

STATE OF THE DISTRICT

2025



DR. RHONDA SCHUHLER, SUPERINTENDENT

Good evening! As Chair of the Board of Education, I'd like to welcome you to Franklin County Schools' State of the District. We are glad to have you with us this evening. The purpose of the State of the District is to provide you with a better understanding of the work taking place in Franklin County Schools and the impact that it has in preparing our students for a successful future.

At this time, I would like to recognize the Franklin County Board of Education. Board members, if you will stand as your name is called:

Chris Perry, Vice-Chair

Tom Harris

Dr. Candice Hinton

Dr. Elizabeth Keith

Tommy Piper

Paige Sayles

STATE OF THE DISTRICT

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DR. RHONDA SCHUHLER, SUPERINTENDENT

We would also like to take this opportunity to recognize members of the Franklin County Board of Commissioners who are with us this evening. We could not be successful as a district without the support that our Board of Commissioners provides to our schools. If you will stand as your name is called:

David Bunn, Chair

Michael Schriver, Vice-Chair

Roxanne Bragg

Logan Davis

Harry Foy

Stuart May

Mark Speed

And our interim County Manager, Ryan Preble

STATE OF THE DISTRICT

2025



DR. RHONDA SCHUHLER, SUPERINTENDENT

In addition to the members of these two boards, we are also joined by Franklin County Sheriff Kevin White.

INSERT ANY OTHER ELECTED OFFICIALS HERE:

We also have representation from our Chamber of Commerce, Franklin County Economic Development, our Parent Summit team, our Strategic Plan Committee Members, principals, teachers, staff members, parents and students. We are so grateful to you for taking time to learn more about the important work taking place each day in our schools.

At this time, I'm going to ask Dr. Rhonda Schuhler, Franklin County Schools Superintendent, to come forward to share more about our progress.

STATE OF THE DISTRICT

2025



DR. RHONDA SCHUHLER, SUPERINTENDENT

Good evening and welcome to our "State of the District." It is my hope that you will leave this evening with a better sense of the opportunities that we provide each day to our students, the progress that we continue to make, and the work that is taking place to chart our future as a school system.

Executive Summary



Franklin County Schools is committed to serving our community by providing a comprehensive, high quality public education to every child in our care. This commitment follows our students throughout their educational journey and it continues well beyond high school.

SUPERINTENDENT

DR. RHONDA SCHUHLER

Rhonda Schuhler has spent the past 31 years in public education in North Carolina, both at the school and district levels. She has served as an elementary classroom teacher, assistant principal, and principal. At the district level, she has provided leadership in a variety of roles including director in human resources, director of professional development and innovation, executive director of K-12 curriculum and instruction, and assistant and associate superintendent. She has led Franklin County Schools as superintendent for the past six years.

I am currently in my 11th year working in Franklin County Schools, and I just wrapped up year 7 as superintendent. I feel blessed to be part of this school community and to have the opportunity to serve our schools, our families and our staff as we work collectively to reach our goals.

Our Board of Education



MEGHAN JORDAN
BOARD CHAIRPERSON
DISTRICT 1



CHRIS PERRY
BOARD VICE-CHAIRPERSON
DISTRICT 5



THOMAS HARRIS
BOARD MEMBER
AT LARGE - SEAT 6



DR. CANDICE HINTON
BOARD MEMBER
DISTRICT 4



DR. ELIZABETH KEITH
BOARD MEMBER
DISTRICT 3



TOMMY PIPER
BOARD MEMBER
DISTRICT 2



PAIGE SAYLES
BOARD MEMBER
AT LARGE - SEAT 7

Our Board Chair, Meghan Jordan already introduced our Board of Education. I can say that our board is fully committed to making decisions that are in the best interests of our students.

OUR SCHOOLS

• 8 ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS



• Bunn Elementary

Principal: Christopher Cullom
Asst. Principal: Timothy Osso



• Edward Best Elementary

Principal: Katie Renze-Bear
Asst. Principal: Michelle Hunt



• Franklinton Elementary

Principal: Jamie Wilkerson
Asst. Principal: Jessica Cotterman



• Laurel Mill Elementary

Principal: Jennifer Giandenoto
Asst. Principal: Dakisha Perry



• Long Mill Elementary

Principal: Pachette Dunn
Asst. Principal: Dr. Robert Kradel



• Louisburg Elementary

Principal: Trenace Gilmore
Asst. Principal: Wanda Keith



• Royal Elementary

Principal: Dr. David Westbrook
Asst. Principal: Petrice Fox



• Youngsville Elementary

Principal: Frank Wiggins
Asst. Principal: Latelle Williams

We have 16 schools in total, serving approximately 8000 students. Here's a snapshot of our 8 elementary schools.

OUR SCHOOLS

• 4 MIDDLE SCHOOLS • 4 HIGH SCHOOLS



• Bunn Middle

Principal: Danielle Richardson
Asst. Principal: Darrell Richardson, Dr. Jennifer Innis



• Cedar Creek Middle

Principal: Gail Bunting
Asst. Principal: Jeffrey Whitt



• Franklinton Middle

Principal: Heidi Boardman
Asst. Principal: Jerri Valentine-Terry



• Terrell Lane Middle

Principal: Crystal Cofield-Davis
Asst. Principal: Kendall Doyle, Ben Eustice



• Bunn High

Principal: Tyler Morris
Asst. Principal: Diana Shaw, Terika Hooks



• Early College High

Principal: Dr. Laura Wilson-Wadsworth



• Franklinton High

Principal: Dr. Russell Holloman
Asst. Principal: Kimberly Heller, Lavonne Carter, Joseph Cobb



• Louisburg Magnet High

Principal: Tonya Treadway
Asst. Principal: Jovon Blacknall, Lucille Glass, Jasmine Manley

Here's a snapshot of our 4 middle schools, our 3 traditional high schools, and our Early College High School

Our Blueprint

In Fall 2019, a cross section of stakeholders (school, business, community, parents) convened to begin development of Blueprint 2025: Franklin County Schools Strategic Plan. This work took place throughout the 2019-2020 school year, and the plan was approved for implementation beginning in Fall 2020.

The committee developed a vision and mission for the work of the district.

We are in the last year of implementation of Blueprint 2025, and are in the process of developing Blueprint 2030, with implementation of the new plan in Fall 2025.

○ ○ ○ ○



Tonight's presentation is built around our current strategic plan, Blueprint 2025, and our progress with each of our goals. Our Blueprint was developed by a cross-section of our school community, and we are in year five of this plan, which drives our day-to-day work as a district.

Vision > Building a stronger community one life-long learner at a time.

Mission > Franklin County Schools will cultivate a dynamic learning environment focused on success beyond the classroom; preparing, inspiring and illuminating the path so that all students will reach their full potential.

Our Goals

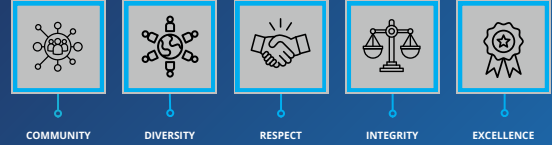
01
FCS STUDENTS WILL GRADUATE PREPARED FOR COLLEGE, CAREER AND LIFE BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

02
FCS STUDENTS WILL DEMONSTRATE PROFICIENCY IN CORE ACADEMIC AREAS

03
FCS STUDENTS WILL BE PROVIDED WITH A SAFE, ORDERLY AND CARING ENVIRONMENT CONDUCIVE TO LEARNING

04
FCS WILL ACTIVELY RECRUIT, SUPPORT AND RETAIN HIGH QUALITY PROFESSIONALS

Core Values



Our plan includes a vision of building a stronger community one life-long learner at a time, and a mission to cultivate a dynamic learning environment focused on success beyond the classroom.

We have 4 key goals that you will learn more about this evening.

01

FCS students will graduate prepared for college, career, and life beyond the classroom



Goal 1 is to prepare each graduate for college, career and life beyond the classroom. This is what we are charged with doing as a district and everything that we do should be in preparation for this ultimate goal.

Goal I Objectives

FCS STUDENTS WILL
GRADUATE PREPARED
FOR COLLEGE, CAREER,
AND LIFE BEYOND THE
CLASSROOM



- Increase the 4-year cohort graduation rate to 90%
- Increase the percentage of students who graduate from high school with at least one post-secondary credit to 35%
- Increase the percentage of students meeting the UNC benchmark on ACT/Workkeys to 75%
- Increase the percentage of high school graduates that are CTE Completers to 70%
- Increase industry-recognized certifications and credentials by 25% as indicated by NC Report Card
- Increase exposure to non-academic skills identified as necessary for success beyond the classroom
- Increase the number of students participating in work-based learning experience to 10%

Our objectives are our tangible outcomes for each goal. For goal 1, we are focused on increasing our graduation rate, the percentage of students who graduate with at least one post-secondary credit that they can carry with them beyond high school, the percentage of Career and Technical Education students completing pathways in their area of interest, the percentage of industry recognized certifications and credentials, and participation in work-based learning experiences.

Data Highlights

85.1%

Graduation Rate
(up 4.8%)



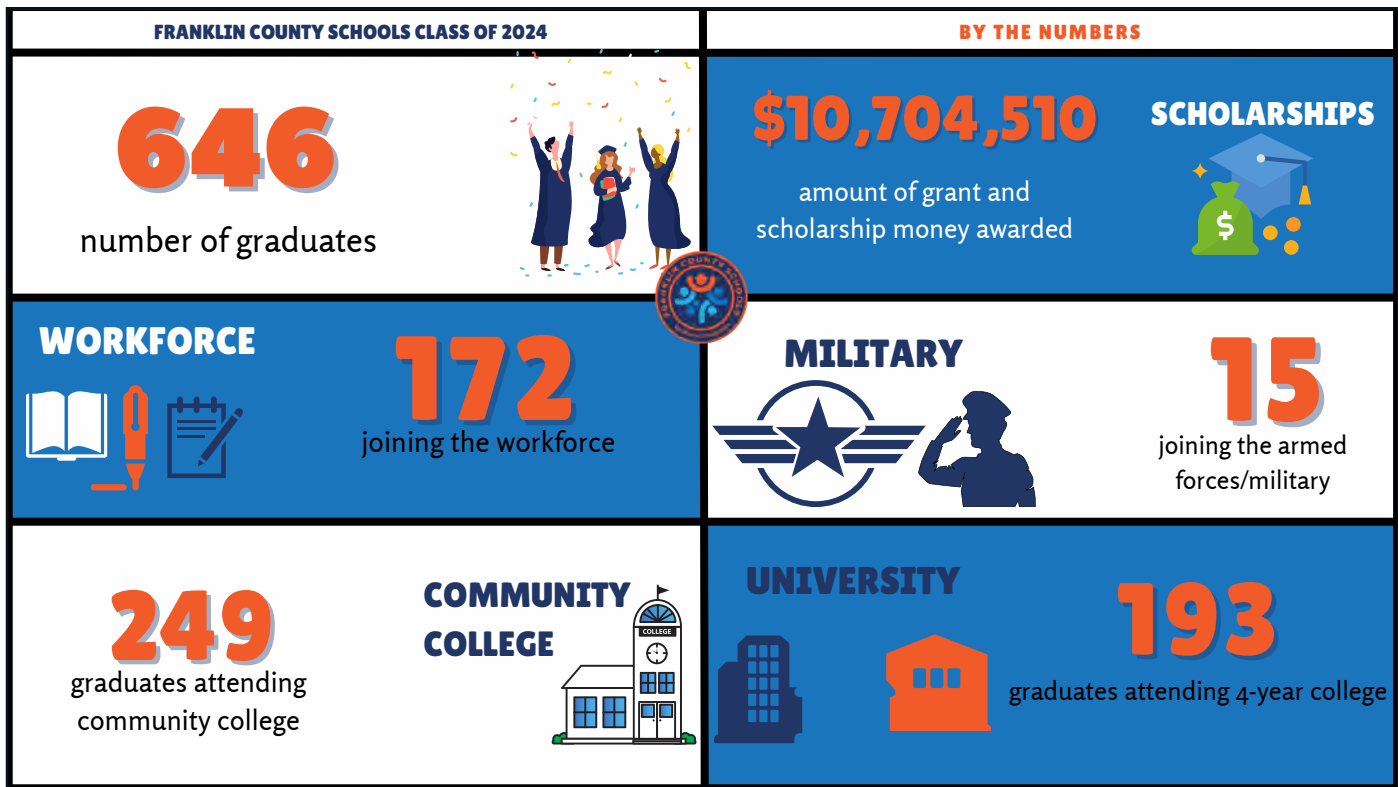
3679

The number of career-ready credentials that our students completed in 2023-24

Two data points of note:

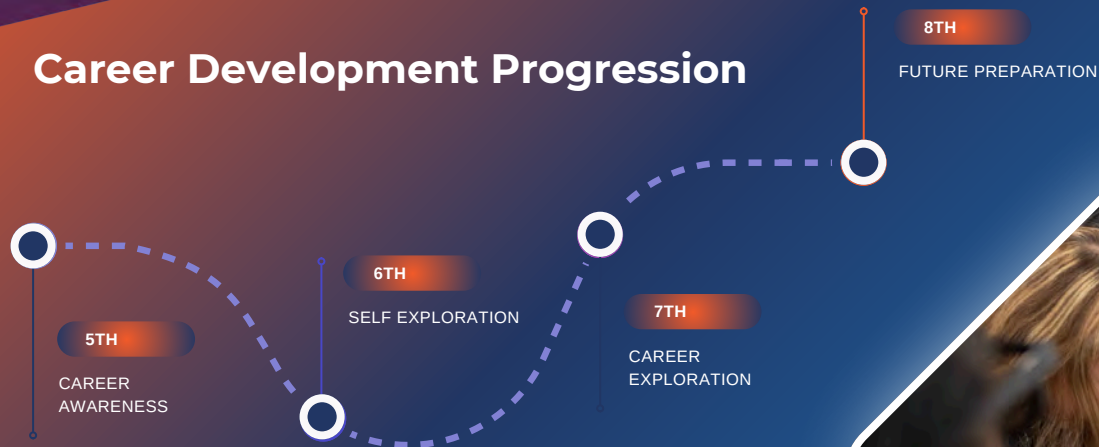
Our graduation rate has increased almost 5 percentage points since we began implementation of our Blueprint.

Our students have far exceeded our initial goal for career-ready credentials, with 3679 credentials earned last year alone.



Here are a few highlights from our class of 2024. You will see that our graduates follow a number of different paths after graduation. Whether it is attending a four year university, a community college, the workforce or the military, we are committed to preparing our students for that next step.

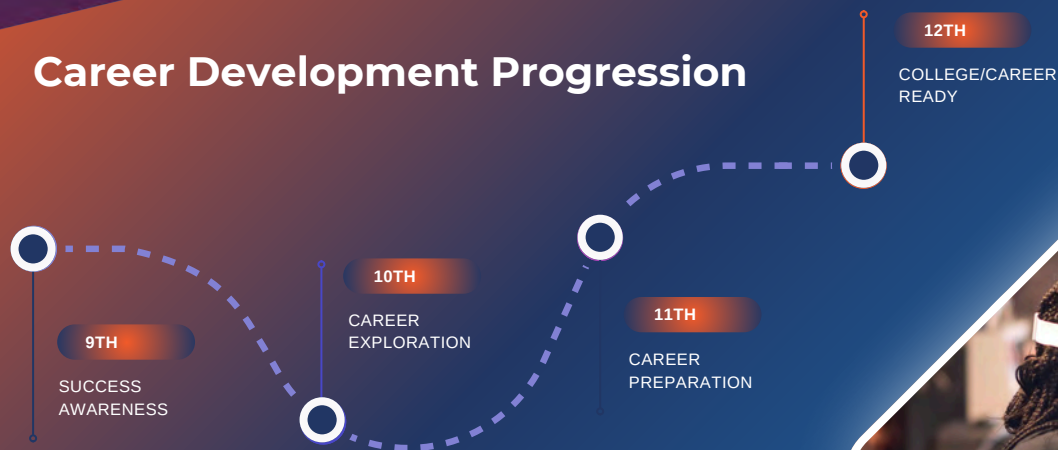
Career Development Progression



An important part of our work is our career development continuum, with a focus for all of our students beginning in elementary school.

Starting in 5th grade, students are introduced to the world of work through experiences shared by professionals, fostering career awareness that continues through middle school. In 6th grade, they explore their personal interests, values, and skills to understand how these influence future career choices. By 7th grade, students deepen their knowledge of various occupations, required education, and career pathways. In 8th grade, they focus on aligning their strengths with career options, making informed high school plans, and understanding the importance of academic performance, career pathways, and financial literacy.

Career Development Progression



In 9th grade, students focus on academic performance, goal setting, and career decision-making while exploring educational options. By 10th grade, they deepen their understanding of the workplace, personal characteristics, and career possibilities to guide their high school and postsecondary choices. In 11th grade, students prepare for college, military, or employment by gaining career-specific knowledge and skills. By 12th grade, they refine their readiness for postsecondary plans, developing both academic and work-based skills needed for their chosen career paths.

I'd like to spotlight one of our programs for career and college readiness: our Early College High School. [SHOW VIDEO NEXT SLIDE](#)



Franklin County Early College High School



■ "A" Rating

FCECHS has received an "A" grade on the state's accountability model for the past 8 years.



■ Graduation Rate

Last year's graduation rate exceeded 85%.



■ Associates Degree

88% of these graduates completed an associate's degree through the program, free of charge.

Franklin County Early College program has been in place on the Franklin County Vance-Granville Community College (VGCC) Campus since Fall 2010.

The Franklin County Early College High School (FCECHS) has demonstrated success in preparing students for college and career.

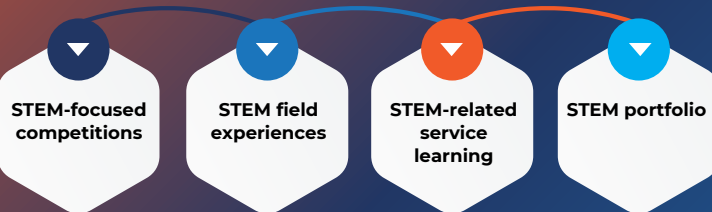
FCECHS has received an "A" grade on the state's accountability model for the past 8 years.

Last year's graduation rate exceeded 85%.

88% of these graduates completed an associate's degree through the program, free of charge. Those who don't complete the associate's degree carry numerous college credits with them upon graduation.

Louisburg Magnet

Louisburg High School graduated the first cohort from their STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering Mathematics) Academy in June 2021.



We are also really excited about our first magnet high school, focused on STEM.

Louisburg High School graduated the first cohort from their STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering Mathematics) Academy in June 2021.

Students in the Academy participated in:

STEM-focused competitions

STEM field experiences

STEM-related service learning

STEM portfolio (artifacts to support employment and college applications)

Beginning with the 2023-24 school year, the Franklin County Board of Education shifted to a schoolwide magnet. LMHS serves all interested and eligible Franklin County students. Transportation is provided for this program.

All LMHS students will participate in one of three pathways- LHS College and Career Pathway, STEM-Focused Program (VGCC) Pathway or Advanced Placement (AP) Diploma Pathway.

Beyond LMHS, Career and Technical Education is a critical area of focus at each of our high schools. Here's a bit more about what our CTE program has to offer. [SHOW VIDEO](#)
[NEXT SLIDE.](#)



CTE PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Horticulture
- Agriculture Mechanics
- Adobe Visual Design
- Adobe Digital Design
- Apparel and Textile Prod
- Business Management
- Introduction to Construction
- Carpentry
- Entrepreneurship
- Firefighter Technology
- Foods and Nutrition
- Interior Design
- Health Science
- Nursing Fundamentals
- Microsoft Word/PowerPoint
- Microsoft Excel/Excel Honors
- Principles of Business & Finance
- Sports and Marketing Entertainment
- Public Safety



Here is a list of our CTE programs at Bunn High School. You will see a mix of opportunities, including agriculture, carpentry, firefighter technology, nursing fundamentals, public safety and a variety of business pathways.

CTE PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Adobe Visual Design
- Adobe Digital Design
- Adobe Video Design
- Agriculture Mechanics
- Agriscience Applications
- Animal Science
- Apparel and Textile Prod
- Culinary Arts and Hospitality
- Interior Design
- Introduction to Construction
- Carpentry
- Digital Design and Animation
- Public Safety
- Emergency Technology
- Emergency Management
- Entrepreneurship
- Masonry
- Microsoft Word/PowerPoint
- Microsoft Excel/Excel Honors
- Sports and Marketing Entertainment
- Principles of Business & Finance
- Horticulture



At Franklinton High School, we have emergency management, public safety, various agriculture programs, construction, carpentry, masonry, and business programs like entrepreneurship and marketing.

CTE PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Agriculture Mechanics
- Horticulture
- Automotive Service
- Introduction to Construction
- Carpentry
- Digital Design and Animation
- Financial Planning
- Foods and Nutrition
- Health Science
- Nursing Fundamentals with practicum
- Principles of Business & Finance
- Public Safety
- Sports and Marketing Entertainment
- Woodworking
- Emergency Technology
- Emergency Management



We've already touched on Louisburg Magnet High, but there are also a host of programs available to students including automotive, ag mechanics, carpentry, nursing, health science and emergency management, and public safety.

Work-Based Learning Experiences

Job Shadow



Students observe a workplace to learn about job skills and careers, with classroom activities before and after to connect the experience to career pathways and education. Open to 10th-12th graders.

Internship



Students gain hands-on experience by working under a mentor's supervision at a workplace. Open to 11th-12th graders.

Apprenticeship



Through NCTAP, students receive paid on-the-job training and work toward an Associate's degree. Open to 11th-12th graders.

As mentioned in the video, we offer work-based learning opportunities to provide students with practical experiences that prepare them to enter the workforce.

These include a range of job shadowing, internships, and apprenticeships for students.

We continue to seek partnerships with local businesses to support this initiative. If you know of a business that would like to work with us, please let us know.

SUMMER CAMPS



SUMMER TEAMSHIP

REGISTRATION

Priority Deadline: May 17th

- Free program for rising 8th-12th grade FCS students
- Reimagined Internship
- Work on a team
- Real world experience
- July 8th-11th at Louisburg College

CTE SUMMER CAMP

REGISTER NOW bit.ly/CTE-CAMP

Rising 6th - 8th Grade Students

FREE Registration Deadline MAY

WEEK 1 → June 17th-20th
WEEK 2 → June 24th-27th
9am - 2pm daily

QUESTIONS?
Sylvia Allen, 919-496-2600
sylvaalien@fcschools.net

Our summer programming provides students with hands-on camps in a variety of areas including carpentry, Ag, Automotive, and culinary arts.

We also offer a nationally recognized summer teamship program- District C- in which students work with companies and organizations to collaborate and solve problems of practice.



We recognize the importance of financial literacy for our students, and every student participates in an economic and personal finance course prior to graduation. To make this real for students, we have hands-on financial literacy events for all 12th graders.

This program is made possible through partnerships with SECU, CIVIC Federal Credit Union, and LGFCU.

DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM

Students are immersed in Spanish language from an early age, leading to bilingual learners

FCS Partnership with Participate Learning

Began with Kindergarten and 1st grade in 2024-25



SPANISH IMMERSION
DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM
Now accepting applications!

2025-2026 Academic Year
Kindergarten to 1st Grade
Apply Today!

919-496-2600
duallanguage@fcschools.net
Royal Elementary
308 Flat Rock Church Road
Louisburg, NC 27549

SCAN ME

Franklin + Participate Learning
www.fcschools.net

The poster features a young girl with a backpack holding a yellow folder. It includes contact information, a QR code, and logos for Franklin and Participate Learning.

This year we introduced the first dual language program in our district at Royal Elementary School. Students are immersed in Spanish language from day 1 of kindergarten, preparing them to be bilingual learners.

Let's take a closer look at this program: [SHOW VIDEO](#).



02

**FCS students
will
demonstrate
proficiency in
core academic
areas**



We are currently enrolling students for the upcoming year. The school is sponsoring an open house week next week and there are still spots available if you'd like to come and see this program in action.

Goal 2 is to demonstrate proficiency in core academic areas. We want to ensure that our students have a strong academic foundation.

Goal 2 Objectives

FCS STUDENTS WILL
DEMONSTRATE
PROFICIENCY IN CORE
ACADEMIC AREAS



- Implement a Pre-Kindergarten program at each elementary school; increase total Pre-K enrollment by 50%
- Increase the overall percentage of students proficient in Mathematics (K-2 Math, EOGs, Math I EOC) to 75%
- Increase the overall percentage of students who are proficient in Reading (K-2 Reading, EOG, English II EOC) to 75%

To accomplish this goal, we have worked to implement a pre-K program at each elementary school, and to increase our overall proficiency in mathematics and reading.

Grade Level Proficiency: Math

Subject	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
EOG Grades 3-8	31% (36.0%)	42% (46.7%)	53% (49.1%)	64% (49.7%)	75%
Math 1	26.4% (22.8%)	37% (39.5)	50% (47.0%)	63% (41.9%)	75%
Math 3	28.4% (17.1%)	37% (37.1%)	50% (51.2%)	63% (52.6%)	75%

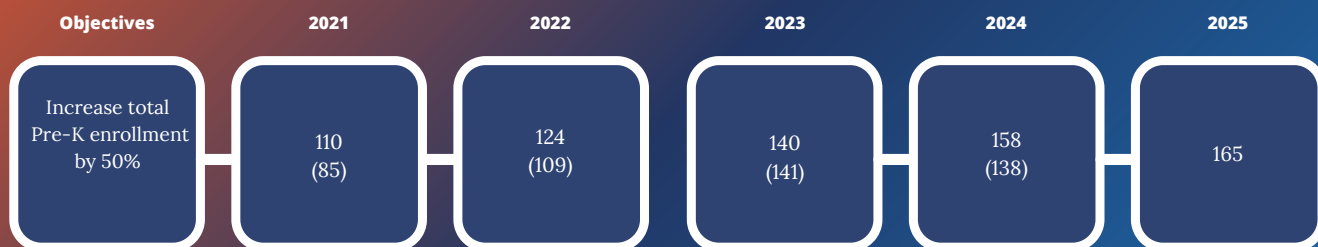
Here's a snapshot of our math proficiency by goal. Although we saw impacts from the pandemic reflected in our progress, overall we have seen steady gains since implementation of our Strategic Plan began.

Grade Level Proficiency: Reading

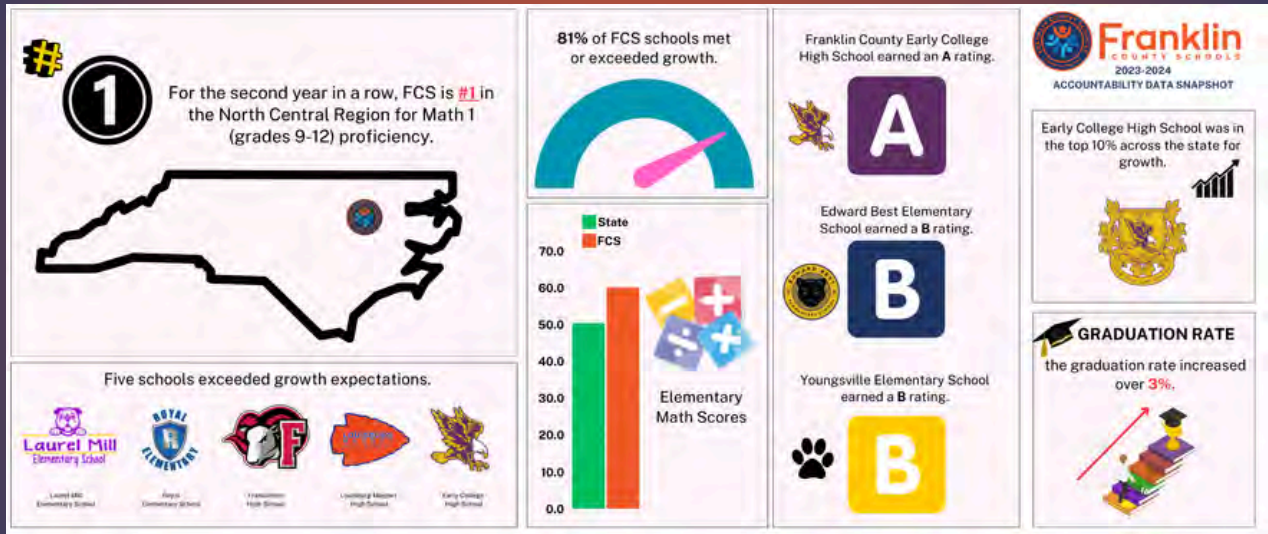
Subject	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
EOG Grades 4-8	33% (33.3%)	43% (42.4%)	54% (44.9%)	65% (45.4%)	75%
Grade 3	28.4% (28.5%)	44% (42.4%)	54% (44.9%)	65% (45.4%)	75%
English II	57.8% (42.2%)	62% (52.5%)	67% (54.8%)	71% (54.6%)	75%

The same can be said of reading progress, where we have seen overall gains across the span of implementation.

Increase total Pre-K enrollment by 50%:



We recognize that building a strong foundation and connecting with students early is essential to our success. Over the past five years we have expanded our PreK programming to ensure that each school site has a program for interested families. We have increased our Pre-K enrollment by 61% since year one of implementation of our current strategic plan.



Here are a few of our successes this past year with academic achievement.

For the second year in a row, our Math 1 students outperformed every district in the 16 district North Central Region. This includes Wake, Chapel Hill, and other historically high performing districts.

Our elementary math scores exceeded the state average.

81% of our schools met and exceeded growth expectations.

Early College received an A rating, and EBES and YES received a B rating based on the state's stringent accountability model.

Improving Student Outcomes

- Regular classroom visits and feedback
- Focus on core instruction and impactful use of instructional time
- Data-driven school, principal and teacher goal setting
- Progress monitoring through Professional Learning Communities (PLC) collaboration
- Quarterly instructional “check ins” and ongoing common assessments aligned to NC standards
- Maximizing instructional time with clear objectives and lesson plans
- Continuous improvement of instructional resources
- Professional development of staff to enhance instruction
- Implementation of the FCS Graduation Support Plan
- Differentiated support for schools based on need (ex. Low performing schools)

We are focused as a district on continuous academic improvement, and here are a few of the strategies that we are implementing.

These include regular classroom visits and feedback, a focus on core instruction and use of quality, research based resources, check-ins and other assessments to monitor student progress and plan instruction based on student need, professional development for staff, and differentiated support for schools in greatest need.

03

FCS students will be provided with a safe, orderly and caring environment conducive to learning



We recognize that students cannot learn if they do not feel that they are in a safe and nurturing environment. Goal 3 focuses on creating an environment that is conducive to learning.

Goal 3 Objectives

FCS STUDENTS WILL BE PROVIDED WITH A SAFE, ORDERLY AND CARING ENVIRONMENT CONDUCIVE TO LEARNING



- Demonstrate increased connections with parents and larger school community
- Implement yearly facilities plan, as part of long range facilities plan, at 90% on-time completion rate
- Decrease exclusionary practices by 10% while also maintaining expectations as identified within student code of conduct

This goal covers multiple areas, including making connections with families, continuous improvement to facilities, and addressing discipline in a proactive way through high expectations and intervening for struggling students.

Planning for the Future: Facilities Maintenance and Improvements

- 1 Long Range Needs**-Total \$98,190,880 over the next 10 years. Of that, \$45,000,000 represents the cost of a replacement school for Franklinton Elementary School (FES) and \$53,190,880 represents Long Range Facility needs across Franklin County Schools. We have submitted a needs-based grant application for a new FES facility for several years, and will continue to do so until funding from the state is granted.
- 2 Short Range Needs**- Our approved capital outlay request to the Franklin County Board of Commissioners for the 2024-25 school year was approximately \$2.8 million.
- 3 School Visits**- This year, the BOE and BOC have conducted joint school visits to look closely at each of our facilities and their needs. This has been a valuable step.
- 4 Joint Facilities Committee**- The BOC has initiated development of a joint committee to examine future facilities needs and how those needs can best be met. We look forward to the first meeting of this important committee.

In terms of our facilities, our Board of Education has actively been working to identify and prioritize facilities needs across the district. We have short term and long term needs that must be addressed, and the Board has projected a price tag of just under \$100 million for this. We are working closely with our County Commissioners to address these needs, since the state of North Carolina has charged local counties with funding facilities.

We have conducted joint school visits with our Board of Commissioners and Board of Education this year, and our Board of Commissioners has charged that a joint committee be formed to work to address these needs. We have identified our school board members who will be a part of this work and we look forward to next steps with the County on this important issue.



BEYOND ACADEMICS

BUILDING GOOD CHARACTER



BENEFITS

01

Moral and Ethical Development: Character education helps students develop a strong moral and ethical foundation. It teaches values such as honesty, integrity, empathy, responsibility, and respect for others. These values are essential for personal growth and social cohesion.

02

Improved Behavior: A character education program can lead to improved behavior in students. It helps reduce incidents of bullying, cheating, and disruptive behavior by promoting positive conduct and self-discipline.

03

Enhanced Social Skills: Character education teaches students important social skills, such as communication, cooperation, and conflict resolution. These skills are valuable in building positive relationships and working effectively in teams.

04

Higher Academic Achievement: There is evidence to suggest that students who participate in character education programs tend to perform better academically. This may be because character education fosters a positive learning environment and helps students develop important study habits and perseverance.

05

Better Decision-Making: Character education equips students with the tools to make ethical and responsible decisions. It encourages critical thinking and problem-solving skills, which are transferable to various aspects of life.

06

Increased Empathy and Compassion: Character education helps students develop empathy and compassion for others. This can lead to a more inclusive and empathetic school, reducing prejudice and discrimination.

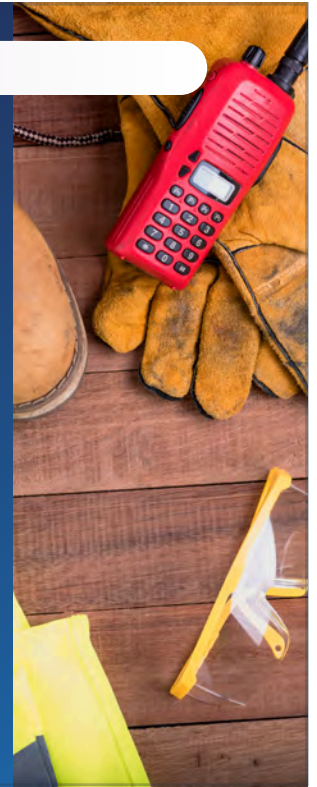
In developing a caring and respectful culture in our schools, we have taken a renewed and intentional focus on character building as part of our efforts. The benefits of quality character education are numerous, and include moral and ethical development, improved behavior, enhanced social skills, higher academic achievement, better decision making, and increased empathy and compassion.

Each month, we focus on a different character trait in our schools. This is emphasized through lessons and activities at the school level. Students demonstrating this character trait are recognized monthly at our Board of Education meetings.

STUDENT SAFETY

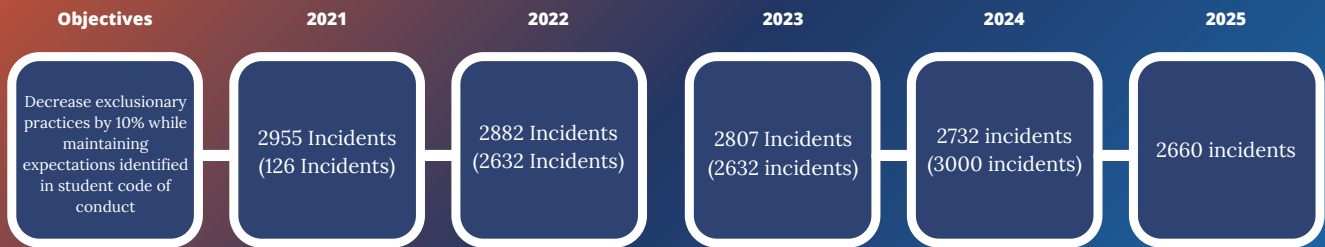
School Safety Efforts:

- Partnering with local law enforcement and having an SRO in every school, supported by the NC SRO/Safety Grant.
- Collaborating with law enforcement on safety planning.
- Proactively reducing exclusionary discipline and violent incidents with stakeholder input.
- Upgrading doors, locks, cameras, and access control systems (grant pending).
- Regularly reviewing disciplinary trends and standardizing procedures.
- Addressing stress and mental health challenges heightened by COVID-19.
- Applied for and received over \$2.5 million in grants to enhance safety and security.



Student safety is a top priority for us. We have an excellent working relationship with our Sheriff's office and local municipalities, and the presence of School Resource Officers, or SROs, in each of our schools has been critical to our safety efforts. We also continue to upgrade our locks, cameras, and access control systems.

Decrease exclusionary practices by 10%:



We haven't seen the decrease in exclusionary practices (in school suspension, out of school suspension) that we had hoped for, but we are also unwilling to sacrifice school safety by not administering consequences for disruptive behaviors. This is an area that we will continue to address through proactive, strategic measures to head off student behaviors before they lead to consequences.

STUDENT HEALTH

Social Work:

FCS partners with outside mental health agencies to provide mental health therapy and support to students in need. FCS school social workers work with families to maintain good attendance in school. FCS has established a Juvenile Attendance Council that encourages and assists our court system, outside agencies, and parents to work together to make school attendance a priority.

Student Health:

FCS partners with the Franklin County Health Department for vaccine clinics for the state required 7th & 12th grade vaccines. "Catch My Breath", a program for vaping cessation, is available to our middle schools, and a more in depth program to our high school freshmen.

McKinney-Vento:

FCS Student Services seeks to identify and serve our homeless students such as food, transportation, clothing, holiday gift assistance, field trip and school supply assistance, and academic tutoring.

FCS has developed multiple community relationships that have enhanced the provision of services for these vulnerable students.

FCS works to remove enrollment barriers and challenges to credit recovery/passing grades/classes due to their highly mobile status.

Psychological Services:

FCS School Psychologists work with MTSS teams, parents, and IEP teams to identify and evaluate students who are suspected of disability.

FCS School Psychologists provide staff development to teachers and service providers on identification of struggling learners.

Student physical and mental health supports continue to be an area of need for us. Our student services team partners with mental health agencies to provide support to students in need. Social workers support families to encourage good attendance. We assist with vaccine clinics for required vaccines. We have a vaping cessation program for middle and high school students.

We work to provide wrap-around support for homeless students through McKinney-Vento.

Our psychologists work with school based teams and parents to evaluate students who may qualify for services through our exceptional childrens' program. They also provide support to teachers on identifying and assisting struggling learners.

CEP

UNIVERSAL FREE MEALS FOR STUDENTS

We are pleased to report that Franklin County Schools has applied for and received Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) status for the next four years. This designation allows us to serve breakfast and lunch to all FCS students daily, free of charge.



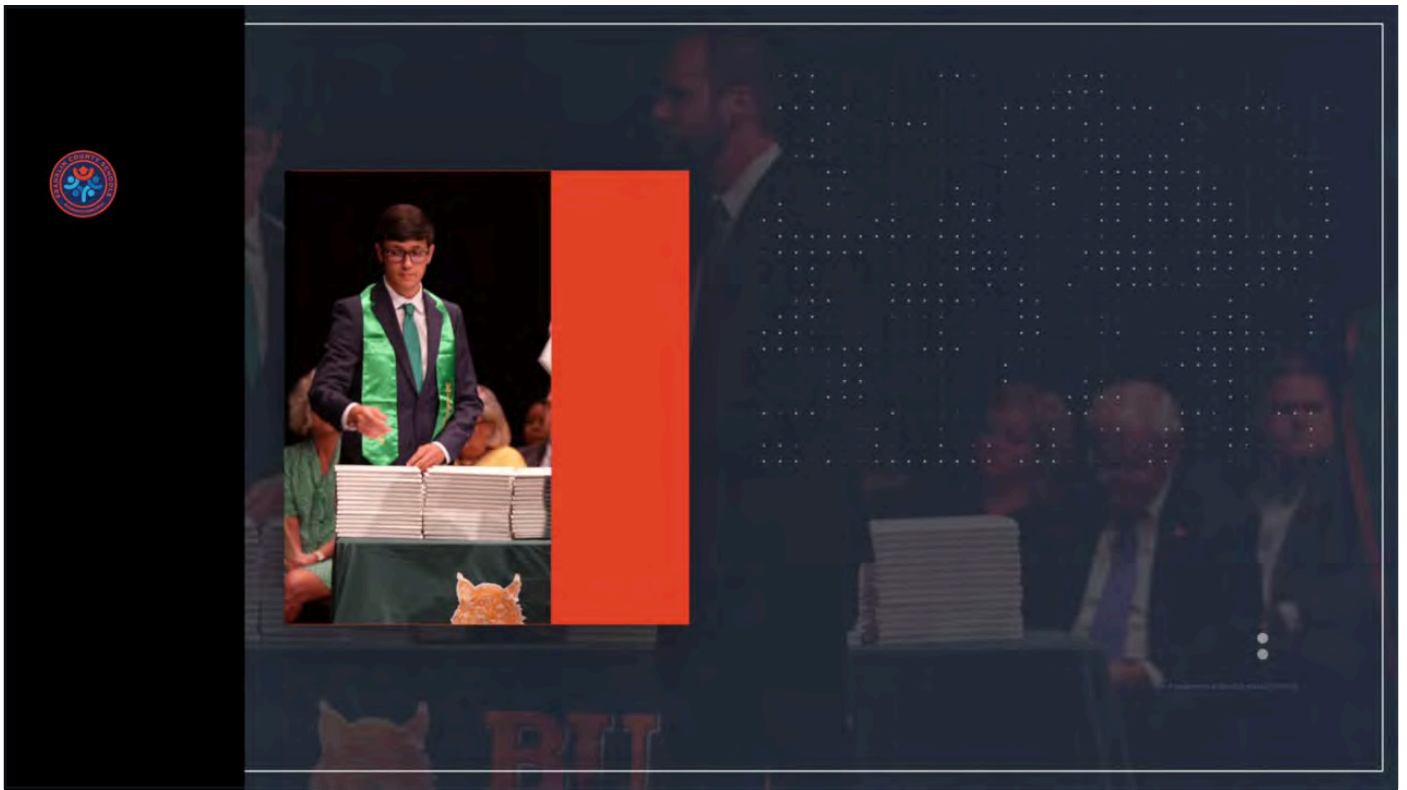
As of last spring, Franklin County Schools receives universal free meals for all students through the Community Eligibility Provision (or CEP).



Beyond Academics: Engaging Extracurriculars

We have talked a lot about academics, but our enhancement courses and extracurricular activities are an important part of what we offer our students. Today we are pleased to be joined by the Edward Best Elementary Chorus.

The Edward Best Elementary Chorus is made up of 28 dedicated 4th and 5th grade students who rehearse after school weekly. Their performances include the EBES Winterfest, Franklin County Schools All-County Chorus, and the national anthem for the Carolina Mudcats. The group is led by Ms. Nancy Wheeler Stover who is a native of Franklin County and a graduate of Franklin County Schools. The Edward Best Chorus is grateful for the opportunity to perform for you this evening.



While our EBES students exit the stage, we have a few images of our students to share with you.

RUN VIDEO



Beyond Academics: Engaging Extracurriculars

We offer a number of extracurricular activities. The list includes:

Various sports, including but not limited to:

- Soccer
- Football
- Tennis
- Cross Country
- Swimming
- Golf
- Wrestling
- Basketball

Club Opportunities, including but not limited to:

- Student Ambassadors
- Fellowship of Christian Athletes
- DECA
- FFA
- Art Club
- Drama Club
- Book Club
- Podcast Club
- Quill and Scroll

Various Honors Societies

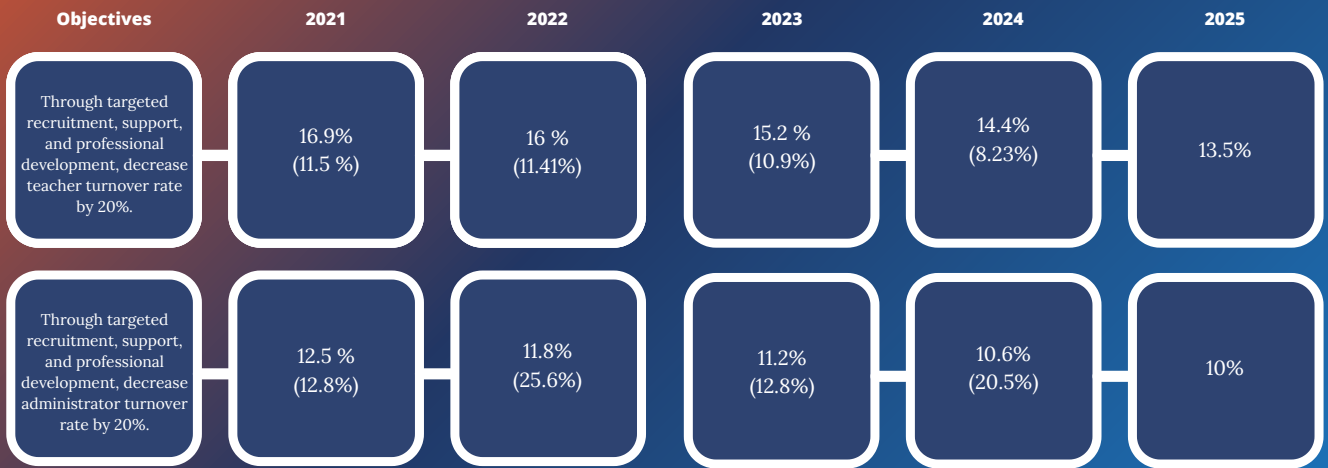
04

FCS will actively recruit, retain and support high quality staff



We can't do the work we do each day without great staff who make it all happen. Goal 4 is focused on recruitment, support and retention of high quality staff in service of our students.

Reduce turnover rates by 20%:



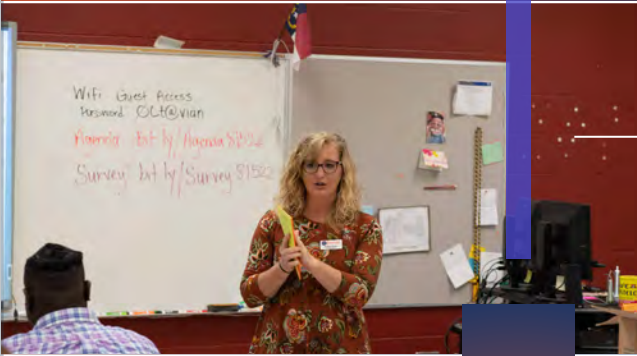
We are pleased that our teacher turnover rate has been relatively low. There are challenges statewide with a narrowing teacher pipeline that impact our ability to fill vacant positions when they arise.

Let's hear from a few of our students and their perspectives on the role that our teachers play in their lives.

NEXT SLIDE IS VIDEO



Let's hear from a few of our students and their perspectives on the role of our teachers.



HIGH QUALITY STAFF

As the largest employer in Franklin County with over 1000 staff members, we are fortunate to have a great team of employees who are dedicated to meeting the needs of the children that we serve.



We've heard a bit about our teachers, but we have many employees who serve students in a variety of ways. With over 1000 employees, we are the largest employer in Franklin County.

Our staff serves in a diverse range of roles to support our students through:



- Facilitation of instruction (teachers)
- Instructional support (instructional assistants)
- Advancement of learning via data analysis, instructional coaching and support (instructional coaches, DLCs, district curriculum specialists)
- Student nutrition (child nutrition)
- Maintenance of hospitable, secure, and clean environments (office support, custodians)
- Transportation of students to and from school and school activities (bus drivers and monitors)
- Health and wellness services (nurses, counselors, psychologists, social workers)
- Organizational leadership (principals, assistant principals)

We have teachers, instructional assistants, coaches and instructional support, child nutrition workers, office support, custodians, technicians, mechanics, bus drivers, nurses, counselors, social workers, administrators... and this isn't an exhaustive list.

HIGH QUALITY STAFF

Like many other districts, Franklin County Schools is confronting significant staffing challenges. In response, we have adopted a proactive and strategic approach to addressing these challenges, including continuous evaluation and modification to align with changing needs, focusing on strategically allocating resources.

We also work to create a family atmosphere and positive culture for working and learning.



Staffing is a challenge in the current environment. We have seen this in the private sector as well as in school districts across the staff, and it impacts all areas of staffing.

We are continually working as a district to address these challenges by attempting to remain financially competitive. We also recognize that it isn't just about money- we must create a culture where folks want to work and learn. We are committed to creating a family atmosphere and positive culture for our employees.

Financial Incentives for Staffing Needs

In December 2020, the Franklin County Schools Board of Education approved a Local Longevity Retention Bonus, underpinned by ESSER (Covid Relief) funds, to recognize and encourage employee longevity within the Franklin County Schools. This incentive covers all permanent staff, including classified employees.

This bonus was administered for three years using ESSER funding, which expired at the end of the 2024 school year. In Spring 2024, the Franklin County Board of Commissioners voted to fully fund our local current expense request, allowing us to maintain this important retention bonus beyond ESSER funding.

Over the years, we have provided financial incentives to recruit and retain employees. Most recently, we utilized a longevity/retention bonus to make us more competitive as a district and to reward loyalty to the district. This bonus was initially supported for three years with COVID relief funds.

During last spring's budget development process, we approached the County with a budget request that would allow this bonus to continue to be funded. The County approved our local request, which has allowed us to maintain this bonus for over 1000 of our employees.

Retention/Recruitment

- Stay interviews with designated key employees at each location
- Biannual climate surveys for each school
- Participation in state and out-of-state educational job fairs
- Engagement with student teachers
- Sharing of best practices with leadership
- Social media advertising
- Local job fairs
- Information sessions for individuals considering becoming teachers
- Honors events to recognize staff members
- Professional development opportunities during early release days
- Calibration of evaluations to provide timely, constructive feedback



We have a number of initiatives in place to support recruitment of employees, as well as retaining our employees through initiatives such as our stay interviews and biannual climate surveys to be responsive to the needs and concerns of our staff. We recognize employees for their service to the district, and we host events like "The Frankies" to honor and celebrate our staff.

TEACH INITIATIVE



The **Teachers Educated and Cultivated at Home (TEACH)** program, currently piloted at Early College High School (ECHS), prepares students for teaching careers with plans to expand to all high schools.

- Students are paired with mentor teachers for monthly meetings on teaching and career pathways.
- Participants take courses at Vance Granville Community College aligned with East Carolina University's Partnership Teach program and gain summer internship experience.
- Graduates in good standing are hired as instructional assistants in Franklin County Schools while completing their Bachelor's in Education at ECU, funded by federal funds.
- After earning their degree, graduates commit to teaching in Franklin County Schools for at least two years.

The inaugural 2024-25 cohort includes six students.



We are also very excited about a new "grow your own" teacher initiative that began this year. We have found that our teachers who are local and have a love for our community are very successful and have longevity with our schools.

The Teachers Educated and Cultivated at Home (TEACH) program is being piloted at our Early College High School, and it identifies high school students who are interested in teaching as a career. We partner with VGCC and East Carolina University to provide a pathway to these student free of charge for them to complete their teaching degree. During that time they also receive practical experience as instructional assistants for our schools.

We currently have 6 future FCS teachers in the pipeline in year one, and we will be expanding this each year.

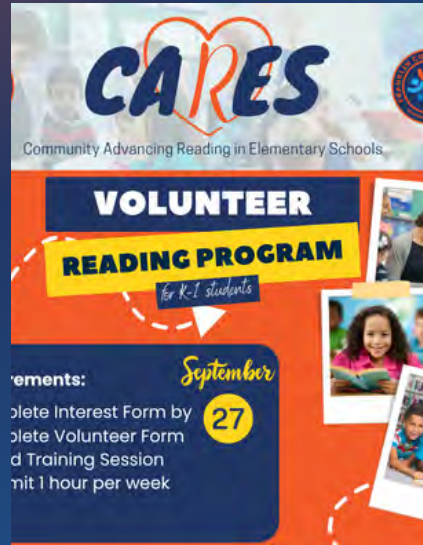


Engaging Our School Community

We cannot be successful without community support. We are so grateful to have you with us this evening as a testament to the importance of community.

As I have already mentioned, we work to create a family environment in our schools. We believe that we are able to offer a personalized approach to working and learning that our larger neighbor can't provide.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Two initiatives that we have implemented that have been very successful are our parent summit and our Franklin Cares Initiative.

Our parent summit is in year three now, and it has allowed us to broaden our base of parent support and strengthen the foundation for parental involvement at each of our schools. Through this initiative, core groups of parents from each of our schools come together twice annually to learn, to provide meaningful feedback, to plan for their schools, and to network with other parents to gain new ideas.

Our CARES initiative provides an opportunity for community members to come into our elementary schools to read with students. There is a background check process and a brief one session training. This is a great way to give back to our students and also to learn more about what we are doing each day. We would love to have you join!

The Best Choice for Families



- We meet the academic, behavioral and social development needs of each and every student who comes through our doors. Charter schools operate on a lottery system for enrollment.
- Our academic programs are extensive and they include opportunities for Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses, certifications and apprenticeships, as well as Advanced Placement and VGCC college courses free of charge. Due to the size of charter schools, it is difficult for them to offer the same level of participation in career and college readiness opportunities.
- We offer the arts, athletics and band at each of our traditional high schools. Charter schools in our area often do not offer the same array of extracurriculars.
- All our teachers are licensed to teach in North Carolina. Only 50% of charter school teachers must be licensed. Only teachers of math, science, social studies and language arts must hold a college degree in a charter school.
- We provide transportation and meals to our families.
- All FCS students receive free breakfast and lunch.

We work to highlight and communicate the ways in which we are the best choice for families in Franklin County. You have heard much of this today.

As a public school system, we work to provide comprehensive programming to meet the needs of every student who walks through our doors each day.

We have highlighted many of these opportunities already this evening.

One important additional piece of information is that all of our teachers are licensed to teach in North Carolina. Only 50% of charter school teachers must be licensed. In charter schools, only the math, science, social studies and language arts teachers are required to have a college degree.



Connecting with Families

Making sure our families, prospective families, and larger community know what we have to offer.

- Our websites are typically the first place families visit for information. Over the past year and a half, we have made great efforts to make them more modern and highlight videos and pictures on our sites that showcase our family atmosphere and excellence in education. Our website received a gold award from the NCSPPA for a high-quality modern website redesign that is very effective.
- Engaging marketing graphics to maintain a professional image and for our current staff/families and prospective staff/families.
- Brochures
- We have brochures in production and distribution for local municipalities, businesses and realtors.
- These brochures give a snapshot of what our school district uniquely offers.
- Strategic, ongoing communication and a “family” approach to keeping stakeholders engaged and informed. This work takes place through district and school-based video messages, weekly family newsletters, etc. The Superintendent regularly sends video messages to families updating them on district developments. She also does “guest editor” pieces for The Franklin Times.

I won't read this to you but we have actively worked to communicate what we have to offer families, and we do this in a variety of ways as part of our ongoing marketing campaign.

We have continued to work to ensure that our district and school websites provide up to date, relevant information, and we have used social media to share news and promote upcoming events. Video messages are used regularly to communicate. We also have brochures that highlight the district and our schools that we make available to local municipalities, businesses and realtors.

I also occasionally write articles for our local newspaper, The Franklin Times, to reach a wider audience that may not rely on social media to get their news.

CONNECTING WITH FAMILIES



Reaching Families Early: We connect with families at the start of their educational journey through a supportive onboarding process:

- **Onboarding Support:**
 - Welcome emails from the communications team.
 - Address and school verification by the student assignment coordinator.
 - Enrollment assistance from the Parent Family Engagement Specialist or school data manager.
- **Kindergarten Readiness:**
 - Partnerships with local preschools, Head Starts, and care centers.
 - Distribution of 550+ Kindergarten Readiness Kits annually (Jan/Feb).
- **Family Engagement:**
 - The District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC) provides feedback to improve district and school family support.
 - Parent Summits have broadened our base of parental support.
 - Initiatives include school tours for new families and targeted outreach via Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, and the FCS App.
 - Information nights for families with children in Franklin County childcare centers.
- **Expanding Early Childhood Support:**
 - Strengthening the Birth-Kindergarten continuum with events like Parent & Family Workshops, Circle Time Activities, and Pre-K enrollment support.
 - Resources include the Dolly Parton Imagination Library and updates via social media platforms.

We are committed to reaching families early, and we connect with them in a variety of ways. Our partnerships with local preschools, head starts, and care centers are vital. We distribute over 550 kindergarten readiness kits annually, and are in the middle of that process right now for this year.

Our parent advisory council (DPAC) and our parent summits allow us opportunities to connect directly with families. This is a great opportunity for us to gather vital feedback.

As I have already stated, we really consider Franklin County Schools to be a family. Let's take a look at what that means for us: [SHOW VIDEO](#).

IN EVERY CONCEIVABLE MANNER
THE AMIL IS A LINK TO OUR PAST
BRIDGE TO OUR FUTURE.”

- JIM HALEY

Our Plan for the New Strategic Plan, **Blueprint 2030:**



Revisit and modify existing vision, mission and belief statements

- Gather feedback from a diverse group of key stakeholders, through surveys and town halls, on priorities for the future of our schools
- The Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) will utilize feedback to:
 - Revisit and modify existing strategic plan goals, as well as strategies and outcomes.
 - The committee may decide to replace, add or delete goals as needed to reflect the changing needs of our school community.

I did want to take this opportunity to share with you that we are in the final year of our current strategic plan, Blueprint 2025, and we are in the process of development of our new plan, Blueprint 2030, for implementation beginning in Fall 2025.

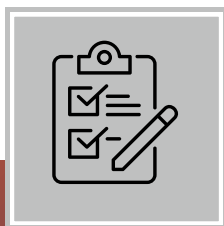
We are actively gathering feedback from key stakeholders to inform this work.

We have already outlined our current strategic plan for you this evening, and our new plan will absolutely still focus on career and college readiness, academic success, safe, orderly and caring schools, and recruiting and retaining a high quality workforce, so we won't be starting from scratch.

We are gathering feedback to revisit and modify our existing goals to make them more responsive to the needs of our school community.

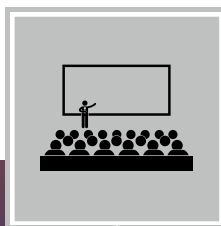
NEW PROCESS

Gather greater stakeholder input



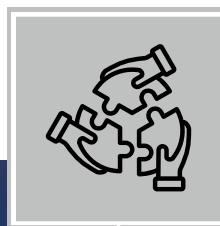
STAKEHOLDER SURVEYS

Utilize surveys to gather feedback on strengths and areas for improvement, as well as priorities



TOWN HALLS

Utilize a "Town Hall" format for each zone to host conversations with stakeholders and to gather additional feedback



SPC 2030 COLLABORATION

Incorporate data gathered through surveys and Town Hall meetings to develop a strategic plan that is reflective of the priorities of our larger community

We are doing this in several ways:

We gathered stakeholder survey feedback earlier this fall. We had almost 1200 survey respondents.

We are conducting town halls to gather feedback. These have been very successful so far, and we have our last town hall next week at Franklinton High School.

We will use all of the data gathered to inform the strategic planning committee's work this spring.

TIMELINE

for Blueprint 2030 Process

OCT 2024



Send out surveys for feedback: staff, parents, students (Oct. 21-Nov. 1)

NOV 2024



Convene Strategic Planning Committee (SPC 2030) to review process, survey questions findings, and agendas for Town Halls

JAN-FEB 2025



Host Franklin County Schools Town Hall Meetings zonally at each High School to gather feedback

MAR 2025



Convene SPC 2030 for work session to review data gathered through surveys and Town Halls and prioritize/begin to develop goals

APR 2025



Convene SPC 2030 to finalize Strategic Plan Draft for BOE consideration

MAY 2025



Present Blueprint 2030 to Franklin County Board of Education for approval

Here's our timeline

FRANKLIN COUNTY SCHOOLS

THANK YOU
FOR YOUR
ATTENTION



SCAN ME



GET IN TOUCH



WWW.FCSCHOOLS.NET



919-496-2600



53 WEST RIVER ROAD, LOUISBURG, NC

We would love to get some feedback from you to inform this process as well! We have provided a QR code that links to a very brief survey for your input. This survey is located on your program as well, so if you are having difficulty connecting to Wifi you can take it with you and complete it from home.

Thank you so much for coming out this evening! A big thanks to Franklinton High School for hosting and to Ms. Massey, Dr. Holloman and the FHS staff for their help this evening, to the LMHS JROTC Color Guard under the leadership of Senior Master Sergeant McMillen, to FHS Honors Chorus under the direction of Mr. McDonald, to the Edward Best Elementary Chorus under the direction of Ms. Stover, and last but not least, a thank you in advance to Ms. Styers, Ms. Ward and the culinary arts students at FHS who catered the refreshments that you are going to enjoy in the commons area.

FRANKLIN COUNTY SCHOOLS

THANK YOU
FOR YOUR
ATTENTION



SCAN ME



GET IN TOUCH



WWW.FCSCHOOLS.NET



919-496-2600



53 WEST RIVER ROAD, LOUISBURG, NC

I'd also like to ask that our student ambassadors from each high school raise your hands. We have:

- Rebecca Alford- BHS
- Kennedy Garcia-Garcia- BHS
- Caitlin Lister- ECHS
- Victoria Sema- ECHS
- Teddy Cooke- FHS
- Samantha Acevedo- FHS
- Peyton Compton- FHS
- Ben Toler- FHS
- Sara Gilman- FHS
- MacKensie Boden- LMHS
- Jonathan Kuntz- LMHS
- Lyniya Davis- LMHS

As you enjoy refreshments, I'd encourage you to connect with these students and learn more about their goals and next steps.

Thanks again for coming out this evening in support of Franklin County Schools. Have a nice night!