



**Richmond County Public Schools**  
*Comprehensive Strategic Plan*  
2025-2030

## SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

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**Mr. Boyd K. Blackley, Chair**

**Mrs. Vivian G. Wood, Vice Chair**

**Mrs. Kathleen F. Beane**

**Mr. Frank Johnson**

**Mrs. Patricia P. Pugh**



## RCPS STAKEHOLDER STEERING & DESIGN TEAM

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**Bernard "Trey" Davis,**  
Superintendent

**Renee Edwards,**  
Director of Federal  
Programs

**Christopher Trader,**  
Director of Technology

**Bryan Thrift,**  
RHS Principal

**Cole Vanover,**  
RCES Principal

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**Heather Drinkwater,**  
MTLC Director

**Casey Wallace,**  
RCM Counselor

**Lynn Cutright,**  
RCE Teacher

**Sarah Gladwell,**  
RCM Teacher

**Cleveland Winfield,**  
RHS Teacher

**R.J. Houck,**  
Student

**Carla Clarke,**  
Parent

**Mark Brann,**  
Parent

# Message from the Superintendent

Dr. Bernard Davis, III



In Richmond County, we are extremely proud of our schools. The success of our school system can be directly attributed to those we serve alongside and work directly with each day. Among those we serve, it is our students and their future that must be our highest priority. As a result, we are committed to always improving on behalf of those we serve and support.

At the end of the 2023-24 school year and through the start of our current 2024-25 school year, we partnered with Berkley Group to survey stakeholders as part of assessing the instructional and organizational needs of the school system. Berkley Group used the information and data collected to inform and guide the process of updating our division's comprehensive strategic plan. This process also involved engaging key school division stakeholders in the process of reviewing the current strategic plan processes and results, and collaboratively designing the school system's new plan. Our recently updated comprehensive strategic plan will play a pivotal role in setting and guiding the school division's course for the next five years.

This strategic plan is not meant to be a symbolic document. It represents our blueprint for success, encompassing why we are here (mission), where we are going and what the desired future for RCPS looks like (vision), how we will behave as part of our individual and collective commitments (core values), and what we are focused on achieving along with the ways in which we will measure that achievement (goals, objectives, strategies, performance indicators). In order to make this plan a living representation of the work we do together, we invite you as a critical stakeholder, to join us as a partner in this work.

RCPS is dedicated to fostering resiliency in our students and preparing each to be future problem-solvers and leaders. This comprehensive strategic plan will challenge us to work together to fulfill our mission each and every day!

Trey Davis, Ed.D.  
Superintendent

# RICHMOND COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS *Profile*

## BY THE NUMBERS

County Population: 9,080

Total students: 1,359

Teachers: 93.5

Other Staff: 106

Student-Teacher Ratios:  
Elementary - 12.06 : 1  
Secondary - 12.63 : 1

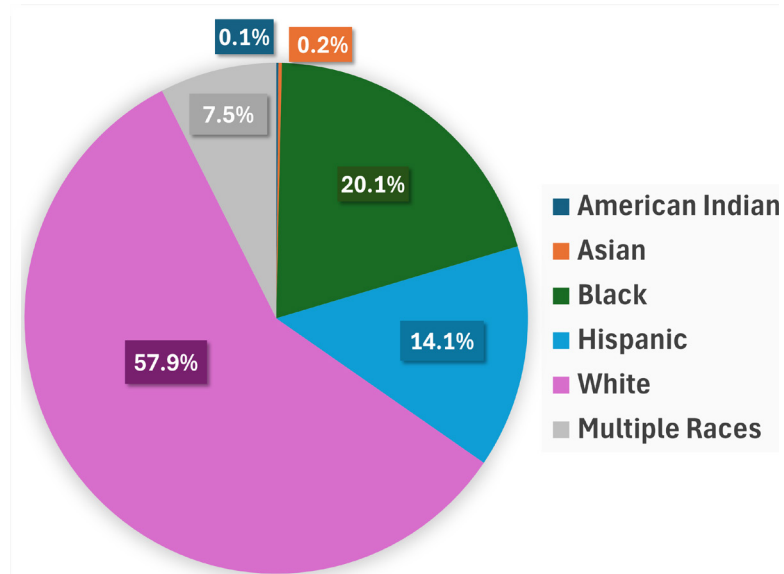
## OUR SCHOOLS (3)

Mackey-Thompson  
Learning Center (Pre-K)

Richmond County  
Elementary/Middle  
(K-7th)

Rappahannock  
High School (8-12th)

## OUR STUDENTS



Students w/disabilities: 13%

Economically disadvantaged: 51%

English language learners: 9%

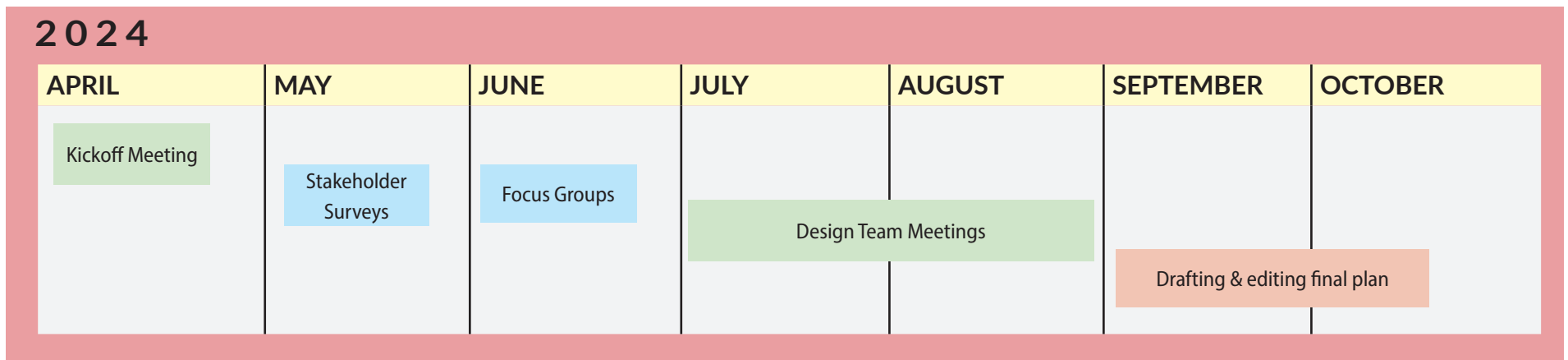


# SUMMARY

## Needs Assessment Process

### BACKGROUND

Richmond County Public Schools partnered with Berkley Group to conduct a school division needs assessment that was used to inform and guide the process of updating the division's comprehensive strategic plan. The school system leadership expressed a sincere desire to refocus and increase the quality of learning in classrooms as well as the levels of support from the division level to the schools. An overarching purpose for this collaborative project was to reengage the community as a partner in moving forward in a clear and positive direction.



### PROCESS

Berkley Group developed and administered an online survey in Spring 2024 to gather perceptions from key stakeholders regarding the quality of RCPS instructional and organizational services. The initial survey results were analyzed to determine areas of focus or priority in following up with stakeholder focus group sessions.

At the beginning of Summer 2024, Berkley Group consultants met with student, staff, parent, and community focus groups to probe further into perceptions of Richmond County Public Schools' relative strengths as well as opportunities for improvement. Following the analysis of focus group feedback, a summary of findings targeting broad areas of strength and opportunities for improvement was shared with the Stakeholder Strategic Planning Design Team and incorporated into the team's work of updating the division strategic plan. Berkley Group facilitated one full day Stakeholder Design Team session to review the division's current plan and provide recommendations. A final virtual session was conducted by Berkley Group to share the final draft plan and receive feedback and recommendations from the Stakeholder Design Team.

## NEEDS ASSESSMENT

As shared in the aforementioned process summary, data was collected by both survey and subsequently by a series of focus groups representing students, parents, teachers, and instructional and administrative personnel. Each data collection point represented an expansion of context and understanding. It also provided an opportunity to formatively reveal opportunities for improvement that should be identified or incorporated into the Division Strategic Plan. This process was critical as the survey data was distilled down to themes, and then expanded by collecting more contextual data from the focus groups. From this process, a summary with recommendations identifying needs to be considered in follow up strategic planning was developed. Responses from the focus groups were valuable in generating the following summations of strength and growth/improvement opportunities.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

### STUDENT LEARNING AND CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION

#### Strengths

- *Integration of instructional technology to engage students in learning*
- *Caring, competent, and invested instructional staff*

#### Growth/Improvement Opportunities

- *Clarity and enhancement of curriculum development processes*  
--*Emphasis on and intentional design of real-world learning experiences in and outside of the classroom*
- *Focus on the science of reading and literacy achievement*  
--*Additional supplemental (i.e. Bookworm materials and accompanying professional learning) and implementation flexibility and support (differentiation)*  
--*Enhancement of literacy (reading) coaching support at all levels*

### STUDENT SUPPORT

#### Strengths

- *A strong sense of collective ownership in supporting special populations who need specialized support*
- *Students, staff, and families acknowledge and appreciate the strong focus on academic opportunities for students*
- *Abundant extracurricular activities to provide students with social support and families with partnership opportunities (athletics, BETA, FFA, etc.)*

#### Growth/Improvement Opportunities

- *There is a need for more school counselors as well as focused support on student mental health and career/college goal setting.*
- *Expansion of partnerships with families and community resources in supporting the whole child (mental, social, and behavioral health)*
- *Increased communication regarding the who, what, and how for support in non-academic areas*
- *Reestablishing school-wide programs, including co-curricular opportunities (ex. Fine Arts) post-COVID*

## SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

### Strengths

- Students and families believe they have the instructional resources they need to support success.
- School environments are generally welcoming to students, staff, and families.
- There is evidence of school and community pride in Richmond County Public Schools.
  - Former students coming back to the school to work as educators
  - Former students remaining, or coming back to work, raise their families, and have their children attend RCPS
  - Educators from neighboring school divisions wanting to transition to RCPS

### Growth/Improvement Opportunities

- There are concerns regarding consistent enforcement of student discipline.
  - A need to develop with fidelity research-based programs/strategies (i.e. PBIS, Responsive Classroom)
- Ensuring that all staff feel their contributions are valued

## SCHOOL AND DIVISION LEADERSHIP

### Strengths

- School and division leadership are perceived as highly accessible and courteous in addressing staff and stakeholder concerns.
- School leaders are visible in the supervision of school activities and events.
- Recent transition and changes at the school level are positively perceived and met with enthusiasm.

### Growth/Improvement Opportunities

- During a time of significant leadership transition, providing on-going professional learning and support to principals and assistant principals that will enhance their instructional leadership and capacity.
- School staff needs increased support and feedback from building leadership.
  - Formal and informal evaluations
  - Enhanced, more inclusive communication and meeting structures
  - Establishing a focus on strategies to build teacher leadership capacity

## FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### Strengths

- The school division fosters a sense of belonging to all stakeholders.
- There is mutual respect demonstrated and felt across the different groups in the day-to-day activities (students, staff, and families).
- Traditional school-wide activities targeted to parents are well-communicated and attended.
- Division communications are appreciated and depended upon by families and staff.

### Growth/Improvement Opportunities

- Developing more collaborative – two-way meeting structures that provide students, parent, and staff with more genuine opportunity to contribute to school improvement and decision-making
  - Leveraging current tools (ClassDojo, classroom folders) to build efficacy among families as partners
- There is a desire to build or rebuild a greater sense of trust between schools and the community.

## INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT STAFF AND DEVELOPMENT

### Strengths

- Division Level support for job embedded professional learning to include instructional coaching
- Conference/External opportunities (SURN, etc.)
- Teachers perceive their working environments as generally inclusive and supportive.

### Growth/Improvement Opportunities

- Re-immersion or enhancement professional learning communities
  - Collaborative teams that function systematically
  - Continuous improvement team planning
- Increase training and support for new teachers
  - Differentiating new staff model

# RCPS *PURPOSE*

## MISSION

As trusted partners with families and community, RCPS fosters resiliency and prepares each student to be our future problem-solvers and leaders.

## VISION

Every student will graduate on time possessing the essential skills needed to thrive in the future. All students are inspired, engaged, and supported as they pursue their aspirations.



# Our Values



## INTEGRITY

We model and champion for what is authentic and true about our schools and ourselves.

- We believe in being trustworthy, open, and fair in communication and decision-making.
- We do what is best for students in all circumstances, regardless of the consequences.



## RESPECT

We create an inclusive environment that recognizes the value and worth of each individual.

- We are considerate in our tone and language.
- We ensure the application of effective two-way communication with all stakeholders.



## RELATIONSHIPS

We foster positive personal connections among our students and staff, with our families and community, and across our region.

- We are committed to building collaborative partnerships to foster the success of all students.
- We believe that every child should have at least one school-based adult with whom they have a positive and meaningful connection.



## TRUST

We build trust through consistency in our actions, caring and compassion in our interactions, and competency in our work.

- We believe that our schools should be welcoming, and all should feel a sense of belonging.
- We avoid actions and behaviors that compromise or undermine trust.



## TEAMWORK

We work cooperatively to achieve our mission, vision, and shared goals.

- We are committed to supporting a culture of collaboration and shared accountability.
- We recognize that every individual has special gifts and can add value through their unique contributions to the team.

# GOAL 1: TEACHING & LEARNING EXCELLENCE



*RCPS will consistently facilitate rigorous and relevant learning experiences that prepare all students for college, careers, and life.*

## OBJECTIVES

### **1.1 All students will meet or exceed state and federal literacy performance benchmarks.**

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- Strategy 1 Review and align pre-k-8 literacy curriculum and instructional practices with the Virginia Literacy Act.
- Strategy 2 Provide on-going professional learning and support in the science of reading to include implementation of supplemental resources.
- Strategy 3 Bolster literacy support at all levels.
- Strategy 4 Utilize research-based literacy programs with fidelity.
- Strategy 5 Develop systemic processes to analyze formative, summative, and diagnostic assessment data to inform core instruction and tiered intervention progress monitoring.

### **1.2 Expand college and career readiness opportunities for all students.**

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- Strategy 1 Expand work-based learning programs and certifications that align with student interest and current and predicted work-force needs.
- Strategy 2 Enhance the human support and resources to initiate career exploration and goal setting beginning in the middle grades.
- Strategy 3 For students formally identified as “gifted,” develop additional programmatic and in-time learning opportunities.
- Strategy 4 Increase the number of high school students accessing advanced-level coursework and college credit when available.

### **1.3 All students access core instruction aligned with rigorous academic standards.**

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- Strategy 1 Refine and deploy the curriculum development process to ensure all students have equitable access to core instruction.
- Strategy 2 Promote the design of intentional real-world learning experiences with an emphasis on problem-based and project-based learning.
- Strategy 3 Use a variety of assessments, including performance-based, multiple-choice, capstone projects, and portfolios.
- Strategy 4 Provide specialized instruction for students with disabilities that align with their prescribed academic and social setting needs.
- Strategy 5 Identify and implement reading and math intervention programs for Tier II students K-12 who are formally supported through Tier II tactics associated with the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Framework.

# GOAL 1: TEACHING & LEARNING EXCELLENCE



## 1.4 All students will access the resources and support to develop digital citizenship skills.

Strategy 1 Continue to enhance technology skills and workplace readiness skills into everyday learning.

Strategy 2 Leverage digital communities and resources to access best practices in curricula and instruction.

Strategy 3 Intentionally utilize technology to facilitate teaching and learning beyond the confines of the classroom and textbook.

### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

#### *\*Completed strategy products and processes*

- State Standards of Learning (SOL) trend data and benchmarks
- Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program (VKRP), Aimsweb MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) Math and MAP Reading, and other literacy/math screening data
- WIDA assessments
- Formative and summative course assessments – quarterly data
- On-Time Graduation Rates (OTGR) and Drop-Out Rates (DOR)
- Internships/Externships
- CTE enrollment, completers, and industry certifications
- Dual Enrollment
- Student participation in extra-curricular activities
- Student participation in Advanced Placement (AP), and advanced coursework
- PSAT, SAT, ACT assessments
- Evaluations, observations, walk-through data
- NICHE survey and ratings



# GOAL 2: HIGH QUALITY STAFF



*RCPS will attract, retain, and develop licensed and support staff to ensure the needs of the whole child are met.*

## OBJECTIVES

### **2.1 Engage all employees in relevant, job-embedded, and differentiated professional learning.**

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- Strategy 1 Refine the professional learning plan aligned with student learning goals and perceived needs of licensed and support staff.
- Strategy 2 Provide updated training in the implementation of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) focused on collaboration and data-informed instructional delivery and in-time intervention.
- Strategy 3 Structure and customize the staff evaluation process to include the use of specific, measurable, actionable, results-oriented and timebound goal setting (SMART) and intentional feedback.
- Strategy 4 Increase and differentiate training and on-going support for beginning teachers and teachers new to the school division.

### **2.2 Recruit new staff and sustain high retention rates of current staff.**

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- Strategy 1 Evaluate and refine the long-term, sustainable, and competitive total compensation plan to promote recruitment and secure retention of high-quality staff.
- Strategy 2 Expand the role of school leaders in the recruitment process.
- Strategy 3 Maximize alternative pathways to readiness and ultimately licensure for applicable staff.
- Strategy 4 Expand access to and promotion of local and regional job fairs.
- Strategy 5 Continue the implementation of the grow-your-own “Teachers of Tomorrow” (TOTs) to increase local teaching capacity.
- Strategy 6 Evaluate current retention incentives and determine areas for enhancement, such as increasing tuition reimbursement.
- Strategy 7 Create additional opportunities to recognize and celebrate employee excellence.
- Strategy 8 Continue to enhance employee advisory committees to include and empower all staff in the problem-solving and decision-making process.
- Strategy 9 Systematically collect employee feedback and analyze trends for continuous improvement, including data from exit and “stay” interviews.

# GOAL 2: HIGH QUALITY STAFF



## 2.3 Enhance instructional leadership capacity and support.

**Strategy 1** Clarify and reinforce school administrator's responsibilities as instructional leaders.

**Strategy 2** Provide updated professional learning to administrators in the area of instructional coaching including practices and a system for monitoring and providing formative feedback.

**Strategy 3** Build teacher leadership capacity through updated structures, roles, and professional learning.

**Strategy 4** Develop collaborative teams that function systematically to promote continuous improvement and planning.

### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

#### *\*Completed strategy processes and products*

- Teacher/employee retention data
- Professional Development surveys
- Professional Learning training plan and participation
- Staff attendance rates
- Staff presentations at state and national conferences
- Staff training levels and certifications
- School, parent, and staff climate surveys
- Exit and stay interviews
- Compensation and benefit comparisons and studies
- Mentor/Mentee program survey results
- Leadership development – Cohorts



# GOAL 3: POSITIVE & SUPPORTIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE



*RCPS will provide a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment for teaching and learning.*

## OBJECTIVES

### 3.1 Prioritize the well-being of students and staff.

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- Strategy 1 Increase school counseling support in compliance with Virginia Standards of Quality.
- Strategy 2 Partner with the community to expand student access to programming, services, and resources that support overall well-being.
- Strategy 3 Integrate wellness and responsive teaching strategies into classroom learning.
- Strategy 4 Review and implement policies and practices that prioritize student and employee wellness.
- Strategy 5 Develop student mentoring capacity by partnering with alumni, citizens, and community organizations.
- Strategy 6 Provide systematic communication and outreach to staff on available services and resources, including the Employee Assistance Program.
- Strategy 7 Reinvigorate collaborative and team structures at the school and division level.
- Strategy 8 Reestablish and/or enhance school-wide programs, including co-curricular opportunities (Fine Arts).
- Strategy 9 Differentiate and increase recognition of academic achievement.

### 3.2 Augment and refine systems of training and support to ensure the safety of students and staff.

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- Strategy 1 Update and reinforce security systems to enhance crisis readiness and response.
- Strategy 2 Review and revise the current Code of Conduct to ensure integrity and clarity of individual accountability is maintained.
- Strategy 3 Implement bullying prevention and response actions that include whole school, community collaboration, and understanding.
- Strategy 4 Ensure safe and secure access to computing devices and educational data by minimizing network threats and vulnerabilities.
- Strategy 5 Utilize a systematic approach for assessing the safety, efficiency, and appropriateness of the facilities and ancillary spaces used by students and staff.
- Strategy 6 Pursue and secure grants to enhance school facilities security and personnel training.

# GOAL 3: POSITIVE & SUPPORTIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE



## KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

### *\*Completed strategy processes and products*

- Student attendance rates
- Discipline data
- Crisis plans and site assessments
- Bullying training levels and incident data
- School Resource Officer (SRO) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
- Weapons detections systems
- Community Services Board (CSB) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
- Threat assessment data
- Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) usage



# GOAL 4: FAMILY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



*RCPS will engage families and the community as partners to provide resources, support, and opportunities that meet future educational challenges.*

## OBJECTIVES

### **4.1 Increase, align, and expand family, staff, and community engagement opportunities.**

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- Strategy 1 Expand collaborative two-way meeting structures enabling stakeholders to contribute to future division improvement initiatives and decision-making.
- Strategy 2 Connect and partner with families to increase academic progress.
- Strategy 3 Generate routine and systematic opportunities for family engagement in supporting both classroom and school-wide improvement efforts.
- Strategy 4 Increase volunteer opportunities for parents and families in school buildings and at school-sponsored activities.
- Strategy 5 Expand school level parent/student events and communication respectively.
- Strategy 6 Leverage current communication tools (ClassDojo, classroom folders) to build efficacy among families as partner to support student learning and social development.
- Strategy 7 Expand the role and participation of families on school advisory committees.

### **4.2 Increase communication efforts to engage families and support stakeholder advocacy.**

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- Strategy 1 Establish quarterly cadence for communicating updates regarding school division academic performance through newsletters, stakeholder advisories, and public forums.
- Strategy 2 Evaluate and streamline the communication platforms for teachers and schools to ensure that all students, parents, families, and citizens have equitable access to information that is authentic and helpful.
- Strategy 3 Increase social media presence and local media coverage of student, staff, school, and division achievements.

# GOAL 4: FAMILY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



## 4.3 Increase mutually supportive and sustainable partnership opportunities.

Strategy 1 Nurture and expand current division-level parent and family advisory groups, councils, and committees.

Strategy 2 Expand mutually beneficial partnerships linking community resources to support the needs of students, employees, and schools.

Strategy 3 Broaden community engagement opportunities to support instructional and extracurricular goals.

### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

#### *\*Completed strategy processes and products*

- Partnership lists, agreements, and numbers at school/division level
- Community Partner and Advisory Committee meeting agendas/minutes
- Website hits and engagement metrics with division communication platforms
- Survey data and participation rates at community events like PTO membership
- Athletic boosters' participation and fundraising data
- Family engagement events attendance data and feedback





*RCPS will operate as a unified coherent school system, targeting resource investments to align with strategic plan priorities and processes.*

## OBJECTIVES

### 5.1 Increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the division's operations.

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- Strategy 1 Implement systematic cycles of continuous improvement.
- Strategy 2 Align strategic planning and continuous improvement efforts of the division and schools.
- Strategy 3 Establish a committee to support and inform board policy development that ensures alignment between policies and the strategic plan.
- Strategy 4 Deploy long-term and systematic processes to ensure organizational capacity to accommodate student needs.
- Strategy 5 Continue to systematically evaluate facilities to ensure they can support current and future educational needs.
- Strategy 6 Maximize transportation services to support current and future educational program needs.
- Strategy 7 Continue to enhance technology infrastructure and direct support to students and staff.

### 5.2 Maximize human and fiscal resources to meet the needs of the school division.

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- Strategy 1 Develop a long-term financial plan that fully aligns strategic plan priorities to projected budget investments.
- Strategy 2 Increase routine, systematic, and fluid joint planning with Richmond County Government administration and between locally elected and appointed boards.
- Strategy 3 Evaluate systems to ensure the efficient, cost effective, and equitable management of resources.
- Strategy 4 Prioritize support for initiatives and programs in every annual budget to enhance quality instruction and plan for future needs.
- Strategy 5 Develop a stakeholder budget development team to increase engagement and transparency in providing information and recommendations regarding finance/budget.
- Strategy 6 Maintain an active and consistent finance committee to integrate fiscal resources into the current communication plan.
- Strategy 7 Explore shared service grant opportunities with Board of Supervisors to cultivate business partnerships and community support to augment student learning and support.

# GOAL 5: ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE & EFFICIENCY



## KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

### *\*Completed strategy processes and products*

- Richmond County Public Schools annual budget
- Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
- Long-term forecast models
- Monthly financial reports
- Annual school report
- School and district financial audits
- Grant submissions and awards
- Contributions and donations of stakeholders
- Building and facility capacity studies
- Planned and executed safety drills/trainings

