

BOARD BRIEF

Date: December 6, 2019
For INFORMATION:

Upcoming Board Agenda:
Yes
No

FROM: Julie A. Crawford, Ed.D., Chief Student Services Officer

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: Hanover Research Report: *Analysis of Equity in Board of Education Policies*

ACPS 2020 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL:

Goal 1: Academic Excellence and Educational Equity
Goal 5: Health and Wellness

SY 2019-2020 FOCUS AREA:

Focus Area 1: Educational Equity

FY 2020 BUDGET PRIORITY:

Leadership and Professional Development

SUMMARY:

In March 2017, ACPS requested that Hanover Research conduct a review of ACPS School Board policies with an equity lens. As stated in the attached report titled *Analysis of Equity in Board of Education Policies*, ACPS requested Hanover investigate the following research questions:

- What are the components of high-quality district and school policies that focus on equity?
- How do districts include wording related to resources and services for student groups who are historically and repeatedly represented in achievement gap data?
- In what ways do ACPS policies compare to those of peer and/or exemplary school districts?
- How do ACPS policies address equitable practices for students in terms of socioeconomic status, religion, culture, race, gender preference, and gender identity?
- What next steps can ACPS take to support an equity lens in policy aligned with the district's 2020 Strategic Plan?

The report is organized in two sections. Section I is the Equity of Peer and Exemplary School Districts, and Section II is Analysis of ACPS Policies and Recommendations for Enhancement. Hanover's report made comparisons between ACPS's policies and those of the districts reviewed in Section I to determine any improvements that may be made to promote fairness

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and to better align policies with the division's priorities.

The report had the following key findings:

- Standalone equity policies focus primarily on promoting student equity and closing student achievement gaps
- Four dimensions of equity may be embedded in the framing of a school board's policies.
- The equity of school board policies and the wording used to describe resources and services for different student subgroups may be analyzed across six policy domains based on a policy analysis tool created by the Great Lakes Equity Center (GLEC).
- Out of all six school districts profiled in this report, the extent to which ACPS's policies incorporate a lens towards equity is comparable to most.

Hanover concluded with several recommendations.

- Make clear references to research or scholarly work to help highlight the importance of equity for student success.
- Provide clarity on the specific student subgroups that have historically been marginalized in school settings that may be eligible to receive additional resources or enroll in specialized programs.
- Create policy that protects against bullying in support of creating safe and welcoming school environments.
- Make the elimination of gaps in achievement a more clearly defined goal and identify practices the division will take to address these gaps.

RECOMMENDATION: The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review the information provided in this brief and attached report to continue the equity training.

IMPACT: By reviewing the Hanover Report, *Analysis of Equity in Board of Education Policies*, the School Board continues its commitment to ensuring the provision of equitable services to ACPS students and staff by providing an inclusive and responsive learning environment.

CONTACT: Dr. Julie A. Crawford, 703-619-8034