THE OPPORTUNITY
Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools (WJCC) is a rapidly changing school division. In an effort to guide future practices and set direction toward continual improvement, the school division engaged PCG Education to facilitate the development of a five-year strategic plan.

THE PCG APPROACH
PCG Education worked in tandem with WJCC and the community to determine the current state of teaching and learning within the district, as well as expectations for the future. Over the course of the nine-month project, hundreds of people attended PCG-facilitated focus groups, community forums, and working sessions to contribute their ideas for the future of the WJCC schools, while several thousand more expressed their opinion through surveys. The perception of current conditions, community values, and future visioning drew on the ideas of staff, students, civic leaders, academicians, business people, parents, and concerned citizens. The goal was to ensure that the plan represented the vision of the community and not any single individual.

PCG Education worked closely with WJCC senior leadership to categorize the data into themes and presented these in the form of strategic priorities to a community-based steering committee chosen from a cross-section of local business, academic (including higher education), and social leaders. Facilitated by PCG Education, the steering committee narrowed the priorities to five and revised them accordingly to the following:

1. High student achievement for 21st century success
2. Safe, secure, and welcoming climate for learning
3. Rich, rewarding experience for professionals
4. Build trust and authentic partnerships with families and the broader community
5. Accountable and trusted leadership

In addition, the steering committee helped to shape a set of goal statements related to the priorities, core values, vision, and a mission statement. Work completed by the steering committee was shared with a representative group of WJCC professionals for their review and revision, who in turn were responsible for focusing the core values, vision, and mission and for converting strategic priorities/goals into action plans.

The action plans include strategies for addressing the goals within each of the priorities. They were shaped with concern for and consideration of how best to deploy limited resources to achieve maximum impact. While the action plans include discrete steps, they are designed to be fluid and include a set of expected outcomes from which evidence can be gathered.

THE RESULTS
Overall, the guiding principles of the project sought inclusivity and transparency in trying to achieve a school division that best represents and serves the children of Williamsburg-James City County. Among the key achievements of this project were the following:

- PCG Education facilitated more than 30 public stakeholders meetings and other events
- PCG provided the community with multiple modes of voicing their respective visions
- PCG brought its experience in successful strategic planning to help guide the Division and Steering Committee throughout the process, with considerate feedback
- Both documents produced by PCG during the engagement (Interim and Final Reports) are available publically.

“The consultants at PCG shared our passion and commitment to students. They took the time to meet with members of the community and understand our unique needs. They worked closely with us, bringing their thoughtful approach, expertise and insight to help us to build a five year plan that is changing the way we are tackling the future.”

Steven M. Constantino, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools