

RIVER TRAILS SCHOOL DISTRICT #26

Strategic Plan 2026-2031

Goal #1	Goal #2	Goal #3
Maximize the Potential of All Learners We will empower all learners to be life-ready by aligning our curriculum for consistency, modernizing support services for equity, and investing in comprehensive professional learning to ensure our educators meet the needs of every student.	Foster a Districtwide Culture of Belonging We will cultivate a districtwide culture of belonging by deepening "Heart Ready" practices, build trust through proactive outreach, and foster collaborative partnerships to ensure students, staff, families, and the community feel valued, connected, and supported.	Ensure Long-Term District Sustainability We will ensure long-term district sustainability through transparent financial stewardship, the modernization of our facilities, and a steadfast commitment to recruiting and retaining a premier, high-quality workforce.
Strategy 1A Enhance and align a modern, universal curriculum for all learners.	Strategy 2A Expand heart ready practices to ensure consistency in support and reduce stressors.	Strategy 3A Strengthen operations, systems, and resources to sustain a high-quality workforce.
Strategy 1B Provide a responsive continuum of services and support systems.	Strategy 2B Streamline communications and public relations to increase trust and transparency.	Strategy 3B Maintain safe, resource-efficient, and optimal physical environments.
Strategy 1C Establish an aligned and comprehensive professional learning system.	Strategy 2C Develop intentional feedback structures to ensure stakeholders feel valued and heard.	Strategy 3C Ensure transparency and the strategic use of all financial resources.

KEY ACTIVITIES

STRATEGY DESCRIPTIONS

STRATEGY 1A: Enhance and Align a Modern and Transparent Curriculum We will empower all learners to be life-ready by cultivating a modern, transparent curriculum that balances academic core standards with engaging extracurricular and encore programming. By auditing core subjects and encore programming, we will ensure that priority standards—from literacy and math to SEL and the arts—are vertically aligned and consistently assessed through a continuous loop of planning and adjusting.	STRATEGY 2A: Expand Heart Ready Practices We will expand the consistent implementation of "Heart Ready" practices district-wide to ensure equitable support for students and staff. By monitoring and measuring the impact of these practices, we will reduce academic and environmental stressors while fostering a culture of care and responsive learning environments where all stakeholders are ready to thrive.	STRATEGY 3A: Optimize Operational Infrastructure and Workforce Support We will optimize our operational infrastructure, systems, and resource allocation to create a high-functioning environment. This work will empower and sustain a premier professional workforce by ensuring that internal systems provide the necessary support for staff to perform at the highest level.
STRATEGY 1B: Provide a Responsive Continuum of Services We will provide a responsive continuum of services by establishing a rigorous program review cycle for all student support systems. By auditing and refining our delivery models, we will eliminate barriers to success, modernize learning opportunities, and ensure that enrichment and support services are both relevant and equitable for all learners.	STRATEGY 2B: Streamline Communications and Public Relations We will streamline communications and public relations to build trust through clarity, transparency, and accessibility. By optimizing digital platforms, embedding multimedia resources, and showcasing district achievements, we will strengthen community engagement and ensure that all families remain informed, connected, and valued.	STRATEGY 3B: Modernize and Maintain Physical Infrastructure We will modernize and maintain all physical infrastructure to ensure every facility provides a secure, desirable, and resource-efficient environment. By prioritizing facility health and safety, we will create physical spaces that optimally support student learning, staff productivity, and community pride.
STRATEGY 1C: Establish a Comprehensive Professional Learning System We will create a districtwide professional learning system that aligns professional development, coaching, and collaborative learning to instructional priorities. This system will support educators in designing rigorous curriculum, implementing inclusive practices, and strengthening behavior supports, thereby fostering collective efficacy and improved learning experiences for all students.	STRATEGY 2C: Develop Partnerships and Feedback Structures We will create intentional feedback structures to ensure every family, staff member, and student feels valued, heard, and represented. By strengthening onboarding, increasing student voice, and expanding two-way parent engagement, we will reinforce a sense of belonging and empower all stakeholders to actively participate in the life of the district.	STRATEGY 3C: Maximize Fiscal Impact and Transparency We will maximize the impact of every dollar through transparent financial reporting and data-driven budgeting. By aligning all fiscal resources with organizational priorities, we will ensure responsible stewardship of taxpayer funds while maintaining the highest quality of educational programming.

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Success Measures and Targets					
Learning Systems		Connections		Resources and Finance	
K-1 Growth (Tier 1): Fall-to-Spring student growth percentile on Aimsweb (ELA & Math).	Target: >65% (High Growth)	Student Belonging: Percent of students reporting a "Sense of Belonging" on Panorama.	Target: >70%	ISBE Financial Profile: Annual designation from the Illinois State Board of Education.	Target: 4.0 (Highest Designation)
K-1 Growth (Tier 2): Fall-to-Spring student growth percentile on Aimsweb (ELA & Math).	Target: >65% (High Growth)	Staff Belonging: Percent of teachers/staff reporting a "Sense of Belonging" on Panorama.	Target: >80%	Audit Integrity: Number of comments or findings in the annual independent clean audit reports.	Target: <1
K-1 Growth (Tier 3): Fall-to-Spring student growth percentile on Aimsweb (ELA & Math).	Target: >65% (High Growth)	Academic Personalism: 5Essentials performance score for "Academic Personalism."	Target: >59% (Strong)	Student Safety Perception: 5Essentials score reflecting how safe students feel in and around school buildings.	Target: >69% (Strong)
Grades 2-8 Growth: Percent of students meeting individual growth targets on MAP (ELA & Math).	Target: >70% (Exceptional Growth)	Student-Teacher Trust: 5Essentials performance score for "Student/Teacher Trust."	Target: >59% (Strong)	Staff Commitment & Culture: Scale score on the 5Essentials "School Commitment" metric.	Target: >59% (Strong)
State Proficiency: Percent of students in "Proficient" or "Exceeds" categories on IAR (ELA & Math).	Target: ELA 60% / Math 58%	Digital Engagement: Annual Smore newsletter views and link click volume on key focus areas.	Target: Stable annual views with a 3% YoY increase on key news links.	Professional Retention: Annual percentage of teachers retained within the district.	Target: 92%
Collaborative Culture: 5Essentials performance score for "Collaborative Teachers."	Target: >59 (Strong)	Public Relations & Print Communications: Direct-mail community newsletters and strategic press releases.	Target: 4 community mailings per year and 5 press releases per trimester, covering all major fiscal, facility, and student milestones.		