

Alamance-Burlington School System
Strategic Planning Initiative
Goals, Strategies, and Action Steps
May 12, 2014

While each goal may appear to stand alone, a review of goals, strategies, and action steps reveals clear linkages between the six goals and the identified strategies and action steps for achieving these goals. Every opportunity must be taken to ensure consistency and alignment as the district works toward achievement of the goals.

School Equity and Consistency

Goal 1: Exemplary Classroom Teaching and Instructional Leadership

The Alamance-Burlington School System will define standards and expectations for exemplary classroom teaching and instructional leadership. ABSS will establish a shared understanding of these expectations across the district to ensure consistency of implementation and will communicate this guarantee to parents. These standards and expectations will be adhered to and supported by the Board of Education, Superintendent, central office administrators, principals, and teachers.

Timeline: Initiation of standards/expectations development – July 1, 2014; initiation of process to establish a shared understanding across the district and communicate with parents – July 1, 2015; and full implementation by June 30, 2016 and ongoing thereafter.

Indicators/Performance Measures:

- Student outcome data
- School productivity data
- Teacher performance summary information
- Administrator performance summary information
- Teacher and administrator effectiveness information
- Stakeholder perceptual data
- Human Resource data

Strategy 1.1:

Examine and evaluate existing standards, expectations, and initiatives

Action Steps:

1.1.1. Establish a team of instructional leaders from the central office and schools, as well as teacher leaders to develop definitions/models and conduct assessments

- 1.1.2. Define what exemplary instruction looks like
 - a. Pedagogy
 - b. Exemplars/rigor
 - c. Assessment/data
 - d. Pacing/curriculum
 - e. Resources
 - f. Technology

- 1.1.3. Define what exemplary learning looks like
 - a. Evidences of learning
 - b. Grading and assessment practices
 - c. Student engagement and ability to articulate their own learning

- 1.1.4. Identify and assess evidences of transfer of these definitions from written documents to what occurs in classrooms with teaching and learning

- 1.1.5. Develop a continuous improvement model
 - a. Reflect/monitor
 - b. Mechanisms for accountability and support
 - c. Visible self-reflection

- 1.1.6. Define what exemplary instructional leadership looks like
 - a. Teacher leadership
 - b. Administrator leadership

- 1.1.7. Develop leadership growth and development models
 - a. Teacher leadership
 - b. Administrator leadership

- 1.1.8. Utilize these definitions and models to assess current standards, expectations, and initiatives to identify what is working well, what is not working well, gaps, and areas of needed improvement

- 1.1.9. Continue those standards, expectations, and initiatives that are working well

- 1.1.10. Improve or discontinue those standards, expectations, and initiatives that are not working well

- 1.1.11. Develop new standards, expectations, and initiatives to address gaps and areas of needed improvement

Strategy 1.2:

Calibrate district-wide understanding of exemplary classroom teaching and instructional leadership against the definitions/standards/models identified in Strategy 1.1

Action Steps:

1.2.1. Identify multiple ways to communicate common expectations across the district

- a. Vertical conversations
- b. Peer collaboration within schools and across district
- c. Demonstrations by teacher leaders
- d. Building walkthroughs by administrators

1.2.2. Communicate district non-negotiables, as well as areas of school flexibility based on the unique needs of student populations

1.2.3. Develop and implement methods for instructional monitoring and comprehensive support at the district, building, and classroom levels

Strategy 1.3:

Communicate this understanding of exemplary classroom teaching and instructional leadership to parents

Action Steps:

1.3.1. Develop key message points to be utilized across the district to ensure consistent messaging to parents

1.3.2. Identify multiple print and electronic methods for communicating this understanding to parents and community, as well as methods for individualized communication

1.3.3. Determine the timing for initial communication with parents, as well as opportunities for clarifying and reinforcing the message

Strategy 1.4:

Create a culture of adherence to and support for these expectations by the Board of Education, Superintendent, central office administrators, principals, and teachers

Action Steps:

1.4.1. Identify opportunities for consistently revisiting expectations

1.4.2. Determine strategies for consistent accountability for adherence and support

Goal 2: Master Plan for Specialized Programs

The Alamance-Burlington School System will develop and implement a master plan for leveraging specialized programs to meet the unique needs and interests of students.

Proposed Timeline: Initiation of master plan development – July 1, 2014; initiation of plan implementation – July 1, 2015; and full plan implementation by June 30, 2018 and ongoing thereafter. Plan implementation is proposed to flow as follows:

- Cummings-Graham Zones (2015-2016)
- Southern-Williams Zones (2016-2017)
- Eastern-Western Zones (2017-2018).

Indicators/Performance Measures:

- School and zonal profiles
- Detailed framework that can be replicated across zones for development and implementation of specialized programs
- Evidences of plan implementation in zones according to timeline and with fidelity
- Summary performance data as measurements of effectiveness

Strategy 2.1:

Define the purpose of specialized programs, considering implications for and connections to local and global workforces

Action Steps:

2.1.1. Establish a team of instructional leaders from the central office and schools, as well as teacher leaders to define the purpose and develop a menu of specialized programs

2.1.2. Review examples of successful specialized programs, including their purposes, outcomes, and impact on the achievement of all students

2.1.3. Examine local and global workforce needs and preparedness of ABSS students for meeting these needs

2.1.4. Develop a written definition of the intended outcomes of specialized programs within ABSS

Strategy 2.2:

Develop a menu of specialized programs

Action Steps:

2.2.1. Use student performance data to identify student needs

2.2.2. Survey students to determine interests after exposing them to options and opportunities

2.2.3. Survey teachers, parents, and other key stakeholders, including local business and community partners

2.2.4. Examine the impact of potential specialized programs on core academics

2.2.5. Determine possible specialized programs that best meet the needs and interests of students

Strategy 2.3:

Develop process for roll out and full implementation of specialized programs, aligning roles and responsibilities for central office and schools

Action Steps:

2.3.1. Conduct needs assessment for each specialized program option, identifying standards for implementation

- a. Personnel
- b. Professional development for capacity building prior to and throughout program implementation
- c. School calendar(s)
- d. Resources
- e. Technology
- f. Facilities, including infrastructure for technology
- g. Transportation

2.3.2. Examine vertical alignment and grade span impacts from elementary to middle to high school

2.3.3. Determine implications for graduation and/or acceleration/advantage in a competitive environment

2.3.4. Determine process by which each school will select its specialized program and the role of community in program determination

2.3.5. Identify strategies to ensure fidelity of program implementation

2.3.6. Develop a plan for monitoring and evaluating implementation and impact of specialized programs

2.3.7. Develop and implement plans for re-aligning staff and resources to support specialized programs

Strategy 2.4:

Develop a plan for educating parents and other key stakeholders about specialized programs

Action Steps:

2.4.1. Develop key message points to be utilized across the district to ensure consistent messaging to parents and stakeholders

2.4.2. Identify multiple print and electronic methods for communicating this understanding to parents and community, as well as methods for individualized communication

2.4.3. Determine the timing for initial communication, as well as opportunities for clarifying and reinforcing the message

Strategy 2.5:

Secure long-term, meaningful support from local businesses and community partners for specialized program

Action Steps:

2.5.1. Identify meaningful roles for the involvement of business and community partners in the development and implementation of specialized programs

2.5.2. Identify ABSS's reciprocal roles with potential partners

2.5.3. Develop protocols for meeting with business and community partners to gain their investment in specific specialized programs

2.5.4. Develop structures for formalizing and publicizing partnerships

Goal 3: Written Five-Year Facilities Plan

The Alamance-Burlington School System will develop a written five-year facilities plan that prioritizes maintenance needs, safety upgrades, detailed aesthetic improvements, and modernization of facilities and infrastructure. This plan will be coordinated and linked to the master plan for specialized programs (Goal 2) and world-class teacher working conditions (Goal 4) and will be shared with the community.

Proposed Timeline: Initiation of plan development – January 1, 2015; initiation of plan communication – by July 1, 2015 and ongoing thereafter; initiation of plan revision – January 1, 2016 and annually thereafter.

Indicators/Performance Measures:

- Published comprehensive needs assessment, available and communicated to all stakeholders
- Written five-year facilities plan, available and communicated to all stakeholders
- Adoption and implementation of comprehensive five-year facilities plan

Strategy 3.1:

Conduct an assessment of facility needs by individual site utilizing a consistent set of standards

Action Steps:

3.1.1. Establish a team of key internal and external stakeholders to define facility standards and conduct facility walkthroughs and assessments

- a. Central office administrators
- b. Building-level teachers and leaders
- c. Parent representatives
- d. Community representatives
- e. Other

3.1.2. Define facility standards for 21st Century Schools, identifying relevant data points, citing regulations that require upgrades, and establishing minimum standards for all facilities

- a. Maintenance
- b. Safety
- c. Detailed aesthetic improvements
- d. Modernization of facilities
- e. Infrastructure to support ongoing technology upgrades

3.1.3. Coordinate and link standards to Goal #2: Master Plan for Specialized Programs and Goal #4: World-Class Teacher Working Conditions

- a. Identify standards that align with the detailed plans developed as a part of these goals
- b. Create standards where needed to ensure coordination and linkage

3.1.4. Review standards noting those that define teaching versus those that enhance teaching

3.1.5. Conduct facility walkthroughs and assessments, utilizing written rubrics and consistent teams of evaluators

3.1.6. Prioritize district facility needs, including needs for new facilities, after completing needs assessments

- a. Overall improvements/changes/upgrades
- b. Maintenance needs
- c. Safety needs
- d. Detailed aesthetic improvements
- e. Modernization of facilities
- f. Infrastructure to support ongoing technology upgrades
- g. Specialized program needs

3.1.7. Develop a draft written five-year facilities plan

Strategy 3.2:

Develop a plan for communicating and creating advocacy for prioritized facility needs

Action Steps:

3.2.1. Develop key message points to be utilized across the district to ensure consistent messaging to parents and stakeholders

3.2.2. Identify multiple print and electronic methods for communicating this understanding to parents, community, and elected officials as well as methods for individualized communication

3.2.3. Determine the timing for initial communication, as well as opportunities for clarifying and reinforcing the message

Strategy 3.3:

Adopt and implement a final written five-year facilities plan

Action Steps:

3.3.1. Present a final plan to the Board of Education for adoption

3.3.2. Continue to identify opportunities for sharing the plan

3.3.3. Identify possible sources of funding and avenues for meeting the identified facility needs

3.3.4. Implement the plan

3.3.5. Revisit, revise, and communicate the standards and plan annually

Strategy 3.4:

Align staff and resources with the facilities plan as it is implemented

Action Steps:

3.4.1. Review current staffing and resources against the plan, identifying opportunities for re-alignment

3.4.2. Develop and implement plans for re-aligning staff and resources

Recruiting and Retaining High Quality Staff

Goal 4: World-Class Teacher Working Conditions

The Alamance-Burlington School System will identify and develop world-class teacher working conditions to include:

- Teacher induction and support,
- Feedback and coaching for growth and improvement for all teachers and instructional leaders,
- Leadership development for teacher leaders and administrators,
- Resources and tools,
- Planning and instructional time,
- Integrity and accountability, and
- Empowerment of employees at every level of the district to execute duties and responsibilities in their particular roles.

To ensure consistency of implementation, ABSS will establish a shared understanding across the district of this guarantee. These working conditions will be adhered to and supported by the Board of Education, Superintendent, central office administrators and support staff, principals, and teachers.

Proposed Timeline: Initiation of working conditions development – July 1, 2014; initiation of process to establish a shared understanding – July 1, 2015; initiation of process to align district and building level services with the working conditions – July 1, 2015; and full implementation by June 30, 2016 and ongoing thereafter.

Indicators/Performance Measures:

- Employee perceptual data
- Human Resource data
- Student outcome data
- School productivity data
- Teacher performance summary information
- Administrator performance summary information
- Teacher and administrator effectiveness information

Strategy 4.1:

Examine and evaluate current teacher working conditions

- Teacher induction and support,
- Feedback and coaching for growth and improvement for all teachers and instructional leaders,
- Leadership development for teacher leaders and administrators,
- Resources and tools,
- Planning and instructional time,
- Integrity and accountability, and
- Empowerment of employees at every level of the district to execute duties and responsibilities in their particular roles

Action Steps:

4.1.1. Establish a team of district and school administrators and teacher leaders to develop definitions and conduct assessments

- 4.1.2. Define what world-class teacher working conditions look like at the district and school levels for each of the seven areas identified above
- 4.1.3. Explore and identify linkages between defined world-class teacher conditions and other goals/strategies/action steps in this plan
- 4.1.4. Utilize definitions, rubrics, and consistent teams to assess current working conditions to identify what is working well, what is not working well, gaps, and areas of needed improvement
 - Teacher Working Conditions Report
 - Teacher surveys
 - Other data
- 4.1.5. Continue effective working conditions in the seven areas
- 4.1.6. Improve or discontinue working conditions/practices that are not effective
- 4.1.7. Develop new working conditions/practices

Strategy 4.2:

Calibrate district-wide understanding of world-class working conditions against the definitions developed in Strategy 4.1

Action Steps:

- 4.2.1. Identify multiple ways to communicate what can be expected relative to world-class teacher working conditions
- 4.2.2. Communicate district non-negotiables, as well as areas of school flexibility based on the unique needs of student populations
- 4.2.3. Identify strategies to ensure fidelity of working conditions across the district and at each school
- 4.2.4. Develop a plan for monitoring and evaluating implementation and impact
- 4.2.5. Develop and implement plans for re-aligning staff and resources to support world-class working conditions

Strategy 4.3:

Communicate this understanding of world-class working conditions within the district and community

Action Steps:

- 4.3.1. Develop key message points to be utilized across the district to ensure consistent messaging
- 4.3.2. Identify multiple print and electronic methods for communicating this understanding, as well as methods for individualized communication

4.3.3. Determine the timing for initial communication, as well as opportunities for clarifying and reinforcing the message

Strategy 4.4:

Create a culture of adherence to and support for these expectations by the Board of Education, Superintendent, central office administrators, principals, and teachers

Action Steps:

4.4.1. Identify opportunities for consistently revisiting expectations

4.4.2. Determine strategies for consistent accountability for adherence and support

Goal 5: Compensation for Building-Level Employees

The Alamance-Burlington Board of Education will relentlessly pursue avenues for increasing the compensation of building-level employees to levels that are competitive with surrounding school systems.

Proposed Timeline: Initiation – July 1, 2014 and ongoing thereafter.

Indicators/Performance Measures:

- Annual ABSS employee compensation report
- Teacher/administrator turnover data
- Annual comparative data for surrounding districts

Strategy 5.1:

Conduct a salary study for all certificated and classified positions, including base pay and supplements

Action Steps:

- 5.1.1. Develop a request for proposal for conducting the salary study
- 5.1.2. Establish the criteria for evaluating and selecting a firm/organization to conduct the study
- 5.1.3. Select the firm/organization and conduct the study
- 5.1.4. Analyze the study results and financial implications, giving focus to implications for the compensation of building-level employees and other classes of employees (i.e., classified employees)
- 5.1.5. Develop a plan for implementing a process to address the recommendations from the study
- 5.1.6. Develop a plan for communicating and creating advocacy for prioritized recommendations from the study

Classroom and School Support

Goal 6: Classroom and School Supports

The Alamance-Burlington School System will identify and provide needed classroom and school supports that align with district goals. In order to eliminate achievement gaps and achieve equitable outcomes for all students, the classroom and school supports will include:

- Materials and resources that enable teachers to provide rigorous and equitable learning opportunities for all students;
- Infrastructure, technology, and systems to support blended learning in all classrooms within the district;
- Sufficient personnel to meet the identified needs of each school; and
- Differentiated professional development to support teaching and learning.

Proposed Timeline: Initiation of classroom and school support plan development – July 1, 2014; completion of plan development – June 30, 2015; implementation of plan in phases – July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2017 and ongoing thereafter.

Indicators/Performance Measures:

- School financial and equity information
- New teacher information
- Student performance data
- School productivity data

Strategy 6.1:

Develop definitions and determine reasonable district-wide expectations as minimum standards

- Materials and resources
- Infrastructure, technology, and systems to support blended learning
- Sufficient personnel
- Differentiated professional development

Action Steps:

6.1.1. Establish a team of instructional leaders from the central office and schools, as well as teacher leaders to develop definitions, determine expectations, and evaluate current resources/programs

6.1.2. Develop definitions, as well as minimum expectations/standards

- Materials and resources
- Infrastructure, technology, and systems to support blended learning
- Sufficient personnel
- Differentiated professional development

Strategy 6.2:

Examine current district and school methodologies for allocating personnel and resources

Action Steps:

6.2.1. Examine current allocation methodologies for effectiveness and equity

6.2.2. Revise methodologies, as needed, to ensure support and resource allocations are equitable and address the unique needs of students

6.2.3. Develop a plan for implementing revised methodologies at the district and school levels

Strategy 6.3:

Conduct needs assessments building by building to determine potential gaps between current allocations and expectations/minimum standards

Action Steps:

6.3.1. Utilize written rubrics and consistent teams to evaluate level and effectiveness of support and resources in each school

6.3.2. Identify gaps and areas of need

Strategy 6.4:

Develop plan for implementing the re-alignment of supports and resources

Action Steps:

6.4.1. Evaluate current resources/programs/personnel for adequacy, effectiveness, and vertical alignment, taking into account student progression and identified gaps and needs

- Core curriculum
- Specialized programs
- Enrichment
- Intervention and support

6.4.2. Streamline current resources/programs

6.4.3. Develop a learning management system, including qualitative assessment beyond State-mandated assessments

6.4.4. Align and target high quality professional development with resources, programming, and student needs, ensuring it is specific and dynamic

- Teachers and other instructional staff
- School administrators

6.4.5. Evaluate current technology, infrastructures/access capabilities, and systems to support blended learning for adequacy, existing gaps, and current and future needs

6.4.6. Develop a technology and infrastructure plan to address gaps and needs

6.4.6. Explore opportunities for utilizing virtual learning (initiating within the district and outside the district) to enhance professional development and student learning

6.4.7. Plan for shift from textbooks to e-learning

6.4.8. Implement allocation processes to ensure equitable distribution of materials/resources, personnel (certificated and classified), professional development, and technology/technology infrastructures

6.4.9. Ensure equitable opportunities and outcomes for all students and avenues for addressing the unique needs of student populations

6.4.10. Develop plan for monitoring implementation and assessing effectiveness of new allocations