Special Education Comprehensive Review Update

From Listening to Lasting Impact

Albemarle County Public Schools

October 8, 2026

Agenda

1. Review of Berkley Group Comprehensive Review
2. Timeline for Development and Implementation
3. Actions to Date
4. Next Steps
5. Questions

Strategic Plan: Learning for All

VISION

Our learners are engaged in authentic, challenging, and relevant learning experiences, becoming lifelong contributors and leaders in our dynamic and diverse society.

MISSION

Working together as a team, **we will end the predictive value** of race, class, gender, **and special capacities for our children's success through high-quality teaching and learning for all.** We seek to build relationships with families and communities to ensure that every student succeeds.

We will know every student.

VALUES

Equity
Excellence
Family and Community
Wellness

GOALS



Thriving Students



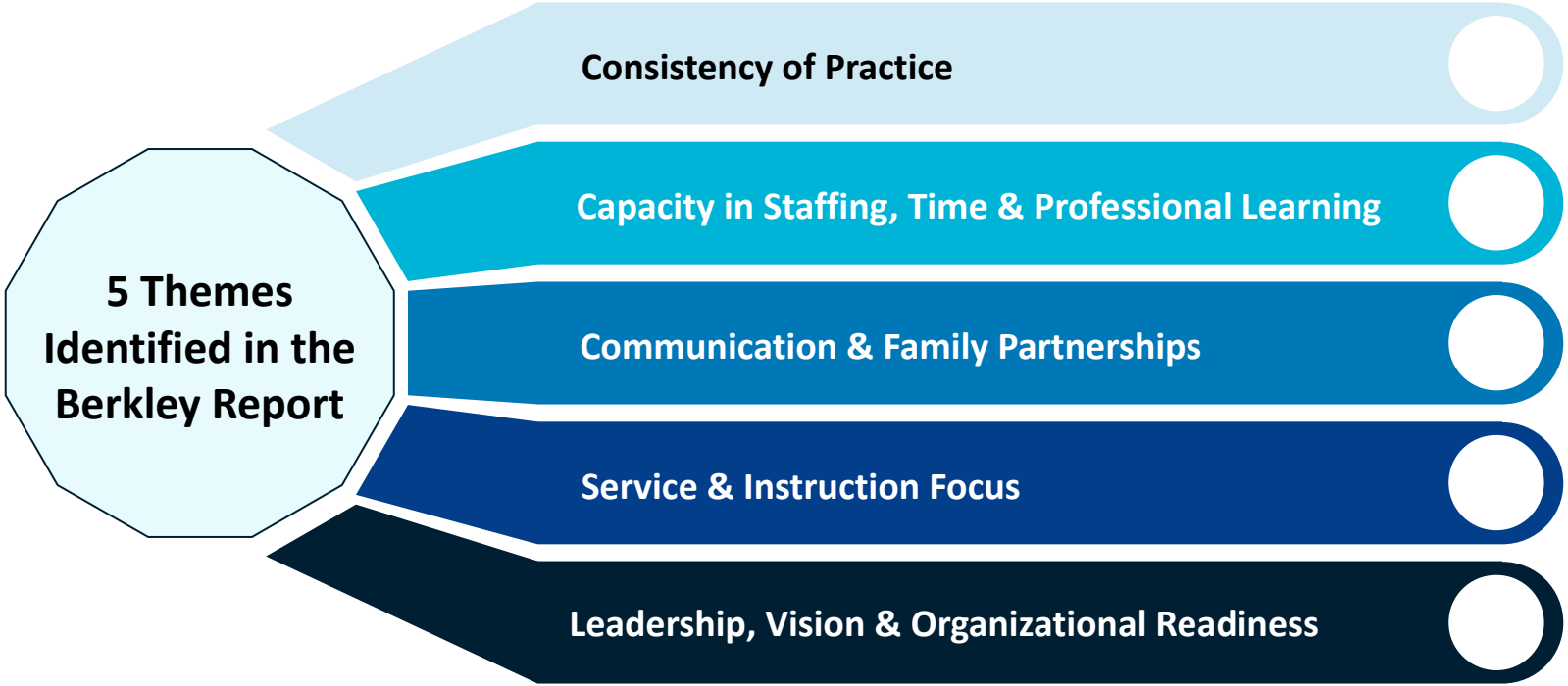
Affirming and Empowering Communities



Equitable, Transformative Resources

Overview Berkley Group Comprehensive Review

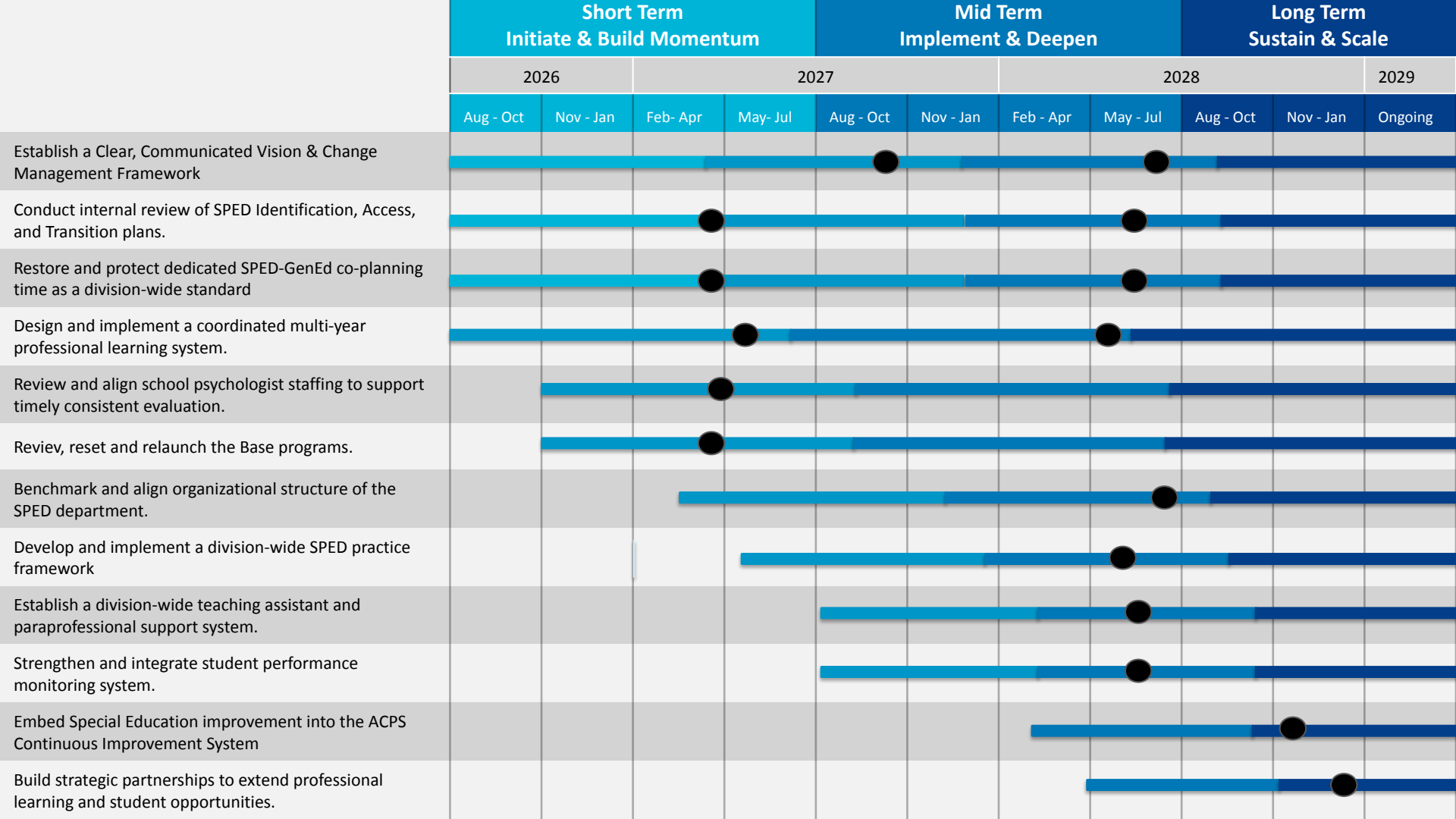
Major Themes



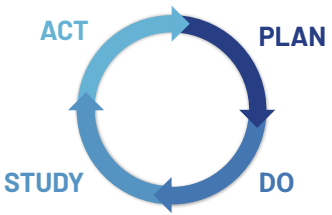
Recommendations Defined

	Description	Progression	Total	Duration
Short Term	High impact foundational actions achievable within the current school year	Initiate & Build	3	0 - 12 Months
Mid-Term	Structural changes requiring planning, piloting and stakeholder engagement	Implement & Deepen	7	12 - 24 Months
Long-Term	Systemic redesign requiring sustained investment and leadership commitment	Sustain & Scale	2	24+ Months

Timeline for Development and Implementation


Short Term
Initiate & Build Momentum
Mid Term
Implement & Deepen
Long Term
Sustain & Scale
2026
2027
2028
2029
Aug - Oct
Nov - Jan
Feb- Apr
May- Jul
Aug - Oct
Nov - Jan
Feb - Apr
May - Jul
Aug - Oct
Nov - Jan
Ongoing
Establish a Clear, Communicated Vision & Change Management Framework
Conduct internal review of SPED Identification, Access, and Transition plans.
Restore and protect dedicated SPED-GenEd co-planning time as a division-wide standard
Design and implement a coordinated multi-year professional learning system.
Review and align school psychologist staffing to support timely consistent evaluation.
Reviev, reset and relaunch the Base programs.
Benchmark and align organizational structure of the SPED department.
Develop and implement a division-wide SPED practice framework
Establish a division-wide teaching assistant and paraprofessional support system.
Strengthen and integrate student performance monitoring system.
Embed Special Education improvement into the ACPS Continuous Improvement System
Build strategic partnerships to extend professional learning and student opportunities.

Short Term Launch and Build Momentum *August 2026 – June 2027* High impact foundational actions achievable within the current school year		Mid Term Deepen and Expand *July 2027 – June 2028* Structural changes requiring planning, piloting and stakeholder engagement		Long Term Sustain and Scale *July 2028 and Beyond* Systemic redesign requiring sustained investment and leadership commitment	
R1 Establish a Clear, Communicated Vision and Change Management Framework	D	**R4** Develop and Implement a Division-Wide Special Education Practice Framework	P	**R11** Embed Special Education Improvement into the ACPS Continuous Improvement System	
R2 Conduct an Internal Review of SPED Identification, Access, and Transition Practices	P	**R5** Benchmark and Align the Organizational Structures of the Department of Special Education		**R12** Build Strategic Partnerships to Extend Professional Learning and Student Opportunity	
R3 Restore and Protect Dedicated SPED–GenEd Co-Planning Time as a Division-Wide Standard	D	**R6** Review, Reset, and Relaunch the Base School Program	P		
		R7 Design and Implement a Coordinated, Multi-Year Professional Learning System	P		
		R8 Establish a Division-Wide Teaching Assistant and Paraprofessional Support System			
		R9 Strengthen and Integrate the Student Performance Monitoring System			
		R10 Review and Align School Psychologist Staffing to Support Timely and Consistent Evaluation	A		



Actions to Date

Vision/ Theory of Change	Internal Review of SPED Processes	Co-Planning
Recommendation 1: Establish a Clear, Communicated Vision and Change Management Framework	**Recommendation 2:** Conduct an Internal Review of SPED Identification, Access, and Transition Practices	**Recommendation 3:** Restore and Protect Dedicated SPED-GenEd Co-Planning Time as a Division-Wide Standard
Developed 60 min. multi-stakeholder protocol around beliefs, values and desired state Implemented protocol with: ● SpEd teachers, ● SpEd and Central Office Leadership, ● Principals and APs Scheduled: ● Related Service Providers, ● SEAC, ● Teaching Assistants, ● Gen Ed Teachers Data beginning to reveal cross-group themes	Ties into the systems and structures review Updating access to communication (i.e. website) to review, revise, and create where needed	Special Ed DPLC has been implemented. First session was held on Sept. 8. - Co-Planning within sped cohorts has been established Shared Ownership of DPLC groups: - Differentiated based on teacher needs (i.e. specialists, related service providers) Ongoing: Review co-planning time between special education and general education

IDEA/ VDOE Compliance	Base Program Assessment	Professional Learning	Other
Recommendation 4: Develop and Implement a Division-Wide Special Education Practice Framework	**Recommendation 6:** Review, Reset, and Relaunch the Base School Program	**Recommendation 7:** Design and Implement a Coordinated, Multi-Year Professional Learning System	
VDOE Audit is scheduled for this school year Crosswalked where the audit and Berkley Report overlap Pulling data for audit	Developed 60-minute protocol to be used with Special Ed teachers regarding: • Current and desired state • Co-teaching and co-planning • Teacher/TA Partnership • Resources, tools and conditions Across Program Movement and Decision-Making Student Experience Gen Ed teachers and TAs will do relevant parts of this protocol	Preservice PL for Teachers: • New Teacher Academy • Preservice Sessions Preservice PL for TAs: • Time dedicated to school based work • Division level PL Upcoming PL: • Making Connections for TAs/Classified Staff (Oct. 12) • DPLC for Special Ed teachers (Oct. 13) • Making Connections for Teachers (Nov. 2nd)	Continued work with Dr. Scott Baker and Dr. Patrick Murphy of the Berkley Group: Multiple meetings to date regarding the recommendations and implementation timeline. Executive Leadership Development scheduled for the Director and Asst. Director of Special Education. Presentation of report to SEAC at September meeting

Near-Term Next Steps

Near-Term Next Steps (October/ November)

Vision / Theory of Change Feedback	Base & General Program Feedback

• Complete stakeholder focus groups including:
  ○ SpEd Teaching Assistants (10/12),
  ○ Related Services (10/13),
  ○ SEAC (10/13)
  ○ General Ed Teachers (11/2)
• Develop draft Vision statement and Theory of Change from common themes
• Administer stakeholder feedback survey on drafts
• Finalize by November 15
	• Engage staff in protocols for both programs:
	  ○ Base Program:
	  ■ Special Ed Teachers (10/ 13)
	  ■ SpEd TAs (10/12)
	  ■ General Ed teachers (11/2)
	  ○ General SpEd Program:
	  ■ Special Ed Teachers (10/ 13)
	  ■ General Ed teachers (11/2)
	• Review feedback in mid-October
	• Shared recommendations in December

Near-Term Next Steps (October/ November)

Making Connections (Sample Topics)	Division Professional Learning	Virtual Thursdays (Sample Topics)	VDOE Audit
• Responding to student behavior • Supporting HMH for Special Education, • Teaching Assistant Data Collection • Behavior basics, • Common behavior support tools, • Supporting math (Kiddom) for Special Education, • Vision protocols, • AAC (communication devices) strategies	• BASE and Vision protocols • Curriculum development • Behavior strategies and cross collaboration between cohorts (BASE/Generalists/Related Services)	• Collaboration within cohorts • Specially Designed Instruction • Goal work • Progress monitoring • Community partnerships	• Happens every 5 years • Ongoing throughout the year with an on-site visit in March 2027 • Reviewing practices, procedures, and policies

From Listening to Lasting Impact

Summary	What to Expect Next:
• Multi-stakeholder protocol around beliefs, values and desired state • Multiple professional learning opportunities • Collaboration with Administrators • Collaboration with SEAC • Review and revisit BASE programs • Re-establishing community partnerships	• Our Special Education Shared Vision • Baseline information from our BASE protocol • Professional Learning Updates • CSEA Audit update (where we are in the process) • Communication Access (website) • Pictures!

Questions