

PLAN 2029

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WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE BELIEVE

AT MASTERY, WE ARE BOLDLY COMMITTED TO OUR MISSION:

All students learn the academic and personal skills they need to be truly prepared for post-secondary success and able to pursue their dreams.

OUR EQUITY CORE BELIEFS:

Our equity work—anchored in our mission—all students will develop the academic and personal skills to thrive

Ensuring that ALL students are growing above the national average

We honor families as partners

All staff thrive and advance our mission to serve all students

EVERY DAY WE PURSUE OUR VISION:

A model urban public school district that serves all students and truly prepares them for post-secondary success.

EVERY DAY, THE STAFF AND LEADERS UPHOLD OUR VALUES:

Student Achievement—Above All

Student achievement is the civil rights issue of our time and the reason we exist. Each staff member is responsible for our students' success.

Pursue Equity

We disrupt systemic racism and the inequities that limit our students' choices. We nurture a culture where all staff, students, and families are seen and valued.

We Serve

We serve students and their families first. Our business is their success.

The High Road

We do the right thing. We are fair and treat folks with respect.



Joy and Humor

Our positive, caring culture supports student and staff success. We like fun. We love to laugh.

Straight Talk

We face reality, communicate honestly and respectfully, and hold each other accountable.

Open Doors

Everybody is welcome to talk to anybody. We are open and transparent.

Continuous Improvement

We seek a better way—always. We are engaged in an ongoing cycle of goal setting, action, measurement, and analysis.

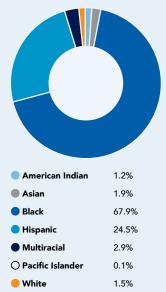
We are in this together. We may disagree, but at the end of the day, we support each other 100%.



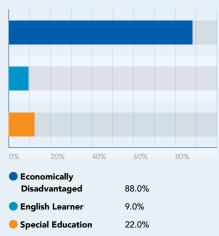
MASTERY SCHOOLS SNAPSHOT



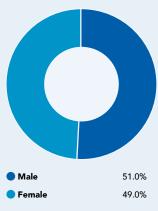




ENROLLMENT BY GROUP



ENROLLMENT BY GENDER



MASTERY SCHOOLS BY THE NUMBERS

Total Enrollment

Number of Schools

K-12

Grades Served

Number of States

7

Number of Staff

1,900

17,017

23

2

Data for School Year 2023–24



DEAR FRIENDS & MEMBERS OF THE MASTERY COMMUNITY

At Mastery, the journey to a sustaining and rewarding life after high school begins in kindergarten. It requires all of us to set a high bar, implement strategic and effective supports, and partner with families and the community to realize our vision. Our commitment to disrupting inequity is what drives our belief that this work not only can be done, but that it must be.

Starting in 2001 with 100 9th graders, Mastery has expanded into a network of 24 schools educating 14,000 students across Philadelphia, PA and Camden, NJ. The majority of this growth has been accelerated by our work turning around historically underperforming schools in the most under-resourced communities in the region. Mastery campuses are typically the highest performing non-selective schools in the neighborhood, and highly competitive with their local school district. Our academic program delivers rigorous, engaging instruction in a joyful environment that prioritizes relationships, data, student support, and staff development.

Since our founding, Mastery has taken immense pride in our commitment to prepare students for bright futures. We have countless alumni who recount the difference that Mastery has made in their lives, opening doors to tremendous opportunities. But not ALL students have realized the full promise of a Mastery education upon graduation. When we reflect on the many Mastery

scholars whose families entrust us with their partnership, we know that our next 20+ years as a network need to generate stronger and more consistent outcomes for a significantly higher number of our young people.

This five year strategic plan intends to set the course for all of our students to thrive in their selected post-secondary path. We are grateful to our staff, students, and families who shared over a multi-year engagement process what was important to them and what they expect from the Mastery community. Input from our constituents has informed the plan's pillars and initiatives on the following pages. We invite the Philadelphia and Camden communities to learn more about Plan 2029 and to consider ways that you can support our efforts for all students to realize their dreams.

We are raising the bar, because it is what our students deserve. Join us on the journey to ensure that all Mastery students pursue bright futures, persist, and prosper.

Sincerely,

Dr. Joel D. Boyd

CEO, Mastery Schools

OUR EQUITY

We believe that diversity, equity, and inclusion are essential to achieving our mission. We strive to be an anti-racist school district that eliminates the inequities in academic achievement that limit our students' choices. that cultivates classrooms where every student is affirmed, supported, and held to high expectations, and that nurtures a diverse organization where students, staff, and families are valued, respected, and included.

THE ROAD TO PLAN 2029

A MISSION OF POST-SECONDARY SUCCESS FOR ALL

The seeds of our strategic plan were planted in 2016, when we made a revision to our network's mission, which had been "college for all." Listening to our students and families, we heard that they wanted Mastery to support a college pathway, but did not want college to be the only option. They were also interested in programming and support for workforce development, military, and other choices that held the promise of a sustaining wage. Their desires for Mastery were in alignment with research that identified a 2- or 4-year college degree, or an industry related credential, as the most important drivers of workers' lifetime earnings, and as such, a critical element to breaking cycles of generational poverty.

Not only did we change the language of our mission statement, but we started to design the multiple pathways model that would allow the mission to be true for our students. Mastery began to offer career and technical education courses and adopted new post-secondary assessments; this work to build pipelines and supports for multiple post-secondary pursuits is ongoing.

DEFINING THE SKILLS NEEDED TO THRIVE: MASTERY'S GRADUATE PROFILE

Once we began to expand our programs and structures in support of students' diverse career interests, we researched the knowledge and skills required to be successful across all post-secondary paths. We found that the vast majority of opportunities for a family-sustaining career require a strong academic foundation, critical thinking skills, technology proficiency, and the social–emotional competencies to be tenacious, to manage one's emotions, and to build positive relationships. The Mastery Graduate Profile captures this learning.

PLAN 2029: THE BRIDGE TO REALIZING THE GRADUATE PROFILE FOR ALL STUDENTS

By codifying the academic and personal skills that we aim for every student to exemplify, we respect their individuality and unique goals while maintaining a set of expectations for all. Plan 2029 is our roadmap to get there. Our strategic plan identifies the key levers that will advance our programs and systems in order to provide more, and ultimately all students with what they need in order to meet the academic and personal standards necessary for success after Mastery.

CONSTITUENT ENGAGEMENT: LISTENING TO WHAT OUR COMMUNITY VALUES

Extensive engagement with families and staff members deeply informed both the process and content of Plan 2029. They appreciated the strategy's high bar for students and for ourselves as a network, and they shared multiple areas of focus to prioritize in order to improve student outcomes so that the attributes of the profile could be attained for significantly more of our students. The stakeholder feedback deeply informed our six pillars: Expectations & Accountability, Instructional Rigor, Family Academic Partnership, Social–Emotional Academic Development, Specialized Supports, and High School Redesign. Another round of constituent engagement resulted in identifying many of the initiatives aligned to these pillars that will propel our work over the next five years.

Our strategic plan identifies the key levers that will advance our programs and systems in order to provide more, and ultimately all students with what they need in order to meet the academic and personal standards necessary for success after Mastery.

Mastery Graduate Profile

ALL MASTERY STUDENTS AND GRADUATES:



Approach challenges by remaining focused, considering alternative approaches, maximizing resources, and asking for support



Attend school regularly, engage in classwork, complete homework, maintain healthy relationships, and engage in extracurricular activities.



Use cognitive routines to think deeply about content and make sense of their own learning.



Manage one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in different situations to achieve their goals and aspirations.



Use digital tools to construct knowledge and demonstrate understanding.

THIS WILL BE EVIDENT AS STUDENTS MASTER:



Academic Knowledge and Skills by demonstrating command of:

- State learning standards
- Core academic disciplines
- Social, Emotional, and Academic Development (SEAD) competencies:
 - Academic tenacity
 - Self-management
 - Digital learner



Personal Skills by demonstrating ability to independently build, process, and apply knowledge in high-impact ways and navigate a complex and ever-changing world through:

- Communication
- Collaboration
- Positive self-identity
- Critical consciousness

THROUGHOUT THEIR K-12 EXPERIENCE, MASTERY STUDENTS WILL:



Pass all classes



Demonstrate proficiency on all state exams



Maintain strong attendance



Participate in extracurriculars



Complete gradespecific capstone projects and experiences

BY GRADUATION, STUDENTS WILL:



Meet all state graduation requirements



Meet Mastery's credit requirements



Complete an internship and/or dual enrollment experience, a senior research project, and a financial literacy capstone



PLAN 2029 THEORY OF ACTION

When examining why many students were not meeting the expectations of the Graduate Profile, it was evident that gaps in learning were occurring at all grade levels. Still, students have been progressing from grade to grade, regardless of level of achievement. Plan 2029's Theory of Action is birthed from the tension experienced by our nation's public schools, as there is pressure to promote students that can feel counter to ensuring that students have evidenced proficiency in the grade level content that they need to be successful as they advance through elementary, middle, and high school.

How will we choose to grapple with this tension as we remain committed to our North Star, the Graduate Profile? We recognize the challenges of a universal definition of what constitutes grade level achievement. Additionally, the funding, facilities, and staffing implications of dramatically rethinking approaches to promotion and retention are considerable. There is also a body of research on the effects of poorly implemented policies that have been executed to address social promotion. Nevertheless, we believe we can boldly engage this tension, hold students to a higher bar, limit the negative impact, and ultimately raise achievement. Our Theory of Action hits at the core of this opportunity.

Plan 2029 Theory of Action

If we define the key academic and personal skills necessary for post-secondary success, and design a system that supports and requires students to demonstrate proficiency of these skills, then significantly more Mastery graduates would be truly prepared for post-secondary success and able to pursue their dreams.

Our Theory of Action calls on us to address two key opportunities:

OPPORTUNITY

1

Define <u>Student</u>
<u>Expectations &</u>
<u>Accountability</u> at all grade levels.

What must be true to move from grade to grade?

In this work, we will deep dive into:

- Attendance
- Grading
- Credits and credit recovery
- Grade level promotion
- Graduation requirements

OPPORTUNITY

2

Develop and strengthen

Programming & Supports
that ensure every student
has what they need
to succeed.

What do students need in order to succeed?

In this work, we will focus on:

- Instruction
- Family partnerships
- Program design



PLAN 2029 GOALS

Throughout the five year plan, we will employ our Theory of Action by implementing the initiatives outlined in each pillar. We believe that instruction will improve, students will work harder, the parent–school relationship will strengthen, and achievement will rise. As such, a far greater percentage of students will meet the expectations of Mastery's Graduate Profile. To this end, we hold ourselves accountable to implementing this plan and realizing the following three goals related to attendance, proficiency, and post-secondary success by 2029.

PLAN 2029 GOAL #1

ATTENDANCE

Every Mastery school's attendance meets/exceeds NJ/PA performance (percent of enrolled students who attend 90%+ of school days).

PLAN 2029 GOAL #2

PROFICIENCY

Every Mastery school's state proficiency rate meets or exceeds Camden/SDP (percent of students network-wide who are proficient on state exams).

PLAN 2029 GOAL #3

POST-SECONDARY SUCCESS

80% of seniors at each Mastery school will enroll in an approved post-secondary pathway (i.e. college, vocational training program, or military) following graduation.



STRATEGIC PLAN 2029 OVERVIEW

It should go without saying that the current academic outcomes for our students who are below grade level are in no way a representation of these students' limitless potential. The core of Plan 2029 is about raising the bar of expectations and maintaining that high bar when students need more time or support to get there.

If our collective expectations are held high and if we accompany those rigorous standards with quality support, our students will meet the challenge. Our strategic plan first and foremost holds the highest expectations and accountability for *ourselves*, as we partner with families to ensure that students receive what they deserve, which is an academically rigorous, joyful school experience with strong supports in service of gaining the skills that position them to thrive in life. We are unapologetically raising standards in service of our students' futures.

Our plan's six pillars—Expectations & Accountability, Instructional Rigor, Family Academic Partnership, Social–Emotional Academic Development, Specialized Supports, and High School Redesign—define the bodies of work that we will take on to employ our strategy. Each pillar contains one or more initiatives that will be developed and executed over the course of the next five years. Aligned to our Theory of Action, our first pillar, Expectations & Accountability, is designed to set our grading, crediting, and promotion policies at a high, yet achievable, bar. Pillars two through six consist of the programming and supports that Mastery must deliver to ensure students are successful in meeting that bar. Meeting the bar means demonstrating the attributes of the Graduate Profile, which dramatically increases the likeliness of post-secondary success.

We are unapologetically raising standards in service of our students' futures.

Demonstrating Attributes of the Graduate Profile Increases the Likelihood of Post-Secondary Success





PILLAR 1

EXPECTATIONS & ACCOUNTABILITY

ESTABLISH AND IMPLEMENT STUDENT GRADING, CREDITING, GRADE PROMOTION, AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENT POLICIES THAT SIGNIFICANTLY LIMIT SOCIAL PROMOTION, HOLD STUDENTS TO APPROPRIATE PERFORMANCE AND/OR EFFORT STANDARDS, AND SERVE TO ENSURE THAT THE VAST MAJORITY OF STUDENTS MEET THE EXPECTATIONS OF MASTERY'S GRADUATE PROFILE.

Nationwide, 40 percent of college students take at least one remedial course, where they spend time and money learning skills they thought they'd learned in high school. The percentage is even higher for Black and Latinx students.¹ And at Mastery specifically, only 10% of our graduates since 2008 have earned a 2- or 4-year college degree, even though 50% of Mastery students have enrolled in college for their freshman year. This is unacceptable.

While it is unfortunately common practice in school systems across the nation to advance students through their K–12 academic path, whether or not they meet academic benchmarks, we intend to shift our practices such that a Mastery student's promotion carries with it the guarantee of preparedness for the next grade. Families have told us that they want the bar to be raised so that their young people have the tools for success in the world beyond high school. Pillar 1 will delineate that bar along with the systems to ensure caring and consistent implementation of these raised expectations.

Initiatives

- **Graduation and Class Year Requirements:**
 - Redesign expectations regarding credits, state assessments, projects and experiences required to be considered a sophomore, junior, senior and to receive a diploma.
- Credit Recovery and Remediation:
 Redesign credit recovery, state assessment remediation and summer school programming such that social promotion is limited and proficiency is significantly increased.
- Grading Policy:

 Redesign grading policies to create a more network consistency and ensure that common measures of academic performance are incorporated.
- Attendance Policy:
 Establish and implement attendance requirements for grade level promotion, earning credits and graduation.
- 5 K–8 Promotion Policy:
 Develop and implement elementary/middle expectations to be promoted to the next grade.





PILLAR 2

INSTRUCTIONAL RIGOR

INCREASE THE NUMBER OF LEARNERS
PERFORMING ON GRADE LEVEL
BY DEEPENING OUR ACADEMIC
FOUNDATION AND ENSURING
RIGOROUS CORE INSTRUCTION IN
EVERY CLASSROOM.

The New Teacher Project (TNTP) found that in a study of 4,000 students in five diverse school systems, students spent more than 500 hours per school year on assignments that weren't appropriate for their grade and with instruction that didn't ask enough of them.

At Mastery, we intend to set conditions such that students do not spend any of their valuable instructional time engaging in content that is not challenging them and advancing their learning. We will not only establish the vision of instructional excellence in every classroom, across every subject area, but we will deliver on it.

Students and families have told us that they want the skills to be college and/or career ready, including a high level of agency in their learning and high level of comfort with technology tools. We've heard from our staff that they are eager to continue their hard work in service of culturally responsive, rigorous instruction, and that they value the guidance of a network-wide vision alongside a clear, supportive system to develop their skills as warm demanders and content experts.

Initiatives

1 Instructional Rubric:

Develop an instructional rubric that prioritizes rigorous instruction and academic success in order to accelerate student achievement.

- Teacher Evaluation System:

 Design and implement a multi-measure evaluation system to develop and assess teachers' ability to execute rigorous, engaging, and culturally responsive lessons.
- Technology Integration:

 Design and implement a technology integration approach to our academic model that promotes rigor and supports students with becoming proficient digital learners, per the Graduate Profile.

Families are empowered through shared visioning, data, and resources to deepen the partnership between home and school in order to ensure high academic achievement for all students. We heard from parents and guardians that they are eager, not only for more information about their students' academic and personal skill growth, but for resources that can accelerate that growth outside of school time.

While this pillar's single initiative focuses on a new area of work for Mastery, which is to partner with families to implement specific programming at home in order to help students reach proficiency, the pillar as a whole encompasses our ongoing work to strengthen systems for clear and collaborative communication between families and staff. Respectful and strength-based family academic partnership, centered on a shared goal of success for the student, will positively impact our students' daily attendance and academic growth at significant levels.

Initiative

At-home Learning Resources:

Develop intentional homework routines, programming and resources to support at-home remediation and advancement, and training to ensure families have the capacity to utilize resources to improve and advance students' academic achievement.







PILLAR 4

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT

DEVELOP STUDENTS' PERSONAL
SKILLS AND WORK HABITS THROUGH
BOTH EXPLICIT AND EMBEDDED
SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING
(SEL) PROGRAMMING AND HIGH
EXPECTATIONS IN AND OUT OF
THE CLASSROOM.

Surveys of American students have found that many lack the interpersonal competencies needed to thrive and that students disconnect from school as they age. Students exposed to SEL programming significantly improved their attitudes, behavior, and academic performance compared to students who did not.

Our Graduate Profile does not only outline academic proficiencies; it also defines the expectations that Mastery students will demonstrate in social—emotional competencies such as self management, tenacity, and critical consciousness. The integration of this personal skill-building into academic courses, alongside extracurricular and capstone programming, will contribute to the holistic development of the Mastery scholar.

Initiatives

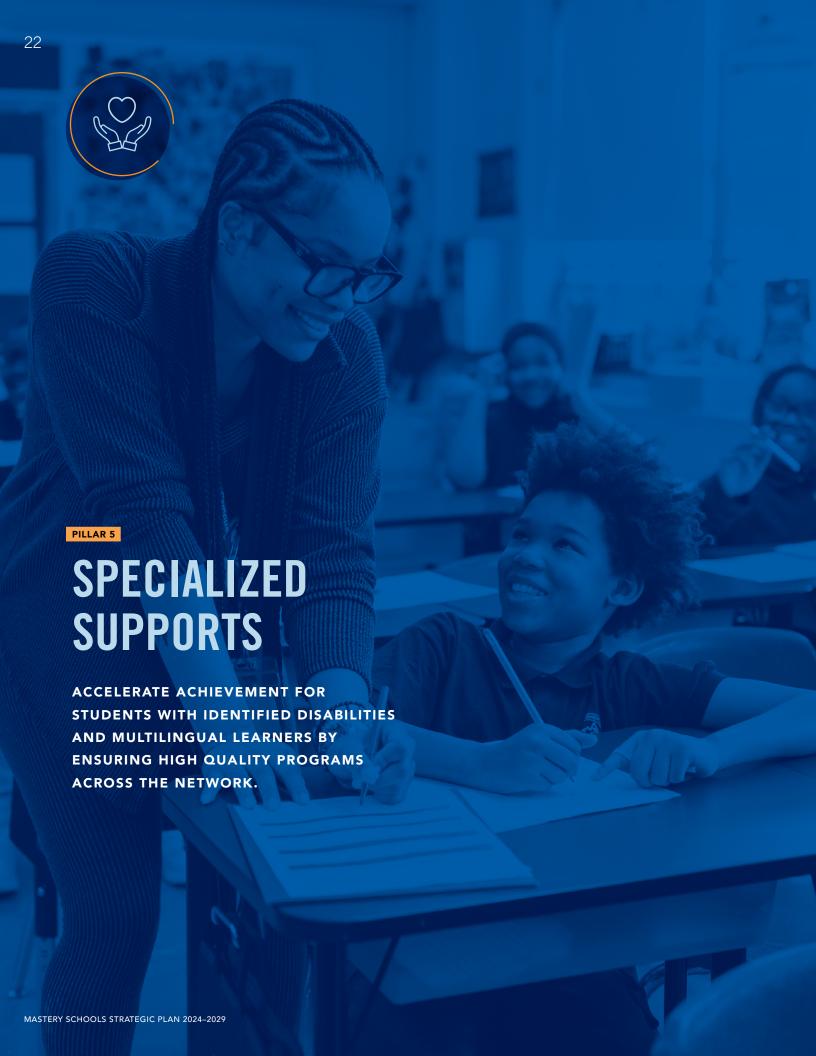
SEL Curriculum:

Adopt an SEL curriculum that supports students in developing the transferable skills outlined in the Graduate Profile.

SEL Capstones:

Design and implement rigorous and reflective grade-level specific projects that students will complete as evidence of proficiency with Graduate Profile competencies.





Currently, many of our students who require specialized services are the furthest away from reaching grade level proficiency and/or their individual plan goals in order to advance toward success after graduation.

A comprehensive review of our special education and multilingual programs, followed by design and implementation of more effective instructional models that build upon the strengths of our learners and support acquisition of grade level content across subjects, will accelerate rates of growth for

Initiatives

Special Education Instructional Model:

our students who need the most support.

Develop the systems to provide more effective instruction by designing, implementing, and supporting instructional models that support grade level content proficiency and/or IEP goal attainment for special education students in all classroom types.

Multilingual Program Model:

Design a sustainable, scalable multilingual program model to better support Multilingual Learners with achieving biliteracy and demonstrating content proficiency.





MASTERY SCHOOLS STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2029

Our students and families have been clear about their vision for the high school experience that will allow them to pursue the pathway of their choice, persist in that path, and prosper in college and career. This vision includes a rigorous, engaging, and relevant set of course options that both open their minds to the possibilities after high school and provide the foundation for entry to those fields. It also includes exposure to college and career, not only through their classroom instruction, but through opportunities off campus such as dual enrollment and apprenticeships. Deepening the connection between students' present and future will further engage and invest them in their learning and in the attainment of the academic and personal skills in Mastery's Graduate Profile.

Initiatives

- Course/Pathway Development and Assessment:
 - Refine and develop courses, learning opportunities, assessment strategy and scheduling models aligned to Mastery's multiple pathway strategy.
- Post-Secondary Assessment Strategy:
 Provide high school students with structured preparation for the assessment(s)
 required for their desired post-secondary destination (ex. SAT, ASVAB, certification exams, etc.)
- Dual Enrollments:

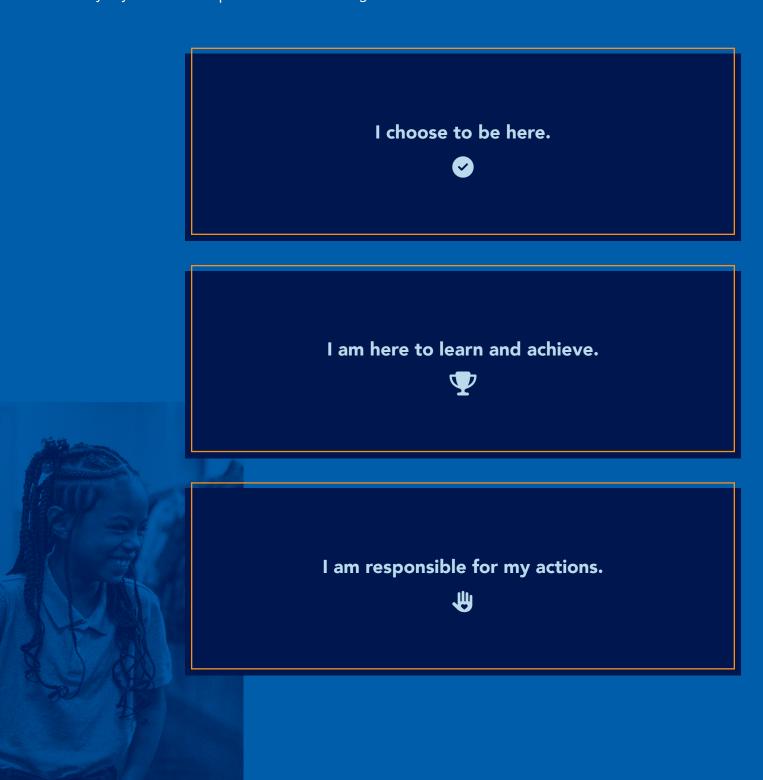
 Develop external partnerships to allow 11th and 12th grade students the opportunity to earn college credits and/or industry credentials and certifications connected to their selected pathway option.



OUR SHARED COMMITMENT

MASTERY SCHOOLS STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2029

Every day our students uphold the Student Pledge:





I contribute to a safe, respectful and cooperative community.



This is my school...
I make it shine.



I come with a clear mind and healthy body.



Plan 2029 serves as our pledge from Mastery educators that we will partner with families and the community to execute this plan with excellence so that our school system shines and serves as a model for the nation, and as such, our students' futures know no bounds.

