SAU 24 Strategic Plan

Spring/Summer 2026 Progress Report

SAU 24 Strategic Plan Steering Committee
Spring/Summer 2026 Report

The SAU 24 Strategic Plan Steering Committee convened on August 18, 2026, at New England College for its fourth meeting. Groups did a deep dive into the data and progress of related goals. They conducted a SWOT (strength, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) for each area and recommended a progress rating to the full committee for vote.

The Steering Committee's next gathering is planned for March 9, 2027.

Members of the committee who convened for this session include:

Jen Matzke, Ava Montgomery, Jackie Hinds, Chris Auger, Miles Green, Irene Gamache, Pat Corbett, Tom Weston, Zach Lawson, Matt Hammond, Kendall Haley, Diana Stupca, Jess Paquette, Andrew Sheard, Kieran Ban, Shane Brunini, Anna Chasse, Deb Morneau, Deb Greaves, Viviana Deoleo, Heather Salter, Jess Duval, Katie Cyr, Lindsay Benson, Ryan Renauld-Smith, Jon Barry, Chris Roy, Martha LeMahieu, Matt Colby, Jackie Coe

Priority 1: Enhance the Overall Student Experience

Goal 1: Portrait of an SAU 24 Learner (POL) Integration

Five-Year Goal: *Fully integrate the Portrait of an SAU 24 Learner into curriculum, instruction, school culture, and decision-making.*

Progress Toward Goal

During Fall and Winter 2025, SAU 24 made meaningful progress toward embedding the Portrait of a Learner across curriculum, instruction, school culture, and decision-making. A foundational step was building shared understanding among staff through a Common Day Workshop activity, reinforced by the NEC Embedded School Reform course, where 12 teachers built strategic plans for specific SAU 24 initiatives and deepened their understanding of both the change process and the strategic plan itself.

The POL Ad Hoc Committee carried this work forward by building a full K–12 implementation plan for 2026: a November 2025 all-staff workshop co-facilitated with the Leadership Team, grade-level implementation goals for 2025–26, a reworked rubric shaped by staff feedback, and a May staff feedback survey to guide next steps. Existing school structures were intentionally aligned to the POL framework as well — CWES connected morning meetings and Character Strong lessons to POL traits, while John Stark faculty linked Habits of Learning to the Portrait.

Building-level momentum was especially visible this spring. CWES tied its Spring Showcase explicitly to the POL, posting competencies on classroom doors and having students explain how their work demonstrated traits like problem-solving and creation. John Stark held its first-ever Coin Recognition ceremony, with a full ceremony schedule planned for every term in 2026–27. WMS continued its house program, which is directly tied to POL competencies, and HCS admin worked with middle school teams to make POL a deliberate part of the school's redesigned Middle School Experience.

Key Metrics (Target: May 2029)

- Each student (grades 3–12) will provide evidence of growth in each POL area through a portfolio: Knowledgeable Problem Solver and Creator, Effective Communicator, Respectful Collaborator
- A PK–12 progression will be developed and referenced in scope and sequence documents
- Regular reporting of POL competencies will appear on report cards

Needs Attention			Making Progress				On Track Toward Goal		
			4						

Key Accomplishments and Evidence of Impact

NEC Embedded School Reform Course

- 12 teachers built strategic plans for specific SAU 24 initiatives, deepening their understanding of the change process and the strategic plan.

POL Ad Hoc Committee

- Built a K–12 implementation plan for 2026, including a November 2025 all-staff workshop co-facilitated with the Leadership Team, grade-level implementation goals for 2025–26, a reworked rubric based on staff feedback, and a May staff feedback survey.

Building Thinking Classrooms Task Force

- Dedicated 10 hours to deepening staff understanding of Building Thinking Classrooms practices in grades 6–12.

Building-Level POL Connections

- CWES: Spring Showcase explicitly connected to the POL — competencies posted on classroom doors, with students presenting to parents on how their work demonstrated POL traits like problem-solving and creation.
- John Stark: Held its first-ever Coin Recognition ceremony at the end of 2025–26; a full ceremony schedule (one per term) is planned for 2026–27.
- WMS: Continued the house program, which is explicitly tied to POL competencies.
- HCS: Admin worked with middle school teams to make POL competencies a deliberate part of the redesigned HCS Middle School Experience.

Steering Committee Assessment (August 2026)

The Steering Committee rated this goal a 4, citing the strength of the POL rubric and existing building structures already highlighting POL, balanced against the lack of a clear path for reporting, progression, and portfolio implementation.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Buildings are using existing structures to highlight POL. The POL rubric has been created and shared with teachers through a representative process.	Lack of a clear path for implementing POL reporting, progression, and student portfolios.
Opportunities	**Threats**
Use the POL rubric to build a clearer pathway for students	Rated less urgent than other strategic priorities

Areas of Focus for 2026-2027

- SAU-wide framework (POL) implementation.
- Transition from habits of learning to POL.
- Curricular connections.

Goal 2: Student Empowerment and Voice

Five-Year Goal: *Foster a culture of student empowerment and ownership by increasing student voice and meaningful decision-making in their own individual educational journeys.*

Progress Toward Goal

During Fall and Winter 2025, SAU 24 worked to foster student empowerment and voice across multiple focus areas. The most significant early advancement came at the SAU Summer Leadership Meeting, where administrators explored the elements of student voice, assessed current practices using a common rubric, and drafted an SAU-wide plan. Student governance structures expanded considerably, with student councils operating at HCS, CWES, WMS, and John Stark and a student forum at JFES.

This spring, that governance work translated into real decision-making power. CWES launched its first-ever Student Council, which organized school events and directly shaped decisions on restorative practices content and the school's response to Panorama survey data. At HCS, "Restorative Circle" discussions engaged all staff and students in grades 3–7 around Panorama results, respect, and belonging, and what students value in the middle school experience; Upstander training was extended to grades 6–8; and student voice groups took on tangible projects, including re-opening a school store and expanding the HCS Buddy Program.

HCS also continued its "Pizza with the Principals" listening forums to keep student input flowing directly to administration. In parallel, the Restorative Practices Task Force finalized a multi-year implementation plan built with stakeholder feedback, which will be presented to Leadership in July 2026 ahead of a broader Fall 2026 rollout — work that reinforces both student voice and the district's wider culture and behavior goals.

Key Metrics

- By May 2029, 100% positive student response (grades 3–12) to school engagement questions on the annual Panorama Survey. Baseline (Spring 2024): JFES 39%, CWES 46%, HCS (3–5) 31%, HCS (6–8) 16%, WMS (4–5) 31%, WMS (6–8) 16%, JSRHS 18%
- In the 2027 YRBS Survey, John Stark students will remain below the state average for "do not believe that students help decide what happens in their school." Baseline (2023): 22.6% vs. 25.1% NH state average
- By May 2026, each school will have a student group focused on increasing student input in major school and SAU decisions. Baseline (2023–24): 2 student board members; JSRHS, WMS, and HCS student councils; JSRHS SALC

Needs Attention			Making Progress			On Track Toward Goal			
					6				

Key Accomplishments and Evidence of Impact

SAU-Wide Student Voice Planning

- Ran Upstander training for grades 6–8 in spring, with plans to expand scope and participants.
- Restorative Practices Task Force established a multi-year implementation plan; presents to Leadership in July 2026.

Much of the Spring/Summer 2026 student-voice work is embedded within the Restorative Practices initiative (see Goal 4: Whole Child).

Building-Level Student Voice

- CWES: Launched its first-ever Student Council, organizing school events and directly informing decisions on restorative practices content and the school's Panorama survey response.
- WMS: Continues to reinforce student leaders through its house program, primarily in upper grades.
- HCS: Held "Restorative Circle" discussions with all staff and students in grades 3–7 around Panorama results, focused on respect and belonging, and on what students value in the middle school experience. Student voice groups are re-opening a school store and expanding the HCS Buddy Program. Continued "Pizza with the Principals" listening forums with students.

Steering Committee Assessment (August 2026)

The Steering Committee rated this goal a 6, pointing to strong building-level structures such as student councils, House programs, and Restorative Circles, while flagging flat and uneven Panorama school-engagement data as a continuing area of concern.

Strengths	Weaknesses
CWES reached 53% school engagement on the Panorama survey. John Stark's Student Voice Committee meets with one student per advisor every two months. CWES has a dedicated Student Representative for wellness. Student councils, student leaders, and House programs are active across buildings, supported by Restorative Circles	Panorama survey lacks effective questions to measure student voice specifically. Spring school-engagement data remains low in several buildings: John Stark 13%, WMS grades 6–8 17%, HCS grades 6–8 10%, WMS grades 4–5 28%, HCS grades 3–5 35%, and JFES 33%. Overall engagement data has been flat.
Opportunities	**Threats**
Build on what is already working well at CWES around student engagement. Brainstorm additional data points beyond Panorama. Consider adding a Panorama question specific to student voice. Consider adding a Key Metric that all SAU 24 schools exceed the national norm in school engagement	Panorama does not currently focus well in this area. The YRBS is administered only every two years. Consider adding student board members at WMS and HCS.

Areas of Focus for 2026-2027

- Develop an SAU-wide student voice training plan.
- Increase student representation and decision-making (school governance).

Goal 3: Career Connected Learning

Five-Year Goal: *Establish flexible, relevant, and career-connected pathways, with consistent competency-based practices, to address the diverse needs of each student.*

Progress Toward Goal

Since the start of the 2025–26 school year, John Stark students have engaged in a wide range of career-connected experiences spanning STEM, trades, civic leadership, and outdoor industries — from the ARMI BioTrek ELO and STARBASE to Construction Career Day, the NH Auto Dealers' Career Day, and the Pipeline Project at Pat's Peak. The partnership with Transcend, a national nonprofit that has supported 300+ schools, entered its active phase in Fall 2025, with educators and admin piloting career-connected practices and using the LEAP survey to evaluate impact district-wide.

At the elementary and middle levels, career awareness has been building steadily through guest presentations, Practical Arts programming, and field experiences. This spring brought two standout building-level milestones: CWES held its first-ever College and Career Day, welcoming 14 community presenters so students could explore professions and ask questions directly, and WMS hosted a Science Night featuring a NASA presenter and a visit from NH judges and lawyers, deepening student exposure to professionals connected to current curriculum. HCS also started new career exploration activities for grades 7 & 8 and made career-connected learning a deliberate part of its redesigned Middle School Experience. Together with the CCL video created to define career-connected learning across the full SAU 24 continuum — from kindergarten play-based learning through high school pathways — these efforts are laying the groundwork for the comprehensive, K–12 Career Connected Learning plan the Transcend partnership is expected to produce.

Key Metrics (Target: May 2029)

- 100% of PK–12 students will respond affirmatively to a survey question about participating in yearly career-connected learning opportunities (Gallup Poll for JSRHS; in-house survey PK–12)
- Transition goals will be reached by 100% of students who are identified
- 100% of students complete a career-connected pathway from the program of studies

Needs Attention			Making Progress			On Track Toward Goal			
					6				

Key Accomplishments and Evidence of Impact

Transcend Collaboration

- Educators and admin partnered with Transcend through 2025–26 on Career-Connected Learning district-wide, piloting practices and using the LEAP survey to evaluate impact.

CCL Communications & Tools

- A dedicated CCL website and June and February CCL newsletters kept the community informed on career-connected learning.
- An ELO Rubric was developed to guide extended learning opportunities.
- The LEAP survey is being used to evaluate the impact of the Transcend partnership.
- Panorama's career-connected-learning question is now tracked to monitor progress.

Building-Level Career Connections

- CWES: Held its first College and Career Day, with 14 community presenters.
- WMS: Hosted a Science Night featuring a NASA presenter and a visit from NH judges and lawyers, increasing student exposure to professionals connected to current curriculum.
- HCS: Started career exploration activities for grades 7 & 8.

Steering Committee Assessment (August 2026)

The Steering Committee rated this goal a 6, noting energy behind new career-connected opportunities and the Transcend partnership's early momentum, tempered by ongoing retention challenges in CTE and engineering pathways and limited transition-plan evidence from special education and school counseling.

Strengths	Weaknesses
New and exciting career-connected opportunities are emerging district-wide. Active partnership with Transcend at JSRHS	Limited evidence from special education and school counselors documenting transition plans and pathways
Opportunities	**Threats**
Year two of CCL faculty work, including PLTW. Students-to-Students ELO programming	Retention challenges persist in CTE and engineering pathways

Areas of Focus for 2026-2027

- SAU-wide CCL plan development.
- School and community partnerships.

Goal 4: Whole Child

Five-Year Goal: *Implement a whole-child approach that values student wellness, social-emotional development, and safety, in addition to academic achievement.*

Progress Toward Goal

SAU 24 continued building a whole-child approach that integrates student wellness, social-emotional development, and safety alongside academics. Schools deepened consistent behavioral frameworks — HCS adopted “Hardworking Caring Safe” as shared language, CWES developed a school-wide behavior matrix, and elementary schools trained in Responsive Classroom with accompanying data collection. Relational supports also strengthened: WMS implemented a 3-tier counseling approach, CWES expanded its Eagle Center and counseling lunch groups, and JSRHS established an administrator advisory and monthly advisory planning committee.

This spring's work added real depth to those structures. At CWES, the MTSS-B team reviewed schoolwide behavior data and created a video shared at a Spring All-School Meeting to reteach behavioral expectations across the cafeteria, playground, hallways, and other common areas; the team also attended two NH state trainings and began building a tiered intervention inventory with clear entry/exit criteria, while planning a split Tier 1 / Tier 2-3 meeting structure for next year. CWES’s UDL team likewise continued building staff practice through whole-faculty meetings, and WMS rolled out small targeted-group SEL interventions, escalating to individual Tier 3 support when needed.

At the SAU level, the BTAM/MTSS-B reporting form was improved, and John Stark conducted Upstander response training with middle schoolers in May, with scripts still to be developed for 2026–27. John Stark students, through the Getting to Y program, also analyzed Youth Risk Behavior Survey data and presented findings to both the Coalition for Safety and Belonging and the John Stark School Board. HCS continued refining its MTSS-A and MTSS-B structures in alignment with SAU 24 Leadership work and delivered Responsive Classroom training to its middle school teachers, further strengthening whole-child supports district-wide.

Key Metrics (Target: May 2029)

- 100% positive student response (grades 3–12) to school climate questions on annual Panorama Survey. Baseline (Spring 2024): JFES 59%, CWES 63%, HCS (3–5) 45%, HCS (6–8) 30%, WMS (4–5) 44%, WMS (6–8) 34%, JSRHS 35%
- Chronic absenteeism will be decreased (target to be determined)
- Below the state average in school environment data points (in-school/out-of-school suspensions). Baseline (2023): JFES 0%/0%, CWES 0.4%/0%, HCS 2.6%/2.6%, WMS 7.98%/3.7%, JSRHS 2.11%/5.1%; State average 3.9%/4.5%



Key Accomplishments and Evidence of Impact

SAU-Wide Whole Child Work

- BTAM/MTSS-B integration: Improved the online behavioral threat reporting form.
- Upstander response training: Conducted with John Stark middle schoolers in May 2026 (scripts still to be developed for 2026–27).
- Coalition for Safety and Belonging - Held monthly meetings, a Getting to Y presentation, and a community game night in January 2026.

Restorative Practices Task Force

- Dedicated 10 hours to developing a multi-year plan for building awareness, support, structures, and systems, including a review of practices in other districts.

Data Development and Analysis

- Absentee and discipline data collection is in development to strengthen future reporting.
- YRBS data analysis: John Stark students, through Getting to Y, analyzed YRBS data and presented findings to the Coalition for Safety and Belonging (May 2026) and the John Stark School Board (June 10, 2026).

Building-Level Whole Child Work

- CWES MTSS-B: Created and shared a video at a Spring All-School Meeting reteaching behavioral expectations across school settings; split Tier 1/Tier 2-3 meeting structure planned for next year; team attended two NH state trainings and began a tiered intervention inventory. UDL team continued building staff practice through whole-faculty meetings.
- WMS: Implements small targeted-group SEL interventions (Character Strong–supported), stepping up to smaller-group/individual (Tier 3) support when needed.
- HCS: Redesigned the Middle School Experience. Delivered Responsive Classroom training for HCS middle school teachers. Continued refining MTSS-A and MTSS-B structures in alignment with SAU 24 Leadership work.

Steering Committee Assessment (August 2026)

The Steering Committee rated this goal a 5, recognizing that SAU 24 performs favorably on state behavioral benchmarks while noting the continued absence of a single, cohesive system for promoting student wellness, belonging, and safety.

Strengths	Weaknesses
SAU 24 is below the state average for at-risk student behaviors and above average for value-driven behaviors	Lack of a cohesive, districtwide system to promote and explore student wellness, belonging, and safety
Opportunities	**Threats**
Continued Restorative Practices implementation.	Inconsistency across buildings. Persistent programmatic silos.

Areas of Focus for 2026-2027

- MTSS foundation and data use.
- Safety focus.
- Discipline & problem-solving through Restorative Practices.

Priority 2: Strengthen Core Instruction

Goal 1: Improving Academic Achievement in Literacy and Math

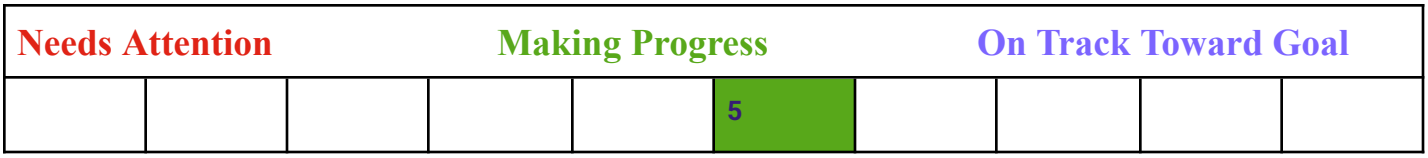
Five-Year Goal: *Increase academic achievement in literacy and math for all students.*

Progress Toward Goal

SAU 24's five-year goal targets every K–11 student achieving growth on iReady and/or PSAT, and reaching 10 points above state average on NH SAS and/or SAT by May 2029. This spring's work included continued staff training in foundational content and practices, continued program implementation training, student assessment preparation, data study, and data infrastructure development to support this goal. While some of this work was on-going from the fall of 2025 or part of a multi-year implementation plan (Wit and Wisdom implementation), much was also new including significant use of data at the building level in the spring of 2026 and back-end preparation for transition to Data Studio in 2026-2027.

Key Metrics (Target: May 2029)

- Every student (K–11) will achieve growth on iReady (K–8) for literacy and math, and every student (grades 10–11) will achieve growth on PSAT. Baseline (2023–24 iReady growth, reading/math): K 63%/66%, Grade 1 71%/58%, Grade 2 64%/43%, Grade 3 59%/37%, Grade 4 60%/45%, Grade 5 44%/25%, Grade 6 56%/48%, Grade 7 40%/29%, Grade 8 46%/48%
- Achieve 10 points above state average proficiency in literacy and math on NH SAS (grades 3–8). Baseline (2023): JFES 44%/47%, HCS 54%/39%, CWES 40%/43%, WMS 38%/21%; State 52%/42%
- Achieve at least 10 percentage points above state average proficiency on SAT (grade 11) for Evidence-Based Reading & Writing and Math. Baseline (2023): ERW—JS 59%, State 52%; Math—JS 21%, State 42%



Key Accomplishments and Evidence of Impact

Foundational Training

- Two members of the SAU 24 Leadership Team are trained as in-house OGAP (On-Going Assessment Project) trainers; 9 educators completed fractional training in Spring of 2026. 39 SAU 24 educators have now completed OGAP training in math content strands appropriate to their teaching assignments.
- Four SAU 24 staff have been trained as LETRS (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling) trainers, providing science-of-reading training and support across all buildings. Nine educators completed the full-year, 12 credit Volume 1 training for teachers in the spring of 2026; they will complete Volume 2 in 2026-2027 and be finished with this intensive training. Two educators completed Volume 2 in the spring of 2026. A new cohort will begin Volume 1 in the fall of 2026.
- Twelve educators participated in a A Building Thinking Classrooms Task Force in 2026-2027. They investigated the instructional strategies and approach to learning outlined in Peter Liljedahl's book "Building Thinking Classrooms," which is about instructional methods for engaged, thinking learners and is targeted mainly at disrupting instruction in math classrooms. The group worked to implement practices in classrooms across schools and across the 6-12 spectrum. The team developed a

"cheat sheet" for teachers to have and a proposal to expand practices across 6-12 classrooms. They presented their work to the SAU24 Leadership team in May for consideration in next-steps planning.

Program Implementation Training

- Staff across the K-8 strand participated in a Module Study protocol on March 10, 2026. They examined Focusing Question Arcs, Main Ideas, and worked collaboratively on planning for implementation of Module 4 for the first time.
- 6-8 educators continued to collaborate around the implementation of OpenSciEd curriculum from Carolina in classrooms across the middle level. Students presented about their learning to the Henniker and Weare school boards.

Ongoing Professional Growth

- The SAU 24 Leadership Team collaborated around a March 10 Workshop Day focused on instructional practices and content alignment PK-12. Presenters from "Facing History and Ourselves" presented workshops to 6-12 social studies teachers and 9-12 English teachers around instructional methods, media literacy, and content.
- SAU 24/NEC Embedded Master's Degree coursework continued with "School Reform, Leadership, and Curriculum Changes" (Coe/Potter) in the spring and "Action Research I: Planning" (Morrill) and "Teaching Math" (Kenney) in the summer. Fall 2026 will be "Action Research II: Implementation" (Morrill) and "Writing Across the Content Areas" (Corsetti-Colby/Crowe).
- Instructional Coaching cycles (many focused on literacy and math instruction) continued in classrooms across the PK-12 grade span. Building level leaders worked with coaches to review data on teacher participation in coaching activities (HCS), to implement instructional rounds using a Look-For model (HCS, CWES, WMS, JSRHS), and collaborated around shared coaching goals for 2026-2027.
- OGAP Training - 9 educators completed fractional-strand training in Spring 2026; 39 SAU 24 educators have now completed OGAP training in math content strands appropriate to their teaching assignments.

Preparing Students for Assessments

- Staff evaluate and use NH SAS data to identify areas requiring additional instructional support
- Staff trained in annual Assessment Proctor training
- Grade 3 students at CWES and HCS completed multi-session training covering the NH SAS interface, tools, strategies, and a practice test. Grade 3 students at CWES worked on typing accuracy and speed during STEM course
- Students across grades 3–8 use goal-setting sheets and practiced with test items

Using Data to Inform Instruction

- NH SAS four-year longitudinal data used to track trends; Assistant Superintendent and Principals collaborate to share "Our Data Story" with school boards across SAU 24
- K–8 teams used student diagnostic data and local assessments to develop groups and design instruction during WIN
- Building Leadership Teams and SAU 24 Instructional Coaches collect classroom data using the "Look For" tool to identify instructional strengths and growth opportunities
- CWES engaged in Team Data Dives, Student Data Chats, and Addressing Learning Gaps initiatives. Used the iReady Data Diagnostic Guide three times across each team/grade level; WIN instructional groups were a direct outcome of that work.

- HCS devoted the February Early Release day to data exploration including Look-For data, Responsive Classroom Site Visit data, teacher reflection data, and iReady Winter Diagnostic data to identify spring next steps
- John Stark: Held a SAT data dive with coaches and admin in March 2026
- All schools engaged faculty and staff in review of student engagement data from the annual Panorama Student Survey during an Early Dismissal workshop in May.

A Note about Assessment Participation - Achievement reporting will continue to lag behind actual performance due to participation issues. Federal accountability requirements result in negative performance indicators for non-participation of required students. The established participation rate is 95% and is designed to prevent districts from not testing students who may perform poorly and thereby inflating their scores. Our issue will be the opposite, the number of students that were opted out of testing will negatively impact our scoring. Effectively, our reported achievement data is calculated by adding the scores for all students who tested and dividing that by either the actual number of students who tested or the number that represents 95%. Our participation this spring was as follows:

Grade Levels: Test	Henniker		Weare		John Stark	
Grade 3-8: Reading, Writing	219/242	90.4%	512/521	98.2%	NA	
Grade 3-8: Math	230/242	95.0%	513/521	98.4%	NA	
Grade 5: Science	46/48	95.8%	86/87	98.8%	NA	
Grade 8: Science	35/37	94.5%	74/77	96.1%	NA	
HS Yr 3: School Day SAT	NA		NA		153/176	86.9%
HS Yr 3: School Day Science	NA		NA		129/176	73.3%

Steering Committee Assessment (August 2026)

The Steering Committee held this goal at a 5 (was 5, recommended 5), pointing to strong curricular consistency and the Writing Progressions work as real strengths, while identifying a need for stronger PSAT benchmarking and more evidence that instructional tools are driving student performance.

Strengths	Weaknesses
The Writing Progressions Task Force is building consistency across grade levels. Curriculum is consistent across SAU 24.	Need for more PSAT benchmarks and connection to instruction. Need for more focus on individual competencies, rather than overall grades, in high
Opportunities	**Threats**
More enrichment and growth opportunities so students already at grade level do not plateau.	Lack of data on whether instructional tools are improving student performance. Overuse or overreliance on technology.

Areas of Focus for 2026-2027

- Teacher Training and Coaching.
- Data Use to Improve Student Outcomes.

Goal 2: Ensure That Tier One Instruction Meets the Diverse Needs of All Students

Five-Year Goal: *Ensure that Tier One instruction meets the diverse needs of all students.*

Progress Toward Goal

This goal centers on aligning core instruction PK–12 and building a consistent, SAU-wide framework for observing and strengthening teaching practice. A cross-district team developed writing progressions to establish shared expectations across grade levels, a 6–8 Science Implementation Team revised course competencies and learning targets to align to new instructional materials, and a Curriculum Collaboration Day in March engaged educators in defining shared instructional commitments.

The centerpiece of this goal, the “Look Fors” observation framework, was finalized this year, giving coaches and building leaders a consistent framework to use to evaluate instructional practices. The framework is now getting real use at the building level: HCS connected “Look For” data to active learning and student engagement at a March faculty meeting, WMS ran staff meetings that grounded best practices in teachers’ own implementation experience, and CWES’s UDL team used whole-faculty sessions to help teachers identify their own growth areas. Together, these reflect a shift from building a tool to actively using implementing a framework to shape professional development.

Key Metrics (Target: May 2029)

- Using a “Look For” model of data collection, demonstrate evidence of consistent use of SAU 24 Instructional Practices (see rubric for level descriptions)
- Using a “Look For” model of data collection, demonstrate evidence of consistent use of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) practices
- Each K–12 educator will be trained in at least one core SAU program (e.g., LETRS, OGAP, Responsive Classroom)

Needs Attention			Making Progress			On Track Toward Goal			
						6			

Key Accomplishments and Evidence of Impact

Curriculum Development

- Educators from across the PK-12 system continued the work of the Structured Literacy team through this new skill-based Writing Progressions Task Force. The team pulled the information from the Wit and Wisdom program, the Common Core Standards, and work from other districts related to expectations for teaching writing and grammar, usage, and mechanics. The group's final work products include a K-12 writing progression and a drafted implementation plan for 2026-2027. The group read a book called “Writing for Understanding” and have prepared progression documents for all K-12 core teachers.
- SAU 24 Board formally adopted local standards (Updated ED306 Standards)
- The Assistant Superintendent collaborated with middle school ELA teachers from WMS and HCS to develop an implementation plan for Wit & Wisdom Module 4.

- JSRHS English educators worked through curriculum alignment and storyline development for high school English courses.
- Summer Curriculum Development/Pacing/Planning: Assistant Superintendent and Instructional Coaches supported collaborative summer curriculum development work across PK-12 content areas with a blended-learning and work approach. Teams worked on curriculum development and planning from phonics to physics with curriculum guides, unit maps, essential questions, and pacing guides prepared for implementation in 2026-2027. This work included two half-day workshops (June and August) and a mid-summer check-in with each project team via Meets.

"Look Fors" Tool and Data

- Coaches and building leadership teams used a "look for" tool and the resulting data to design targeted professional development for staff.
- CWES: UDL team continued building staff practice through whole-faculty meetings, helping teachers identify individual focus areas for growing their UDL implementation.

Training

- Two members of the SAU 24 Leadership Team are trained as in-house OGAP (On-Going Assessment Project) trainers; 9 educators completed fractional training in Spring of 2026. 39 SAU 24 educators have now completed OGAP training in math content strands appropriate to their teaching assignments.
- Four SAU 24 staff have been trained as LETRS (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling) trainers, providing science-of-reading training and support across all buildings. Nine educators completed the full-year, 12 credit Volume 1 training for teachers in the spring of 2026; they will complete Volume 2 in 2026-2027 and be finished with this intensive training. Two educators completed Volume 2 in the spring of 2026. A new cohort will begin Volume 1 in the fall of 2026.

Steering Committee Assessment (August 2026)

The Steering Committee held this goal at a 6, with one member noting the work "feels and looks great" and expressing excitement to see data confirm the progress and improvement already visible in classrooms.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Strong commitment to OGAP training across leadership, special education, and classroom teachers. Consistent curriculum and assessment tools districtwide. Strong cohort data and tracking to inform instruction.	Lack of tracking and analysis of individual student data to inform instruction
Opportunities	**Threats**
The Writing Progressions Task Force will help identify writing-skill progression through a scope and sequence available to teachers. Provide teachers support and training on SAS reports to inform instruction.	Lack of staffing and resources to support the diverse needs of every student. Over-reliance on technology to differentiate instruction.

As data and consistent instruction show progress, additional curriculum shifts and opportunities can be explored	

Areas of Focus for 2026-2027

- Instructional alignment and coherence.
- High Leverage Instructional Practices and UDL Training.

Goal 3: Develop and Maintain an Effective MTSS Framework

Five-Year Goal: *Develop and maintain an effective MTSS framework that addresses academic, behavioral, and SEL needs of students.*

Progress Toward Goal

This goal aims to develop a Multi-Tiered System of Supports addressing academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs, with five-year targets including maintaining recommended tiered intervention percentages (80% Tier 1, 15% Tier 2, 5% Tier 3) and getting 80% of students to grade level on iReady and PSAT by 2029. Work this year focused on laying Tier 1 groundwork: teams began developing processes for reviewing data and delivering supports within WIN blocks, establishing goal-setting practices tied to student data, and building teacher guides for using online instructional tools effectively. Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention development remains in early stages, with action steps identified but detailed implementation still ahead.

Foundational work was a focus area of the Core Team (Principals and SAU Administrators) and continued at the SAU 24 Leadership Team levels. Both worked through evaluation of MTSS Framework guiding materials and professional development around the nested nature of multi-tiered systems of support. At the leadership level and in buildings, teams dug into structures and systems for MTSS work and began to thoughtfully document current practices and to flesh out next steps plans. In each school a team examined current practices and worked to refine practices and procedures for 2026-2027 implementation.

Key Metrics

- By the 2027–28 academic year, maintain the recommended tiered intervention percentages of 80% within Tier 1, 15% within Tier 2, and 5% within Tier 3 in each school (consistent tracking measure to be identified)
- By 2029, the percentage of special education students receiving specially designed instruction will be at or below the state average. Baseline (2023): State 19.1%, Henniker 22.3%, John Stark 13.1%, Stoddard 15.5%, Weare 25.1%
- By May 2029, 80% of students (K–8) will be on grade level or above on iReady for literacy and math, and 80% of students (grades 9–11) will achieve benchmark on PSAT for Evidence-Based Reading & Writing and Math

Needs Attention				Making Progress			On Track Toward Goal		
					5				

Key Accomplishments and Evidence of Impact

Foundational Training

- SAU 24 Leadership Team: focus for spring 2026 - MTSS implementation. Included reflection, sharing of current practices, a focus on *systems* as a plural and a focus on development of a "recipe cards" mindset focused on the 80/15/5 tier structure.
- John Stark: investigated, developed, and piloted new MTSS structures, formats for intervention, and protocols for use in 2026-2027.

Tier 1: Data Systems and WIN/FLEX Supports

- Teams documenting and formalizing systems for reviewing data and providing targeted supports during WIN (What I Need) instructional blocks across K–8 and formats for FLEX intervention 9-12.
- Alignment of Tier 1 support tools for literacy and mathematics in grades K-8 (Lexia Core 5, Lexia PowerUp, Ready Personalized Pathway, ALEKS Path) and establishment of shared expectations for Tier 1 use.
- CWES: MTSS-B team produced a video reteaching behavioral expectations across school settings after reviewing schoolwide data (see Priority 1, Goal 4 for additional detail).
- CWES: Continued applying iReady diagnostic-data practices (three cycles per team/grade level) to inform WIN groupings, alongside dedicated faculty/early-release time for data review.

Tier 2 and Tier 3 Interventions

- WMS added self-made probes to further dive into skills of students for data aligning reporting about progress in interventions.

Steering Committee Assessment (August 2026)

The Steering Committee rated this goal a 5, recognizing good MTSS structures already in place at every school while noting that current supports are not yet keeping pace with student demand.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Good MTSS structures are in place at all schools	Structures are not keeping up with the demand of students.
Opportunities	**Threats**
Tie-in with Restorative Practices work. School leaders are working on a consistent tracking measure for Tiered Intervention progress	Budget constraints. Student buy-in of Tier 1 supports.

Areas of Focus for 2026-2027

- Data Driven Action.
- Ensure System for Targeted Skill-Based Interventions (A & B).
- Ensure Tier II and III Intervention Coherence with Tier I.

Priority 3: Foster a Sense of Belonging

Goal 1: Create an Environment Where Every Student Feels Included

Five-Year Goal: *Create an environment where every student feels included.*

Progress Toward Goal

SAU 24 expanded both whole-school and small-group opportunities this year to help every student feel connected to their community. At the whole-school level, CWES held All School Meetings focused on unity, WMS launched its House Program to build cross-grade community, and HCS continued strengthening the middle school experience through sports and clubs. Individualized offerings grew too: HCS is working to expand its Buddies program, John Stark's peer leaders connected with incoming 8th graders, and CWES formed a Student Council and added student representatives to their Wellness Advisory Committee to give students a formal voice, alongside Collaborative Celebrations.

Transition work saw real building-level movement this spring. John Stark coordinated a planning meeting with WMS and HCS administrators to design the 8th/9th-grade transition process and ensured MtSS considerations are shared across that grade band. HCS middle school teams, particularly in grades 7–8, reflected specifically on how the HCS experience can build the skills and habits students need to succeed at John Stark. At the elementary level, CWES continued its practice of offering 1:1 tours to students who would benefit from extra transition support, and invited 3rd-grade families to WMS events, including the Big/Little Dance and a 3rd-grade parade with WMS 4th-grade staff..

Key Metrics (Target: May 2029)

- By May 2029, above the 60th percentile in positive student response (3-12) to school belonging questions in annual Panorama Survey.
- In 2027 YRBS Survey, 5 points above the state average for the percent of students who strongly agree or agree that in their community they feel like they matter to people. Baseline data: 2023 YRBS State 54.8%, School 55.2%, Region 53.3%
- In 2027 YRBS Survey, 5 points below the state average for the percent of students who said they were ever bullied on school property during the past 12 months. Baseline data: 2023 YRBS State 24.2%, School 31.8%, Region 26.3%

Needs Attention			Making Progress			On Track Toward Goal			
						7			

Key Accomplishments and Evidence of Impact

Group and Whole-School Opportunities

- All School Meetings at CWES
- House Program at WMS- Feedback and reflection gathered to inform 2025–26 school year.
- State of John Stark Athletics report.

Individualized and Small-Group Opportunities

- Expanding Kindergarten Buddies at HCS
- Peer Leadership Connection to 9th Graders at JSRHS& incoming 8th graders
- Collaborative Celebrations at CWES
- Student Councils at CWES and WMS
- Wellness Advisory Committee at CWES
- Increased club offerings at CWES, WMS and JFES

- HCS Middle School experience-sports/clubs and adaptive PE/Music opportunity
- HCS: Adaptive PE and Music lesson plans developed to expand inclusive programming.

Transition Planning

- John Stark coordinated a planning meeting with WMS and HCS administrators to design the 8th/9th-grade transition process, and ensured MtSS considerations are shared across that transition.
- HCS middle school teams (grades 7–8) reflected on how the HCS experience builds the skills and habits students need to succeed at John Stark.
- CWES continued offering 1:1 tours to students who would benefit from extra transition support, and invited 3rd-grade families to WMS events, including the Big/Little Dance and a 3rd-grade parade with WMS 4th-grade staff.

Steering Committee Assessment (August 2026)

The Steering Committee rated this goal a 7, the highest mark in the district's self-assessment, reflecting that SAU 24 schools are already outperforming national benchmarks in student belonging, while flagging that those national benchmarks remain low and that grades 6–12 lag behind K–5.

Strengths	Weaknesses
100% of SAU 24 schools scored above the national benchmark on Panorama School Belonging. CWES already reached its goal of above 60% (66%). Evidence of students feeling supported and understood has increased. The House System at WMS is a strength supporting belonging.	National benchmarks themselves are very low for Student Belonging, limiting how much a strong SAU 24 score reflects true student experience
Opportunities	**Threats**
Focus improvement efforts on grades 6–12, the lowest-scoring band on Panorama. Build connections between staff and students beyond academics. Consider raising the K–5 goal above 60%, since that band is already on track	The YRBS survey is administered only every two years, limiting data frequency. The 60% key-metric target is most challenging to reach at grades 6–12. Ambiguity remains over whether the metric should be read as a national percentile or a percent-favorable score. National benchmark figures versus SAU averages have caused some confusion in interpreting the data.

Areas of Focus for 2026-2027

- Community Building.
- Transitions
- Developmentally Appropriate Student Experiences, including JS compost initiative

Goal 2: Create an Environment Where Staff Can Thrive and Develop

Five-Year Goal: *Create an environment in which each staff member views SAU 24 as a place where they can thrive and develop.*

Progress Toward Goal

For 2025-2026, SAU 24 made striking progress on staff retention, with three districts exceeding the 90% target six years ahead of schedule — Weare reached 93.0% (up from 81.3% in 2023), Henniker 90.9% (up from 77.3%), and John Stark 91.9% (up from 82.3%). The September 2025 Stay Survey, with roughly 65% response and 73–76% teacher participation, rated overall experience between 3.3–3.4 out of 4, with colleague relationships consistently the strongest dimension and compensation and administrator communication flagged as growth areas. Two flagship initiatives continue to support this work: Leadership Pathways, offering 15 hours of professional growth without requiring a formal title, and the Embedded Master's Program with New England College.

Building-level culture efforts deepened this spring. CWES shared its Stay Survey results transparently with teachers and team leaders, and staff identified passing a teacher's contract and sustaining a focus on culture as the clearest priorities to come out of that data. CWES also emphasized leadership opportunities for mid-career staff, with several completing the Embedded Master's course and being encouraged to continue next year. HCS held spring conversations with the Henniker Teacher's Association specifically about evaluation and feedback processes, which was an area the Panorama survey flagged for improvement. At the SAU level, the Leadership Pathways program itself was refocused around a new "5 Ways of Being" framework, sharpening its approach to building leadership capacity districtwide.

Key Metrics (Target: May 2029)

- Metric - By May 2029, to be above the 60th percentile in positive staff responses to school climate questions in the annual Panorama Survey. Baseline (Spring 2024, teacher/staff): JFES 44%/63%, CWES 68%/78%, HCS 45%/29%, WMS 42%/37%, JSRHS 24%/33%
- Metric - By May 2029, increase employee retention rate to a 90% retention rate (exempting non-renewals and retirees). Baseline (2023): HCS 77.3%, Weare 81.3%, John Stark 82.3%. All three districts have already exceeded the 90% retention target set for May 2029. The following table summarizes retention rates exempting retirees and non-renewals per the strategic plan metric
- By May 2029, 90% of current staff respond that they are likely or very likely to recommend SAU 24 as a great place to work.

Needs Attention			Making Progress			On Track Toward Goal			
						7			

Key Accomplishments and Evidence of Impact

Professional Development and Career Pathways

- Leadership Pathways program: 15 hours of professional growth across five sessions grounded in SAU 24 Leadership Commitments

- Embedded Master's Program through New England College: MEd in Curriculum and Instruction at potentially no out-of-pocket cost with a two-year commitment
- LETRS/OGAP training district-wide
- Responsive Classroom training at WMS, CWES, and HCS
- Coaching cycles available district-wide
- Fall Instructional Conference Collaboration with NEA and WEA&HTA

Building-Level Culture and Climate

- Squad Groups at JSRHS & CWES
- Nest display at CWES
- Food cart, potlucks, and celebrations in all schools
- Critical Friends Groups and Sunshine Committee at HCS
- JSRHS contract work focused on creating a positive, affirming professional environment

Data and Leading Indicators

- Stay Survey (Fall 2025): 75% of staff had not considered leaving within the past year
- Panorama staff responses reached 50% positive overall, with teacher responses up 7% from Spring 2024
- Weare exit interviews for 25-26 showed improvement in administrator communication (2.62 to 3.17) and instructional leadership (2.79 to 3.17), as well as parent/community support scores (2.5 to 3.0)

Building-Level Culture Updates

- CWES shared Stay Survey results transparently with teachers and team leaders; passing a teacher's contract and sustaining a focus on culture emerged as the top priorities from that conversation.
- CWES emphasized leadership opportunities and professional growth for mid-career staff, with several staff completing the Embedded Master's course.
- HCS held spring conversations with the Henniker Teacher's Association about evaluation and feedback processes, an area flagged for improvement on the Panorama survey.
- SAU Admin refocused the Leadership Pathways program around a new "5 Ways of Being" framework.
- JFES staff participated in TIER 1 work with a BCBA on school expectations and behavioral interventions.

Steering Committee Assessment (August 2026)

The Steering Committee rated this goal a 7 (previous: 7, new: 7), citing strong retention gains and improved exit-interview scores in Weare, balanced against continued teacher loss at John Stark and the compounding effect of recent failed contracts and budgets.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Weare and Henniker have already met the 90% retention goal (John Stark Regional High School results will still factor in). Stay Survey: 75% of staff had not considered leaving in the past year. Weare Exit Interview scores significantly improved: Administrator Communication 2.62 → 3.17; Instructional Leadership 2.79 → 3.17; Parent/Community Support 2.5 → 3.0.	John Stark Regional High School experienced continued teacher loss. 60% loss among Buildings & Grounds staff at John Stark Regional High School. Community support for teachers remains an area needing attention.

Opportunities	Threats
Quality of new hires, including in Facilities. Strengthening communication and engagement with staff Build common vernacular around retention and contract issues across all levels Increase morale-boosting efforts at the building level in a more consistent and sustained way Communication: control the narrative proactively with all stakeholders, at every level	Failed contracts and budgets. The compounding effect of multiple years of failed contracts and budgets

Areas of Focus for 2026-2027

- Active Adult Collaboration.
- Compensation and Retention
- Communication to the community about issue

Goal 3: Cultivate a Culture of Trust Through Leadership

Five-Year Goal: *Cultivate a culture of trust through leadership that is empowering and inclusive.*

Progress Toward Goal

SAU 24 administrators took deliberate steps this year to strengthen trust through instructional leadership that is both empowering and inclusive. Faculty meetings were intentionally restructured to tie directly to teaching, learning, and strategic goals, and administrators dedicated time to developing and using “Look For” observation tools in partnership with instructional coaches — work reinforced by a series of SAU-wide Leadership Meetings on instruction and MtSS, and by the first cycle of Leadership Evaluations centering instructional leadership as a core administrator expectation.

Building-level leadership structures were formalized across every school: CWES Team Leaders now meet monthly with a focus on strategic goals, John Stark convenes a leadership team of principals, assistant principals, and department coordinators, and HCS established a six-member instructional leadership team combining administrators and teacher leaders. The Coaching Triangle model is advancing in parallel, with six “Look For”-based coaching meetings per school.

Key Metrics (Target: May 2029)

- By May 2029, 90% positive responses to Staff-Leadership Relationship questions in annual Panorama Survey.
- By May 2029, 90% positive responses to Trust/Relationship questions on “Stay” survey.
- By May 2029, 90% positive responses to Empowerment questions on “Stay” survey

Needs Attention				Making Progress			On Track Toward Goal		
				5					

Key Accomplishments and Evidence of Impact

Instructional Leadership Focus

- Faculty meetings are intentionally aligned to strategic goals and school-specific staff needs
- Administration dedicated time to “Look For” observation tools and collaboration with instructional coaches
- Instructional focus for SAU-wide Leadership Meeting series
- Given choice and options during Professional development and faculty meetings- builds trust
- Teacher needs are recognized when building meeting structures and Professional development

Building Administrative Structures

- CWES: Weekly instructional leadership meeting; Team Leaders meeting monthly with five sessions on core program implementation
- John Stark: Weekly instructional meeting plus operational meeting; leadership team of principals, assistant principals, and department coordinators
- HCS: Monthly instructional and tactical meetings; six-member leadership team (3 administrators, 3 teacher leaders) focused on instruction
- WMS: Weekly instructional meeting plus operational meeting

Coaching and Professional Growth

- Coaching Triangle model: six meetings per school/admin team using the “Look For” framework for classroom observation and reflection
- Coaching-driven professional growth cycles coordinated between coaches and administrators
- Data-driven professional development planning following leadership meeting data analysis
- Eight faculty meetings per year with a focus on curriculum, instruction, and assessment
- Teacher evaluation focused on a continuum of understanding, implementing, and responding with specific, actionable steps for each teacher

Communication

- ParentSquare implementation: commitment to three communications per year, building understanding about student progress and celebrations
- Monthly instructional videos and photos shared with families highlighting core programs

Building-Level Instructional Leadership

- CWES’s admin PLC held weekly meetings focused on instructional leadership and classroom instruction, spending Trimester 1 learning about Core programs before offering team feedback, attending team meetings addressing Institutional Integrity, and devoting two faculty meetings to positioning this work as a critical strategic-plan priority.

Steering Committee Assessment (August 2026)

The Steering Committee rated this goal a 5, recognizing strong staff-leadership relationships on Panorama and Stay Survey data, while noting instructional leadership as the lowest-scoring category and flagging contracts and retention as ongoing threats to sustaining trust.

Strengths	Weaknesses
76–77%+ positive Staff/Leadership responses on Panorama. 2025–26 leadership focus centered on instruction. Positive Stay Survey trust/relationship scores	Instructional Leadership is the lowest-scoring category on current survey data
Opportunities	**Threats**
Journey Mapping as a tool to strengthen leadership development.	Contracts and retention pressures continue to threaten leadership trust and stability.

Areas of Focus for 2026-2027

- Crucial Conversations.
- Communication.
- System/Structure Development.

Goal 4: Increase Family Engagement Through Intentional Communication

Five-Year Goal: *Increase family engagement through intentional communication and connection.*

Progress Toward Goal

Fall and Winter 2025 brought solid infrastructure progress on family engagement. ParentSquare adoption is complete across all buildings, with families rating implementation satisfaction at 3.83 out of 5. Website improvements were made for every school and the SAU, video content is being developed to explain key instructional initiatives, and the Simbli migration for board materials will launch for Fall 2026. A Fall 2025 communications audit confirmed families generally feel positive about SAU 24's communication, while also surfacing the clearest priorities going forward: closing the teacher-to-family gap on individual student progress, consolidating an overwhelming app ecosystem, and resolving social media access issues.

Building-level efforts reinforced this district infrastructure. WMS and CWES administrators conducted MtSS informational outreach at school board meetings to build community understanding of behavioral intervention processes, and John Stark increased intentional outreach to families about student progress during conference periods. Beyond ParentSquare, the SAU held its third annual candidate and budget forum in March 2026 and the SAU 24 School Board members staffed board information tables at school events during the budget season — though survey feedback suggests families still want clearer information about how tax dollars are allocated and what a budget vote means.

Key Metrics (Target: May 2029)

- By May 2029, 100% positive responses to Family Engagement questions in the annual Panorama Survey. Baseline (Spring 2024): JFES 34%, CWES 16%, HCS 23%, WMS 17%, JSRHS 18%
- By May 2029, 100% of respondents in the biennial Communications Audit survey report yes to If an issue were to arise, do you feel you know who the best person would be to contact? Baseline (2023): 75.9%
- By May 2029, increase the number of opportunities for families to be directly involved with the school. (Panorama data: "How often have you visited your child's school?")

Needs Attention			Making Progress			On Track Toward Goal			
				5					

Key Accomplishments and Evidence of Impact

Communication About Student Learning

- ParentSquare implementation underway across all buildings (HCS, WMS, CWES, JSRHS, and SAU); families rated implementation satisfaction at 3.83 out of 5 in the communications survey
- Communications Audit conducted (Fall 2025 survey); SAU 24 Communications Board Committee examined board-related findings; full review underway
- MtSS informational efforts by WMS and CWES administrators at school board meetings have helped increase the community's awareness and provide understanding of behavioral intervention processes.
- Increase in intentional outreach at JS about student progress during conferences.

Community Engagement and Digital Presence

- New websites for all schools and the SAU have been built and implemented; Strategic Plan resources webpage has been expanded
- Instructional Playbook and career-connected learning videos created to share the work of SAU 24
- Simbli migration for board meeting agendas, minutes, and policies underway
- John Stark Instagram account established; Facebook permissions issues being resolved
- Community outreach stipend position re-hired in late October 2025 for newsletter and press release distribution

Budget Communication

- SAU-wide candidate and budget forum (March 3, 2026)—third year of this event
- Board information tables at school events during budget season
- Survey feedback indicates families want more information about how tax dollars are allocated and what a budget vote means
- A Budget Engagement Plan was developed at the SAU 24 Board Retreat to guide future communication about school funding

ParentSquare Implementation

- Implementation underway across all buildings; families recognize it as a strength
- Software audit in progress (targeting Summer 2026 completion) to integrate or replace other tools and reduce app fatigue—survey data identified this as a significant pain point, with families citing too many apps
- Family onboarding, staff training, and leadership training are ongoing
- ParentSquare usage data is now being tracked to inform future engagement strategy

Building-Level Communication

- CWES used ParentSquare to communicate about Core Programs and highlight student achievements to families.

Steering Committee Assessment (August 2026)

The Steering Committee rated this goal a 5 (an initial discussion mark of approximately 6 was refined to 5 in the final summary), recognizing ParentSquare and Simbli as genuine strengths while flagging staff capacity and the reach of current engagement efforts as ongoing constraints.

Strengths	Weaknesses
ParentSquare adoption across the district. The Simbli migration for board materials.	Staff capacity to sustain family engagement work
Opportunities	**Threats**
ParentSquare's connection to social media for broader reach. Add a community module Launch a budget engagement webpage. Promote wider use of Simbli. Increase frequency of board meeting topic dissemination, including YouTube clips of meetings.	Limited reach of current engagement channels. Building sustained family interest in engagement opportunities

Areas of Focus for 2026-2027

- Clear Staff to Family Communication Norms.
- Accessible Community Engagement.

SAU 24 Strategic Plan

Spring/Summer 2026 Progress Report

Priority 4: Responsible Stewardship of Resources

Goal 1: Long-Term Planning and Budgetary Needs

Five-Year Goal: *Utilize effective long-term planning to fully anticipate and manage future budgetary needs.*

Progress Toward Goal

SAU 24 is working toward a comprehensive long-term financial planning approach in which major facilities, programming, and technology spending flows from established, transparent plans. The clearest progress so far is the development and publication of Capital Improvement Plans (CIPs) for facilities, now live on the SAU website, giving the community a clear view of upcoming major expenses and timelines.

Groundwork has also been laid across other planning areas within this year's budgeting cycle. Technology maintains an annual replacement plan for short-term durable goods like Chromebooks and staff laptops. Curriculum supply budget lines were updated for 2026–27 to reflect ongoing costs for adopted programs such as Wit and Wisdom and Carolina OpenSciEd, and furniture replacement plans were developed for CWES and HCS. The Curriculum Review and Replacement Plan is being updated based on recent committee work, and the district transitioned back to google classroom after using Canvas since the pandemic.

Key Metrics (Target: May 2029)

- All significant facilities and programming spending originate from established CIP and Maintenance Plans or CIA Plan
- A Human Resources plan is developed to anticipate enrollment and programming needs through 2034
- Consistently hold end-of-year bottom lines to under 5% of overall budget

Needs Attention			Making Progress			On Track Toward Goal			
					6				

Key Accomplishments and Evidence of Impact

Facilities Planning

- Capital Improvement Plans (CIPs) for facilities developed and published on the SAU website, providing stakeholders with a transparent view of future major expenses and timelines

Technology Planning

- Annual replacement plan in place for short-term durable goods (student Chromebooks and staff laptops)

Curriculum and Program Planning

- 2026–27 curriculum supply budget lines updated to reflect ongoing annual costs for programs such as Wit and Wisdom and Carolina OpenSciEd
- Furniture replacement plans developed for CWES and HCS
- Curriculum Review and Replacement Plan being updated in light of recent committee work
- LMS adoption process underway with evaluation and selection in progress

Future Planning

JFES Enrollment Committee established to address enrollment planning

SAU 24/34 Executive Boards met twice in Spring 2026 to explore collaboration opportunities; a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is now in development

Steering Committee Assessment (August 2026)

The Steering Committee rated this goal a 6, crediting published Capital Improvement Plans and efficiency-focused software investments as real progress, while cautioning that the CIP mindset has not yet been widely adopted or understood beyond the business office.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Capital Improvement Plans have been published for all buildings. Additional business software has been implemented to increase efficiency. The SAU Office is fully staffed with individuals who have been in their positions more than two years	Being fully staffed does not by itself adequately cover the full scope of responsibility. The CIP mindset has not been widely adopted, executed, or understood beyond the business office.
Opportunities	**Threats**
Additional software for HR, succession planning, and accounting and procedures. Adding community engagement to long-term planning work.	The Alma partnership with NHED. Legislative changes affecting district planning

Areas of Focus for 2026-2027

- Increase communication of SAU long-term planning
- Continue to develop procedures and practices that connect to long-term planning

Goal 2: Human Resources Best Practices

Five-Year Goal: *Adopt human resources best practices to become a sought-after employer for all roles.*

Progress Toward Goal

This goal focuses on the operational side of HR — modernizing processes, improving staff access to information, and building infrastructure for a professional employee experience — while retention metrics (already exceeding the 90% target districtwide) are tracked under Priority 3. The signature accomplishment remains the launch of an online staff portal, giving staff access to time-off summaries, pay stubs, and tax forms; some staff have shifted to digital time-off requests, and administrative (260-day) staff now use portal-based time tracking. Groundwork was also completed for a digital process to communicate new hires from school administration to the SAU central office.

The most significant new development this cycle is on the benefits side: SAU Leadership worked with insurance professionals to design a self-funded healthcare model, projected to save the district money while adding benefits for plan participants. A new advisory committee is being formed to help shape and refine plan design going forward.

Next work includes expanding portal adoption, digitizing the annual renewal packet, rolling out the new-hire communication process, and implementing electronic Personnel Action Forms (e-PARs) by August 2026.

Key Metrics (Target: May 2029)

- 90% employee retention rate (exempting non-renewals and retirees). Baseline (2023): HCS 77.3%, Weare 81.3%, John Stark 82.3%
- Average rating above 3.5 for “How would you rate your overall experience in SAU 24?” on the biannual “Why I Stay” survey. Baseline (2023): HCS 3.24, Weare 3.25, JSRHS 2.9
- Establishment and consistent meeting of Faculty, Staff, and Student Advisory Councils to provide meaningful input into SAU issues



Key Accomplishments and Evidence of Impact

Staff Portal and Digital HR Processes

- Online staff portal launched, providing access to time-off summaries, pay stubs, and tax forms
- Administrative staff (260-day employees) shifted to portal-based time tracking
- Research and groundwork completed for a digital new-hire communication process between school administration offices and the SAU central office

Benefits and Self-Funding Healthcare

- SAU Leadership worked with insurance professionals to develop a self-funded healthcare model, projected to save the district money while providing additional benefits to plan participants.

Steering Committee Assessment (August 2026)

The Steering Committee rated this goal a 7 (previous: 4, new: 7), the largest single-year jump of any goal in the plan, driven by the staff portal launch and the self-funded healthcare redesign, while flagging that the portal is not yet fully used and that healthcare cost sustainability remains an open question.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Hiring process efficiency gains through EPARS. Implementation of a new, self-funded health insurance plan. Launch of the staff portal	Process and workflow gaps remain in rolling out new HR systems. Loss of some wellness initiatives. The staff portal has been built but is not yet fully used.
Opportunities	**Threats**
Potential savings from the new health insurance plan. Build wellness initiatives into the Advisory Council's work. Expand the staff portal to hourly employees and PCOs, with informing and educating support.	The long-term financial sustainability of healthcare costs

Areas of Focus for 2026-2027

- Continue the staff portal rollout with attention focused on customer service, addressing questions and needs regardless of seniority or role.
- Continue progress on the EPARS process to improve efficiency.
- Evaluate the staff portal's current accessibility and identify next steps.
- Maintain ongoing attention to the sustainability of the district's healthcare costs

Goal 3: Operational Efficiency

Five-Year Goal: *Maximize tools and resources to strengthen operational efficiency.*

Progress Toward Goal

SAU 24 continued examining processes and procedures to strengthen operational efficiency, with the business office leading modernization of financial operations. The most tangible progress: additional accounting software modules have improved organization of accounts receivable, and the content manager tool implementation is now complete, giving staff image access within School ERP Pro, with further capabilities planned for future rollout.

SAU 24 continues exploring how to organize and maximize resources. The JFES Enrollment Committee was a community-wide group that explored and reported back to the community the impact and potential solutions for Stoddard's declining school enrollment. The SAU 24/34 collaboration has advanced concretely: the two districts' Executive Boards met twice in Spring 2026, and a Memorandum of Understanding is now in development. Within special education, individual decisions to share specialized staff across schools continue to meet student needs, and the centralized technology services model remains a template for other centralized staffing approaches.

The business office staff have begun to set up procedures for a new Medicaid reimbursement process for full roll out in September 2026. Implementation of a content manager and accounts receivable module within the accounting software has been implemented. Developing a centralized procedure manual remains the next priority.

Key Metrics (Target: May 2029)

- Documented staff time and budget savings (areas and percentage decreases to be identified)
- Increased use of ticketing tools for technology and facilities issues

Needs Attention			Making Progress			On Track Toward Goal			
					6				

Key Accomplishments and Evidence of Impact

Business Office Modernization

- Additional accounting software modules implemented, improving organization of accounts receivable processes
- Content manager tool implementation completed, providing staff image access within School ERP Pro; additional capabilities planned for future rollout

Structural and Resource Planning

- Individual decisions to share specialized staff across SAU schools within special education to meet student needs
- Centralized SAU 24 technology services model implemented, providing a template for other centralized staffing approaches

Revenue and Reimbursement Processes

Business office staff have begun setup procedures for a new Medicaid reimbursement process, with full rollout expected by September 2026.

Steering Committee Assessment (August 2026)

The Steering Committee rated this goal a 6, the same evidence and rating discussion applied to Goal 1 (Long-Term Planning) and Goal 3 (Operational Efficiency) together on the chart paper, reflecting real software and staffing gains alongside a continued need to widen understanding of planning tools and processes districtwide.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Additional business software has been implemented to increase efficiency. The SAU Office is fully staffed with individuals who have been in their positions for more than two years.	Being fully staffed does not by itself adequately cover the full scope of responsibility.
Opportunities	**Threats**
Additional software for HR, succession planning, and accounting and procedures. Adding community engagement to operational planning work	Legislative changes affecting district operations.

Note: The Steering Committee also discussed adding a new "Budget Engagement" goal within this priority but did not adopt it as a distinct focus area for 2026–2027. We will combine goal 3 with goal 1.

Areas of Focus for 2026-2027

- Continued exploration of shared staffing models
- Combine this goal with Goal 1