

Strategic Planning Work Sessions 2025



Agenda

- Welcome
- Strategic Planning Overview
- Recap from “Visions & Values”
- Strategy Development Brainstorm & Group Share

Our Strategic Planning Process



PHASE	DELIVERABLES	DESCRIPTION
1 Assess & Understand	Process, Timeline, and Engagement Plan	Provides a roadmap for how we will develop a strategic plan, with transparency around timelines and ways to engage
	Needs Assessment	Describes the current state of APS by outlining data, successes & challenges, needs & expectations, and uniqueness of the district
2 Strategic Direction	Mission & Vision	Develop a shared agreement on our vision (future state) and mission (purpose)
	Core Values & Profile of a Graduate	Agree on our fundamental behaviors and expectations for staff and students
	Overarching Goals	Develop long-range, measurable goals with targets
3 Strategy Development & Refinement	Theory of Action & Key Drivers/Priorities	Outline key paths and drivers to achieve our goals
	High-level Strategies & Initiatives	Identify and build out the high impact activities and the support processes needed to achieve them
	FY26 Budget Request	Identify funding for the strategies and initiatives
	Implement Annual Facilities Review	Identify any changes to school zones
4 Implementation & Monitoring	Change Management Plan	Develop a plan to ensure all stakeholders understand their role in achieving our strategy
	Detailed Initiative Action Plans	Complete detailed action plans outlining owners, budgets, timelines, and action steps
	Monitoring & Reporting Plan	Outline the monitoring and reporting cadence for the strategic plan

March & April



3/7, 3/13, 3/17, 3/25, 4/3, 4/17, 4/18, 4/11



February Engagement

What should students know or be able to do by the time they leave APS?

What should APS stop or avoid doing to better support student outcomes?

What should students know or be able to do by the time they leave APS?



Academic Excellence & Critical Thinking

This goal focuses on foundational academic and problem-solving skills:

- Strong literacy, numeracy, and mastery of foundational concepts
- Ability to analyze information, think independently, and make thoughtful decisions
- Critical thinking and problem-solving skills applied to real-world situations
- Effectively communicate learning verbally, in writing, and digitally

Life Skills and Career Readiness

This goal prepares students for life after graduation:

- Development of practical life skills, including financial literacy
- Career and college preparation, ensuring students have a plan for their future
- Exposure to various post-graduation options, including non-technical trades
- Exposure to STEM, AI and modern tools
- Develop skills to collaborate, communicate, manage emotions, and resolve conflicts.
- Build resilience, adaptability, and a sense of civic responsibility to engage positively with their communities

What should APS stop or avoid doing to better support student outcomes?



Inequitable and Inflexible Practices

The district should avoid:

- Implementing harsh discipline policies that disproportionately affect certain student groups
- Ignoring systemic inequities in discipline, special education referrals, and resource allocation
- Overemphasizing college preparation at the expense of career readiness
- Pulling students with special needs out of general education classrooms unnecessarily
- Placing underqualified teachers in struggling schools without proper support
- Restricting access to effective teaching strategies across the district
- Over-testing and teaching to the test

Short-Sighted Decision Making

The district should avoid:

- Introducing too many new programs without giving existing ones time to show results
- Cutting arts programs in favor of focusing solely on STEM
- Over-testing students at the expense of actual learning time
- Focusing on graduation rates over real learning and skill development
- Wasting money on ineffective programs instead of investing in proven strategies
- Making decisions without community input, including hiring leaders
- Waiting for crises instead of taking preventative action
- Thinking the methods of the path will work in the future

Misalignment of Resources and Priorities

The district should avoid:

- Lacking collaboration between schools to share strategies and resources
- Allowing politics to overshadow student success
- Overusing screen time at the expense of hands-on learning
- Implementing frequent half-days that disrupt consistent learning
- Ignoring attendance issues without addressing root causes
- Lacking accountability for all stakeholders, including parents, students, and charter schools
- Keeping ineffective staff instead of prioritizing strong educators
- Thinking of partners as financial resources only



March Engagement

What must be true of _____

Schools

Family & Community Partnership

APS Operational & Resource Support

to achieve _____ ?

Academic Excellence & Critical Thinking

Life Skills & Career Readiness



Academic Excellence & Critical Thinking

- **High-Quality Teaching:** Invest in recruiting, developing, and retaining certified, competent educators. Teachers should receive ongoing professional learning and support.
- **Rigorous & Relevant Curriculum:** Curriculum must be modern, aligned to standards, and reflect students' cultures and lived experiences. Families want stronger emphasis on reading, math, writing, and computer science.
- **Whole-Child Learning:** Social-emotional learning (SEL) should be integrated into the classroom. Schools should be welcoming, inclusive, and safe, both physically and emotionally.
- **Equity & Inclusion:** Provide equitable learning environments where all students, including multilingual learners and students with disabilities, feel supported and capable.
- **Instructional Practices:** Use evidence-based teaching strategies, project-based learning, and student-centered approaches like differentiated instruction and productive struggle.
- **Assessment & Accountability:** Shift focus from test scores to the learning process. Hold all schools (APS, charter, partner) accountable with transparency in student outcomes and policies.

Life Skills and Career Readiness

- **Early & Continuous Career Exposure:** Stakeholders advocate for real-world learning (e.g., JROTC, vocational training, job shadowing, apprenticeships) starting in early grades.
- **Financial Literacy & Practical Skills:** Life readiness should include soft skills, resume writing, managing money, signing documents, and “Life 101” courses.
- **Pathways for All Students:** Emphasis on providing multiple post-secondary options—college, career, military—based on student interest and aptitude, supported by assessments and CTAE certifications.
- **Support for Diverse Needs:** More individual teacher attention, SEL support, and equitable access to career-prep programs across schools and student backgrounds.



Academic Excellence & Critical Thinking

- **Facilities & Infrastructure:** Clean, safe, inclusive school buildings, ADA compliance, and modern classrooms that support teaching and learning (including green and sensory spaces).
- **Data-Informed Systems:** Use data and accountability tools to evaluate program success and ensure district responsiveness.
- **Technology & Tools:** Equitable access to devices and instructional platforms; improved training for both families and educators on key systems.
- **Staffing & Scheduling:** Address inconsistencies in hiring, certification, and scheduling across clusters to ensure academic equity.

Life Skills and Career Readiness

- **Transportation Equity:** Ensure reliable and timely transport for internships, after-school programs, and daily attendance—MARTA passes and bus route input mentioned.
- **Mental Health & Wellness:** School-based clinics, mental health staff, "Zen rooms," and wraparound services are essential to readiness.
- **Life Enrichment Spaces:** Innovation labs, makerspaces, and modernized electives foster career-linked skills.
- **Policy Review:** Need for clear, fair, and consistently applied attendance and discipline policies—avoiding criminalization of student behavior.
- **Nutrition & Housing:** Provide healthy meals and explore housing support for teachers as readiness barriers.



Academic Excellence & Critical Thinking

- **Accessible Communication:** Multilingual, transparent communication is vital—via websites, text platforms, in-person outreach, and asynchronous resources.
- **Aligned Expectations:** Educators and families need shared understanding of academic expectations and curriculum goals.
Adult Learning & Support: GED programs, parenting classes, and home-learning resources (e.g., make-and-take kits) are valued.
- **Tutoring & Mentoring:** Families want access to out-of-school academic support and peer mentoring among students.
- **Cultural Respect & Appreciation:** Families seek school environments that reinforce respect for cultural values and family roles.

Life Skills and Career Readiness

- **Parent University & Workshops:** Strong demand for family education in topics like scholarships, job prep, financial literacy, and college navigation.
- **Community-Based Career Exposure:** Field trips, local apprenticeships, and career days should connect students with nearby businesses and professionals.
- **District-Wide Frameworks:** Families support establishing consistent engagement and resource frameworks to avoid initiative fatigue.
- **Support for Marginalized Families:** Special consideration for parents with disabilities or limited English proficiency; ensure all families can navigate school systems.
- **Shared Responsibility:** Families want to be co-creators in student readiness, with structured roles via GO Teams and shared decision-making.



April Engagement

Our Strategic Plan Components



Purpose Why APS exists	Mission What you do	Vision A picture of APS' future
Portrait of a Graduate APS' students' knowledge, skills, and abilities	Core Values APS' employees' beliefs guiding how they work	

Joint School Board & District Administration Responsibility

Theory of Action APS' belief in what will lead to long-term success	
Priorities Broad Areas of Focus	Strategic Goals Specific and measurable targets related to district Priorities
Strategic Initiatives Specific projects related to Priorities that help to achieve the Strategic Goals	
Key Performance Indicators & Action Steps A plan of what needs to occur, by when, by whom, and toward what goal	

District Administration Responsibility



**We are ATLANTA'S
public school system.**



Growth.

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Science
- Social Studies

Grit.

- Critical Thinking
- Soft Skills
- Tenacity
- Perseverance
- Problem Solving

Graduate.

- Early Post-secondary Opportunities
- College/Career
- Credential/ Employed
- Enlistment



Empowering Atlanta's students
to shape the future.



Educate with Excellence:
Creating growth, **building** grit,
and **preparing** graduates.

Growth. Grit. Graduate.

Educate with Excellence: Creating growth, building grit, and preparing graduates.

Holding Ourselves Accountable

Goals (Examples)

- Literacy (3rd Grade)
- Numeracy (8th Grade)
- Readiness (High School)

(KPIs: Leading Indicators for each)

Guardrails (Examples)

- Discipline
- Attendance
- Access
- Engagement/Governance
- Student Engagement

Academic Acceleration “Back to Basics”

Classrooms

- Highly-effective teachers & leaders
- High-quality instructional materials with timely support (professional learning, curriculum, assessments)
- Targeted resources for learners with the most opportunities for growth (subgroups)

Schools

Supportive Community “Community of Believers”

APS

Community

Holding Ourselves Accountable

KPIs (Examples)

- Staff Retention
- Staff Engagement
- Nutrition
- Transportation
- Safety
- Technology

KPIs (Examples)

- Family Engagement
- Partnerships

Next Steps



STRATEGIC DIRECTION VALUES & GOALS

February 13, 2025, 6pm: North Atlanta HS, 4111 Northside Pkwy NW*

February 25, 2025, Noon: Virtual* ([Zoom](#))

February 27, 2025, 6:30pm: Hollis Innovation Academy, 225 James P Brawley Dr NW

March 6, 2025, 6pm: South Atlanta HS, 800 Hutchens Rd SE



STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT FOCUS & PRIORITIES

March 7, 2025, Noon: Virtual* ([Zoom](#))

March 13, 2025, 6pm: Jackson HS, 801 Glenwood Ave SE*

March 17, 2025, 6pm: Therrell HS, 3099 Panther Trail SW

March 25, 2025, 6pm: Mays HS, 3450 Benjamin E Mays Dr SW

STRATEGY REFINEMENT STRATEGIES & INITIATIVES

April 3, 2025, 6pm: Harper-Archer ES, 3399 Collier Dr NW*

April 17, 2025, 6pm: Howard MS, 551 John Wesley Dobbs Ave NE

April 18, 2025, Noon: Virtual* ([Zoom](#))

April 22, 2025, 6pm: Carver HS, 55 McDonough Blvd SE

We will also join existing community groups and committees for feedback, including the monthly Spanish-Speaking Family Meetings on March 19 & April 16.

* Spanish Interpretation Provided

