

## BOARD BRIEF

Date: February 3, 2023

BOARD INFORMATION:   X    
MEETING PREPARATION:       

**FROM:** Taneika Tukan, School Engagement & Community Outreach Manager  
Kurt Huffman, Executive Director of Community Partnerships & Engagement

**THROUGH:** Julia Burgos, Chief of School and Community Relations  
Melanie Kay-Wyatt, Ed.D., Interim Superintendent of Schools

**TO:** The Honorable Meagan L. Alderton, Chair, and  
Members of the Alexandria City School Board

**TOPIC:** Mid-Year Progress Report on Implementation of ParentSquare Platform

### **ACPS 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL:**

Goal 1: Systemic Alignment  
Goal 4: Strategic Resource Allocation  
Goal 5: Family and Community Engagement

### **SY 2022-2023 FOCUS AREA:**

Social Emotional and Academic Learning Recovery  
Hispanic Males  
Middle School Educational Experience

### **FY 2023 BUDGET PRIORITY:**

Implementation of 2025 Strategic Plan  
Continue Engagement with Hispanic Families to Improve Graduation and Chronic Absenteeism

### **SUMMARY**

The implementation of ParentSquare is a key action in the division's strategic work to provide a streamlined set of digital tools that supports real-time communication with staff and all families while ensuring that messaging about classroom activities, family engagement opportunities, absenteeism, facilities and operations services, safety and security is timely, accessible, translated, recognizable and updated. To that end, the Department of School and Community Relations worked with the Department of Technology Services to ensure that all staff members and parents/guardians had active ParentSquare accounts to receive and send messages when schools opened in August 2022. Extensive training resources and widespread outreach have contributed to thousands of communications including two-way text message conversations, absence notifications and attendance notes, parent-teacher conference appointment scheduling and volunteer sign-ups between staff and families in nine

languages. Performance data, including contactability, language access, and feature usage are shared in the 2022-23 ParentSquare Mid-Year Report.

## **BACKGROUND**

In August 2022, Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) launched ParentSquare, a communications platform to encourage a stronger school to home connection. The platform allows families to receive announcements from the division and their schools and teachers in one place, with the added ability to engage in two-way communication in their preferred method (email, text and/or app), frequency and language. To date, the platform is in use in all schools. 15,751 (99%) students have at least one family member receiving ParentSquare notifications. 10,647 (67%) students have at least one parent with a registered ParentSquare account and full access to its features. 83% of school-based have activated their accounts. 11 out of 14 of the platform features have been used. Communications are delivered in ten languages, which is twice as many as the number of the division's official languages.

As we shift our focus from initial launch to usage and performance, we are looking forward to carrying out phase two of implementation which includes:

- Targeted, grassroots outreach to unregistered parents and staff to achieve Year 1 80% registration goal
- Identification of ParentSquare Ambassadors across stakeholder groups to support account registration and platform use among targeted groups
- Continued training and resource sharing to increase staff proficiency and platform usage
- Roll-out Secure Documents feature which allows staff to securely send home important documents that contain student information including progress reports, report cards, letters regarding academics and extracurriculars, etc.
- Exploration of calendar integrations with Canvas, attendance notification frequency to increase platform utility for secondary parents

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The interim superintendent recommends that the School Board review the ParentSquare Mid-Year Performance Report to better understand how the platform is being used to facilitate school-home communications in its initial roll-out and what full implementation will include.

## **IMPACT**

Ensure equitable communications, information access and opportunities for engagement for all families by using preferred channels, frequency and language.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

ParentSquare Platform Mid-Year Report, July 2022 – January 2023

## **CONTACT**

Julia Burgos, Chief of School and Community Relations

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