

Date: November 9, 2019

For ACTION _____

For INFORMATION X

Board Agenda: Yes _____

No X

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

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

TO: The Honorable Ramee A. Gentry, Chair, and
Members of the Alexandria City School Board

TOPIC: ECEW Indicator Data Reported by ACPS

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 (ECEW) relative to initiatives the Workgroup has taken to drive improved outcomes for children across the City of Alexandria. Data on prekindergarten experience and VKRP have not been previously released but all other data have been published in previous reports.

Between 2016-2017, the baseline year of data collection, and 2017-2018, indicator data suggests a few early improvements. The percentage of kindergarten students with previous formalized prekindergarten experiences increased from **77% to 81%**. The percentage of kindergarten students found to be obese or overweight decreased from **32.5% to 29.5%**.

Kindergarten readiness indicator data saw mixed results with some indicators improving or remaining the same and some decreases in the percentage of student meeting readiness benchmarks. PALS literacy screenings in the fall remained consistent at **78%** for all students. A slightly higher percentage of students met the Spring benchmark in 2018 (**85%** compared to **83%** in 2017). VKRP 2017-2018 data showed a decrease in the percentage of students meeting the mathematics benchmark with **71%** meeting the benchmark compared to **76%** in 2016-2017. On the VKRP social skills readiness indicator a higher percentage of students met the benchmark in 2017-2018 at **83%** compared to **79%** in 2016-2017. The VKRP self-regulation readiness indicator saw a higher percentage of students meeting the benchmark in 2017-2018 at **86%** compared to **84%** in 2016-2017.

With regard to grade 3 SOL performance, comparisons between years are complicated by the changes in federal calculations as a result of the *Every Student Succeeds Act*. While pass rates generally show a decline between 2016-2017 and 2017-2018, these comparisons are not true apples-to-apples contrasts as a result of changes to the adjustments in the federal calculations especially around student transfers. ACPS has recommended to the Workgroup that the 2018 data be used as a new baseline year for future comparisons as this calculation is not expected to change in the foreseeable future.

BACKGROUND:

The Early Care and Education Workgroup (ECEW) 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 and are repeated here. 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 2017-2018 and 2016-2017 school years below. All data included have been previously publicly reported by ACPS with the exception of this year's pre-K experience, which will be publicly reported in the coming months as part of the ACPS 2020 scorecard, and the VKRP data.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Superintendent recommends review of the ECEW Indicator Data Reported by ACPS for possible planning, procedural, programmatic, and/or budgetary changes.

IMPACT:

Between the first two years of monitoring, the division saw improvements in the percentage of students entering kindergarten with formalized prekindergarten experience; being overweight or obese; and meeting readiness indicators in social skills and self-regulation areas. Kindergarten readiness remained stable in the area of literacy and declined slightly in the area of mathematics. Grade 3 SOL performance appears lower across the division, however changes in calculations warrant caution in interpretation of these year-to-year comparisons.

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