



Good afternoon Chairman Edwards, Vice Chair Brunke, members of the School Board, and Dr. Magula. Dr. Lisa Banicky, director of Innovation and Strategic Planning, and I are here to provide you with our proposal for moving forward in the strategic planning process.

Purpose

- Review the planning context
 - State and local requirements
 - Development of *Compass to 2015*
 - Current Planning Context
- Identify *guiding principles* underpinning the planning process
- Propose a *planning process* that actively engages students, staff, and community members
- Clearly articulate the *timeline* for the planning process

I would like to start by placing this proposal in context by briefly reviewing the state and local requirements associated with the development of a strategic plan, the process that was used to develop our current plan, *Compass to 2015*, and highlight important factors that we believe will have an impact on the planning process.

After setting the context, I will turn the presentation over to Dr. Banicky who will share the *guiding principles* that will direct the work involved in the *planning process* and will also describe how we plan to engage a wide variety of stakeholders in this process. Finally, she will also present the tentative *timeline* for the planning process for your review.

State and Local Requirements

Compass to 2015 designed as a six-year plan.

Standards of Quality VA Code 22.1-253.13:6B

- Adopt a divisionwide comprehensive, unified, long-range plan developed with staff and community involvement. 2014-2015
- Review the plan biennially and adopt any necessary revisions.
- Prior to adoption of plan or revisions, provide opportunity for inspection and at least one public hearing to solicit public comment.
- Consider schools' plans for continuous improvement in the development of the divisionwide comprehensive plan.

School Board of Virginia Beach Policy 7-26

- Ad Hoc Strategic Plan Committee activated one year prior to the end of the cycle of the long-range plan required by VDOE. 2013-2014
- Committee as a mechanism for gathering input and reviewing division data.
- Committee members appointed by the School Board upon recommendation of the Superintendent.
- Superintendent designates a staff member to function as administrative facilitator for the committee.

As you are already aware, the requirement to develop a divisionwide comprehensive plan is stated in Virginia's Standards of Quality or SOQ as part of Standard 6. This standard, titled Planning and Public Involvement, requires divisions to adopt a unified, long-range plan developed with staff and community involvement. Prior to 2005, the SOQ specified that the plan was to be for a six-year period. Changes to the SOQ after 2005 replaced the phrase six-year with the word comprehensive. According to the SOQ, local school boards are required to review the plan every two years and adopt any necessary revisions. Prior to adopting a divisionwide plan or making revisions to the plan, the SOQ requires school divisions to provide the community with an opportunity for inspection and at least one public hearing to solicit comments. Standard 6 also directs local school divisions to consider each school's plan

when developing the divisionwide comprehensive plan. **(Click)**

At the local level, School Board Policy 7-26 provides additional direction for developing the division's strategic plan. Our policy requires the activation of an Ad Hoc Steering committee one year prior to the end of the division's strategic plan. The committee works to gather input and review division data. The committee members are appointed by the School Board based on the recommendation of the Superintendent. The Superintendent also designates a staff member to serve as an administrative facilitator to the committee. **(Click)**

Our current strategic plan was designed as a six-year plan. If we follow the same process for the next strategic plan, **(Click)** this means that the Ad Hoc committee would need to be activated during the 2013-2014 school year **(Click)** with the task of presenting a plan for approval during the 2014-2015 school year. The plan adopted in 2014-2015 would take effect during the 2015-2016 school year. **(Click)**



Compass to 2015 was a direct result of the School Board’s Program of Work from the 2007-2008 school year. The goal was to develop a new strategic plan that would guide our school division from 2009-2015. Stakeholder participation in the development of the plan was a top priority.

As part of the planning process, **(Click)** a Core Management Team made up of 13 cabinet members and central office departmental contacts was created specifically for the purpose of **(Click)** developing and implementing strategies to engage our stakeholders and elicit input. The major strategies used to gather input included a forum on Future trends. The forum was open to the public and addressed potential trends impacting education including globalization, demographics, technology, changing values and motivating the new 21st century learner. A series of 11 focus groups was also conducted and involved parents, graduates, dropouts, current students, teachers, school administrators, business and community leaders as well as members of the general public. The findings from the future trends forum and the focus groups formed the basis of a Town Hall meeting sponsored by VBCPS. Facilitated discussions gave citizens another opportunity to weigh in on what the school division should offer its 21st century learners. At the town hall meeting attendees prioritized areas of focus for the strategic plan. **(Click)** The Core Management Team also identified relevant school division performance data and best practices. Their work was all about setting the stage for the work of the Ad Hoc Steering committee. The Core management team completed most of their work between

December and February of the planning year. **(Click)**

The Ad Hoc Steering Committee included 31 members representing students, teachers, parents, members of the business and military community, as well as representatives of higher education, three School Board members, and the Superintendent. The committee was tasked with examining the Vision and Mission of VBCPS, reviewing community input and future trends, and identifying gaps and strategic priorities. The Ad Hoc Steering Committee provided a draft of the plan to the School Board at the Board's annual summer retreat in July of 2008.

Development of *Compass to 2015*

- Shared for approval in September 2008
- Public Comment September 2008
- Adopted October 2008
- Dynamic, user-friendly document
- Implemented over time



The final draft of the plan was shared for approval in September of 2008, public comment on the draft plan was solicited at an open mic event at Tallwood High School, and the plan was adopted in October of 2008. The result of the planning process was a concise, easy-to-read document that served as a basis for identifying key strategies, implemented over time.

Current Planning Context

What Has Not Changed

- Commitment to stakeholder participation
- Belief that the process is as important as the product
- Importance of prioritization
- Unanticipated state and federal mandates
- Guiding questions:
 - Where are we now?
 - Where do we want to go?
 - How do we get there?

What Has Changed

- Starting Point
 - *Compass to 2015* “Brand” Recognition
 - Continued support for current direction
- Superintendent vacancy
- Use of social media

We now find ourselves in a position to revisit our strategic plan, and although experts in many fields will tell you that the rate of change in the world today is increasing, not in a linear manner, but exponentially. We know that there are some things that have not changed since we first began embarking on our journey under *Compass to 2015*. **(Click)**

We continue to be committed to stakeholder participation in the process and a belief that the process is as important as the product. We also know that meaningful action will require strategically setting priorities to maximize available resources without overburdening staff and schools. Realistically, we also know to expect unanticipated state and federal mandates. Finally, the guiding questions that were used to develop *Compass to 2015* are the same questions that will guide the

next planning cycle. **(Click)**

But some things have changed. **(Click)** The biggest change is our starting point. Where we are now is different from where we were prior to *Compass to 2015*. We have a strategic plan with “brand” recognition. If you were to have asked the community about the strategic plan in place prior to *Compass to 2015*, I wonder how many people would have been familiar with it. In the spring of 2011, as part of our annual climate survey, we asked parents how familiar they were with *Compass to 2015*, and nearly half of the parents responding to the survey indicated that they were somewhat or well aware of it. When we asked the same question in the spring of 2013, nearly 60% of the parents responding to the survey answered in the same way. But more important than brand recognition is the continued support of the strategic plan. Knowing that the planning cycle was fast approaching, we have taken several opportunities over the last few months to seek preliminary input into the next strategic plan. The first was at the annual School Board retreat in July. When we asked you about the next strategic plan we heard two messages: 1) that you think we are on the right track BUT 2) you wanted to hear from the community. As part of the annual Administrators’ Conference this past August, we also offered roundtable sessions focused on the strategic plan. One hundred administrators and selected teachers participated in the roundtable sessions. The discussions that resulted from the roundtable sessions demonstrated a continued support for the goal, student outcomes, and strategic objectives of *Compass to 2015*. Many participants expressed the belief that we had made progress as a division but that there was more to be done to realize the full potential of our current strategic plan. The issues of brand

recognition and continued support for *Compass to 2015* also emerged during the Superintendent search process conducted by Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates.

Another huge change is that we are currently seeking a new leader for our school division. Dr. Merrill's vision for an uncompromising commitment to 21st century skills and moving the division beyond the SOLs played an important role in *Compass to 2015*. However, it is important to note two things: 1) The plan was created by a committee of community representatives based on widespread community input and 2) as Dr. Magula noted in her opening remarks at our annual Administrators' Conference, if it is the right thing to do for our students, it shouldn't matter who is in the position.

As a final point, it is important to recognize that we have a powerful tool available to us this time around in the form of social media. We expect to leverage this tool to its fullest extent during the next strategic planning cycle. At this point I will turn the presentation over to Dr. Banicky.

Guiding Principles

The planning process will ...

- Place a premium on stakeholder input and participation.
- Establish a shared understanding of the future direction of the school division.
- Result in a concise six-year framework for identifying priorities and making decisions.

**Our Pledge: We are not checking a box,
we are setting a course for student success.**

Thank you Dr. Robertson. With this context in mind, we have developed a strategic planning process that will be guided by the principles you see listed on this slide.

By engaging in a broadly inclusive planning process that seeks to maximize stakeholder involvement, we believe that we will successfully establish a shared understanding of what VBCPS will be all about as we move forward beyond 2015. In the end, our goal is to have a six-year framework that is both a concise and flexible tool for identifying priorities and making decisions. This framework will act as our alignment gauge as we develop strategies that shape our plan of work in the coming years.

On the slides that follow, we will discuss who will be involved in the planning process and how we will seek to involve our stakeholders and wider community in the process.

Strategic Planning Process

Strategic
Planning
Work
Groups

- **Core Management Team**
 - Develop communication and outreach plan
 - Plan participation events
 - Prepare background information for Ad Hoc Steering Committee
- **Ad Hoc Steering Committee**
 - Review community input, data, educational trends
 - Identify priorities and draft strategic framework

The management plan for the process is similar to the one used to create *Compass to 2015*. A small Core Management Team will be assembled to develop a plan for reaching out and engaging our community in events designed to gather input. This team will also be responsible for preparing background information such as division performance trends, future educational trends, relevant research and literature to aide the work of the second group, the Ad Hoc Steering Committee. **(Click)**

The Ad Hoc Steering Committee will again be composed of students, teachers, parents, members of the business and military community, as well as representatives of higher education, the School Board, and the Interim Superintendent. The members will be appointed by the School Board based on recommendations from the Interim Superintendent. This group will work to review community input and the background information provided by the Core Management Team. The goal of this group is to identify priorities and draft a strategic framework that will guide our division in the coming years. The use of the word framework is purposeful. There is an interesting debate that exists between the benefits of strategic planning versus strategic thinking. Strategic planning has the benefit of a longer history and an easily recognized, linear process for developing a plan. But some authors would argue that this process assumes either little contextual change over time or a predictable future, neither of which seem tenable given the accelerated rate of change we are observing in the world around us. Strategic thinking recognizes that successful strategies often emerge from messy processes that involve intuition, creativity, and most of all, learning (Mintzberg, 1994). **We** would argue that *Compass to 2015* was really a framework more than a plan because the goal, outcomes,

and strategic objectives did not change over time, but the key strategies were subject to change based on our learnings over time. In essence, we are advocating for the continued flexibility evident in *Compass to 2015*.

Strategic Planning Process

Opportunities
for
Participation

- Stakeholder Focus Groups
 - VBCPS Students (Current and Recent Graduates)
 - VBCPS Staff (Teachers, Administrators, Classified)
 - Parents
 - Business/Higher Ed./Community Leaders
 - Community Members without School-Aged Children
- Stakeholder Meetings
- Virtual “Town Hall” Event
- Stakeholder Survey
- Public Comment and *Compass to 2015* Celebratory Event

To aid the work of the Ad Hoc Steering Committee, there are two major tasks that must be accomplished during the Strategic Planning process, the first is to gather stakeholder and community input and the second is to prioritize the findings to emerge from the input process. To develop the strategic framework, we plan to gather input in a variety of ways. **(Click)**

The first is by holding focus groups with the key stakeholder groups listed on this slide. This was an invaluable source of information during the last planning cycle and one that we think should be repeated.

The second is stakeholder meetings. By stakeholder meetings we mean meetings of pre-existing groups like Teacher Assembly, PTA, and a variety of other community and business groups. **(Click)**

We are also recommending the use of a virtual town hall to gather input from the wider community. There are several options we could pursue including hosting the event on VBSchools.com as well as partnering with the City of Virginia Beach to use their Virtual Town Hall tool on their website.

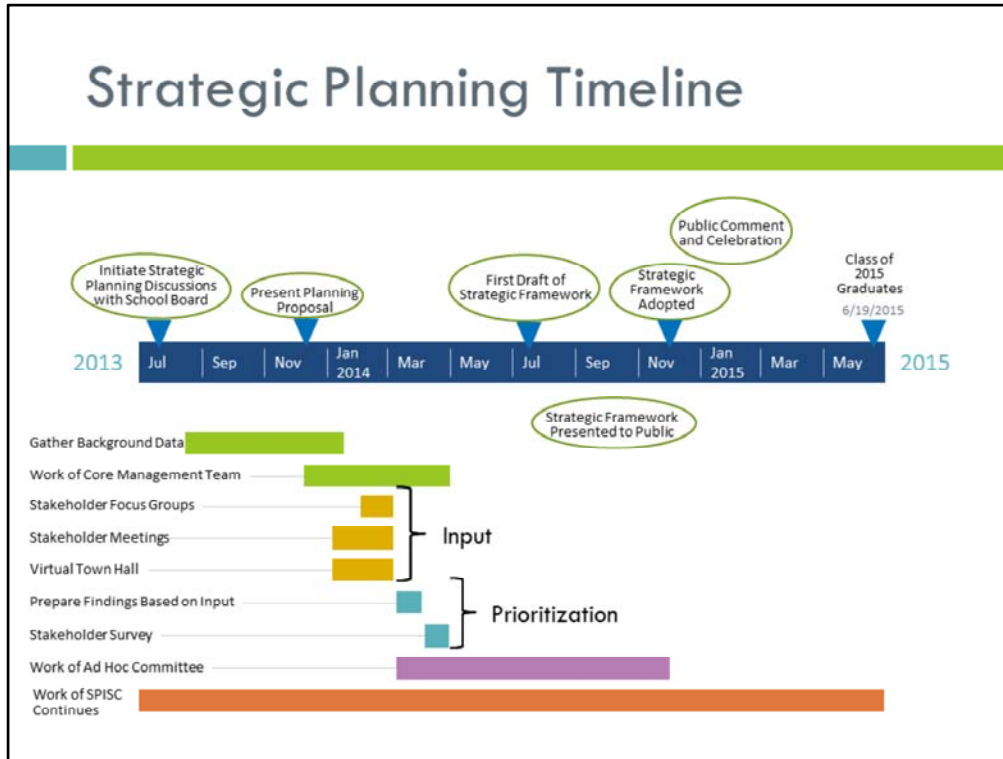
Stakeholder focus groups and meetings, as well as a virtual town hall (combined with our in-house review of trends, review of performance data) are all sources of input.

After we have gathered input from these sources, it will be important to engage in a process for prioritizing the “findings” to emerge. **(Click)** We are proposing a survey as the second stage of the process. We plan to clearly communicate the timeline of all participation opportunities and their purpose (e.g., input or prioritization) throughout the

planning process.

Another opportunity for participation in the planning process will come when it is time to receive public comment on the draft framework. During the last planning cycle, this was accomplished by holding an open mic event at a local high school. **(Click)** This time we would like to propose a dual purpose event. One purpose of the event would be to receive public comment on the framework, but the second purpose would be to provide an avenue for recognizing and celebrating the work that students, staff, and schools have invested in *Compass to 2015*.

All of the items listed on this slide represent avenues for participation. With the exception of the focus groups, the opportunities are open to all.



We are proposing the following timeline for the strategic planning process. The blue triangles and the flags represent the major milestones throughout the planning process **(Click)** including the work we started this past summer when we first began discussions with the School Board about the strategic planning cycle **(Click)** as well as today’s workshop. Our plan is to have a first draft of the framework **(Click)** by the time of the School Board retreat **(Click)** and formally present the framework to the public in October of 2014. **(Click)** We would plan to have the public comment coincide with a celebratory community event tentatively planned for November of 2014 **(Click)** with the goal of adopting the framework in December of 2014. **(Click)**

The key tasks associated with the planning process appear beneath the timeline. The green bars represent the gathering of background information and work of the Core Management Team to set the stage for the input process represented by the light orange bars and the prioritization process represented by the light blue bars. You can see that the work of the Ad Hoc Steering Committee is tentatively scheduled to begin in earnest in the spring of next year and extend over the summer and into the fall of 2014 with the hope that a new superintendent would be in place no later than July of 2014. **(Click)** All of these tasks are going on as the Strategic Planning Implementation Steering Committee (SPISC) continues their work to support *Compass to 2015*.

Next Steps

- Questions/suggestions for the proposed planning process

On behalf of the Department of Planning, Innovation, and Accountability and the communities you represent, we thank you for your time and consideration this evening. At this point we would like to open it up for questions or suggestions about the proposed process.