

BOARD BRIEF

October 28, 2022

BOARD INFORMATION: X

MEETING PREPARATION: _____

FROM: Kennetra N. Wood, Executive Director of Equity and Alternative Programs

THROUGH: 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: 2022-23 Update: Equity Audit of School Board Policies

ACPS 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL:

- Goal 1: Systemic Alignment
- Goal 2: Instructional Excellence
- Goal 3: Student Accessibility and Support
- Goal 4: Strategic Resource Allocation
- Goal 5: Family and Community Engagement

SY 2022-2023 FOCUS AREA:

- Strategic Plan Implementation
- Policy Equity Audit

FY 2023 BUDGET PRIORITY:

- Equitable TAG Identification of Black and Hispanic Students
- Address Chronic Absenteeism & High School Graduation Rate Among Hispanic Male Students
- Social and Emotional Supports for Students
- Expand Access and Improve Quality of Out of School Learning
- Implementation of Customer Relationship Management System
- Development of a Comprehensive ACPS Communication Plan
- Expand Cultural Competency Training to ACPS Families
- Textbooks
- Technology Upgrades
- Transportation
- Modernizations
- Communications Support
- Transparency and Engagement for CIP Projects

SUMMARY:

During the 2020-2021 school year, Alexandria City Public Schools embarked on an innovative equity audit of all School Board policies. This brief provides an update on the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA EAC-South) support, the equity policy audit timeline,

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the progress made since the initiative began in December 2020 as well as next steps for the 2022-2023 school year.

BACKGROUND:

Guided by the five goals of the ACPS Strategic Plan 2025: *Equity for All* with racial equity at its heart, the policy audit team met with multiple organizations in an effort to secure a consultant partner for conducting the equity audit of School Board policies. During the search, IDRA EAC-South was secured based on their policy experience and expertise and their ability to support the work through a federal grant without an expense incurred by ACPS. IDRA EAC-South supported the ACPS Equity Audit Team through a thorough review of over 175 policies through an equity lens with a focus on the disparate impacts of policy implementation on marginalized student populations. Additionally, IDRA EAC-South completed a findings report for approximately 110 policies and collaborated to conduct student and family focus groups.

In September 2022, IDRA EAC-South was notified that the organization did not receive the federal Equity Assistance Center grant. The grant funding afforded IDRA EAC-South the ability to support the ACPS policy audit without financial implications. Therefore the partnership between ACPS and IDRA EAC-South has been dissolved as of September 30, 2022. The IDRA EAC-South representative has provided the policy audit team with the final draft of the ongoing audit report.

In collaboration with the Policy Services Consultant, Matt Smith, the policy audit team is supporting the process outlined in the September 23, 2022 Board Brief and has revised the policy audit timeline.

Phase I - Equity Audit- Review & Develop Recommendations

2020-2021 school year

- ✓ December 2020 – February 2021 Audit team planning for organization and process
- ✓ February - June 2021 – Reviewed A, I & J Policies
- ✓ IDRA ongoing report of equity analysis and recommendations (A,I & J policies completed)

Phase II - Board Review and Policy Revision

2021-2022 through the 2023-2024 school years

- Refine and adopt revised policies
- Review tier 2 policies with a focus on the policies in need of code revisions and VSBA model policy changes
- Continue focus groups of stakeholders with a focus on historically marginalized groups.
- Revised Equity Audit Process (*from the Policy Services Consultant*)

Task	Responsibility
1. Identify policies that require revision based on the four priorities	Policy Services Consultant; Cabinet; School Board
2. Update the policies with code and VSBA model policy changes	Policy Services Consultant

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3.	Review the policies with an equity lens	Equity Team; Focus groups for policies identified by the Equity Team
4.	Review policies and develop draft revisions	Policy Services Consultant; Identified key staff members
5.	Review drafts and provide feedback	Cabinet
6.	Review drafts and provide feedback	School Board Policy Subcommittee
7.	Adopt Policies and Regulations	School Board; Superintendent

Phase III – Action Planning, Implementation & Capacity Building 2024-2025 school year

- A development of a 5-year outlook and plan for re-evaluation.

The Policy Audit Team has spent the past two years working in collaboration with IDRA EAC-South; therefore, the team has acquired the skills and ability to continue the audit review process moving forward. The team will continue to review the policies through an equity lens with a focus on each policy’s intent, implementation outcomes, and the intended and unintended impact on our most marginalized populations. The Policy Services Consultant will support the audit team with conducting focus group implementation and organization of policies for review. Our continued goal is to move closer towards equity for all of our ACPS students, families and staff and believe we have the capacity to ensure the work moves forward.

RECOMMENDATION: The Interim Superintendent recommends the School Board review the updated equity audit timeline and attached IDRA report of policies reviewed in preparation for upcoming policy audit revisions.

IMPACT:

Reviewing the status update will align the School Board’s understanding of the change in support for the equity policy audit and updated timeline.

ATTACHMENTS:

IDRA EAC-South Equity Audit of School Board Policies Report *(to date)*

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