



ATLANTA
PUBLIC
SCHOOLS

2025-2030 Strategic Plan

One District. One Goal. Every Child.

Mid-Year Report 2025-2026



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As Atlanta Public Schools (APS) enters the second semester of the 2025-2026 academic year, the district stands at a pivotal turning point. The theme for 2026 is "**The Year of Acceleration**," shifting from incremental progress to intentional, rapid growth to ensure we are educating and empowering every student to shape the future. With the hard work from our school board, exceptional teachers, leaders and staff, talented students, and a community of believers, the district saw significant gains across both academic and operational focus areas:

Academic Excellence:

- **Historic Graduation Rates:** For the first time, the graduation rate exceeded 90%.
- **Testing & Rigor:** Achieved all-time highs in AP course participation and top-tier scores (3s, 4s, and 5s). ACT and SAT scores saw year-over-year gains despite record participation.
- **School Improvement:** 9 out of 10 schools successfully exited the state's targeted support list.
- **Improved CCRPI results** were recorded in 11 of 12 measurable areas.
- **Engagement:** Chronic absenteeism was reduced by 3.3%.

Operational & Financial Stability:

- **Fiscal Responsibility:** Successfully closed a \$100 million budget deficit to move into a balanced budget position.
- **Human Capital:** Achieved over 90% teacher retention. Increased average teacher pay to over \$90,000 and enhanced benefits and life insurance.
- **Safety & Infrastructure:** Placed School Resource Officers (SROs) in every school, including elementary levels, and expanded safety vestibule projects.
- **Long-term Planning:** Tackled long-standing facility challenges to allow for the future reinvestment of capital into academic programming.

Critical Challenges & Areas for Growth

Despite these successes, there is much work to do:

- **Early Literacy:** 3rd-grade literacy rates remain a primary concern, hovering at state and national averages (approx. 35%).
- **Economic Alignment:** There is a continued need to expand high-wage, high-demand career certification opportunities for students.
- **Instruction:** The district must ensure a "saturation" of high-quality educators across the district.
- **Fiscal Constraints:** While the budget is balanced, it remains stretched, requiring disciplined resource allocation.

"The Year of Acceleration"

The strategy for the remainder of the 2025-2026 school year moves beyond stabilization toward high-impact growth. Key directives include:

1. **Intentional Intervention:** Teachers are tasked with immediate, time-sensitive remediation to close learning gaps.
2. **Post-Secondary Readiness:** Increasing the focus on preparing students for life beyond graduation through diversified career and college pathways.
3. **Stakeholder Activation:** A district-wide call for "maximum effort" from students, parents (utilizing the Parent Portal), and the community (via your local school or [Atlanta Partners for Education](#)) to move the needle on student achievement.

The following pages dive deeper into progress in each of our 2025-2030 Strategic Plan Focus Areas, as well as how we are strengthening our strategy management processes.



WE ARE STRENGTHENING OUR INSTRUCTIONAL CORE

MID-YEAR
2025-2026

DATA SNAPSHOT

64%

36%

64% of K-3 students were 'On Track' or 'Above' on Amira (Dyslexia Screener) in the fall

MAP Data

3 pp

English Language Arts

Overall, 41% of students in grades 2-8 are predicted to score Proficient or Distinguished based on Winter MAP, compared to 38% in Fall (+3 percentage point (pp))

- Each subgroup (Black, Students with Disability, and Economically Disadvantaged) also increased 3 pp

4 pp

Math

Overall, 36% of students in grades 2-8 are predicted to score Proficient or Distinguished based on Winter MAP, compared to 32% in Fall (+4 pp)

- Black Students (+4 pp)
- Students with Disabilities (+3 pp)
- Economically Disadvantaged (+5 pp)

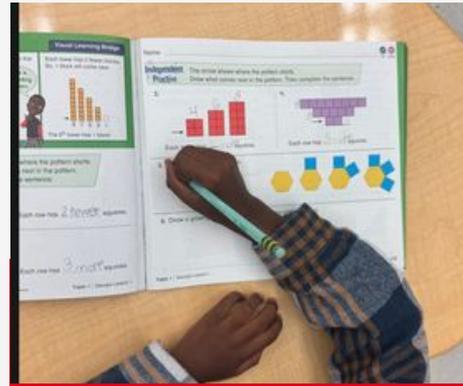
PROGRESS

- Implemented **new writing resource and a playbook** to teach writing
- Building instructional alignment through **new Instructional Frameworks**
- Provided consistent **modeling and coaching**, with 362 school visits
- Addressing pacing challenges through **dedicated support calendars for teachers**
- Received "high satisfaction" ratings from teachers about **monthly professional learning**
- Exceptional Education team completed more than 200 classroom observations; provided professional learning based on observations; and made positive progress in compliance



NEXT STEPS

- Develop **differentiated review opportunities** aligned to GMAS Math blueprints
- Provide **targeted Math professional learning** focused on Conceptual Understanding
- Provide support in the **"modeling & guided practice"** phases of explicit instruction
- Provide **professional learning in science of reading for 6-12** recognizing evidence-based practices for vocabulary instruction
- **Continuous standard alignment** within the HMH curriculum resource.
- Intense focus on literacy and writing, including a **Literacy Council and Writing Playbooks**
- Continue **partnering to improve early learning**
- Shift **Exceptional Education professional learning** from information to practice
- Start **Exceptional Education community engagement meetings** with a reimagined Advisory Committee



CCRPI OVERVIEW

APS scored **100 on the Closing Gaps** component in elementary schools

Improved Readiness and Content Mastery scores at **all grade bands.**

Students with disabilities and economically disadvantaged made **gains in 11 of 12 areas.**

- Barack and Michelle Obama Academy and Springdale Park Elementary both scored 100 in the Progress component.
- Hollis Innovation Academy (middle school) scored a 99.9 on Progress.
- Mary Lin Elementary, Springdale Park, Virginia-Highland Elementary and Morningside Elementary all scored a 100 in Content Mastery
- Coretta Scott King Young Women's Leadership Academy scored a 100 for Graduation Rate.
- M. Agnes Jones Elementary and Humphries Elementary increased their Progress score by 20.9 and 18.2 points, respectively.

DATA SNAPSHOT

2.7pp

Not Chronically Absent

78% of students were not chronically absent as of the end of November, a 2.7 percentage point (pp) increase from the same time last year

1.2pp

No Suspensions

As of the end of November, 95.2% of students had no suspensions, up 1.2pp from the same time last year

- Students with disabilities: 91.6% (+2.3pp)
- Black students: 93.7% (+1.62pp)

As of the end of November, 88.5% of students had no discipline incidents (+0.52pp)

65%

Mentorship

65% of middle and high school students have a mentor they can go to for advice on school, career, or life

80%

Trusted Adult

80% of students state they have someone at school that cares about them (Grades 4-12)

PROGRESS

- Convened the District Attendance Review Team (DART), and four subcommittees, to review school attendance data, uncover barriers and root causes, and set expectations for school attendance teams.
- Partners have been identified and leveraged to support improving student immunization compliance.
- Convening weekly Chronic Absence Review Team (CART) at the school level to implement the Tiered Attendance Intervention Framework.
- Identifying student needs earlier due to stronger data systems and regular MTSS cycles.
- Reorganized Student Services Team to focus on alignment, collaboration, intentionality, and accountability.

NEXT STEPS

- Continue collaboration with Social Work Services, Family Engagement, Counseling, Health Services, and Community Partners to build parent and family capacity.
- Continue Tier 3 intensive social work case management, which may include wraparound services, home visits, and referrals to community agencies, as needed.
- Provide ongoing training to staff on data dashboards to flag students with emerging or chronic absenteeism.
- Create a clear Restorative Practices Framework to develop restorative discipline protocols.
- Position athletic coaches as central figures in caring for every child, increasing access to trusted adults and fostering a culture of mentorship, support, and growth across athletic programs.



SOUTH ATLANTA HS GAINS

Compared to last year, South Atlanta HS has the highest increase in Average Daily Attendance (+3 percentage points)

They did this by maintaining a daily sign-in log to track attendance, issuing attendance agreements, informing students of the number of days they must attend to reach 90% (ownership), and celebrating their progress with certificates, recognition, and sweet treats.

Additionally, they highlight and celebrate all students who maintain a CCRPI attendance rate of 90% or higher.

We are also laser-focused on students with CCRPI attendance below 85% using the same checkpoints, with additional layers of support.

DATA SNAPSHOT

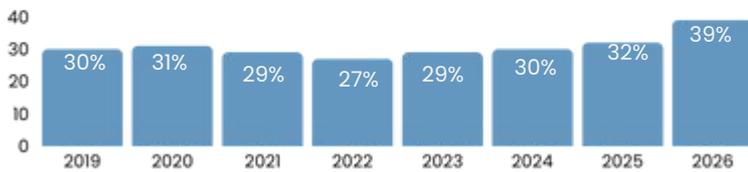


Pathway Completion
82% of cohort 2026 students have completed or are scheduled to complete a pathway in World Language, Advanced Academics, Fine Arts, or CTAE

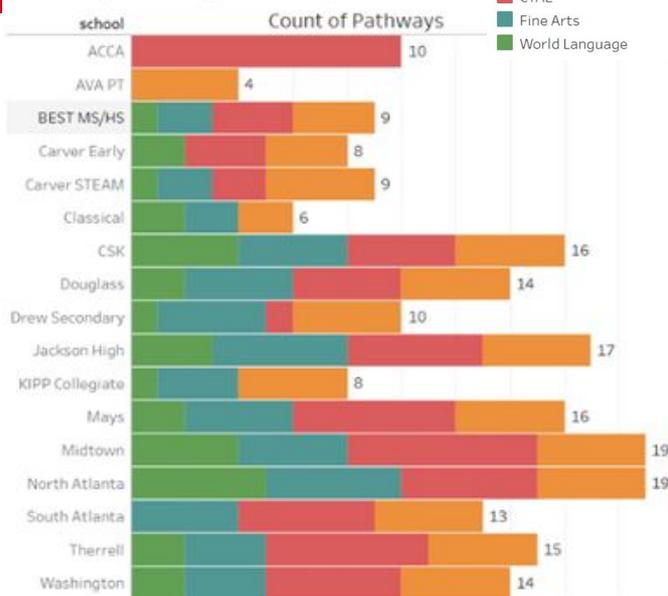


Advanced Academics
39% of all high school students are enrolled in an Advanced Placement, Dual Enrollment, or International Baccalaureate course this year

% of students who enrolled in Accelerated Enrollment course



Pathway Offering Summary



PROGRESS

- Through APS2040, we launched a phased process to explore and open specialized and innovative school models (eg. School of the Arts, Academy of Biomedical & Healthcare Sciences, Literacy, 3DE, Single-gender, Early College)
- Fully implemented the Individual College & Career Plans for 8th Graders
 - Students are walked through all 4 years of High School courses
 - At each grade level, students receive tips for success
- 521 students enrolled at Atlanta College & Career Academy



- Athletics launched the Youth Announcer Program where 8 scholars were introduced to the profession of Sports Communication with Sam Crenshaw, veteran Sports Reporter and local television Sports Anchor

NEXT STEPS

- Expand access to high-skill, high-demand and high-wage pathways aligned to student aptitude, interest and regional workforce demand data
- Engage stakeholders across the district on our specialized offerings
- Secure key partners to support those offerings
- Explore implementation of robust programming in middle school to better prepare students for secondary opportunities
- Provide ongoing professional learning for school teams on all College & Career Readiness initiatives: YouScience, College and Career Plans, Academic Advisement, Dual Enrollment/Accelerated Career
- Launch athletic career exploration programs, annually connecting students with athletic industry opportunities with the district and professionals across diverse pathways.



ACCA DUAL COMPLETER

Atlanta College & Career Academy student, Christian Garcia, completed 2 pathways, on track for 3 technical certificates, and employed as an automotive technician.



CARVER FOOTBALL UNDEFEATED

The Carver Panthers raised their region championship trophy after completing a perfect 10-0 regular season.

DATA SNAPSHOT



Experienced Teachers Leading the Way: 89% of APS teachers now have three + years of experience, exceeding SY26 target by 3 percentage points (pp) and narrowing the gap between high- and low-poverty schools to just 8%.



Record-Breaking Retention: Overall teacher retention reached 90%, surpassing SY26 target of 86%. Retention in the same school also rose by 8 pp, to 88.6% – the highest on record since SY17!



Strong, Seasoned Leaders: The percentage of principals with 3+ years of APS experience increased from 53% to 61%, moving us closer to our 2030 goal of 80%.

Competitive Compensation: The average teacher salary increased to \$90,908, keeping us on track toward our \$100,000 goal by 2030.

PROGRESS

- Programming is underway for Cohort 3 in partnership with Georgia State University to empower educators to earn a master’s degree at no cost
- Targeted pay adjustments were implemented for several non-teaching roles, including paraprofessionals, school bus drivers, custodians, crossing guards, and nurses, based on regional compensation data
- Tiered schools to provide a targeted talent strategy
- Fall 2025 Micro-Credential Cohort is 55 staff members
- Continued to provide wellbeing resources, including expanded Benefits options



NEXT STEPS

- Launch the APS Employee Engagement survey in January, with an additional focus on 360-style questions
- Establish formal mentoring/sponsorship programs led by principals and managers to grow future leaders



2025 APyeS! AWARDS

- **Teacher of the Year Award**, was presented to Briana Wilson, a kindergarten teacher at Fickett Elementary School
- **Principal of the Year** was awarded to Yusuf A. Muhammad Jr. of Phoenix Academy
- **Assistant Principal of the Year** was awarded to Christopher Gomillion of Continental Colony Elementary School

OUR RESPONSIBILITY IS SHARED

DATA SNAPSHOT

\$3,352,146 Funds Raised (e.g. United Way, Google, Georgia Power, Norfolk Southern)

68.2% 68.2% of currently enrolled students have at least one parent/guardian with an **Infinite Campus Parent Portal account**



PROGRESS

Family Engagement

- Began the District Family Ambassador program for families to serve as school ambassadors
- Supported schools and clusters on family engagement programs, series, and support
- Restructured the Family Engagement team to align with Associate Superintendents and serve with other student support functions
- Held the 6th Annual APS Family Engagement Conference
- Hosted "Reimagine What's Possible" with civic, business, and community leaders

Partnerships

- Recruited leaders in corporate finance via Coca-Cola, Mercedes-Benz USA, and philanthropy via United Way of Atlanta to strengthen APFE governance and oversight.
- Created new APFE branding and website to clearly communicate mission, priorities, and impact.
- Implemented new Partner Interest Form with expected response rate
- Identified partnership liaisons in every school and their school needs

FOOD DISTRIBUTION ACROSS APS

Schools, partners, communities, and staff distributed food to hundreds of families throughout the district.

These efforts came at a time when food insecurity continues to affect Georgia households at significant levels.



NEXT STEPS

Family Engagement

- Launch district campaign to bring more awareness to Parent Portal
- Promote families to engage in mid-year student success conversations
- Host Parent University sessions on Testing, Summer Learning, and Instructional Technology
- Continue piloting the Family Ambassador cohort

Partnerships

- Create a Fundraising menu to fulfill APS unfunded strategic needs
- Confirming an APFE Advisory Council and meeting cadence
- Meet the needs of schools and clusters

DATA SNAPSHOT

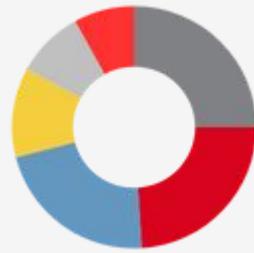


Nutrition

39% Breakfast participation from August-November

66% Lunch participation from August-November

FY26 Strategic Budget Expenditure Breakdown



- 25% We Are Strengthening Our Instructional Core
- 24% Our Responsibility is Shared
- 22% We Are Caring For Every Child
- 12% Our System is Efficient & Effective
- 9% Our Strength is Our Team
- 8% We Are Sparking Student Curiosity

49,945

49,558

Student Enrollment

Enrollment was 49,558 as of October 1, 2025, down 387 students compared to October 1, 2024

PROGRESS

Transportation

- Deployed 20 additional propane-powered buses August 2025
- Implemented monthly attendance incentive for Transportation staff
- Implemented quarterly route review and routine student headcounts

Nutrition

- Continue to determine if schools can be added to the CEP list
- Kept overall labor cost and food cost down

Facilities

- Developed a Comprehensive Long Range Facilities Plan to serve as a long-term roadmap to capital improvement planning and increasing school utilization.
- Designated 18 properties to be declared surplus through Board action

Finance

- Cut Central Office spending; constrained growth in utilities; eliminated general fund transfer to School Nutrition Program
- Reduced dependence on Fund Balance



GROWING OUR NUTRITION TEAM

So far this year, 10 food assistants completed our Managers in Training (MIT) program, with 3 stepping into new roles. Three are on track to complete their GED through APS Adult Education.

Each Nutrition Cluster now leads its own monthly session, giving managers the opportunity to build confidence, strengthen their presentation skills, and deepen camaraderie across the district.

We are proud of every participant, trainer, and leader who has contributed to these milestones.

NEXT STEPS

- January Chew Cru Taste Testing for students to test and rate new menu items and recipes
- Review option to move to "Grab and Go" breakfast
- Implement a process to address redistricting and rezoning, including an updated Board Policy and the associated Administrative Regulation.
- Develop recommendations for E-SPLOST 2027
- Leverage stakeholder engagement to understand student and community needs
- Address unactivated properties through, partnerships with AUDC, MALB, and AHA, Parks and Rec, community organization, etc.
- Activate any current and future unactivated properties through one of the following 5 methods: Short-term lease; Medium-term lease; Long-term lease; district use; and/or Sale or trade.
- Demo unused, unactivated buildings to reduce neighborhood blight (in coordination with the Atlanta Historic Preservation Center).

TRACK OUR PROGRESS

Track district, cluster and school progress here: atlantapublicschools.us/strategicplan

Baseline (2025)	Indicator	Goal (2026)	Goal (2030)
46.1%	% of students scoring 'Demonstrating' or 'Exceeding' on all ELA domains in Spring GKIDS 2.0	49.9%	65%
11.2%	% of Exceptional Education students scoring proficient and above on End of Grade Milestones Exams	13.2%	21.2%
22.2%	% of Black students scoring proficient and above on End of Grade Milestones Exams	27.2%	47.2%
18.7%	% of Economically Disadvantaged students scoring proficient and above on End of Grade Milestones Exams	23.7%	43.7%
63.6%	% of Students with Disabilities with a Typical or High End of Grade Milestones Student Growth Percentile	65.9%	75%
66.0%	% of Black students with a Typical or High End of Grade Milestones Student Growth Percentile	67.8%	75%
65.6%	% of Economically-Disadvantaged students with a Typical or High End of Grade Milestones Student Growth Percentile	67.5%	75%
65.2%	% of English Learners with a Typical or High ACCESS Student Growth Percentile	67.2%	75%
32	# of schools identified on the state lists (CSI, TSI, ATSI)	18	8
0%	% of students with access to high-quality PK3 seats	0.0%	20%
28%	% of students with access to high-quality PK4 seats	30.4%	40%
68.8%	% of students who are not chronically absent	71.0%	80%
60%	% students who feel a sense of belonging	63.0%	75%
89.6%	% of students without suspensions	90.7%	95%
83.5%	% of Students with Disabilities students without suspensions (OSS)	85.8%	95%
86.4%	% of Black students without suspensions (OSS)	88.1%	95%
43.6%	% of students feeling comfortable going to most or all of the adults in the school for help	47.9%	65%
0%	% of students with individual success plans	0%	90%
19% (2024)	% of schools with 4 or 5 star climate rating	29.3%	50%
0	Number of new specialized and innovative school models in the new schools network	0	5
58%	% of on-time graduating seniors who enrolled in college the following fall	60.3%	65%
78.3%	% of students who complete a pathway in CTAE, Fine Arts, Advanced Academics, or World Language	79.7%	85%
49.9%	% of students earning HS credit in AP, IB, or Dual Enrollment	50.5%	55%
N/A	% of students participating in at least one school-based extracurricular activity	65%	75%
99.4%	Elementary Beyond the Core	99.4%	99%
99.0%	Middle School Beyond the Core	99.0%	99%

We Are Strengthening Our Core

We Are Caring For Every Child

We Are Sparking Student Curiosity

TRACK OUR PROGRESS

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	Baseline (2025)	Indicator	Goal (2026)	Goal (2030)
Our Strength Is Our Team	TBD	Teacher Quality Measure	TBD	TBD
	51%	% of engaged staff	53.8%	65%
	84%	% of teachers with 3 or more years of experience	85.2%	90%
	85%	% of teachers returning the following year	86.0%	90%
	\$88,840	Average teacher salary	\$91,072	\$100,000
	53.1%	% of Principals with 3 or more years of experience as principals within APS	58.5%	80%
Our Responsibility Is Shared	83.5%	% of favorable responses to "Supporting Student Success" (Family Engagement Survey)	84.7%	90%
	68%	% of students whose guardian has an Infinite Campus Parent Portal account	71.4%	85%
	\$1,690,183	Fundraising Revenue through APFE (Cash and Grants)	\$3,352,146	\$5,000,000
	N/A	% of clusters with access to community hubs*	TBD	100%
Our System Is Efficient & Effective	60.6%	% of students choosing very safe or extremely safe to location questions (ES)	62.5%	70%
	52.1%	% of students choosing very safe or extremely safe to location questions (MS/HS)	54.7%	65%
	3.2%	% of budgeted general fund expenditures from fund balance	1.5%	0%
	61.9%	% of students participating in lunch	63.9%	72%
	36.2%	% of student participating in breakfast	38.2%	46%
	N/A	% of on-time morning bus arrivals	97.1%	100%
	N/A	% of on-time afternoon bus arrivals	83.1%	90%
	\$2.05	Cost per square foot for electricity, gas, and water*	TBD	TBD
	N/A	% of work orders completed on time	TBD	90%
	27	# of excess properties repurposed for community good through lease/sale/trade/reuse	28	48
	5.6%	% of facilities between 85% and 95% utilization*	TBD	TBD
	34.3%	% of schools meeting K-12 Enrollment Minimums*	43.4%	TBD
	99%	% uptime for for core digital tools that support digital learning	100%	100%

* We are continually reviewing our Key Performance Indicators and goals to ensure alignment and prioritization.

CONTINUALLY IMPROVING

- We are **reviewing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)** to ensure alignment to our priorities and needs. (eg. Teacher Quality, Facility Usage, etc)
- We are **finalizing our Accelerated Literacy Plan** to move students from incremental progress to breakthrough results.
- We are **strengthening our Progress Monitoring** processes for the district and school strategic plans, as well as School Improvement plans.
- We are **planning Spring community engagement** to discuss our future, ensure our budget is aligned, and address hot topics.

FUND THE PLAN

- We are continuing to **limit expenditures** to ensure we use the least amount of fund balance possible.
- Budget Commission will take place on the following dates to help build and inform the FY27 budget:
 - January 22nd
 - February 26th
 - April 16th
- Tentative Adoption (May 4th)
- Final Adoption (June 1st)

FACILITIES PLANNING: NEXT STEPS

Road to the Redistricting/Rezoning for Impacted Schools (*Tentative*)

January - February 2026: Develop and finalize the administrative regulation related to Board Policy AD, that includes, but not limited to, the community engagement process and trigger points to initiate discussion about future changes to attendance zones and possible school closures;

Schools experiencing redistricting/rezoning in SY27-28: Process begins in Spring 2026 and runs through Fall 2026: Board vote in Fall 2026

Schools experiencing redistricting/rezoning in SY28-29: Process begins in Spring 2027 and runs through Fall 2027: Board vote in Fall 2027

Road to the E-SPLOST 2027 (*Tentative*)

- *January - March 2026:* Recommendation development (APS Staff)
- *March - April 2026:* Present E-SPLOST Plan to Board at retreat (or Board meetings)
- *April - May 2026:* Community engagement for draft E-SPLOST 2027 list
- *June 2026:* Board of Education approval of E-SPLOST 2027 referendum and call for vote
- *July - October 2026:* Website of E-SPLOST 2027 information
- *November 3, 2026:* E-SPLOST 2027 Final Decision
- *July 1, 2027:* If E-SPLOST 2027 passes, collections start