

# South Bend Community School Corporation:

## Strategic Plan 2026

**Mission Statement:** Together with our community, we create equitable, inclusive, and just schools to ensure all students achieve academic and personal success.

**Vision Statement:** We are the community's first choice for a relevant and inspiring education.

### **Our Core Values:**

- We promote a culture of educational excellence where each student learns and thrives in school and beyond.
- We respect, admire and celebrate personal and cultural diversity.
- As a team, we cultivate strong relationships with students, staff, families, and community through restorative practices.
- We ensure safe schools for both students and adults.
- Because our families and community are essential to our success, we will extend and deepen those partnerships.
- We are honest, transparent and accountable to our community.

### **Our District Priorities:**

**Academic Excellence:** We will advance students' skills and competencies in literate practices across all subject areas.

**Equity, Inclusion, & Justice:** We will mandate anti-racist practices to ensure access to opportunities for all students and staff.

**Financial Sustainability:** We will responsibly and transparently manage our fiscal and capital resources to deliver a quality education.

**Community Partnerships:** We will extend, deepen, and monitor community partnerships to strengthen student learning.

**Objective 1: Provide access to exceptional literacy instruction for all students.**

In order to ensure our students are productive 21st century citizens upon graduation, each must be able to read on grade level, think critically, and support arguments and opinions with text and media from a variety of sources. To guarantee our students have the tools necessary to perform these skills, we must establish equitable access to high quality teachers, resources, and curriculum, and equip all educators with the skills necessary to deliver research-based literacy instruction. Throughout the process, the district will be steadfast in ensuring all aspects of teaching and instruction are inclusive, including curricula and reading materials accessible to all students.

**Action Items**

Ensure all PK-12 teachers receive direct professional learning in literacy instruction, including research-based curricula, instructional organization and the effective integration of writing into all content-area instruction.

Establish a team of literacy specialist(s) to engage in direct support and provide job-embedded coaching to instructors at all levels.

Archive priority standards into a virtual catalog to support virtual K-5 instruction.

Expand pre-kindergarten availability to ensure all students enter elementary school Kindergarten-ready.

**Measures of Success**

Effectively implement literacy block expectations in 100% of classrooms within two years.

Raise the percentage of the lowest-performing 25% of students meeting growth targets on ILEARN English Language Arts exams from 23% to 40% by 2024.

Improve the percentage of students demonstrating proficiency on ILEARN English Language Arts exams from 23.7% to 61.7% by 2026.

## Objective 2: Ensure all students graduate college- or career- ready.

SBCSC's high school graduation rate continues to lag behind both state and national averages, with approximately one quarter of all students not achieving a diploma within four years. To address these challenges, the corporation must establish true 6-12 academic pathways through which students can engage deeply in coursework of interest while preparing for college credit, internships, or industry credential opportunities. Throughout the pathway experience, SBCSC must systematically monitor students off-track for graduation, and provide rigorous academic intervention at the middle and early high school grade levels.

### Action Items

Expand 21st Century Scholars recruitment activities and continually monitor completion of scholar tasks at each HS grade level.

Expand dual credit participation of traditionally underrepresented student populations.

Actively identify and recruit students into college-readiness and preparation programming.

Create systemic opportunities for underrepresented populations to participate in pathways options, including expanded informational opportunities for elementary and middle school students and parents.

### Measures of Success

Ensure 60% of grade level cohorts meet 21st Century Scholarship requirements each year of high school.

Increase to 1,500 per year the number of students achieving dual credit or industry certification within three years.

Increase from 56% to 88% the percentage of graduation cohorts demonstrating college or career readiness by 2026.

### **Objective 3: Guarantee all children access to high-performing schools.**

Student performance in the corporation varies widely across schools, with high-performing programs co-existing with others that have for years struggled to raise student achievement. With the creation of the Empowerment Zone in 2019, the corporation has committed to providing underperforming schools with the resources and autonomy necessary for the success of turnaround efforts. The district must continue to support SBEZ in these efforts, while ensuring intensive supports and strategies crucial to academic success at other high-poverty schools.

#### **Action Items**

Conduct school quality reviews for objective evaluations of schools historically not meeting expectations.

Provide ongoing support to the Empowerment Zone through continued refinement of central services and planning for long-term sustainability.

Provide intensive supports and interventions for schools at risk of SBOE interventions, leveraging grant resources for turnaround efforts.

Ensure increased and equitable access to all SBCSC schools and programs.

#### **Measures of Success**

Observe schools meet 50% of standards observed under local school quality review processes within three years.

Ensure 75% of African-American students attend a school meeting or approaching standards under Indiana's federal accountability system within four years.

Increase the percentage of SBCSC schools meeting or approaching accountability standards from 31% to 65%.

## Objective 4: Attract, develop, and retain high-quality and diverse staff.

In an effort to become the area's first choice in K-12 education, it is essential that we provide our students access to the highest quality teachers, administrators, and support staff. Becoming the first choice for new and experienced educators across the region requires salary and career pathway investments necessary to attract and retain talent, while at the same time providing the training and support necessary to develop the skills of all educators. Increased compensation and advancement must be accompanied by a clear recruitment strategy, with focused efforts to develop a diverse workforce reflective of the corporation's student population.

### Action Items

Establish a competitive and expanded teacher salary framework, including rewards for advanced credentials and responsibilities that contribute to student success.

Develop teacher certification pathways aimed at improving retention of emergency permit educators and high need certification areas.

Expand teacher recruitment, with special emphasis on HBCU and HSI schools of education, and ensure a climate of support that ensures retention.

Establish teacher induction and onboarding processes, including early career mentoring and job-embedded professional learning.

Require professional learning opportunities in diversity, equity, and inclusion for all corporation staff.

### Measures of Success

Ensure 75% of all newly hired instructors successfully complete new teacher induction and all associated professional learning within 2 years.

Increase from 16% to 32% the percentage of teachers, administrators, and staff from historically marginalized and underrepresented populations.

Achieve a 80% retention rate at each building among effective and highly effective educators before 2026.

**Objective 5: Establish tiered systems of support to create positive classroom environments for all.**

SBCSC aims to create safe, culturally responsive, and trauma-informed learning environments. To achieve this goal, we must guarantee multi-tiered systems of support accessible to all schools and student populations, with an emphasis on positive behavior interventions and support (PBIS), restorative justice, and trauma-informed care. The establishment of comprehensive support structures lays the groundwork for academic improvement, but more importantly facilitates the development of the social and emotional skills so critical to the long-term success of our students.

**Action Items**

Implement and integrate Social and Emotional Learning curriculum across all grade levels.

Consistently train and implement SBCSC Code of Conduct.

Implement professional learning in PBIS and restorative justice to create a positive student environment.

Establish discipline data review teams and processes at each school to conduct root cause analysis and develop building-level strategies for correcting disproportionality.

Provide wraparound supports for at-risk students to prevent drop-out or expulsion, including collaboration with local mental health providers and youth agencies.

**Measures of Success**

Observe 75% implementation of multi-tiered system of support practices (Tier 1, 2, and 3 practices) in all buildings.

Reduce out-of-school suspension rates for African-American students from 21% to 10% or below by 2026.

Increase to 80% in all buildings the percentage of students who believe SBCSC is a safe, welcoming, and warm environment, as measured by climate survey indicators by 2026.

## **Objective 6: Provide efficient and cost-effective operational services to support instructional investments.**

In order to achieve near term academic gains and guarantee the long-term sustainability of the district, SBCSC must achieve greater efficiency in non-instructional expenses and ensure dollars continue to flow to the classroom. While savings have been achieved, the corporation continues to exceed benchmark targets in spending on facilities and busing services, and can continue to improve efficiency in administrative services. Policy measures to improve building utilization and better transport students from home to school are essential to raise the quality of service, lower operational costs to the corporation, and ensure significant instructional investments for our neediest student populations.

### **Action Items**

Reduce capital footprint while revitalizing educational facilities.

Minimize administrative costs by optimizing administrative processes and updating back-end systems.

Improve efficiency and operations of student transportation.

Develop a purchasing strategy to ensure opportunities for local women- and minority-owned businesses to engage with the school corporation.

Implement budgeting procedures and targeted investments to ensure expenditures are equitable, data-informed, and aligned with district priorities to raise student achievement.

### **Measures of Success**

Ensure 80% building utilization across all SBCSC buildings within five years.

Increase the participation of women-owned businesses and minority-owned businesses by 25%, respectively, within three years.

Reduce per-pupil facilities and operations expenses to peer averages by 2026.

## **Objective 7: Collaborate with community partners to improve student outcomes and achievement.**

Throughout the corporation's challenges, the South Bend community has remained committed to the academic success of our students, and the ongoing involvement of all stakeholders will remain critical to the success of all strategic objectives. The corporation must seek to actively involve both internal and external community members into decision-making processes, while leveraging the support partner organizations can offer our students in academic interventions, social and emotional support, and family services. Through continuous collaboration and improvement with these partners, we can establish true K-12 student pathways that leave all students prepared for college or careers and ready to contribute to the long-term success of South Bend.

### **Action Items**

Expand high-value CTE offerings and dual credit course offerings in partnership with local providers/partners.

Expand student mentoring and tutoring programs for students.

Increase participation in internships and demonstration of employability skills.

Establish Brown Learning Center as a hub for family support services.

### **Measures of Success**

Ensure the availability of extended-learning supports at 100% of SBCSC schools beginning in the 2021-22 school year.

Increase the number of students participating in SBCSC mentoring and tutoring programs to 1,200 within two years.

Raise by 50% the number of students participating in internships or work-based learning opportunities



