

Surry County Public Schools Listening and Learning Tour

Welcome to the comprehensive report on the district-wide listening and learning tour conducted by the superintendent of Surry County Public Schools. This initiative, completed on throughout Fall 2024, aimed to engage key stakeholders—including staff, families, students, leadership, and community members—in an open dialogue about the district's strengths, challenges, and future priorities. Through surveys, workshops, and direct feedback, we've gathered valuable insights to inform strategic decisions that align with the values, expectations, and diverse needs of our district community.





Tour Objectives and Methodology

Objectives

The primary goal was to engage stakeholders in open dialogue about the district's strengths, challenges, and future priorities. By gathering direct feedback, we aimed to inform strategic decisions that align with community values and needs.

Methodology

We conducted surveys tailored to each stakeholder group, focusing on key themes such as overall satisfaction, support for students, communication effectiveness, and vision for the district's future. Additionally, we incorporated insights from in-person workshops and exercises.

Survey Participants

- ***Staff:** 55 Staff Members
- ***Families:** 63 Family Members
- ***Students:** 137 SCHS Students
- ***Leadership:** 13 Instructional Leaders
- ***Community Members:** 13 Stakeholders
- ***All Operations:** Transportation, Food Service, Technology, Cust./Maintenance
- ***All School Staff:** Teachers, Paras, Counselors, Nurses, Office Staff
- * **All School Board & BOS Members**

The “Weed the Garden” activity revealed key findings in the areas of: GLOWS, GROWS, and GOT TO GO!

Report Structure



1

Executive Summary

Provides an overview of key findings and recommendations.

2

Methodology

Outlines the approach used to collect and analyze data.

3

Thematic Findings

Presents shared priorities across all groups and unique perspectives.

4

Stakeholder Group Findings

Delves into specific concerns and needs of each group.

5

Priority Recommendations

Offers actionable steps for the superintendent and district leaders.





Key Employee Findings: Strengths



Strong Peer Relationships

Stakeholders consistently highlighted the supportive peer relationships within the district, fostering a positive collaborative environment.



Dedicated Staff

The commitment and dedication of the district's staff were widely recognized as a significant strength across all stakeholder groups.



Community-Centered Culture

The district's focus on maintaining strong community ties and fostering a sense of belonging was appreciated by many stakeholders.



Staff Survey Insights

Strengths

Staff highlighted strong teamwork, peer support, and departmental expertise as major strengths. They value the collegial environment and relationships with school leadership.

Challenges

Key challenges include limited communication from district leadership, gaps in students' foundational skills, and a need for more transparent planning processes.

Priorities

Staff prioritize expanded extracurriculars, cleaner facilities, minimized instructional interruptions, and additional support for student achievement.

The #1 Priority for staff is COMPENSATION! SCPS is working towards ensuring all staff are on the correct salary scale.

BUDGET BIG ROCKS FY 25-26

3% Raise for ALL
Employees

Ensuring ALL Employees are
on the Correct Step

Absorbing Anticipated
Health Insurance Increase

Other priorities focus on:

Inflation adjustments, mental health support, enhanced security, a Public Relations Officer, additional vocational education classes, support for students at national competitions, re-establishing the fine arts program, building assessments (maintenance and upkeep), updated athletic uniforms

SCPS aims for excellence with 2025 goals

By Terry Harris Jan 10, 2025



Family Survey Insights



Family satisfaction levels range from "Neutral" to "Somewhat Satisfied," with concerns centered on academic quality and inclusivity. They emphasize the need for improved communication, especially regarding academic progress and school events.

Student Survey Insights

Satisfaction Levels

Student satisfaction varies, with positive experiences often related to social events and teacher relationships. Many desire more input on school policies and decisions.

Desired Changes

Key requests include longer lunch periods, flexible phone policies, increased funding for activities, and policies that better support student well-being.

***However ALL students felt that the teachers hold them accountable and care about their academic success!**

Support & Communication

Students report varying levels of support from staff and mixed effectiveness in school communication. They seek better updates on events and policy changes.



Leadership and Community Insights



Leadership Perspectives

Leaders value autonomy and a collaborative approach. They seek equitable treatment, clearer organizational structures, and a supportive environment for providing feedback.

Community Views

Leaders value autonomy and a collaborative approach. They seek equitable treatment, clearer organizational structures, and a supportive environment for providing feedback.

Superintendent's response

Weekly Memo Meetings

24/7 Access

High Visibility at School & Community Events

Ongoing Communication: WHRO, Media, BOS, Community



Key Findings: Challenges

Communication Gaps

Stakeholders expressed a need for improved communication and transparency across all levels of the district, particularly regarding policy changes and decision-making processes.

Student Support

There is a call for increased academic and social-emotional support for students, especially those with diverse learning needs or requiring special education services.

Engagement Opportunities

Many stakeholders, particularly students and community members, desire more inclusive and varied engagement opportunities to have their voices heard in district matters.





Priority 1: Enhance Communication and Transparency

1

Comprehensive Communication Plan

Develop a regular schedule for district-wide updates through newsletters, emails, and forums.

2

Regular Town Hall Meetings

Host quarterly town halls with superintendent and district leadership for direct engagement.

3

Enhanced Feedback Mechanisms

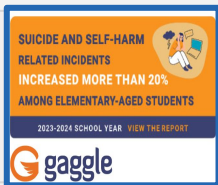
Implement regular surveys, focus groups, and structured sessions for each stakeholder group.





Priority 2: Foster Safe, Inclusive Learning Environments

1



Strengthen Anti-Bullying and SEL Programs

Partner with mental health professionals to enhance initiatives

(GATEWAY, GAGGLE, EAP, SCPS HEALTH INS)

2



Implement School Climate Assessments

Conduct annual surveys and focus groups to understand needs.

(SOUP/SALAD/W-SUPT., SEC. SURVEY, WALK-TALKS)

3



Increase Staff Training

Provide regular training on inclusive practices with a focus on SWD, Sense of Belonging, Student-Engagement, and Cultural Sensitivity. (ONGOING PD/PL, ACI, TIS)



Priority 3: Increase Academic and Social Support



Expand Tutoring Programs

Establish in-school and after-school tutoring to help students meet grade-level standards, focusing on reading, writing, and foundational skills.



Invest in SEL Resources

Increase access to mental health professionals and counselors, and consider introducing peer mentorship programs that support SEL development.



Support Diverse Learners

Ensure adequate funding for special education programs (inclusion practices) and full implementation of IEP accommodations. Offer professional development on differentiated instruction. Ensure qualified staff for ELLS.

Stakeholder Recommendations



1

Strengthen Communication

Implement regular, transparent updates on district initiatives and decision-making processes.

Weekly Principals/SUPT. Updates, Monthly Alerts/Dept. Newsletters, Quarterly Soup/Salad with SUPT. Comm./Faith Groups, APPTEGY APP., Redesign Website, Surveys, PR Champion

2

Foster Inclusive Environments

Create safe, supportive learning spaces that address diverse student needs and promote cultural sensitivity.

Gateway, GAGGLE App., Counselor's Corner Newsletter, PL/PD-Specially Designed Instruction, and Trauma Informed Schools training.
Aim High Initiative!

3

Expand Resources

Increase academic and SEL resources, focusing on equitable distribution and support for all students

Gateway-student focus groups on Vaping/Drug Usage, Program Inventory, Ongoing PD/PL for All staff.

4

Collaborative Leadership

Encourage practices that empower staff and incorporate diverse perspectives in decision-making.

Continue the 3L Process through "Weed the Garden Activities, Faculty Meeting Updates, and Stakeholder Surveys





Moving Forward: A Collaborative Approach

By addressing the priorities identified—from enhancing communication to fostering inclusive environments and increasing support resources—we can create a stronger, more responsive educational system.

The insights gathered from staff, students, families, leadership, and community members will guide our strategic planning and day-to-day operations. Together, we can build a district that truly serves the needs of all stakeholders, ensuring that every student has the opportunity to thrive.



WE ARE Building Excellence, One Student At A Time

**THANK YOU FOR A GREAT TAKE LOOK, LISTEN, &
LEARN TOUR!
QUESTIONS?**

