



# DISTRICT STRATEGIC *Plan*



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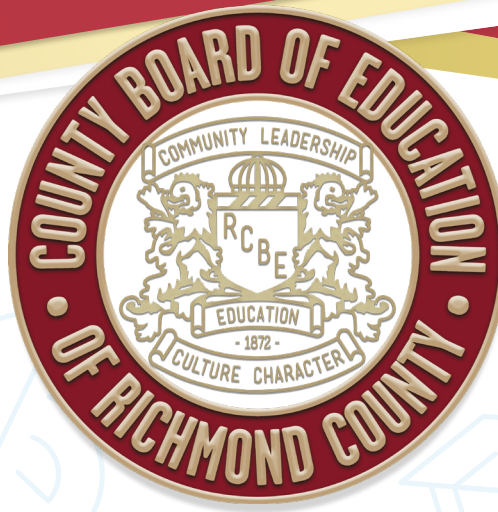
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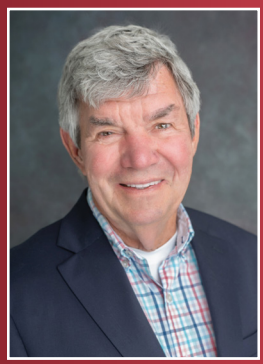
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**Venus Cain**  
District 9 (at Large)



**Samantha Valentine**  
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## THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

is a policy-making body and serves as a legislative body in the development and evaluation of policies. While the board is responsible for school programs and operations by law, it delegates some portion of the authority to the Superintendent. The board is governed by a President and a Vice-President who is elected by and from the board membership every two years on the Saturday preceding the second Thursday in January.

## A NOTE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

The District Strategic Plan is a comprehensive, data-driven roadmap that guides our continuous improvement efforts as a school system. It reflects the Richmond County School System's unwavering commitment to enhancing practices that support student experiences and achievement. In collaboration with Cognia, our accreditation organization, we engaged in a thorough process of assessing performance, setting strategic goals, and developing a plan grounded in data. To shape our 2025-2030 Strategic Plan, we considered multiple data sources, including student achievement metrics, stakeholder feedback, and future career trends. We are enthusiastic about the progress and outcomes we anticipate as we work collaboratively with all stakeholders to achieve lasting improvement.



**Dr. Malinda Cobb**  
Superintendent of Schools

**HISTORY** Chartered on August 23, 1872, our school system has the oldest public school in the South and the 5th oldest public high school in America. Several RCSS schools are on the National Register of Historic Places. Richmond County is steeped in history, and our school system.

# WHO -ARE- WE

## Mission Statement:

Empowering Every  
Learner Every Day.

## Vision Statement:




To prepare every  
student to thrive,  
adapt, and lead in an  
ever-changing world.

## Belief Statements:

- Success is attainable for everyone.
- All students deserve a quality educational experience.
- Education is a shared responsibility.
- Transparency is a foundation of trust.
- Safety for all is a priority.

## Richmond County School System STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

### STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

 Elementary	14,291
 Middle	6,178
 High	8,236
<b>Total Number of Students</b>	<b>28,705</b>



#### Magnet School Students

Students are also counted in Elementary, Middle, & High

### STUDENT DIVERSITY

BLACK	75.7%
WHITE	11.0%
HISPANIC	7.3%
2 OR MORE RACES	4.7%
ASIAN /PACIFIC ISLANDER	1.1%
NATIVE AMERICAN	0.2%

### STUDENTS BY GENDER

 MALE	51%
 FEMALE	49%







 **Graduation Rate** Based on 2024  
**81.7%**

Students Receiving Special Education Services  
**4,460** 

Students Experiencing Homelessness  
**600** 

 **Median Household Income**  
**\$53,197**

## SCHOOLS

 Elementary	27
 K-8	1
 Middle	8
 High	8
 Magnet	4
 Special Programs	5

**TOTAL 53**



**NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES**  
**4,829** 

#### COMMUNITY ELIGIBILITY PROVISION (CEP)

Breakfast & Lunch At  
No Cost For All RCSS Students



# STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW



## INTRODUCTION

The 2025-2030 Richmond County School System District Strategic Plan provides a clear and focused direction for continuous improvement. It identifies four strategic themes designed to accelerate both district-wide progress and student achievement. These high-leverage focus areas are aligned with the renewed school system's vision, mission, and core beliefs, and they guide the ongoing improvement efforts of schools and district-level departments. Resources are strategically prioritized and aligned with critical initiatives to support the achievement of the school system's objectives. The Strategic Plan is the result of a process developed by the District Strategic Thinking and Planning Core Focus Group with assistance from Cognia.

The District Strategic Thinking and Planning Core Focus Group included representation from a cross section of students, parents, local community members, departments, school-level administrators, and district-level administrators.

## STAKEHOLDER INPUT

The 2025-2030 Strategic Plan was developed and informed by student achievement data, stakeholder surveys, workforce development forecasts, and input from several stakeholder. Cognia facilitated three meetings to learn more about our system's needs, concerns, and accomplishments from our stakeholders' perspectives. The first meeting was held with employee representatives from each department. The second meeting was held with the Superintendent's Student Advisory, and the final meeting was with School Council members (parents). Our strategic planning sessions held in September, November and January provided opportunities for key stakeholders to engage in effective dialogue, assess needs, and develop strategies. Key stakeholders participating included students, parents, community members, and representatives from all departments and school levels within our school system. During the process we considered a variety of data sources including census data for our area, employment forecasts, demographics, all of the school system's data points and the results of our accreditation report from Cognia. The District Strategic Thinking and Planning Core Group developed theories of action and conducted root cause analyses. The stakeholder input was analyzed to determine common themes for continuous improvement. Four strategic themes (focus areas) emerged from the analysis of qualitative and quantitative data. The whole child, the profile of a RCSS graduate, and employees' needs were also at the forefront of our decision-making. The Strategy Map was presented to the School Board for approval.

**STRUCTURE** The Strategic Plan is structured to set a clear five-year direction with key measures for progress. The strategic themes, objectives, critical initiatives, and activities are grounded in the vision, mission, and beliefs of the school system.

**STRATEGIC THEMES** set the school system's focus are for achieving the vision and mission.

**OBJECTIVES** set the broad goals for RCSS's future.

**CRITICAL INITIATIVES** describe the prioritized activities to achieve each objective.

**ACTIVITIES** describe the actions steps to be taken to achieve each objective.

**KEY MEASURES** describe specific measures to demonstrate progress of the objectives and critical initiatives.

It is important to understand that the Strategic Theme areas strongly correlate to each Objective, Critical Initiative, Activity and Key Measure. The Strategic Themes were consistently identified as points of concern of future growth in the coming years.



## EXECUTION and MONITORING

To ensure the successful implementation of our Strategic Plan, we will use a structured and data-informed approach that emphasizes accountability, collaboration, and continuous improvement.

### Monitoring Framework

- ◀ **Benchmarks & Target Dates:** Each objective is aligned with measurable benchmarks and specific timelines to track progress effectively.
- ◀ **Plan-Do-Check-Act Cycle:** This continuous improvement model will guide the monitoring of each objective, ensuring timely adjustments and sustained momentum.
- ◀ **Cross-Functional Action Plans:** Departments will collaborate to develop integrated action plans that support the achievement of system-wide goals.

### Strategic Themes & Critical Initiatives

Each Strategic Theme is supported by 4–5 Critical Initiatives, designed to drive meaningful progress. These initiatives are structured around four key components:

- ◀ **Critical Initiatives:** Targeted efforts aligned with each theme to advance strategic priorities.
- ◀ **Activities:** Specific actions and projects that bring each initiative to life.
- ◀ **Key Measures:** Defined metrics to monitor progress and ensure alignment with desired outcomes.
- ◀ **Intended Outcomes:** Clear, measurable results that indicate the success and impact of each initiative.

### Ongoing Evaluation & Accountability

- ◀ **Quarterly Monitoring:** Three scheduled check-ins throughout the year will assess progress, identify challenges, and inform necessary adjustments.
- ◀ **Year-End Evaluation:** A comprehensive review at the end of the school year will evaluate the overall effectiveness and impact of the initiatives, reinforcing a culture of reflection and continuous improvement. The Strategic Plan is used by schools and departments to develop annual school improvement plans and goals with strategies and reporting metrics. We will measure our progress toward meeting each objective and the effectiveness of each critical initiative and activity annually.

# STRATEGIC PLAN AT-A-GLANCE

RICHMOND COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM 2025-2030 Strategy Map



This graphic portrays the complete **Strategy Map** which includes:

- ◀ **The What**  
Strategic Themes
- ◀ **The Focus**  
Objectives
- ◀ **The How**  
Critical Initiatives



# STRATEGIC THEME

## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Objective	Empower every learner to take ownership of their learning.	
Critical Initiative 1	Intended Outcomes	Key Measures
Provide professional learning in evidence-based teaching methods.	Improve Tier 1 instruction via innovative tech use, use of resources, and increased academic expectations.	TKES, LKES, GaLeads
		Perception Data
		Achievement Data
		eleot Data
Activity 1	Provide professional learning on access and use of district resources for instruction.	
Activity 2	Provide professional learning to utilize technology effectively.	
Activity 3	Provide professional learning aligned to standards.	
Activity 4	Increase on-time completion rates of TKES, LKES, GaLeads	

Objective	Empower every learner to take ownership of their learning.	
Critical Initiative 2	Intended Outcomes	Key Measures
Provide all learners with access to engaging learning opportunities in a comprehensive curriculum	Increased attendance	Chronic absenteeism
	Improved discipline	OSS reduction by 5%
	Improved achievement	TKES, LKES, GaLeads
	Increased use of engagement strategies	Content Mastery improvements by 6%
	Enhanced collaboration	eleot Data
Activity 1	Create a learner profile for all students.	
Activity 2	Actively engage students.	
Activity 3	Vary the content/process/product from learner profiles.	
Activity 4	Increase on-time completion rates of TKES, LKES, GaLeads	

Objective	Empower every learner to take ownership of their learning.	
Critical Initiative 3	Intended Outcomes	Key Measures
Promote student ownership of learning by fostering voice, choice, and accountability	Increased cultural awareness	TKES, LKES, GaLeads
	Improved differentiation	Perception Data
	Enhanced student-teacher relationships	Subgroup improvements by 3% annually
	Increased achievement in subgroups	ESOL long-term student decrease by 10%
	Decreased number of ESOL long-term students	eleot Data
Activity 1	Students host student-led conferences.	
Activity 2	Increase club offerings for students.	
Activity 3	Design lessons to student interest and choice.	
Activity 4	Conduct data talks with students.	
Activity 5	Increase on-time completion rates of TKES, LKES, GaLeads	

Objective	Empower every learner to take ownership of their learning.	
Critical Initiative 4	Intended Outcomes	Key Measures
Improve measurable academic outcomes using data-driven decision making	Increased content mastery	Content mastery improvements by 6%
	Increased number of pathway completers	Pathway completers increased by 5%
	Enhanced student-teacher relationships	
	Improved graduation rate	Graduation rate increased by 2%
Activity 1	Engage in collaborative planning.	
Activity 2	Conduct assessment data review to guide and inform instruction.	



### Student Achievement

#### Objective

Empower Every Learner to Take Ownership of their Learning.

#### Critical Initiatives

- ◀ Provide professional learning in evidence-based teaching methods.
- ◀ Provide all learners with access to engaging learning opportunities in a comprehensive curriculum.
- ◀ Promote student ownership of learning by fostering voice, choice, and accountability.
- ◀ Improve measurable academic outcomes using data-driven decision making.



# STRATEGIC THEME STAKEHOLDER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



## Stakeholder Engagement & Communication

### Objective

Engage with our Community  
using a Variety of Consistent  
Two-Way Communication Tools.

### Critical Initiatives

- ◀ Streamline and centralize communications platforms.
- ◀ Develop a district-wide communications plan.
- ◀ Train staff and school district leaders in effective communication strategies.
- ◀ Create systems, processes and opportunities for student and staff achievement stories to be disseminated across multiple platforms.
- ◀ Enhance partnership program to foster community involvement.



Objective	Engage with our community using a variety of consistent two-way communication tools.	
Critical Initiative 1	Intended Outcomes	Key Measures
Streamline and centralize communications platforms.	Efficiency and effectiveness in messaging across all schools and departments	Stakeholder perception/survey data
	Improved understanding of education avenues	Increased open rates of communication
Activity 1	Collect data on audience & audit current platforms.	
Activity 2	Redesign the RCSS website and develop an RCSS app.	

Objective	Engage with our community using a variety of consistent two-way communication tools.	
Critical Initiative 2	Intended Outcomes	Key Measures
Develop a district-wide communications plan.	Improved perceptions of stakeholders regarding communication	Stakeholder survey results improve by 10%
		Increased engagement on digital platforms
Activity 1	Create a strategic communications plan.	
Activity 2	Add a crisis communication plan to the district communication plan.	

Objective	Engage with our community using a variety of consistent two-way communication tools.	
Critical Initiative 3	Intended Outcomes	Key Measures
Train staff and school district leaders in effective communication strategies.	Improved communication between schools and families by 10%	Survey results (improved stakeholders' perception)
		Agenda and sign-in sheets
	Increased opportunities for two-way communication	Focus group data
Activity 1	Develop and implement a customer service training plan.	

Objective	Engage with our community using a variety of consistent two-way communication tools.	
Critical Initiative 4	Intended Outcomes	Key Measures
Create systems, processes and opportunities for student and staff achievement stories to be disseminated across multiple platforms.	Increased exposure to positive news stories	Critical mention data
		Social media analytics
		Let's Talk positive responses
	Increased engagement on owned media by 10%	Spotlight positive behavior data
Activity 1	Refine the communications support request process.	
Activity 2	Launch a community-wide newsletter.	

Objective	Engage with our community using a variety of consistent two-way communication tools.	
Critical Initiative 5	Intended Outcomes	Key Measures
Enhance partnership program to foster community involvement.	More meaningful mutually beneficial partnerships	Partnership survey data
		Number of monthly visitors in schools
Activity 1	Identify current partnerships and level of partnerships.	
Activity 2	Establish processes/protocols for engaging.	
Activity 3	Engage in thanking partners.	
Activity 4	Draft framework components.	
Activity 5	Develop a communication plan.	



# STRATEGIC THEME

## TALENT DEVELOPMENT

Objective	Foster student and staff potential to embrace ongoing growth and development.	
Critical Initiative 1	Intended Outcomes	Key Measures
Establish a framework for adult-centered professional learning opportunities based on staff input, experiences and roles.	Equitable access to professional learning for all	Talent Development Needs Data
		Improved Professional Learning Impact Survey Data
	Consistent practices throughout the system	Cognia observation Data
		Microsoft forms (data collection tool)
Activity 1	Define the purpose and vision of the framework.	
Activity 2	Map employee segments with core responsibilities and professional learning needs; and supervisors provide the plan of performance assessment.	
Activity 3	Gather input from all employee segments regarding professional learning needs.	
Activity 4	Create universal tier levels and define universal competencies.	
Activity 5	Draft framework components (core elements for all roles, tier criteria, and delivery methods).	
Activity 6	Develop a communication plan.	

Objective	Foster student and staff potential to embrace ongoing growth and development.	
Critical Initiative 2	Intended Outcomes	Key Measures
Enhance student agency for increased student opportunities for enrollment, enlistment and employment.	Increased student engagement, student ownership, and student voice and choice	ELEOT
	Increased enrollment and partnerships to increase enlistment and employment	Infinite Campus survey data Stakeholder survey data
Activity 1	Provide professional learning on student agency.	
Activity 2	Increase opportunities for student-led conferences.	
Activity 3	Create forums where students provide input on school policies, curriculum, and support services.	
Activity 4	Organize events with representatives from colleges, trade schools, military branches, and local employers.	

Objective	Foster student and staff potential to embrace ongoing growth and development.	
Critical Initiative 3	Intended Outcomes	Key Measures
Refine the comprehensive recruitment and retention plan for students and staff.	Increased number of filled positions	HR Staffing Data
	Increased student enrollment	Student Enrollment Data
Activity 1	Create cross-department innovation teams.	
Activity 2	Provide innovation grants and resources.	
Activity 3	Establish innovation teams and recognition program.	
Activity 4	Empower autonomy with guardrails.	
Activity 5	Recognize and celebrate innovation.	
Activity 6	Create a culture for risk-taking.	

Objective	Foster student and staff potential to embrace ongoing growth and development.	
Critical Initiative 4	Intended Outcomes	Key Measures
Leverage technology integration to enhance student and staff performance and productivity.	Increased technology integration	ELEOT
	Improved efficiency in departments	Teacher Observation Tool Tech usage data (email, platforms, etc.)
Activity 1	Select or develop platform for monitoring.	
Activity 2	Pilot the monitoring system.	
Activity 3	Develop reporting and feedback mechanisms.	
Activity 4	Build stakeholder capacity.	

Objective	Foster student and staff potential to embrace ongoing growth and development.	
Critical Initiative 5	Intended Outcomes	Key Measures
Develop a system for monitoring the implementation of professional learning.	Increased effectiveness of professional learning opportunities	Observation data
	Growth in job embedded performance	Performance evaluation tool Learning Forward Survey Data
Activity 1	Define purpose and vision of professional learning.	
Activity 2	Identify monitoring objectives.	
Activity 3	Map stakeholders and responsibilities.	
Activity 4	Design monitoring processes and tools.	
Activity 5	Build implementation readiness.	
Activity 6	Embed a system for continuous feedback.	
Activity 7	Outline metrics for success.	



### Talent Development

#### Objective

Foster Student and Staff Potential to Embrace Ongoing Growth and Development.

#### Critical Initiatives

- ◀ Establish a framework for adult-centered professional learning opportunities based on staff input, experiences and roles.
- ◀ Enhance student agency for increased student opportunities for enrollment, enlistment and employment.
- ◀ Refine the comprehensive recruitment and retention plan for students and staff.
- ◀ Leverage technology integration to enhance student and staff performance and productivity.
- ◀ Develop a system for monitoring the implementation of professional learning.



# STRATEGIC THEME

## SAFE AND SECURE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT



### Safe & Secure Learning Environment

#### Objective

Provide a Safe and Secure Environment for All.

#### Critical Initiatives

- Define and develop a positive system culture.
- Ensure physical and emotional safety by enhancing security measures and providing emotional support for students and staff.
- Develop a comprehensive safety training plan.
- Design fiscally responsible processes and procedures for operational effectiveness.



Objective	Provide a safe and secure learning environment for all.	
<b>Critical Initiative 1</b>	<b>Intended Outcomes</b>	<b>Key Measures</b>
Define and develop a positive system culture.	Improved staff and student attendance, increased student performance, enhanced employee satisfaction	Attendance data (staff and student)
		Students' performance data
		School Climate CCRPI
		Panorama Survey data
		Georgia School Climate Survey Data
Activity 1	Engage in data collection and analysis.	
Activity 2	Define a positive system culture for RCSS.	
Activity 3	Communicate and provide professional learning to system employees.	
Activity 4	Design fiscally responsible processes and procedures.	

Objective	Provide a safe and secure learning environment for all.	
<b>Critical Initiative 2</b>	<b>Intended Outcomes</b>	<b>Key Measures</b>
Ensure physical and emotional safety by enhancing security measures and providing emotional support for students and staff.	Improved stakeholder perceptions of safety	Improved stakeholder perception survey data
	Reduced major disciplinary issues and increased positive behavior among students	Georgia School Climate Survey Data
	Increased engagement in learning	Student discipline data
		PBIS data
Activity 1	Monitor the implementation of SEL in schools.	
Activity 2	Expand mental health resources.	
Activity 3	Conduct campus safety audits/walkthroughs.	

Objective	Provide a safe and secure learning environment for all.	
<b>Critical Initiative 3</b>	<b>Intended Outcomes</b>	<b>Key Measures</b>
Develop a comprehensive safety training plan.	Reduced workplace accidents and injuries	Data from GCN
	Enhanced safety awareness, compliance with relevant safety regulations	Safety Audit
	Enhanced student-teacher relationships	School Accident Reports
	Improved teaching and learning	Workers' Comp Report data
	Safety becomes a shared responsibility for all	Digital safety data
Activity 1	Implement additional safety measures in schools.	
Activity 2	Create and deliver safety training modules via GCN.	
Activity 3	Ensure all schools and district offices have safety plans.	
Activity 4	Review data to determine where workplace accident incidents are coming from and develop a plan to support staff.	

Objective	Provide a safe and secure learning environment for all.	
<b>Critical Initiative 4</b>	<b>Intended Outcomes</b>	<b>Key Measures</b>
Design fiscally responsible processes and procedures for operational effectiveness.	Improved operational effectiveness	Georgia School Climate Survey Data
	Increased fiscal transparency	
	Enhanced utilization of resources	Audit data
Activity 1	Communicate budget updates with stakeholders regularly.	
Activity 2	Conduct comprehensive internal and external audits to ensure optimal utilization of resources and cost-effectiveness of expenditures.	

# STRATEGIC PLAN

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The successful development and refinement of this strategic plan would not have been possible without the invaluable contributions of the following individuals. Their generous investment of time, intellectual engagement, and professional expertise significantly enriched the planning process. Their dedication to the project reflects a deep commitment to collaborative inquiry and institutional advancement.

**RCSS Board of Education-School Board Members:** (Approval March 18, 2025)

- Shawnda Stovall, *President*  
Edward D. Lowery, *Vice-President*  
Charlie Hannah  
Walter H. Eubanks  
Shontae Boyd
- Monique Braswell  
Charlie Walker, Jr.  
Mary Jane Abbott  
Venus Cain  
Samantha Valentine

**STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE:**

- Dr. Kenneth Bradshaw  
Dr. Malinda Cobb
- Dr. Lloydette Young  
Cognia Facilitators

**STRATEGIC PLANNING FOCUS GROUPS:**

- RCSS Employees (Representatives from each school level and department)  
RCSS Superintendent Student Advisory Members (Student Group)  
RCSS School Council (Parent Group)

**STRATEGIC THEME LEADS:**

Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 3	Theme 4
<b>Student Achievement</b>	<b>Stakeholder &amp; Community Engagement</b>	<b>Talent Development</b>	<b>Safe &amp; Secure Learning Environment</b>
Kinesha Ponder and Carolyn McCord	Haley Lucuesta and DeMargo Lewis	Kenneth Johnson, Jr. and Lezettra Saunders	Dr. Melissa Shepard and Kourtney Bell

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**DISTRICT STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2030 BOOKLET DESIGNED AND CREATED BY:**

- Dr. Lloydette Young
- Donald Jay Tilton, Jr.



# DISTRICT STRATEGIC *Plan*



## Vision Statement:

To prepare every student to thrive, adapt, and lead in an ever-changing world.



@richmondcountyschools



@richmondcountyschools



@RCSSMedia



@Richmond County School System

## Mission Statement:

Empowering Every Learner Every Day.

