

## BOARD BRIEF

Date: May 22, 2020

BOARD INFORMATION:   X  

MEETING PREPARATION:       

**FROM:** Amber Eby, Ph.D., Evaluation and Assessment Analyst

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

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

**TOPIC:** COVID-19 Pulse Survey Administration #1 Results

### **ACPS 2020 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL:**

Goal 1: Academic Excellence and Educational Equity; Goal 2: Family and Community Engagement; Goal 3: An Exemplary Staff; Goal 5: Health and Wellness

### **SY 2019-2020 FOCUS AREA:**

Focus Area 1: Educational Equity

### **FY 2020 BUDGET PRIORITY:**

Academics; Optimal and Equitable Learning Environments; Mental and Social/Emotional Health;

### **SUMMARY:**

This brief covers results from the first administration of the COVID-19 Pulse Survey. ACPS received high responses from stakeholders with over 11,000 responses from students, parents, and staff. Areas of strength were high overall satisfaction with academic and emotional support provided by ACPS and parents and staff feeling well-informed about division decisions. The primary area of continued focus is student engagement throughout the closure period.

### **BACKGROUND:**

During the week of May 4, Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) administered a brief online survey to staff, parents, and students in grades 3-12 to seek additional feedback related to the ACPS response to the COVID-19 school building closures. The two-to-three minute survey was designed to assist in high-level monitoring of the division's efforts and inform future decisions.

### **Participation Rates**

ACPS received 11,006 responses between May 4 and May 11, 2020. There were 2,037 staff responses, 5,522 student responses, and 3,447 parent responses. Hispanic students (-9%) were underrepresented in the student sample, while Hispanic (-13%) and Black (-11%) parents were underrepresented in the parent sample. The parent survey was offered in English, Spanish, Amharic, and Arabic. The survey received over 700 responses in languages other than English.

## BOARD BRIEF

### Results

*Areas of strength.* Parents (83%), students (88%), and staff (84%) reported a high level of satisfaction with instructional and academic supports. The majority of parents (81%), students (78%), and staff (82%) were also satisfied with social and emotional supports. High percentages of parents (86%) and staff (82%) felt well-informed about decisions made by ACPS.

*Areas of continued focus.* Teachers reported concerns with the number of students engaging in their classes with 53% of teachers saying that less than half of their students engaged in class within the last week. The lowest percentages for class engagement were seen in grades 9-12. With these concerns over engagement, just over half of teachers agreed that students are making academic progress, compared with 84% of student and 78% of parent respondents.

### Next Steps

Results are being used both centrally and at schools to inform efforts and improvements. SLT has engaged in multiple data discussions focused on identifying bright spots and inequities within the results. One area of focus that emerged from the SLT discussions was a continued push for how to best support schools and staff in increasing consistent student engagement in learning. Examples of next steps identified include:

- Leverage and extend learnings from teachers to support staff learning across schools. Ask explicitly about engagement strategies and lessons learned.
- Continue to redefine what engagement looks like within a distance learning context.
- Student services to revisit procedures used by SST following up with students who are not engaging with the school. Student Services will support SST school teams to generate ideas and alternative methods for outreach.

Another survey administration will be held in the beginning of June to gauge progress and to inform summer and fall planning for the division.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review this brief and attachment for awareness of the results from the first ACPS Pulse Survey for students, staff, and families.

**IMPACT:** This survey effort is critical in informing current division standing through the eyes of our stakeholders across the key areas of instruction, technology access, nutrition, health and wellness, and communication in this time of school closure. While a vast majority of respondents reported overall satisfaction with supports provided thus far, it is also critical to continue to focus and think innovatively on how to best increase student engagement.

### ATTACHMENTS:

1. "ACPS COVID-19 Survey Administration #1 Report"

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