

**CORE VALUES**

- We believe that all students can learn.
- We believe that all people have value and can add value.
- We believe that embracing diversity strengthens communities.
- We believe that family is the first and most powerful influence on a person's life.
- We believe individuals are responsible for their choices and actions.
- We believe that honesty and integrity are vital.
- We believe that lifelong learning is essential for individuals and communities to flourish.



**HIGHLANDS COUNTY SCHOOLS STRATEGIC  
PLANNING PROCESS**

The School Board of Highlands County District Strategic Plan for 2008-2013 was developed using input from several stakeholder groups and goal teams, data from past and projected performance, survey results from Best Practices.



**VISION**

**"Where Excellence is a Tradition"**

**MISSION**

**"Through the individual commitment of all, the Highlands County School District will provide educational opportunities in a safe environment that prepare all students to achieve their potential, be independent thinkers, and responsible productive members of a global society".**



**District Strategic Plan  
2008-2013**



**"Where Excellence is a Tradition"**

**Wally Cox  
Superintendent of Schools**

426 School Street  
Sebring, FL 33870  
Phone: (863) 471-5555  
Fax: (863) 471-5600  
www:highlands.k12.fl.us

**Goal 1. All students will achieve at their highest potential**

**Objective 1.1.**  
**Increase the percentage of students at proficiency level as measured by standardized tests, progressing to 100% by 2014**

- Strategies:**
- 1.1.1 Use data analysis to monitor student progress and guide instructional decisions
  - 1.1.2 Monitor the use of effective research based instructional program delivery methods to insure fidelity
  - 1.1.3 Maintain adequate research based instructional materials, equipment and methodology

**Objective 1.2.**  
**Provide a more comprehensive, rigorous and aligned curriculum at all levels to ultimately increase the graduation rate**

- Strategies:**
- 1.2.1 Align and map the curriculum to the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards
  - 1.2.2 Explore the feasibility of adding additional foreign language curriculum
  - 1.2.3 Expand opportunities for students to take advanced coursework (i.e., HAART, Honors, Dual Enrollment Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate)
  - 1.2.4 Expand opportunities for middle school students to take high school level courses
  - 1.2.5 Offer additional opportunities for student learning through computer assisted instruction and online courses
  - 1.2.6 Increase career and technical education programs with industry recognized certification
  - 1.2.7 Integrate technology into the curriculum to insure that students develop adequate technology skills for employment and/or higher education
  - 1.2.8 Support co-curricular and intra-curricular experiences that provide additional opportunities for students

**Goal 2. Recruit, develop and retain high performing instructional and non-instructional staff.**

**Objective 2.1.**  
**Develop and implement a plan for recruiting highly qualified applicants**

- Strategies:**
- 2.1.1 Review succession management plan periodically to forecast vacancies
  - 2.1.2 Remain competitive with salary and benefits package
  - 2.1.3 Attract a qualified, diverse pool of candidates through various sources and resources
  - 2.1.4 Obtain input from all stakeholders regarding staffing needs
  - 2.1.5 Network with community service organizations and business partners
  - 2.1.6 Promote district programs and opportunities to increase employee interest in career building
  - 2.1.7 Partner with colleges/universities to place education interns at schools and provide apprenticeship opportunities for students in market-driven vocational career programs
  - 2.1.8 Ensure compliance with federal/state laws and district policies with regard to equal employment opportunities and non-discrimination practices
  - 2.1.9 Assess all programs, processes, procedures, and plans annually

**Objective 2.2.**  
**Develop and implement a plan for selecting high performing staff**

- Strategies:**
- 2.2.1 Maintain, assess, revise, update detailed job descriptions with minimum qualifications and essential job functions for all contracted positions
  - 2.2.2 Utilize internet application system and interview process to evaluate and qualify applicants; serve as a vital informational resource for both internal and external stakeholders
  - 2.2.3 Provide legislative updates/training as needed when it pertains to qualifications and/or selection of candidates

**Objective 2.3.**  
**Develop and implement a plan to train and retain high performing staff**

- Strategies:**
- 2.3.1 Develop/maintain a district-wide Professional Development Plan
  - 2.3.2 Conduct surveys/needs assessments to determine training and professional development needs of all district staff
  - 2.3.3 Provide ongoing, relevant, job-embedded professional development via various modems of delivery which meets professional growth needs and career goals of district staff
  - 2.3.4 Evaluate professional development objectives and training for continuous improvement to meet requirements of DOE Professional Development Protocol Review Standards
  - 2.3.5 Develop/implement a structured mentoring program to support new administrators and instructional staff
  - 2.3.6 Implement professional improvement plans and/or strategies for corrective intervention for identified performance deficiencies
  - 2.3.7 Recognize and award employee accomplishments and contributions
  - 2.3.8 Provide optional supplemental leadership/mentoring opportunities and experiences
  - 2.3.9 Assess all programs, processes, procedures, and plans annually

**Goal 3. Provide a safe and orderly learning environment**

**Objective 3.1.**  
**Decrease the number of SESIR discipline incidents**

- Strategies:**
- 3.1.1 Continue installation of security devices on campuses and buses
  - 3.1.2 Implement training in classroom management skills
  - 3.1.3 Continue walk-through training for administrative staff
  - 3.1.4 Continue SAC Code of Conduct review process
  - 3.1.5 Increase number of schools trained in Positive Behavioral Support Program

**Objective 3.2.**  
**Reduce the Incidents/Claims for property damage**

- Strategies:**
- 3.2.1 Continue installation of security devices on campuses and buses
  - 3.2.2 Implement recommendations of fire and safety inspections
  - 3.2.3 Revise and implement Reasonable Suspicion Drug testing policy for employees
  - 3.2.4 Implement Transportation Department remediation policy for property damage incidents

**Objective 3.3.**  
**Achieve a decrease in favorable attitudes of middle and high school students toward drug/alcohol use as measured by the Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey**

- Strategies:**
- 3.3.1 Continue Middle / High school Random Student Drug Testing Program
  - 3.3.2 Revise and implement Safe & Drug Free Schools Plan 3.3.3 Implement Red Ribbon Week activities
  - 3.3.4 Continue to co-fund nurses & health techs in partnership with the Highlands County Health Department

**Objective 3.4.**  
**Achieve a decrease in favorable attitudes of middle and high school students toward anti-social behavior as measured by the Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey**

- Strategies:**
- 3.4.1 Increase use of Connect-Ed software for school-home communication
  - 3.4.2 Promote use of Civility /Sportsmanship policies
  - 3.4.3 Continue funding for the Academy at Youth Care Lane Program as an alternative to expulsion
  - 3.4.4 Continue providing anti-bullying programs
  - 3.4.5 Continue to co-fund School Resource Officers in partnership with the Highlands County Sheriff's Department

**Objective 3.5.**  
**Achieve a decrease in district-wide incidents concerning personal injury**

- Strategies:**
- 3.5.1 Revise and implement the District Wellness Program
  - 3.5.2 Emphasize Code of Conduct review at all school sites
  - 3.5.3 Revise school crisis plans annually
  - 3.5.4 Implement Safety Committee recommendations

**GOAL 4. All operations will demonstrate best practices while supporting student achievement**

**Objective 4.1.**  
**Conduct a comprehensive budget planning process that manages resources efficiently to support the District's Strategic Plan**

- Strategies:**
- 4.1.1 Conduct annual comprehensive planning meetings that provide an opportunity for schools and departments to present requests for staffing, equipment and facility needs
  - 4.1.2 Hold school board budget workshops
  - 4.1.3 Schedule two public hearings to gather public input prior to budget adoption

**Objective 4.2.**  
**Conduct long range planning will be conducted to insure that adequate facilities are available for a safe learning environment**

- Strategies:**
- 4.2.1 Complete five-year educational plant survey to insure that all existing school sites have adequate student stations and core facilities and all new school facilities are planned for anticipated student growth
  - 4.2.2 Design new educational facilities to meet the needs of students with an emphasis on technology

**Objective 4.3.**  
**Provide safe, orderly, and cost effective transportation services for all students**

- Strategies:**
- 4.3.1 Evaluate bus replacement program to insure that all buses are operationally safe
  - 4.3.2 Continue purchase of video recorders for busses to assist with student discipline

**Objective 4.4.**  
**Provide an efficient food service program that meets the standards and nutritional needs of students and staff in compliance with federal, state, and local requirements**

- Strategies:**
- 4.4.1 Monitor all food production to insure compliance with nutritional standards
  - 4.4.2 Design and implement promotional activities to encourage participation and increase sales

**Objective 4.5.**  
**Provide accounting, payroll, and purchasing services that are efficient and demonstrate best business practices**

- Strategies:**
- 4.5.1 Continue to automate all accounting, payroll, and purchasing processes

**Goal 5. Increase parent and community involvement in schools**

**Objective 5.1**  
**Recruit and support a strong volunteer program, PreK-12**

- Strategies:**
- 5.1.1 Enlist the assistance of the District School Advisory Council and School Advisory Councils, PTO's booster clubs, alumni associations, service organizations and businesses in recruiting additional members and volunteers
  - 5.1.2 Provide ongoing recognition to school volunteers

**Objective 5.2**  
**Involve families and community in proactive efforts to provide a safe, orderly, and well-disciplined environment in our schools and during school activities.**

- Strategies:**
- 5.2.1 Seek input from the District School Advisory Council on annual revision of the Code of Student Conduct
  - 5.2.2 Continue and expand supportive relationships with law enforcement and health agencies
  - 5.2.3 Expand partnerships with businesses, community, and institutes of higher education

**Objective 5.3**  
**Increase communication to all stakeholders**

- Strategies:**
- 5.3.1 Use a variety of media (i.e., newspapers, websites, newsletters, radio, Connect-Ed, Pinnacle Parent Viewer, email, etc.)
  - 5.3.2 Conduct parent workshops district-wide to provide information and to enhance opportunities for families to support their children's academic progress
  - 5.3.3 Provide translation in native languages as necessary