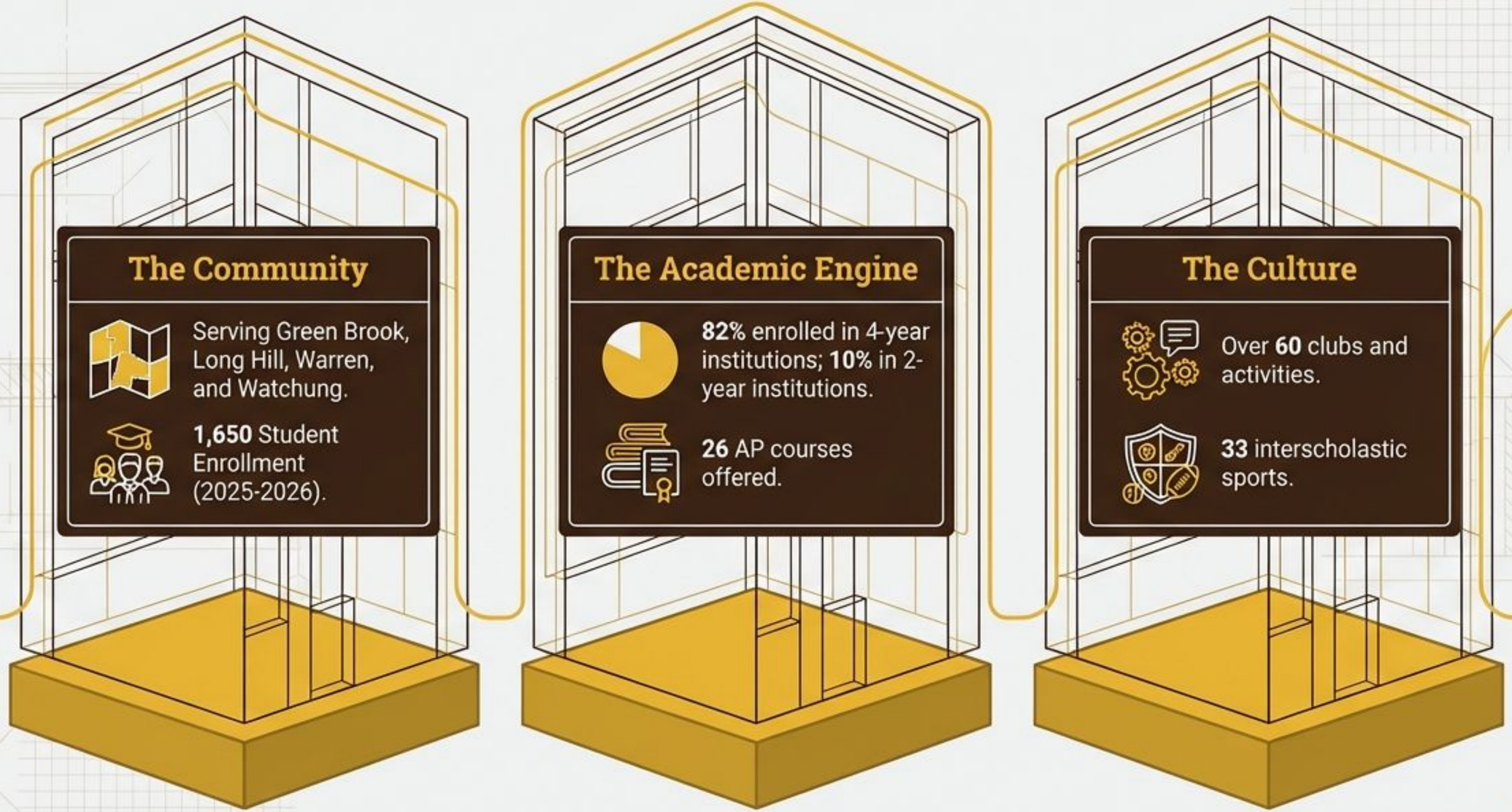
ENCOURAGE, EMPOWER, EXPLORE, EXCEL

WATCHUNG HILLS
REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

Building the Illuminated Pathway

Watchung Hills Regional High School Strategic Plan 2026-2031

A Foundation of Excellence & Equity



The Community

Serving Green Brook, Long Hill, Warren, and Watchung.

1,650 Student Enrollment (2025-2026).

The Academic Engine

82% enrolled in 4-year institutions; **10%** in 2-year institutions.

26 AP courses offered.

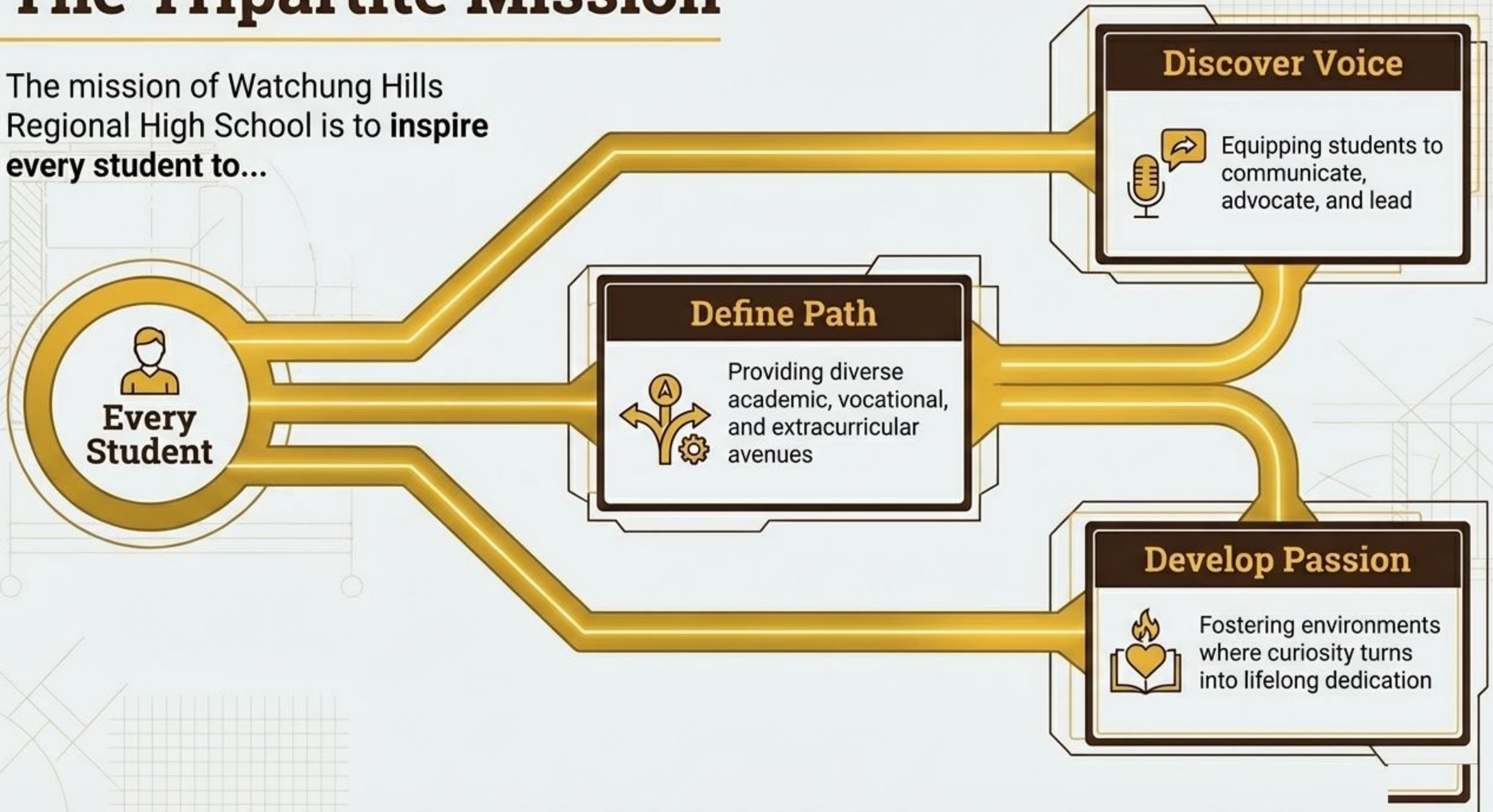
The Culture

Over **60** clubs and activities.

33 interscholastic sports.

The Tripartite Mission

The mission of Watchung Hills Regional High School is to **inspire every student to...**



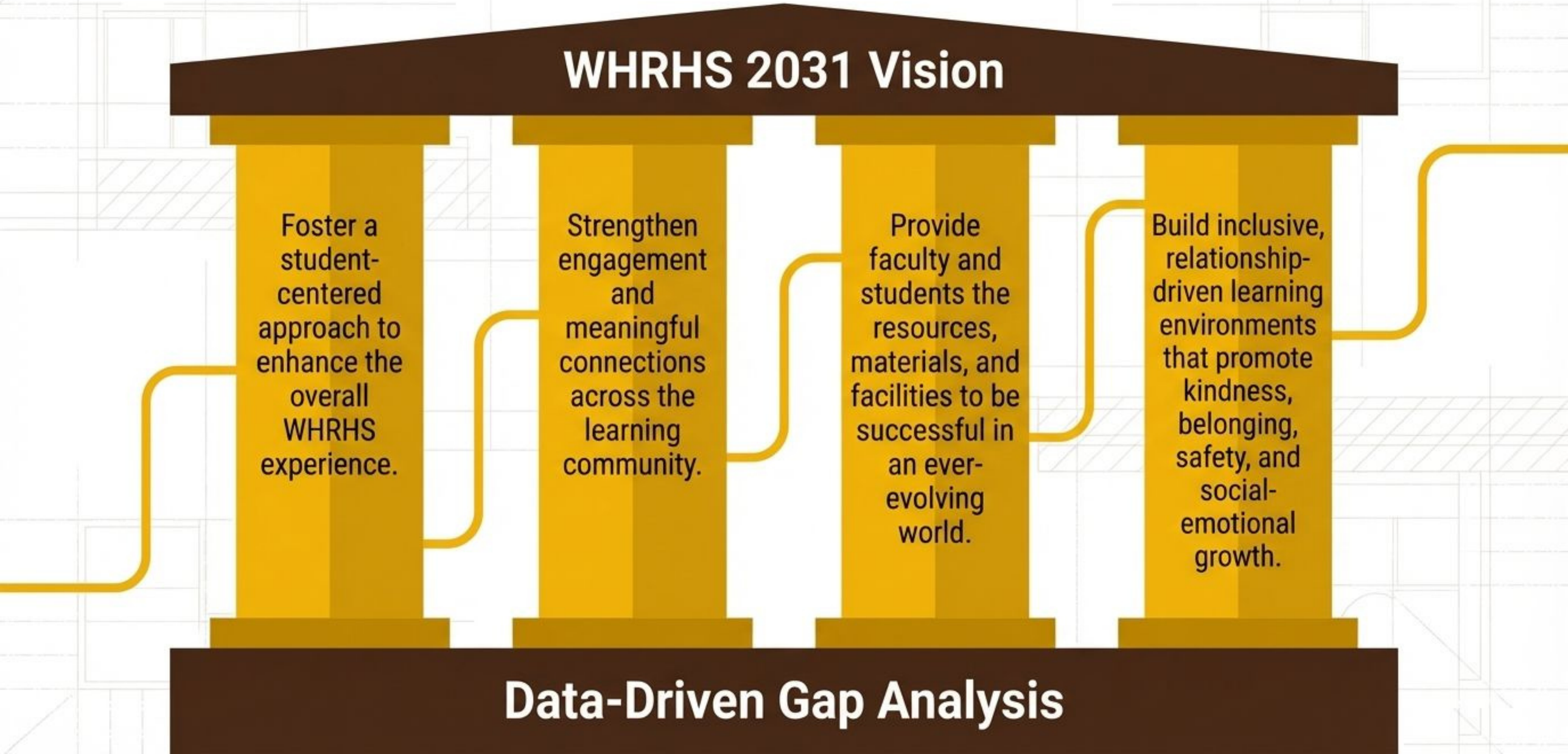
The Reality Dashboard: Identifying the Gaps

	The Solid Ground	The Friction Points
Culture	84% of students feel they belong; 86% report supportive staff relationships (NJSCI).	>50% report cyberbullying; 68% present with symptoms of anxiety.
Academics	92% college enrollment rate.	12.5% of seniors felt unprepared for post-secondary transition; lack of AI curriculum.
Community	Active monthly PAG meetings with student leaders.	Poor attendance at GLC/ASC meetings; lack of school-wide mentoring.

The Transformation Matrix

	Current Reality		2031 Vision
Safety & Wellness	High anxiety, isolated cyberbullying		Mental health integrated into everyday culture; relationship-driven peer networks
Teaching & Learning	Traditional pathways, unclear relevance for some		Equitable access, community internships, robust post-secondary array
Leadership & Governance	Inconsistent collaborative communication		Two-way communication channels, NJSCI feedback loops
Community & Culture	Fragmented club participation, lack of unified initiatives		‘The Warrior Way’ visible, structured upperclassmen mentoring, Good Deeds Day
Finance & Facilities	Need for multipurpose spaces, event security		AI investments, updated multi-purpose facilities, alternative revenue streams

The Four Pillars of the 2026-2031 Strategic Plan



Pillar 1: The Student-Centered Experience

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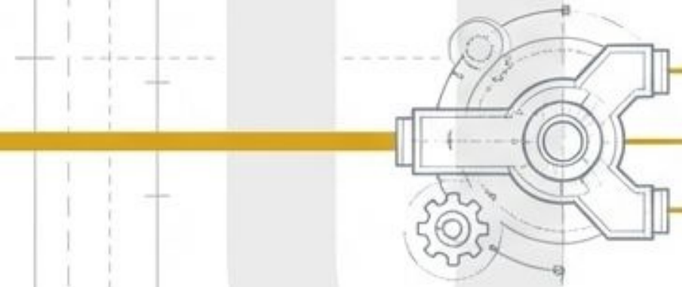


Academic Autonomy (By 2027)

Implementation of 'choice-based' assessments per unit (video, essay, project); reorganization of Flex Day based on direct student/staff survey data.

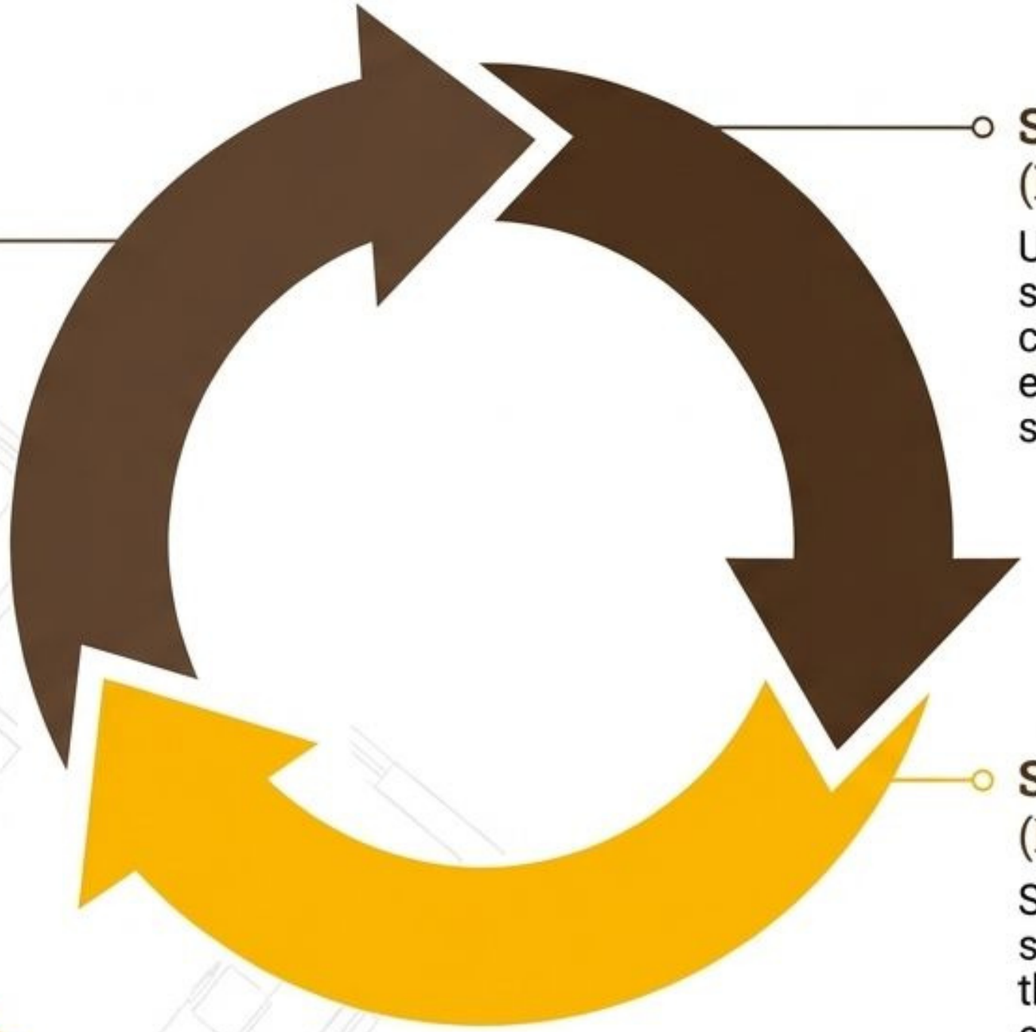
Early Foundations (By 2027)

Launch of a new 10-week program for 9th graders focusing on executive functioning, public speaking, and ethical decision-making.

Expanding Horizons (By 2028)

Launch of work-based learning (internships) and dual enrollment programs across business, healthcare, and social sciences (Partnering with Rutgers, Montclair State, FDU, RVCC, Syracuse, and NJIT).

Pillar 2: Meaningful Connections & Engagement



Step 1: Empower
(By Jan 2027)

Utilize the new ASC/GLC structure to empower students to create and drive regular school events based on actual student student interests.

Step 2: Adapt
(By Jun 2027)

Solicit input to evaluate potential schedule modifications, ensuring the daily timetable allows for better engagement with student events and club activities.

Step 3: Evaluate
(By 2028-2029)

Gather comprehensive student body feedback, establish custom metrics to evaluate engagement improvements, and convene stakeholder groups to modify plans as necessary.

Pillar 3: Future-Ready Resources & Facilities

Facilities Master Plan

By Jan 2027: Identify specific facility projects for a referendum and submit to the State for approval.

By Jun 2030: Complete a major, comprehensive update to the Long-Range Facility Plan (LRFP), focusing on multi-purpose, collaborative spaces and the new design thinking lab.

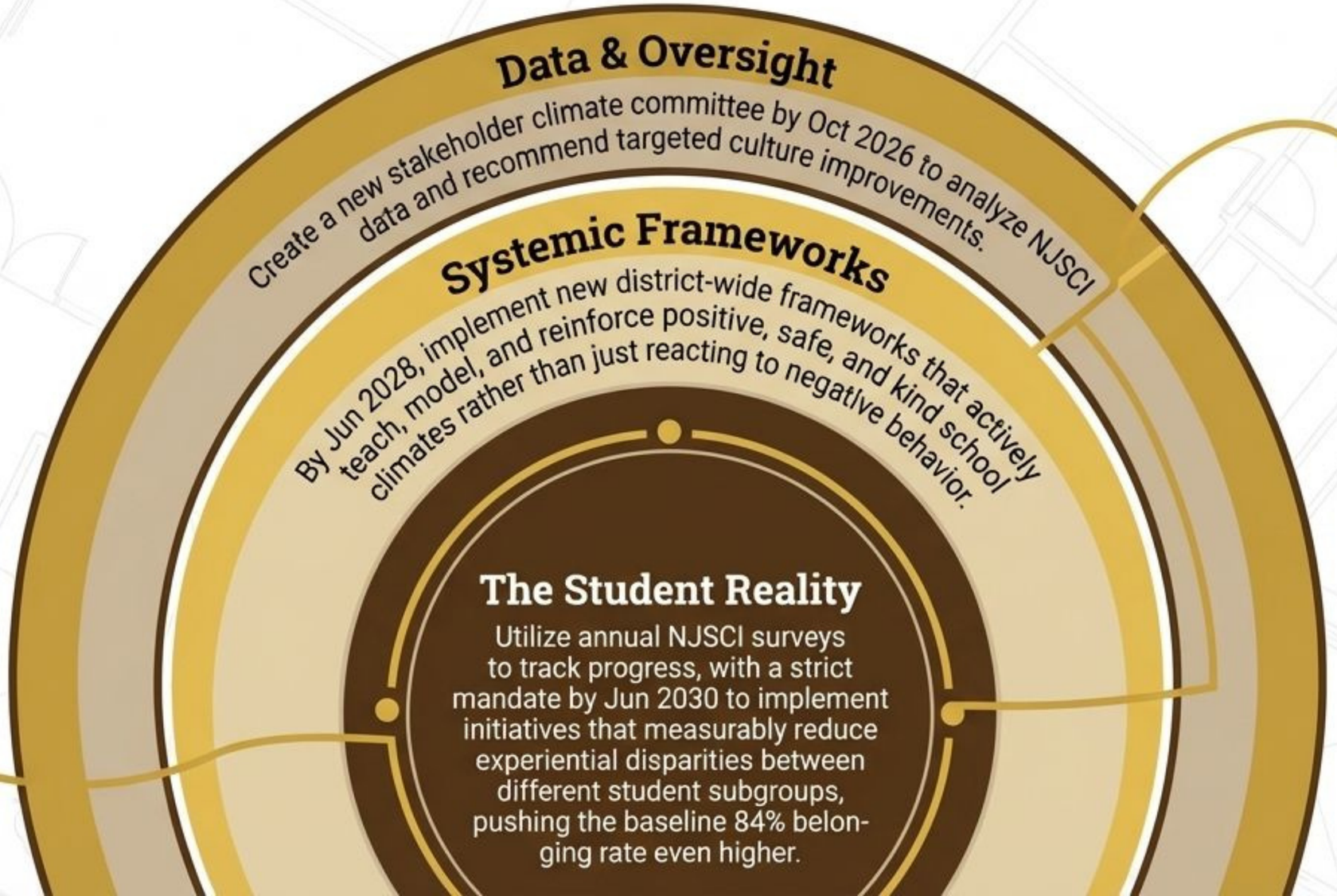
Fiscal Innovation

Strategic investments in AI and advanced security infrastructure.

By Jun 2027: Form an administrative committee to identify three new recurring, alternative revenue sources (e.g., sponsorships).

By Jun 2028: Allocate these new revenues through transparent budgeting to meet immediate district needs.

Pillar 4: Inclusive, Relationship-Driven Climate



The Master Plan Timeline: 2026 – 2027

Oct 2026

Stakeholder climate committee created (Pillar 4).

Dec 2026

Data collection on Flex Day & Choice-based assessments begins (Pillar 1).

Jan 2027

ASC/GLC empowered for student events (Pillar 2); Facility referendum projects submitted to State (Pillar 3).

Jun 2027

Teachers implement choice-based assessments; alternative revenue committee formed; climate recommendations analyzed.

Sep 2027

10-week 9th-grade foundational program launches (Pillar 1).

The Master Plan Timeline: 2028 – 2030

Jun 2028

- Dual enrollment & internships launch (Pillar 1);
- Custom engagement metrics created (Pillar 2);
- New revenue sources allocated (Pillar 3);
- New positive climate frameworks implemented (Pillar 4).

Sep 2028

- New support structures for college/career transitions designed.

Jun 2029

Major stakeholder reviews across engagement, facilities, and climate data to adapt the strategic plan.

Jun 2030

- Major update to the Long-Range Facility Plan completed (Pillar 3);
- Disparity reduction initiatives fully implemented (Pillar 4).

The Destination: 2031

A strategic plan is only as strong as the students it serves. By illuminating this pathway over the next five years, we ensure that every student who walks through our doors is prepared to:

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