

GO BLUE!

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN



WATER VALLEY
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Table of Contents

Water Valley Community 1

Water Valley School District 2

What is a Strategic Plan? 3

Stakeholder Input that Shaped the Plan 5

District at-a-Glance 7

Portrait of a Water Valley Graduate 8

GO BLUE! Strategic Priorities Framework 10

Mission and Core Beliefs 11

Measures of Success 15

Implementation and Timeline 15



GO BLUE!
FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN



LETTER FROM THE SCHOOL BOARD

Connected by Tradition

Dear Water Valley Community,

On behalf of the Water Valley School District Board of Trustees, we are proud to present the GO BLUE! Strategic Plan (GBSP), a shared roadmap that reflects our community's hopes for its children and our commitment to strong, student-centered governance. This plan represents months of thoughtful work by educators, families, students, and community partners who helped identify what Water Valley needs today — and what we aspire to become tomorrow.



We will grow opportunities for students, strengthen teaching and learning, improve district operations, enhance safety and well-being, invest wisely in resources, and deepen community trust. As a board, we believe in this work, and we are committed to supporting the plan with integrity, consistency, and unified leadership.

Effective school boards demonstrate strong governance, and we pledge to support this strategic plan through the following commitments:

- ▶ **GOVERN** THROUGH POLICY
- ▶ **LEAD** THROUGH VISION
- ▶ **MONITOR** THROUGH DATA
- ▶ **BUDGET** THROUGH PRIORITIES
- ▶ **COMMUNICATE** THROUGH TRANSPARENCY
- ▶ **PARTNER** THROUGH TRUST
- ▶ **IMPROVE** THROUGH EVALUATION
- ▶ **ALWAYS** CENTER STUDENTS FIRST

These principles will guide our decisions, our expectations, and our partnership with the superintendent and district leadership. Water Valley is a district strengthened by its people — by the dedication of our teachers, the enthusiasm of our students, the involvement of our families, and the pride of our community.

We invite all Water Vallians to join us in supporting this plan and ensuring that every student has the opportunity to learn, grow, and succeed. Together, we can build on our successes and continue moving Water Valley forward.

Sincerely,

Board of Trustees
Water Valley School District



Joseph
Flippin



Rodney
Phillips



Shannon
Crow



Tonya
Eubanks



Jeremy
Warren





LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Rooted in Excellence



Dear Water Valley Community,

It is my honor to share the GO BLUE! Strategic Plan, a collective vision shaped by our educators, families, students, and community partners. This plan outlines the next chapter for Water Valley School District — a chapter rooted in excellence, strengthened by community, and focused on expanding opportunities for every student.

Water Valley School District serves approximately 1,000 students across two campuses — Davidson Elementary School (PreK–6) and Water Valley High School (7–12). As a small but dynamic district, we benefit from one of the lowest student-to-teacher ratios in Mississippi, allowing us to truly know our students, meet their needs, and support their growth.

We are proud of our **four** consecutive years as a **B** rated High-Performing district, our dedicated faculty and staff, and the robust opportunities available through strong academic programming, state-of-the-art technology, and innovative career and technical education offerings.



Our plan positions us for continued success by strengthening student achievement, improving district systems, enhancing school safety, engaging our community, and aligning financial resources with student needs. I am deeply grateful to the Water Valley School Board for their leadership, and to our community for its unwavering support.

Together, we will continue the proud legacy of Blue Devils who are equipped for college, career, and life — and who value the hometown spirit that makes Water Valley truly special.

Sincerely,

Drew Pitcock

Drew Pitcock, Superintendent
Water Valley School District





THE WATER VALLEY COMMUNITY

Connected by Tradition



Water Valley is a welcoming, close-knit community of approximately 3,700 residents, known for its rich history, strong traditions, and enduring sense of hometown pride. Once a thriving Illinois Central Railroad hub, the city has evolved into a vibrant community supported by manufacturing, agriculture, and growing commercial opportunities.

Located near major roadways and neighboring cities such as Oxford, Batesville, Grenada, and within 90 minutes of Memphis, Tupelo, and Hernando, Water Valley offers residents access to a wide range of cultural, recreational, and educational experiences.

A COMMUNITY WITH SHARED VALUES AND STRONG CONNECTIONS

Water Valley is more than a place — it is a community where people show up for one another, celebrate together, and support shared goals. From lively Friday night football games to youth athletics at Crawford Sports Complex, from worship services across 40 local churches to the nationally recognized Watermelon Carnival, the town is deeply connected by tradition and togetherness.

Ongoing revitalization efforts, supported by city leadership, the Water Valley Area Chamber of Commerce, and the Yalobusha County Economic Development Foundation, continue to strengthen economic growth and community pride. **Water Valley is a hometown rooted in tradition, rich in values, and committed to supporting its children, families, and schools.**





WATER VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Commitment to Character



Our district provides a well-rounded academic education, a variety of extracurricular offerings, and a strong commitment to student character development. **Both campuses implement Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)**, creating encouraging, structured environments that reinforce good character and choices. Water Valley School District serves approximately 1,000 students across two campuses (Davidson Elementary School (Prek-6), Water Valley High School (7-12)).

WHAT SETS WATER VALLEY APART

B RATED HIGH-PERFORMING SCHOOL DISTRICT

The district has earned a High-Performing designation for four consecutive years, reflecting strong teaching and student success.

LOW STUDENT-TO- TEACHER RATIO

Small class sizes allow personalized attention and increased academic growth.

DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Students from all backgrounds thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

Innovative CTE programs prepare students for post-secondary opportunities.

DEDICATED FACULTY AND STAFF

Highly qualified, caring educators work daily to ensure students achieve at high levels.

STRONG COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Deep partnerships with families, local businesses, and civic organizations strengthen experiences.

TECHNOLOGY-RICH INSTRUCTION

Modern learning tools equip students with skills for a digital future.

OUTSTANDING EXTRACURRICULARS

Championship athletic programs and vibrant arts and music opportunities enrich student life.





WHAT IS A STRATEGIC PLAN?

Building the Future



A⁺ ROADMAP FOR THE FUTURE OF WATER VALLEY SCHOOLS



A⁺ Shared Vision

A strategic plan is a roadmap that guides a school district's work over several years. It establishes a clear, unified vision for what the district is working toward and how it will get there. It ensures that every decision—at the board, district, school, and classroom level—is aligned to student learning and success. The GO BLUE! Strategic Plan reflects the values and voices of our community and charts a path for the next five years.



A⁺ Guide for Decision-Making

The strategic plan helps the district make thoughtful, student-centered choices about programs, staffing, resources, and priorities. It connects everyday decisions to long-term goals so that every action supports the success of all Water Valley students.



A⁺ Tool for Accountability

A strong strategic plan includes clear goals and measurable indicators. These allow the school board, superintendent, staff, and community to track progress over time. It becomes the district's standard for evaluating effectiveness and staying focused on results.



A⁺ Community Commitment

The GO BLUE! Strategic Plan reflects the voices and values of students, families, staff, and community members. It represents what matters most to Water Valley and affirms the district's promise to provide safe schools, strong instruction, and meaningful opportunities for all students.

This strategic plan provides a clear roadmap for the district's work by establishing six unified priorities that will guide every decision over the next five years. **Water Valley is committed to growing opportunities for students, optimizing district operations, building academic excellence, leveraging financial resources wisely, upholding safe and supportive schools, and elevating community trust through strong communication and partnerships.** Together, these priorities form a focused and coherent vision for excellence—ensuring that Water Valley continues to build on its strengths while boldly addressing its challenges and preparing every student for future success.





THE WATER VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Water Valley School District (WVSD) Board of Trustees and Superintendent welcomed stakeholders from across the spectrum—parents, teachers, principals, district staff, business leaders, faith-based ministers, community representatives, and the Mayor of Water Valley—to take part in shaping the district's future. Together, these partners formed the Strategic Planning Committee, a diverse group that met across four focused work sessions to envision the next chapter for our schools.



Their collaboration reflected Water Valley's enduring belief that strong schools are built through collective effort. Each participant contributed insights, hopes, and expertise, offering a rich perspective on what our students need to thrive. The committee's work highlighted both the pride we share in our district's strengths and the commitment we hold to continuous growth.

The Board of Trustees and Superintendent extend sincere appreciation to Solero Technologies, BankFirst, and the WVSD Central Office staff for graciously hosting the planning sessions. This support underscores the powerful partnership between the school district and the broader community.

Through thoughtful discussion and purposeful planning, the committee developed a strategic framework rooted in the values of Water Valley and guided by a clear vision for student success.

The resulting plan is more than a document—it is a community commitment to growing opportunities, strengthening excellence, supporting educators, and building a brighter, more promising future for every student in the Water Valley School District.



WHAT WE HEARD — STAKEHOLDER INPUT THAT SHAPED THE PLAN

During the strategic planning process, Water Valley School District gathered input from 238 stakeholders, including parents, teachers, staff, students, community members, and business partners. These voices guided every aspect of the GO BLUE! Strategic Plan. Across all groups, several clear themes emerged — painting a strong, encouraging, and honest picture of Water Valley today.



A+ Strong Foundation of Pride and Confidence

Stakeholders expressed overwhelming pride in Water Valley's safe schools, dedicated educators, close-knit community, and high-performing rating. Families noted that Water Valley offers a uniquely supportive environment that larger districts cannot replicate. Survey data also shows broad confidence in district leadership and trust that the district is moving in the right direction.



High-quality facilities, small class sizes, and a strong sense of belonging were consistently identified as strengths.



Committed, Caring Adults Make the Difference

Families and staff repeatedly shared that Water Valley's greatest strength is its people — teachers, principals, coaches, and support personnel who care deeply about students. Respondents described staff as hardworking, invested, and proud to serve the children of Water Valley. This strong adult culture is a powerful asset for long-term student success.



Students Need Stronger Support and Belonging

While safety is a clear strength, stakeholders emphasized the need to strengthen student behavior supports, bullying prevention, and relationships that foster belonging. Both parents and teachers described inconsistent discipline practices and expressed a desire for clearer expectations and more predictable systems across schools.



Belonging emerged as the #1 priority in the survey — highlighting a districtwide commitment to nurturing the whole child.

TEACHERS NEED SUPPORT, STABILITY, AND RESOURCES

The community identified teacher quality and retention as the district's number-one challenge. Teachers voiced the need for additional support with:

- ▶ **STUDENT BEHAVIOR**
- ▶ **TECHNOLOGY ACCESS**
- ▶ **SPECIAL EDUCATION RESOURCES**
- ▶ **MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT**
- ▶ **CLASSROOM MATERIALS**
- ▶ **PROTECTED PLANNING AND COLLABORATION TIME**

Stakeholders expressed strong concern about retaining great educators and attracting new ones, especially with competition from larger neighboring districts.



COMMUNICATION MUST BE CONSISTENT AND TRANSPARENT

Families want clearer, more frequent communication from schools and teachers. Stakeholders called for timely information, consistent messaging, and more transparency around decisions, goals, and student progress. Improving communication emerged as a key opportunity for strengthening trust.

INSTRUCTIONAL RIGOR AND STUDENT READINESS MATTER

Stakeholders want Water Valley students to graduate with:

- ▶ **STRONG ACADEMICS**
- ▶ **REAL-WORLD SKILLS**
- ▶ **LIFE AND CAREER READINESS**
- ▶ **EXPOSURE TO DIVERSE PATHWAYS AND OPPORTUNITIES**



Parents and community members emphasized expanding electives, workforce-aligned programs, dual credit options, and hands-on learning experiences.

A+ COMMUNITY READY TO PARTNER

Local businesses and organizations expressed high willingness to support students through job shadowing, guest speaking, career fairs, mentorships, and real-world learning projects. Water Valley's spirit of collaboration is strong and continues to grow. The community wants to be part of the district's success.

A+ DISTRICT POSITIONED FOR GROWTH

Overall, the data shows that Water Valley has:

- ▶ **A STRONG CULTURE OF SAFETY**
- ▶ **COMMITTED AND CARING ADULTS**
- ▶ **HIGH LEVELS OF COMMUNITY PRIDE**
- ▶ **GROWING ACADEMIC MOMENTUM**

The challenges identified—student behavior, teacher support, instructional consistency, and communication—are normal, solvable, and already aligned to the GO BLUE! Strategic Plan priorities. Stakeholders are unified, hopeful, and committed to partnering with the district to help every student succeed.





DISTRICT DATA AT-A-GLANCE

District Accountability Rating

B



STUDENTS

Student
Enrollment

989

Extracurricular
Activities

16



92.3%
GRADUATION RATE



PER PUPIL EXPENDITURE

\$11,367

Student Opportunities

- ▶ PBIS model at both campuses
- ▶ College & Career Readiness expansion
- ▶ State-of-the-art welding trailer
- ▶ Strong arts, athletics, and extracurricular programs

CAMPUSES

DAVIDSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (PREK-6)

WATER VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL (7-12)

EDUCATIONAL LEARNING CENTER

EMPLOYMENT BY THE NUMBERS

Total
Employees

160

Classified
Employees

69

Certified
Employees

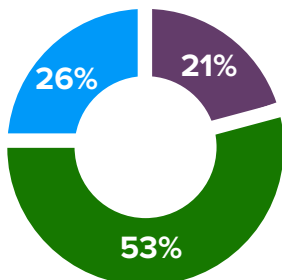
91

PERFORMANCE

High-performing district for
four consecutive years

One of the lowest student-
teacher ratios in the state

SOURCES OF REVENUE



\$3,648,257
FEDERAL

\$7,517,986
STATE

\$2,992,821
LOCAL





WATER VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT PORTRAIT OF A **GRADUATE**

The Water Valley School District is committed to preparing every student with the knowledge, skills, and qualities needed for success in college, career, and life.

CAREER READY

Career Ready

- ▶ Strong literacy, math, and financial skills
- ▶ Skilled with technology and adaptable
- ▶ Critical thinkers and problem solvers
- ▶ Effective communicators and collaborators
- ▶ Professional, dependable, and ethical

ACTIVE CITIZENS

Active Citizens

- ▶ Responsible and accountable for actions
- ▶ Engaged in community and civic life
- ▶ Respectful of differences and perspectives
- ▶ Informed about public systems and processes
- ▶ Contributors and volunteers in the community

LIFE READY

Life Ready

- ▶ Confident decision-makers
- ▶ Healthy mental and physical habits
- ▶ Financially literate and future-minded
- ▶ Able to manage conflict constructively
- ▶ Ready for daily responsibilities and independence

SOCIALLY SKILLED

Socially Skilled

- ▶ Emotionally intelligent and empathetic
- ▶ Able to build healthy relationships
- ▶ Strong communication skills across audiences
- ▶ Well-informed, disciplined, and respectful
- ▶ Resolves conflicts and works well with others





PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE SUMMARY

Prepared for Life



Portrait of a Graduate outlines the essential attributes, skills, and qualities students should possess when they cross the graduation stage—fully prepared for college, career, and life. The portrait reflects the shared vision of the school district and community for developing well-rounded, confident, and capable young adults.



READY FOR WORK AND CAREER

Graduates demonstrate strong literacy and numeracy, financial awareness, technological competence, and the ability to think critically and solve problems. They communicate effectively, collaborate with others, show professionalism, adapt to changing environments, act with integrity, and commit to lifelong learning.



ACTIVE AND RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS

Graduates understand their civic responsibilities, participate meaningfully in their communities, respect differences, navigate public systems, engage in service, and show pride in their hometown. They take responsibility for their actions and contribute positively to community life.



PREPARED WITH ESSENTIAL LIFE SKILLS

Graduates manage personal responsibilities with confidence, including decision-making, conflict resolution, financial literacy, personal health, family awareness, and the ability to navigate transportation and daily living. They act with self-respect and maintain strong personal values.



SOCIALLY SKILLED AND EMOTIONALLY INTELLIGENT

Graduates build healthy relationships, communicate effectively, demonstrate emotional intelligence, show discipline and self-control, stay informed on current events, and resolve conflicts constructively. They develop a strong sense of belonging and identity and treat others with empathy and respect.



GO BLUE! FRAMEWORK

Expanding Learning Pathways

GO BLUE!

GO BLUE! Strategic Plan is Water Valley's five-year framework for strengthening opportunities, operations, academics, safety, finances, and community trust. Built from the voices of students, families, staff, and local partners, it reflects what our community values most—belonging, excellence, and opportunity. **The framework aligns the district's work around a shared purpose: ensuring every student is supported, challenged, and prepared for life beyond graduation.** GO BLUE! Strategic Plan connects classrooms, families, and local businesses by expanding learning pathways, strengthening safety and communication, supporting teachers, and preparing students for college, careers, and the workforce. It is a unified vision rooted in Water Valley's identity and designed to build a stronger future for our schools and our community.



MISSION

The Water Valley School District ensures that every student is supported, every staff member is valued, and every family feels connected to the success of our schools.

CORE BELIEFS



1. Student-Centered Decision Making

We believe every decision must place the needs, safety, and success of students above all else.



2. Excellence in Teaching and Learning

We believe high-quality instruction, strong relationships, and high expectations are essential for student achievement and lifelong success.



3. Responsible Stewardship

We believe in transparent, accountable, and strategic use of all district resources — financial, human, and operational — to support student learning.



4. Community Partnership and Trust

We believe strong schools thrive through collaboration with families, local businesses, civic organizations, and the broader Water Valley community.



5. Integrity and Ethical Governance

We believe in governing through policy, leading with vision, communicating transparently, and modeling professionalism in all actions.



6. Safe, Supportive, and Belonging-Focused Schools

We believe every student deserves a learning environment where students feel safe, supported, valued, with a true sense of belonging.



7. Continuous Growth and Innovation

We believe in learning, adapting, and improving as a district — embracing new ideas, innovative practices, and continuous reflection to ensure all students thrive.



G GROWING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS

Water Valley is committed to ensuring every student has access to high-quality learning experiences, engaging coursework, and pathways that prepare students for success beyond graduation.

Key focus areas:

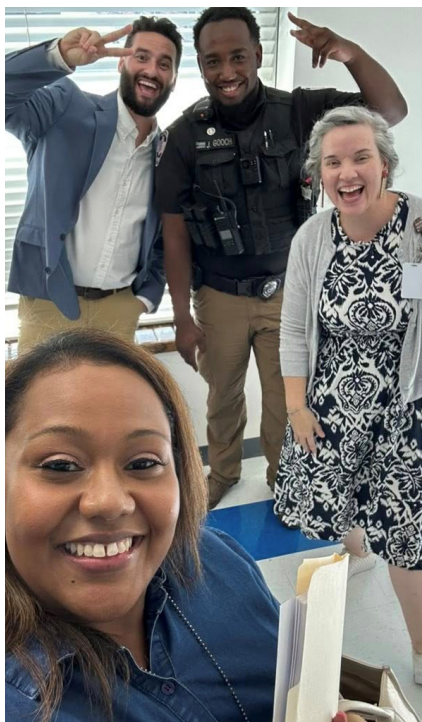
- ▶ Strengthening early childhood through 12th-grade academic programs
- ▶ Increasing access to advanced coursework, dual credit, AP, and CTE
- ▶ Expanding enrichment, extracurriculars, and real-world learning experiences

O OPTIMIZING OPERATIONS

Efficient, effective district operations support student success. Water Valley will strengthen internal systems, communication, scheduling, and resource management.

Key focus areas:

- ▶ Improving staffing structures and workload balance
- ▶ Increasing use of data systems for decision-making
- ▶ Streamlining internal processes to reduce inefficiencies



B BUILDING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Efficient, effective district operations support student success. Water Valley will strengthen internal systems, communication, scheduling, and resource management.

Key focus areas:

- ▶ Improving staffing structures and workload balance
- ▶ Increasing use of data systems for decision-making
- ▶ Streamlining internal processes to reduce inefficiencies

L LEVERAGING FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Water Valley must use every available dollar wisely.

Key focus areas:

- ▶ Transparent budgeting aligned to student needs
- ▶ Seeking grants and additional revenue streams
- ▶ Prioritizing competitive salaries within financial realities
- ▶ Maintaining strong financial stewardship for long-term stability

U UPHOLDING SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE SCHOOLS

Safety and well-being are essential for learning.

Key focus areas:

- ▶ Student mental health supports
- ▶ Bullying prevention
- ▶ School safety protocols and emergency readiness
- ▶ Positive behavior systems
- ▶ Partnerships with local law enforcement and mental health agencies

E ELEVATING COMMUNITY TRUST

As a small community, trust and communication matter.

Key focus areas:

- ▶ Improving two-way communication with families
- ▶ Increasing transparency around district decisions
- ▶ Strengthening partnerships with local businesses and organizations
- ▶ Celebrating district achievements publicly





STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND GOALS

Growing Opportunities for Students

GOAL	Expand opportunities that prepare students for college, career, and life.
STRATEGIES	▶ Increase advanced coursework & CTE pathways ▶ Boost enrichment & early childhood supports ▶ Build workforce partnerships (job shadowing, internships) ▶ Strengthen middle school transition supports

G

Optimizing Operations

GOAL	Strengthen district systems that support teaching and learning.
STRATEGIES	▶ Improve communication ▶ Strengthen scheduling & staffing systems ▶ Enhance technology support ▶ Reduce teacher overload & streamline processes

O

Building Academic Excellence

GOAL	Ensure high-quality instruction for every student
STRATEGIES	▶ Build a rigorous, aligned instructional program ▶ Strengthen supports for struggling learners ▶ Expand professional development and coaching ▶ Use data consistently to monitor student progress

B

Building Academic Excellence

GOAL	Align budget decisions to strategic priorities.
STRATEGIES	▶ Prioritize student-centered budgeting ▶ Expand grants and partnerships ▶ Improve teacher recruitment through competitive pay ▶ Strengthen long-range financial planning

L

Building Academic Excellence

GOAL	Build safe, welcoming schools where students belong.
STRATEGIES	▶ Strengthen PBIS and behavior expectations ▶ Improve bullying prevention ▶ Expand mental health services ▶ Build programs that promote belonging and culture

U

Elevating Community Trust

GOAL	Strengthen communication and community engagement.
STRATEGIES	▶ Improve two-way communication ▶ Expand partnerships with businesses & churches ▶ Celebrate district successes ▶ Maintain transparent reporting

E



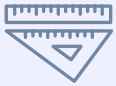
MEASURES OF SUCCESS KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS



Student Achievement Growth



Attendance and Discipline Indicators



Teacher Retention and Recruitment Benchmarks



Stakeholder Satisfaction



CTE Participation and Postsecondary Readiness



Financial Transparency Metrics



Community Partnership Engagement Rate

IMPLEMENTATION AND TIMELINE

YEAR ONE FOCUS

Strengthen communication systems



Expand CTE exploration



Launch behavior and belonging initiatives



Establish monitoring dashboards



GO BLUE!
Staff alignment training

FIVE YEAR CYCLE

Annual review each Spring ► Board updates and public reporting annually

**Full plan refresh in Year 5*





GO BLUE!