Offices of Academics, School Administration, and Communications and School Performance are many team members who must have a teacher’s license at minimum and various administrative licenses, bachelor’s degrees, and advanced degrees. Other segments of the workforce—for example, the hourly employees—may require only a high school diploma. Experience or an associate/bachelor’s/master’s degree in a specialty area such as governance, finance, or human resources is required for many non-school-based positions. Finally, there is a segment of employees that require expertise in technical areas and/or the trades.

The Key Drivers that Engage Them. The most important criterion for employees, regardless of their position within the district, is to have a passion for the work they do. The central focus for all staff should be how every position is related to meeting the needs of students who attend Milwaukee Public Schools. As a result, the district wants employees who desire to build a district that supports the education of our youth, which in turn will help the success of the Milwaukee community.

Organized Bargaining Units. The district has multiple certified collective bargaining units that are available to employees of the district if they desire membership. The district meets with each unit formally and informally to address employees’ concerns.

Special Health and Safety Requirements. The district must meet all local, county, state, and national regulatory health requirements from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Milwaukee Health Department. Included are standard regulations for the Family and Medical Leave Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and Fair Labor Standards Act. Additionally, the district must comply with the safety regulations for nutrition and the delivery of food to students. All state statutes governing schools are also influenced by the Department of Public Instruction, further defining the implementation of those laws.

P.1a(4) Assets, Major Facilities, Equipment, Technologies, and Intellectual Property. The major facilities can be broken into four major categories: buildings such as schools, recreation facilities, administrative support, and operational support buildings. We have 145 active school buildings, three closed buildings (Carleton, Edison, and Philipp), two administrative support buildings (Central Services and MPSSSC), and four operational support buildings (Facilities and Maintenance Services 11th Street, 7th Street, 39th Street, and Clairmont). Recreation manages 52 outdoor playfields throughout the city and has one stand-alone community center (Beulah Brinton), one senior adult center (OASIS), and Oak Ridge Farm in Dousman, Wisconsin. The rest of our program locations are MPS schools.

Each facility type utilizes a common set of equipment such as office furniture, copy equipment, and computer technology. Each type of facility also requires specialized equipment. A school will require student furniture specific to a grade level and/or subject along with equipment for specialized areas such as kitchen equipment, gym equipment, etc. A recreation facility will include play or athletic equipment for sports and mats for exercise classes. The administrative buildings will primarily include office furniture and related equipment. The operations facilities will include equipment such as vehicles, tools, supplies,



and other equipment used to maintain facilities. Common to all facilities typically are cleaning equipment, lawn maintenance, and computer technology.

Each of the facilities is dependent on a variety of technologies that are common to all, including telephones, cell phones, computers, laptops, Chromebooks, and printers. Display devices are found in most spaces, including monitors, interactive flat panels, and digital signage. All of these items are also dependent on the building's infrastructure, including network wiring, electrical outlets, and network devices such as switches and Wi-Fi access points. The district utilizes a standard, core set of software programs such as Microsoft Office 365/email and Microsoft Windows operating systems. However, each department or function also requires use of unique programs such as BusinessPlus for financial operations, AssetWorks for facilities maintenance, Infinite Campus for student records, and PeopleSoft for human resources. In addition, there are a multitude of educational software programs used by schools associated with teaching, curriculum support, and academic interventions.

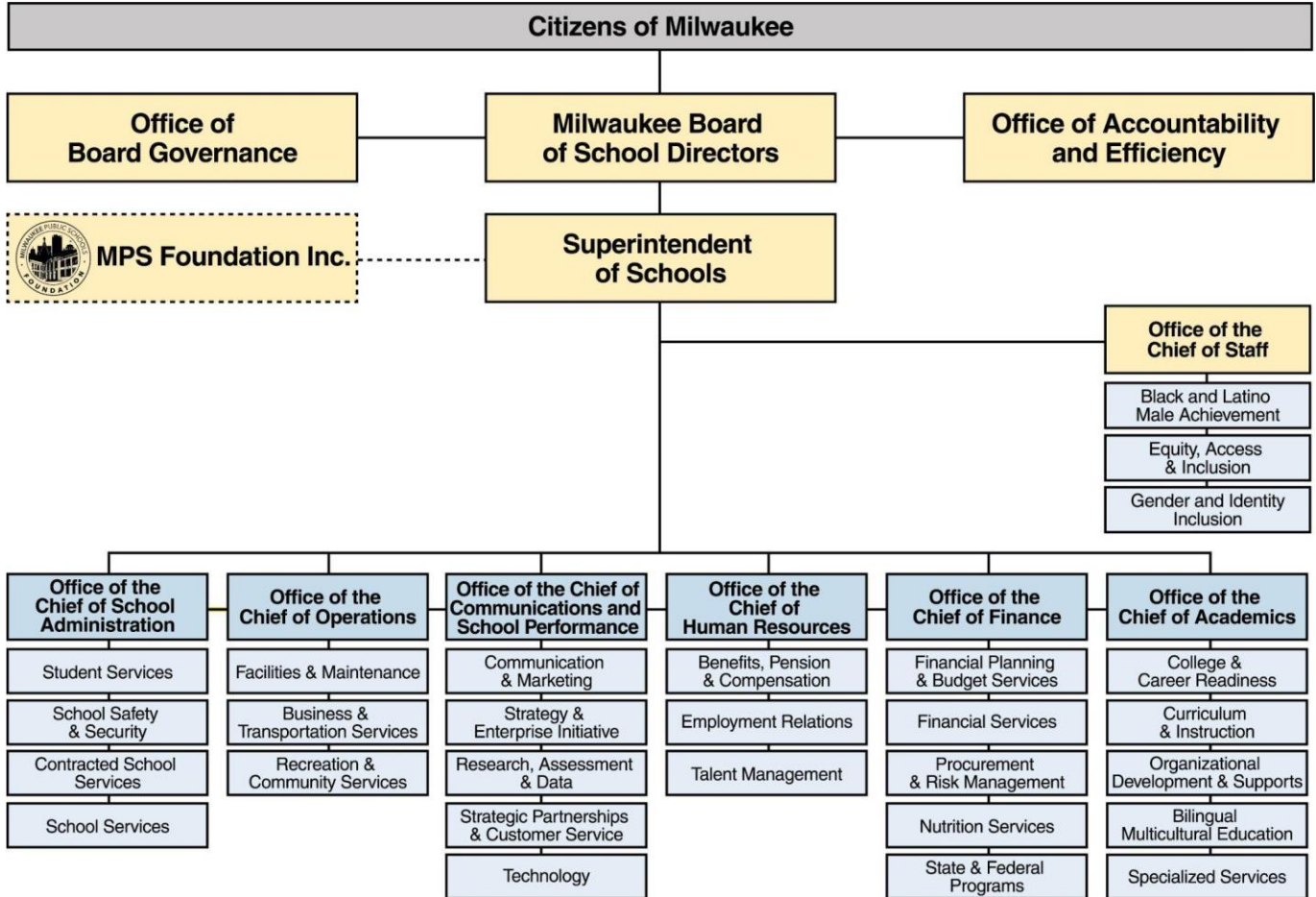
Intellectual property has been developed by many areas of the district. MPS logos and branding have been created by the Department of Communications and Marketing. The Department of Facilities and Maintenance Services has information related to master specifications, construction documents/drawings, and the environmental database system. Instructional pacing guides, handbooks, and aids are created by our staff for use within classrooms. Professional development courses are created by and for MPS staff.

P.1a(5) Regulatory Environment. The Milwaukee Public Schools has a hierarchy in which regulations, standards, and requirements exist. The Office of Board Governance oversees the development of the district's administrative policies, procedures, and board rules. The board rules are specific to the elected school board members and are operated in accordance with Wisconsin Statute 119 and statutes governing cities of the first class. Cities of the first class for Wisconsin are those with a population of more than 150,000. Milwaukee has 569,330 residents. The Office of Board Governance also provides compliance and oversight to district departments, operations, programs, schools, and functions to ensure justification of the use of public resources being economical, efficient, and effective.

The district also develops administrative policies and procedures that are based on state statutes and federal requirements for school districts. The policies are divided into nine categories ranging from foundations, general school administration, fiscal management, support services, facilities, personnel, instruction, students, and school community relations. Predominantly, Wisconsin State Statutes 115, 118, and 121 influence the development of these policies. Additional regulations are dictated at the city, state, and federal level. For example, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration provides regulatory guidelines that must be met for compliance. The United States Department of Agriculture provides regulatory guidance to food services. All state statutes governing schools are also influenced by the Department of Public Instruction, further defining the implementation of those laws.

P.1b(1) Organizational Structure.

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Organizational Leadership Structure and Governance Structure. The governance structure comprises the Office of Board Governance, the Milwaukee Board of School Directors, and the Office of Accountability and Efficiency. The administration of the district is composed of the superintendent, and the seven offices that are responsible for implementation of the laws, policies, and procedures of the district team. The Milwaukee Board of School Directors is an elected group, each member representing one of eight districts of the city and an at-large representative. They serve four-year terms with biennial elections. Half of the directors are elected at each biennium. The superintendent is contracted by the Milwaukee Board of School Directors. All administrators are recommended by the superintendent but are approved by the Milwaukee Board of School Directors. The Office of Board Governance houses the auditing functions for the district. The Office of Accountability and Efficiency supports the Milwaukee Board of School Directors with data and oversight of the functional systems in the district.

Structures and Mechanisms Making Up Our Leadership System. The senior leadership of the district includes the superintendent and the seven office chiefs. Each office has a specific focus that is aligned to the mission, vision, and goals of the district. The district wants all offices to work synergistically with each other. Each office is made up of various departments that are led by directors and managers to oversee the day-to-day work of the district.



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Reporting Relationships Among Governance Board, Senior Leaders, and Parent Organization. All employees of the administration report to the superintendent. The superintendent then takes the work of the offices, data, and recommendations and presents informational reports to the Milwaukee Board of School Directors, seeking approval, if needed, and implementation. The reports are presented at various committee meetings of the board (Accountability, Finance and Personnel, Student Achievement and School Innovation, Committee on Parent and Community Engagement, Legislative Rules and Policy, Strategic Planning and Budget) and to the board meeting each month. Additionally, each department is responsible for providing specific data and information to the Office of Board Governance and the Office of Accountability and Efficiency for the purposes of audit, public requests, and complaint resolution.

P.1b(2) Key Market Segments, Student and Other Customer Groups, and Stakeholder Groups.

Milwaukee Public Schools' organizational relationships include many stakeholders, both internal and external. Internal stakeholders include students, staff (current, past, future), parents and guardians/families, the board, the Milwaukee Teachers' Education Association and the Administrators and Supervisors Council, and volunteers. External stakeholders include many local, regional, state, and national agencies: members of the community within the city of Milwaukee, other public school districts, private and parochial schools, universities, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, partners, vendors, and the Council of the Great City Schools. The key student groups are school-aged children who reside in the city of Milwaukee and attend Milwaukee Public Schools. Additionally, there are school-aged children who reside in Milwaukee but are homeschooled, attend a private or parochial school, attend a charter school not chartered by MPS, or attend a school outside of the district (for example, open enrollment). Each of these has students from different segments: students with disabilities, English learners, gifted and talented, LGBTQ+, refugees and immigrants, multilingual students, school-aged parents, students from varied socioeconomic backgrounds, students who must balance school with work or athletic/art involvement, and students whose postsecondary plans include college, the trades, the military, family business, or the workforce.

Key Requirements and Expectations for Our Educational Programs and Services, Student and Other Customer Support Services, and Operations, Including Differences Among the Groups.

MPS adheres to federal laws (for example, Title I, Title III) and state laws (for example, instructional minutes, equitable services) to stay in compliance with the educational requirements for all children and their families. The district is required to provide students with high-quality curriculum and instruction to support students in their progress toward meeting grade-level standards and requirements for graduation. Schools provide students with sufficient instructional days and minutes to meet state law. Assessments provide teachers, students, and families with feedback on student progress to monitor growth toward closing academic and behavior gaps.

The district is expected to provide a learning environment that is equitable, accessible, and inclusive for all. This education prepares students for postsecondary opportunities as contributing members of society. These educational programs and services are executed through ambitious and engaging instruction, culturally responsive teaching, differentiation, and data-driven decision making.

The district operates in a Response to Intervention framework to provide a multi-tiered system of support with a continuum of services for academics (e.g., specialized instruction for students with disabilities, English as a second language, acceleration, instruction in native language, virtual learning, academic and

career planning) and behavioral (e.g., restorative practices, PBIS) success. Students receive the materials needed for academic success (e.g., curriculum, technology, classrooms).

Customer service is provided to both internal and external stakeholders in a timely and professional manner that supplies accurate information. The district offers a welcoming and nurturing environment. We accommodate the needs of our stakeholders by offering equitable access to resources and educational programming.

P1.b(3) Key Types of Suppliers, Partners, and Collaborators. Our partners are community-based organizations, philanthropic foundations, health care providers, parents, and alumni that are used to support and enhance the work of the district. Collaborators work with the district to provide greater support and continuity such as various agencies that include the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, labor organizations, and institutions of higher education. Our key suppliers ultimately support the district by providing students and staff with educational materials, supplies, technology, and supplement services.

Roles of Suppliers, Partners, and Collaborators in Producing and Delivering Key Educational Programs and Services and Student and Other Customer Support Services and in Enhancing Competitiveness. Suppliers, partners, and collaborators work together to benefit students, staff, families, and the entire community. Suppliers should help the district maintain use of the most current and advanced materials and processes. Partners from the business and surrounding communities assist with ensuring that we are looking to the future and addressing needs within the community. As collaborators, their input and assistance can help to maintain our focus on advancing the education of our students and supporting our staff. They play an integral role in the implementation of Ambitious Instruction: Accelerating Learning by empowering our teachers and leaders with the tools to help increase teaching and learning, focused on culturally and linguistically responsive practices that promote academic achievement in all content areas.

Role of Suppliers, Partners, and Collaborators in Contributing and Implementation Innovations. Suppliers, partners, and collaborators help the district achieve the one common goal of educating students. Our various partners and collaborators advocate for the development and purchasing of resources that support literacy and biliteracy, language acquisition development, academic achievement, and cultural experiences across programs in the district. Our suppliers provide us with opportunities to collaborate with other districts. In addition, they bring current best practices, insights on what is working, changes in environmental and regulatory compliance, and space to test/pilot new ideas and trends, and they provide opportunities to align our district requirements with outside opportunities. If we look at our networking opportunities, suppliers, partners, and collaborators enable us to engage in our work in more reflective and innovative ways that promote continuous growth. In the Office of Human Resources, VidCruiter allows MPS to be more flexible with interviews and does not require people to leave their offices, providing cost savings and convenience. The district has become its own supplier through Milwaukee Public Schools University, an innovative program that allows MPS to grow and retain its own educators.

Key Supply Network Requirements. The supply network must be robust to accommodate the large scale of the district and flexible to adapt to the variety of school and department schedules, procedures, and the academic and social-emotional needs of students and staff. Administrative Policy 3.10 “aid[s], assist[s], and protect[s], to the extent justified by the evidence, the interests of historically underutilized business

(HUB) concerns in order to preserve free competitive enterprise and to ensure that a fair proportion of the total purchases and contracts or subcontracts for goods and services for MPS be placed with HUBs.” The district also requires that contractors with MPS engage in activities that enhance the education of our youth. Activities may range from adopting a school and onsite visits to the job site to hiring working-age students as interns. On certain MPS contracts, student engagement will be a requirement.

P.2 Organizational Situation

P.2a(1) Competitive Position. Milwaukee Public Schools has the largest number of educational users in pre-K–12 as well as one of the largest network infrastructures in the state with a rich variety of educational programs and extracurricular activities for children. With an enrollment of 69,115 students and over 8,593 full-time-equivalent staff positions, MPS is a diverse community spread across 156 schools. Enrollment has been on a downward trend since 1997. There are approximately 149,907 school-aged children (ages 4–20) who reside in Milwaukee. Currently, fewer than 50% of school-aged children in Milwaukee attend MPS.

Competitors for students, including charter, choice, private, parochial, home, and online schools, are becoming options for some families within the city of Milwaukee. Additionally, students can gain access to neighboring suburban districts through open enrollment and family relocation. Many neighboring districts and non-MPS schools are perceived to have safer environments, greater student achievement, more opportunities for athletics and extracurriculars, better facilities, and steady or increasing enrollment, resulting in greater funding.

In some cases, historical perceptions and/or perceptions based on diverse media platforms impact markets. We are in competition with employers for our workforce in all areas.

P.2a(2) Competitiveness Changes. The district continues to educate 69,115 students. Milwaukee Public Schools is also able to offer many programs and resources to families that competitors are not able to provide to students and families. Some examples include support for English learners, Montessori programming, AP, International Baccalaureate, gifted and talented programs, multiple language programs, arts, extensive specialized service programs, and technology advancement for teachers and students, which has made us very competitive. We had a successful transition to virtual learning during the pandemic and widespread use of instructional technology tools that continue to enhance teaching and learning.

Opportunities for innovation include more hands-on/minds-on engagement; an expansion of extracurricular offerings across all grade levels; visual and performing arts opportunities that support academic achievement, creativity, and mental health; and community partners that support the needs of students, families, and staff in a holistic manner.

While virtual learning was beneficial at the onset of the pandemic, after the return of in-person instruction, many employees found it more attractive to seek alternative employment where remote work was possible (e.g., virtual learning, remote work, flexible scheduling). To help address the possibility of remote work, a position has been created to analyze and propose solutions.

There has been a decline in the number of school-aged children. Enumeration data determines the number of school-aged children in Milwaukee based on census data. The following table summarizes the data:

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Year	Enumeration Data
2017–18	156,968
2018–19	154,864
2019–20	154,293
2020–21	150,693
2021–22	149,907

MPS’s revenues are tied directly to its enrollment. The highly competitive nature of the K–12 education landscape in Milwaukee, along with the decline in the number of school-aged children, impacts MPS enrollment. Families living in the city of Milwaukee can choose MPS neighborhood schools, specialty schools, MPS charter schools, or MPS partnership schools, but they can also choose non-MPS charter schools, suburban district schools through open enrollment, or private schools. During the pandemic, many of our competitors remained open (in person), and many working families chose to leave MPS because they needed to have their children in school while they went to work.

The shortage in staff and inability to attract or retain qualified staff continues to affect our competitive situation. Furthermore, our population of students continues to change, and therefore we need to continue to develop the skills and knowledge of our educators.

Facilities have an impact on some of our students, staff, and families. Some may want more modern facilities or other amenities found in the private sector. Newer schools are sometimes preferred over older schools regardless of schools being public, private, choice, or charter. However, for some families, the opposite is true if the school has a longstanding history/reputation of academic, athletic, and/or arts excellence.

P.2a(3) Comparative Data. Within the education sector, the district has the data dashboard, which shows data for all MPS schools. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) public portal WISEdash shows data for all school districts in the state such as accountability metrics: attendance, graduation rate, state test scores, and postsecondary education and success. DPI also provides a more expansive dashboard WISEdash for Districts that includes secure data and methods to monitor accountability measures.

Internal data are plentiful and cover a variety of topics. Data are used to impact district and school improvement planning, including a range of assessment data, district and school report cards, the Council of the Great City Schools Key Performance Indicators, Essential Survey of Climate and Culture, Resource Inequity Tool, Tiered Fidelity Inventory/RTI Center, National Student Clearinghouse’s Postsecondary Data Partnership, National Center for Education Statistics, Youth Risk Behavior Survey, DPI Digital Equity Dashboard, Bridges Collaborative, Wisconsin Equity Focused Surveys (Wisconsin Educator Effectiveness Research Partnership, a UW–Milwaukee, UW–Madison, and DPI partnership), and enrollment data.

P.2b Strategic Context. Diverse programming and community partnerships are available to all students (e.g., Montessori, IB, bilingual, career and technical education, college programming in our schools).

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Academic, art, athletic, and recreational programs are diverse, offering students a wide range of opportunities. The district has one of the largest network infrastructures in the state of Wisconsin, providing services to about 85,000 users at approximately 145 different locations. Our size allows us to offer a variety of services and programs that other school districts cannot.

Our strategic challenges include declining enrollment based on school-aged children in the city and the state, federal, CESA, and retired MPS employee support of choice schools. Parent and family engagement remains a struggle. Other challenges include student attendance issues, the lower number of licensed teachers available, and the violence in the city that has a direct effect on what is happening in our schools. MPS needs to improve student achievement and increase four-year graduation rates.

P.2c Performance Improvement System. The foundation of the Milwaukee Public Schools performance improvement systems includes the district and school improvement processes and procedures that guide the leadership team decisions at the district and school level to improve student outcomes, equity, and efficient use of district resources. The “Plan, Do, Study, and Act” format has been used for several years. The monitoring of our planning and implementation processes has included collaboration with the Department of Public Instruction.

The district has expanded the improvement plan to include staffing goals, support and development of school leaders, and family and community engagement along with the focus on Ambitious Instruction: Accelerating Learning to help close achievement gaps for all students and increase the number of students graduating on time.