

BOARD AGENDA ITEM

October 13, 2026

SUBJECT:

District Strategic Plan

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

District Strategic Plans are developed every five years using current research-based practices. The plans are approved by our School Board and must be submitted to the South Carolina Department of Education for final review and approval.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATION:

The Division of Instruction has prepared an overview of the 2026-2031 District Strategic Plan. This information will be used to gather feedback for the final draft of the plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

Accept Aiken County Public School District Strategic Plan presentation as information.

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District Strategic Plan Overview

Action Steps, Estimated Costs and Funding Sources 2026-2027 to 2030-2031

Area of Focus: Student Achievement Early Childhood/Primary (PK-2 nd)		
Performance Goal 1: By spring of 2031, 40% of our kindergarten students will demonstrate readiness to learn as measured by Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) in the Language and Literacy Domain.		
ACTION STEPS	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE
- Explore options to increase 4K classrooms through tuition-based opportunities. ➤ Consider a pilot program that would consist of at least two tuition-based classrooms. - Provide Early Childhood LETRS training to all 4K aides. - Develop high-impact Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) by emphasizing a focus on learning, cultivating a collaborative culture with collective responsibility, and maintaining an intentional approach to improving student achievement. - Provide professional learning and support to build the instructional capacity of teachers and leaders through collaborative learning, coaching, and evidence-based practices which promote student-centered instructional practices to minimalize screen time usage.	TBD (based on tuition)	Parents/ACPSD
	NA	NA
	\$50K/year (this represents total for all PLC PD)	Title II
	TBD based on training days needed	Title I Title II General Fund

Area of Focus: Student Achievement			
Early Childhood/Primary (PK-2 nd)			
Performance Goal 2: By spring of 2031, 80% of first grade students will be on track for success in ELA for second grade as measured by our universal screener.			
Performance Goal 3: By spring of 2031, 80% of second grade students will be on track for success in ELA for third grade as measured by our universal screener.			
ACTION STEPS	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE	
Use intensive intervention based on individualized student data to target skill deficits.	NA	School-based Title I	
Implement a comprehensive ELA and mathematics block grounded in the District's Instructional Framework to deliver high-quality, standard-aligned instruction that reflects the expectations of the South Carolina College and Career-Ready Standards.	NA	NA	
Promote student-centered instructional practices to maximize active learning and to reduce technology dependence.	NA	NA	
Fully utilize Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) to build school capacity to identify student needs, provide targeted instruction, intervention, enrichment, and monitor student progress to improve outcomes for every learner.	\$80K - \$100K/year (this represents total for district)	General Fund	
Develop high-impact Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) by emphasizing a focus on learning, cultivating a collaborative culture with collective responsibility, and maintaining an intentional approach to improving student achievement.	\$50K/year (this represents total for all PLC PD)	Title II	
Provide professional learning and support to build the instructional capacity of teachers and leaders through collaborative learning, coaching, and evidence-based practices which promote student-centered instructional practices to reduce screen time.	TBD based on training days needed	Title I Title II General Fund	

Area of Focus: Student Achievement

Elementary Level (Grades 3-5)			
Performance Goal 1: By spring of 2031, 75% of our students in grades 3-5 will meet or exceed state expectations in English Language Arts.			
Performance Goal 2: By spring of 2031, 75% of our students in grades 3-5 will meet or exceed state expectations in Mathematics.			
ACTION STEPS	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE	
Implement a comprehensive ELA and mathematics block grounded in the District's Instructional Framework to deliver high-quality, standard-aligned instruction that reflects the expectations of the South Carolina College and Career-Ready Standards.	NA	NA	
Build a comprehensive assessment system to drive instructional decisions, including common formative and summative assessments.	\$75K/year (this represents total for district)	Title I (Schools' Title I and ATSI Funds will cover school-based expenses)	
Fully utilize Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) to build school capacity to identify student needs, provide targeted instruction, intervention, enrichment, and monitor student progress to improve outcomes for every learner.	\$80K - \$100K/year (this represents total for district)	General Fund	
Develop high-impact Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) by emphasizing a focus on learning, cultivating a collaborative culture with collective responsibility, and maintaining an intentional approach to improving student achievement.	\$50K/year (this represents total for all PLC PD)	Title II	
Provide professional learning and support to build the instructional capacity of teachers and leaders through collaborative learning, coaching, and evidence-based practices which promote student-centered instructional practices to minimize screen time.	TBD based on the number of training days needed	Title I Title II General Fund	

Area of Focus: Student Achievement

Elementary (Grade 4) Science

Performance Goal 3: By spring of 2031, 75% of our students in grade 4 will meet or exceed state expectations in Science.		
ACTION STEPS	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE
Implement a comprehensive ELA and mathematics block grounded in the District's Instructional Framework to deliver high-quality, standard-aligned instruction that reflects the expectations of the South Carolina College and Career-Ready Standards.	NA	NA
Build a comprehensive assessment system to drive instructional decisions, including common formative and summative assessments.	\$75K/year (this represents total for district)	Title I (Schools' Title I and ATSI Funds will cover school-based expenses)
Increase inquiry-based, hands-on science learning by engaging students in authentic scientific investigations aligned with South Carolina College and Career-Ready Science Standards.	\$25K /year	Title II Opportunity Grants
Develop high-impact Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) by emphasizing a focus on learning, cultivating a collaborative culture with collective responsibility, and maintaining a results-oriented approach to improving student achievement.	\$50K/year (this represents total for all PLC PD)	Title II
Provide professional learning and support to build the instructional capacity of teachers and leaders through collaborative learning, coaching, and evidence-based practices which promote student-centered instructional practices to minimize screen time.	TBD based on the number of training days needed	Title I Title II General Fund

Area of Focus: Student Achievement

Middle Level (Grades 6-8)

Performance Goal 1: By spring of 2031, 75% of our students in grades 6-8 will meet or exceed state expectations in English Language Arts.

Performance Goal 2: By spring of 2031, 75% of our students in grades 6-8 will meet or exceed state expectations in Mathematics.		
Performance Goal 3: By spring of 2031, 75% of our students in grade 6 will meet or exceed state expectations in Science		
ACTION STEPS	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE
Implement a common data-based approach to professional learning communities (PLCs) through the delivery of professional development and sustained coaching for administrators and teacher leaders.	\$50K/year (this represents total for all PLC PD)	Title II
Develop professional development on effective research-based strategies in ELA, math, and science by incorporating AVID strategies to enhance teaching and learning.	NA	NA
Develop standards-aligned, common formative and summative assessments for use in professional learning communities and to drive student achievement.	\$75K/year (this represents total for district)	Title I (Schools' Title I and ATSI Funds will cover school-based expenses)
Engage lead teachers to create and realign resources to include common pacing guides, unit supports, and cross-curricular documents to support the extended instructional block.	NA	NA
Provide additional professional development and support to advance MTSS initiatives with a focus on support in core subjects to address student achievement gaps.	\$80K - \$100K/year (this represents total for district)	General Fund
Provide professional learning and support to build the instructional capacity of teachers and leaders through collaborative learning, coaching, and evidence-based practices which promote student-centered instructional practices to reduce screen time	TBD based on needed days	Title I Title II General Fund

Area of Focus: Student Achievement

Student Performance: High School (9-12)

Performance Goal 1: By spring of 2031, 75% of participating students will earn a grade of C or higher on End of Course Examination Program (EOCEP).

ACTION STEPS	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE
Implement a districtwide, standards-aligned instructional framework that emphasizes rigorous instruction, frequent progress monitoring, and targeted intervention to ensure students are prepared to earn a C or higher on End of Course (EOC) assessments.	NA	NA
Administer common unit assessments aligned to EOC standards.	\$100K/year	General Fund
Structure allocations and professional development for Special Education and Multi-Language teachers to increase co-teaching opportunities in EOC courses.	NA	NA
Employ student-centered instructional practices to maximize active learning and to reduce technology dependence.	NA	NA
Utilize MTSS processes through standardized expectations and improved interventions, including staffing, to support student success.	\$80K - \$100K/year (this represents total for district)	General Fund
Develop high-impact Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) by emphasizing a focus on learning, cultivating a collaborative culture with collective responsibility, and maintaining a results-oriented approach to improving student achievement.	\$50K/year (this amount represents total for district)	Title II
Provide high-quality, job-embedded professional learning and differentiated support to build the instructional capacity of teachers and leaders through collaborative learning, coaching, and evidence-based practices which promote teacher directed, student-centered instructional practices to reduce screen time	TBD based on the number of training days needed	Title I Title II General Fund

Area of Focus: Student Achievement

Student Performance: High School (9-12)

Performance Goal 2: By the spring of 2031, 90% of students will graduate with their ninth-grade cohort within four years.

ACTION STEPS	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE
Identify a robust monitoring system that crosses all aspects of a student's pathway to success, to ensure students are on track to graduate.	NA	NA

Align district resources with individual student goals to promote student success.	NA	NA
Structure the IGP process to encompass MTSS, IEPs, 504, ILAPs, and student goal setting to facilitate student-led IGPs.	NA	NA
Cultivate strategic community alliances deepening student investment and participation to connect students to real-world applications of learning.	NA	NA
Increase student engagement through Project-Based Learning and rigorous hands-on learning opportunities aligned to course standards.	NA	NA

Performance Goal 3: By the spring of 2031, 80% of graduating students will be college or career-ready as measured by state-identified CCR indicators.		
ACTION STEPS	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE
Implement a monitoring system for all high school students for Career and Technical Education course credit to increase pathway participation.	NA	NA
Leverage community partnerships to maximize internships and pathway access for career readiness.	NA	NA
Promote opportunities and student ownership for high achievement on WIN, ASVAB, SAT, ACT, and in career credentialing pathways.	\$5K	Opportunity Grant
Provide professional development on all components of College and Career Readiness and how to increase student readiness.	NA	NA

Area of Focus: Gifted and Talented		
Performance Goal: By the spring of 2031, we will increase newly identified Gifted and Talented students by 20%.		
ACTION STEPS	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE
Develop a gifted and talented steering committee to be made up of parents and district stakeholders throughout the district.	NA	NA

- Create an instructional plan to develop higher order thinking skills for K-5 students that include PBL, STEM, and STEAM. - a.) Provide professional development for K-5 teachers to focus on strategies for developing critical thinking skills. - b.) Provide professional development for elementary, middle, and high school teachers through GT endorsement courses and AP coursework for high school teachers.	\$50K/year	Title II
Establish a plan which utilizes alternative Dimension A assessments to identify Gifted and Talented students in grades 3-5.	\$10K/year	General Fund

Area of Focus: Teacher/Administrator Quality		
Performance Goal 1: By spring of 2031, we will increase teacher retention from 84% to 90%.		
ACTION STEPS	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE
Develop a teacher retention dashboard that monitors retention by school, years of experience, certification, and working conditions taken from the SC Teacher Survey.	NA	NA

• Provide professional development on building school level teacher retention plans using transfer data, vacancy reports, and employee feedback to identify 2-3 retention priorities.	NA	NA
• Extend support for teachers beyond induction years (years 3-5) through differentiated support, coaching, and mentoring.	TBD	Title II
• Expand teacher leadership and career opportunities that allow teachers to grow while remaining in the classroom by providing increased opportunities such as mentor teachers, lead teacher, curriculum leadership, coaching, and aspiring leader pathways.	NA	NA
• Enhance district-wide employee recognition strategies that reward excellence, growth, longevity, leadership, innovation, and contributions to school culture.	NA	NA

Area of Focus: Teacher/Administrator Quality

By Spring of 2031, increase career advancement and leadership development opportunities for certified and classified staff by 25%, as measured by participation in district-sponsored leadership programs, professional development pathways, mentorship opportunities, and internal advancement initiatives.

ACTION STEPS	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE
Expand and enhance the Principal Pipeline Program, LEAD FORWARD to increase participation and provide aspiring school leaders with structured leadership development, mentoring, and practical experiences that prepare them for future administrative roles within the district.	NA	NA
Redesign the district's Aspiring Administrators Program to provide certified staff interested in administrative careers with structured leadership development, mentoring, job-embedded experiences, and preparation for future administrative opportunities.	NA	NA
Redesign the district's Career Pathways Program for employees that introduce participants to a variety of career and leadership opportunities within the district, provides exposure to the skills and qualifications required for different roles, and supports employees in developing career goals and professional growth plans.	NA	NA

Area of Focus: Climate		
Performance Goal 1: By 2031, we will increase overall perception of school climate from 7.23 to 8.21.		
ACTION STEPS	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE
Provide professional development on <i>Administrator and Teacher Navigator</i> to assist teachers and administrators with understanding their students' academic needs and to prepare for successful teaching and learning throughout the school year.	NA	NA
Engage an action team at each school responsible for a systematic review of school climate data including parents, teachers, and students to identify data driven priorities.	NA	NA

Performance Goal 2: By the spring of 2031 we will increase student attendance by ten percentage points.		
ACTION STEPS	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE
Ensure that each school has a systematic approach to celebrate student growth, consistency, and improvement in school attendance for all students.	TBD	School Funded
Create a task force to include parents, community members, and district stakeholders to address the nationwide challenge of student attendance.	NA	NA
Utilize the Attendance Monitoring program.	\$33K/year	General Fund
Educate parents, community members, and district stakeholders to increase awareness of attendance thresholds, the impact attendance has on student grades, and state regulations related to attendance.	NA	NA
Equip school-based teams with evidence-based strategies and specialized training to combat chronic absenteeism as part of the MTSS process.	\$80K - \$100K/year (this represents total for district)	General Fund
Implement a district-wide communication and marketing campaign to emphasize the importance of regular attendance and its connection to student success.	NA	NA
Create a district-wide process to address student attendance through a behavior modification framework to target support for students and parents.	\$20K	Title II

Area of Focus: Strategic Partnerships

Performance Goal: By 2031, we will increase the number of strategic partnerships in Aiken County Public School District by 25%

ACTION STEPS	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE
Create a database to house partnerships districtwide which includes resources they can provide for specific grade/content level.	NA	NA
Identify a position/person(s)/team to establish and lead initiative.	NA	NA
Use needs assessments to prioritize needs by grade level and attendance area.	NA	NA
Establish a Strategic Partnership Foundation/Consortium/Alliance to build capacity for self-sustainability and to meet various needs in the district.	TBD	Self-Sustaining

Area of Focus: Learning Environments

Performance Goal 1: By the end of the 2030-2031 school year, Aiken County Public School District will construct and renovate safe and accessible educational spaces based on the recommendations of a long-term facility study.

ACTION STEPS	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE
Consult with school stakeholders to include special education, safety and security, administrators and teachers, parents and athletics.	NA	NA
Establish a plan for archiving feedback and implementing the outcomes from programming meetings.	NA	NA
Establish a budget and timeline to address the suggested implementation needs.	NA	NA

Performance Goal 2: By the end of the 2030-2031 school year, Aiken County Public School District will implement a learner-driven classroom model that increases student choice, collaboration, engagement, and ownership by incorporating flexible furniture arrangements and multiple learning zones.

ACTION STEPS	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE
Identify existing and create new flexible learning spaces.	NA	NA
Create and implement an equipment and furniture replacement cycle.	NA	NA
Commission a facility condition index.	TBD	General Fund