

Mays HS Strategic Planning Workshop

3.25

Atlanta Public Schools hosted a Strategic Planning session with community members to explore what must be true for schools to achieve the goals of Academic Excellence & Critical Thinking and Life Skills & College and Career Readiness. Participants generated ideas focused on support systems, equity, access, and meaningful school-community collaboration.

SCHOOLS

Academic Excellence & Critical Thinking

- Create **welcoming, affirming environments** rooted in respect and inclusion.
- Ensure **teacher and administrative talent** through strong recruitment, support, and retention of certified, high-quality staff.
- Provide **curriculum consistency** across all schools and levels, aligned to global/national standards.
- Use **evidence-based instructional practices** to drive teaching and learning.
- Maintain **up-to-date facilities** that support effective instruction.
- Promote **accountability for all schools** (traditional, charter, partner) with transparency in policies, qualifications, and student data.

Life Skills & Career Readiness

- Foster **whole-child development** with support for SEL, mental health, and restorative practices.
- Train educators in supporting **students with disabilities and behavioral needs**.
- Offer **real-world application opportunities** such as internships and job shadowing.
- Include **K–12 exposure** to life and career skills, including:
 - Financial literacy
 - Technology use
 - Practical skills (signing documents, money management)
- Integrate **career readiness pathways** and partnerships with tech schools and vocational programs.

OPERATIONS

Academic Excellence & Critical Thinking

- Improve **district/school/cluster-level master scheduling**.
- Implement **universal platforms** for academics, events, and behavior systems.
- Provide better **training on tools** like Infinite Campus and email systems.

- Establish **HR consistency in hiring/certification standards** across clusters.
- Ensure all operational supports accommodate **students with disabilities**.

Life Skills & Career Readiness

- Upgrade **facilities** (cleanliness, trash removal, restroom locks).
- Improve **transportation** reliability for daily and after-school needs.
- Build **mental health infrastructure**:
 - Hire trained staff for students and teachers
 - Designate "Zen rooms" for de-escalation
- Review and disseminate **school policies and handbooks** regularly.
- Conduct **audits of discipline practices** to avoid criminalizing student behavior.
- Create stronger **school-home bridges** to support readiness from all home backgrounds.

FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Academic Excellence & Critical Thinking

- Schedule **events outside of work hours** to engage working families.
- Promote **equity and transparency** across all school types (APS, charter, partner).
- Launch a **broader, multilingual communication strategy**:
 - User-friendly websites
 - Text platforms
 - Asynchronous resources (videos, recorded meetings)
- Partner with **local businesses and alumni** to align education with workforce needs.
- Offer **monthly APS-family check-ins** and clear breakdowns of school policies.

Life Skills & Career Readiness

- Expand **internship, apprenticeship, and vocational opportunities** through local business partnerships.
- Develop a robust **Parent University**:
 - Joint learning for parents and students (e.g., resume writing, literacy)
 - Community workshops
- Engage partners in **providing sponsorships and donations**.
- Increase **awareness and access to career pathways** and ACCA options.
- Utilize **local talent** for communication and cultural engagement.
- Encourage **student participation in city/county initiatives**.

Cross-Cutting Concerns & Sentiments

- Persistent concerns about **accountability at the district level**, especially regarding responsiveness and follow-through.
- Community desires **visible implementation of feedback** and clear evidence that their voices lead to action.
- Emphasis on **collaboration across schools, families, and the broader Atlanta community** to ensure student success.