

Houston County School System Strategic Improvement Plan



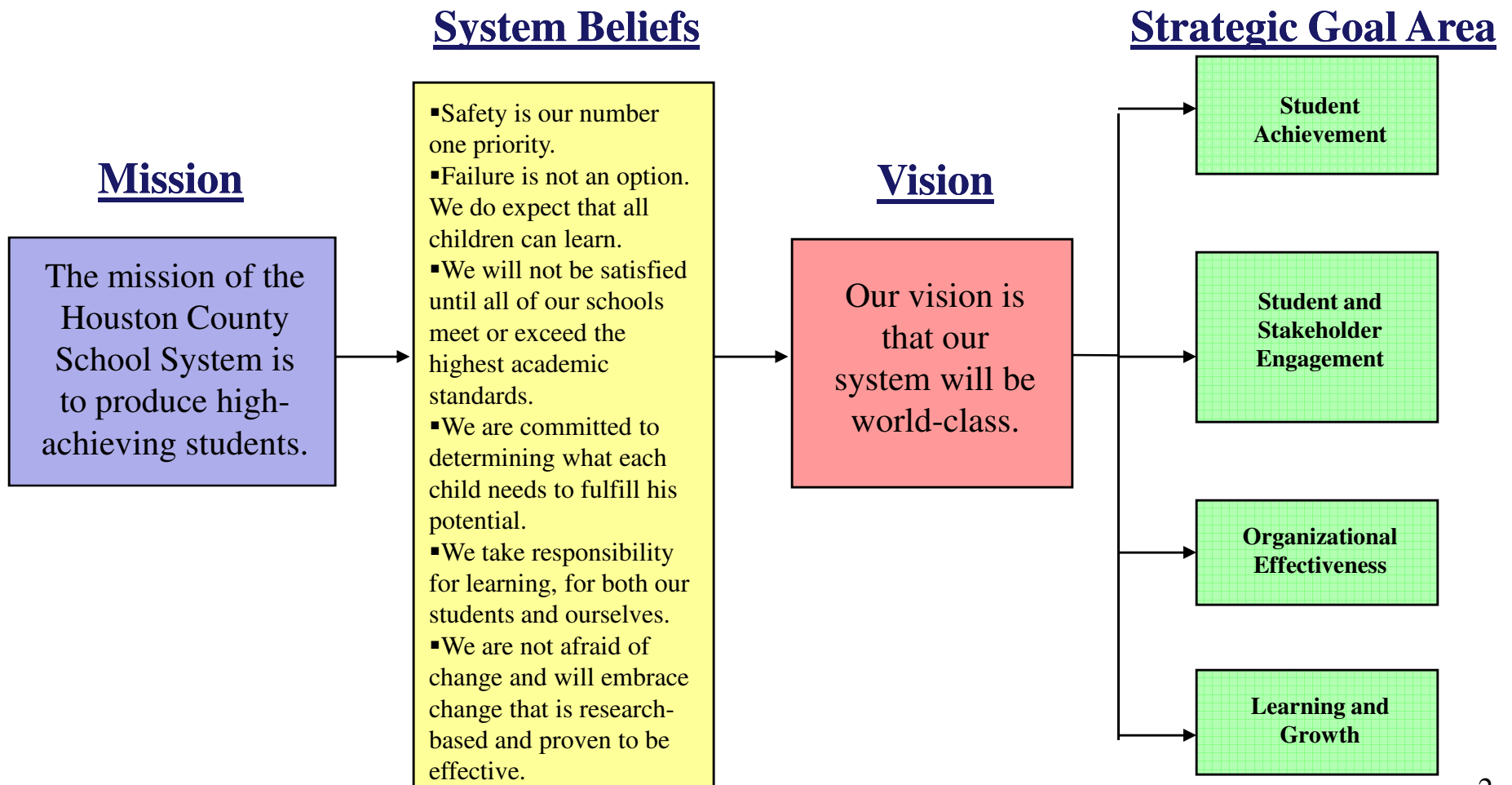
Mr. David Carpenter, Superintendent

Approved by the Houston County Board of Education

October 21, 2008



Houston County School System Strategic Improvement Plan

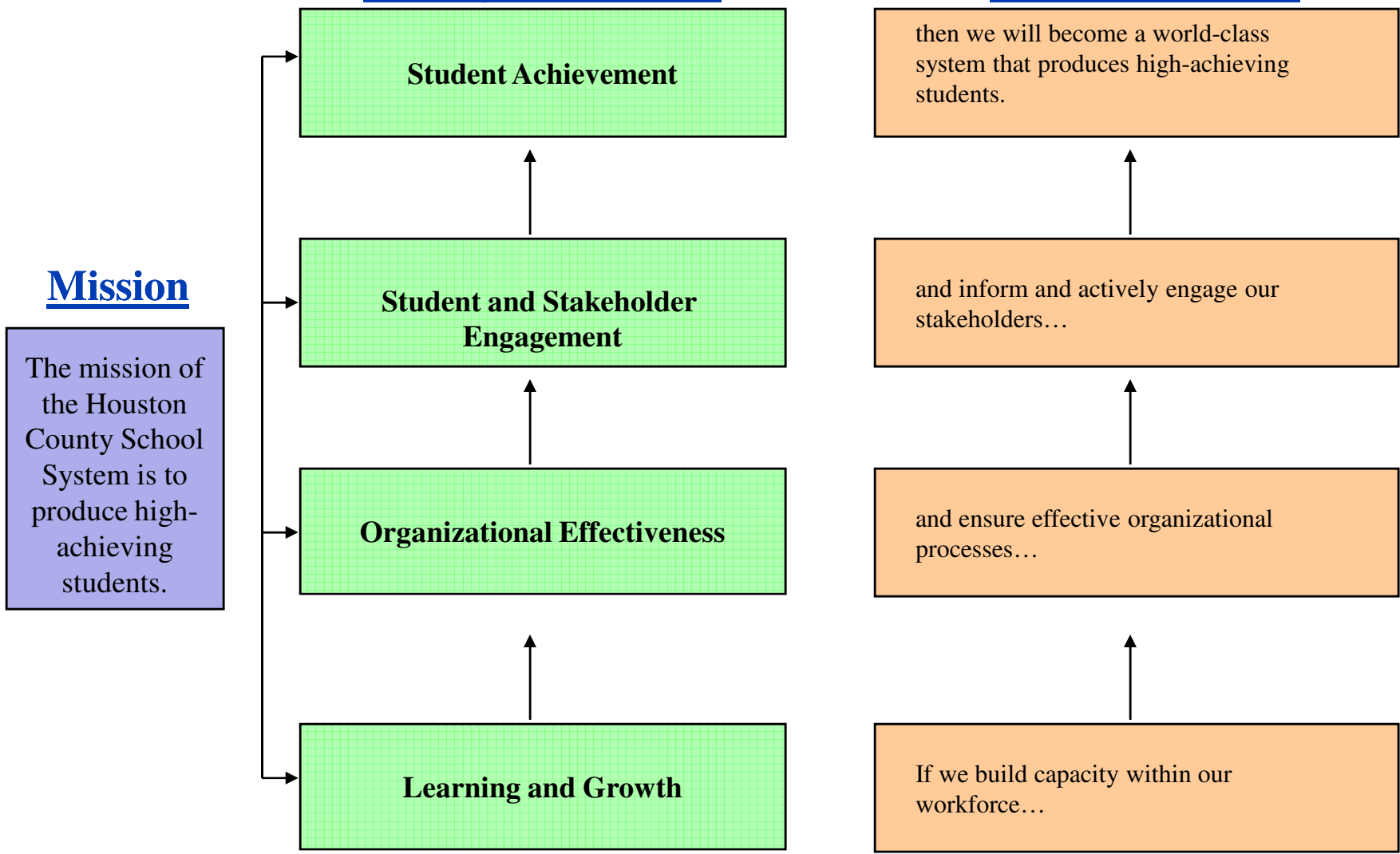




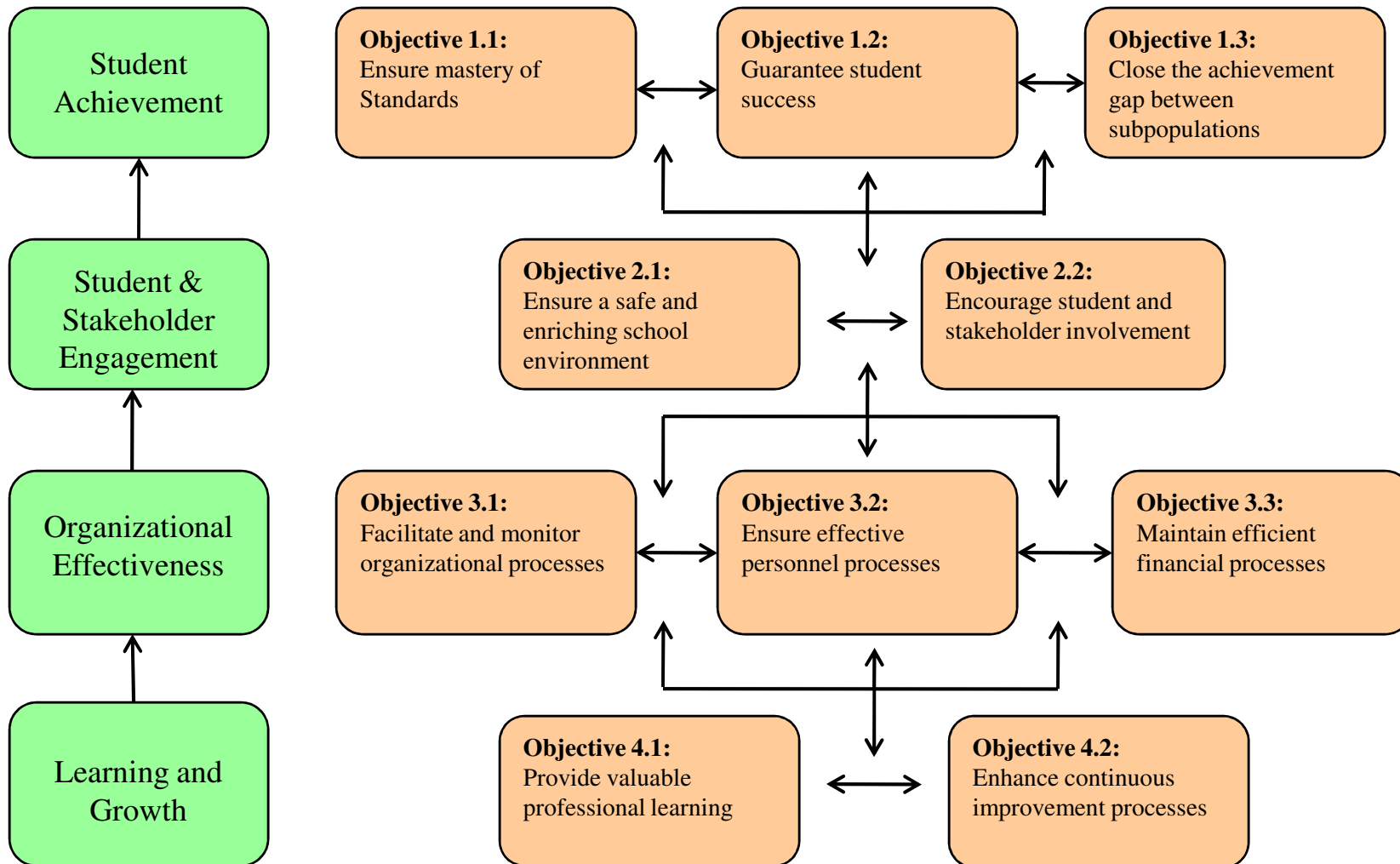
Strategic Improvement Plan

Strategic Goal Area

Cause and Effect



Strategy Map



Performance Objectives

Strategic Goal Area

Mission

The mission of the Houston County School System is to produce high-achieving students.

Student Achievement

- 1.1 Ensure mastery of the Standards
- 1.2 Guarantee Student Success
- 1.3 Close the Achievement Gap between subpopulations

Student and Stakeholder Engagement

- 2.1 Ensure a safe and enriching school environment
- 2.2 Encourage student and stakeholder involvement

Organizational Effectiveness

- 3.1 Facilitate and monitor organizational processes
- 3.2 Ensure effective personnel processes
- 3.3 Maintain efficient financial processes

Learning and Growth

- 4.1 Provide valuable professional learning
- 4.2 Enhance continuous improvement processes

Goal 1: Student Achievement

Initiatives

Performance Measures

**Objective 1.1:
Ensure mastery
of Standards**

1.1.A: Provide high quality instruction that is aligned with the Georgia Performance Standards and other identified curriculum standards

1.1.B: Develop high and clear expectations for all students by implementing standards-based classroom processes

1.1.C: Implement a balanced assessment approach to include diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments to design and adjust instruction to maximize student achievement

1.1.A: % of student graduating (Balanced Scorecard)
1.1.A: % of schools meeting AYP Status (Balanced Scorecard)
1.1.A: % of employees utilizing standards implementation resources on SharePoint (Balanced Scorecard)
1.1.A: % of content areas with grade level curriculum documents (Balanced Scorecard)

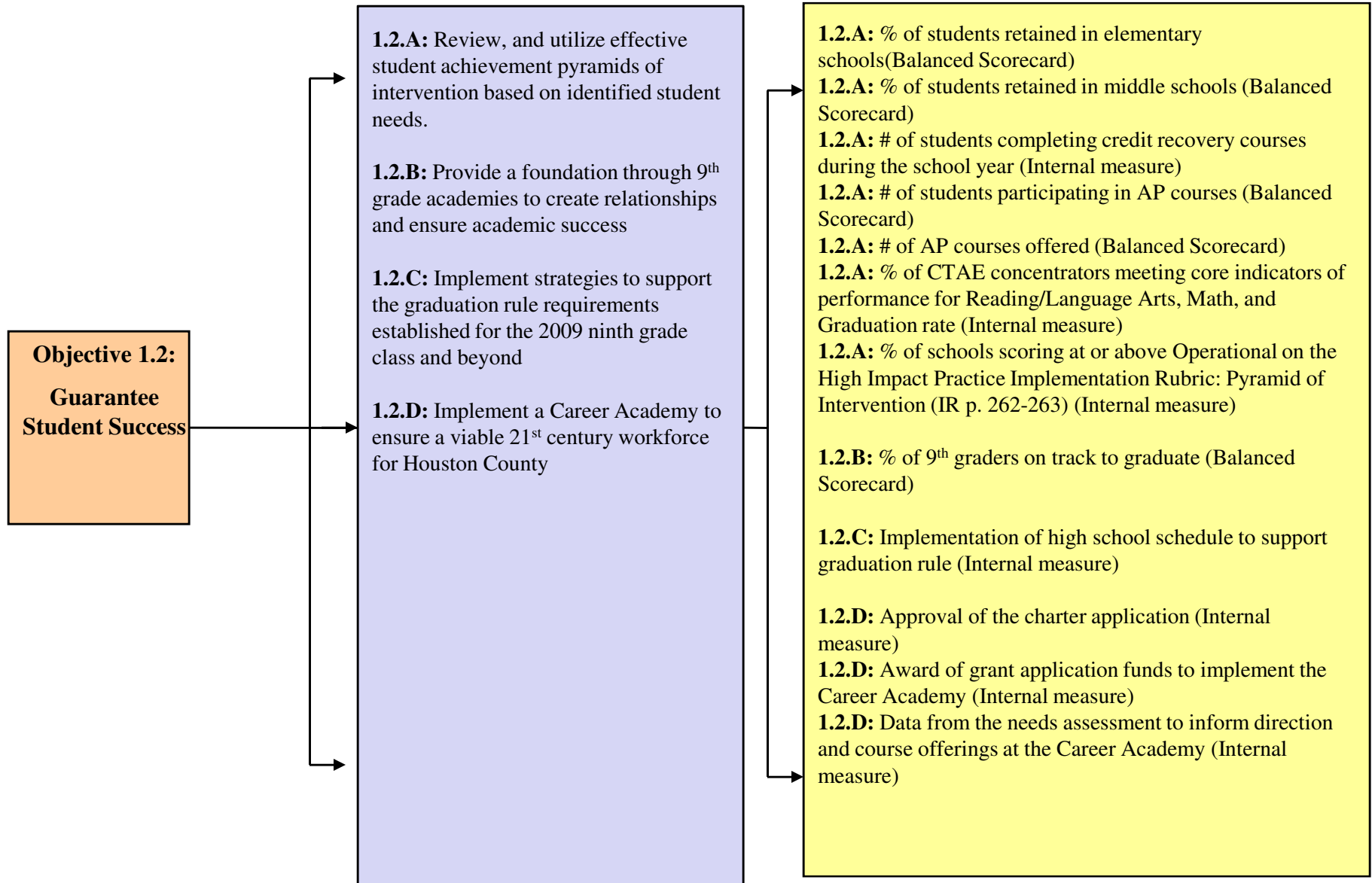
1.1.B: # of walkthroughs conducted to monitor the implementation of the 6 system standards-based classroom processes (Internal measure)
1.1.B: % of elementary school classrooms implementing standards-based classroom processes (Internal measure)
1.1.B: % of middle school classrooms implementing standards-based classroom processes (Internal measure)
1.1.B: % of high school classrooms implementing standards-based classroom processes (Internal measure)
1.1.B: % of students meeting or exceeding standards (Balanced Scorecard/Internal measure)

1.1.C: % of grades 3,5, & 8 students meeting or exceeding standards on Reading and Mathematics CRCT assessments (Balanced Scorecard)
1.1.C: % of all first-time test takers with a passing score on the GHSGT (Balanced Scorecard)
1.1.C: % of students meeting or exceeding standards on the following EOCT assessments: 9th grade Literature, American Literature, Algebra 1, Math 1, Geometry, Physical Science, Biology, US History, and Economics (Balanced Scorecard)
1.1.C: % of kindergarten students scoring a 3 on GKIDS (Balanced Scorecard)

Goal 1: Student Achievement

Initiatives

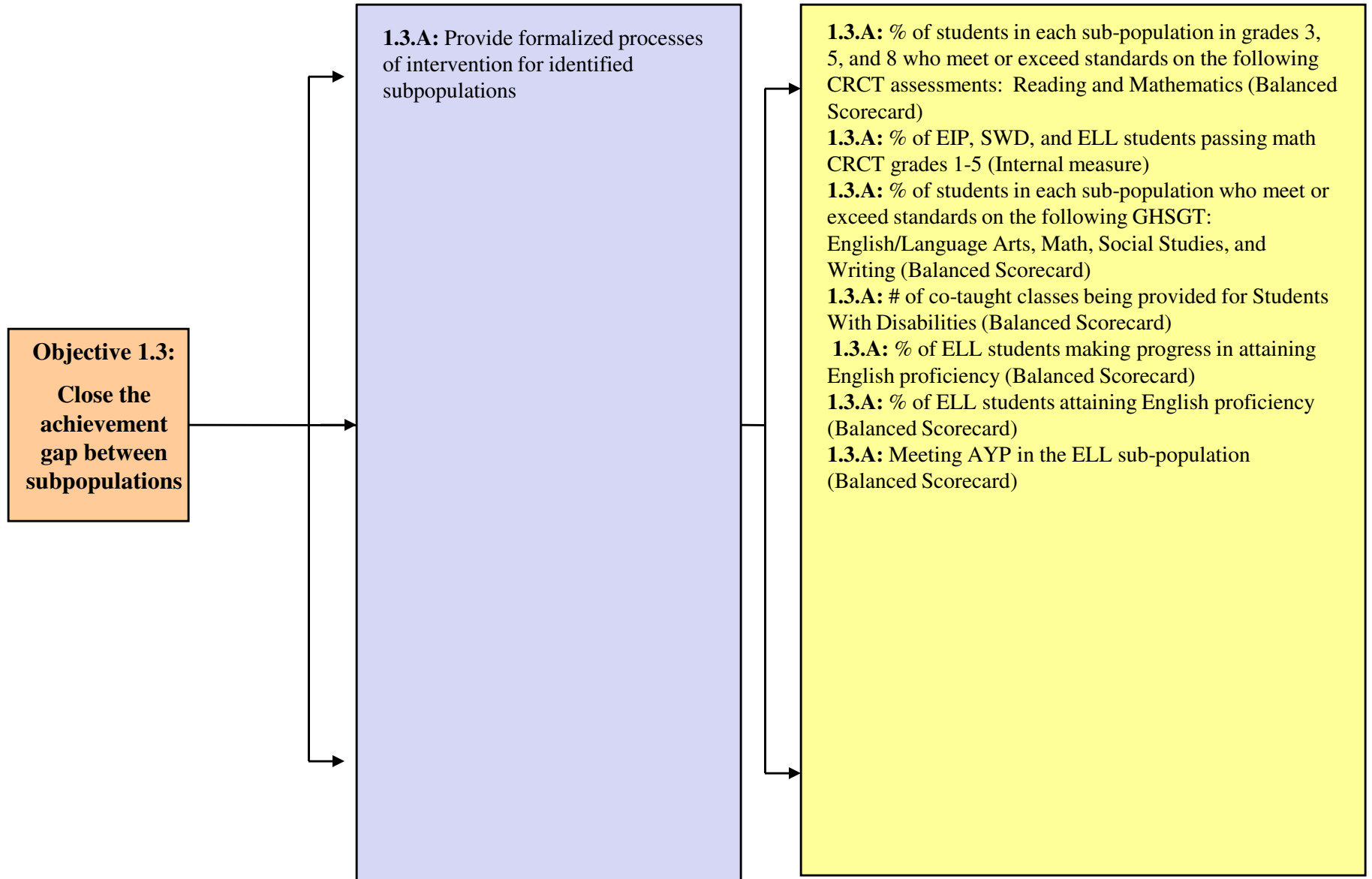
Performance Measures



Goal 1: Student Achievement

Initiatives

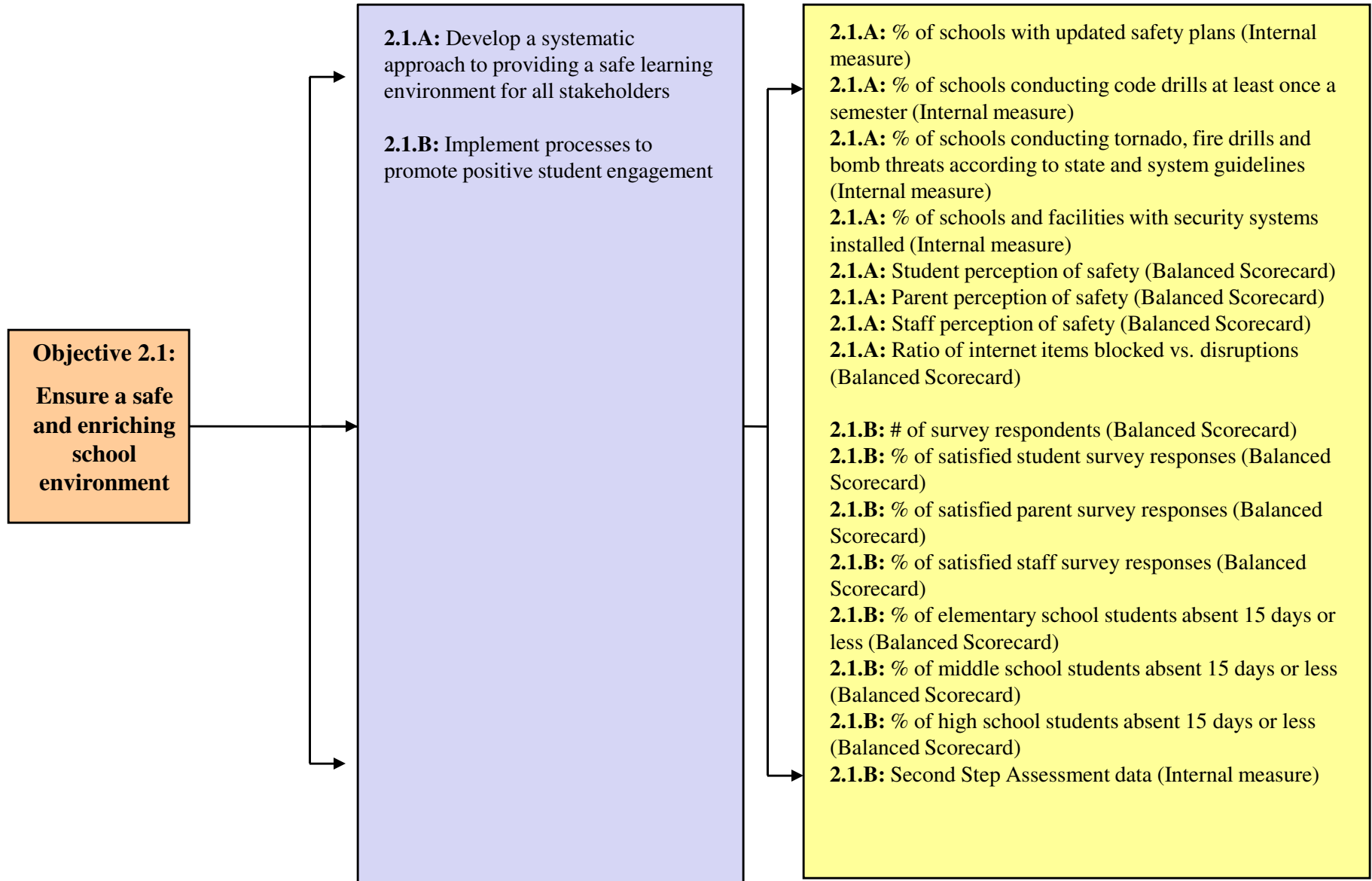
Performance Measures



Goal 2: Student and Stakeholder Engagement

Initiatives

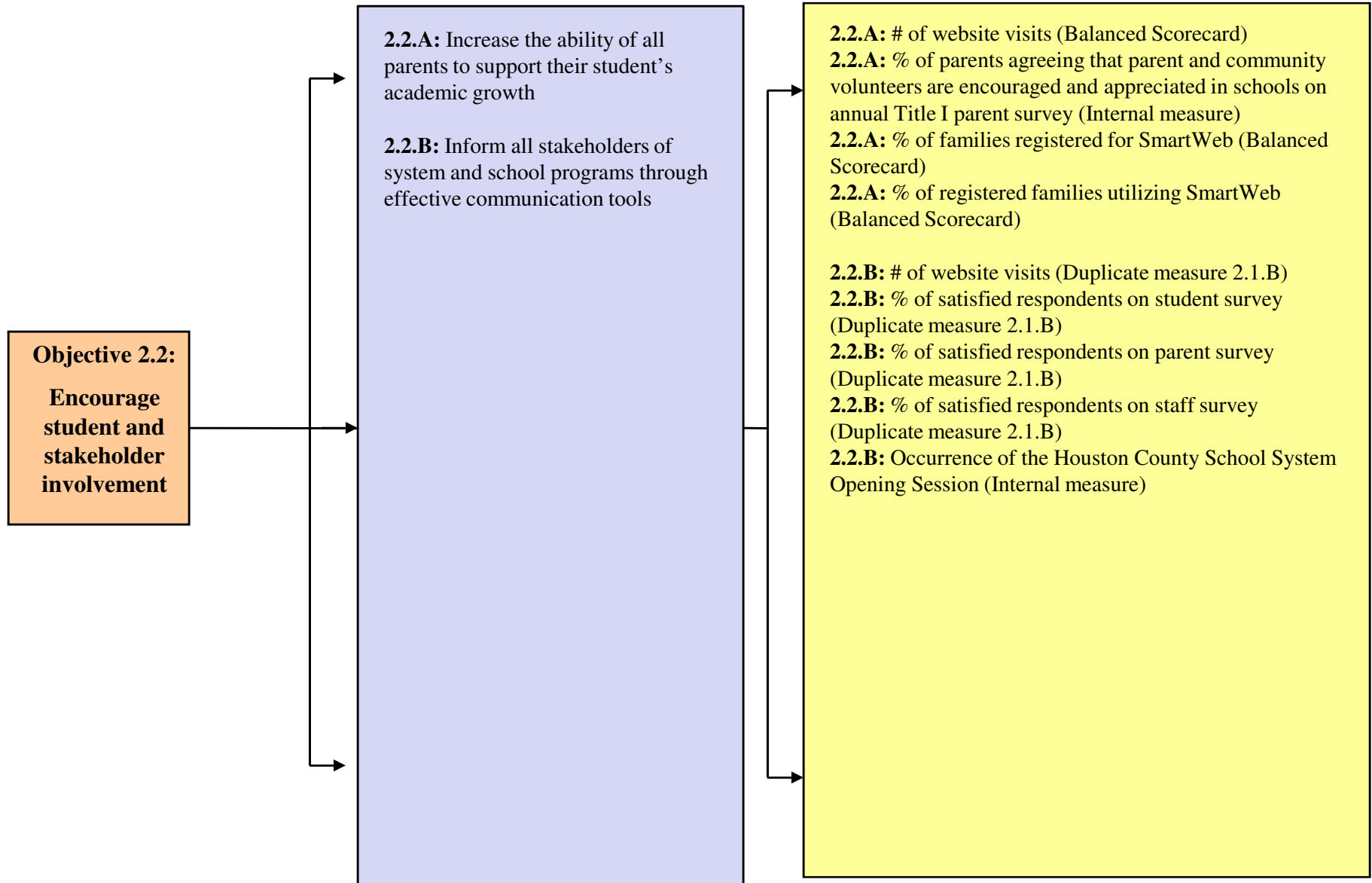
Performance Measures



Goal 2: Student and Stakeholder Engagement

Initiatives

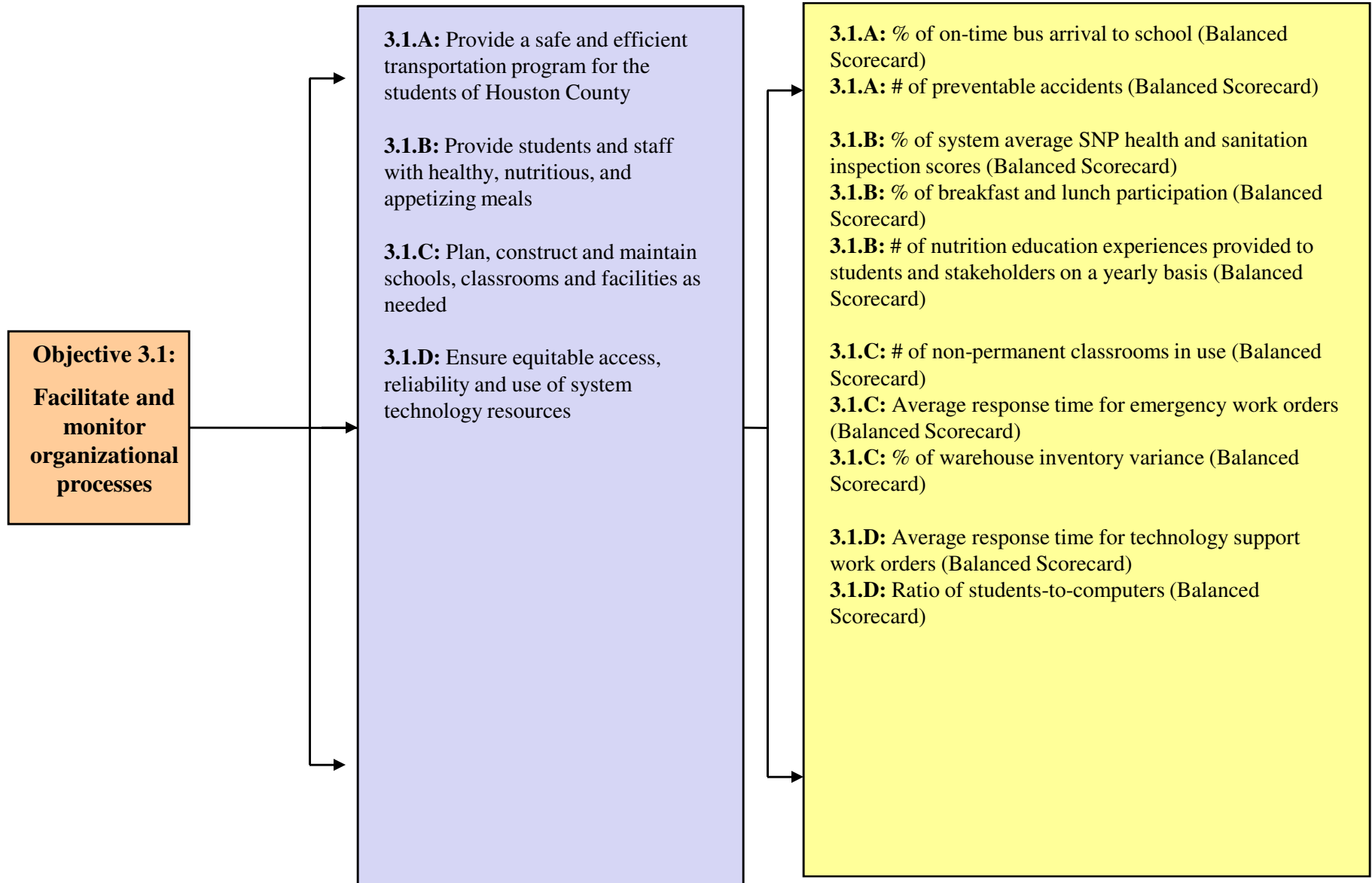
Performance Measures



Goal 3: Organizational Effectiveness

Initiatives

Performance Measures



Goal 3: Organizational Effectiveness

Initiatives

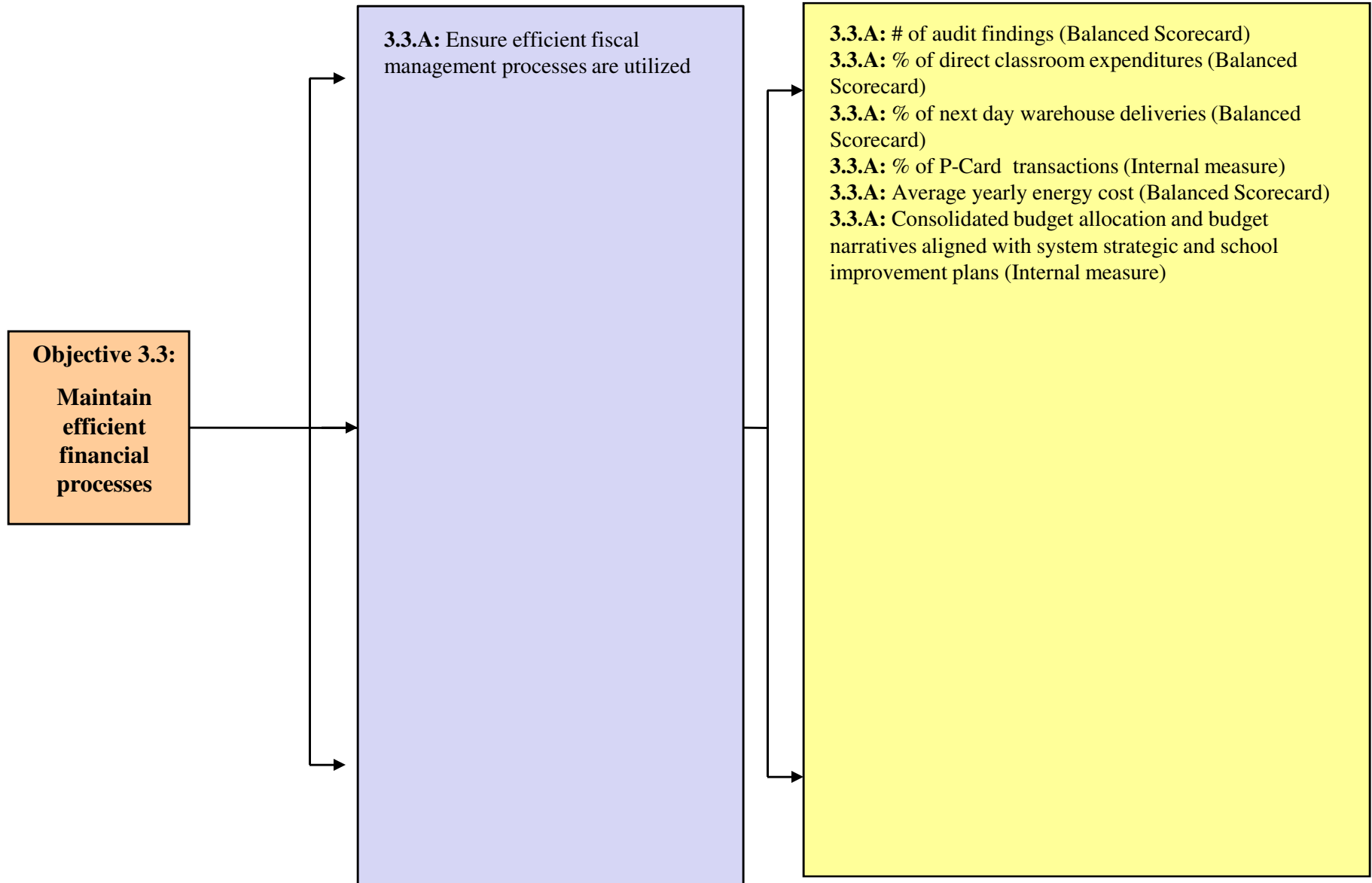
Performance Measures



Goal 3: Organizational Effectiveness

Initiatives

Performance Measures



Goal 4: Learning and Growth

Initiatives

4.1.A: Provide leaders with professional learning focused on producing high achieving students

Performance Measures

- 4.1.A:** Leadership Summit focused on corrective instruction and other best practices to support ongoing interventions for students (Internal measure)
- 4.1.A:** % of satisfied professional learning responses on administrator survey (Balanced Scorecard)
- 4.1.A:** % of satisfied leaders participating in monthly professional learning sessions (Internal measure)
- 4.1.A:** % of satisfied principals participating in LEADing Edge Academy (Internal measure)
- 4.1.A:** % of satisfied leaders and Better Seeking Team members participating in the Leadership Summit (Internal measure)
- 4.1.A:** % of schools scoring at or above Operational on the High Impact Practice Implementation Rubric: Professional Learning - Leadership Strand (IR p. 265) (Internal measure)

Objective 4.1:

Provide valuable professional learning

Goal 4: Learning and Growth

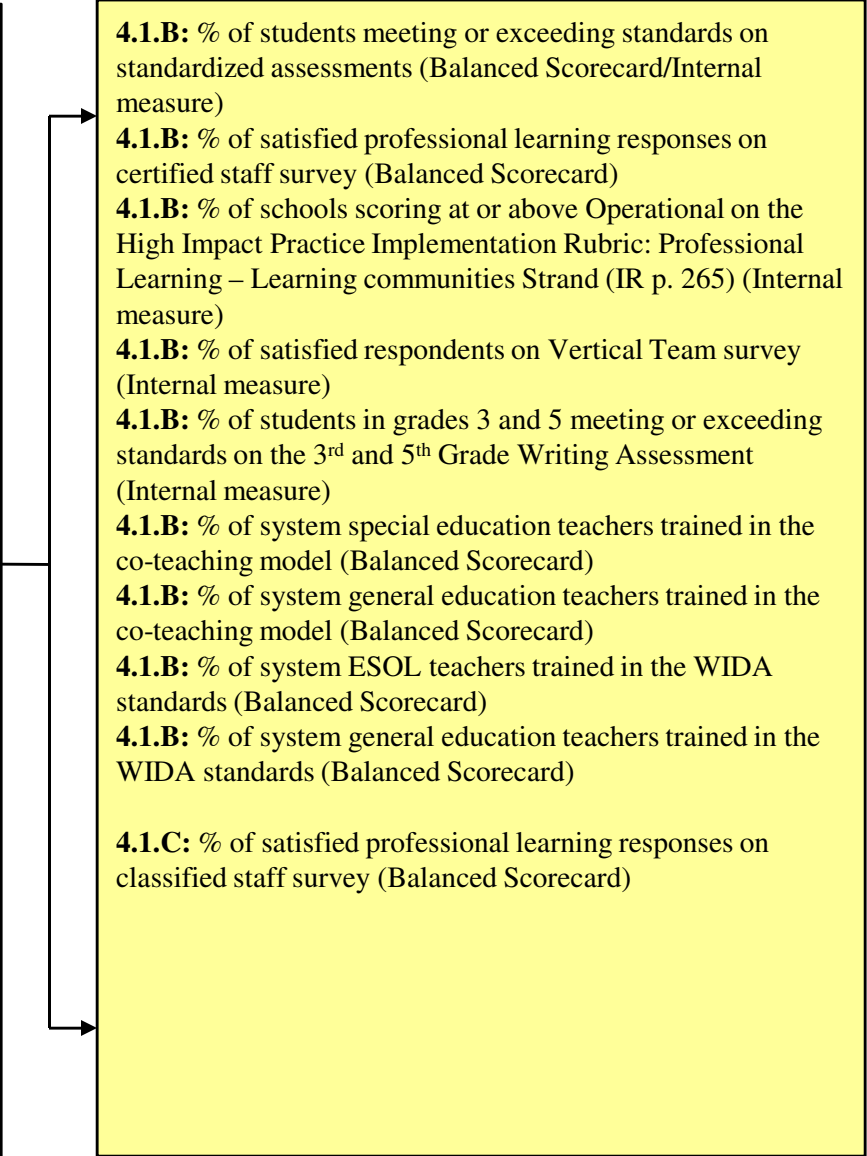
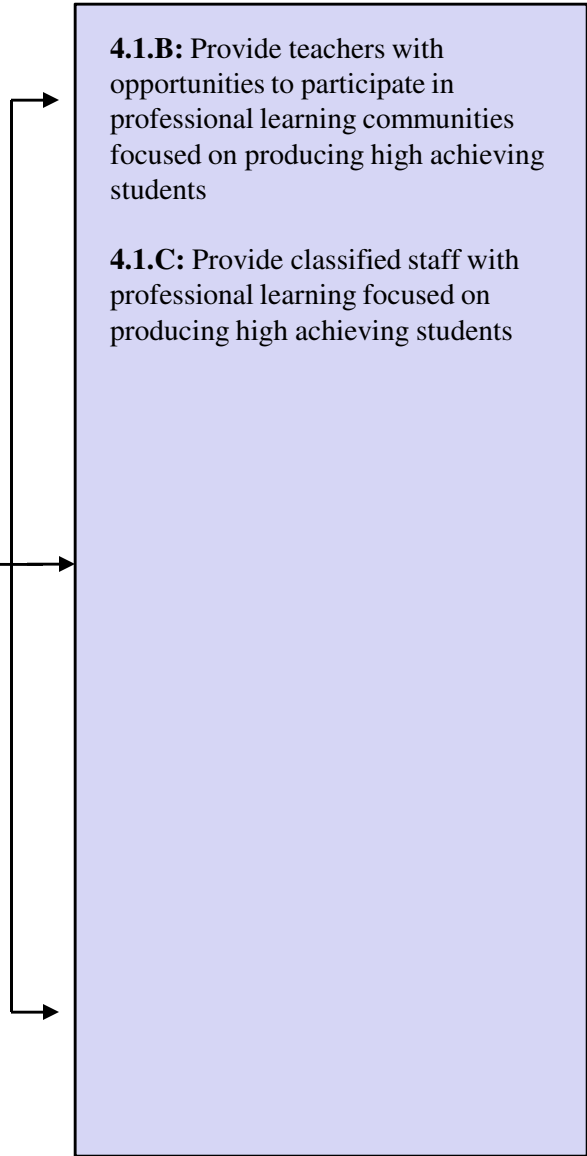
Initiatives

- 4.1.B:** Provide teachers with opportunities to participate in professional learning communities focused on producing high achieving students
- 4.1.C:** Provide classified staff with professional learning focused on producing high achieving students

Performance Measures

- 4.1.B:** % of students meeting or exceeding standards on standardized assessments (Balanced Scorecard/Internal measure)
- 4.1.B:** % of satisfied professional learning responses on certified staff survey (Balanced Scorecard)
- 4.1.B:** % of schools scoring at or above Operational on the High Impact Practice Implementation Rubric: Professional Learning – Learning communities Strand (IR p. 265) (Internal measure)
- 4.1.B:** % of satisfied respondents on Vertical Team survey (Internal measure)
- 4.1.B:** % of students in grades 3 and 5 meeting or exceeding standards on the 3rd and 5th Grade Writing Assessment (Internal measure)
- 4.1.B:** % of system special education teachers trained in the co-teaching model (Balanced Scorecard)
- 4.1.B:** % of system general education teachers trained in the co-teaching model (Balanced Scorecard)
- 4.1.B:** % of system ESOL teachers trained in the WIDA standards (Balanced Scorecard)
- 4.1.B:** % of system general education teachers trained in the WIDA standards (Balanced Scorecard)
- 4.1.C:** % of satisfied professional learning responses on classified staff survey (Balanced Scorecard)

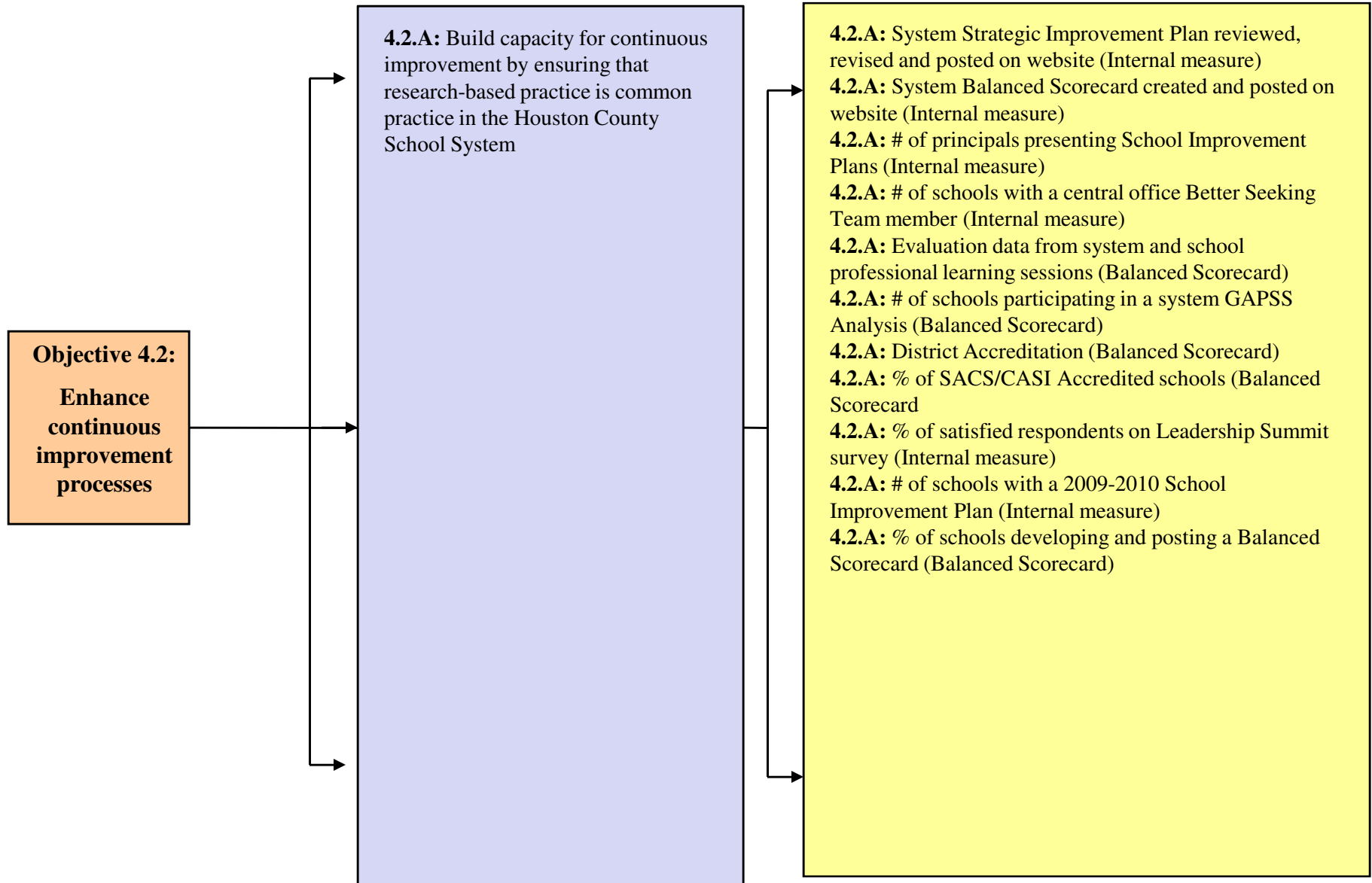
Objective 4.1:
Provide valuable professional learning



Goal 4: Learning and Growth

Initiatives

Performance Measures

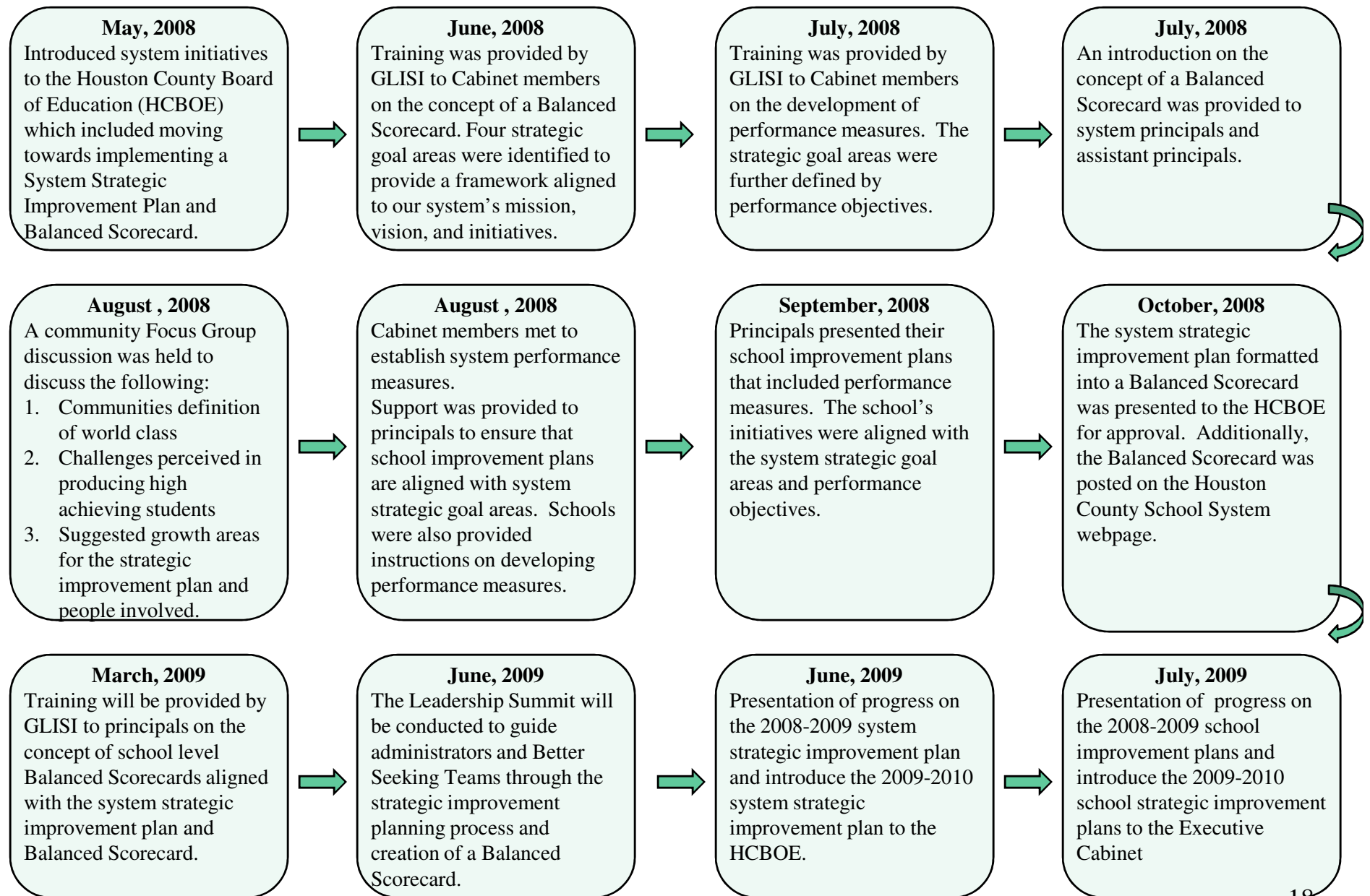




Appendix

- Timeline for implementation of the Houston County Strategic Improvement Plan and Balanced Scorecard
- Glossary
- Acronym List
- Synopsis of Community Focus Group meeting

Implementation Timeline for the Balanced Scorecard



Glossary

- Action Steps – Individual steps needed to be completed to execute an initiative which is linked to a performance objective.
- Action Plans – A set of initiatives with individual action steps to implement one of the stated performance objectives. Action plans should reflect cost implications, resources needed, personnel responsible and timeframe for completion.
- Balanced Assessment - A variety of effective assessments utilized to monitor student progress and inform instructional practices.
- Balanced Scorecard – A measurement-based strategic management tool, originated by Robert Kaplan and David Norton, which provides a method of aligning business activities to the strategy, and monitoring performance in strategic goal areas over time. The “Balanced” perspectives of the Scorecard take into account the cause and effect relationships of strategies and results, ensuring that all the drivers of performance are managed and aligned. The Scorecard is a strategic management tool which supports performance planning, alignment, measurement, monitoring and communicating about performance needs and results.
- Baseline – Is the current level of performance against the target, usually expressed as a number.
- Beliefs – The fundamental convictions and core values that guide the actions and decisions of an organization.
- Benchmarking – Identifying high performing-peers, then comparing to their standards, best practices and results.
- Better Seeking Team – a representative group of teachers and administrators focused upon instructional goals and issues, working collaboratively and consistently to contribute to the develop, revision, and implementation of the School Improvement Plan.
- Career Academy - serves high school students. Primary goals include increasing 1.) the graduation rate, 2.) the number of students in work-based learning programs, and 3.) the number of students earning WorkReady certificates.
- Concentrator – a high school student who took at least 3 CTAE courses in a particular program area during high school.
- Co-Teaching - an instructional arrangement that involves two teachers with different expertise sharing instructional responsibility
- Diagnostic Assessment - A variety of assessment tasks and processes used to determine students’ level of knowledge, skills, and understandings at the beginning of a course, grade level, unit, and/or lesson.
- Formative Assessment - Formal and informal assessment processes and tasks used throughout a unit or course of study to monitor student progress, elicit evidence of learning gaps and strengths, and provide feedback to students so that they can adjust their learning process.
- Georgia Performance Standards (GPS)– The GPS go into much greater depth than the content standards used in the previous curriculum. The performance standard incorporates the content standard, which simply tells the teacher what a student is expected to know (i.e., what concepts he or she is expected to master), and expands upon it by providing three additional items: suggested tasks, sample student work, and teacher commentary on that work.

Glossary

- Initiatives – A plan, program, project, process, or task put in place to affect a positive impact on progress towards one of the stated performance objectives.
- Mission – Defines why an organization exists; the organizations purpose/core work; all functions, actions and decisions should support the mission.
- Performance Measures – Are quantifiable standards used to evaluate and communicate performance against targeted results. Performance Measures are tools used to determine whether organizations, groups and individual performers are meeting performance objectives and moving toward the successful implementation of strategy.
- Performance Objectives – Are concise statements that describe the specific things within each strategic goal or goal area that must be performed well for an organization to execute its strategy and achieve its desired results. Performance Objectives along with specific measures will be used to determine progress towards overall strategic goals or goal areas. Performance objectives should be stated in action terms, beginning with an action verb, such as improve, increase, reduce, initiate, develop, lower, become, achieve, etc.
- Performance Targets – Desired levels of performance for performance measures, usually expressed as a number, and expected to be achieved by a specific time.
- Professional Learning Communities - Adults in the school are organized into learning communities whose goals are aligned with those of the school and system.
- Pyramid of Intervention - A formalized process of differentiated strategies to support students.
- School Improvement Plan – The school improvement plan is aligned to the system balanced scorecard and system improvement plan and services as the strategic and operational plan for the school.
- Stakeholders – An individual or group with an interest in the success of an organization in delivering intended results and maintaining the viability of the organizations services. In education these include staff, teachers, parents, community, etc.
- Standards-Based Classroom - A standards-based classroom is a classroom where teachers and students have a clear understanding of the expectations (standards). They know what they are teaching/learning each day, why the day’s learning is an important thing to know or know how to do, and how to do it. They also know that they are working toward meeting standards throughout the year...that standards-based learning is a process not an event.

Performance standards provide clear expectations for assessment, instruction, and student work. They define the level of work that demonstrates achievement of the standards, enabling a teacher to know “how good is good enough.” The performance standards isolate and identify the skills needed to use the knowledge and skills to problem-solve, reason, communicate, and make connections with other information. Performance standards also tell the teacher how to assess the extent to which the student knows the material or can manipulate and apply the information.

Glossary

- Rubric - Describes what work must look like to be fully operational, operational, emergent, or not addressed. Rubrics are needed to minimize subjective judgments of performance assessments.
- Second Step Prevention Program – Program designed to promote positive student engagement.
- SmartWeb - database program that allows teachers to input student attendance and grades and allows access for parents and students to view student data.
- Strategic Goal Areas or goals - Educational balanced scorecards typically have between three to five strategic goal areas which provide a framework to describe the organization’s mission, vision and strategy. Strategic Goal Areas are often referred to as Strategic Perspectives because they highlight the key strategic areas that an organization must attend to as it moves to achieve its mission.
- Strategy – How an organization intends to accomplish its vision and maximize future success; a focused approach, or “game plan”. Strategy is systematic and makes the value proposition for the connection of the organization’s mission, goals, objectives and initiatives.
- Strategy Map – A visual display of the aligned strategy elements of a strategic direction/plan. It displays the cause-effect relationship among the objectives that make up the organizations strategy. It usually shows the strategic goal areas (perspectives) on the left side of the chart with the performance objectives mapped beside each linked by cause and effect arrows.
- Student Engagement - the student is involved with a task, activity or work that is associated with a result or outcome that has clear meaning and relatively immediate value
- Summative Assessment - Formal assessments administered at key juncture points in a student’s education (e.g., at the conclusion of a unit, grading period, course of study) to evaluate the extent to which they have mastered required GPS and related learning goals.
- System Improvement Plan (System Strategic Improvement Plan) – The system level improvement plan that is aligned with system strategic goals or goal areas and serves as the strategic and operational improvement plan for the school system. The system improvement plan is based on a continuous improvement approach.
- Title I - Federal program designed to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain high-quality education and reach proficiency on state academic achievement standards.
- Vision – The statement of an organization’s picture of future success which communicates; where it wants to be in the future. The vision helps to determine the organization strategic perspectives.

Acronym List

- AP - Advanced Placement
- AYP - Adequate Yearly Progress
- CRCT - Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests
- CTAE – Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education
- EIP - Early Intervention Program
- ELL - English Language Learners
- EOCT - End-of-Course Tests
- ESOL - English to Speakers of Other Languages
- GAPSS – Georgia’s Keys to Quality - Georgia Assessment of Performance on School Standards
- GHS GT - Georgia High School Graduation Tests
- GHS WT - Georgia High School Writing Test
- GLISI - Georgia’s Leadership Institute for School Improvement
- GKIDS - Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills
- GPS - Georgia Performance Standards
- IR - Georgia’s Keys to Quality – Implementation Resource
- LEADing Edge Academy - Learning, Energized, Accountable, Disciplined
- NCLB - No Child Left Behind
- SACS CASI - Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement
- SNP – School Nutrition Program
- SK – Georgia’s Keys to Quality – School Keys
- SWD – Students with Disabilities
- WIDA - World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA)

Houston County Schools Strategic Planning

Focus Group Synopsis

August 12, 2008, 6:00 PM

- Attending: Karl Abernathy; Jimmy Autry; Shaw Blackmon; David Carpenter; Wanda Creel; Paula Dougherty; Ed Dyson; Tim Helms; Toby Hill; Patsy Hutto; Cora Fells-Gibson; Cindy Graver; Robin Hines; James Kinchen; Keith Kratz; Carol Kuhn; Morgan Law; Beth McLaughlin; Johnny Ricks; Ed Rodriguez; Henry Scott; Megan Smith; Amy Tadich; Stephen Thublin; Jerry Walls; Steve Williams; Fred Wilson; James and Gail Yawn.
- Mr. Carpenter welcomed the group asking for verbal feedback from stakeholders in the Houston County School System. He explained that the system is currently going through an accreditation study by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and that this meeting is a part of that study.
- After brief introductions, the group was asked to go to their small discussion groups by Dr. Wanda Creel. The Focus Group Questions were introduced as follows with responses:
 - A. *Our vision is that our system will be world-class. What is your definition of world-class?*
 - *students enabled on a global perspective*
 - *technologically savvy*
 - *solid foundation*
 - *models of excellence in all areas (best practices)*
 - *world class teachers with world class pay*
 - *competitive socially and academically*
 - *recognition*
 - *successful at the next level/future endeavors*

Houston County Schools Strategic Planning Focus Group Synopsis

B. What is working well?

- *financial stewardship*
- *communication*
- *high standards*
- *pro-active vision*
- *relationship with community*
- *safety*
- *youth sports*
- *world class teachers*
- *facilities*
- *gifted*
- *special needs*
- *recognition*
- *energy/camaraderie*
- *school councils*
- *positive culture*
- *SmartWeb/technology*
- *meeting expectations*

B. What needs improvement?

- *security*
- *programs to assist students*
- *graduation rate*
- *smaller high schools*
- *test scores*
- *effort to not lose at-risk children*
- *average children*
- *Title I school teacher support*
- *emphasis on second language*
- *smaller class size*
- *parent involvement*
- *reducing paperwork*
- *differentiated instruction for all students*
- *enhancement of career options*
- *breaking the poverty cycle*
- *creative post-secondary options*
- *more industry certified programs*

Houston County Schools Strategic Planning Focus Group Synopsis

C. *What examples, ideas, and potential challenges exist related to producing high-achieving students?*

- *Parental involvement*
- *Learning/achieving is cool*
- *Funding*
- *Being average is not good*
- *Finding qualified teachers/administrators*
- *Embrace technology and next generation of technology and support it with funding*
- *Major pay raise for teachers – to reward them for staying in the profession*
- *Continue to have a strong buy-in from stakeholders*
- *Legislation*
- *Publicity*

D. *What area would you like to see in the HCSS Strategic Plan that was not included?*

- *Student achievement*
- *Student and stakeholder satisfaction*
- *Organizational effectiveness*
- *Learning and growth*
 - *Virtual schools*
 - *Parental involvement – How?*
 - *Accountability*
- *Student involvement in their future*
- *Parent/community support of the schools*
- *Cool for parents to be involved in the schools (student perception)*
- *Parental training*
- *Joint effort with teachers and parents*
- *Role models*
- *Peer pressure – positive from athletes, scholars, etc.*

Houston County Schools Strategic Planning Focus Group Synopsis

E. Who was not part of this discussion that you feel should have been included?

- *At-risk students – not successful*
- *Successful graduates*
- *Average students*
- *Home-school parents*
- *Private school parents*
- *Recent graduates*
- *Military (young enlisted)*
- *Elected officials*
- *Medical community*
- *Social services*
- *Newspapers/media*