

BOARD BRIEF

Date: June 14, 2019

For ACTION _____

For INFORMATION X_____

Board Agenda: Yes ___

No X___

FROM: Dr. Gregory Tardieu, Manager of Grants and Partnerships
Office of School, Business and Community Partnerships

THROUGH: Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools
Kurt Huffman, Director of School, Business and Community Partnerships

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

TOPIC: Teacher Success Utilizing DonorsChoose Online Platform

SUMMARY: The mission of DonorsChoose.org is “to make it easy for anyone to help a classroom in need, moving us closer to a nation where students in every community have the tools and experiences they need for a great education”. Started by a former history teacher at a Bronx public high school, DonorsChoose.org has provided a platform for public giving that has resulted in the support of 1.3 million teacher classroom projects. They vet all requests, purchase each item, and ship materials directly to verified schools.

ACPS teachers have been using the DonorsChoose online platform since 2008 to help secure additional funding for special projects for their classrooms and school. The platform has provided a mix of results with some classes having their projects fully funded and others that struggled to achieve their funding goals. Discussions to address this challenge were put into motion between The Office of School, Business and Community Partnerships and Donors Choose Representatives. As a result of those discussions, ACPS was given a special link that would allow visitors to the site to search only ACPS Schools and Teachers:

<https://www.donorschoose.org/donors/search.html?zone=304&community=12921:2>

DonorsChoose.org also added a special link on their search engine for “**Alexandria City Pub Sch Dist**” so it is more identifiable for parents who were attempting to find ACPS Teacher projects.

In addition to the links referenced above, ACPS implemented a “Donors Choose Blitz” to start the school year. Teachers who were experienced with the Donors Choose platform and process were surveyed on what they found to be the best ways to get their classroom projects fully funded and their advice was shared with all teachers. The results of all these efforts were extremely positive as ACPS will become one of the few divisions to have collected over \$500,000 through the DonorsChoose platform.

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BACKGROUND: DonorsChoose.org is an online teacher fundraising platform. It allows for classroom teachers to acquire unique and unfunded supplies and equipment. The benefit of DonorsChoose is that it allows for financial transparency, no monetary entanglements with teachers, all equipment/resource donations belong to ACPS and retain tax deductibility to the donor. ACPS has been using this platform since 2008.

RECOMMENDATION: The Superintendent recommends the School Board review the information provided in the brief.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: 2018-2019 May Summary Report.pdf

Attachment 2: Annual Back To School - DonorsChoose Blitz Flyer.pdf

Attachment 3: Annual DonorsChoose Blitz - For Teachers.pdf

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