

Our Way Forward

FOR EVERY STUDENT. FOR EVERY FAMILY. FOR OUR COMMUNITY.

The WS/FCS Strategic Plan is organized around four pillars of engagement designed to restore WS/FCS as a thriving 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 rebuild trust, restabilize, and create the conditions for a stronger, more 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, we have intentionally narrowed our objectives 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.

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.

Measures of Success	From 2024-2025	2025-2026	Target 2026-2027	Target 2027-2028
By 2028, 58% of WS/FCS students will meet or exceed grade level proficiency (3-8) as measured by NC End-of-Grade tests.	49.2%		54%	58%
By 2028, 75% of schools will meet and/or exceed growth.	63%		69%	75%
By 2028, 90% of WS/FCS students will graduate with 4-year cohort.	86%		87%	90%
By 2028, WS/FCS will reduce chronic absenteeism by 5% points.	32.1%		30.1%	27.1%

To achieve these goals, 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 durable skills in the [Portrait of a Graduate](#).

Deliverables	Accountable Exec. Leader	Department Responsible	Collaborating Departments
- Continue utilizing the Vision of Learning and Teaching to support implementation of Deeper Learning, Culturally Relevant Instruction, and quality instructional design through monitoring of Professional Learning Teams (PLTs) - Leverage Professional Learning Teams (PLTs) to demonstrate high-quality instructional design on the district PLT Rubric through monitoring and use of PLT protocols - Assess student proficiency in key durable skills (e.g., critical thinking, communication, collaboration) as measured by performance-based task evaluations and student portfolios	Chief Academic Officer	Instructional Services	- Accountability - School Support & Talent Development - Human Resources - Transportation - Student Services - Choice & Magnet - Technology - Title I

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.

Deliverables	Accountable Exec. Leader	Department Responsible	Collaborating Departments
• Implement NCDPI required Mental Health plan • Continue professional development and support for school staff related to student behavior • Monitor student data and use Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) to address barriers to learning in academics, behavior, attendance, and emotional wellbeing • Implement dropout prevention strategies to support the 4-year cohort graduation rate	Chief Student Services Officer	Student Services	• Accountability • All Schools • Exceptional Children • Family & Community Engagement • Exceptional Children • School Support & Talent Development

Strategy 3: Access to Specialized Opportunities

3.1 Increase participation in academic programs such as Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), College and Career Promise (CCP) through Dual Enrollment, 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.

Deliverables	Accountable Exec. Leader	Department Responsible	Collaborating Departments
3.1 (AP, CCP, & CTE) • Increase student participation in AP, IB, CTE, CCP (Forsyth Tech Dual Enrollment), STEM, and Arts programs, with targeted outreach to historically underrepresented student populations	Chief Academic Officer	Instructional Services	• Accountability • Choice & Magnet • Marketing & Communication • Middle & High

• Partner with Forsyth Technical Community College to establish and expand structured CCP certificate pathways at each high school to streamline credit transfer and credential attainment, with increased focus on CTE pathway access for 9th and 10th grade students • Eliminate financial, logistical, and prerequisite barriers to advanced coursework by offering fully funded course materials and exam fee waivers, and optimizing transportation to specialized program sites 3.2- Career Based Exploration Opportunities • Provide a structured career-based learning experience (e.g., job shadowing, career fairs, workplace tours, or industry mentorships, World of Work, etc.) for every student annually by Grade 10 • Increase student participation in paid/unpaid internships, youth apprenticeships, and service-learning opportunities • Embed a hands-on, community-connected project or out-of-classroom learning experience into the core curriculum across all grade bands (K–12) each academic year			Schools • Human Resources • Instructional Services • Student Services • Technology
(IB, STEM, & Visual & Performing Arts) -Implement IB grant objectives -Build upon marketing and recruitment plan to grow enrollment -Align magnet theme programming with core curriculum through collaboration with Instructional Services	Chief of Staff & Strategic Planning	Choice & Magnet	

Pillar 2: Staff Engagement

Our staff are the heartbeat of this district. Pillar 2 reflects our commitment to building and 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 development, 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.

Measures of Success	From 2024-2025	2025-2026	Target 2026-2027	Target 2027-2028
By 2028, the percentage of WS/FCS staff who report they are valued, supported, and given opportunities to give input on decision-making will increase by 3% points from the 2026-2027 baseline.			Establish Baseline	+3% points
By September 2028, WS/FCS will increase the retention rate for full-time permanent employees (excluding retirements) measured annually by the percentage of May employees who remain employed in September of the following school year by 5% points.		Baseline Sept. 2026	+2% points	+3% points

To achieve these goals, 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.

Deliverables	Accountable Exec. Leader	Department Responsible	Collaborating Departments
- Launch a districtwide employee recognition program spanning service awards, milestone recognition, and highlights through district communications, Board meetings, and social media - Incorporate district mission, vision, and strategic priorities into onboarding and professional learning - Continue school-based professional learning communities and cross-department collaboration between schools and central office teams	Chief Human Resources	Human Resources	- All Departments - All Schools

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.

Deliverables	Accountable Exec. Leader	Department Responsible	Collaborating Departments
• Implement a standardized districtwide hiring process and interview protocol, with annual training for hiring managers on equitable practices and legal compliance • Launch centralized applicant tracking dashboards for vacancy monitoring • Develop an annual targeted recruitment plan focused on high-need certification areas and diverse candidate pools • Expand and maintain partnerships with HBCUs, universities, alternative licensure providers, and educator preparation programs • Host annual recruitment fairs and virtual recruitment events • Increase Grow Your Own educator pathways • Implement a comprehensive employee wellness strategy • Expand Employee Assistance Program (EAP) awareness and utilization • Continue Alternative Licensure success through WS/FCS Teacher Academy and Residency Program • Assign mentors to all beginning and alternatively licensed educators • Provide quarterly licensure workshops and testing support • Monitor licensure progress through dashboards and individualized support plans.	Chief Human Resources	Human Resources	• All Departments • All Schools

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.

Deliverables	Accountable Exec. Leader	Department Responsible	Collaborating Departments
School-based Admin & Instructional Support (e.g., Principals, Asst Principals, Multi-Classroom Leaders, etc.) • Continue a differentiated coaching model for school leaders using aligned site visits, coaching protocols, and shared trackers • Continue a tiered support system identifying schools requiring intensive, targeted, or universal support, ensuring those schools receive additional monitoring visits, professional development, and collaborative problem-solving opportunities • Create an annual professional learning sequence for principals and assistant principals aligned to district priorities (instructional leadership, DDI, MTSS, culture, coaching, and strategic planning), differentiated by role and experience level	Chief of Schools	School Support & Talent Development	• All Schools • Instructional Services • Student Services • Legal
Instructional Facilitators, Teachers, Teacher Assistants (TAs) • Deliver targeted, content-specific coaching and actionable feedback through a structured, job-embedded coaching cycle aligned with the Vision for Learning and Teaching (VLT) • Facilitate differentiated professional development and learning modules focused on academic content and evidence-based instructional strategies (e.g. effective core instruction and support for differentiated small groups)	Chief Academic Officer	Instructional Services	• All Schools • School Support & Talent Development
Operations (e.g., Data Managers, Admin Asst., Financial Secretary, etc.) • Coordinate professional learning and training plan for staff aligned to core systems and processes • Create training modules for core operations systems and processes (e.g., data platforms, financial systems) to support consistent onboarding and ongoing skill-building	General Counsel	Legal	• All Departments • All Schools

Leadership (Program Managers & Above) • Maintain and expand leadership pipelines including the Teacher Leader Academy, Aspiring Principal programs, and Assistant Principal development, aligned to the WS/FCS Leadership Framework • Develop and clearly communicate transparent career progression pathways (Teacher → Teacher Leader → Assistant Principal → Principal → Executive Leadership) • Launch and sustain the District Leadership Dashboard to identify talent, monitor readiness, support succession planning, and track competencies, experiences, and career aspiration	Chief of Schools		• All Schools • Instructional Services • Human Resources
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Pillar 3: Family and Community Engagement

Strong schools are built on strong 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.

Measures of Success	From 2024-2025	2025-2026	Target 2026-2027	Target 2027-2028
By June 2028, the percentage of WS/FCS families who report being satisfied or very satisfied with district and school-based family engagement opportunities will increase by 5% points from the 2026–2027 baseline.				
By June 2028, the percentage of volunteers logging 3 or more volunteer hours will increase by 3% points from the 2026-2027 baseline.				

To achieve these goals, 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.

Deliverables	Accountable Exec. Leader	Department Responsible	Collaborating Departments
• Build a family & community engagement framework • Provide training and resources to school-based parent liaisons and leaders on research informed and evidence-based family engagement practices • Continue and expand in-person and virtual learning opportunities for families including multilingual formats • Continue multilingual communication and interpretation services • Continue and expand advisory groups and engagement opportunities that give families voice in decision-making • Continue districtwide and school-based communication (webpage, social media, translated materials, school-level outreach) to reach all families with consistent, regular messaging.	Chief of Staff & Strategic Planning	Family & Community Engagement	• All Schools • School Support & Talent Development • Marketing & Communications • Legal • Student Services • Instructional Services • Multilingual Learners • Title I

Establish community resource map for schools			
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Strategy 8: Community Engagement

8.1 Develop a marketing and communication plan to attract and retain families.

8.2 Build intentional partnerships to strengthen shared responsibility for student success.

Deliverables	Accountable Exec. Leader	Department Responsible	Collaborating Departments
8.1 - Build on existing communication and strengthen branding campaigns to showcase WS/FCS programs and school experiences for current and prospective families. - Establish consistent messaging to families - Provide frequent updates via Cable 2, website and social media - Recognize partners on website and social media	Chief Communications Officer	Marketing & Communications	- All Schools - Choice & Magnet - Human Resources - Instructional Services - Student Services - School Support & Talent Development
8.2 - Establish an online district partnership hub to track and match community/business partners to schools - Expand community conversations and collaboration for volunteering and partnerships	Chief of Staff & Strategic Planning	Family & Community Engagement	- All Schools - CTE - Marketing & Communications - Student Services

Strategy 9: Educational Advocacy

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

Deliverables	Accountable Exec. Leader	Department Responsible	Collaborating Departments
Continue to build relationships with and engage in regular	Superintendent	Superintendent	All Departments

communication with elected officials • Strengthen engagement with businesses, educational advocacy organizations, and civic coalition for public education funding and supportive policy • Promote and advocate for the Legislative Priorities of the WS/FCS Board of Education			
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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 and infrastructure, and safety and security.

Measures of Success	From 2024-2025	2025-2026	Target 2026-2027	Target 2027-2028
By 2028, the percentage of students, staff, and families who agree or strongly agree that they feel safe at school will increase by 5% points from the 2026-2027 baseline.			Establish Baseline	+5% points
By May 2027, WS/FCS will stabilize enrollment by maintaining K-12 enrollment +/-1.5% points from October 2026 (Best 1 of 2 ADM) to May 2027 (PRM 9), excluding early graduates.		Baseline Sept. 2026		
By February 2028, WS/FCS will grow its share of resident school-aged students from the January 2027 baseline by 1% point.				

To achieve these goals, 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.

Deliverables	Accountable Exec. Leader	Department Responsible	Collaborating Departments
- Utilize decision-making protocol to solve complex district issues - Implement monitoring system for department goals aligned to the Strategic Plan and a corresponding scoreboard - Continue to support schools in achieving their school improvement goals - Establish a regular reporting cadence to keep the Board of Education and community informed on progress tied to the Strategic Plan	Superintendent	Superintendent	- All Departments - All Schools

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 confidence in school safety.

11.4 Ensure district programs and practices continue through leadership transitions and organizational changes.

Deliverables	Accountable Exec. Leader	Department Responsible	Collaborating Departments
11.1 • Expand Market Share work group into a formal, cross-functional taskforce • Build on existing communication and strengthen branding campaigns to showcase WS/FCS programs and school experiences for current and prospective families (8.1) • Conduct engagement satisfaction survey	Chief of Staff & Strategic Planning	Choice & Magnet	• All Schools • Marketing & Communications • Student Assignment • School Support & Talent Development
11.2 • Conduct a comprehensive review of all facility assets to inform a districtwide capital outlay plan. • Evaluate utilization of schools and properties to ensure operational efficiency	Chief Operating Officer	Facilities Planning & Construction	• Finance
11.3 • Continuously evaluate safety protocols for ongoing efficacy • Provide ongoing training and support to assist school building leaders with effective safety practices	Chief Operating Officer	Safety, Security, & Emergency Management	• All Schools • School Support & Talent Development • Student Services • Legal
11.4 • Document standard operating procedures through department and school-based work plans and a process to ensure the standard operating procedures are monitored and adjusted to ensure effective and efficient implementation • Establish leadership transition/onboarding protocol for departing and incoming leaders in key roles	Superintendent	Superintendent	• All Departments • All Schools