



**Washtenaw ISD**  
A REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICE AGENCY

# 2021-22 YEAR-END BOARD REPORT

Washtenaw Intermediate School District  
August 2022

# STUDENTS FIRST



## MISSION

To promote the continuous improvement of achievement for every student while providing high-quality service to our customers through leadership, innovation, and collaboration.

## VISION

To be the leader in empowering, facilitating, and delivering a high-quality, boundary-spanning, educational system that educates all children through an equitable, inclusive, and holistic approach.

## BOARD GOALS

Because we put students first, the Washtenaw ISD Board of Education has established these goals, adopting a lens of equity, inclusion, and social justice.



### **Goal #1 –**

Lead, develop, and support a culture of equity and opportunity while disrupting systemic racism in coordinated efforts for underserved students from birth through college and career in Washtenaw County.



### **Goal #2 –**

Cultivate and nurture an organizational culture of equity, inclusion, and social justice by leading sustained education, engagement, and action and intentionally disrupting systemic racism within WISD and our partnering schools and organizations.



### **Goal #3 –**

Lead and advocate for policies and practices that support equity, and inclusion, and the disruption of systemic racism on the local, state, and national levels.

# COMMITTED TO STUDENTS & FAMILIES



Washtenaw ISD's Board of Education is committed to resource allocation, policy, and practice is designed to close the opportunity gap to ensure equitable educational access for all students, with a specific focus on achieving an equitable system for students in poverty, students with disabilities, and students of color.

## BOARD OF EDUCATION

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**Ashley Kryscynski**,  
Communications and Public Relations Specialist

# WASHTENAW ISD YEAR-END BOARD REPORT 2021-22

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## GOAL 1:

***Lead, develop, and support a culture of equity and opportunity while disrupting systemic racism in coordinated efforts for underserved students from birth through college and career in Washtenaw County.***

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### **INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS**

#### **High Point Reimagined**

WISD's High Point Program, as well as Honey Creek Community School, the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program, and Gretchen's House moved into their newly renovated building behind the Teaching and Learning Center on January 3, 2022. By June 2022, the building housed 360 students (High Point - 70, Honey Creek - 249, DHH - 6, and Gretchen's House - 35). Students and staff are very excited to learn and grow in their new surroundings that support student focused teaching and learning. A Community Open House was held on May 19, 2022, and was attended by over 300 students, families, staff and community members.



#### **Achievement Initiatives Team Provides Coaching to LEAs**

The Achievement Initiatives Team worked in partnership with Ann Arbor Public Schools, Lincoln Consolidated Schools, and Ypsilanti Community Schools to develop a professional learning series focused on culturally responsive and equity-based instructional practices. Each district held learning sessions with one or more of the following scholars, including Dr. Christopher Emdin, Dr. Yolanda Sealy-Ruiz, Dr. Gholdy Muhammad, and Dr. Terry Flenbaugh. In addition, work with district leaders to problem solve equity-based issues that arose during the year.

#### **Voices of Youth**

Washtenaw ISD partnered with Issue Media Group to host our first Voices of Youth cohort. Ten students across Washtenaw County were trained and mentored by local journalists to publish articles in the online news media outlet, "Concentrate." Students were paid a stipend for their time. The district has also received \$12,000 from the Ann Arbor Community Foundation to support the continuation of this work for next school year.

#### **Mom Power**

WISD completed our eighth Mom Power cohort. Mom Power follows an evidence-based curriculum to support under-resourced mothers with young children in the county. The Mom Power groups help mothers learn how to interpret their child's behavior and attend to their needs. They also receive help navigating local safety net services from Trusted Parent Advisors. In March 2022, the grant was extended for an additional six months for staff and three

Trusted Parent Advisors to participate in the development of the Strong Roots Cafe card deck of discussion prompts. The Strong Roots Cafes bring the Mom Power parenting concepts together with the support of a Parent Cafe.

### **Mental Health & Public Safety Preservation Millage Partnership**

Through continued funding from the Mental Health & Public Safety Preservation Millage, WISD issued nineteen mini-grants to middle and high schools across Washtenaw County to support various student-led mental health projects.

### **Crisis Team Planning and Support**

WISD continues convening the District Crisis Team Leads of local districts to work on supporting student and staff mental health, as well as threat assessment work. The group meets monthly to share ideas among districts and learn about community resources. In response to feedback about the increasing mental health needs of school staff, WISD sponsored a “Resilience for Educators” workshop in mid-March that was attended by dozens of educators representing all local districts.

### **Handle With Care**

Handle With Care continues to notify schools when their students have witnessed or experienced a potentially traumatic event outside of school that involved law enforcement. The new WISD website did not support the previous Handle with Care system, so staff worked to create a new system and communicate to districts and law enforcement agencies about the change. WISD has also consulted with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) on their forthcoming statewide Handle With Care system.

### **Transforming Research Into Action to Improve the Lives of Students (TRAILS)**

WISD has received \$112,500 in 31p funding to bring TRAILS programming to ten schools in our county. Middle schools were selected because of the unique developmental opportunity of teaching Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) and Social Emotional Learning (SEL) skills to students at this age. Training began this summer.

### **Clinical Social Work Support**

The continuation of 31n(6) funding has created the opportunity to support local districts with 3.25 FTE clinical social workers to support general education students grades K-12. From October 2021-June 2022, social workers had 641 encounters with students and families and provided critical support such as crisis intervention services, psychotherapy, and behavioral health counseling to 73 unique students 547 times over the course of the year. Four MSW interns from Eastern Michigan University and University of Michigan will provide case management support supporting the clinical team, truancy work, and homeless outreach efforts in September 2022. Funding from the Mental Health and Public Safety Preservation Millage will create the opportunity to provide a stipend these individuals for the duration of their placement.

### **Justice Leaders**

During the 2021-2022 school year, the following Justice Leaders sessions were offered:

- 17 cohorts of the Core Course (for a total of 37 overall)
- 4 cohorts of the Advanced Course (for a total of 11 overall)
- 2 cohorts of White People Working for Racial Justice
- Our first cohort of the new EJATT Deep Dive
- 3 workshops on Interrupting Bias & Bigotry
- 1 session on Socially Just Celebrations and Holidays

- 3 sessions on Building and Sustaining Equity Teams & Justice Squads
- 1 session of Understanding Disability and Ableism
- Created the Racism Crisis Response for Schools

### Significant Disproportionality Work with Local Districts

Washtenaw ISD continued the work of developing systems to monitor areas of significant disproportionality in local districts and public school academies. The work was piloted in Ypsilanti Community Schools and Fortis Academy and will be launched in all local districts and PSAs this 2022-2023 school year. Deborah Hester-Washington, the Director of Special Education and two Data Analysis Teacher Consultants will monitor monthly, as an attempt to be proactive and not reactive, locals and PSAs discipline data ensuring that students with IEPs are not being targeted for excessive discipline based on their race, disability or gender.



## TECHNOLOGY ACCESS & SUPPORT

### Remote Learning Access

This year, WISD launched two Virtual young adult classrooms. This program reaches students through remote programming to augment their community-based learning. The Technology department supported the setup of connections and devices for these students in these remote learning environments to ensure all had access to this opportunity.

### Washtenaw Digital Learning Network

This year, Washtenaw ISD launched a new learning network around Digital Learning. This network met quarterly to discuss equity in digital spaces and online learning. Goals of the network included:

- Understanding how to create equitable systematic approaches (district level, building level, classroom level) to support district teachers to engage in online learning.
- Understanding online learning inequities and strategies to address them.
- Selecting and using technology tools that are equitable and accessible to all students and caregivers.
- Providing explicit and consumable digital legal information on student data to teachers and caregivers.
- Understanding online learning models to analyze the potential implications for teachers, caregivers, and students.

### Washtenaw County Fiber Consortium

The WISD fiber network is owned and operated by WISD on behalf of all constituent districts. This is a shared governance and cost agreement that has been renewed for five years to maintain this resource for the educational endeavors of the students in Washtenaw County. This agreement covers the actual fiber optic cable, equipment to manage the network, and a portion of staff costs. The network is also connected to the Statewide Educational Network (SEN), which is a statewide private network that allows the reduction of internet costs, in addition to

transport for other statewide services. The following services have been added to this agreement:

- Cybersecurity support and requirements
- Student Information System Hosting
- Business System Hosting
- Special Education Student Information System Management
- Server Hosting
- Backup Storage
- Library Management Hosting (Follett)

### New Website Development

The Technology and Communication departments launched a brand new website on July 1, 2022, which is available at the same address: [www.washtenawisd.org](http://www.washtenawisd.org). After more than one year of exploring possible website vendors, the Technology and Communication departments chose Foxbright as the district's new website management company. Merri Lynn Colligan, Gretchen Derr Mullins, and Ashley Kryscynski met regularly throughout the winter, spring and summer to prepare for a summer website launch.



Our new website is engaging, modern, and easier to use and navigate, and it:

- Provides improved accessibility features.
- Offers language translation services.
- Is easier to navigate.
- Highlights the district's calendar and news.
- Has interactive features like video and maps of our local districts and programs.
- Features an updated staff directory.
- Is responsive for phones and tablets.

[A short tour of the new website is available here.](#)

### Assistive Technology at High Point

As the new High Point facility has opened, the availability of assistive technology for the students has been augmented to provide instructional access to all of our students. This includes:

- Accessible toys including switch toys to learn cause and effect skills.
- Accessible games which can assist with cognitive skills, motor skills, matching and scanning skills, and decision-making skills.
- Accessible music which can encourage student mobility by use of a walker or stander with gross motor skills, or the use of switches for increased accessibility.
- Augmentative communication devices which can facilitate alternative means of





communication and learning for students, while increasing relationship building between students, staff, and families.

- Switches which require only a few grams of pressure for activation allow for increased participation from the student population.
- Mounting kits and devices which allow for the proper installation and adjustment of the aforementioned assistive devices per student

The facilitation of training from Jamie Mayo included a weekly newsletter with technical how-to instructions and videos alongside implementation ideas.

## **EQUITY IN THE COMMUNITY**

### **2030 Long Range Planning**

Six community listening sessions were held with various groups, including the Washtenaw My Brother's Keeper steering committee, the Transgender Task Force, and the A2Y Chamber's leadership class. These sessions generated a set of values, clarity of purpose and a vision that will be used for anchoring the long range plan.

### **Washtenaw My Brother's Keeper**

Washtenaw My Brother's Keeper (WMBK) secured a substantial amount of grant funding for various programming for youth and young men of color. Those projects included:

- CLR Academy - Summer 2022
  - Four new locations (five total): Sycamore Meadows, Parkridge Community Center, Carrot Way (Avalon Housing), Willow Run Middle School (Bright Futures), 1500 Pauline (Avalon Housing).
  - 132 young people served, 80 attended at least three times.
  - \$80,000 in grant money was secured for this program: \$45,000 from Community Mental Health, \$20,000 from St. Joseph Mercy/Trinity Health, \$15,000 from Ralph C. Wilson/Community Foundation of Southeast Michigan.
- Young Men of Purpose program at Ypsilanti Community Middle School
  - Ypsilanti Community Middle School (YCMS) was the recipient of the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation's grant to increase the number of young Black men in Ypsilanti Community Schools successfully persisting through middle school (grades 6-8) and matriculating to attend high school. YCMS partnered with Mentor2Youth, Washtenaw's My Brother's Keeper, Washtenaw Community College's Parkridge Center, and Christian Love Fellowship to offer the Young Men of Purpose program.
  - Through this program, 77 students received mentoring, academic and behavior support, and exposure to college and career readiness programming.
  - Funded by AAA Community Foundation at \$25,000 per year for three years.
- Formula 734
  - Seven students served (with three adult participants for 10 total individuals served).



- \$50,000 from Vera Institute of Justice to partner with the Washtenaw County Prosecutor's Office. Two of the seven students were identified by Prosecutor's Office for diversion and deflection (neither have reoffended to date).
- 50 Strong Breakfasts
  - Once a month Saturday morning breakfasts.
  - 65 students served.

### **Trusted Parent Advisors**

The Trusted Parent Advisors continue their equity work in the community. One goal is to support parents by using evidence-informed Parent Cafes, which build on the strengthening family protective factors. In the last 12 months, Trusted Parent Advisors have held 261 Parent Cafes, many in the YCS district area, for 90 moms. In addition to building a social support network and resilience, they have helped parents enroll their children in Head Start, Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP), K-12 schools, WIC, Early Head Start, mental health supports and basic family needs. Our Trusted Parent Advisor who speaks Arabic has helped immigrant families navigate the unfamiliar education and human services systems. We use the discussion themes from the cafes to inform other work and help us better advocate for families in Washtenaw County.

In addition, Trusted Parent Advisors have done one-on-one education about COVID-19 vaccines and have directly helped 178 people access vaccine appointments. They are also instrumental in encouraging residents from the MacArthur Boulevard area to attend community listening sessions and township board meetings to advocate for the use of American Rescue Plan dollars to support children and families in this neighborhood.

In May 2022, two Trusted Parent Advisors and the Success by 6 GSC Parent Liaison presented at the Michigan Association of Women's Health, Obstetrics and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN) conference. The three of them represented the Trusted Parent Advisor work by sharing what they have learned during their work in the community and their 2019 survey findings regarding implicit bias in prenatal care in Washtenaw County.

Trusted Parent Advisors also started a collaboration with the Ypsilanti District Library in April 2022. Twice a month, Trusted Parents and YDL hold a pop-up library at Sycamore Meadows housing complex. Children play games, listen to stories, and take home a book and educational toy at every pop-up. To purchase books for the pop-up, the Trusted Parent Advisors followed the guidelines and recommendations of the WISD Achievement Initiatives department surrounding diverse reading options. Parents have access to computers, printers and various social services. Trusted Parents help recruit families to attend the pop-up and assist in signing up for programs and connecting with other resources and services they may need. From April to July, participation has included 147 children ages 0-10 and 45 parents.

### **Success by 6 Great Start Collaborative**

The Success by 6 Great Start Collaborative has started an ABL Change Organizational Equity Self-Assessment to develop a strategy that the Collaborative can adopt to bring an equity focus to the early childhood system of programs in Washtenaw County. The goal is to survey traditionally marginalized parents about how programs are successfully addressing their needs and ways program staff can do better. In the spring, the survey language was tested with parents and the GSC organizations. It will be released this summer to area partner organizations.

## Early Childhood Department Expansion

Our Early Childhood Department continues to grow. In June and July, the department welcomed its new Executive Director, Edward J. Manuszak II. He began in his role on July 1 and has been individually meeting with all department team members. The Early Childhood Department met for the first time face-to-face in over two years on July 28. They are beginning to work on a department vision statement and making sure to collaborate together in how the department should move forward. Additionally, Bahjee Chea, Family Support Specialist; Bianka Von Kulajta, Early On Social Worker; Meghann Strpko, Early On Physical Therapist; Gina Collins, Early On Speech and Language Pathologist; Joseph Allison, Office Professional for Early Childhood Department; LaDawn White, Early Childhood Department Grants Manager; Jill Dromazos, Early On Physical Therapist; Micki Kollman, Early On Speech and Language Pathologist; Cathy Schuh, Early On Occupational Therapist; and Denise Palmeri, Early On Early Intervention Teacher.

This summer, we are coordinating an air duct cleaning to occur at the Beatty Early Learning Center to offer a safer and cleaner learning environment for the children and staff there. The department has also organized in August two Back to School Expos - one in Ann Arbor and one in Ypsilanti. We also have our annual Early Childhood Conference scheduled to occur at Pineview Church in Ypsilanti for all early childhood providers throughout all of Washtenaw County. Detroit Public Television and the Michigan Learning Channel will be present to offer support and Clifford the Big Red Dog will be there. Our department has been and is excited to continue serving the children and families of Washtenaw County.



## Adult Education in the Washtenaw County Jail

Since July 1, 2021, WISD has been able to officially capture services for 75 participants, and the team has served more than 95 total individuals in both Adult Basic Education (ABE), GED, High School Completion, and Career Preparation. We have provided special education services to over 30 young adults. More than half the students served in the jail were under the age of 25 years.

We asked each student to report their biggest barriers to personal success prior to starting in our program:

- 72% Reported they were ex-offenders
- 41% Long term unemployment
- 46% Reported a disability
- 45% Low Income
- 29% Chronic Homelessness
- 26% Substance Abuse Disorders

Due to technology updates and COVID-19 precautions this year, we have not been able to provide GED tests inside the jail. Following up on the outcomes of our students, we would like to highlight to following student's successes:

- 58 students have returned to the community.
- 2 of our GED graduates from the jail will be attending Eastern Michigan University during Fall 2022.
- 5 individuals earned their GED after their release.

- 2 students passed 3 out of 4 GED tests.
- 5 individuals earned their high school diploma with Ann Arbor Adult Education.
- 9 participants completed our Career Preparation Program.

### **Addressing the Root Causes of Absenteeism**

During the 2021-22 year, school absenteeism work continued with the local districts. This year, WISD received 195 referrals for youth who struggled with education engagement. In recent years, the work has shifted to helping families navigate resources and systems Washtenaw County. Root causes are often related to housing instability, economic hardship, poor school and family relationships, family trauma, and mental health concerns.

- 121 of the referrals were for students living in 48197 and 48198 zip codes.
- 42 of the students referred were special education students.
- 19 students were homeless during the 2021-2022 school year.
- 107 of the referrals were for students in grades K-5.

The work we have been doing with families in Washtenaw County is a symptom of much larger systemic inequity issues. Every Day Labs shared a report in September of 2021 called, “The Power of a Student Being Present: A Comprehensive Summary of Student Absenteeism Research.” The report states the following:

“Students with disabilities have some of the highest rates of chronic absence across the K–12 spectrum. Data from the 2015–16 CRDC show that students with disabilities have an astounding 22.5% chronic absence rate; students with disabilities are 50% more likely to be chronically absent than students without disabilities. This is especially concerning given that, as Attendance Works notes, “these students are also the ones who most need the supports and resources that schools provide.” Children living in poverty are also much more likely to be chronically absent than their peers. A 2018 analysis from the Economic Policy Institute found that 23.2% of students who were eligible for free lunch and 17.9% of students eligible for reduced-price lunch were chronically absent compared to 15.4% of other students. Families living with low income often lack the resources to overcome missed learning time, and therefore it is especially detrimental to student growth and development.”

### **Child Savings Accounts**

A contract and Memorandum of Understanding with Washtenaw County has been finalized, completing the formal process of establishing the partnership needed to operate the Children’s Savings Account project. Two staff positions for the project have been posted and a contract for services with VistaShare for use of its Outcome Tracker software has been completed. Initial steps have been taken to start the account development process with the Michigan Education Savings Plan (MESP) and the project is on track to make an initial deposit into the MESP held 529 account by December 2022.

## GOAL 2:

***Cultivate and nurture an organizational culture of equity, inclusion, and social justice by leading sustained education, engagement, and action and intentionally disrupting systemic racism within WISD and our partnering schools and organizations.***

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## **PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

### **Courageous Conversations About Race Book Study**

The Community and School Partnerships team continues holding monthly book studies of the *Courageous Conversations About Race* book, which is helping to deepen our understanding of the CCAR protocol and serving as a foundation for our Equity Team work.

### **Meeting Educators' Needs**

The Achievement Initiatives team provided a variety of professional learning offerings with a focus on Assessment Literacy, Early Literacy Coaching, School Health, Equity, Social Justice and Inclusion during the 2021-2022 school year. The professional learning was provided in synchronous, asynchronous, and blended learning options to meet educators' needs. This allowed for:

- An increased number of offerings as well as accessibility and participation.
- Educators from across the county and tri-county region actively participated.
- Collaborations with EMU and other community organizations.
- Meeting the challenges of substitute teacher shortages.

### **Tri-County Mathematics**

The Achievement Initiatives team partnered with Wayne RESA and Oakland Schools to host a culturally responsive mathematics institute for educators across three counties. The Tri-County Mathematics Institute included a Summer Institute with teachers, pre-service teachers, and high school students. In addition, we were excited to also host a Leadership Institute, and the Meaningful Mathematics Showcase with nearly 200 students from across the three counties participating.

### **Equity-Based Disciplinary Literacy**

A new collaborative for educators was formed this year to focus on creating disciplinary literacy instruction that is culturally responsive, equity-driven, and identity-affirming for themselves and for their students.



## **BUILDING ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORTS**

### **Improving District Communications**

As part of the Communications Department's effort to improve communication across the district, the Smore Newsletter service was implemented in Fall 2021. Existing weekly communications such as the staff Monday Memo and the Family Newsletter transitioned to Smore, and an initial team of supervisors were trained in using Smore to develop program- and department-level communications. In addition to district-level communication, Smore was implemented by the Achievement Initiatives, Early Childhood, and Technology departments, and the Red Oak Young Adult Program and Progress Park.

### **Disrupting Racism & Decentering Dominant Power Structures**

The Achievement Initiatives team expanded this year to better serve our local districts. The following positions were developed this year: Coordinator for Early Literacy Coaching & English Language Learners Initiatives, Mathematics and Science Coordinator, Project Specialist, and Supervisor. For each of these positions, we strategically constructed interview teams and questions to represent the diversity within our organization, and job descriptions that were aligned to the equity, social justice, and inclusion board goals.

At the state level, various team members participated on state task forces, including the Disciplinary Literacy Taskforce and the Early Mathematics Taskforce. For the Disciplinary Literacy Taskforce, we supported the group in contracting with Dr. April Baker-Bell and Dr. Ghody Muhammad to revise the Essential Practices to be culturally sustaining. In the Early Mathematics Task Force, we worked with the leaders to diversify the participants on the taskforce.

### **Equity Teams**

Staff who were willing to step into equity leadership roles were given the opportunity to join team, program or department-level equity teams. These 18 equity teams, with over 70 individuals, represent all departments, programs and teams at the ISD. The equity teams meet as small department or program teams on a schedule that they have set for themselves, and every 6-8 weeks they came together as an organization-wide equity team



facilitated by the national Courageous Conversation facilitators. The equity teams have identified their team purpose and racial equity challenge(s).

### **District Equity Leadership Team**

The District Equity Leadership Team (DELT) met every 6-8 weeks during the year. This group of district leaders is working on building their individual and collective leadership around racial equity. They are using system leadership tools to understand how mindsets and beliefs underlie many of our organizational practices. These leadership tools can help us be deliberate and intentional when we are developing processes, structures, and routines in our organization. We ended the year by developing a process for revisiting our organizational policies, administrative guidelines and internal practices with an eye to being inclusive and racially conscious. That process will go into effect in the 2022-23 school year.

## GOAL 3:

*Lead and advocate for policies and practices that support equity, and inclusion, and the disruption of systemic racism on the local, state, and national levels.*

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### **STATE-LEVEL ADVOCACY AND LEADERSHIP**

#### **Superintendent's Advocacy**

Superintendent Naomi Norman continues to serve as Chair of the Governor's PreK-12 Literacy Commission advocating for systemic supports and funding for youth and families around literacy development. She also serves on MAISA's Instruction Committee and the GELN DEI Task Force.

In the DEI Task Force role, Naomi Norman worked with members of the team to bring the Midwest Forum on Equity, Opportunity and Inclusive Practices back from its pandemic break. Twelve ISDs and over 90 people participated from four different Michigan locations in the one-day event.

#### **Special Education Advocacy**

Deputy Superintendent Cherie Vannatter serves on Special Education Instructional Leadership Network's (SEILN) Critical Shortage Workgroup, the Michigan Department of Education Communications Workgroup, and the Preschool Inclusion Workgroup. She is also on the K-12 Alliance Special Education Advocacy Group.

#### **School Business Advocacy**

Associate Superintendent Brian Marcel is on the Michigan School Business Officials (MSBO) Board of Directors and also serves on a subcommittee related to Investing in MSBO Members, which assesses opportunities for scholarships to various MSBO professional development sessions, workshops, and conferences. He continues to advocate for equity factors being considered for the awarding of the scholarships. He is also working on options to recruit college graduates into considering school business as a career choice.

#### **Technology Advocacy**

Chief Information Officer Merri Lynn Colligan serves on the METL (Michigan Education Technology Leaders) Executive board as the Past Chair and is on several task forces including Cybersecurity, MiConnect, Workforce retention, REMC (Regional Educational Media Center) director, MAEDS (Michigan Association for Educational Data Systems) board member, and MISEN (Michigan State Educational Network) advisory. She advocates for equal access to connectivity and digital instruction for all students and equitable support for districts in the areas of connectivity and securing data integrity.

#### **School Public Relations Advocacy**

Communications and Public Relations Specialist Ashley Kryscynski serves on the Michigan School Public Relations Association's (MSPRA) Board of Directors and Executive Board as Board Secretary. She also co-chairs MSPRA's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force, which aims to better understand how to best support school communicators as schools and

communities become more diverse. Additionally, she co-led the Michigan ISD School PR Network's development of a Communication Plan and Toolkit for intermediate school districts across the state, and she contributed to the creation of a presentation focused on telling ISDs' stories for the annual MAISA Summer Conference.

## **LOCAL ADVOCACY AND LEADERSHIP**

### **Mental Health Advocacy**

Holly Heaviland, Executive Director of Community and School Partnerships, serves on the Washtenaw County Community Mental Health "Mental Health Millage Committee," representing K-12 educators. Millage-funded programs include a broad array of initiatives, but among the most important is access to mental health and substance use recovery services for all Washtenaw County residents who are having difficulty accessing private care, regardless of their insurance status or ability to pay for services. Holly works to align our K-12 mental health investments with emerging scopes of work for funded initiatives.

### **Advocacy with Area Business Leaders**

Ashley Kryscynski serves on A2Y Regional Chamber of Commerce's Board of Directors and Public Policy Committee. In her role on both the Board and Policy Committee, she is responsible for weaving in issues related to local public education and lifting up achievements that business leaders should be aware of. A2Y Chamber board members and policy committee members were invited to the High Point Open House in May 2022 to bridge business relationships with our school community.

### **Continuum of Care**

Jennifer Monahan, Youth Transitions and Truancy Manager, serves on the Washtenaw County Continuum of Care Board of Directors. She has used this position to advocate for housing for families who have been historically left out of the decision-making process for housing and shelter in the county.