

Date: December 14, 2017

For ACTION \_\_\_\_\_  
For INFORMATION   X  

Board Agenda: Yes   X    
No \_\_\_\_\_

**FROM:** Clinton Page, Chief Accountability Officer  
Joseph Makolandra, Chief Human Resources Officer

**THROUGH:** Lois Berlin, Ed.D., Interim Superintendent of Schools

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

**TOPIC:** Performance Update to ACPS 2020 - Goal 3: An Exemplary Staff

**BACKGROUND:**

The Code of Virginia § 22.1-253.13:6 provides that each local school board shall adopt a division-wide comprehensive, unified, long-range plan based on data collection, an analysis of the data, and how the data will be utilized to improve classroom instruction and student achievement. The plan is to be developed with staff and community involvement and is to include, or be consistent with, all other division-wide plans required by state and federal laws and regulations. Each local school board is to review the plan biennially and adopt any necessary revisions. ACPS Board policy, AF - Comprehensive Plan, implements the Code of Virginia's requirement.

The Board adopted the 'ACPS 2020' strategic goals and objectives on June 11, 2015. A Scorecard was developed establishing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for each strategic plan objective. These KPIs are aimed to inform division performance in the specific objective area on an annual basis and ultimately, if ACPS reaches the goal established for school year 2020. On May 20, 2016, the Board was provided with an update to the ACPS 2020 Scorecard, along with documented methodologies regarding how targets were selected.

Reported KPI outcomes were presented to the Board by goal area from October 2016 through February 2017. After the first year of reporting, an in-depth review was conducted to ensure that KPIs and targets are appropriate in informing stakeholders on division progress. KPI revisions were presented to the Board on April 27, 2017.

The attached document includes Goal 3 results for the 2016-2017 school year and the ultimate targets for 2020 ("ACPS 2020 Goal 3 Scorecard").

**RESULTS:**

Fifty-seven percent of all ACPS 2020 Goal 3 targets were met (4/7) for the 2016-2017 school year. Performance on one indicator (14%) improved by more than two percentage points when compared to the previous year but fell shy of the target. One area remained consistent with the prior year, representing 14%. The performance target was not met (declined) in one area (14%).

For two KPIs related to staff evaluations (3.6.1, 3.6.2), 2016-2017 served as the first year of data collection.

### **Targets Met and Areas of Improvement:**

Fifty-seven percent of all 2016-2017 Goal 3 targets were met (4/7). Targets were met in teacher placement on the first school day, student-teacher placement, teacher salaries, and staff participation in the division's wellness plan. Improvement was seen in the percent of new teachers hired before June 30<sup>th</sup>.

### **Remaining Consistent:**

One data point remained constant when compared to the 2015-2016 school year as it relates to teacher retention.

### **Areas of Decline:**

There was a single area of decline in leadership development planning where the target of finalizing a plan was not met.

### **NEXT STEPS:**

#### **1. Sustaining Growth Areas:**

Hiring the best and brightest new teachers and staff requires ACPS to take a proactive approach to securing these candidates for vacant positions. Hiring these individual prior to the June 30<sup>th</sup> helps ensure that the division is hiring the best candidates available to ACPS. To ensure continued growth in this area the Department of Human Resources will incorporate the following strategies:

- i. Hold ACPS job fair prior to surrounding school divisions
- ii. Focus on recruiting efforts that include adjustments to the previously attended college job fairs for FY18, and ACPS transfer fair
- iii. Distribute intent of employment letters prior to January 30, 2017
- iv. Continue to hold retirement seminars
- v. Increase hiring prior to June 30<sup>th</sup>
- vi. Implement "Refer a Teacher" program
- vii. Hold information sessions for support staff and community members on "How to become a Teacher"

#### **2. Pushing Growth in Areas Where the Division Was Constant:**

The historical average retention rate is 84%, while ACPS is still above this average at 85%, the division still has work to do to ensure increased retention rates. Several factors influence employees leaving any school division. Most believe it is due to pay; however, studies indicate that teachers' perceptions of the school administration have by far the greatest influence on teacher-retention decisions. Given the turnover of the administration for this year, it is logical to believe that this will improve as the stability of ACPS leaders in the schools' administration improves.

The ACPS *Strategic Plan 2020* emphasizes the value of recruiting, developing, supporting, and retaining staff (Strategic Plan Objective 3.1 and Objective 3.5). An essential premise is that if ACPS improves the quality of administrators, the division will be able to sustain and retain a highly qualified staff involving both teachers and support personnel.

ACPS recognizes the importance of the development and support of principals. At the beginning of this academic year, for example, new principals and assistant principals participated in a New Administrators' Orientation program. They received a detailed introduction to policies and practices as well as roles and procedures for each of the departments and offices within the school division. Major focus was placed on critical information that a new administrator would need to become an effective instructional leader and program manager responsible for addressing the needs of a diverse student population.

Throughout this academic year, a multi-faceted approach to professional learning has engaged principals and assistant principals in becoming effective instructional leaders. Using what Stanford University and the University of Virginia call an "instructional infrastructure," ACPS leadership development sessions included workshops on: (1) Reinforcing a curriculum based upon backwards planning; (2) Promoting research-based and engaging instruction; (3) Implementing an effective formative assessment system; (4) Using an effective data analysis process and related systems-focused and data-driven action planning; (5) Providing effective intervention systems that address the needs of our diverse student population; and (6) Accelerating progress whenever possible, maximizing the achievement of every learner.

The ACPS sustained leadership development program is differentiated to address new principals (including a comprehensive induction program), those new but continuing in the field, and senior leadership who can serve as role models and mentors to newcomers. Finally, this comprehensive process will ensure the recruitment and retention of effective and well-qualified teachers and support staff. An effective instructional leader models best practices, reinforces collaborative problem solving and decision making, and ensures that educators are equipped to put the learner at the center of the learning process in ACPS.

Projected future growth in the area of leadership development will include administrator mentoring and coaching, focusing upon new administrators to ensure that they have a support system as they confront real-life issues in their new roles. They will build a true professional tool kit that will support them and their staff as they address priorities in their School Education Plans.

When teachers feel supported professionally and have opportunities to grow they are more likely to stay with a school division. Recognizing this is an important factor in employee's decisions to stay with ACPS, the division continues to offer many opportunities to staff.

To support new teachers the mentor program has been revised. Training began this year on the Santa Cruz model for effective mentoring program. This program focuses on the needs of the first year teacher, or a teacher new to the school division. It provides a support system necessary to for successful teaching through shared developmental experiences and collegial nurturing under the guidance of an experienced professional. Mentors and mentor coordinators are trained in the details of successful mentoring through providing a focus on the teacher improving their instructional practices, clarifying ACPS and their school expectations and providing social/emotional support. Each new teacher is provided a mentor and each mentor has a mentor coordinator.

ACPS tuition assistance offers opportunities for staff to advance their educational and professional goals. Tuition assistance is available to licensed employees that request reimbursement for coursework that meets the instructional/program goals and priorities aligned to the ACPS 2020 Strategic Plan, Characteristics of High Performing School

Districts, and the 12 Priorities of the Curriculum and Instruction Office. Tuition assistance is available to support personnel (non-licensed) as well. Funds are provided to support employees who are seeking academic credits, continuing education updates, or attending workshops/seminars outside of the work place to update their job skills or enhance their job expertise

The National Board certification program offers support to teachers who want to pursue this advanced certification. This program offers a monthly support course that assists the teachers through this process. The teacher can receive from 45 to 180 recertification points by completing this process. After completion, the teacher is eligible for Department of Education sponsored stipends that include a first year of \$5000 and \$2500 for years 2 through 10. Additionally, ACPS provides a \$2200 Bonus for years 1-10.

Finally, to retain quality staff, ACPS has initiated the Grow a Teacher program. The mission of this program is to support paraprofessionals, parents and community members in high need communities to become highly effective teachers through innovative partnerships with community organizations, higher education institutions, and the division. The goals of this program include:

- a. Create a pipeline of highly qualified teachers of color.
- b. Improve teacher retention in high need schools.
- c. Recruit for hard-to-staff schools and hard-to-fill positions especially in areas of ELL, Special Education, math and science.
- d. Increase cultural competence and community of connections of teachers.

ACPS efforts to increase the percentage of annual employee retention continues by actively engaging employees in the various programs to support and develop administrators, assisting new teachers and providing the programs for professional growth opportunities for employees.

### **3. Reversing the Course of Areas of Decline:**

ACPS will sustain the initiatives in leadership development described above, ensuring that the division stays the course rather than introducing an excessive number of new programs. ACPS will build capacity and encourage in-service administrators to provide mentoring, coaching, and professional learning to their peers. This will involve a collaborative effort involving the Departments of Human Resources, Curriculum and Instruction, Student Services, and Facilities. Currently, a Project Plan that will guide and inform program evaluation of these efforts is under development. It will include objectives, key performance indicators, a timeline with deliverables, and identified individuals responsible for sustaining these processes.

### **TARGETS SET & ADJUSTMENTS**

Last year, Human Resources adjusted 3.6.1 KPI to more accurately capture the evaluation process in the licensed staff evaluation and to ensure we capture all of support (non-licensed) evaluation. By measuring the completion of each step in the process the aim is to ensure the fidelity of the full evaluation process. This new KPI will assist Human Resources and the principals that each step in the process is completed.

This year Human Resources has added the support staff to the on-line evaluation tool, Talent Ed. This will be the first time that support evaluation process is fully automated

through electronic verification. This will allow for better tracking of the completion of these evaluations. Below are the targets for 3.6.1 and 3.6.2 based on 2016-17 baseline data.

3.6.1 - Percentage of eligible licensed staff evaluation processes completed on time

Key Performance Indicator	2016-17		2017-18	2018-19	2020
	TARGET	ACTUAL	TARGET	TARGET	TARGET
3.6.1 % of eligible licensed staff evaluation processes completed on time	Establish Baseline	81%	≥86%	≥92%	≥98%

3.6.2 - Percentage of eligible support staff employees with documented evaluations completed on time

Key Performance Indicator	2016-17		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
	TARGET	ACTUAL	TARGET	TARGET	TARGET
3.6.2 % of eligible support staff employees with documented evaluations completed on time	Establish Baseline	75%	≥86%	≥92%	≥98%

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review the attached materials for possible planning, procedural, programmatic, and/or budgetary changes.

**IMPACT:**

KPIs and targets may warrant revisiting to validate their appropriateness in informing stakeholders on division progress.

- ATTACHMENTS:**
1. "ACPS 2020 Goal 3 Scorecard"
  2. "ACPS 2020 Goal 3 Performance Update"
  3. "ACPS Mentoring Handbook 2017-18"

**CONTACT PERSON:**

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