

LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE

# Gadsden Independent School District

*Moving Forward Together*



Legislative Education Study Committee • September 2026

# The Gadsden Story



**Who We Are**



**What We Heard**



**What We Changed**



**What Students Are  
Achieving**



**Where We're Going**

# Who We Are – Gadsden ISD

*A district serving students from Pre-K through Grade 12*



+ 5 Pre-K

22

schools across the district  
and 5 Pre-K Centers



11,117

students based on 2026  
enrollment



4,062

English Learners



2,480

Special Education students



Pre-K through Grade 12 across  
the southern Doña Ana County  
region



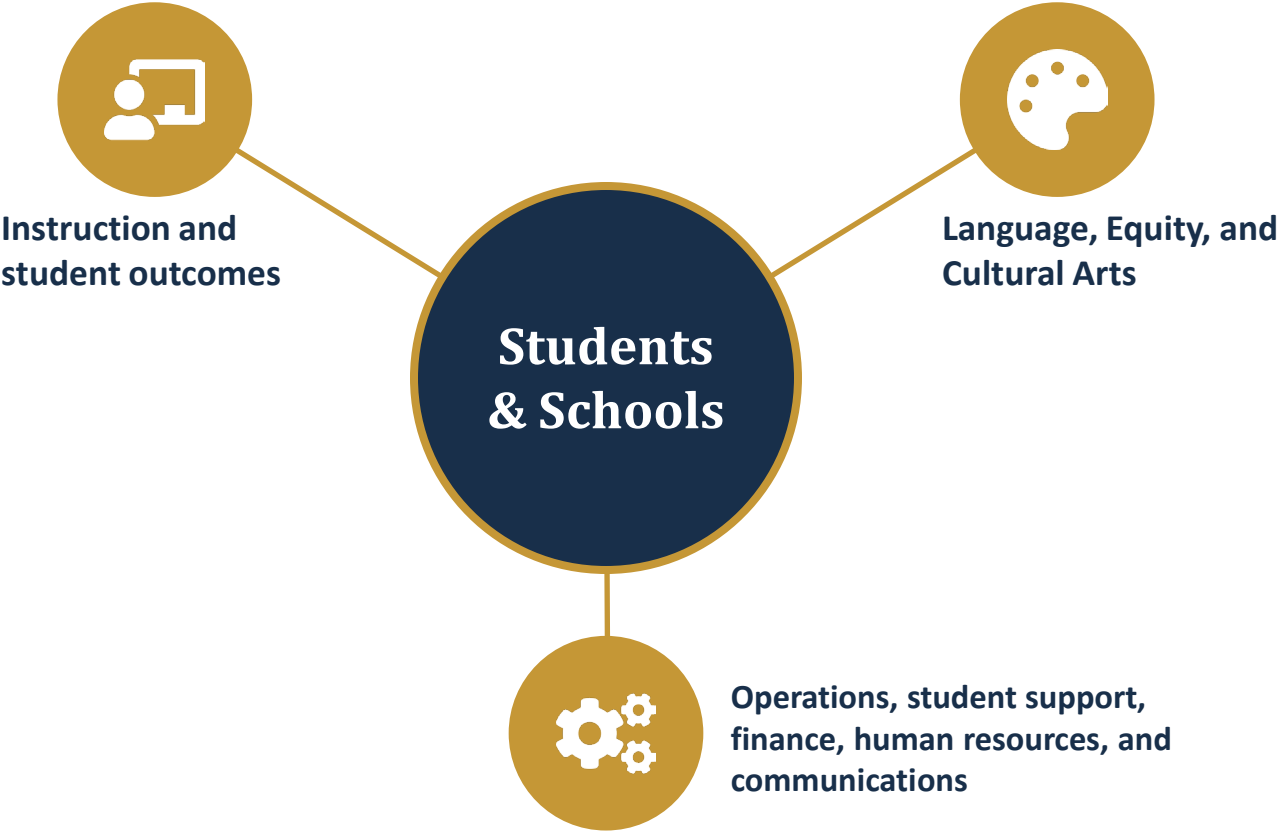
A multilingual, multicultural,  
student population



Opportunities and challenges  
shaped by our border-region  
context

# Our Leadership Team

*Aligned leadership around student outcomes, service, and servant leadership*



Executive Cabinet and Leadership Team working across departments and schools



**A shared expectation:**

*central office exists to support schools and students*

# The First 100 Days-Entry Plan

*Listening and Learning*



# 100

DAYS

# What Did We Hear? What Did We Learn?



**Listening became  
the starting point  
for action**



School visits and conversations with principals and staff



Employee, family, and community feedback



Gadsden Listens surveys and Community Listening Meetings



Recurring themes identified across voices and settings



Priorities shaped by what students, staff, families, and community partners told us

# From Feedback to Action





# Opening the New Middle School

*Gadsden Middle School. A new opportunity.*

Photo © GISD



# More Than a New Building



Gadsden Middle School is now  
serving

# 881

**students**



A significant investment in Gadsden students and families



Modern learning environments designed around student  
needs



Expanded opportunities for academics, activities, and student  
experiences



A stronger sense of pride, belonging, and community



A visible example of how public investment can translate into  
student opportunity

# Student Outcomes

*Gadsden Is Moving*



# The Results We Are Watching



**Reading achievement  
and growth**



**Mathematics  
achievement and  
growth**



**Graduation and  
college/career  
readiness**



**Attendance and  
student engagement**



**English learner  
progress**



**Schools  
demonstrating  
improvement**



**NM Vistas Summative Data, 8 Spotlight Schools, and Traditional Schools**

# NM Vistas 2026 Spotlight Schools

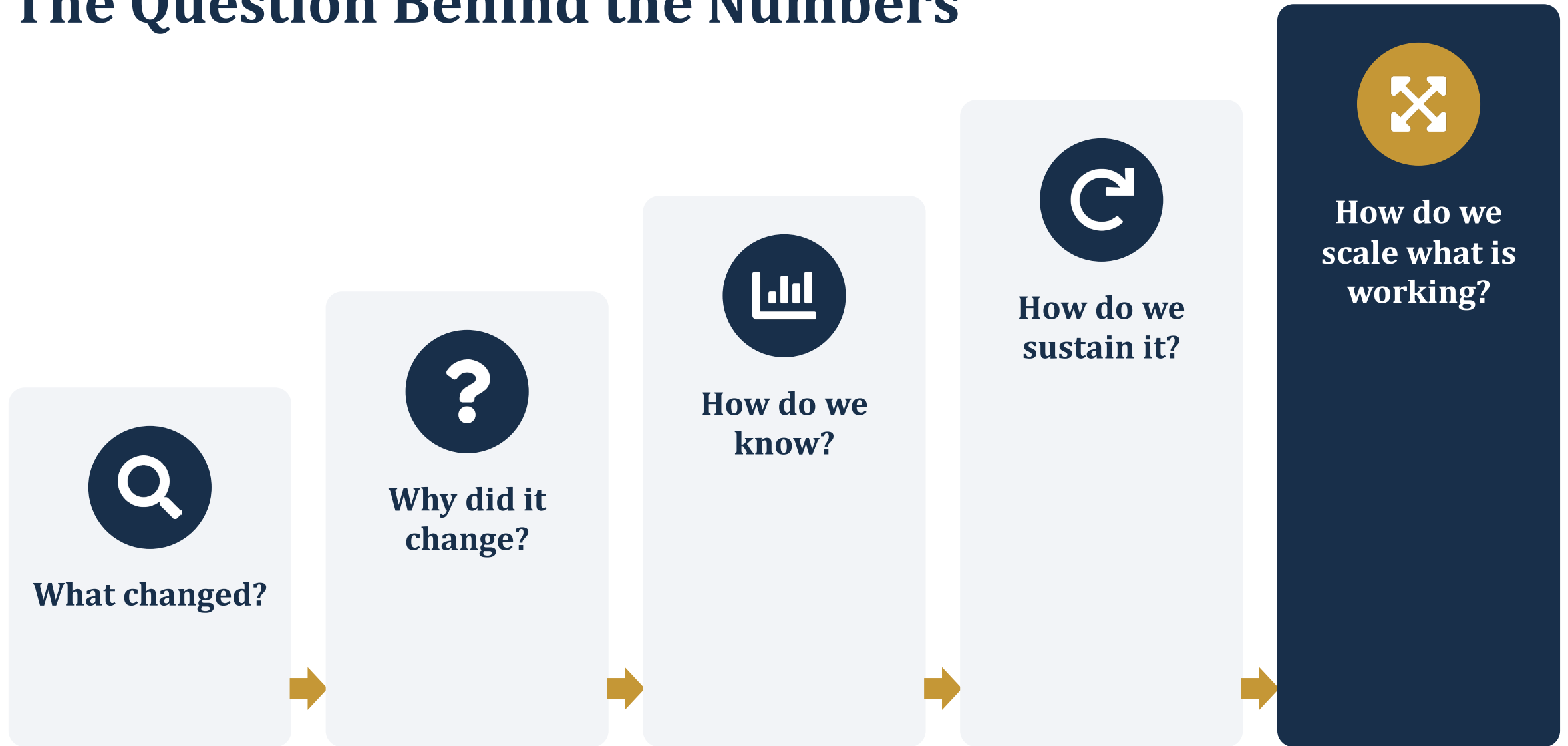
*Eight Gadsden ISD schools earned the Spotlight designation*



8 Spotlight Schools in the 2026 NM Vistas accountability results

- |                         |                            |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| ★ Anthony Elementary    | ★ Desert Trail Elementary  |
| ★ Gadsden Elementary    | ★ La Unión Elementary      |
| ★ Loma Linda Elementary | ★ North Valley Elementary  |
| ★ Riverside Elementary  | ★ Alta Vista Early College |

# The Question Behind the Numbers



# What Is Driving Improvement?



**Strong Tier I  
instruction**



**Curriculum  
implementation and  
alignment**



**Principal leadership  
and instructional  
expectations**



**Data cycles that lead  
to timely action**



**Dual Language  
programs**



**Observation,  
feedback, and  
professional learning**

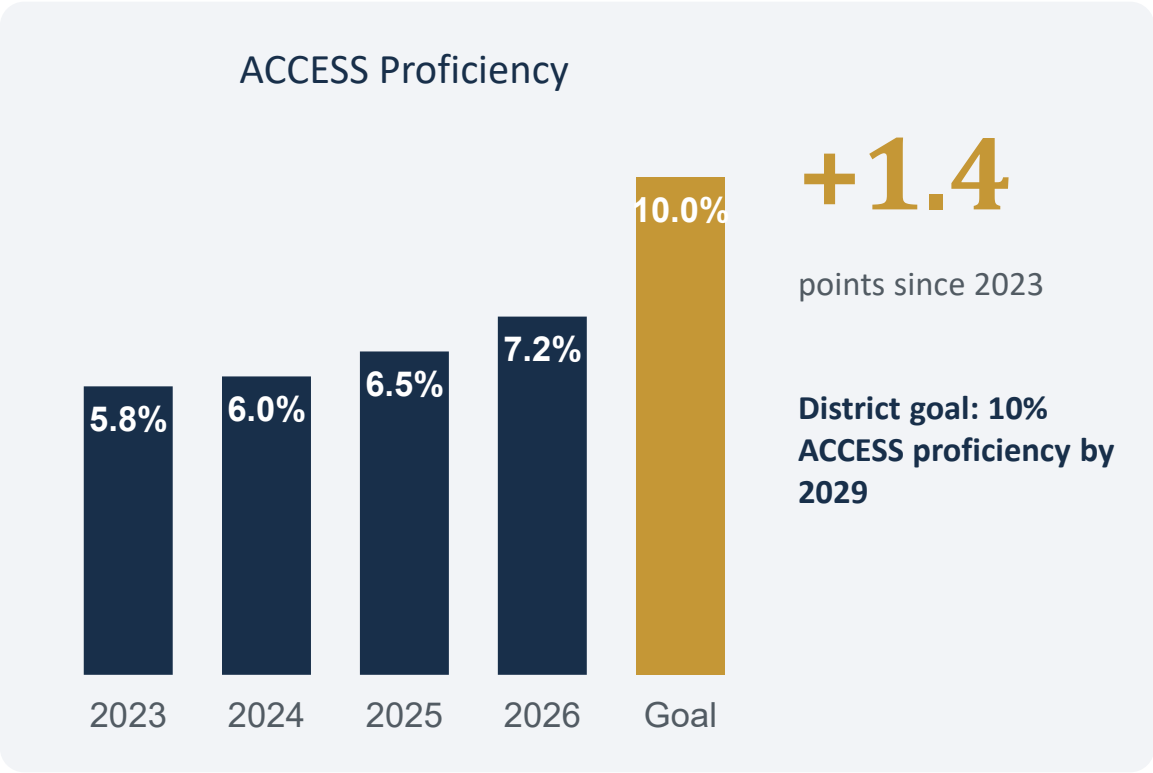


**Accountability for  
implementation**

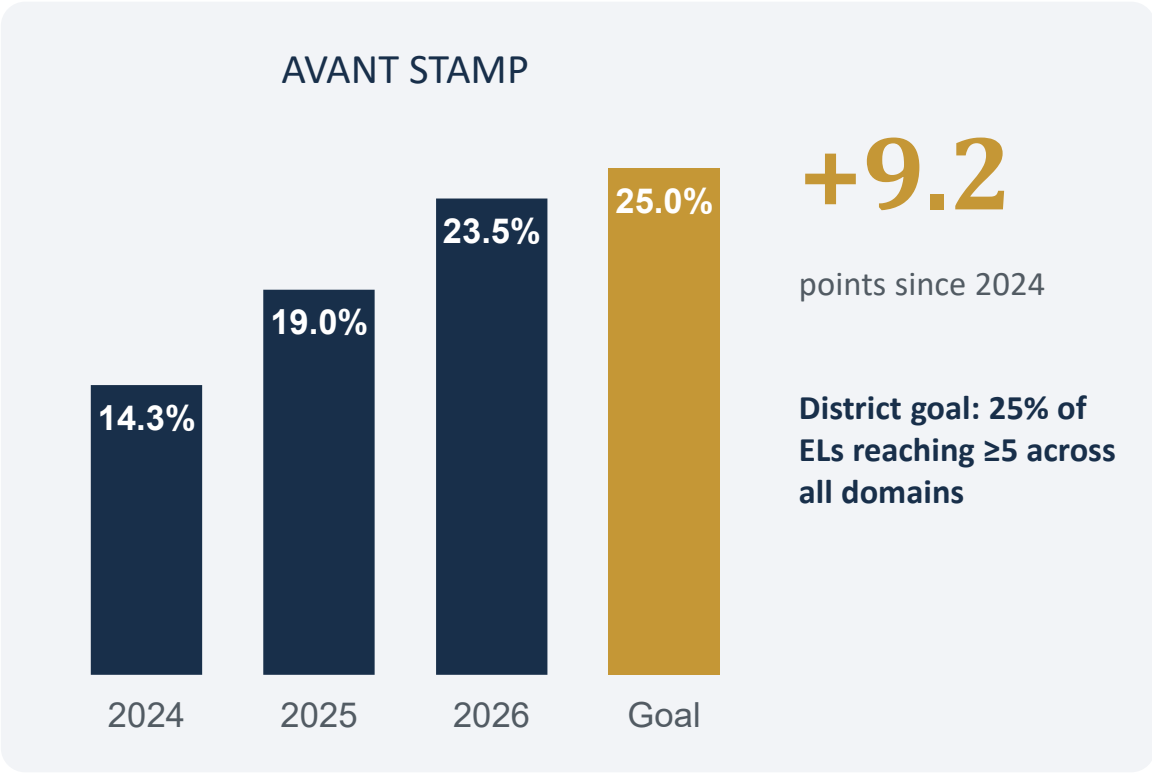


# English Learner Progress

A core part of the Gadsden story



ACCESS proficiency: 5.8% (2023) → 6.0% (2024) → 6.5% (2025) → 7.2% (2026)



AVANT STAMP: 14.3% (2024) → 19.0% (2025) → 23.5% (2026)



Continued focus on bilingual education, dual-language, ELD, and heritage-language pathways

# From Better Numbers to Better Systems



**Student outcomes** are the results we measure.



**Implementation** is the work we manage and monitor.



**Leadership** is the capacity we build.



**Data** is the evidence we use to adjust.



**Continuous improvement** is the system we are building.

# What We Are Learning

*Where We Go Next*



# Lessons From Gadsden



**Leadership  
stability creates  
conditions for  
sustained  
improvement**



**Strong Tier I  
instruction is  
foundational**



**Implementation  
matters more  
than simply  
adopting  
initiatives**



**Data must lead  
to action—not  
just reporting**



**Community  
engagement  
and high  
expectations  
can work  
together**

# Where We Go Next



**Increase math achievement**



**Strengthening effective layer 2  
multi-layer systems of support**



**Improve Special Education  
services**



**Increase student participation  
in bilingual and dual language  
programs**



**Increase gifted identification  
and services**



**Implement district-wide  
emergency response systems**

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