Strategic Plan for 2024-2029

Sumter County Schools

716 Country Club Rd
Livingston, AL 35470

Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow

Sumter County Board of Education
District 1 – Mrs. Lillian Wideman, Chairman
District 2 – Ms. Eleanor James
District 3 – Ms. Sharon Nelson
District 4 – Ms. Jeanette Brasfield-Payne
District 5 – Mrs. Darla Spencer
District 6 – Mrs. Christine Jones

Superintendent of Education
Dr. Marcy Burroughs

Sumter County School System

Vision
The Sumter County School System is committed to empowering learners to maximize their full potential today, making them leaders tomorrow.

Mission
The mission of the Sumter County School System is to foster a challenging learning environment that creates opportunities for students to graduate college and career ready.

Beliefs
1. We believe the support from parents, teachers, and stakeholders are valuable to student success.
2. We believe it is our responsibility to prepare students to be College and Career ready.
3. We believe the school system will provide a challenging curriculum.
4. We believe each student will receive a quality education.
5. We believe each student can reach their full potential in a supportive environment.
6. We believe we can meet the diverse needs of all students.

Focus Areas of the SCSS Strategic Plan

1. Culture of Learning

The Sumter County School System establishes a healthy culture of learning that follows stated values, connects stakeholders, and demonstrates evidence that reflects the district's mission, beliefs, and expectations. SCSS emphasizes the importance of creating a culture that fosters continuous improvement and encourages learners, educators, and leaders to be active learners who are committed to their own growth and development.

2. Leadership for Learning

The Sumter County School System believes that strong leadership sets high expectations for learner achievement and creates a supportive environment that enables all learners to succeed. Leaders engage in their own learning and promote learning for educators and staff, engage families and communities, and ultimately improve learner outcomes.

3. Engagement of Learning

The Sumter County School System emphasizes engagement as a critical factor in promoting learning and success. Engaged learners are more likely to develop critical thinking skills and achieve their academic goals. Effective engagement strategies can motivate learners to encourage them to have a greater sense of ownership over their learning.

4. Growth in Learning

The Sumter County School System stands by the belief that by measuring growth over time, educators can gain a better understanding of learners' progress and can identify areas of improvement in their instructional practices. A focus on growth also promotes a growth mindset among learners and encourages them to view challenges and setbacks as opportunities for growth and learning. Educators must foster resilience, persistence, and self-efficacy, which is important for lifelong success.

Focus Area 1: Culture of Learning

Objectives:
1. Leaders actively engage stakeholders to support the institution's priorities and guiding principles that promote learners' academic growth and well-being.
2. Professional staff members embrace effective collegiality and collaboration in support of learners.
3. *Professional staff members receive the support they need to strengthen their professional practice.

Critical Initiatives:
1. *Provide ongoing job-embedded professional learning.
   Action Steps:
   a. Implement evidence-based learning practices related to improving student learning and educator effectiveness.
   b. Provide professional development related to standards-based instruction.
2. *Develop a comprehensive professional development plan.
   Action Steps:
   a. Provide ongoing mentoring and coaching for staff members.
   b. All staff members will complete a professional learning plan aligned with the district's goals.
   c. All school leaders will complete a professional learning plan aligned with the district's goals.
3. *Develop, implement, and monitor a multi-tiered system of support that focuses on student achievement and growth.
   Action Step:
   a. Create and cultivate a structure to promote high expectations among all students and staff.

Focus Area 2: Leadership for Learning

Objectives:
1. *Leaders guide professional staff members in the continuous improvement process focused on learners' experiences and needs.
2. *The governing authority demonstrates a commitment to learners by collaborating with leaders to uphold the institution's priorities and to drive continuous improvement.
3. Professional staff members implement curriculum and instruction that are aligned for relevancy, inclusion, and effectiveness.
4. Learners' needs drive the equitable allocation and management of human, material, digital, and fiscal resources.

Critical Initiatives:
1. *Provide ongoing professional training sessions related to effective board governance on roles and responsibilities.
   Action Steps:
   a. Provide opportunities for newly hired district leaders to participate in customized job-embedded professional learning sessions related to their specific job duties.
   b. Develop, implement, and evaluate a professional development plan for Board members that includes orientation sessions for new members and whole board training on roles and responsibilities.
   c. Develop an annual written commitment to adhere to a Board Code of Ethics.
2. Conduct an annual assessment to identify professional development needs.
   Action Steps:
   a. Collaborate with UA/UWA Inservice Center to develop an annual survey to identify professional development needs.
3. Long-range capital planning to support learner needs.
   Action Steps:
   a. Develop and update annually a capital plan that identify needs and prioritizes them based on funding availability and student/staff safety.
   b. Build new facilities as warrantied by age of buildings and student safety concerns.
4. Identify curriculum gaps and align professional learning opportunities based on the identified gaps.
   Action Steps:
   a. Look for trends and patterns in the data that indicate areas of strength and areas needing improvement.
   b. Organize meetings with teachers and curriculum specialists to discuss identified gaps and gather suggestions for improvement.
   c. Identify strategies, resources, and instructional materials needed to fill the curriculum gaps.

Focus Area 3: Engagement of Learning

Objectives:
1. *Instruction is characterized by high expectations and learner-centered practices.
2. *Instruction is monitored and adjusted to advance and deepen individual learners' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum.
3. Professional staff members integrate digital resources that deepen and advance learners' engagement with instruction and stimulate their curiosity.

Critical Initiatives:
1. Develop and implement purposely planned lessons.
   Action Steps:
   a. Align instructional practices with the Alabama College and Career Ready Course of Study Standards.
   b. Develop lessons that are rigorous and require the use of higher order thinking.
2. Actively involve students in the teaching and learning process.
   Action Steps:
   a. Develop a process where students can progress monitor their learning during class instruction.
3. Use observation data to develop and provide instructional support.
   Action Steps:
   a. Use data to drive instruction and to make informed decisions.
   b. Develop a walk-through form that focuses on student engagement and learning opportunities provided to students.
4. Monitor the implementation of grade-level and content-specific standards
   Action Steps:
   a. Establish a timeline for monitoring activities, including regular check-ins, classroom observations, and data collection periods.
   b. Develop classroom observation protocols that focus on the implementation of content-specific standards.
   c. Establish a process for regularly reviewing lesson plans to ensure alignment with grade-level standards.
   d. Organize regular meetings with teachers, instructional coaches, and administrators to review and reflect on the data.
   e. Based on the monitoring data, determine areas where teachers may need additional support or training.
   f. Implement support strategies such as peer observations, co-planning sessions, and professional learning communities.

Focus Area 4: Growth in Learning

Objectives:
1. Leaders use data and input from a variety of sources to make decisions for learners' and staff members' growth and well-being.
2. Learners' progress is measured through a balanced system that includes assessment both for learning and of learning.

Critical Initiatives:
1. Utilize student information systems to centralize data collection.
   Action Steps:
   a. Collect and use data to monitor student progress and the implementation of evidence-based professional practices.
2. Professional development for teachers and administrators on how to analyze and interpret data effectively.
   Action Steps:
   a. Establish communities of practice where teachers and administrators can collaborate, share insights, and support each other in data analysis efforts.
3. Schedule regular data review cycles to assess the progress of implemented initiatives and make necessary adjustments.
   Action Steps:
   a. Create or utilize existing tools for data collection, such as surveys, assessment results, attendance records, and observation checklists.
   b. Use data management systems to organize and store collected data for easy access and analysis.
   c. Schedule regular data review meetings according to the established calendar.
   d. Define clear, measurable goals and objectives for the next review cycle.
   e. Promote a culture that values data-driven decision-making and continuous improvement.