UCPS
UNION COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Strategic Plan
2026 - 2031

UNION COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS



A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

As the top-performing school district in North Carolina, Union County Public Schools (UCPS) is reaching new heights. Over the course of the last 10 years, we have made significant academic gains, developed innovative programming and offered our students multiple college and career readiness pathways focused on their success after graduation. We have also developed an apprentice-based teacher pipeline program, increased mental health supports and advanced physical safety efforts for students and staff.

Now, it is time to build on these efforts and plan for the future. I am proud to share Strategic Plan 2026 - 2031, our new five-year strategic plan that will move UCPS forward. We took time to redefine our mission and vision and worked to identify focus areas that are relevant, timely and that will lead to even more higher student outcomes.

I would like to thank everyone who contributed to the development of our plan. Through surveys and collaborative discussions, we received valuable input and feedback from employees, students, parents, community members and our Board of Education. Their perspectives helped to identify and shape the four focus areas for the plan.

I encourage you to read the plan and stay engaged as we work to prepare all students for college, career and life.

Sincerely,
Andrew G. Houlihan, Ed.D.
Superintendent

A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

As we move forward, let us remember that a strategic plan is more than words written on paper—it is a commitment to action, accountability, collaboration, and results. Our children deserve nothing less than our collective best.

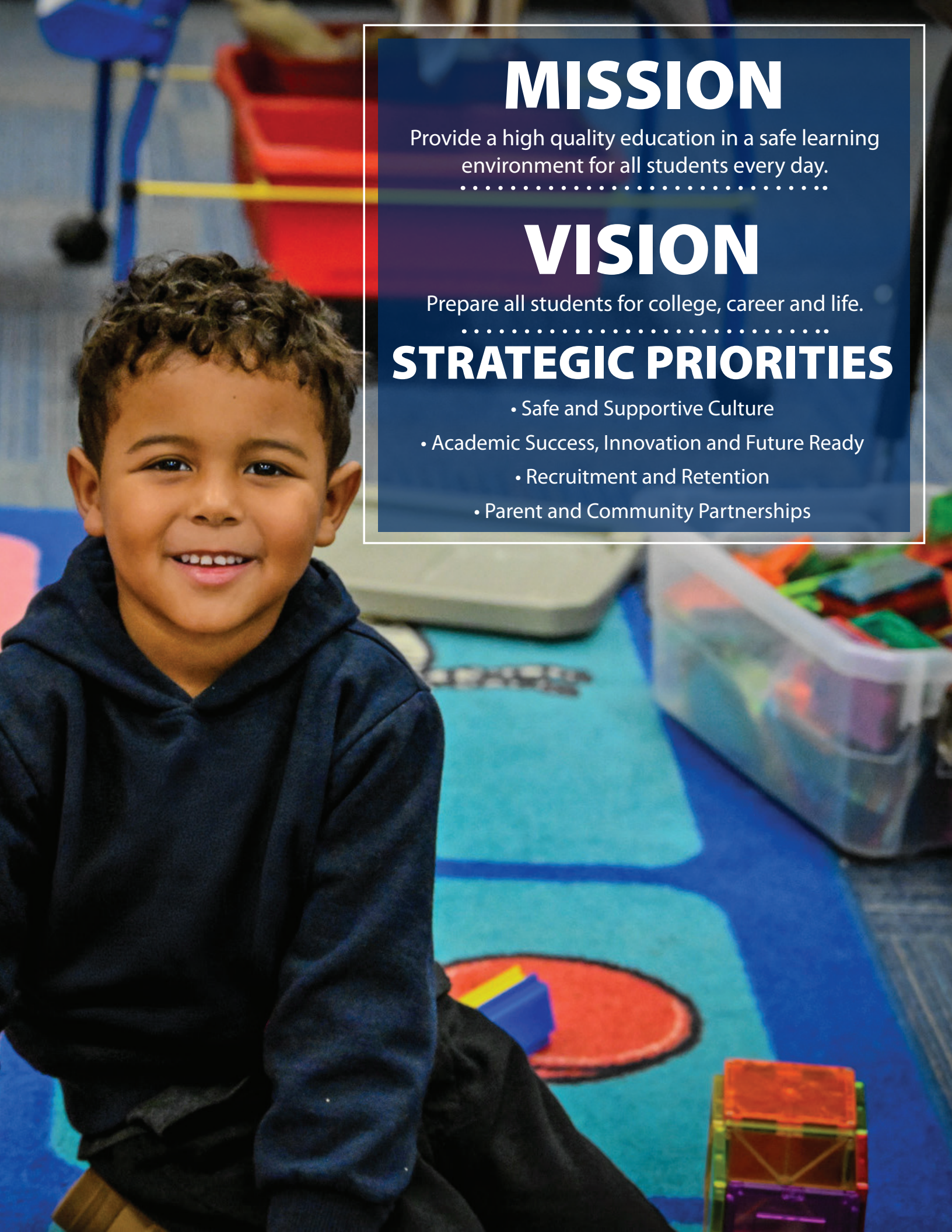
The future of Union County Public Schools will not be determined by what we say we value, but by what we are willing to do together to make those values a reality. We must continue to build bridges, strengthen partnerships, listen to one another, and keep our focus where it belongs: on the success, safety, well-being, and future of every student we serve.This is our opportunity to build upon what has been accomplished, confront the challenges before us, and boldly prepare the next generation for a future filled with possibility. When the Board of Education, our educators, families, community, and entire county stand together with a shared purpose, there is no limit to what we can accomplish for our children.

Let us move forward—not divided by differences, but united by our responsibility to the children and families of Union County. Our students are counting on us, our community is depending on us, and the future is calling us. Together, let us answer that call.

The work begins now. The vision is before us. And the future of our children is worth everything we have to give.

Sincerely,
Rev. Jimmy H. Bention, Sr.
Board Chairman





MISSION

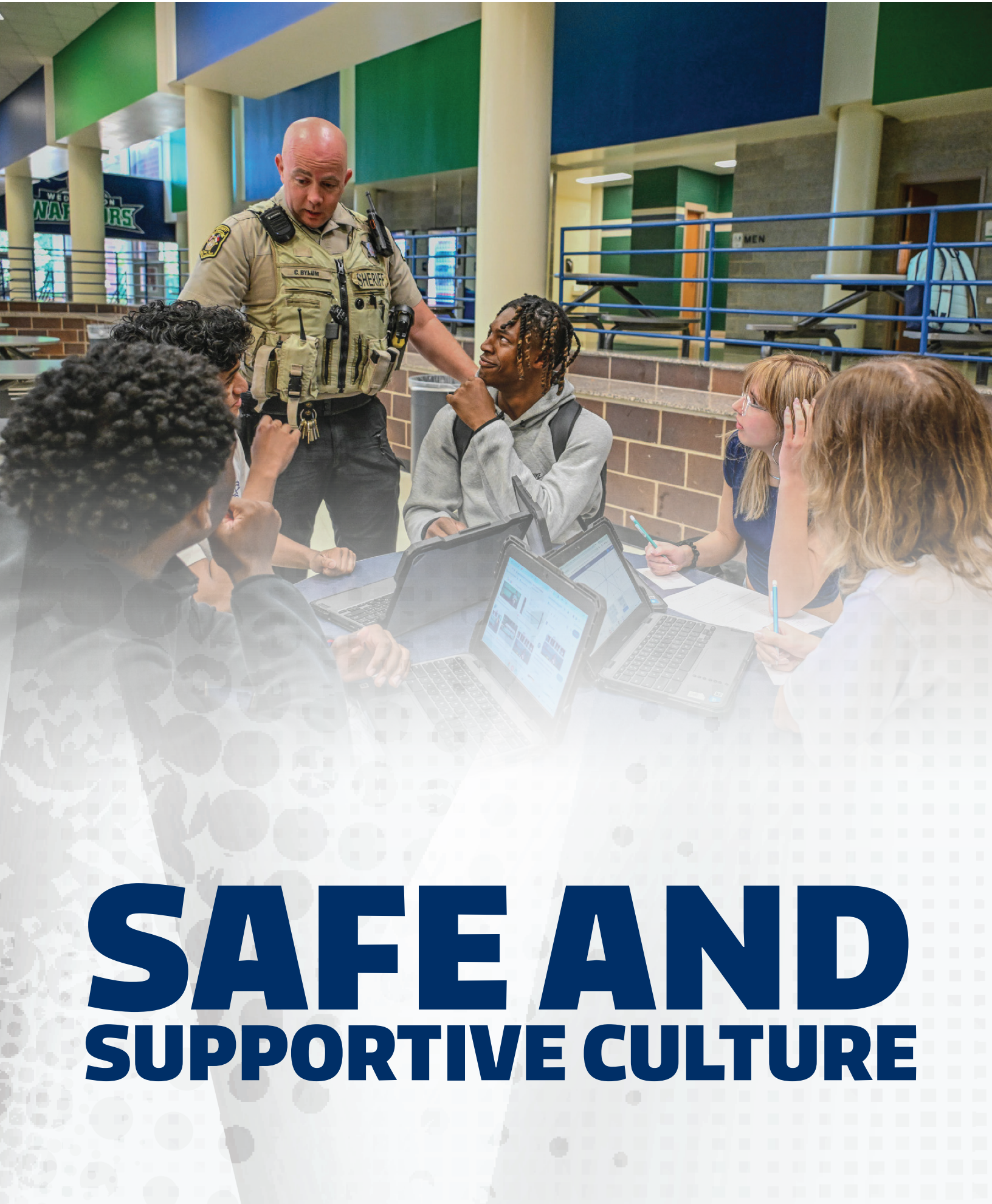
Provide a high quality education in a safe learning environment for all students every day.

VISION

Prepare all students for college, career and life.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- Safe and Supportive Culture
- Academic Success, Innovation and Future Ready
- Recruitment and Retention
- Parent and Community Partnerships



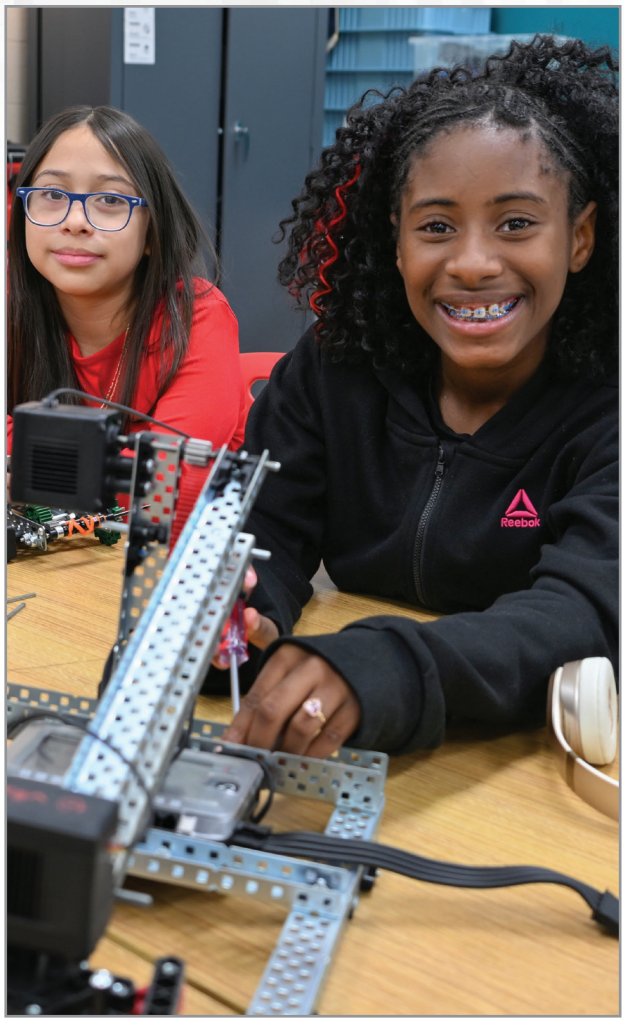
SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE CULTURE

Strategic Plan 2026 - 2031

SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE CULTURE

We will provide a safe, supportive environment that prioritizes mental health, wellness and overall safety. This will be supported through the alignment between UCPS, law enforcement and community partners.

- Strengthen school safety to provide a secure and supportive learning environment.
- Enhance student mental health services and programs to promote emotional resilience.
- Implement early intervention strategies and wrap-around services.















ACADEMIC SUCCESS, INNOVATION AND FUTURE READY

Strategic Plan 2026 - 2031
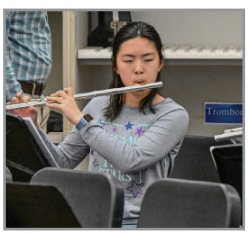
ACADEMIC SUCCESS, INNOVATION AND FUTURE READY

We are committed to helping each student build a strong, meaningful future through advanced teaching and learning, innovative programming and opportunities in school to support student success.

- Deliver high-quality instruction that leads to demonstrated proficiency and growth across all content areas.
- Prepare students for emerging technology, in-demand skills and future careers.
- Prioritize opportunities to develop communication, problem-solving, collaboration and leadership skills–UCPS Portrait of a Graduate.
- Develop and implement innovative programs to increase engagement in student learning.











RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

We will recruit and retain highly effective educators and invest in our classified employee groups.

- Attract, hire and develop highly effective educators and school leaders.
- Increase educator retention rates.
- Build and sustain highly impactful employee pipelines.
- Create professional development and leadership opportunities for classified staff.













PARENT AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

PARENT AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

We will strengthen student success by partnering with families and the community through two-way communication, equipping families with resources and creating more opportunities for meaningful parent involvement.

- Build strong partnerships with families, educators, and the community.
- Strengthen collaborative efforts between families and educators to improve academic achievement.


















Space





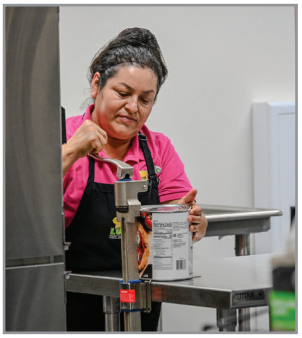












UNION COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

EDUCATE • INNOVATE • GRADUATE

Union County Public Schools
400 N. Church Street • Monroe, NC 28112

www.ucpsnc.org/strategic-plan

STAY **CONNECTED** www.ucpsnc.org