**The School Districty of Palm Beach County**

**SouthTech Preparatory Academy**



**2025-26 Schoolwide Improvement Plan**

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SouthTech Preparatory Academy

1325 Gateway Blvd. Boynton Beach, FL 33426

www.southtechschools.org

# **Demographics**

**Principal: Pamela Galarza**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| School Type and Grades Served | Middle School 6-8 |
| Primary Service Type | K-12 General Education |
| 2024-25 Title I School | Yes |
| 2024-25 Economically Disadvantaged (FRL) Rate | 100% |
| School Grades History | 2024-25: A (73%)  2023-2024: A (66%)  2022-2023: C (54%, B was retained from 2022 SY)  2021-2022: B (55%) |
| Total Educator Count | 31 |
| Ineffective Educator % | 0% |
| % Inexperienced Teachers | 53.3% |
| Number of Students Enrolled | 529 |

# 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

# South Tech Preparatory Academy’s core mission is to graduate students prepared to matriculate into a career academy program of study which will prepare them for work, higher education, and productive

# School’s History & Vision Statement

SouthTech Preparatory Academy has set high standards for student achievement as both a Title I and a choice school. As a feeder program to SouthTech Academy, SouthTech Preparatory Academy (STP) will provide students with a strong academic curriculum instilling the desire to pursue continuing education. Additionally, as of SY21, STP is the only CTE (career technical education) Middle School in Palm Beach County; students have the opportunity to explore career pathways which lead to a successful livelihood and produce the tenets of productive citizenship. STP will serve a racially, culturally, socio-economically, and academically diverse population with: the support of state and district resources, a career-centered, academic curriculum aligned to state standards and the involvement of parents/guardians in the adolescent development of the whole child.

SouthTech Preparatory Academy promotes academic success and financial efficiency-aligning responsibility with accountability-via the following: state standards, the School Improvement Plan (SIP), Title I monitoring, the Florida Continuous Improvement Model (FCIM), Florida Assessment (BEST, FAST), the Governing Board and the National Career Academy Coalition. All require rigorous accounting with regard to: student academic achievement, career academy success, quality and integrated instruction aligned with benchmarks and standards, allocation of human and material resources, policies and procedures, and administrative monitoring.

Data-driven instruction will be implemented; strategic formative assessments will be used to monitor learning gains over the students’ middle school careers, with students taking diagnostic/progress monitoring assessments in the key subjects of reading, writing, and mathematics. The results of these assessments will drive instruction and curriculum planning. STP will also plan parent conferences around quarterly updates (report cards), ensure all IEPs (individual education plans) and 504s are met, and hold conferences with ELLs (English language learners), ensuring the most at-risk students have the support needed to be successful.

SouthTech Preparatory Academy will keep parents informed regarding school-wide progress via FAST results (3 times per year), progress reports, report cards, Chalk reporting software, Parent Link, Title I meetings/parent trainings, and mailings. This stream of communication will encourage parents to take on a more active role in helping to shape the lives of their children at this critical juncture in their personal and academic development.

# 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. |
| Pamela Galarza | Principal | The principal will monitor and work with all staff listed above to ensure implementation with MTSS and SIP support. The principal oversees the execution and monitoring of all strategies and action steps towards continuous improvement process at the school. The principal will guide and facilitate instruction with the use of best practices and school district recommended resources/materials. It is the principal’s responsibility to deepen the understanding of standards and engage faculty, students, parents, and the community members to understand the standards and the vision of academic success aligned to college and career readiness. In addition, the principal hires and retains highly qualified employees, uses  data to inform decisions and instruction, professional learning, performance, and student learning. The principal quickly and proactively addresses problems in instruction and student learning. Finally, as principal, Ms. Galarza must reflect on competing priorities and focus attention on those that will have the greatest leverage in improving instruction and learning. |
| Faten Atway | Assistant Principal | As assistant Principal, Ms. Clarke supports professional learning and  collaboration amongst teachers and resource staff and facilitates and leads professional learning focused on content, instruction, and pedagogical content knowledge. She must demonstrate through daily decisions and actions that the school’s priority is academic success for every student. The Assistant Principal assists with eliminating barriers and distractions that interfere with effective teaching and learning. Supports the principal in building a culture of pride, trust, and respect. Monitors the implementation of cultural competence, equity, and access within the instructional practices at the school center. She also monitors and improves instruction by visiting classrooms to support and monitor instruction. |
| Tricia Clarke | Assistant Principal/ESE Coordinator | The ESE Coordinator manages the caseload of ESE students and assists teachers and staff in coordinating ESE Services and related services for students with disabilities. She coordinates, organizes, and facilitates IEP meetings to ensure necessary participants are in attendance. Collaborates with teachers to provide suggested strategies and accommodations to best meet the individual needs and assist students in meeting goals as defined in the IEP. Provides families with required information regarding IDEA Procedural Safeguards. Finally, she establishes and maintains cooperative  working relationships by consulting regularly with internal and external customers such as: students, parents, teachers, counselors, related service providers, agencies, etc.  Ms. Clarke assumes a proactive approach to discipline and safety issues, coordinating the Dean’s activities and duty assignments to maintain a positive and secure learning environment. She assigns disciplinary consequences for rule infractions in accordance with the District Discipline Matrix and monitors the continuity and follow-up of assigned discipline, ensuring timely parent notification and enforcement of discipline contracts. Working closely with the Dean of Students and other school personnel, she coordinates investigative and prevention efforts to maximize the prevention and cessation of inappropriate activities. As the manager of the school’s PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) system, she promotes consistent expectations and positive student behavior. In addition, she oversees all school-wide assessments, including FSQ, USA, Diagnostics, ACCESS, EOCs, CTE, and FAST, ensuring compliance with all testing regulations and procedures. |
| Telisha Kelly | Academic Coach | The Middle School Academic Coach plays a critical role in supporting teachers to improve instructional practices, strengthen curriculum delivery, and ensure alignment with the Florida Standards. This position serves as a mentor, resource, and instructional leader, working closely with educators to enhance student achievement through effective teaching strategies and standards-based instruction. The Academic Coach collaborates with school leadership and instructional staff to develop, implement, and monitor curriculum plans, ensuring consistency and rigor across grade levels and subject areas. |

# 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** | 71% | 61% | 59% | 62% | 57% | 56% | 50% | 52% | 52% |
| **ELA Learning Gains** | 74% | 61% | 59% | 67% | 61% | 58% |  |  |  |
| **ELA Lowest 25%** | 78% | 57% | 55% | 70% | 57% | 54% |  |  |  |
| **Math Achievement** | 67% | 62% | 60% | 52% | 59% | 58% | 40% | 53% | 54% |
| **Math Learning Gains** | 70% | 61% | 59% | 59% | 62% | 62% |  |  |  |
| **Math Lowest 25%** | 76% | 54% | 53% | 72% | 57% | 54% |  |  |  |
| **Science Achievement** | 58% | 62% | 61% | 43% | 60% | 58% | 35% | 57% | 56% |
| **Social Studies Achievement** | 76% | 74% | 74% | 80% | 70% | 70% | 72% | 67% | 67% |
| **Acceleration Rate** | 92% | 79% | 77% | 94% | 73% | 73% | 72% | 75% | 75% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sub Group Data | 2025 | | | 2024 | | | 2022 | | |
| **SWD** | **ELL** | **FRL** | **SWD** | **ELL** | **FRL** | **SWD** | **ELL** | **FRL** |
| **ELA Achievement** | 47% | 62% | 70% | 33% | 46% | 60% | 15% | 35% | 48% |
| **ELA Learning Gains** | 68% | 74% | 73% | 66% | 63% | 67% | 30% | 36% | 48% |
| **ELA Lowest 25%** | 85% | 83% | 81% | 63% | 67% | 70% | 32% | 36% | 46% |
| **Math Achievement** | 51% | 62% | 66% | 22% | 38% | 50% | 11% | 30% | 41% |
| **Math Learning Gains** | 74% | 73% | 70% | 52% | 57% | 57% | 29% | 43% | 52% |
| **Math Lowest 25%** | 69% | 76% | 73% | 71% | 63% | 71% | 39% | 61% | 62% |
| **Science Achievement** | 55% | 33% | 55% | 16% | 13% | 39% | 15% | 22% | 32% |
| **Social Studies Achievement** | 59% | 63% | 74% | 64% | 74% | 80% | 24% | 56% | 65% |
| **Acceleration Rate** | 84% | 91% | 91% | 88% | 98% | 94% |  | 91% | 95% |

## Data Reflection

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

* **ELA Achievement:** The school has shown strong growth from **50% in 2023 → 62% in 2024 → 71% in 2025**, consistently outperforming both district and state averages. This indicates effective instructional strategies and curriculum alignment.
* **ELA Learning Gains:** Improvement from **67% in 2024 → 74% in 2025** suggests that students are making above-average progress year over year, particularly in comparison to district (61%) and state (59%) trends in 2025.
* **ELA Lowest 25%:** Gains from **70% → 78%** show that targeted interventions for struggling students are highly effective, surpassing district and state results by a significant margin.

**Insight:** ELA programs are showing consistent and robust improvement, particularly among lower-performing students, signaling effective differentiation and support strategies. In addition, all historically low performing subgroups are showing strong improvement in ELA, particularly among the lowest-performing students, highlighting effective differentiation and intervention programs.

### **2. Mathematics**

* **Math Achievement:** Substantial improvement from **40% in 2023 → 52% in 2024 → 67% in 2025**, significantly outperforming both district and state in 2025.
* **Math Learning Gains:** Increase from **59% in 2024 → 70% in 2025**, indicating students are making solid progress.
* **Math Lowest 25%:** Growth from **72% → 76%**, with the school exceeding district and state averages, showing strong support for the most struggling students.

**Insight:** Math interventions and instructional support are showing dramatic results, especially considering past low achievement. The trend indicates strong upward momentum. Math performance for all subgroups shows substantial growth, particularly SWD and ELL populations, indicating effective remediation and targeted instruction.

### **3. Science**

* **Science Achievement:** Gradual improvement from **35% in 2023 → 43% in 2024 → 58% in 2025**. The school remains slightly below the district average in 2025 (62%) and state average (61%).

**Insight:** While progress is evident, science remains a relative area of growth opportunity. Focused strategies may be needed to match district performance consistently. Science achievement shows major improvement for SWD and FRL subgroups. ELL students need continued support to maintain growth trends.

### **4. Social Studies**

* **Social Studies Achievement:** The school consistently performs above district and state averages (**72% → 80% → 76%**). Slight dip in 2025 compared to 2024 (80% → 76%) could indicate test variability or cohort differences.

**Insight:** Social Studies achievement is strong overall, though monitoring fluctuations is recommended. Social Studies achievement is generally strong, with minor fluctuations in 2025. Maintaining support for all subgroups is important to sustain gains.

### **5. Acceleration Rate**

* **Acceleration Rate:** Shows strong growth (**72% → 94% → 92%**), consistently outperforming district and state averages. This indicates a high percentage of students are taking advanced courses or participating in accelerated programs.

**Insight:** The school excels in promoting advanced learning opportunities and student readiness for higher-level coursework. In addition, data shows **high participation in accelerated programs** across subgroups (84–98%), indicating equitable access to advanced coursework.

# Planning for Improvement

SouthTech Preparatory Academy earned 73% 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 | **Earned 2025** | **Goal 2026** |
| **ELA Achievement** | 71% | 75% |
| **ELA Learning Gains** | 74% | 75% |
| **ELA Lowest 25% Learning Gains** | 78% | 80% |
| **Math Achievement** | 67% | 70% |
| **Math Learning Gains** | 70% | 70% |
| **Math Lowest 25% Learning Gains** | 76% | 80% |
| **Science Achievement** | 58% | 65% |
| **Social Studies Achievement** | 76% | 80% |
| **Acceleration Rate** | 92% | 95% |

If SouthTech hits all of these goals, we will earn 690 points (77%). 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 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 the school day
* Department based PLCs for data-driven planning and to target areas of weaknesses

Science has improved but still **lags behind district levels**, suggesting targeted support is needed.

# 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 approving attendance. A PLC group has been formed to research this topic, and we are implementing mentoring and rewards programs to promote good attendance.

We want to give all our students the opportunity to reach their potential and increase student achievement. We want to establish a culture of high expectations and continuous improvement by exposing our students to the rigor of the standard. A systematic approach to discipline enhances learning outcomes for all students. By reinforcing desired behavioral outcomes students will clearly understand expectations. Students are explicitly taught what the desired behavior should be. PBIS supports the decrease of levels of disruptiveness, rates of office referrals, and suspensions. To improve school climate, safety, in order to increase instructional time. PBIS - will focus on students with disabilities subgroup to ensure all early warning symptoms are targeted and monitored. Will use new PBIS tracking system through JupiterGrades to monitor all students with focus on SWD. If we focus on standards-based instruction to increase learning gains in school-wide ELA and Math, then we will increase student achievement for our low performing subgroups and ensure alignment to the District’s Strategic Plan; This area of focus aligns directly with our District Strategic Plan.

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 guidance department has been developed and implemented with dedicated time 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