**The School Districty of Palm Beach County**

**SouthTech Academy**



**2025-26 Schoolwide Improvement Plan**

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SouthTech Academy

6161 W. Woolbright Rd, Boynton Beach, FL 33437 www.southtechschools.org

# **Demographics**

**Principal: Joshua Wigelsworth**  Start Date: 07.01.2024

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| School Type and Grades Served | High School, 9-12 |
| Primary Service Type | K-12 General Education |
| 2024-25 Title I School | Yes |
| 2024-25 Economically Disadvantaged (FRL) Rate | 84% |
| School Grades History | 2024-2025: A (77%)  2023-2024: A (68%)  2022-2023: A (73%) |
| Total Educator Count | 55 |
| Ineffective Educator % | 0 |
| % Out of Field | 21.6% |
| % Inexperienced Teachers | 49.2% |
| Number of Students Enrolled | 1,168 |

# Purpose and Outline of the SIP

The SIP is intended to be the primary artifact used by the school with stakeholders to review data, set goals, create an action plan and monitor progress. The Florida Department of Education encourages schools to use the SIP as a “living document” by continually updating, refining and using the plan to guide their work throughout the year. This printed version represents the SIP as of August 13, 2025.

# School Mission

SouthTech Academy’s core mission is to graduate students prepared for work, higher education, and productive citizenship.

# School’s History & Vision Statement

SouthTech Academy has a legacy of service and a history of success. As an Area Vocational/Technical Center a reputation was established within the community. The local economy was strengthened as adults and high school students cycled through programs and entered the workforce. Local politics diverted those programs away from SouthTech in 1998, and the school began a three-year transformation into a Career Academy Center that provided academics and career training for high school students during the day and career enhancement training for adults after the high school day ended. During FY03 the District decided to close SouthTech at the end of FY04.

In late FY03, the School Advisory Council, principal, staff, students, parents, and other stakeholders decided that the school's value to students and the community at large more than justified whatever investment was needed for redemption. Florida Statutes provide a process for converting a District school to a charter school. The process required several months of time and a great deal of work, but allows a conversion charter school to operate under a local governing board under the control of State statutes, but free of District policy. A Founding Board of dedicated individuals was formed, community and business support was recruited, and South Technical Community High School was effectively converted to SouthTech Charter High School on July 1, 2004. SouthTech Academy became the new name effective July 1, 2005. At today’s SouthTech Academy, the Career Academy concept has been retained and will continue to expand into additional high wage/high demand areas in the future. In addition, continual emphasis will be placed on increasing academic excellence while providing state-of-the-art career education.

SouthTech is postured to become a national model. A part of this posturing may be attributed to the unique nature of programs, but the level of dedication and support that exists among all stakeholders along with the huge demand for SouthTech's product assures the organization that significance as a national model is both realistic and attainable. The goal of SouthTech Academy is to convert the possibility of national educational significance into reality. The key to achievement of the goal is excellence. The vision focuses on production of educational excellence that justifies and deserves national acclaim. Leadership seeks to enable the existing dedication and high levels of available support to attain optimum results. At the high school level, optimum results develop students prepared for work, higher education, and productive citizenship.

# School Leadership Team

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Title** | **Job Duties and Responsibilities** |
| Carla Lovett | Executive Director | Carla Lovett administers the budget, creates a positive culture for students, employees and families, improves school leadership, and creates the long-term plans for the success of SouthTech students and the school itself. She strives to create positive relationships between SouthTech and the community it supports, working with business and community leaders to bring the best opportunities to SouthTech students. |
| Nicole Handy | Director of Growth and Expansion | The Director of Growth and Expansion is responsible for identifying, evaluating, and pursuing strategic opportunities to broaden SouthTech School’s reach and impact, with a primary focus on increasing access to high-quality Career and Technical Education (CTE) for students. This includes leading efforts to open new campuses and establish satellite programs both statewide and nationwide, ensuring each location is strategically placed to serve diverse student populations and meet local workforce needs. The Director will research emerging industry trends, labor market demands, and educational innovations to guide program development and campus planning. They will cultivate and maintain partnerships with business leaders, community organizations, governmental agencies, and educational institutions to create pathways that connect students to relevant, in-demand career opportunities. Duties include conducting market analyses, preparing feasibility studies, developing proposals, and overseeing the planning, design, and launch of new campuses or schools. |
| Joshua Wigelsworth | Principal | Joshua Wigelsworth oversees all of the operations of SouthTech Academy including SIP implementation on a school-wide scale. He also provides support to the instructional coaches and assistant principals as needed while revising policies and procedures as needed and assessing teaching methods. |
| Erin Kurtz | Assistant Principal | Erin Kurtz oversees academic teachers, ensuring that the SIP is implemented and students are challenged with a rigorous curriculum in all of their courses. She monitors student achievement and tracks the graduation status of every student, ensuring the highest graduation rate possible. She is also the ESP leader, ensuring a nurturing and supportive environment for our new teachers. |
| Joseph Roberts | Assistant Principal | Joseph Roberts tracks student disciplinary referrals and implements the Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports (PBIS) Program. In addition, he is responsible for coordinating and communicating information regarding the Response to Intervention and oversees the ESE department. |
| Meghan Hess | CTE Coordinator | Meghan Hess is the head of all career academies at SouthTech. She works with community partners to offer on-the-job opportunities for our students and works with SouthTech instructors towards the goal of every student graduating with an advanced certification. |
| Kristen Markevich | Assessment & Compliance Specialist | Kristen Markevich acts as the testing manager, federal grant administrator, and ensures compliance with all district, state and national policies. |
| Jonelle Breault | Math Coach | Jonelle Breault serves as an instructional leader for the math department, spearheading on-campus tutorial efforts and data-driven instructional initiatives. |
| Jill Dangelis | ESE Coordinator | Jill Dangelis is responsible for tracking support for all students with IEPs to ensure all accommodations are met and ensures IEPs are up-to-date. His team meets with every student and parent to ensure each child is successful regardless of their circumstances. |
| Kristi Vullo | 504 Coordinator | Kristi Vullo is responsible for ensuring all 504s are up-to-date and accommodations are met. Her team meets with every student and parent to their plan gives them the best opportunity to succeed. |

# School Data – Note the 2023 learning gain and sub group data were not provided by DOE.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| School Grade Component | 2025 | | | 2024 | | | 2023 | | |
| **School** | **District** | **State** | **School** | **District** | **State** | **School** | **District** | **State** |
| **ELA Achievement** | 61% | 61% | 59% | 48% | 57% | 56% | 54% | 52% | 50% |
| **ELA Learning Gains** | 60% | 61% | 59% | 50% | 61% | 58% |  |  |  |
| **ELA Lowest 25%** | 61% | 57% | 55% | 48% | 57% | 54% |  |  |  |
| **Math Achievement** | 73% | 62% | 60% | 71% | 59% | 58% | 40% | 53% | 53% |
| **Math Learning Gains** | 67% | 61% | 59% | 61% | 62% | 59% |  |  |  |
| **Math Lowest 25%** | 78% | 54% | 53% | 59% | 57% | 54% |  |  |  |
| **Science Achievement** | 88% | 62% | 61% | 76% | 60% | 51% | 79% | 56% | 53% |
| **Social Studies Achievement** | 81% | 74% | 74% | 71% | 70% | 70% | 69% | 67% | 65% |
| **Graduation Rate** | 99% | 92% | 90% | 99% | 91% | 88% | 97% | 89% | 87% |
| **Acceleration Rate** | 100% | 70% | 68% | 99% | 70% | 616% | 97% | 70% | 61% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sub Group Data | 2025 | | | 2024 | | | 2022 | | |
| **SWD** | **ELL** | **FRL** | **SWD** | **ELL** | **FRL** | **SWD** | **ELL** | **FRL** |
| **ELA Achievement** | 38% | 44% | 61% | 21% | 25% | 47% | 27% | 33% | 51% |
| **ELA Learning Gains** | 56% | 58% | 59% | 36% | 43% | 52% | 51% | 51% | 57% |
| **ELA Lowest 25%** | 52% | 57% | 62% | 42% | 45% | 51% | 45% | 43% | 42% |
| **Math Achievement** | 62% | 72% | 73% | 69% | 55% | 72% | 17% | 28% | 34% |
| **Math Learning Gains** | 67% | 67% | 65% | 59% | 50% | 64% | 34% | 46% | 44% |
| **Math Lowest 25%** | 67% | 100% | 81% | 59% | 60% | 61% | 44% | 57% | 39% |
| **Science Achievement** | 81% | 77% | 87% | 65% | 72% | 75% | 39% | 65% | 67% |
| **Social Studies Achievement** | 60% | 52% | 81% | 35% | 38% | 71% | 12% | 47% | 52% |
| **Graduation Rate** | 97% | 93% | 99% | 99% | 100% | 99% | 95% | 100% | 97% |
| **Acceleration Rate** | 100% | 100% | 99% | 95% | 97% | 98% | 94% | 92% | 96% |

## Data Reflection

### **1. English Language Arts (ELA)**

* **ELA Achievement:** The school shows growth from **54% in 2023 → 48% in 2024 → 61% in 2025**, surpassing both district (61%) and state (59%) averages in 2025. This indicates a strong rebound after a dip in 2024.
* **ELA Learning Gains:** From **50% in 2024 → 60% in 2025**, the school is improving student growth, though still slightly below district average (61%).
* **ELA Lowest 25%:** From **48% → 61%**, showing meaningful progress in supporting the lowest-performing students.

**Insight:** ELA performance is improving steadily, with targeted interventions likely contributing to gains among struggling students. ELA interventions are showing results, particularly for ELL and FRL subgroups. SWD students improved significantly in 2025 but may need continued targeted support.

### **2. Mathematics**

* **Math Achievement:** Strong improvement from **40% in 2023 → 71% in 2024 → 73% in 2025**, consistently above district (62%) and state (60%) averages by 2025.
* **Math Learning Gains:** From **61% → 67%**, showing steady student progress year over year.
* **Math Lowest 25%:** From **59% → 78%**, a significant increase, demonstrating effective support for struggling math students.

**Insight:** Math programs are highly effective, particularly for students who need additional support, with achievement and growth consistently outperforming district and state levels. Math interventions are highly effective, particularly for ELL and FRL students. SWD performance shows dramatic growth but may require continued support to maintain high achievement.

### **3. Science**

* **Science Achievement:** From **79% in 2023 → 76% in 2024 → 88% in 2025**, showing strong upward trends. The school significantly outperforms district and state averages each year, indicating robust science instruction and curriculum implementation.

**Insight:** Science is a major strength for the school, with achievement rates well above benchmarks. Science is a major area of growth across all subgroups, with SWD showing the largest gains, indicating effective instructional strategies and interventions.

### **4. Social Studies**

* **Social Studies Achievement:** From **69% → 71% → 81%**, with steady growth over three years and consistent outperformance of district and state averages.

**Insight:** Social Studies instruction is strong and continues to improve student outcomes. Social Studies outcomes have improved considerably, especially for SWD and FRL students. ELL students are improving, but continued monitoring and support may be needed.

### **5. Graduation Rate**

* From **97% in 2023 → 99% in 2024 → 99% in 2025**, consistently exceeding district (92%, 91%, 92%) and state averages (87%, 88%, 90%).

**Insight:** The school maintains excellent student retention and graduation success. Graduation rates are very strong across all subgroups, indicating effective support for completion and retention.

### **6. Acceleration Rate**

* From **97% in 2023 → 99% in 2024 → 100% in 2025**, far exceeding district (70%) and state (61–68%) averages. This indicates nearly all students are enrolled in advanced courses or accelerated programs.

**Insight:** The school demonstrates outstanding commitment to advanced coursework and college/career readiness. Nearly all students in each subgroup are accessing advanced coursework, reflecting strong equity in accelerated program participation.

### **Overall Trends**

1. **Strong Growth Across Subjects:** Math, Science, and Social Studies show consistent improvement, with 2025 marking peak achievement levels across nearly all areas.
2. **ELA Rebound:** After a dip in 2024, ELA achievement and learning gains improved significantly in 2025, particularly for lowest-performing students.
3. **Math Excellence:** ELL and FRL students show exceptional gains, especially in the lowest 25%. SWD students improved greatly but require continued monitoring.
4. **High Graduation and Acceleration Rates:** Exceptional graduation (99%) and acceleration (100%) rates indicate the school is preparing students effectively for postsecondary success.
5. **Above-Average Performance:** In nearly every metric, the school outperforms district and state averages, highlighting strong leadership, instructional programs, and student support systems.
6. **Target Areas:** Ongoing support for SWD in ELA and ELL students in Social Studies will help sustain growth and close remaining gaps.

# Planning for Improvement

SouthTech Academy earned 68% of the possible points in the 2023-2024 school year; our goal is to earn 70% of the possible for the 2024-2025 school year. The 2025 goals are:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| School Grade Component | **Goal 2025** | **Earned 2025** | **Goal 2026** |
| **ELA Achievement** | 55% | 61% | 65% |
| **ELA Learning Gains** | 55% | 60% | 60% |
| **ELA Lowest 25% Learning Gains** | 55% | 61% | 65% |
| **Math Achievement** | 70% | 73% | 75% |
| **Math Learning Gains** | 60% | 67% | 70% |
| **Math Lowest 25% Learning Gains** | 60% | 78% | 80% |
| **Science Achievement** | 75% | 88% | 90% |
| **Social Studies Achievement** | 75% | 81% | 85% |
| **Graduation Rate** | 100% | 99% | 100% |
| **Acceleration Rate** | 100% | 100% | 100% |

If SouthTech hits all of these goals, we will earn 790 points. In order to achieve these goals, a number of action steps are occurring:

* Data chats with all students to review their test scores, strengths, and weaknesses
* Progress monitoring via Achieve 3000, IXL and Cambium
* Targeted-after school and Saturday tutoring for the low 25% and “bubble” students
* Math push-ins and pull-outs to provide small group tutorials/support
* ELA pull-outs to provide small group tutorials/support during and outside of the school day
* Department based PLCs for data-driven planning and to target areas of weaknesses

# Positive Culture & Environment

The PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) team meets monthly to discuss ways to:

* Increase academic performance/participation
* Improve social emotional competence
* Reduce discipline
* Decrease rates of bullying
* Increase student attendance/decrease unexcused tardiness
* Improve overall school organization health and school climate

This year, our focus will be on improving attendance. A PLC group has been formed to research this topic, and we are implementing mentoring and rewards programs to promote good attendance.

For students that have been identified as having barriers to academic and/or social success, the SBT (school-based team) will assign mentors to students who provide positive adult interactions and feedback throughout the school day. Other interventions provided to these students include, but are not limited to, classroom guidance, small group counseling and individual counseling/referrals to community resources. Along with the SBT, a comprehensive school counseling department is in place to:

* Assess the needs of students and the barriers blocking their success
* Identify interventions that research suggests to remove the barrier to success
* Evaluate and evolve the interventions if necessary

SouthTech schools builds a positive school culture through a variety of initiatives and organizations. Students are involved in various clubs such as Hope Ambassadors, and GSA to ensure a bully-free, inclusive culture. SGA and DECA offer many extra-curricular and community service activities to build relationships and foster congeniality amongst students. In addition, a variety of other clubs (drama, writing, gaming, Rugby, Volleyball, etc.) are offered for students to explore their interests and meet like-minded individuals. Furthermore, the popular, school-wide Bulldog Bucks initiative allows all staff to immediately reward students for positive behavior witnessed.