

BOARD BRIEF

Date: November 22, 2019

BOARD INFORMATION: X

MEETING PREPARATION:

FROM: Jennifer Whitson, Ed.D., Evaluation & Assessment Analyst

THROUGH: Clinton Page, Chief Accountability Officer
Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

TO: The Honorable Cindy Anderson, Chair, and
Members of the Alexandria City School Board

TOPIC: Smart Beginnings Indicator Data Reported by ACPS

ACPS 2020 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL:

Goal 1: Academic Excellence and Educational Equity
Goal 5: Health and Wellness

SY 2019-2020 FOCUS AREA:

Focus Area 1: Educational Equity

FY 2020 BUDGET PRIORITY:

Gap Group Achievements
Academics

SUMMARY:

The enclosed brief highlights indicator data from ACPS on pre-kindergarten experience, student health as it relates to body mass index (BMI) of kindergartners, kindergarten readiness assessment data, and grade 3 SOL performance. These data are being monitored by the Early Care and Education Workgroup, recently rebranded Smart Beginnings Alexandria, relative to initiatives the Workgroup has taken to drive improved outcomes for children across the City of Alexandria.

Between school year 2016-2017 and 2018-2019, indicator data suggest a few early improvements. The percentage of kindergarten students meeting PALS benchmarks increased from **78%** to **80%**. Using 2018 as a new baseline year for SOL pass rates because of changes to the state calculation based on federal requirements, grade 3 reading increased from **61%** to **62%** and grade 3 math pass rates increased from **60%** to **71%**.

Other indicators have seen fluctuations across the three years. VKRP 2018-2019 data showed an increase in the percentage of students meeting the mathematics benchmark compared to 2017-2018 with **73%** meeting the benchmark, but this was lower than the **76%** who met the benchmark in 2016-2017. On the VKRP, a lower percentage of students met the social skills benchmark in 2018-2019 at **78%** compared to **83%** in 2017-2018; **83%** met the self-regulation

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benchmark in 2018-2019 compared to **86%** in 2017-2018. The percentage of kindergarten students with previous formalized prekindergarten experiences was **76%** in 2018-2019 compared to **81%** in 2017-2018 and **77%** in 2016-2017. Data on the percentage of kindergarten students found to be obese or overweight is still pending as of the time of this update.

BACKGROUND:

The Early Care and Education Workgroup (ECEW), now rebranded as Smart Beginnings Alexandria, developed a set of indicators to establish key data for future monitoring of initiatives put in place by the group on driving better outcomes for children across the City of Alexandria. Baseline data were reported in November of 2017. Several of the identified data indicators fell under the domain of Alexandria City Public Schools. These indicators included: percent of ACPS kindergarten students with prior pre-kindergarten experience, percent of kindergarten students identified as overweight/obese based on BMI data, performance on the kindergarten PALS assessment, performance on the kindergarten VKRP assessment, performance on the grade 3 Reading SOL, and performance on the grade 3 Math SOL. These data are reported for the 2018-2019, 2017-2018 and 2016-2017 school years in the attached memo. Data included have been previously publicly reported by ACPS with the exception of 2018-2019 PALS and VKRP data and pre-K experiences, which will be publicly reported in the coming months as part of the ACPS 2020 scorecard.

RECOMMENDATION: The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review the Smart Beginnings Alexandria Indicator Data reported by ACPS for possible planning, procedural, programmatic, and/or budgetary changes.

IMPACT:

Across the first three years of monitoring, the division saw improvement in the percentage of students meeting readiness indicators in literacy. Kindergarten readiness fluctuated in the areas of mathematics, social skills, and self regulation. Likewise, the percentage of kindergarten students with pre-K experiences fluctuated across the three years. Updated kindergarten BMI data was not available at the time of this report. Grade 3 SOL performance improved between 2018 and 2019.

ATTACHMENTS: *Smart Beginnings Alexandria Early Childhood Indicator Data Reported by ACPS for December 1 Report Memo*

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