The Hardy Harvest

Superintendent Dr. Nakia Hardy's 100-Day Report

Listening. Learning. Leading.

Executive Summary

The first 100 days of leadership provide an opportunity to listen, learn, build relationships, and establish a foundation for future success. This report reflects Superintendent Dr. Nakia Hardy's first 100 days leading Franklin County Schools and summarizes the insights, priorities, and opportunities identified through engagement with students, staff, families, community partners, elected officials, faith leaders, and stakeholders across the district.

Guided by the framework of **Preserve, Prune, and Plant**, this report highlights the strengths that define Franklin County Schools, identifies areas requiring refinement and continued investment, and outlines a vision for preparing the district for future growth and success.

Throughout her first 100 days, Dr. Hardy focused on listening before leading. Through school visits, community conversations, advisory meetings, Parent Summits, Coffee with the Superintendent sessions, stakeholder engagement opportunities, and the Blueprint 2030 Pulse Survey, she sought to understand the experiences, perspectives, and aspirations of those who know Franklin County Schools best. A consistent theme emerged throughout these conversations: the Franklin County community deeply values its schools, believes in its students, and remains committed to their success.

The report identifies several strengths that should be preserved as Franklin County Schools continue to grow. These include strong family and community traditions, positive relationships, parent involvement, school safety initiatives, dedicated employees, and a culture of student achievement. Academic accomplishments continue to demonstrate the district's commitment to excellence. Franklin County Schools ranks first in the North Central Region for Math I

proficiency, an important indicator of college, career, and workforce readiness, and students earned 3,416 Career and Technical Education credentials during the previous school year. These achievements reflect the dedication of students, staff, families, and community partners working together to support student success.

The report also acknowledges opportunities for growth. Stakeholder feedback highlighted the need to strengthen organizational culture, invest more intentionally in employee support and development, improve communication and transparency, refine systems and processes, and continue aligning resources with strategic priorities. Growth requires honest reflection, and the district remains committed to continuously improving how it serves students, staff, and families.

Looking ahead, Franklin County Schools must prepare for the opportunities and challenges that accompany rapid growth. As one of the fastest-growing counties in North Carolina, the district must continue evolving to meet the needs of a changing community while preserving the values and traditions that make it unique. Future priorities include strengthening two-way communication and stakeholder engagement, expanding advisory groups, investing in professional learning and leadership development, supporting enrollment growth, fostering innovation, strengthening community partnerships, and ensuring every school has clear measures of success.

This report also introduces the district's 2026–2027 theme, **Rooted in Purpose**. Rooted in Purpose reflects a commitment to ensuring that every decision, initiative, and investment remains connected to student success, community partnership, excellence, innovation, and opportunity.

At its core, this report reaffirms a simple but powerful truth: the success of Franklin County Schools depends on the collective efforts of students, employees, families, community partners, businesses, faith leaders, elected officials, and stakeholders working together toward a common purpose. As Franklin County Schools continue implementing Blueprint 2030 and preparing for the future, the district remains committed to transparency, continuous improvement, and Growing Forward Together in service of every student.

A Letter from the Superintendent

Dear Members of the Board of Education, Staff, Families, Students, and Community Partners,

It is with gratitude and optimism that I share this 100-Day Report with the Franklin County community.

When I accepted the opportunity to serve as Superintendent of Franklin County Schools, I committed myself to listening before leading. Over the past 100 days, I have visited schools, met with students and staff, attended community events, engaged with elected officials and faith leaders, and listened to the voices of stakeholders across our district.

These experiences have strengthened my belief that Franklin County Schools is a special place.

I have witnessed caring educators who go above and beyond for students. I have seen students demonstrate academic excellence, leadership, creativity, and resilience. I have observed strong partnerships between schools, families, businesses, and community organizations. Most importantly, I have experienced a community that genuinely cares about its schools and its children.

Like many of our schools and families, these first 100 days were shaped by storms. Weather disruptions challenged schedules and routines, but they also revealed something important: storms reveal the strength of roots.

Franklin County Schools has strong roots.

Our challenge moving forward is not simply to maintain what exists but to thoughtfully cultivate growth. Through The Hardy Harvest framework, we have identified areas that must be *preserved*, areas that require *pruning*, and opportunities that must be *planted* for future success.

As one of North Carolina's fastest-growing counties, Franklin County is experiencing significant change. Growth brings opportunity, but it also requires intentional planning, strategic investment, and a willingness to adapt. We must preserve the values and traditions that define us while embracing innovative approaches that prepare students for an increasingly complex future.

The future of Franklin County Schools depends on all of us working together. Students, families, staff, community partners, elected officials, and the Board of Education each play a vital role in our success.

Thank you for your support, partnership, and commitment to our students.

Sincerely,

Dr. Nakia Hardy
Superintendent
Franklin County Schools

Listening Before Leading

One of the primary goals of the first 100 days was to build understanding through engagement.

Throughout the entry process, Dr. Hardy prioritized opportunities to listen and learn from those who know Franklin County Schools best. School visits, advisory meetings, parent engagement opportunities, community events, stakeholder conversations, and district feedback efforts provided valuable insights into the district's strengths, challenges, and aspirations.

Key engagement activities included:

- School visits across all district campuses
- Parent and family engagement events
- Student conversations and classroom visits
- Meetings with principals and school leadership teams
- Staff listening sessions
- County commissioner and municipal leader meetings
- Faith-based community engagement
- Advisory group development and participation
- Blueprint 2030 stakeholder feedback efforts
- Community and business partner outreach

The feedback gathered through these efforts helped identify recurring themes that informed the Preserve, Prune, and Plant framework presented during The Hardy Harvest.

Stakeholders consistently highlighted the importance of strong relationships, community pride, academic excellence, student opportunity, and family engagement. They also identified opportunities to strengthen communication, employee support, facilities planning, student services, and long-term strategic growth.

These conversations continue to shape the district's priorities and reinforce the importance of collaborative leadership as Franklin County Schools moves forward.

About Franklin County Schools

Building a Stronger Community One Lifelong Learner at a Time

Franklin County Schools serves more than 7,900 students across sixteen schools and continues to be the largest and most influential organization in Franklin County. Guided by the mission of empowering students for success through academic excellence, career readiness, and community partnership, the district strives to prepare every student for life beyond the classroom.

Franklin County is one of the fastest-growing counties in North Carolina. New families, new businesses, and new opportunities continue to shape our community. With this growth comes both opportunity and responsibility.

As our community evolves, Franklin County Schools must continue honoring its traditions while embracing innovation, adaptability, and strategic growth. Our future success depends upon our ability to preserve what makes us strong while preparing for the needs of tomorrow.

Today, Franklin County Schools offers students a wide range of opportunities including Career and Technical Education pathways, Advanced Placement courses, dual enrollment experiences, arts programs, athletics, student leadership opportunities, and innovative instructional programming designed to prepare students for success in an increasingly competitive world.

Throughout the first 100 days, one message became clear: Franklin County Schools possess strong roots, committed people, and tremendous potential for growth.

Preserve: What Makes Us Strong

Preserving the Roots of Franklin County Schools

As stakeholders reflected on what they value most about Franklin County Schools, several themes emerged consistently. These strengths represent the foundation upon which future growth must be built.

Family Tradition and Community

Franklin County Schools is deeply connected to the communities it serves. Many families have attended district schools for generations, creating a strong sense of belonging, pride, and tradition.

The district's schools serve not only as centers of learning but also as gathering places that unite communities and create lasting relationships.

Community Pride

Stakeholders consistently expressed pride in their schools, students, and staff. This pride is evident through strong attendance at school events, community support for student activities, and ongoing partnerships that benefit students.

Parent Involvement

Family engagement remains one of the district's greatest priorities.

Through Parent Summits, family engagement initiatives, advisory opportunities, and school-based activities, parents continue to play an active role in supporting student success.

Safety and Security

Safe schools remain a top priority.

The district benefits from strong partnerships with School Resource Officers, local law enforcement agencies, emergency management personnel, and school-based safety teams. These relationships help ensure that students and staff learn and work in safe, supportive environments.

Academic Success

Franklin County Schools continues to demonstrate academic excellence.

Highlights include:

- #1 in the North Central Region for Math I Proficiency
- More than 3,400 Career and Technical Education Credentials Earned
- Expanding opportunities in Career and Technical Education
- Strong student achievement growth
- Success across academics, athletics, arts, and leadership

These accomplishments reflect the dedication of students, educators, families, and community partners working together toward a common goal.

Preserve Summary

The future of Franklin County Schools must be built upon the strengths that have defined the district for generations: community, relationships, family engagement, safety, and student achievement.

These roots remain strong and worthy of preservation.

Prune: Honest Reflection Creates Healthy Growth

Refining Systems, Strengthening Culture, and Investing in People

Healthy growth requires honest reflection.

Throughout the listening and learning process, stakeholders identified opportunities to strengthen systems, improve communication, invest in employees, and refine organizational practices. These conversations highlighted areas where thoughtful improvements can create stronger outcomes for students and staff.

Culture

While Franklin County Schools possesses many positive cultural attributes, stakeholders consistently expressed a desire to strengthen:

- Communication
- Transparency
- Collaboration
- Trust
- Shared ownership
- Employee voice

Strong culture does not happen by accident. It requires intentional leadership, consistent communication, and a commitment to continuous improvement.

Investing in Our People

The district's greatest resource is its people.

Future success depends upon how effectively Franklin County Schools recruits, retains, supports, develops, and recognizes employees.

Focus areas include:

- Professional growth opportunities
- Leadership development
- Employee relations
- Employee recognition
- Career advancement pathways
- Support systems for all employee groups

Compensation and Retention

Attracting and retaining high-quality employees remains one of the most important priorities facing public education.

The district continues to evaluate strategies that support retention, including:

- Local longevity bonus initiatives
- Competitive compensation advocacy
- Recruitment pipeline development
- Employee support programs

Superintendent Teacher Advisory Council (STAC)

Teacher voice remains critical to district success.

Improvements include:

- Two-year membership terms
- Monthly meetings
- Increased continuity
- Expanded opportunities for feedback

Licensure Support

Stakeholders identified opportunities to better support employees as they navigate licensure requirements and professional advancement processes.

Future efforts will focus on improving communication, guidance, and employee support.

Blueprint 2030 Outcomes

The district has established a strong strategic framework through Blueprint 2030.

The next phase requires a continued focus on measurable outcomes, implementation, accountability, and continuous improvement.

Inclement Weather Team and Processes

The district continues reviewing and refining decision-making processes related to weather events, communication, and stakeholder engagement to ensure transparency and consistency.

Reallocation of Resources and Personnel

As priorities evolve, resources must align accordingly.

The district continues evaluating personnel, structures, and investments to ensure resources support strategic goals and student success.

Building Organizational Efficiency

As Franklin County grows, organizational complexity grows as well.

Leadership continues evaluating structures, systems, and workflows to ensure the district remains responsive, efficient, and positioned for future success.

Prune Summary

Growth requires more than preserving strengths. It requires strengthening culture, investing in people, refining systems, and removing barriers that limit success.

Plant: Preparing for the Future

Investing in Growth, Innovation, and Opportunity

As Franklin County continues to grow, Franklin County Schools must prepare for the future through intentional investments in people, partnerships, communication, and innovation.

Two-Way Communication and Feedback

Future success depends on meaningful engagement.

The district will continue creating opportunities for listening, collaboration, and stakeholder feedback through advisory groups, engagement sessions, and community conversations.

Superintendent Student Leadership Cohort

This initiative will provide students with opportunities to engage directly with district leadership, strengthen leadership skills, and contribute ideas that shape the future of Franklin County Schools.

Student Advisory Council

Student voice matters.

The Student Advisory Council will provide a structured avenue for students to share feedback, perspectives, and recommendations.

Biannual Student Leadership Meetings

District leadership will meet regularly with students to discuss priorities, concerns, and opportunities for improvement.

Classified Advisory Board

Creating stronger voice and representation for classified employees remains a priority.

The Classified Advisory Board will provide opportunities for collaboration, feedback, and engagement.

Professional Development for Classified Employees

All employees deserve opportunities for growth and advancement.

Future efforts will expand professional learning opportunities for classified staff.

Innovation

The future requires innovative thinking.

The district will continue exploring new approaches, programs, and opportunities that prepare students for success in a rapidly changing world.

Reimagining Franklin County Schools

The future of Franklin County Schools is now.

As Franklin County continues to attract new residents and businesses, the district must continue asking:

- Why should families choose Franklin County Schools?
- What makes our schools unique?
- How do we remain competitive and relevant?

Telling Our Story

The district must become more intentional about sharing its successes, opportunities, and impact.

Future efforts will focus on:

- Strategic communications
- Community engagement
- Enrollment growth
- Recruitment support
- Brand awareness

Community Partnerships

Future success requires strong partnerships.

The district will continue strengthening relationships with:

- Businesses
- Realtors
- Community Colleges
- Economic Development Organizations
- Nonprofit Organizations

Bus Driver Advisory Group

Transportation employees play a critical role in student success.

This advisory group will provide opportunities for engagement, communication, and collaboration.

Success Indicators for Every School

Every school deserves clear measures of success.

The district will work to develop success indicators that reflect academic achievement, culture, student growth, engagement, and community impact.

Principal Support Program

Strong schools require strong leadership.

Future efforts will focus on strengthening support systems for principals and school leaders.

Faith-Based Partnerships

The district will continue expanding partnerships with faith-based organizations through:

- Quarterly meetings
- School-hosted engagement opportunities
- Volunteer partnerships
- Community support initiatives

Plant Summary

The future of Franklin County Schools depends upon our willingness to invest in innovation, partnerships, communication, leadership development, and opportunity.

Rooted in Purpose

The 2026–2027 District Theme

Rooted in Purpose represents Franklin County Schools' commitment to ensuring every decision remains focused on students and aligned with the district's mission.

Purpose reminds us why we serve.

Purpose reminds us why we teach.

Purpose reminds us why we lead.

Purpose reminds us why every decision matters.

The framework is built upon five pillars:

- ***Student Success***
    - Every decision begins with students.
- ***Community Partnership***
    - Strong schools require strong partnerships.
- ***Excellence***
    - Continuous improvement remains essential.
- ***Innovation***
    - Preparing students for tomorrow requires forward-thinking leadership.
- ***Opportunity***
    - Every student deserves access to opportunities that support success beyond graduation.

Rooted in Purpose serves as both a reflection of who we are and a vision for who we aspire to become.

The Power of Community

Throughout the first 100 days, one lesson became increasingly clear:

The greatest strength of Franklin County Schools is its people.

Students.

Families.

Employees.

Board members.

Community partners.

Faith leaders.

Businesses.

Volunteers.

The district's success is built upon relationships and shared commitment.

As Franklin County continues to grow and evolve, the power of community will remain one of our most important assets.

Together, we will continue preserving what makes us strong, refining what needs improvement, and planting seeds for future success.

Growing Forward Together

Franklin