

BOARD BRIEF

Date: April 5, 2019
For ACTION _____

For INFORMATION X____
Board Agenda: Yes ___

No X____

FROM: Mignon Anthony, Chief Operating Officer
Terri Mazingo, Ed.D., Chief Academic Officer
Helen Lloyd, Director of Communications
Kurt Huffman, Director of School, Business and Community Partnerships

THROUGH: Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

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

TOPIC: Northern Virginia Education Innovation Partnership

SUMMARY: Alexandria City Public Schools is planning to partner with Arlington Public Schools and Falls Church City Public Schools to create a Northern Virginia Education Innovation Partnership. The partnership will provide unique educational opportunities for students through collaboration with business ventures and Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech).

BACKGROUND:

In August 2018, Alexandria City and ACPS announced they would be partnering with Virginia Tech to develop an Innovation Campus in the Alexandria section of Potomac Yard to fill demand for high-tech talent as part of the proposal that brought Amazon’s new headquarters to Northern Virginia. The announcement coincided with the launch of The High School Project: Inspiring a Future for Alexandria, and aligned with the concept of a Connected High School Network that ACPS is currently exploring.

In February, ACPS was approached by Arlington Public Schools and Falls Church City Public Schools with a proposal to expand high tech opportunities for students across the Northern Virginia region. The result is potentially creating a partnership based around the concept of an “innovation hub” that would increase access and opportunity to high tech programming and experiences for all students from Pre-K through to PHD, while also increasing professional learning opportunities for staff.

The Northern Virginia Education Innovation encompasses the PreK-12 resources of Alexandria City Public Schools, Arlington Public Schools and Falls Church City Public Schools and higher education resources of Virginia Polytechnic Institute of State University (Virginia Tech). The goal

BOARD BRIEF

of the partnership would be to provide unique educational opportunities for all students that could not be provided by a single school division alone. This multi-school division effort will have the potential to be a game-changer for the entire region by linking schools, universities, and businesses; and is an opportunity to assess the skills that students will need to be successful in the future, and provide the innovative programming to fulfill those needs. Each school division brings something different, but beneficial for future innovation, providing students from all three divisions with expanded course options and opportunities.

The partnership could potentially be an accelerator to support the advancement of expertise; an incubator to grow key areas needed for the future workforce; pathways offering exploration from Pre-K to PhD for all students; and a solution to the critical need for teacher professional development. With cooperative effort, our community is ready to become an Innovation Hub and model for best practices for the nation and the world.

RECOMMENDATION: The Superintendent recommends the School Board review the Virginia Tech White Paper.

IMPACT: This white paper will be shared with the Alexandria Economic Development Council, who will be writing one section. It is expected to be shared with Virginia Tech and become public in the next few weeks. The Board should be aware that this is an initial outline for the basis of a potential partnership. There will be adjustments in the future and this partnership may grow to include others.

ATTACHMENTS:

Virginia Tech White Paper

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