



# Five-Year Strategic Plan

SY 2016-SY 2021



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## From the Superintendent

Dear Parents and Families, Students, Staff, Community Members and Friends of Portsmouth Public Schools,

The Portsmouth Public Schools Comprehensive Plan has guided our school division for many years, so as we approach the end of the Comprehensive Plan era, it is a perfect time to reflect on our strengths, challenges, and opportunities for the future. The strategic planning process afforded us the opportunity to do this in a way that included your input and feedback. Portsmouth is **OUR** community, and the best way to forge ahead is to do it in the spirit of collaboration...together!

This Five-Year Strategic Plan outlines five goals in the areas of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment, Social-Emotional Development, High-Quality Personnel, Family & Community Engagement, and Finance & Operations. The plan determines objectives and the related action steps that are required to meet each goal. It will guide us into the future and support all of us in assuring that our students reach their full potential.

I would like to extend a special thanks to the School Board for their support with this process, as well as to all of the community and staff members who took the time to respond to the surveys. I'd also like to thank the Strategic Planning Team for working together during Spring 2016 to contribute to the development of this important plan that sets the path forward for the future of Portsmouth Public Schools, VA. Team members included:

Anita Taylor	Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction
Antonio Fox	Director, Curriculum and Instruction
Claude Parent	School Board Member
Costella Williams	School Board Member
L. Pettis Patton	Portsmouth City Manager
Joseph Wiggins	Executive Administrator to the Division Superintendent
Scott Ziegler	Director, Human Resources
Derrick Nottingham	Director, Research and Evaluation
Dean Schlaepfer	Director, Information Technology
Katie Vincent	Special Education Teacher
Donna Clifton	Long Term Substitute, President of Portsmouth Council of PTAs
Faye Felton	Principal, Hodges Manor Elementary
Sabrina Evans	Executive Director, Portsmouth Schools Foundation



Jennifer Thomas  
Ariel Durall

Supervisor, Information Technology  
Public Information Officer

Sincerely,

Elie Bracy III, Ed. D  
Superintendent  
Portsmouth Public Schools



## About Portsmouth Public Schools

Portsmouth is passionate about education, its rich maritime history and the success of all students. Our schools are filled with active learning, engaged students and dedicated teachers. With nearly 15,000 students, Portsmouth Public Schools offers small class sizes with specific programs to prepare students for technical careers and college. We have 13 elementary schools, three middle schools, three high schools, four Pre-K centers, one alternative school and an adult learning center. Our First College program offers high school students the opportunity to take college courses at Tidewater Community College.

## Portsmouth At-A-Glance

### ENROLLMENT

- o 14,971 students\*
- Student body: Male students, 7,520 or 50.2% and Female 7,451 or 49.8%\*
- Students receiving special education services: 1,689 or 11.3%\*
- Students taking one or more Dual-Enrollment Courses: 277\*
- Students taking one or more Advanced Placement Courses: 155\*
- Students taking one or more Career and Technical Education Courses: 3,916\*
- Students enrolled in First College: 207

### CURRICULUM CONTENT AREAS

- o Business Education
- o English
- o Language Arts
- o ESOL
- o Gifted and Talented Education
- o Music Education
- o Mathematics
- o Health and Physical Education
- o Virtual Learning
- o Career and Technical Education



- o Science
- o Social Studies
- o Library Media
- o Journalism and Communications
- o World Languages
- o Fine Arts

### OUR SCHOOLS

- o 2 Nationally recognized High Schools
- 13 Elementary Schools
- 3 Middle Schools
- 3 High Schools
- 4 Pre-K centers
- 1 adult learning center
- 1 alternative high school

### OUR STUDENT BODY

- o African-American 72.4 %
- Caucasian 22.3%
- Multi-racial 3.5%
- Asian 1%
- American Indian 0.4%
- Native Hawaiian 0.4%

### OUR HIGHLY QUALIFIED STAFF

- o Number of employees: 2,064
- Number of certified classroom teachers: 1,086
- Average years of experience: 12 completed years of professional experience
- Average teacher salary: \$52,029.67
- Percentage of certified staff with master's degrees or above: 56.4%



*\*Data from July 2015 School Profile  
Report, Office of Research and Evaluation*



## Strategic Planning Process

The strategic planning process was facilitated by Ann Cunningham-Morris M.Ed., a nationally-recognized consultant, with expertise in strategic planning, curriculum, instruction, assessment and leadership. The process included working with the division to identify strategic planning team members representing the community and the staff, as well as team development of the community and organizational performance surveys. The community survey was released in April 2016, marking the first time that the community was widely included in determining strategic plan goals that would inform the future direction of the school division. The organizational performance survey was also released to over 50 district leaders in April 2016 to get their feedback and input in five general strategic planning focus areas.

The community survey distribution outreach included media coverage, division website posting, as well as social media postings and advertisements on Facebook and Twitter. In addition, website and email distribution collaboration was successful with Portsmouth libraries, Portsmouth Schools Foundation, Old Towne Business Association, City of Portsmouth, Friends of the Juvenile Courts, Parks and Recreation Adult League, and the YMCA. Internal outreach was also included, with survey link distribution via the employee newsletter and a staff email from the superintendent,

The feedback was very good for a first-time survey of this type. More than 840 community and staff members responded. Their answers helped the strategic planning team to prioritize the district's greatest challenges, specify skills and abilities students need to have for a successful future, and define the evidence that will evaluate the quality of education in Portsmouth Public Schools.

Specific actions taken by the team and the district leadership in the development of the strategic plan included:

- Investigate trends that will impact the future of education in the school division.
- Examine present school division data & practices.
- Deploy surveys in April 2016.
- Review survey feedback from over 840 community/staff members and over 50 district leaders.
- Determine educational and financial priorities based on answers to survey questions.
- Review Mission statement to ensure alignment with community feedback.
- Categorize top priorities into five goals.
- Outline objectives to help meet the five goals.
- Defined action steps to achieve the objectives.
- Establish measures to gauge progress toward meeting objectives and goals.
- Determine who will be responsible for recording measurements and documenting success throughout Portsmouth Public Schools.



The facilitator and strategic planning team used information from Robert W. Ewy's book, ***Stakeholder-Driven Strategic Planning in Education: A Practical Guide for Developing and Deploying Successful Long-Range Plans***, as a reference to guide the process.



***School Division Mission- To engage all students in learning that will foster academic excellence and responsible citizenship***

**Goal**

**1**

**Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment**

**Provide educational opportunities to assure all students achieve high academic growth.**

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**Objective 1:** Graduates will be College and Career Ready.

**Action Steps:**

- a. Increase the number of students who exceed state expectations on the VA Standards of Learning assessments and decrease the number of students who do not meet state standards.
- b. Monitor and address achievement levels and gaps to assure all schools are recognized as fully accredited.
- c. Increase the percentage of students graduating from high school to be equal to or greater than the state average in all gap groups.
- d. Continue to promote and expand access to technical and career awareness programs.
- e. Increase the variety of technical and career offerings available to students.
- f. Increase student opportunities connected to higher education institutions in the region.
- g. Increase the number of students earning college credit by graduation.

**Objective 2:** Instructional personnel will implement highly effective, research-based curriculum, instruction and assessment practices.

**Action Steps:**



- a. Adopt and implement division-wide instructional practices that support rigor and student engagement across the curriculum.
- b. Continue to identify and implement instructional and assessment practices that increase student mastery of the four core content areas: English/language arts/reading, mathematics, science and social studies.
- c. Integrate literacy across the curriculum practices and policies.
- d. Continue to develop and implement instructional accountability practices for school-based leaders and teachers that will benefit student learning.
- e. Implement a balanced assessment system that includes a focus on research-based formative and summative assessment strategies, including the use of performance tasks.
- f. Identify and implement inquiry-based teaching and learning practices that will increase student critical thinking and problem-solving abilities.
- g. Continue to leverage technology integration as a teaching, learning and assessment tool across the curriculum.
- h. Continue to expand teacher and administrative use of technology tools for data-based instructional decision-making.

**Objective 3:** The curriculum and related programs will meet the needs of all students.

**Action Steps:**

- a. Continue to implement policies and practices that assure the district-level K-12 curriculum remains aligned to standards, adheres to curriculum development best practices, and is accessible to all teachers and administrators.
- b. Implement division-wide practices that assure teacher unit and lesson plans are aligned to the district curriculum, identified standards, and identified research-based instruction and assessment practices.
- c. Increase instructional programs and related student services that will meet the needs of the diverse student population.
- d. Increase the opportunity for advanced content pathways and courses offered in elementary, middle and high schools.
- e. Continue to leverage technology and identify other research-based solutions to integrate personalized learning practices across the curriculum.

**Goal**

**2**

**Social-Emotional Development**

**Strengthen practices and policies focused on social-emotional development.**

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**Objective 1:** Implement social-emotional learning support and strategies.

**Action Steps:**

- a. Integrate social-emotional learning into curriculum and instruction.
- b. Adopt and effectively implement a research-based positive behavior program at each school.
- c. Evaluate and strengthen programs and practices designed to support the social-emotional development of high need students.

**Objective 2:** implement practices and policies that support student’s ability to be responsible, contributing citizens.

**Action Steps:**

- a. Identify and implement practices that will increase student’s ability to work cooperatively with others, resolve conflicts, and respect other cultures and beliefs.
- b. Identify and implement practices that will increase the percentage of students demonstrating accountability for following rules and laws.
- c. Identify and implement practices that will increase student ability to filter and use information.
- d. Identify and implement practices that will increase student ability to use technology wisely.



## High-Quality Personnel

**Recruit, retain, and develop highly-qualified personnel.**

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**Objective 1:** Provide a compensation package that is competitive with other school districts in the state of similar size and resources.

**Action Step:**

- a. Continue to annually assess the district's capacity to offer salary schedule adjustments for all positions.
- b. Continue to annually assess the total compensation package offered to employees.

**Objective 2:** Strengthen the teacher recruitment pipeline.

**Action Steps:**

- a. Continue to strengthen outreach and connections with regional university teacher education programs to engage with talented future teachers early in their university experience.
- b. Continue to explore and implement partnerships with alternative certification programs and pathways.

**Objective 3:** Provide effective, research-based, and differentiated professional learning opportunities tied directly to the district strategic plan and aligned school improvement plans.

**Action Steps:**

- a. Collaborate across all school division departments to develop a five-year professional learning plan aligned to the strategic plan categories and focus areas.



- b. Work with schools to support them in developing differentiated professional learning plans that include implementation follow-up support, job-embedded strategies and best practices for effective professional learning communities.
- c. Assure that district and school professional learning plans include research-based evaluation practices to determine if the professional learning is making a difference in employee performance and student achievement.

**Objective 4:** Implement ongoing research-based leadership development opportunities for educational and support personnel to ensure a healthy pipeline of high quality leaders.

**Action Steps:**

- a. Identify and implement leadership development opportunities for principals, assistant principals and aspiring principals that will build their capacity as instructional leaders, visionaries, community engagement practitioners, learners and collaborators.
- b. Develop and implement a teacher leadership program for teachers who want to remain in the classroom, lead the learning of their colleagues, and significantly impact education in the division; the program should include research-based teacher leadership practices, incentives and recognitions.
- c. Implement ongoing leadership development opportunities for operations and support personnel identified as high-flyers aligned with best practices in business leadership development and the future needs of the school division.

**Objective 5:** Continue to provide ongoing support for new teachers and administrators through a comprehensive induction plan.

**Action Steps:**

- a. Collaborate with new teachers and administrators regularly using face-to-face communities of practice, ongoing coaching and various virtual strategies to provide support.
- b. Continue to develop and implement an effective mentoring program for new teachers and administrators aligned with mentoring best practices.



## **Family & Community Engagement**

**Strengthen school, family, and community involvement and perceptions.**

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**Objective 1:** Partner with families to strengthen understanding of academic standards, student progress, social-emotional development support and the importance of teachers and families working together.

**Action Steps:**

- a. Continue to strengthen the resources and information provided to families to support their child's education.
- b. Introduce families to resources that assist with student and family social-emotional needs.
- c. Continue to use the Internet, social media, and other tools to enhance parent and community partnerships and communication.

**Objective 2:** Identify and implement practices to increase positive perception of schools among families and community members.

**Action Steps:**

- a. Develop, implement and monitor consistent effective customer service practices across all schools in the division.
- b. Strengthen and monitor consistent positive school culture and climate practices across all schools in the division.
- c. Expand ongoing collaboration opportunities with businesses, military, faith-based, recreational, civic and city organizations to benefit students and families.



## Finance & Operations

**Ensure fiscal stability through sound financial practices and ensure high-quality school facilities.**

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**Objective 1:** Continue to develop and sustain sound financial management practices, stability, and efficiency based on best practices.

**Action Step:**

- a. Develop, monitor and evaluate an annual financial and debt plan aligned to the District Strategic Plan.

**Objective 2:** Continue to develop and sustain process efficiencies that make the best use of available resources.

**Action Step:**

- a. Monitor, evaluate and update processes as needed to assure optimum resource availability to support student and staff success factors.

**Objective 3:** School facilities will be safe and inviting places for students, families, staff, and the community.

**Action Step:**

- a. Monitor and increase safety, cleanliness, and overall appearance factors of facilities.

**Objective 4:** Maintain equipment and infrastructure to support technology integration.

**Action Step:**

- a. Continue to update virtual servers, switches, bandwidth, wireless capacity, and storage to meet demand as needed.