

BOARD MEMO

Date: 12/02/2021

For ACTION

For INFORMATION

Board Agenda: Yes

No

FROM: Anthony Sims, Ph.D., Executive Director of School Improvement

THROUGH: Terri H. Mozingo, Ed.D., Chief of Teaching, Learning, and Leadership
Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

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

TOPIC: Early Warning Indicator System (EWIS)

ACPS 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL:

Goal 2: Instructional Excellence

Goal 3: Student Accessibility and Support

SY 2021–2022 FOCUS AREA:

Focus Area 1: Social, Emotional, and Academic Learning Recovery

Focus Area 2: Hispanic Males

FY 2022 BUDGET PRIORITY:

Implementation of 2025 Strategic Plan

K–4 Literacy Continued Implementation

Reduce Disproportionality in Talented and Gifted (TAG) and Advanced Courses

Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) Implementation with Restorative Practices and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

Continue Engagement with Hispanic Families to Improve Graduation and Chronic Absenteeism

SUMMARY:

ACPS will develop and implement an Early Warning Indicator System (EWIS) as a division-wide monitoring strategy that utilizes key performance indicators to proactively engage interventions for students in grades placed at risk of experiencing poor academic outcomes. The EWIS represents ACPS' focus on innovative strategies to transform structures and systems that perpetuate racial and educational inequities that lead to marginalization and disparate achievement outcomes for certain student groups.

BACKGROUND:

The EWIS is a national strategy adopted by high schools as a dropout prevention measure to identify students at risk of not graduating. EWISs are designed to identify students who are "at risk" of

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failing to meet basic proficiency in core coursework and other behaviors that lead to dropping out of school.

EWISs enable school districts to discern student achievement and school environment patterns that contribute to students moving "off-track" for high school graduation. The EWIS utilizes available division-wide academic and behavioral data to identify students at risk of successfully attaining crucial educational milestones—thus, allowing educators to customize interventions to ensure students are afforded a path to school success.

The central dynamic feature of EWIS is integrating updated student performance data at multiple intervals throughout the school year. Traditionally, early warning indicator models use similar data variables, including absence/truancy events, behavioral referrals, discipline data, course grades/failure, mobility, grade retention, and local and state performance assessments.

Some districts have expanded the early warning indicator concept to monitor student progress relative to "college and career readiness" benchmarks established across the elementary, middle, and high school continuum. This approach allows educators to continuously intervene to ensure students achieve milestones aligned to college and career readiness competencies as a high school graduate. The ACPS EWIS will identify readiness indicators for fourth grade and transitional grades to middle and high school.

Social and emotional learning are vital components of effective student engagement, well-being, and academic achievement. The ACPS EWIS model will evolve to incorporate additional social, emotional, and engagement data elements. Integrating these data could provide critical insights into monitoring and proactively addressing the confounding effects of academic and social and emotional competencies on future academic success.

The focus of the ACPS EWIS in the first year of implementation is to establish important baseline data to guide inquiry and deeper analyses in two essential areas:

- Patterns and commonalities of learning needs and characteristics among students placed at risk of achieving proficiency
- A school-level diagnostic and monitoring tool to continuously assess the effectiveness of interventions to improve the success trajectories of historically marginalized students significantly.

The EWIS implementation timeline includes three phases:

EWIS IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

	Actions	Dates
Phase 1	Establish a cross-departmental EWIS work group. Perform analytics onboarding with technical specialists. Perform data migration and integration.	September–October
Phase 2	Establish early warning indicators/thresholds.	November–January

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	Perform analytics onboarding with technical specialists. Develop an implementation plan.	
Phase 3	Initiate an EWIS Pilot. Collect and analyze staff usability feedback.	February–March

RECOMMENDATION:

The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review the information on the EWIS.

IMPACT:

The EWIS provides a data-driven approach to achieving racial and educational equity and ensuring academic success for all students by proactively addressing factors associated with persistent academic and behavioral barriers.

CONTACT:

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