

Raytown Quality Schools Vision Draft

Learning

In today's ever-evolving world, it is essential that our schools develop the knowledge and skills that will prepare learners to be agile problem solvers in order to enable them to positively impact their communities. To do so, Raytown Quality Schools is committed to addressing the unique needs of each of our students – ensuring all are empowered to pursue their goals and aspirations.

Throughout their school experience, our students will engage in learning that is aligned to the foundational academic and social skills needed to thrive in and beyond school. Meaningful student work will be grounded in culturally relevant connections to the world and enhanced by hands-on application and experiential engagements.

We will design high interest enrichment opportunities during and beyond the school day that foster confidence, critical thinking, and perseverance. These experiences will include access to point of need mentors and topical experts through digital communication, face-to-face meetings, and virtual field expeditions. Our Career and Technical Education programming will provide career exposure, exploration, and client-connected projects from the elementary years through graduation – enabling all students to access advanced coursework options and attain career certifications.

Students across the district will develop a sense of belonging and ownership because they will have meaningful input into the policies, practices, and approaches that impact their learning. To further support students in their development as contributing members of their learning community, students will be co-creators of their pathways, goals, and action plans. Our students will collect, reflect upon, and set goals around a wide set of evidence in order to understand their progress toward standard mastery and identified needs. Learner-led presentations such as conferences and portfolio presentations will create a clear view of mastery for students, teachers, and families. Our grading, assessment, and reporting practices will be calibrated and aligned to our core beliefs. A culture of continuous improvement will be developed through frequent opportunities for students to provide, receive, and respond to feedback about their work.

Through a learner-centered approach that connects our students to real-world experiences, we will develop the essential skills needed to be productive contributors in the community and leaders of the next generation, no matter their chosen path.

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Teaching

In Raytown Quality Schools, cultivating both the art and science of teaching serves as the cornerstone of students reaching their full potential. We believe that our educators are difference makers through their ability to effectively teach, guide, coach, and mentor while partnering with our students and their families toward high levels of success.

To foster a culture of creativity, excellence, and innovation with our educators, we will provide support for a variety of approaches aligned to common instructional models. Our teaching will be culturally appropriate and adaptive with access to high-quality curriculum resources that can be customized to meet the needs of their individual learners. These resources, along with essential lesson information, will be available to students and families digitally to enhance access.

We will reimagine time and planning structures to create the space to design the most effective lessons. Priority academic and social skill standards, along with common approaches to creating, scoring, and analyzing formative and summative assessments, will be used to collaboratively plan impactful experiences for all students. Time for educator collaboration through Professional Learning Communities will provide regular opportunities to give, receive, and adjust to feedback about their instructional practices.

Our educators will utilize a multi-tiered system of behavior and academic supports that ensures every learner gets what they need in real time. We will focus on relevant data sets and other whole-learner evidence to collaboratively plan integrated units, lessons, and performance-based assessments. This information will also enable our teachers to adapt their planning, lesson delivery, and assessment methods to the personalized needs of each learner.

Environments across our district will be safe, healthy, and reflective of our values. Raytown Quality Schools will create the conditions where every employee can model safe and healthy working habits. Through the fostering of meaningful and purposeful relationships, we will set and attain high expectations with students and each other while modeling the skills and behaviors critical to student and staff success. Physical spaces throughout the district will be secure and equipped with resources that enhance a wide range of approaches to teaching. Our resources will be leveraged to transform the classroom experience, drive innovation, accelerate learning, and increase access.

By putting a premium on relationships and individualized approaches to teaching and learning, Raytown Quality Schools will achieve a culture of belonging and pride for our students, educators, and our community alike.

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Leadership

Raytown Quality Schools believes that the term leadership is not specific to one person or based on a title; rather, it is action oriented and present throughout our community, from the Board of Education to the classroom and the home. To this end, we will provide a range of opportunities for the development and implementation of leadership skills for our staff members, students, and families.

Leaders will foster a culture of transparency and empathy building across the district related to decision-making processes. Frequent communications, both internally and externally, will provide stakeholders with a clear view of successes, strategic goals, innovative practices, and challenges across the district. Physical resources, personnel, and budget aligned to the prioritized needs of district and school strategic plans will ensure cohesive vision progress and clarity about our approaches to improvement.

Leaders throughout the Raytown Quality Schools community will model and support innovative approaches to learning, working, and leading. Our leaders will provide regular and actionable feedback around instructional and professional practices. The Board of Education, central office, and school leadership will regularly collaborate on developing a shared understanding of expectations for, roles in, and measures of continuous district improvement while regularly measuring the impact and effectiveness of our programs, curriculum, and work.

Our recruitment and retention strategies will ensure a pipeline of diverse, highly qualified educators, support personnel, and administrators. Because relationships with our community of educators and staff members are paramount, leaders will regularly engage the educational community in conversations about what motivates them, their professional needs, and promising practices being implemented. We will provide our current and aspiring leadership with regular professional learning that is focused on their personal development needs. Leaders across the district will collaborate to share knowledge and resources while promoting promising practices that will streamline our work and pathways to continued success.

Committing to the development of leadership across our schools and community will enable us to solidify a culture of vision clarity, buy-in, organizational efficiency, and high levels of job satisfaction.

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Professional Learning

Personalized experiences are essential to meeting learners where they are and, equally important, to meeting the diverse growth needs of our professionals. High levels of success for our students are dependent on an investment in the professional development of our educators.

To maximize the impact of this investment, we will provide the time and assistance needed to implement, adjust, and evolve new approaches and initiatives. Professional learning will go beyond single sessions to include job-embedded coaching, on-going instructional conversations, and identification of innovative practices being implemented. Non-evaluative coaching will be implemented to provide timely feedback about and development of the specific instructional and professional needs of each educator. This coaching will assist our staff members in developing and sharing their most innovative and promising practices. To ensure success and cohesiveness of practice, we will provide robust onboarding structures and sustained mentorship for all new employees.

Flexible scheduling will enable embedded opportunities bolstered by networks of Collaborative Teams (CT) within our schools and across the district. Our Collaborative Teams will focus on needs identified through routine assessment and reflection and leverage a blend of face-to-face and online approaches to professional learning to ensure that opportunities are consistent, relevant, and accessible. District departments will work collaboratively to ensure coherent and connected professional learning aligned to our instructional expectations and their contextual content needs. In addition to internal collaboration, we will support professional growth at conferences and workshops as well as with peers across the region to gain cutting-edge information that will enhance success in the classroom as well as personal and professional growth.

By providing the highest quality professional learning experiences aimed at developing effective educators, support staff, and leaders, our staff members will be empowered to hone and advance their skills – leading to unprecedented levels of pride in our profession and community.

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Wider Community

A healthy relationship between a school district and the community it serves is essential to each entity's ability to thrive. Raytown Quality Schools is committed to fostering strong relationships throughout our community as both continue to evolve.

We will create a culture of trust, transparency, and collaboration with our stakeholders. Our district and schools will engage families as true partners in their students' educational experiences by providing access to the information needed to support their development. We will provide before and after school programs that help keep students safe, assist working families, and extend the school day with high interest learning. We will regularly seek out information and feedback from students and families about the impact of services we offer. We will facilitate partnerships between feeder schools to build community, create cohesive learning models, and ease the transition between grade levels for students and families.

In addition to family engagement, we will build reciprocal partnerships with local businesses as well as educational, community, and civic organizations. These partnerships will provide client-connected, real-world experiences through volunteering, internships, and apprenticeships while providing a variety of resources that will ensure the skills that we teach in school are transferable to our community. Additionally, we will develop regular opportunities for these organizations to partner with the district in providing families with wrap-around services – ensuring our students have the resources they need to fully engage in learning.

Consistent communications across our region will serve as a beacon to the Raytown community. We will leverage a variety of media (including newsletters, social media, community networks, videos, emails, blogs, and tweets) to provide “windows into our classrooms” that will build understanding about innovative practice, a wide range of positive student outcomes, and our strategic goals – empowering educators, families, community members, business partners, and peers to increase positive messaging around our work, enhance opportunities across our schools, and contribute as partners in problem solving.

The community is the lifeblood of our school district. Through close partnerships we will continue to leverage knowledge of stakeholders and work collaboratively to bring continued and future success to Raytown Quality Schools.