



STRATEGIC PLAN 2016-2020

# United for Excellence



Sunflower County Consolidated School District  
Sunflower County Consolidated School District



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*Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.*  
- Nelson Mandela

## Vision/Mission/Core Beliefs

### **Our Vision**

To provide all students with a successful educational experience.

### **Our Mission**

The mission of the Sunflower County Consolidated School District is to serve our communities with effective schools, quality programs, and well prepared staff who equip our students to graduate able to reach their fullest individual potential.

### **Our Core Beliefs**

- A safe and orderly climate is important to the teaching and learning process. (Safety)
- Building positive relationships is critical to school success. (Relationship Building)
- All children can and will learn academic and social skills necessary to advance in society. (All Children Will Learn)
- High expectations will be held for students, teachers, and staff. (High Expectations)
- The schools, students, parents, and community members should be partners in the educational process for our children. (Partners in Education)
- Administrators, staff, and faculty are committed to life-long learning. (Life-long Learning)





# Superintendent's Message



It is my honor and privilege to serve and lead a school district with as much promise as the Sunflower County Consolidated School District. I am excited to be a part of the district as I strongly believe the SCCSD has a bright future ahead!

The Board of Trustees, administrators, faculty, and staff of the district are dedicated to ensuring that every child will learn. As such, each group has pledged to work together to achieve the district's vision, mission, and goals.

I join them in their commitment and the range of efforts that will be undertaken to produce a strong district. We are focused on offering high quality programs and on accomplishing great things.

Both the Board and I know that for us to grow and improve as we desire, it will take more than mere words and lip service. It will take the commitment and hard work of each one of us. We realize that we must be aggressive in our efforts and that we must keep a laser-like focus on our long-range goals. Our "unification" must now move beyond the merging of several districts to the point that we are "one" in every sense of the word.

We are excited to present our strategic plan for our future. It is our roadmap for the days and years ahead. We recognize that it is vitally important for everyone to know our intended direction. In order for each of us to carry out our respective responsibilities as well as to assess how much we have achieved and when we achieved it, our plan must be available for all to see. The Board of Trustees, administrators, faculty, staff and I are excited about our path ahead. We want our schools, communities, and you to be excited too! We ask that you join us as we continue our journey to make SCCSD a district where "Every Child Will Learn!"

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dr. Debra Dace". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Debra Dace, Superintendent of Schools

# The Board of Trustees' Message

The Board of Trustees of the Sunflower County Consolidated School District (SCCSD) takes very seriously its responsibility to provide strong governance and good policy. The Board has followed the state's mandate to define the vision, mission and goals of the SCCSD and has worked hard to ensure that our strategic plan is clear, concise, and matches the requirements of the mandate.



Rev. Edward Thomas,  
President

This Board strives to provide focused decision-making that matches the needs of our students and our district. We intend to use our resources wisely and to provide adequate resources wherever they are needed pledging always to put aside individual wishes and desires for the good of the entire district.

The Board pledges to work together cooperatively. We intend to be a team focused on the continuous growth and improvement of the district so a positive difference is made for SCCSD children and the communities we serve.



Emma Golden,  
Vice-President

We intend to deliver on our pledge and on our promise to be "United for Excellence." Our goal is to continuously improve our school system because we listen, lead, and work together. We know that we must invest in our schools, in the development and retention of our administrators and staff, in our educational programs and facilities. We intend to be responsible, accountable stewards, transparent in our practices, and wise in the use of the resources entrusted to us. In the pages that follow, our strategic plan for the next five years and the process we used in its development are presented. We want everyone to know what our plan is so that everyone is aware of what we deem important, where we intend to be in the future, and what our hopes are for our children.



Melanie Townsend,  
Secretary



Debra Johnson,  
Board Member



Daisy Morgan, Board  
Member

# STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEES

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Rev. Edward Thomas, School Board President  
Mrs. Emma Golden, School Board Vice President  
Ms. Melanie Townsend, School Board Secretary  
Ms. Deborah Johnson, School Board Member  
Mrs. Daisy Morgan, School Board Member

## CENTRAL OFFICE LEADERSHIP TEAM

Dr. Debra Dace, Superintendent  
Ms. Miskia Davis, Assistant Superintendent  
Mrs. Frankie Blackmon, Director of Federal Programs  
Dr. Valerie Simpson, Director of Special Projects/HR  
Ms. Ellen Griffin, Director of Child Nutrition  
Ms. Jorgell Jones, Director of Curriculum and Instruction  
Ms. Lillie Robey, Director of Finance  
Ms. Nicole Andrews, Interim Director of Exceptional Education  
Mr. Gared Watkins, Director of Organizational Support

## COMMUNITY/BUSINESS

Sunflower County United for Children  
(SCUC) -12/8/15  
Adoris Turner  
Angelio Mister  
Axton Thompson  
Betty Petty  
Carolyn Willis  
David Jackson  
Doris Thompson  
Hattie Jordan  
Jacqueline Smith  
Kate Gluckman  
Kimberly Merchant  
Liz Johnson  
Mattie Todd  
Oleta Fitzgerald  
Roshunda Sample

# DISTRICT-WIDE STEERING COMMITTEE

Dr. Debra Dace, Superintendent  
Mrs. Miskia Davis, Asst. Superintendent  
Ms. Jorgell Jones, Curriculum Director  
Mrs. Frankie Blackmon, Federal Prog. Director  
Ms. Nicole Andrews, Interim Dir. of Exceptional Ed.  
Mr. Gared Watkins, Dir. of Organizational Support  
Mr. Adoris Turner, Supervisor of Public Relations  
Rev. Edward Thomas, School Board President  
Mrs. Emma Golden, School Board Vice-President  
Ms. Melanie Townsend, School Board Secretary  
Mrs. Debra Johnson, School Board Member  
Mrs. Daisy Morgan, School Board Member  
Mrs. Tanya Rodges – Moorhead Middle, Principal  
Mr. Anwar Carter – AW James, Counselor  
Mr. Clayton Barksdale – Ruleville Central High School, Librarian

Ms. Diana Brown – Ruleville Middle School, Exceptional Education Teacher  
Ms. Felicia Flannigan – Merritt/Gentry, Academic Coach  
Mr. Dylan Jones – Inverness, Teacher  
Mr. Anthony Gingerelli – Merritt, Teacher  
Ms. Kathy Lang – Carver, Teacher  
Ms. Eurica Pointer – Ruleville Central Elementary School, Paraprofessional  
Ms. Trina O’Banner – James C. Rosser, Counselor  
Ms. Cora Cunningham – A. W. James, Behavior Specialist  
Ms. Daphne Heflin – Lockard Elementary, Principal  
Mr. Philip Mohr – Gentry, Teacher  
Dr. Valerie Simpson – Director of Special Projects/HR  
Ms. Michaelynne Whitsitt – East Sunflower, Teacher  
Ms. Patricia F. Williams -Robert L. Merritt JHS, Teacher

# STRATEGIC PLANNING TIMELINE

To be rated as compliant with Standard 9 of the MS Accountability Standards, a school district must have a board-approved strategic plan that contains both long-term and short-term goals. As a result of this requirement, the Board and Superintendent forged ahead to craft a strategic plan realizing that it would require review and/or modification. Since an annual review is an additional requirement, the 2015-2016 school year presented the perfect opportunity for SCCSD to revisit our strategic plan to ensure it included the broad-based input needed and a review of what changes the current plan needed. In September 2015 an external partner, CORE Learning LLC, was selected to lead the district through the strategic planning revision process with a goal of having a revised plan ready for approval in February 2016.

## Initial Meeting

October 13, 2015 - the first onsite planning meeting between CORE Learning LLC's Project Team, SCCSD Superintendent, SCCSD Assistant Superintendent, and SCCSD Public Relations Director occurred.

## Subsequent Meetings

November 20, 2015 – the 1st School Board Work Session where the Board of Trustees reviewed the district's motto, vision, mission, and goals occurred resulting in the affirmation and approval of the motto, vision, goals and, in theory, the mission occurred; directions were given to provide suggestions for clarifying language in the mission

- December 3, 2015 – the 1st meeting of the SCCSD's Districtwide Strategic Planning Steering Committee occurred.
- December 8, 2015 – the 1st meeting at the Sunflower County United for Children's headquarter in downtown Indianola was held to give updates on SCCSD's strategic planning and to gather additional community input
- January 14, 2016 –the final meeting of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee to review and discuss the draft of the plan and gather further input was held.
- February 9, 2016 – draft of revised Strategic Plan presented to the SCCSD Board of Trustees
- March 8, 2016 – revised Strategic Plan approved by the SCCSD Board of Trustees





*The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education.*  
— Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

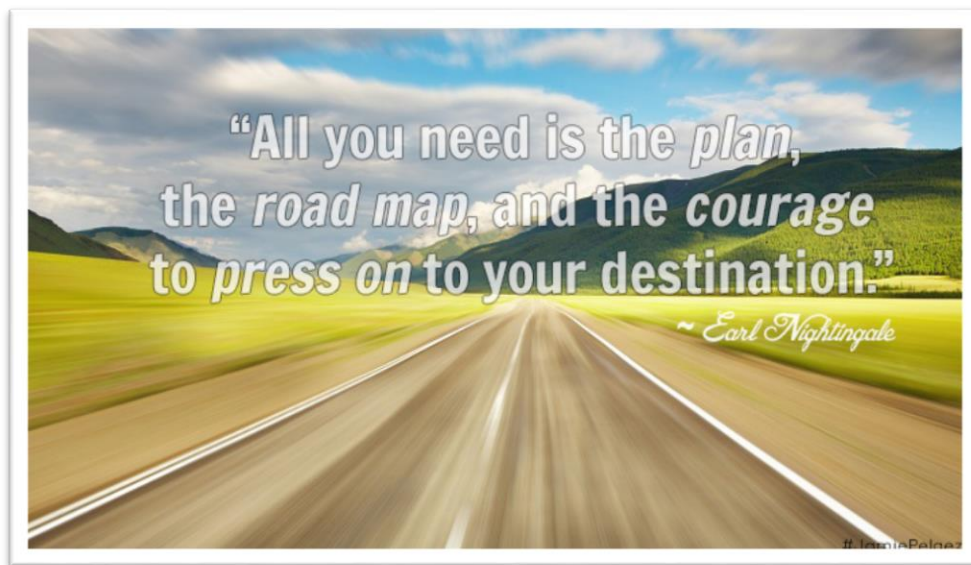
## Our Roadmap – The Promise of SCCSD

This strategic plan will be used as a roadmap for the future. It will serve as our compass and our “measuring stick” for assessing our progress and the accomplishment of our goals.

The work leading to the development of this plan has required us to think of the district as a whole and not as individual parts. This effort has emphasized the importance of a candid assessment of where we are and where we want to be.

We have been honest---sometimes brutally so---about our current state. Participants in the strategic planning process have been encouraged to take a candid look at where the district currently stands in the attainment of state and national education goals and to dream big about our needs, resources, strengths, and barriers. Effective, quality schools and programs are the life blood of a community. Businesses consider the effectiveness of local schools when determining where to locate or expand.

Our efforts in this strategic planning process are aimed at making our schools not only better, but the best they can be. This plan will help us determine our progress toward our destination. SCCSD has great promise and this strategic plan defines our pathway to achieving our goals and reaching our potential.





# OUR CURRENT STATE

## **ACCREDITATION STATUS**

Accredited by the MS Department of Education  
Accredited by the Southern Association of  
Colleges and Schools

## **STATE ASSESSMENT RESULTS**

(School Year 2014 -2015)

Accountability Rating - MDE Has Not Finalized  
or Released Accountability Ratings  
Graduation Rate - MDE Has Not Finalized or  
Released Graduation Rates

## **SCHOOL YEAR 2013 – 2014\***

\*SCCSD and \*\*Indianola School Districts were  
under MS Department of Education  
Conservatorship in this school year.

**DISTRICT ACCOUNTABILITY RATING =**  
D (both districts) Waiver Ratings

### **School Ratings**

- \*A.W. James Elementary – D
- \*Drew Hunter Middle – D
- \*Ruleville Central Elementary – F
- \*Ruleville Middle – A
- \*Ruleville Central High – C
- \*East Sunflower Elementary – D
- \*Moorhead Middle /A.W. James / C. Rosser  
Elementary – D
- \*Inverness Elementary – C
- \*\*Lockard Elementary - N/A
- \*\*Carver Elementary – D
- \*\*Merritt Jr. High - D
- \*\*Gentry High - C

Graduation Rate = 54.8%

## **FACILITIES**

- 14 schools in operation
- 1 main central office
- 2 satellite district offices
- Bus Shop (Indianola & Drew)
- Maintenance Shop (Indianola)

## **STRENGTHS\*\***

- Strong district leadership
- Teamwork
- Consistency at all levels
- Fiscally sound
- Strong Superintendent-Board relationship
- Transparent practices
- Strong public relations

## **GROWTH AREAS\*\***

- Securing and retaining highly qualified staff
- Principal leadership
- Academic achievement
- Physical plant improvement
- Student discipline

## **CURRENT AND FUTURE INITIATIVES**

- Technology infusion in all schools
- An up-to-date, reliable transportation fleet
- Well-equipped, safe, and secure facilities
- Personalized professional development
- Innovative programs to prepare students for college and careers



## Our Motto

### “Where Every Child Will Learn”

Our motto grew out of the many planning meetings that occurred after the Sunflower County Consolidated School District was returned to local control following conservatorship under the jurisdiction of the Mississippi Department of Education.

The SCCSD Board wanted a motto that was brief yet clear. The desire was for a motto that described the Board’s expectations for the type of district SCCSD aspired to be.

We believe that every child has unique abilities and capabilities. Our newly adopted motto succinctly summarizes our expectation that every child will learn.

## Defining Our Motto

“*Where Every Child Will Learn*” means that each day our emphasis will be on meeting each student where (s) he is academically, emotionally, socially, and behaviorally, then moving them toward our overall district vision. We want to prepare our children so well that when they leave us their individual needs have been effectively met ...

- that those who want to pursue college can,
- that those who desire to enter a career immediately after leaving school can and,
- that those who are challenged by disabilities of any type are prepared to be as independent as their disabilities will allow them.

For every student, we will emphasize readiness and mastery of standards and so they can be prepared for life after school ends. When our students exit SCCSD, we want them confident and prepared for the future.

# STRATEGIES FOR ACHIEVING DESIRED RESULTS

SCCSD has developed an action plan that details the strategies to be used by staff over the course of the next five years to meet the goal established by the District Planning Team.

The action plan includes measurable outcome indicators of success that will guide the work of each strategy. The SCCSD Board will assess the progress of the Superintendent and her staff on an annual basis.

## GOALS

1  
Determining the levels of proficiency and growth in assessed areas.

3  
Assessing student access to and integration of technology and innovative teaching.

2  
Ensuring effective teachers and leaders are at every school.

4  
Assessing the levels of safety and security of our facilities and transportation fleet.

5  
Ensuring the district plans well, spends wisely, and abides by its established budget.

# Strategic Plan Goals

## **GOAL 1:**

Ensure all students are proficient and showing growth in all assessed areas.

## **GOAL 2:**

Provide every school with effective teachers and leaders.

## **GOAL 3:**

Increase technology access and integration to support innovative teaching and learning.

## **GOAL 4:**

Provide safe, secure facilities and a safe transportation system.

## **GOAL 5:**

Operate a financially stable school district.



# Strategic Plan Goals

## GOAL 1

### Ensure all students are proficient and showing growth in all assessed areas.

To achieve our vision of proficiency in all assessed areas and the development of college and career-ready graduates, we must excel in our singular goal of being “united for excellence”. As stated in our core beliefs, we believe all students can achieve at high academic levels – regardless of demographics, socio-economic conditions, or personal circumstances. This commitment demands that every child in every school receive rigorous, engaging, high-quality instruction matched to how each student learns best.

Our promise to parents and students is that students who graduate from SCCSD will be prepared to attend the college of their choice, to pursue their career of choice and to be as independent as they can possibly be. By 2020, the final year of this plan, the realization of this promise and the achievement of our goal will be represented by measurable results.



To achieve and assess the level of increase in student performance (annually and by 2020), we will regularly review evaluate the following indicators of college and career readiness:

- Proficiency on the MS College and Career Ready Standards
- Proficiency on MKAS
- Proficiency on MAP (Mississippi Assessment Program) Tests
- Proficiency on SATP-3

- Preliminary ACT scores
- Percentage of students enrolled in Advanced Placement/Dual Credit Courses
- Technical licenses or certifications earned

As students advance from Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12 attention to individual and group performance will help schools determine the effectiveness of current approaches to instruction allowing schools to retool and revamp practices that result in less than desired results. These reviews will allow SCCSD to equip every student in every school for academic success along their pathway to college and career readiness.

**GOAL 1 STRATEGIES: The District will ensure all students are proficient and showing growth in all assessed areas.**

ACTION STEP(S)	TIMELINE (from /to)	RESOURCES STRATEGIES	PARTIES RESPONSIBLE	MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S) INDICATORS OF SUCCESS
1. Implement a uniform research-based literacy program at all K-8 schools	2016-2017	Purchase/acquire/define literacy curriculum Provide prof. development to all staff Monitor progress at defined intervals Revise strategies not shown to be making a positive difference	Supt. /Asst. Supt. Dir. of Curriculum/Inst. Dir. of Federal Programs Principals/Teachers Academic Coaches	District’s Annual State Accountability Rating Increase the percentage of SCCSD students proficient on state assessment Increase in teachers’ student growth data
2. Implement a uniform research-based numeracy program at all K-8 schools	2016-2017	Purchase/acquire/define numeracy curriculum Provide prof. development to all staff Monitor progress at defined intervals Revise strategies based on benchmark data as needed	Supt. /Asst. Supt. Dir. of Curriculum/Inst. Dir. of Federal Programs Principals/Teachers Academic Coaches	District’s Annual State Accountability Rating Increase the percentage of SCCSD students proficient on state assessment Increase in teachers’ student growth data
3. Implement a uniform research-based science program at all K-8 schools	2016-2017	Purchase/acquire/define science curriculum Provide prof. development to all staff Monitor progress at defined intervals Revise strategies based on benchmark data as needed	Supt. /Asst. Supt. Dir. of Curriculum/Inst. Dir. of Federal Programs Principals/Teachers Academic Coaches	District’s Annual State Accountability Rating Increase the percentage of SCCSD students proficient on state assessment Increase in teachers’ student growth data
4. Implement a system of instructional support in all instructional areas	2016-2017	Purchase/acquire/define system of instructional support Provide prof. development to all staff Monitor progress at defined intervals Revise strategies not shown to be making a positive difference	Superintendent Asst. Superintendent Dir. of Curriculum/Inst. Dir. of Federal Programs Principals/Teachers Academic Coaches	District’s Annual State Accountability Rating Reduction in the percentage of students referred for special education assessment Annual reduction in the percentage of students needing Tier 3 intervention
5. Implement an effective and consistently implemented progress monitoring system district-wide	2016-2019	District-wide universal screening program 9-weeks “Common” assessments in all subjects Bi-weekly ‘common’ assessments in state tested areas Uniform “Benchmark Assessment” program at every SCCSD school	Superintendent Assistant Superintendent Director of Curriculum and Instruction Director of Exceptional Education.	District’s Annual State Accountability Rating Reduction in the percentage of students referred for special education assessment Annual reduction in the percentage of students needing Tier 3 intervention

*When you know better, you do better.*  
– Maya Angelou

## GOAL 2

### Provide every school with effective teachers and leaders.

All great organizations provide their employees a culture of opportunity and a way to feel valued as they grow and improve. In great organizations, every employee is important—and that is true for our district. Every employee in the Sunflower County Consolidated School District plays a critical role in the education of students. The bus driver who greets the student at the start of a school day, the teacher who leads learning in the classroom, the principal who makes the school a nurturing, rigorous learning environment, the custodian who keeps the school healthy and clean—everyone who works in our district engages students in some way. It is critical that every employee in the SCCSD be effective and feel valued.

It's also critical that SCCSD be a world-class employer. We must provide all employees the opportunity to learn and grow in their work. We must not only find the best candidates but find a way to keep them and develop them throughout their careers. This will require a continuum of human-resources management that begins with recruitment but doesn't end there. Proactive recruitment is only the beginning—we must also provide meaningful professional development and constructive evaluations and appraisals. We must provide multiple career pathways, particularly for teachers so that they can advance without having to leave the classroom.



We want to develop leaders from within our employee ranks, so that we build on the strengths and talents of those who have come to SCCSD. Leadership training will benefit the leaders who receive it, as well as the people they manage.

By doing this, we can build our own capacity. But we can also do something else that is needed: We can restore the important social role of educators.

Is there any work more important than teaching children? Our focus on the importance of teaching, through salaries, development and recognition, will help SCCSD shape the discussion in education so that teaching is recognized as the iconic profession of our time. By focusing on building a premier workforce through specific pathways and structures with measurable outcomes, we will strengthen our schools and our students. We will also help to return the important work done by educators, particularly teachers, to the status it deserves. We must recruit, compensate and support the best and the brightest candidates from across the country. This will benefit our students, our schools and ultimately the educational profession as well.

**Goal 2: The district will provide every school with effective teachers and leaders.**

ACTION STEP(S)	TIMELINE (FROM/TO)	RESOURCES STRATEGIES	PARTIES RESPONSIBLE	MEASURABLE OUTCOMES INDICATORS OF SUCCESS
1. Develop and implement a system-wide recruitment plan for securing and maintaining a highly qualified staff	2016 – 2017 Ongoing	Formal SCCSD Plan for Recruitment Structured Teacher/Administrator Induction and Mentoring Program SCCSD Exit Interview Prgm.	Superintendent Assistant Superintendent	Finalized incentive plan recommended to the school board for approval Increase in retention rate of highly qualified teachers annually Results of Staff Needs Assessment Results of Exit Interviews
2. Develop and implement a comprehensive teacher/administrator induction and mentoring program	2016-2017	Selection of a recognized, proven teacher induction programs. Train appropriate staff in the use and approach	Superintendent Assistant Superintendent Director of Human Resources	Results of Staff Needs Assessment Decrease in the number of teachers/administrators leaving the district annually
3. Develop and implement a comprehensive professional development plan	2016-2017	SCCSD Annual Comprehensive Professional Development Plan	Superintendent Assistant Superintendent Director of Curriculum Director of Federal Programs. Director of Technology Principals	Results of Staff Needs Assessment MTES ratings
4. Create functional and effective professional learning communities at the district office and each school	2016-2017	Selection of teacher representatives from each school Monthly meetings	Superintendent Assistant Superintendent Director of Curriculum Principals	Results of Staff Needs Assessment MTES ratings
5. Utilize the MDE Staff Evaluation System with fidelity at every school and at the district level	2016-2017	Professional development for staff regarding requirements and expectations for attaining highest ratings on evaluations	Superintendent District Leadership Team Principals	100% of Staff will be evaluated annually using the designated instrument(s)



## GOAL 3

### Increase technology access and integration to support innovative teaching and learning.

One of the clearest themes that emerged from our task forces was the importance of educational options. Students and their parents want educational options that allow every student to learn. They want customized learning that fits an individual student, not a one-size fits-all model. Those choices can be wide-ranging. Education doesn't happen only in a classroom. Our students are learning all the time, everywhere they go. This represents an opportunity for us as a district to stretch each student and extend learning whenever and wherever we can. It also means we can offer a personalized plan of learning for each child. Using technology, we can open the global classroom for each learner, customizing the educational experience to meet individual needs, talents and abilities.

We can extend learning in time as well as space, with learning that expands beyond the classroom to take place before and after school, as well as in the summer. Virtual summer school can provide learning connections even when students are at home. We also want to intentionally cultivate and nurture an entrepreneurial spirit in our students.

Such creative approaches in teaching, particularly in project-based and challenge-based activities, will help our students develop collaboration, communication and critical-thinking skills—the skills they must have to compete in the fast-moving global workplace of the future. To serve the wide variety of learners and needs, each of our schools must have a unique focus, niche or signature program. We want every school to have its own specialty so that every school in every neighborhood is a school of viable choice for families.



**Goal 3: The district will increase technology access and integration to support innovative teaching and learning.**

ACTION STEP(S)	TIMELINE (FROM/TO)	RESOURCES STRATEGIES	PARTIES RESPONSIBLE	MEASURABLE OUTCOMES INDICATORS OF SUCCESS
1. Develop an acquisition plan and schedule for ensuring uniform technology for student and staff use	2016-2020	Staff Survey(s) Facility/Classroom Inventory Lists Update technology in all schools to provide a minimum of one mobile computer lab for teacher and student use (i.e. laptops or iPads)	Asst. Supt. Federal Programs Director Technology Coordinator	School and classroom inventory lists SCCSD Student/Staff/Parent Technology Survey indicates majority of respondents indicate technology is available and making a positive difference All schools and classrooms with functional smart board technology and other multi-media technology
2. Develop and implement an effective maintenance process for ensuring teachers and students at every school have working technology	2016-2019	SCCSD Troubleshooting Guide sheet will be developed and disseminated	Supt./Asst. Supt. Principals	Technology maintenance repair data showing maintenance requests are made and completed
3. Ensure that all schools/classrooms have functional smart board technology and other multi-media technology available for use	2016-2018	Purchase needed equipment Provide professional development to staff on appropriate use	Supt./Asst. Supt. Federal Programs Director Technology Coordinator	School and classroom inventory lists Annual Prof. Development Calendar Purchasing documents for all equipment acquired
4. Begin to teach keyboarding in Grade K – 5 at all applicable schools.	2016-2017 Ongoing	Acquire keyboard instructional program	Supt./Asst. Supt. Director of Curriculum Principals Technology Coordinator	Annual listing of courses offered at each school
5. Offer all teachers and instructional support staff professional development that focuses on the use of technology to increase effectiveness of instruction and increased student engagement	2016-2020	Professional Development Plan development	Supt./Asst. Supt. Director of Curriculum Federal Programs Director Technology Coordinator	Teacher surveys from technology professional development Classroom Lesson Jobs indicating use of technology

## GOAL 4

### Provide safe, secure facilities and a safe transportation system.

The *Effective Schools Research* of Dr. Ron Edmonds, the studies of the National Center for School Climate, and Marzano are but a few of the widely accepted findings that address the educational importance of a positive school climate on the academic growth and performance of students and the exemplary performance of education professionals. These studies have brought to the forefront the critical importance of an emotionally safe school climate.

School climate extends far beyond the walls of classrooms to every aspect of what schools offer for their students. Often, a first impression of how a school district operates is how its facilities and its transportation fleet looks. If individuals see crumbling buildings or vehicles that look ragged, it is quite easy to assume that the educational offerings for students will be less than adequate.

The SCCSD Board of Trustees is committed to ensuring that we offer an educational program in an optimum learning environment. Our intent is to provide a challenging slate of offerings that makes our students competitive with their peers regardless of where their peers are located. SCCSD's focus will be on having all facilities safe, orderly, well-maintained, and compliant with current building code and construction standards. The Board further pledges that the safety and security of students and employees will be among the district's top priorities.

It is the Board's intent to make certain that facility and fleet reviews are conducted annually. SCCSD resources will be budgeted and prioritized to make certain that necessary upgrades of our facilities and our transportation fleet are always at the highest levels possible.



**Goal 4: The district will provide safe, secure facilities and a safe transportation system.**

ACTION STEP	TIMELINE (FROM/TO)	RESOURCES STRATEGIES	PARTIES RESPONSIBLE	MEASURABLE OUTCOMES INDICATORS OF SUCCESS
1. Provide safe and reliable transportation to all students	2016-2017 Ongoing	Transportation Fleet Inventory Listing Secure external funding for acquisition of additional buses Leverage dist. & ext. funding	Superintendent Dir. of Org. Support Transportation Supervisor	Completed Annual Transportation Fleet Audit reflecting all vehicles are safe and operable  Annual Report to the Board Purchase camera system for school buses to ensure student safety
2. The transportation fleet will be upgraded annually to replace oldest vehicles in fleet	2016 and Ongoing	Transportation Fleet Inventory Listing Secure external funding for acquisition of additional buses	Superintendent Dir. of Org. Support Transportation Supervisor	Review of Inventory Listing
3. Provide secure facilities throughout the district	2016-2017	Facilities audits	Superintendent Dir. of Org. Support Chief of Security	Completed Annual Facilities Audit indicating all facilities are safe and in good repair and report to the Board (Beginning of the Year)
4. Maintain existing district facilities in order to promote environmentally/ educationally friendly facilities	2016 and Ongoing	Entry and exit doors and windows annual replacement schedule Facilities audits	Superintendent Dir. of Org. Support Maintenance Supervisor	Completed Annual Facilities Audit indicating all facilities are safe and in good repair Monthly Building & Quality Inspection
5. Secure an external vendor/architect to facilitate an annual facilities audit and share the results with stakeholders	2016 and Ongoing	Conduct an annual facility audit to assess safety compliance and safe to operation	Superintendent Dir. of Org. Support	Completed Annual Facilities Audit indicating all facilities are safe and in good repair Annual Report to the Board



## **GOAL 5**

### **Operate a financially stable school district.**

SCCSD is one of the newest school districts in the state of Mississippi having become a newly configured district after the consolidation of the former Indianola, Sunflower County, and Drew School Districts. Consolidation followed the Mississippi Department of Education's (MDE) conservatorship of the district (3 former Districts). SCCSD had much to do to be functionally ready to operate and compliant with the many MDE requirements for accreditation.

The Board of Trustees and Superintendent were aware that one primary area where MS school districts were assessed and evaluated in announced or unannounced visits was in the area of strategic planning.

### **FINANCIAL STATUS**

- Operational budget of \$40,030,115
- District Maintenance \$24,040,199
- Fund balance of \$10,494,950 (as of 6/30/2015)
- Millage rate of 50.85
- 2.78 mills for obligations
- Per Pupil Expenditure - \$11,100 per student



**Goal 5: The district will be financially stable and will utilize sound fiscal management practices.**

ACTION STEP	TIMELINE (FROM/TO)	RESOURCES STRATEGIES	PARTIES RESPONSIBLE	MEASURABLE OUTCOMES INDICATORS OF SUCCESS
1. Effectively plan and expend funds.	2015- 2016 and ongoing	Mandated pre-planning meetings (by school and department) as preliminary budgeting is completed Monthly reports to the board of budget and expenditure status Refrain from unbudgeted expenditures unless there are documented emergencies that will impact accreditation level or facility operations Leverage funds through all programs	Superintendent Assistant Superintendent Business Manager Department Heads Principals Board of Trustees	Annual Budget Planning Calendar Production of monthly budget reports for principals and department heads Annual Financial Audit Report to the Board
2. Maintain an annual balanced budget where expenditures do not exceed revenue.	2015-2016 and ongoing	Monthly reviews of budget and expenditure status by school/department Structured budget amendment process with local maintenance funds similar to process used for federal funds	Superintendent Assistant Superintendent Business Manager Department Heads Principals Board of Trustees	Annual Financial Audit Report to the Board
3. Research availability of and seek external funding to increase revenue in prioritized areas of need.	2016-2017 and ongoing	Identification of prioritized target areas for external grant-seeking efforts Develop/train a district grant writing team utilizing current staff Incorporate professional development on grant-writing into the district budget Budget funds for grant-writing assistance and external evaluation	Superintendent Assistant Superintendent Business Manager Department Heads Principals	Listing of district external funding target areas District professional development calendar reflecting inclusion of external partnerships Current budget reflecting a line item for grant-writing assistance

# **METHODS TO BE EMPLOYED TO REACH OUR GOALS**

## **Recruiting and Retaining Qualified Educators (Goal 1)**

- Increased targeted professional development for educators in our areas of deficiency
- Increased teacher mentoring and support

## **Family and Community Engagement (Goal 2)**

- Increased staffing to support student success
- Increased efforts to provide clear and timely communication districtwide
- Increased emphasis on resolving parent, staff, community concerns

## **Organizational Effectiveness (Goal 3& 5)**

- Allocated funding and additional human effort to support improved communications to parents and staff
- Allocated funding for the acquisition of new instructional technology and for professional development on the proper and effective use of new instructional technology

## **Safe and Supportive Environments (Goal 4)**

- Increased facility maintenance to improve schools in greatest need of repair
- Implemented bus fleet replacement program to ensure that our bus fleet is continually updated and all vehicles are in good repair

## **Fiscal Stability (Goal 5)**

- Effective budget management practices
- Prioritized spending aligned with goals
- Regular reviews of financial status
- Reduced bonded indebtedness

# MEASURING OUR RESULTS

## Administrator/ Faculty / Staff Evaluations\*

The Board of Trustees will use the Strategic Plan as a major component of the annual evaluation of the job performance of the Superintendent of Schools.

The Superintendent and/or her designees will use the Strategic Plan, along with the state's evaluation system, to assess the job performance of administrators, instructional, and support staff.

*\*Only the information not protected by employees' rights to confidentiality and privacy will be available for public review.*

## Evaluation of Student Performance\*

The individual and group performance of students on the various state and district assessment programs will be the method for assessing proficiency and growth.

*\*Student performance results will be available on SCCSD's and the Mississippi Department of Education's website when the results have been verified and released for public review.*



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**Dr. Debra Dace, Superintendent of Schools**



