

Sustainability Action Plan

A Roadmap to Healthy and
Sustainable Schools

2026-2031





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FROM THE DESK OF SUPERINTENDENT JOHN MULFORD

Dear Community Members, Families, and Staff,

It is with great pride and enthusiasm that we present our district's first Sustainability Action Plan. This milestone represents a significant commitment to environmental stewardship and our shared responsibility to create a healthier, more sustainable future for our students and community.

The development of this plan reflects our district's values and our recognition that schools play a vital role in addressing environmental challenges. Through this comprehensive framework, we are establishing clear goals and actionable strategies that will guide both our educational programs and our operational practices in the years ahead.

In our classrooms, this plan will inspire hands-on learning opportunities that connect students to real-world environmental issues. Our students will not only learn about sustainability—they will experience it through curriculum integration, outdoor learning spaces, and student-led initiatives. We believe that preparing environmentally literate and engaged citizens should be a core component of education.

In our operations, we are committing to measurable improvements in energy efficiency, waste reduction, and resource conservation. These efforts will reduce our environmental footprint while also modeling the practices we hope to instill in our students. Decisions we make about our facilities, purchasing, and daily operations will be considered through the lens of environmental responsibility.

This Sustainability Action Plan would not have been possible without the dedication and collaboration of numerous stakeholders. I extend my heartfelt thanks to the teachers, staff members, students, parents, and community partners who contributed their time, expertise, and vision to this effort. Your input has been invaluable, and your continued support will be essential as we work together to bring this plan to life.

As we embark on this important journey, I am filled with optimism about what we can accomplish together. The actions we take today will create lasting benefits for our students, our schools, and our entire community. I invite you to read through this plan, engage with its vision, and join us in building a more sustainable future.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "John Mulford". The signature is fluid and cursive.

SUPERINTENDENT JOHN MULFORD
FAYETTEVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

“

Through this comprehensive framework, we are establishing clear goals and actionable strategies that will guide both our educational programs and our operational practices in the years ahead.

”

"The Fayetteville Sustainability Department commends Fayetteville Public Schools for advancing a thoughtful and comprehensive sustainability plan. When our schools go green, our whole community wins. Fayetteville Public Schools' sustainability plan shows that we can save money, cut waste, and give our kids a brighter, healthier future."

Peter Nierengarten, PE
Environmental Director
Sustainability Department
City of Fayetteville, Arkansas

"The FPS Sustainability Action Plan is an exciting aspect of FPS's future. The intentional, collaborative design process and comprehensive nature of the plan are an indication of its strength and broad support. I am excited to see the positive impacts to students, staff, and community, as well as the environment, that will occur as a result of Implementing this plan, and it positions FPS as a leader in school sustainability in Arkansas."

Sophia Stephenson
Executive Director
Arkansas Environmental Education Association





"The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission fully supports the implementation of the Fayetteville Public School District's Sustainability Action Plan. These goals align closely with the expectations set forth by the Education Division within the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission and we hope to continue a successful partnership through collaboration in conservation and outdoor recreation experiences."

Mary Beth Hatch

Chief of Education

Arkansas Game and Fish Commission



STUDENT PERSPECTIVES



*"I'm very glad that our school district is environmentally conscious enough to make a plan such as this. **I love the initiative of getting the younger students involved with the community and the environment,** and the idea of promoting student opinion, too. I look forward to seeing how it is implemented, and am optimistic that it will make positive change."*

Kai Presley, 10th grade Fayetteville High School

*The Adoption of the Sustainability Action Plan means a lot to me because students will get to partake in outdoor hands on activities more often and connect what they're learning with the real world. It provides opportunities for all grade levels to work outdoors with community partners on environmental issues and **ensures that student ideas for improving sustainability are heard and valued across all grade levels.** Ultimately it gives all students the opportunity to be more active in their communities and improve the environment around them.-*

Keller McElroy, 10th grade Fayetteville High School

SUSTAINABILITY HIGHLIGHTS

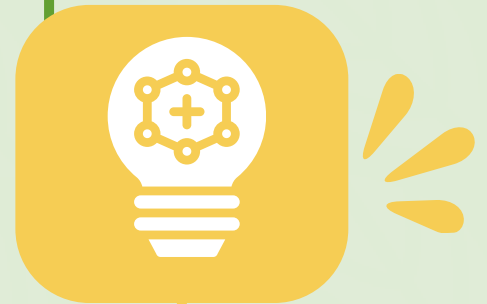
Food Waste Diversion & Composting



As of the fall of 2025 over 25 tons of cafeteria waste has been diverted from landfills through a robust composting partnership with the city of Fayetteville, along with effective share tables, sustainable serving ware, and intentional educational initiatives.

Renewable Energy

Installed two major solar arrays at \$0 cost to FPS have generated over 18 million kWh of clean energy since 2023 and generated over \$700,000 of savings for the district.



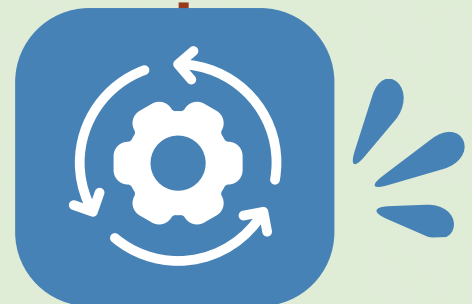
"No Mow" Biodiversity Zones

Prioritizing natural growth over turf maintenance while replacing manicured grass with native vegetation, providing essential food to bees, butterflies, and local wildlife.



Innovative Bulk Milk Initiative

Progressively removing single use cartons in favor off high efficiency bulk dispensers with reusable cups, eliminating daily packaging waste. In six months of Implementation over 90,000 cartons have been diverted from the waste stream



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Fayetteville Public Schools is proud to present its multi-year Sustainability Action Plan, a comprehensive framework designed to accelerate and strengthen sustainable practices across the district. Developed in partnership with the Green Schools National Network (GSNN) and aligned with the impact systems named within the GSNN GreenPrint, the plan was shaped by the collective input of stakeholders during the Spring 2025, Sustainability Leadership Summit, and reflects the district's commitment to environmental stewardship, student engagement, and community collaboration.

Over the summer of 2025, a series of focused meetings refined the intentions into 8 actionable goals, that include 25 supporting goals, actions and projected evidence. Feedback from students, families, staff, and community partners helped develop the direction and establish clear expectations.. The result is a cohesive, comprehensive plan that provides clear direction and measurable outcomes, positioning Fayetteville Public Schools as a leader in sustainability both regionally and nationally.



FPS VISION

Be the trusted leader in Arkansas public education

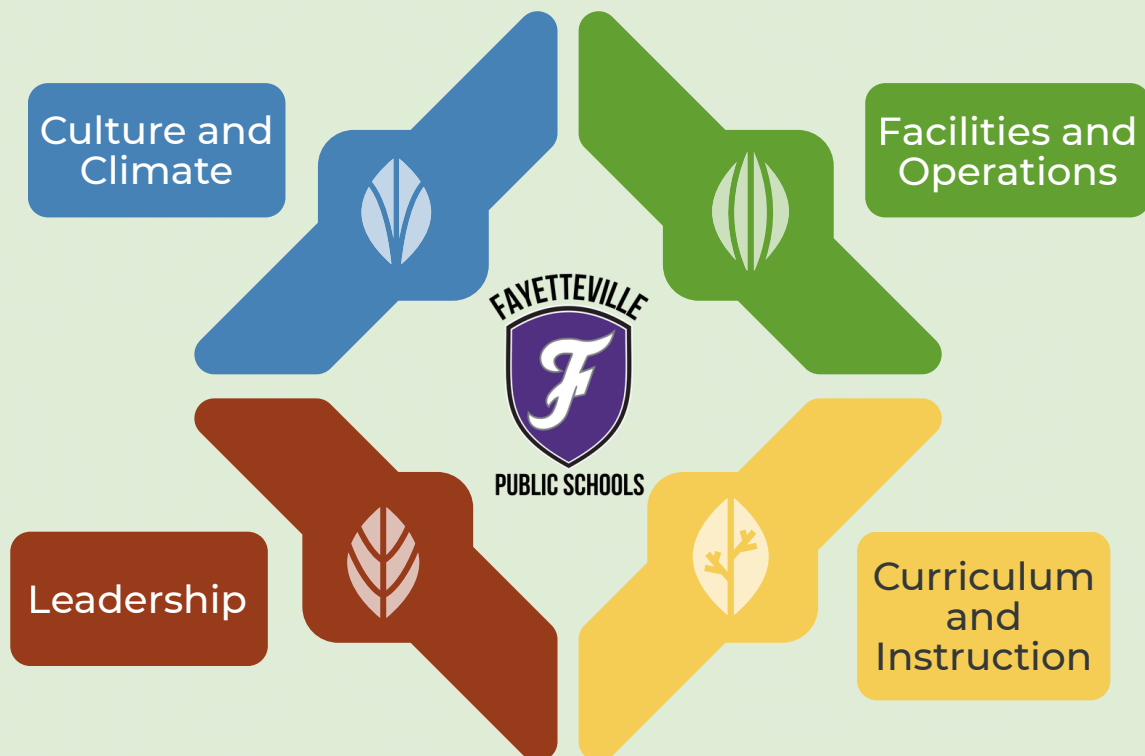
FPS MISSION

We will personalize learning and exceed expectations every day in an inclusive and safe environment.

FPS CORE VALUES

- ★ **Excellence:** outstanding quality and value
- ★ **Leadership:** intentional initiative and influence
- ★ **Inclusion:** variety and diversity
- ★ **Community Engagement:** community connection and involvement
- ★ **Integrity:** Internal consistency and sincerity

One way FPS lives these values is through the Sustainability Action Plan





Curriculum and Instruction

IMPACT SYSTEM

Goal 1

Expand and Embed Outdoor Education Across the Curriculum

FPS will increase equitable access to outdoor learning experiences across grade levels and content areas, using the outdoors as a platform for deeper student engagement, interdisciplinary connections, and environmental literacy.



Supporting Goals

Build teacher capacity by providing opportunities for professional development, peer collaboration, and resources to support standards-based outdoor instruction across subjects.

Actions

- Model and ensure that teachers have first hand experiences they can bring into the classroom.
- Provide a collection of community resources to which educators have access.
- Explore the feasibility of having school “champions” to mentor others in the building on using outdoor education techniques
- Outdoor education principles are embedded in curriculum, staff development, and family engagement, as evidenced by outdoor education documentation.

Incorporate outdoor learning into curriculum maps and instructional practices district-wide, prioritizing meaningful, regular time outdoors.

Actions

- Pacing guides reflect instructional practices which prioritize time outdoors.
- Standards are provided which intentionally align with outdoor learning.

Establish and scale models of success by documenting best practices, supporting site-based leadership, and expanding outdoor partnerships to sustain growth.

Actions

- Celebrate outdoor learning across the district
- Establishing partnerships that can deliver outdoor learning opportunities that are accessible and easy for teachers to utilize
- The district will create and disseminate exemplar models of outdoor education to guide consistent integration across schools and support staff development.

Leverage outdoor learning to improve student engagement, well-being, and behavior.

Actions

- Increase positive behavior, prosocial interaction, and improve self-regulation and impulse control through nature-based learning experiences.
- Involve students in the design, maintenance, and stewardship of outdoor learning environments.
- Design school facilities that prioritize views of the natural environment through thoughtful site planning and wellness-focused architecture.
- Students will demonstrate readiness for outdoor learning by articulating their current lessons and explaining the significance of connecting academic content to the natural environment.



Curriculum and Instruction

IMPACT SYSTEM

Goal 2

Empower Students Through Authentic, Project-Based Sustainability Learning

FPS will expand opportunities for students to lead meaningful sustainability-focused projects that are interdisciplinary, standards-aligned, and grounded in authentic problem solving.



Supporting Goals

Build teacher capacity to design and facilitate project-based, student-centered learning experiences that connect sustainability with core academic content

Actions

- Offer PD opportunities on Authentic, Project-Based Sustainability Learning Including outdoor learning experiences
- Design FPS logo/ graphics that embody nature, outdoors, connection to Ozarks to instill value of Arkansas and our connection to it.

Develop systems to showcase and scale successful student projects that demonstrate leadership, innovation, and impact within schools and the broader community.

Actions

- Celebrate outdoor learning across the district , showcasing student projects
- Fayetteville Public Schools will showcase these sustainability initiatives locally, across the district, and to broader audiences at the state, national, and international levels.

Strengthen community partnerships to provide students with mentorship, authentic audiences, and opportunities for civic engagement around local environmental challenges.

Actions

- Develop strategic partnerships with local businesses and organizations to support student growth and learning by creating a platform that connects the district with willing community partners.





FACILITIES & OPERATIONS

IMPACT SYSTEM

Goal 1

FPS will make data on energy, water, transportation, and waste visible and accessible to students and staff, empowering student-led action to reduce environmental impact and improve operational efficiency.



Supporting Goals

Build teacher capacity to use utility and waste data as instructional tools in core and STEM subjects.

Actions

- Collect Energy, Water, and Waste Data
- Consolidate all data into one system
- Develop training, guides, and examples.

Develop partnership among district, community, and student stakeholders to set and track measurable goals for energy efficiency, recycling, composting, and landfill reduction.

Actions

- Create a committee of district, community, and student stakeholders to develop goals for energy efficiency, recycling, composting, and landfill reduction.
- Develop a sustainability plan for school board adoption.

Establish student teams to audit and reduce school waste, energy, and water use through project based learning.

Actions

- Share Facility plan with students for input
- Identify Student Clubs/Classes
- Develop Inventory of current sustainability effort
- Establish Realistic targets.
- Implement methods for reduction and measurement
- Track data over time.

Celebrate student-driven reductions in waste generation and improvements in school resource performance across the district.

Actions

- Recognize the success of student-driven sustainability efforts
- Showcase progress and achievements in broader school networks.



FACILITIES & OPERATIONS

IMPACT SYSTEM

Goal 2

FPS will use detailed operational data — including energy use, water consumption, and waste streams — to guide facility improvements and provide real-world learning opportunities for students.



Supporting Goals

Develop building-level sustainability dashboards that include waste diversion rates and landfill volume, visible to staff and students.

Actions

- Pilot and document building-level sustainability dashboard implementation.
- Evaluate implementation for future expansion to other district facilities.

Integrate waste audit data into project-based learning and service-learning experiences, especially in science, math, and CTE classrooms.

Actions

- Develop curriculum for waste analysis.
- Develop classes/clubs to work on projects .

Analyze waste data to inform purchasing, cafeteria practices, and event planning, in effort to reduce costs and environmental impact.

Actions

- Regularly analyze waste data to guide purchasing decisions, cafeteria operations, and event planning, aiming to reduce costs and minimize environmental impact.





Leadership

IMPACT SYSTEM

Goal 1

Further support collaborative leadership that integrates sustainability initiatives into discussions, agendas, and initiatives.



Supporting Goals

Foster transparent communication and stakeholder engagement

Actions

- Continue to build the district's network of sustainability advocates, champions, and organizations

Strengthen systems that support innovative teaching practices that foster sustainability.

Actions

- Update FPS job descriptions for sustainability adjacent roles .

Collect and utilize data-driven sustainability decision-making that is shared widely

Actions

- Explore a data dashboard that will be utilized to communicate progress towards sustainability goals.
- Update FPS sustainability web page to reflect current work and goals.

Build district-wide leadership capacity for sustainability

Actions

- Annual report to school board detailing cost savings and student experiences resulting from district sustainability efforts
- Varying cohort of FPS employees and board members to attend Green Schools Conference annually



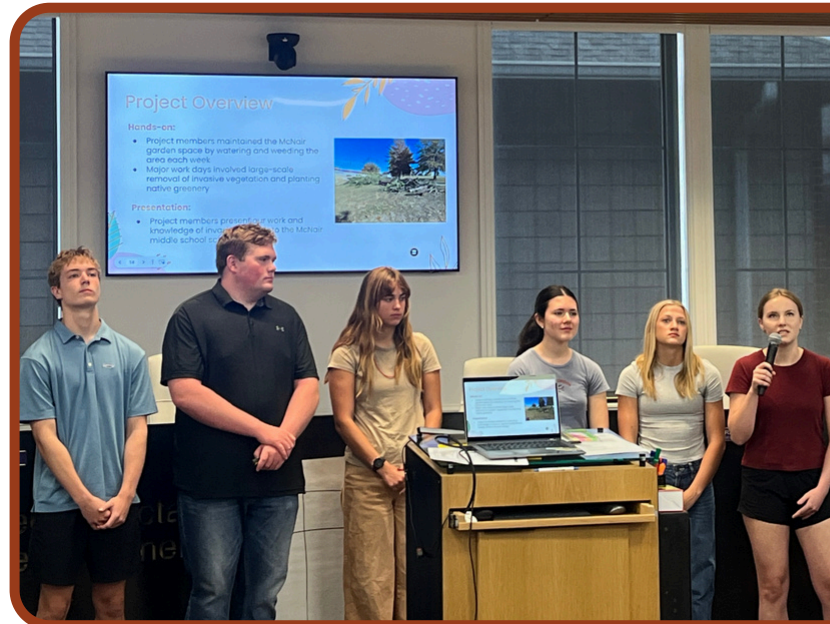


Leadership

IMPACT SYSTEM

Goal 2

Showcase sustainability initiatives that impact educational success, health and well-being, community engagement, facilities resiliency, and financial viability.



Supporting Goals

Create and support consistent public communication of sustainability successes and direction.

Actions

- Create FPS Sustainability brand and utilize across communication channels
- Create one FPS Sustainability video per semester
- Creation of FPS Sustainability specific social media channels

Identify criteria that measures impact of sustainability initiatives

Actions

- Use stakeholder surveys to identify key metrics for assessing sustainability program outcomes.

Develop and integrate incentives that support a deeper commitment to sustainability efforts

Actions

- Conduct a review of staffing needs and associated financial considerations to support sustainability roles, such as school gardening and related initiatives.





Culture & Climate

IMPACT SYSTEM

Goal 1

Strengthen community engagement and connection to FPS sustainability initiatives through consistent communication and involvement invitation



Supporting goals

Identify and elevate sustainability communication opportunities

Actions

- Update the FPS brand/logo to incorporate the four 'impact systems,' aligning with sustainability initiatives to strengthen and elevate communication opportunities around these efforts.

Expand involvement invitation to include a diverse set of community partners, students and family members

Actions

- Expand involvement by engaging a diverse range of community partners, students, and families through targeted outreach and flexible scheduling.



Culture & Climate

IMPACT SYSTEM

Goal 2

Model sustainable practices throughout the FPS educational ecosystem.



Supporting goals

Collect and share data connected to energy, water, and waste usage.

Actions

- Prepare and share semi-annual usage reports with the board to inform decision-making and track progress.

Identify milestones to honor and celebrate while deepening sustainability commitments

Actions

- Under the guidance of building staff, students will identify and set annual goals to advance sustainable practices within their school.

**COMPLETED IN
PARTNERSHIP WITH**



**GREEN SCHOOLS
NATIONAL NETWORK**