OCPS Learning Agenda: 2025-26

Executive Summary

The OCPS 2025-26 Learning Agenda is a document designed to focus our district's research efforts and foster a culture of continuous improvement. This document serves as a complement to our strategic plan, aligning with and expanding upon its core concepts. The Learning Agenda aims to address significant, enduring questions facing our district and evaluate programs for potential expansion, revision, or replacement.

Purpose and Objectives

The OCPS 2025-26 Learning Agenda aims to refocus the district's research and program evaluation efforts into a collaborative, long-term framework that supports continuous learning and improvement. This agenda seeks to address the challenges that the district faces and evaluate programs for potential expansion, revision, reduction, or replacement. Specifically, the Learning Agenda will:

1. **Support District Decision Making**: By organizing and deepening the district's understanding of key topics, the Learning Agenda will help district leaders make informed decisions.

2. **Foster a Learning Organization**: The agenda will help OCPS further develop as a learning organization where both students and adults continually improve based on new information and evidence.

3. **Engage Stakeholders**: It will connect community members, decision-makers, implementers, researchers, and potential funders, ensuring that all perspectives shape the district's actions.

4. **Promote Transparency and Reflection**: The Learning Agenda will enable mid-course corrections and adaptations by regularly reviewing and refining the district's long-term questions and strategies.

5. **Align with District Strategies**: Serving as a companion to the district's strategic plan, the agenda will align with and extend the strategic objectives without reiterating the same content.

The Learning Agenda is intended to be a living document that evolves with the district's growing knowledge and changing policy context, ultimately supporting a culture of continuous improvement and evidence-based decision-making. In the 2025-26 fiscal year, the Research department proposes several research questions for evidence-building that are aligned with strategic goals and are critical to strengthening OCPS. By building evidence in these areas, OCPS will be better able to ensure every student has access to high-quality learning opportunities that meet their unique needs.

Research Topics

OCPS is interested in supporting research proposals that are aligned with its OCPS 2030 strategic plan. Specific topics of interest can be found in the plan's Key Performance Indicators and are listed below. OCPS Research department staff will work with applicants and OCPS staff to catalog research questions aligned to each of these topics.

KPI 1 – Grade 12 students meet the OCPS Portrait of a Graduate requirements

- What schoolwide characteristics help students demonstrate success as described by the Portrait of a Graduate?

- What support and resources are most effective at increasing student success as described by the Portrait of a Graduate?

- What are the most significant barriers to student participation in accelerated pathways?

- How does participation in accelerated pathways impact college readiness and career success?

- What supports and resources are needed to ensure access to accelerated pathways?

- How effective are the district's efforts at promoting student resiliency?

KPI 2 – Students perform at Level 3 or above in all content areas across all grade levels as measured on the FDOE accountability system

- What are the critical components of early intervention programs that lead to higher third-grade achievement levels?

- How do resource allocation and support services impact student performance?

- What are the most effective interventions for improving outcomes in low-performing schools?

- What are the opportunities available to the district to increase resources known to contribute to student performance?

- How widespread are teaching practices aligned to the Science of Reading?

- What are the long-term trends of student performance in reading, and what factors influence those trends?

- What are the critical components of early literacy programs that lead to higher third-grade reading levels?

- How do parental involvement and home literacy environments impact early literacy development?

- What are the long-term impacts of PreK literacy interventions on third-grade reading outcomes?

- How does OCPS improve middle school mathematics outcomes?

KPI 3 – OCPS schools remain the top choice for families

- How effective are the district's marketing efforts in attracting local students?
- What factors contribute positively or negatively to the OCPS middle school experience?
- What roles do leadership and school culture play in transforming low-performing schools?

KPI 4 – Minimize preventable employee turnover

- What personal and institutional factors contribute to employee turnover?
- What is the current state of employee retention in the field of education?
- How effective are the mentoring and training programs for bookkeepers and secretaries?
- How effective are the district's efforts at developing and supporting a talent pipeline for school leadership positions?

KPI 5 – Students attend 90% of their scheduled instructional time

- Is school staff absenteeism associated with student absenteeism and student achievement?
- What factors are associated with students' perceptions of their schools?

Partnered Research

This section describes research projects that are being undertaken by departments in OCPS to better understand their own programs.

Improving Grades 4 through 7 Mathematics Instruction Project

Managing Department: Curriculum and Digital Learning

OCPS and WestEd are collaborating on this project with the purpose of improving mathematics education for grades 4 through 7. The project consists of three phases: assessing math instruction through classroom observations and data collection, developing guidelines and recommendations for a high-quality grades 4 through 7 mathematics curriculum, and providing professional learning for teachers focused on instructional practices. OCPS will facilitate bi-monthly meetings, encourage participation in surveys and focus groups, arrange classroom observations, and host workshops for at least 50 teachers and school leaders, while WestEd will compensate OCPS for its involvement, with financial incentives for survey and focus group participants.

Chronic Absenteeism Analysis

Managing Department: School Choice Services

OCPS and WestEd are collaborating on this project with the purpose of identifying patterns and underlying causes of absenteeism. The project will analyze de-identified and aggregated student data from multiple school years and grade levels. WestEd will conduct data analyses, administer surveys, and produce reports to inform targeted interventions and policy improvements. The study also seeks to develop a survey instrument that can be used by other districts facing similar challenges. This project is funded by the Helios Foundation.

Program Evaluation Projects

Amira (now Istation)
The Amira Learning program is an AI-driven tool designed to enhance multilingual literacy for students by assessing their proficiency, providing tailored instruction, and offering real-time tutoring. It supports both English and Spanish literacy, using cognates to bridge language learning. The program continuously monitors progress, adjusting instructional recommendations to ensure consistent growth. Proven to double national growth rates with just 10 minutes of daily use, Amira offers personalized learning, real-time feedback for educators, and inclusive support for diverse linguistic backgrounds. The Amira program has been implemented starting in the 2024-25 school year.

IXL Math
The IXL Math program is a comprehensive online mathematics platform that offers over 3,500 skills. The program breaks down every mathematics topic into manageable MicroSkills and uses an adaptive engine to deliver questions at the right level of rigor for each learner. It provides a personalized digital learning space with actionable analytics, real-time diagnostics, and individualized guidance. OCPS began using IXL's platform districtwide in 2021 to support Algebra 1 and Geometry instruction. In 2024-25, IXL will be used to support core mathematics instruction in grades 6-12 and deliver targeted reading interventions to high school students.

Leader in Me
The Leader in Me program, developed by FranklinCovey, is a school-wide transformation model that empowers students with leadership and life skills based on The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People. It aims to create a culture of student empowerment, integrating leadership development into the curriculum and school culture to foster academic success, leadership, and personal growth. By focusing on leadership, culture, and academics, the program aims to help build a high-trust environment where students feel valued and capable. The program has been implemented since the 2019-20 school year.

Read2Succeed
The Read2Succeed program, supported by the Foundation for Orange County Public Schools (OCPS), aims to improve reading skills in first- and second-graders by pairing them with volunteers who help enhance their vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. Using engaging methods like literature, journals, and art supplies, the program focuses on building vocabulary for first-graders and improving fluency for second-graders through a research-based approach. Volunteers dedicate less than an hour, twice a week, during the school day to foster a love for reading and learning in these young students. The program has been implemented since the 1999-2000 school year.

Reflex Math
Reflex math provides adaptive and individualized instruction to students in first through fifth grade to support mastery of basic facts. Review of diagnostic data demonstrates that students would benefit from additional support in identifying specific strategies to increase fact fluency and numeracy. Reflex provides opportunities to engage in consistent practice and utilization of their adapted strategies for fact fluency and in turn building student automaticity. Reflex is a technology based resource that provides teachers with ability to monitor student acquisition

of facts and provides concrete data to support intervention and enrichment for identified students.

Rosen Postsecondary

The Rosen Foundation Scholarship was designed to provide students in underserved areas of Orlando, such as the Parramore and Tangelo Park neighborhoods, with financial assistance to pursue postsecondary education. Once eligible students graduate from Dr. Phillips and Jones High School and are accepted to a state university, community college, or vocational school in Florida, the scholarship pays for student tuition, books, school supplies, and housing, as needed. The Tangelo Park Program started in the 1993-94 school year and the Parramore Program started in 2015-16. The evaluation is required by a Memorandum of Understanding between OCPS and the Harris Rosen Foundation.

Rosen Preschool

As part of a Community School model, the Rosen Preschool, funded by The Harris Rosen Foundation, Inc., provides children ages 2 through 4 with tuition-free daycare and educational programming. The Rosen Preschool is located on the same campus as the OCPS Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) kindergarten through eighth-grade school. The program started in the 2017-18 school year. The evaluation is required by a Memorandum of Understanding between OCPS and the Harris Rosen Foundation.

Saga Education Algebra 1 Tutoring

The Saga Education Algebra 1 High Dosage Tutoring program is a research-backed initiative that provides daily 50-minute instruction to students during the school day. This program is designed to complement in-classroom learning and help students progress two to three times faster than their peers. The program is particularly important in the context of mathematics, as Algebra 1 is the course most frequently failed nationally.[1] The program has been implemented since the 2023-24 school year.

SIPPS (Collaborative Classroom)

SIPPS (Systematic Instruction in Phonological Awareness, Phonics, and Sight Words) is an instructional resource that provides a structured literacy approach to foundational skills instruction through explicit instructional routines focused on phonological awareness, multisyllabic decoding, and sight words. This research-based program is proven to help both new and struggling readers build skills and confidence for fluent, independent reading. The program has been implemented since the 2021-22 school year.

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[1] Guryan, Jonathan, Jens Ludwig, Monica P. Bhatt, Philip J. Cook, Jonathan M. V. Davis, Kenneth Dodge, George Farkas, Roland G. Fryer Jr., Susan Mayer, Harold Pollack, Laurence Steinberg, and Greg Stoddard. 2023. "Not Too Late: Improving Academic Outcomes among Adolescents." *American Economic Review* 113 (3): 738–765.

SuccessMaker

The SuccessMaker program is a continuously adaptive learning system designed for students, focusing on reading and mathematics. It personalizes learning paths in real time, adjusting to each student's specific learning needs. The program is ideal for differentiation, accelerated learning, and intervention. It provides appropriate differentiation for students performing on grade level, intervenes at the just-right intensity for students who are not yet at grade level, and challenges high achievers and gifted students. It delivers outcome-based data to inform educational decision-making and aligns students learning trajectories to the scope and sequence of many core programs. The SuccessMaker program has been implemented since the 2023-24 school year.

3DE

3DE by Junior Achievement, formerly known as the JA Academy for Leadership and Entrepreneurship, is a national model partnership between OCPS, 3DE, and Junior Achievement of Central Florida. 3DE re-engineers high school education and pushes students to discover solutions to real-world challenges, connect the relevancy of education, and develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to thrive in today's ever-evolving economy. 3DE's approach to learning uses case methodology to integrate real-world connectivity into the standard high school experience. Coursework is complemented by career readiness experiences including career-site visits, interacting with business coaches, and consultancy experiences. The result is a high school experience that reflects the pace of activity and interconnectedness of life beyond the classroom walls. This program has been implemented since the 2022-2023 school year.

Travel + Leisure Postsecondary

The Travel + Leisure Postsecondary Scholarship Program began during the 2021-22 school year. The Travel + Leisure Charitable Foundation provided scholarships for those high school graduates of Edgewater High School, Evans High School, and Wekiva High School who have been accepted to a Florida state public college or university, a Florida community college, or a Florida technical school. Scholarship recipients must be full-time residents of the Town of Eatonville, living within the boundaries of the attendance zone that will be determined through the statewide mandated zoning process in consultation with OCPS and Foundation. The evaluation is required by a Memorandum of Understanding between OCPS and the Travel + Leisure Foundation.

Travel + Leisure Preschool

As part of a community school model, the Travel + Leisure Preschool, funded by The Travel + Leisure Charitable Foundation, provides children ages 2 through 3 with tuition-free daycare and educational programming. The Travel + Leisure Preschool is located on the same campus as the OCPS Hungerford Elementary School. The program will be implemented starting at the 2024-25 school year. The evaluation is required by a Memorandum of Understanding between OCPS and the Travel + Leisure Foundation.

Program Evaluation Plan At-A-Glance

S = in the Scoping stage; E = in the active Evaluation stage; R = in the Reporting stage

Program Name	Evaluation Type	Sponsoring Department	2025-26				2026-27			
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Amira (Istation)*	Internal	Multilingual Services								
IXL Math	Internal	CDL/Mathematics	R							
Leader in Me	External	Division of Learning	R							
Read2Succeed	Internal	CDL	R							
Reflex Math	Internal	CDL	S		E	R				
Rosen Postsecondary	Internal	Strategy			E	R			E	R
Rosen Preschool	Internal	Strategy			E	R			E	R
Saga Tutoring	Internal	High School Office	R							
SIPPS (Collaborative Classroom)	External	CDL			E	R				
Success Maker	Internal	CDL	R							
Travel + Leisure Postsecondary	Internal	Strategy			E	R			E	R
Travel + Leisure Preschool	Internal	Strategy			E	R			E	R
3DE	Internal	High School Office	R							

Also included as an Outcomes-Based Contract

Continuing Research Topics

The district's Research department continues to seek partnerships with various entities and encourages rigorous research projects that match the district's priorities. The table below displays the continuation of prior OCPS research topics and are aligned to the following OCPS 2030 Strategic Plan objectives. Researchers who are interested in conducting projects aligned to these topics should consult the Research department's website for information about the research application process.

Research Topics	Commitments				
	High Expectations for Student Mastery	Safe and Supportive Environment	Purposeful and Student-Centered Team	Efficient and Fiscally Sound Operations	Engaged and Invested Community
Successful strategies and practices to **narrow the achievement gap**, specifically in English Language Arts and Mathematics	✓				
Literacy (especially for students in secondary who struggle with reading and writing and students in VPK-Grade 2)	✓				
Strategies to improve **student resiliency**		✓			
The **long-term impact of COVID** on academic achievement, overall and by subgroup	✓				
Best practices to improve **school climate**	✓	✓		✓	
Promoting a sense of belonging for both adults and students		✓	✓	✓	
Employee satisfaction, recruitment and retention	✓		✓	✓	
Effectiveness of **professional learning** opportunities			✓		
Teacher effectiveness in improving student achievement	✓		✓		
Interventions and supports for **mental health as part of student resiliency**		✓		✓	

Research Topics	Commitments				
	High Expectations for Student Mastery	Safe and Supportive Environment	Purposeful and Student-Centered Team	Efficient and Fiscally Sound Operations	Engaged and Invested Community
Elementary and middle school **acceleration**	✓				
Dual language proficiency/acceleration strategies	✓				
Early childhood (PreK, VPK) and **school readiness**	✓				
Initiatives that focus on **access and opportunity** for all students	✓				
Dropout prevention and **graduation promotion**	✓			✓	✓