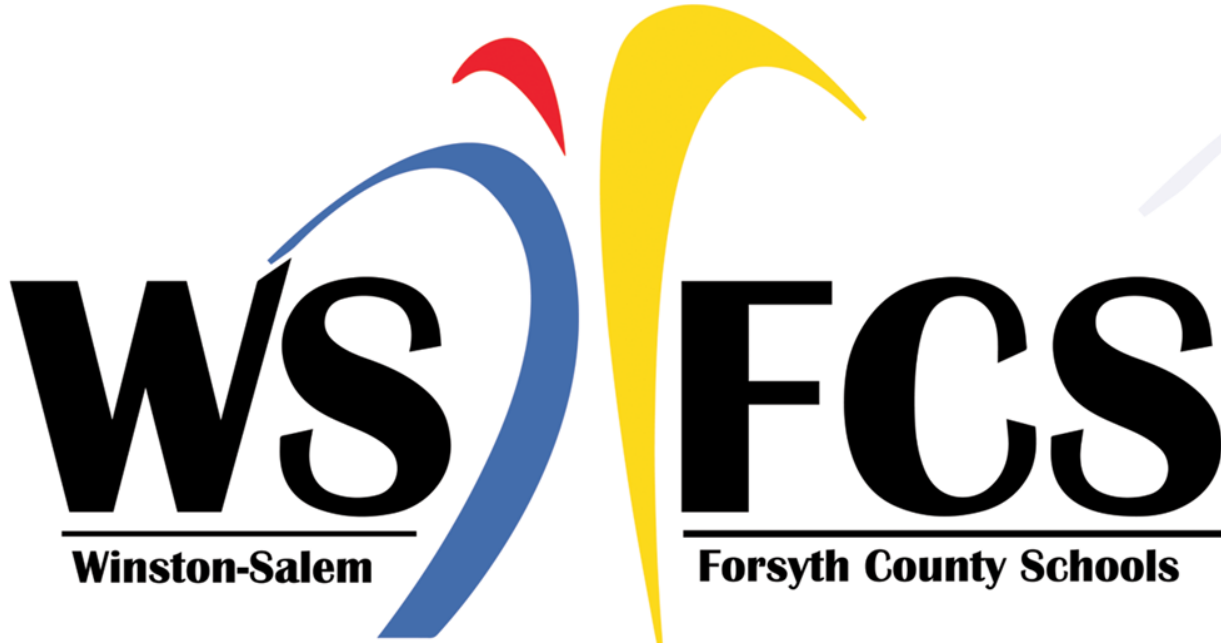


# 2026-2028 Draft Strategic Plan



## OUR MISSION

Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools will engage all students in high-quality, relevant learning experiences so they will graduate with interpersonal, academic, and workforce skills to compete globally and contribute to society.

## OUR VISION

Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools will be the best place to learn and work through excellence, collaboration, and inclusiveness.

# Introduction

## **For Every Student. For Every Family. For Our Community.**

The 2024–2025 school year was one of our most challenging in WS/FCS' history. Budget pressures, enrollment shifts, staffing demands, and more tested our resolve and stretched our resources in ways that required us to lead with both urgency and purpose. Yet what emerged from that pressure was something powerful, our students showed up, our educators persevered, and our community stood beside us with voices, action, and an unwavering belief in what WS/FCS represents. That support did not go unnoticed, and it will not be forgotten.

It is that collective commitment that grounds us as we move forward. Our mission, vision, and core values are the foundation upon which every decision must be made. Our theory of action is clear: when we align our beliefs with intentional investment in the people and systems that support staff and student success, we move forward together.

This Strategic Plan reflects that commitment. Designed to stabilize, strengthen, and build, it addresses our current challenges while laying a strong foundation for the future. It prioritizes consistency across schools, transparency and accountability in our decision-making, and meaningful engagement with students, families, staff, and the broader community. By aligning our goals and resources with a shared vision, we are positioning WS/FCS for long-term sustainability and growth. We are not simply a district recovering, we are moving forward stronger, and this community deserves nothing less!

## Pillars of Engagement



### Students

- Academics
- Emotional Well-being
- Access & Opportunity
- Co-Curricular Experiences
- School Climate & Culture



### Staff

- High Performing Workforce
- Evaluation & Accountability
- Climate & Culture



### Support Systems

- Operational Efficiency
- Safety & Security
- Facilities



### Family & Community Engagement

- Communication
- Workforce Development
- Collaboration

The WS/FCS Strategic Plan is organized around four pillars of engagement designed to position WS/FCS as a premier district. Fulfilling our promise to this community requires more than good intentions and requires a clear, structured commitment to the people who depend on us most. Each pillar reflects how we will (1) show up for our students, (2) support our staff, (3) partner with families and the broader community, and (4) build the systems that sustain it all. It is through intentional, transparent, and accountable actions that we will strengthen trust and create the conditions for a sustainable future for every student, family, and community member we serve.

The goals that will anchor this work include:

**Goal 1: Student Success** Raise student performance and maximize access for every student while also working to close opportunity gaps and ensure every student graduates prepared for post-secondary success.

**Goal 2: Culture** Recruit, develop, and retain a high-performing workforce where every staff member is valued and empowered and all students and staff experience belonging and well-being.

**Goal 3: Family & Community Engagement** Expand and deepen partnerships with families, businesses, local and state government, and community organizations to strengthen trust and attract and retain families.

Informed by the voices of our students, families, staff, and community, WS/FCS has intentionally narrowed our strategies across each pillar for the 2026–2028 strategic plan period to focus our energy, align our resources, and drive measurable progress in the areas that matter most. This is not a reduction of our commitment but is a sharpening of it. The broader work is not lost; it is the foundation upon which future success will be built.

## Pillar 1: Student Engagement

At the heart of everything we do is our students. This pillar reflects our commitment to ensuring that every student in WS/FCS is engaged, supported, and empowered academically, emotionally, and beyond the classroom walls.

SMART Goals	From 2025-2026	2026-2027	Milestone 2028	5-Year Target 2031

To achieve, WS/FCS will:

### Strategy 1: Access to Rigorous Instruction

1.1 Deliver standards-based, rigorous, culturally relevant, and participatory instruction for core academic skills and to support mastery of the life ready skills outlined in the [Portrait of a Graduate](#).

### Strategy 2: Development of the Whole Child

2.1 Ensure access to emotional, behavioral, mental, and physical health services.

2.2 Administer discipline consequences that hold students accountable, celebrate positive behavior, and support the whole student.

2.3 Identify and close gaps in discipline referrals, suspensions, and attendance across student groups.

### Strategy 3: Access to Specialized Opportunities

3.1 Increase participation in academic programs such as Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), Career Technical Education (CTE), STEM, and Visual and Performing Arts.

3.2 Connect every student to meaningful opportunities through career-based learning and in and out of classroom experiences.

## Pillar 2: Staff Engagement

Our staff are the heartbeat of this district. Pillar 2 reflects our commitment to sustaining a high-performing workforce by investing in the people who show up every day for our students and community. From recruiting and retaining exceptional talent to providing meaningful professional learning, supporting career advancement, and fostering a district culture where everyone is valued and held to the highest standard, this pillar ensures that WS/FCS remains a place where great educators and professionals choose to grow, thrive, and stay.

SMART Goals	From 2025-2026	2026-2027	Milestone 2028	5-Year Target 2031

To achieve, WS/FCS will:

### Strategy 4: Positive District Culture

- 4.1 Ensure staff members see themselves and each other as contributors to student success.
- 4.2 Foster a community of continuous growth through collaboration, understanding, and cohesion.
- 4.3 Recognize and honor staff achievements.
- 4.4 Build shared leadership by incorporating staff input into decision-making processes.

### Strategy 5: Recruitment & Retention

- 5.1 Ensure standardized hiring practices to employ highly qualified candidates.
- 5.2 Promote a workforce that reflects the diverse identities of our students and families.
- 5.3 Provide access to mental health and other services to support staff wellness and increase retention.
- 5.4 Enhance opportunities and support for alternatively licensed staff to obtain and achieve full licensure.

### Strategy 6: Professional Development

- 6.1 Provide differentiated opportunities for collaboration, coaching, and support for all staff members.
- 6.2 Provide opportunities for staff growth and advancement through clear pathways for career development.

### **Pillar 3: Family and Community Engagement**

Thriving schools are built on meaningful partnerships. Pillar 3 reflects our commitment to supporting families, expanding access to choice and options, and communicating openly and consistently, ensuring our community is not just informed, but actively engaged as a partner in the success of every student in WS/FCS.

<b>SMART Goals</b>	<b>From 2025-2026</b>	<b>2026-2027</b>	<b>Milestone 2028</b>	<b>5-Year Target 2031</b>

To achieve, WS/FCS will:

#### **Strategy 7: Family Support**

- 7.1 Empower families to partner in student learning, advocacy, and school improvement.
- 7.2 Incorporate family feedback into policies and practices.
- 7.3 Provide targeted communication, learning opportunities, and support to all families in their first language.

#### **Strategy 8: Community Engagement**

- 8.1 Develop a marketing and communication plan to attract and retain families.
- 8.4 Build intentional partnerships to strengthen shared responsibility for student success.

#### **Strategy 9: Educational Advocacy**

- 9.1 Engage elected officials and the business community to support public education through financial resources and policy.

## Pillar 4: Support Systems

Behind every thriving school is a district that operates with efficiency, integrity, and purpose. Delivering on our promise to students and families requires systems that work. Pillar 4 reflects our commitment to the operational systems that make the work of the entire district possible from transportation and technology to finance, human resources, facilities, safety and security, and more.

SMART Goals	From 2025-2026	2026-2027	Milestone 2028	5-Year Target 2031

To achieve, WS/FCS will:

### Strategy 10: Continuous Improvement

- 10.1 Establish standard operating procedures and monitor implementation and results to ensure accountability at all levels of the organization.
- 10.2 Balance operational efficiency, fiscal responsibility, and environmental sustainability.
- 10.3 Identify barriers to success and improve practices and policies.

### Strategy 11: Operating as a System

- 11.1 Implement targeted strategies to increase student recruitment and retention.
- 11.2 Establish a capital outlay plan to protect and maintain district facilities and assets.
- 11.3 Maintain consistent focus on physical security strategies to support school safety.
- 11.4 Ensure district programs and practices continue through leadership transitions and organizational changes.