



2023-2028 STRATEGIC PLAN

FALL 2025



FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

As your Superintendent, I feel truly blessed to live and work in a community that cares so deeply about our schools and our children. Here in Houston County, we believe in setting the bar high for every student and staff member while giving them the tools and support to achieve it. Our 2023–2028 Strategic Plan is more than just a document; it's our shared roadmap for making sure every child learns, grows, and succeeds. One of the things I love most about this plan is that it keeps us focused on continuous improvement. No matter how well we're doing, we can always find ways to grow.

It's important for us to stay focused on our mission, vision, and values so that every decision we make is guided by a common purpose. Our mission is to produce high achievement for all through continuous growth, and our vision is to be the standard for world-class education.

We live out this mission and vision through our core values:

- Prioritize the safety and well-being of all.
- Produce college and career ready graduates.
- Promote the academic success of all students. All means all!
- Ensure the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional growth of students through a Multi-Tiered System of Supports.
- Support quality learning, by student, by standard.
- Take collective responsibility for teaching, learning, and professional development through professional learning communities.
- Use evidence-based, high-leverage practices to meet the needs of all students.
- Create partnerships with stakeholders that promote positive relationships and student success.

I'm excited for the work ahead and the difference we can make together. I encourage you to stay connected, share your thoughts, and join us in celebrating every success along the way. Together, we can help our students reach their fullest potential.

Sincerely,

Dr. Richard Rogers
Superintendent of Schools



LETTER TO OUR COMMUNITY

We are excited to share the 2023-2028 Strategic Plan for the Houston County School District. This strategic plan aligns with and reinforces our mission of producing high achievement for all through continuous growth. We strive to be the standard for world-class education by providing an exceptional learning experience for all of our students. We believe that this plan will serve as a roadmap for our district as we seek to improve outcomes for every student.

Our plan includes a focus on quality learning, innovative teaching methods, and community engagement. We will be implementing new technology and resources to support these initiatives, and we welcome your feedback and involvement in the process.

Thank you for your continued support of our school district, and we look forward to a successful year ahead.

Sincerely,

Helen Hughes, Chair

Rick Unruh, Vice Chair

Houston County Board of Education



HELEN HUGHES

Chair, District 5



DR. RICK UNRUH

Vice Chair, District 1



DAVE CROCKETT

District 3



MARK IVORY

District 6, At Large



CLYDE JACKSON, JR.

District 7, At Large



LORI JOHNSON

District 2



JON NICHOLS

District 4



DR. RICHARD ROGERS

Superintendent of Schools
Ex-Officio Board Member

MEET THE BOARD



TABLE OF CONTENTS

About Our District	1
District Quick Facts	2
About the Strategic Plan	3
Strategic Plan Goal Areas	4
Strategic Measures of Student Success	8
Our Data Picture	9
Districtwide Professional Learning Community	10
Supporting Our Schools	11
District Awards and Recognitions	12
School Awards and Recognitions	13
Planning for Growth	14
Governance Team	15





ABOUT OUR DISTRICT



The Houston County School District educates over 30,900 Pre-Kindergarten-12th grade students at 38 schools. In addition to our elementary, middle, and high school campuses, our school district offers the Houston College and Career Academy, WIN Academy, Houston Virtual, Houston County Transition Academy, and the Lindsey Student Support Center.

Our students excel in many areas, outperforming state and national test averages, winning academic competitions, and earning sports championships. Our schools and employees have acquired numerous state and national awards for outstanding achievements. Our faculty and staff members continually strive to improve and work to take our school district to even greater heights.

In our district, we pride ourselves on doing things "The Houston County Way Forward," which can be described as follows:

- Strive for excellence in all that we do.
- Have a professional attitude.
- Go the extra mile.
- Base decisions on what is best for students.
- Provide quality customer service.
- Work hard, with dedication and love for students.
- Approach work every day with a positive attitude, hope, enthusiasm, and compassion.
- Do things right; do the right thing.
- Nurture relationships in an approachable and collaborative environment.

Houston County is a great place to learn, live, and work!

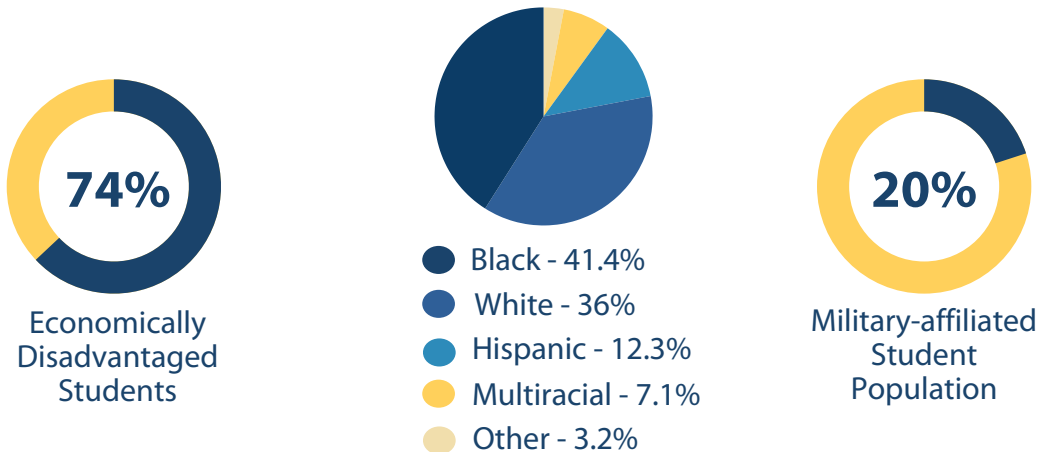


DISTRICT QUICK FACTS



ENROLLMENT

30,939 students as of October 2024 | 12th largest school district in Georgia



SCHOOLS AND PROGRAMS



FINANCE

\$469,511,940
FY26 Total General Fund Budget

\$15,175.41
FY26 Average Expenditure Per Student



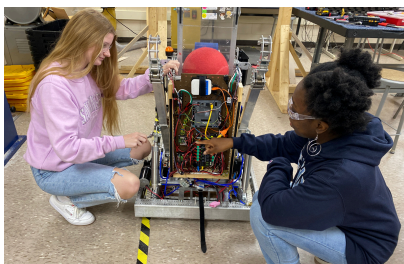
ABOUT THE STRATEGIC PLAN



The Houston County School District is committed to continuous improvement processes through strategic planning. Developed with input from school and district leaders, our strategic plan serves as a roadmap for achieving our mission, vision, values, and goals. The district strategic plan outlines our four strategic goal areas with performance objectives, initiatives, and actions that are implemented to ensure overall success. Various data sources, such as student achievement, teacher observations, stakeholder surveys, employee feedback, and SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analyses, are used to inform the priorities and initiatives included in our plan.

School and district leaders regularly review the district plan to ensure strategic actions are relevant, aligned with initiatives, and effective. Action steps are monitored through systematic protocols implemented by team leaders. School-level strategic plans include actions that are aligned to the district plan, but are specific to the needs of the school's population.

This document includes the strategic goal areas, performance objectives, and initiatives that serve as drivers for our strategic action steps. The full strategic plan can be found on our district website at hcbe.net/strategicplan.



STRATEGIC GOAL AREA 1

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Performance Objective I - Implement a Viable Curriculum

- Initiative A - Provide high-quality instruction that is aligned with the state standards.
- Initiative B - Develop high and clear expectations for all students.
- Initiative C - Implement a balanced assessment approach to include diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments to design and adjust instruction to maximize student achievement.
- Initiative D - Integrate technology into curriculum, instruction, and assessments to improve student achievement.

Performance Objective II - Guarantee Student Success

- Initiative A - Implement an effective Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) to impact the whole child.
- Initiative B - Ensure all student subgroups are making improvements in achievement rates.
- Initiative C - Provide a foundation for secondary students to ensure college and career readiness.



STRATEGIC GOAL AREA 2

STUDENT & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Performance Objective I - Foster a safe and engaging learning community

- Initiative A - Provide a supportive learning environment for all stakeholders.
- Initiative B - Implement processes to promote positive student engagement.

Performance Objective II - Promote student and stakeholder engagement

- Initiative A - Build the capacity for students to take ownership of their success.
- Initiative B - Provide opportunities for families to support their student's academic growth.
- Initiative C - Provide effective stakeholder communication.



STRATEGIC GOAL AREA 3

ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Performance Objective I - Facilitate Effective Leadership

- Initiative A - Plan, construct, and maintain safe schools, classrooms, and facilities.
- Initiative B - Provide a safe and efficient transportation program.
- Initiative C - Ensure safe processes to provide appealing, nutritious, and healthy menu items.
- Initiative D - Ensure equitable access, reliability, and use of system technology resources.
- Initiative E - Implement policies and procedures to ensure organizational effectiveness.
- Initiative F - Ensure efficient fiscal management processes are utilized.

Performance Objective II - Build Professional Capacity

- Initiative A - Recruit professionally qualified certified and classified staff.
- Initiative B - Retain professionally qualified certified and classified staff.



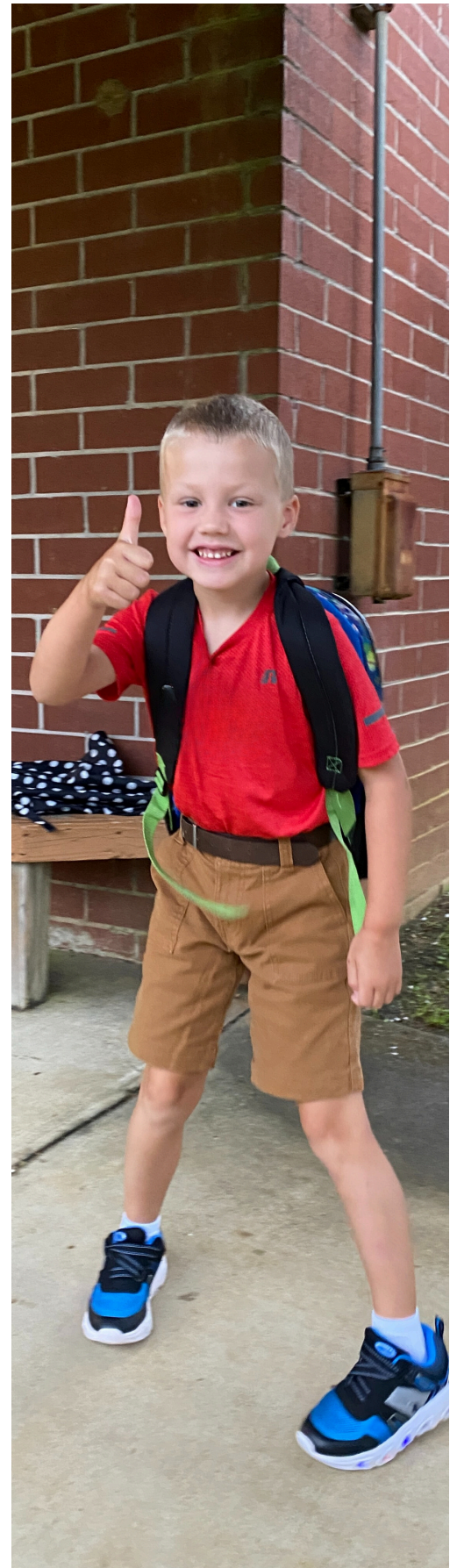


STRATEGIC GOAL AREA 4

LEARNING AND GROWTH

Performance Objective I - Enhance continuous improvement processes

- Initiative A - Support systematic implementation of Professional Learning Communities and their processes.
- Initiative B - Provide leaders with professional learning focused on producing high-achieving students.
- Initiative C - Provide teachers with professional learning focused on producing high-achieving students.
- Initiative D - Provide professional learning based on specific needs of personnel.





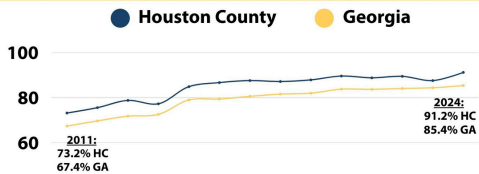
STRATEGIC MEASURES OF STUDENT SUCCESS

Strategic planning provides a robust framework for improvement at the district and school levels. Our school leaders work with their teacher teams to develop actions to meet their yearly targets for student achievement and growth. The document they use to monitor and record their progress is the Houston County Strategic Measures of Student Success (SMoSS). The graphic below displays the SMoSS focus areas of measurement that guide school improvement efforts. The SMoSS is revisited each year to determine if schools have met their targets, and actions are updated based on the results.





OUR DATA PICTURE



18% Increase from 2011-2024

2,099 Class of 2024 Graduates

Graduation is our ultimate goal!



96% 84.9% 90% 95% 89.8%

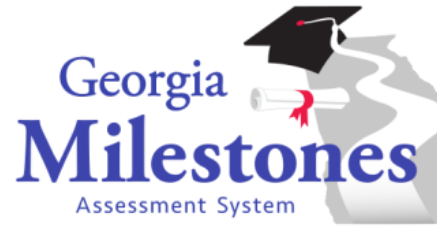
Our MISSION

is to produce high achievement for all through continuous growth.

Our VISION

is to be the standard for world-class education.

Houston County School District | www.hcbe.net



The 2025 Georgia Milestones Assessment System (GMAS) results for elementary and middle schools showed that Houston County students outperformed the state in all reported content areas, which were reading, ELA, science, and social studies. The district's high school students outperformed the state on the American Literature, Algebra, and Biology GMAS tests. Here are some examples of our 2025 results that far exceeded the state average:

81%

81% of Houston County's 5th graders were reading on or above grade level, at 11 points higher than the state average.

84%

84% of Houston County's 5th graders scored at the developing learner level or above on the ELA assessment, at 8 points higher than the state average.

80%

80% of Houston County's 8th graders were reading on or above grade level, at 12 points higher than the state average.

88%

88% of Houston County's 8th graders scored at the developing learner level or above on the Math assessment, at 9 points higher than the state average.

88%

88% of Houston County's Algebra students scored at the developing learner level or above, at 13 points higher than the state average.



DISTRICTWIDE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITY

The Houston County School District is a Districtwide Professional Learning Community (PLC) with all schools functioning as PLCs. As articulated in the district's values statements, we take collective responsibility for teaching, learning, and professional development through professional learning communities. Part of the dedication to being a PLC is making a commitment to practices that center around the three big ideas of a PLC: a focus on learning, a collaborative culture and collective responsibility, and a results orientation. To achieve our PLC goals, all teachers and leaders are engaged in collaboration, ensuring a guaranteed and viable curriculum, using common formative and summative assessments, and developing schedules that include time for interventions, enrichments, and extensions. The work of the collaborative teams revolves around the four PLC guiding questions. Described below is an overview of each of these components of our collective commitments.

COLLABORATION

All educators will work in collaborative teams and take collective responsibility for student learning. No one works in isolation.

GUARANTEED AND VIABLE CURRICULUM

Collaborative teams will use district established essential standards. Individual schools may add essential standards as appropriate. Teacher teams will guarantee students are proficient in the essential standards before moving to the next grade level.

COMMON FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS

Using common formative and summative assessments, collaborative teams will monitor student learning and use data to show evidence of learning by student, by standard, for essential standards.

INTERVENTIONS AND ENRICHMENTS

Schools will implement a coordinated plan that takes place during the school day to provide timely and targeted support for students according to each student's individual needs.

FOUR PLC GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. What do we want our students to learn?
2. How will we know if each student has learned it?
3. How will we respond when some students do not learn it?
4. How will we extend and enrich the learning for students who have demonstrated proficiency?



SUPPORTING OUR SCHOOLS



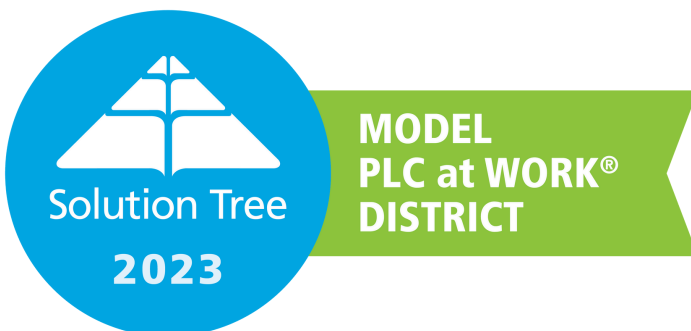
Our continuous improvement process involves providing clarity about the fundamental purpose of our organization, which is educating students. Throughout various departments, efforts are aligned with this purpose. The 2023-2028 Strategic Plan was developed with input from all departments that support what happens in our schools. We are proud of our district-level teams that provide ancillary services and support for teaching and learning. Educating students requires collaboration among different departments to ensure we have safe, clean schools and adequate resources for teachers and students. From transporting students to school on buses, feeding them, providing technology tools, delivering supplemental instruction, to communicating with parents, we fully understand the importance of working together as a cohesive unit. In April 2023, we officially opened the Lindsey Student Support Center as an additional resource for our families. We believe that teamwork is an integral part of our success.





DISTRICT AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

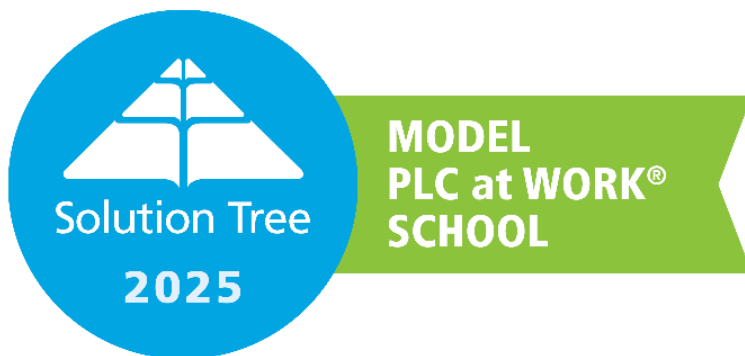
The Houston County Board of Education has once again been recognized by the Georgia School Boards Association (GSBA) as an Exemplary School Board for its proven pursuit of excellence. This is the ninth consecutive year our Board has been bestowed with this honor. The Board of Education was also named 2024 Governance Team of the Year Runner Up, which was an outstanding accomplishment. Houston County School District has received other notable recognitions by premier organizations such as Forbes and Solution Tree. Several district office departments have earned awards from their state affiliate organizations for superior practices and performance. We have received the Award of Distinction for Excellent Financial Reporting by the Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts since the 2013 inception of this award. Because of our steadfast commitment to excellence, Houston County recently earned systems accreditation from Cognia for the next six years.





SCHOOL AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

Houston County School District has award-winning schools across the district. We are honored to have 14 schools recognized as Military Flagship Schools by the Georgia Department of Education. Feagin Mill Middle was recognized for achieving academic excellence as our most recent National Blue Ribbon School. Kings Chapel Elementary and Quail Run Elementary received this honor in 2023. Other schools in the district have received this distinction in the past. For their solid commitment to being robust Professional Learning Communities, six Houston County schools are Solution Tree Model PLC at Work Schools: Bonaire Elementary, Bonaire Primary, Eagle Springs Elementary, Houston County High, Matt Arthur Elementary, and Shirley Hills Elementary. Additionally, several of our schools have been recognized as Title I Reward Schools for being among the top 5% of Title I schools making the most progress in improving the performance of students compared to other Title I schools around the state. Our high schools have received various AP Honor School awards, and all high schools have been named as AP STEM Schools by the state department. These awards and recognitions are just a few examples of accolades our schools have earned for outstanding student achievement, support, and growth.



Title I Reward School





PLANNING FOR GROWTH



The Houston County community is experiencing constant population growth. To accommodate our increasing needs resulting from this growth, our Board is committed to providing state-of-the-art facilities and resources to accomplish our vision of being the standard for world-class education. We have ongoing Capital Projects involving additions, modifications, renovations, site improvements, and new construction. These projects are made possible by our E-SPLOST, local, and state funds. Stakeholders surveying our community will see evidence of our Capital Project investments across the district. We owe our taxpayers immense gratitude for approving several consecutive E-SPLOST referendums that provide vital infrastructure benefiting all students.





GOVERNANCE TEAM

Meet the Houston County Board of Education
Recognized as a Georgia School Boards Association Exemplary Board and
2024 Georgia School Boards Association Governance Team of the Year Runner Up



"Our Board is committed to providing excellent leadership, resources, and support to our teachers, our students, and their families. This strategic plan provides the framework for achieving success!"

Helen Hughes



"Now that our 2023-2028 Strategic Plan is finalized, the real work begins. Our action steps are guided by our mission and vision. This plan emphasizes initiatives to help our students excel."

Rick Unruh



"For years, the Houston County School District has been well-known for the quality of the education we provide. This plan ensures that we continuously strive to be a high-performing school district for many years to come!"

Dave Crockett



"As a former educator, I understand the importance of measuring where we are and understanding what it will take to move us to the next level. Our students will benefit greatly from the strategies listed in this plan."

Mark Ivory



"Our strategic plan ensures that we put students first by focusing our collective efforts on creating opportunities, removing barriers, and promoting excellent results for every learner in our community."

Clyde Jackson, Jr.



"Our District uses evidence-based practices to meet the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs of all students. This plan keeps our focus on using effective practices that support the whole child."

Lori Johnson



"It's been said that having a goal without a plan is simply a wish. Our strategic plan provides us with an accountability tool for making ongoing progress toward meeting and exceeding our goals."

Jon Nichols

MEET OUR EXECUTIVE CABINET

Our Executive Cabinet consists of the Superintendent, Dr. Richard Rogers, and his leadership team, which includes the Deputy Superintendent, Assistant Superintendents, and Chiefs. Led by the Superintendent, the Executive Cabinet works collaboratively to facilitate organized and efficient daily operations of the school district.



DR. RICHARD ROGERS
Superintendent of Schools



DR. CHRIS BROWN
Deputy Superintendent



DR. LAZUNIA FRIERSON
Assistant Superintendent of
District & School Effectiveness



DR. STEVEN HORNYAK
Chief Innovation Officer



DR. ELGIN MAYFIELD
Assistant Superintendent of
Teaching & Learning



MRS. MICHELLE MORRIS
Chief Financial Officer



DR. WALTER STEPHENS
Assistant Superintendent of
Human Resources & District Operations



DR. CHERYL THOMAS
Assistant Superintendent of
School Operations



DR. DANA WIGGINS
Assistant Superintendent of
Student Services

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