



Rutherford County Schools

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PRESS RELEASE

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Dr. David M. Sutton, Assistant Superintendent

During its business meeting on Tuesday, August 5, 2014, the Rutherford County Board of Education unanimously adopted a new five-year strategic planning framework for Rutherford County Schools. Development of the new framework began during the Board's planning retreat in January. During Tuesday's meeting, Assistant Superintendent Dr. David Sutton noted, "Over the eight months that have passed since that time, we've worked thoughtfully and carefully to conceive and design a strategic planning framework to guide innovation and promote excellent outcomes for the students of our schools and our communities." After summarizing several sweeping changes to federal and state education policy within the past several years, Sutton added that the new planning framework "reaffirms our strong commitment to providing a world-class education to every child in Rutherford County, and it helps to position our school district to meet the challenges of a new era. It provides a vehicle for working intentionally, creatively, collaboratively, and effectively to realize ambitious achievement outcomes for all our students."

The newly adopted framework defines the school district's vision that all Rutherford County students graduate prepared for college and career success. It also outlines its mission to prepare all students for lifelong learning in a global community by partnering with families and the community and by providing a rigorous education in a safe, nurturing environment.

The framework targets improvement in eight indicators of student performance over the next five years, including academics, college and career readiness, and graduation success. "Our new planning framework is tightly focused on student achievement and student success," observed Superintendent Dr. Janet Mason. "We are committed to ensuring that every student graduates with the knowledge and skills necessary for success beyond high school, and we are also committed to maintaining the strong tradition of innovation already demonstrated by our school district."

"Since January, Board members, district officials, school leaders, and other stakeholders have worked closely to identify innovations that will promote even higher levels of student achievement," said Mason. "As a result, our planning framework describes three broad strategies to guide our work over the next five years. In the coming weeks, we will continue to develop written plans that guide specific activities under each of those broad strategies."

Rutherford County Schools Vision: All Rutherford County students will graduate prepared for college and career success.

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Engaging every student in rigorous instruction in the knowledge and skills required for college and career success is the first of those broad strategies. “From pre-kindergarten through graduation, we want to ensure that all students encounter programs and experiences that help to prepare them for success beyond high school,” Sutton said. “Adapting teaching to meet the individual needs of each student, expanding early college learning experiences in all our middle and high schools, and introducing new opportunities in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) education are just a few examples the work we will accomplish.”

The second strategy focuses on supporting students’ social, emotional, and developmental needs. “We know that great learning outcomes for students hinge not only on their academic experiences, but also on their social and emotional development,” said Mason. “By expanding and adapting our system of support to meet students’ changing social and emotional needs, we also help to promote their academic achievement and prepare them for adult life.”

Ensuring that all students have access to safe, modern facilities and resources is the framework’s final strategy. “Providing students with the tools, resources, and facilities they need to achieve at high levels is critical to students’ success,” explained Benny Hendrix, the school district’s Chief Operations and Technology Officer. “Our specific work under this strategy will focus on ensuring that all students have equitable access to those resources through long-range facilities planning and other focused improvements in our auxiliary services.”

“I am pleased with the framework of our new strategic plan, which focuses on preparing all students in Rutherford County Schools for college and career success,” said Dr. John Mark Bennett, Chairman of the Board of Education. “Our Board has great confidence that this plan will guide our system over the next few years to the benefit of our students and citizens. We appreciate the efforts of all administrators and staff who will further develop, implement, and monitor this plan.”

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