



NSPRA Gold Medallion Entry

Special Communication Project/Campaign

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Richmond County School System
864 Broad St., Augusta, GA 30901
Public school district



Synopsis

RICHMOND COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM 2025-2030 Strategy Map



In 2025, the Richmond County School System (RCSS) launched a comprehensive communications campaign to introduce and sustain awareness of its 2025–2030 Strategic Plan. District leaders recognized that while strategic plans often guide internal decision-making, they frequently fail to reach the educators, families, and community members responsible for bringing those priorities to life.

Stakeholder feedback during the planning process revealed a clear communications challenge: while the district regularly shared information, families and staff wanted greater transparency about how decisions are made and how the school system plans to move forward. RCSS needed a strategy that would not only introduce the new strategic plan but also build a shared culture around the district’s mission and priorities.

To address this challenge, the RCSS Communications Department developed the [RCSS Strategy Map](#), a visual framework that translates the strategic plan into four clearly defined priorities: Student Achievement; Stakeholder Engagement and Communication; Talent Development; and Safe and Secure Learning Environment.

Synopsis

Rather than presenting the plan solely as a written document, the communications team created a comprehensive branding and engagement strategy designed to integrate the strategic plan into daily communication across the school system. The campaign included districtwide mission, vision, and belief banners; strategy map posters distributed to all schools and departments; a centralized brand resource hub for staff; a public strategic plan webpage; a district PowerPoint template aligned with the strategic priorities; and a strategic plan launch video shared across social media.

The plan was approved by the Richmond County Board of Education in March 2025 and introduced to educators from all 54 schools during the district's annual [convocation](#) at the Bell Auditorium in Augusta, GA. Families were introduced to the strategic plan through the district's Back-to-School Welcome Guide mailed to more than 15,000 households.

By transforming the strategic plan into a recognizable visual identity and equipping staff with communication tools, RCSS created a sustainable framework that reinforces the district's mission: Empowering Every Learner Every Day.



The Challenge

Strategic plans are essential for guiding district priorities, yet many school systems struggle to communicate them effectively beyond leadership and board members.

During the development of the Richmond County School System’s 2025–2030 Strategic Plan, district leaders heard consistent feedback from staff, families, and community members that the district needed to be more transparent about its processes and priorities. Stakeholders expressed a desire to better understand how decisions are made, how progress is measured, and how they can play a role in supporting student success.

At the same time, the district was working to build a stronger systemwide culture centered on a newly adopted mission and vision. Leadership recognized that introducing a new strategic plan without a clear communication strategy could result in limited awareness or engagement among staff and families.

The challenge for the Communications Department was clear: transform a complex planning document into a visible, accessible framework that could help create a shared culture around the district’s priorities.

Research

The Richmond County School System developed its communications strategy for the 2025–2030 Strategic Plan through a stakeholder-informed research process designed to identify how the district could improve transparency, consistency, and engagement in its communications.

While district leadership and planning partners guided development of the strategic plan itself, the RCSS Communications Department led the development of the external communications strategy that would introduce and sustain awareness of the plan among staff, families, and the broader community.

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Focus Groups



Because the strategic plan includes Stakeholder Engagement and Communication as one of its four priorities, the communications team participated directly in the strategic planning process. Communications staff attended stakeholder focus groups, reviewed survey feedback, and participated in strategic planning discussions in order to better understand how families, staff, and community members receive and interact with district information.

Stakeholder feedback consistently highlighted a need for clearer communication about district priorities and decision-making processes. Participants expressed interest in more transparent communication from the school system and more accessible ways to understand long-term district goals.

Focus group discussions also revealed challenges related to communication platforms. While schools were actively communicating with families through newsletters, emails, and social media, there was no unified framework guiding how schools and departments communicated district priorities. Participants also raised questions about the accessibility and ease of use of certain communication tools, particularly for families who may not have consistent access to technology.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Established district mission, vision, and strategic planning process• Active communication channels across schools and departments.
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No existing coordinated strategy for communicating district priorities across the school system.• Schools and departments often developed their own messaging, leading to inconsistent implementation of the mission and vision.
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leadership transition with a new superintendent of schools provided a natural opportunity to introduce a refreshed district brand and Strategy Map.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The summer break allowed the district to update banners, signage, and communications materials across schools and departments while staff and students were out of buildings, enabling a consistent rollout.• The timing of the launch aligned with the district’s annual back-to-school communications campaign, allowing the strategic plan messaging to be seamlessly integrated into existing outreach to families and staff.
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Without a unified communications framework, stakeholders may have limited awareness or understanding of district priorities• Inconsistent messaging could reduce transparency and trust with families and the community

Internal Audit

To better understand the communications landscape, the Communications Department conducted an internal audit of the district’s brand identity. The audit confirmed that while RCSS had developed strategic plans in the past, there had not been a coordinated effort to ensure the plan was consistently communicated across schools, departments, and public-facing materials beyond the launch of the strategic plan in year one of implementation.

Competitor Analysis

The communications team also conducted a competitor analysis reviewing how nearby school districts visually communicate their strategic priorities and brand identity. These findings helped inform a more accessible and visual approach to communicating the RCSS strategic plan while modernizing and differentiating our look compared to other districts in the region.

Communications leadership also participated in the development of the district’s updated mission and vision statements, ensuring that the communications campaign would authentically reflect the district’s guiding message: Empowering Every Learner Every Day.

Planning

Based on the research findings, the communications team developed a strategy to translate the strategic plan into a clear framework that could be consistently communicated across the district.

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The communications strategy focused on three primary objectives:

Objective 1: Increase transparency around district priorities

Launch a public-facing Strategy Map webpage and integrate the district’s mission, vision, and beliefs into the redesigned district homepage by the end of the 2024–2025 school year, ensuring stakeholders can easily access and understand the district’s strategic direction.

Objective 2: Create systemwide alignment in strategic messaging

Provide standardized communication tools—including Strategy Map graphics, presentation templates, and brand resources—to all schools and departments and replace existing mission and vision banners across district facilities by July 2025.

Objective 3: Equip district leaders and staff to communicate the strategic plan

Develop a strategic plan presentation and introduce the Strategy Map during district leadership meetings, Summer Convocation, and New Educator Orientation so staff across all schools understand and can communicate the district’s mission, vision, and priorities.

Visual Storytelling Strategy

To make the strategic plan accessible and easy to share, the communications team designed the Strategy Map as a visual storytelling framework rather than a single static document. The team created more than a dozen modular graphics that break down the mission, vision, beliefs, strategic priorities, and critical initiatives into clear visual components.

Each graphic was designed as a flexible PNG asset so schools and departments could easily incorporate them into presentations, newsletters, websites, and social media posts. This approach allowed schools and departments to communicate the strategic plan as a shared journey toward long-term goals, while maintaining a consistent districtwide brand.

Implementation

Following approval of the strategic plan by the Richmond County Board of Education in March 2025, the communications campaign launched in phases designed to reach staff, families, and the broader community.

Website Integration

To ensure the strategic plan was accessible to the public, the communications team created a dedicated webpage at rcboe.org/strategymap featuring the Strategy Map and visual explanations of the district’s mission, vision, beliefs, and strategic priorities. In 2025, RCSS also completed a full redesign of its district website. As part of the redesign, the district’s mission, vision, and belief statements were prominently featured on the

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homepage, ensuring that visitors immediately see the guiding principles of the school system.

Brand Resource Hub

To support consistent communication across the district, the communications team created a centralized [brand resource page](#) for staff. This page houses Strategy Map graphics, brand guidelines, [presentation templates](#), and communication resources that schools and departments can use to align their messaging with the district's strategic priorities.

Strategic Plan Publication

In addition to the visual Strategy Map, the communications and accountability team developed a [comprehensive strategic plan publication](#) outlining the full five-year plan. This document expands on the Strategy Map by providing detailed descriptions of each strategic theme, objective, and critical initiative.

Visual Branding Across Schools

To make the strategic plan visible across the district, mission, vision, and belief banners were distributed to all schools and district departments. [Strategy Map posters](#) were also provided to reinforce the plan's priorities in classrooms, offices, and meeting spaces.

Strategic Plan Launch Video

The district produced a [strategic plan launch video](#) featuring Superintendent Dr. Malinda Cobb explaining the district's mission, vision, and strategic priorities. The video was shared across social media and the district website to introduce the plan to families and community members.

Staff Engagement

The strategic plan was formally introduced to district staff during the annual [Summer Convocation](#) held at the Bell Auditorium on July 29, where educators from all 54 schools gathered to begin the new school year. Superintendent Dr. Malinda Cobb presented the Strategy Map and emphasized the district's mission of empowering every learner every day. District leaders also introduced the strategic plan during New Educator Orientation, ensuring that new teachers to the career field joining the district understood the mission, vision, and priorities guiding RCSS.

Back-To-School Welcome Guide

Strategic plan messaging was incorporated into the district's annual [Back-to-School Welcome Guide](#), which was mailed to more than 15,000 households and distributed to all schools. This allowed the district to introduce the strategic plan to families during an existing high-engagement communications campaign.

Evaluation

The district successfully completed its key implementation objectives, including:

- Mission, vision, and belief banners installed in all 54 schools and district departments
- Strategy Map posters distributed districtwide
- A strategic plan webpage launched at rcboe.org/strategymap
- A brand resource hub created for staff
- A new district PowerPoint template aligned with the strategic plan

The Strategy Map webpage generated more than 1,800 interaction events, demonstrating strong engagement with the district’s strategic planning content.

The strategic plan launch video also generated strong engagement across social media platforms.

Across Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube, the video generated:

- 13,700+ total video views
- More than 7,800 people reached
- Over 37 hours of cumulative watch time
- 627 total engagements

RCSS is also revitalizing its annual report to align directly with the strategic plan’s critical initiatives, allowing families and community members to track progress toward the district’s goals.

Evaluation and implementation of the strategic plan communications framework will continue throughout the 2025–2030 strategic planning cycle, ensuring the district maintains transparency and engagement as it works toward achieving its long-term goals.

Through this campaign, the Richmond County School System successfully transformed its strategic plan into a shared communications framework that strengthens transparency, aligns messaging across schools, and reinforces the district’s mission of Empowering Every Learner Every Day.

Supporting Materials

[RCSS Homepage](#)



ABOUT US

Mission & Philosophy

Mission: Empowering Every Learner, Every Day.

Vision: To prepare every student to thrive, adapt, and lead in an ever-changing world.

Beliefs

- Success is attainable for everyone.
- All students deserve a quality educational experience.
- Education is a shared responsibility.
- Transparency is a foundation of trust.
- Safety for all is a priority.



2025-2030 STRATEGIC PLAN

Contact Us!

Video Analytics



As the new school year begins, we're also launching a new direction for our district. In this video, Interim Superintendent Dr. Malinda Cobb shares the mission, vision, and belief statements that will guide our work over the next five years, along with our four strategic priorities: Student Achievement

Facebook

Overview

Views	Reach	Interactions	Watch time	Follows
7,904	5,061	72	86,707,570	

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[Instagram](#)

Overview

Views ⓘ

5,141

Reach ⓘ

2,243

Interactions ⓘ

84

Watch time ⓘ

8h 20m

Follows ⓘ

0

[LinkedIn](#)

Video performance ⓘ

627

Video Views

5h 0m 12s

Watch time

28s

Average watch time

[YouTube](#)

This video has gotten 147 views since it was published

Views

147 ✓

About the same as usual

Watch time (hours)

4.1 ✓

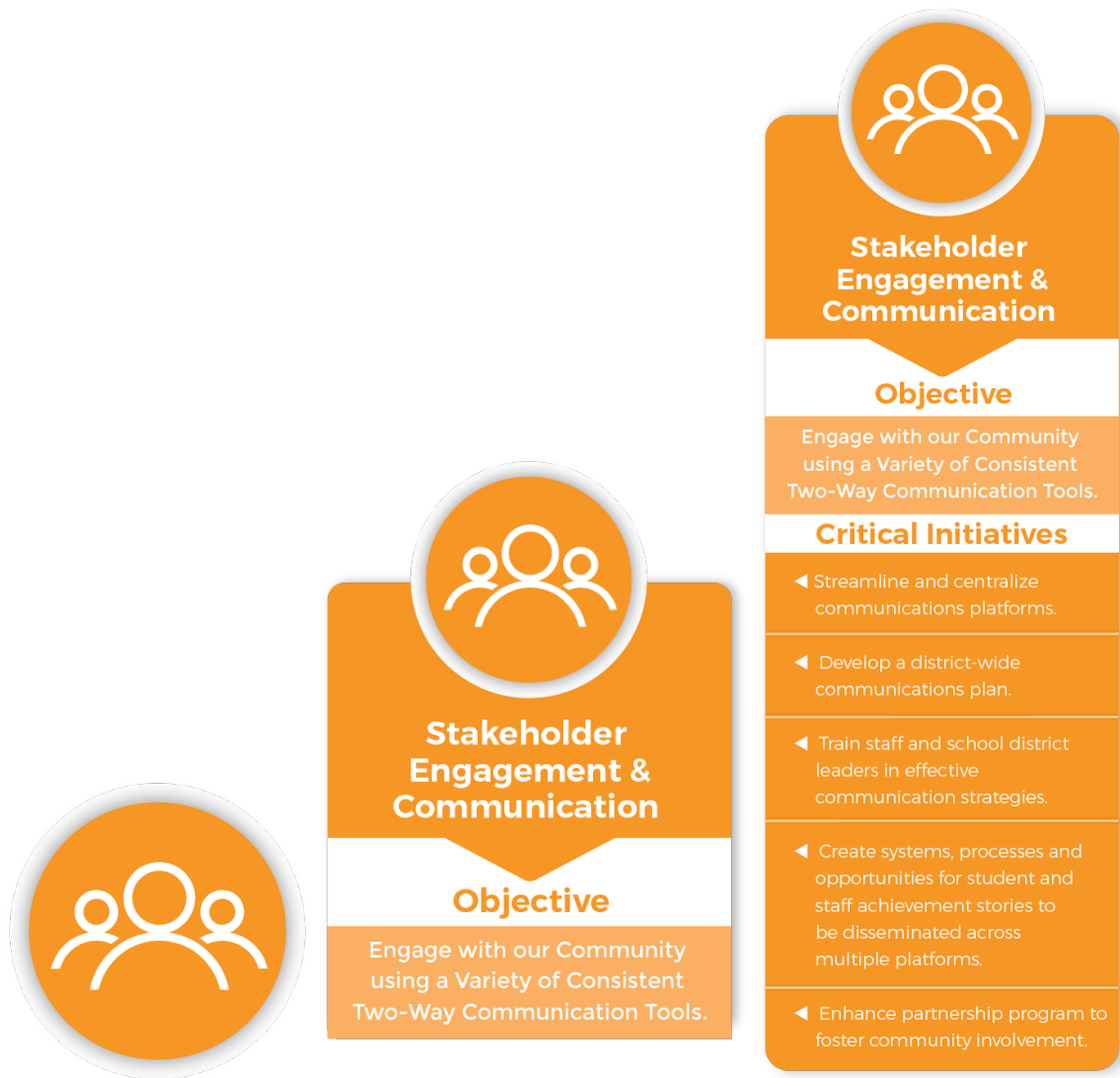
About the same as usual

Subscribers

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More than a dozen graphic elements were created for our PowerPoint template that break down our strategy map.



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Mission/Vision Banner



Mission Statement:

Empowering Every Learner Every Day.

Vision Statement:

To prepare every student to thrive, adapt, and lead in an ever-changing world.

Belief Statements:

- Success is attainable for everyone.
- All students deserve a quality educational experience.
- Education is a shared responsibility.
- Transparency is a foundation of trust.
- Safety for all is a priority.

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