



MEASURING WHAT MATTERS

A COMBINED QUALITY PROFILE FOR ALEXANDRIA CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND
UPDATE ON PROGRESS TOWARDS THE GOALS OF THE ACPS 2020 STRATEGIC PLAN
FALL 2018

Ensuring Every Student Succeeds



FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

The mission of Alexandria City Public Schools is to ensure that Every Student Succeeds. But what does success look like?

Measuring What Matters is a way to share with our community the incredible talent our young people have that may manifest in many different ways. Standards of Learning (SOL) data is only one measure of a student's academic success. Opportunities and successes outside of the classroom are just as important as the experience inside of the classroom. At ACPS, we pride ourselves on preparing our students for the world, whether it is college, a career, or joining the military. Every child deserves an opportunity to be supported and engaged in a high quality learning environment. And every child deserves to have their successes acknowledged.

At ACPS, we have students from 118 different countries who speak 120 different languages. We have students who come to us without any prior formal education and students who enter kindergarten already able to read, write and solve math problems. Success looks different for each of our students. Every year, some of our students go on to study at Ivy League colleges such as Yale and Princeton. This year, one student whose family fled a civil war in Eritrea has won a full scholarship to The Juilliard School, where she will study under some of the best musicians in the world. Success for other students may mean improving by two grade levels having been in ACPS for only a year.

Our diversity is a gift. There is no other school division where students can experience such a rich global environment as the one we offer at ACPS. Our students graduate being able to fully engage in our dynamic world. Time and time again, our students come back and tell us they were better prepared for the college experience or the work environment thanks to their ACPS experiences. This is real success. It is one that all of our students can experience and we are truly grateful that so many of them do.

Dr. Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr.
Superintendent of Schools



HIGHLIGHTS AT A GLANCE

ALEXANDRIA CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

With students from 118 countries who speak 120 different languages, ACPS is the most diverse school division in Northern Virginia.

ACPS has been named as one of only 26 school divisions in the United States and Canada to be officially recognized for its procurement processes.

JAMES K. POLK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

James K. Polk Elementary School was one of only six schools in Virginia to receive the Let's Move Active Schools award, the nation's top physical education and physical activity distinction for K-12 schools.

JEFFERSON-HOUSTON SCHOOL

This is the first year that Jefferson-Houston School has been fully authorized as an International Baccalaureate World School for both the Primary Years Programme and the Middle Years Programme.

LYLES-CROUCH TRADITIONAL ACADEMY

Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy was named a Virginia Naturally site for encouraging environmental stewardship.

EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

The Early Childhood Center, co-located at John Adams Elementary School, opened in September. The Early Childhood Center is the result of years of collaborative planning with the City of Alexandria and our partners, such as the The Campagna Center, and is an example of the power of collaboration in the delivery of services to our families and commitment to our youngest learners.

FERDINAND T. DAY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Ferdinand T. Day Elementary School opened in September. It is the first new school for ACPS in 20 years. Ferdinand T. Day is the second school in ACPS to offer a STEM elementary program, following Cora Kelly School for Math, Science and Technology. The STEM foundation will ensure that students are prepared for a range of STEM-related options at the secondary level and beyond.

T.C. WILLIAMS HIGH SCHOOL

In June, T.C. Williams High School celebrated its largest cohort of graduating students in the school's recent history, as well as the largest number of students in a single class heading to college.

This year, T.C. Williams High School saw an all-time high in the number of Advanced Placement (AP) tests earning top scores.

THE GOVERNOR'S HEALTH SCIENCES ACADEMY

ACPS and The George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences have partnered to create the Governor's Health Sciences Academy at T.C. Williams High School, a new career and technical education (CTE) pathway for students interested in careers in medicine and health care. Students can earn up to 22 college credits before they graduate from high school.



COLLEGE-BOUND

The T.C. Williams High School Class of 2018 saw a substantial increase in the number of students reporting a commitment to post-secondary education, with **561** planning to attend college — a **58** percent increase from last year.

The gains are due in part to the new leadership structure, which improves the ratio of counselors working with senior students to better support them in planning and pursuing their post-secondary goals. The new structure also aligns support from the T.C. College and Career Center with partners such as the Scholarship Fund of Alexandria, Alexandria Workforce Development, and Northern Virginia Community College, to ensure that every student has a plan following graduation and the support needed to implement that plan.

Not only is T.C. Williams the largest high school in Northern Virginia, it also offers some of the best opportunities to students.

ACPS offers **33** Advanced Placement (AP) classes, **142** online classes and more than **260** different face-to-face courses at high school alone. ACPS offers **18** Dual Enrollment courses, allowing students to earn high school credit and college credit at the same time. These opportunities allow students to complete the Northern Virginia College General Studies Certificate before they leave high school or start college.

“*The investment that the Scholarship Fund has made in each and every scholarship recipient is an endowment in our futures. For many of us, our scholarships will help to make higher education a reality. We are grateful to all who have helped us on our respective journeys.*”

~ T.C. senior, Ross Cooper, recipient of the Madelyn Anderson Memorial Scholarship

THE SCHOLARSHIP FUND OF ALEXANDRIA

In 2018 the Scholarship Fund of Alexandria (SFA) awarded a total of \$950,000 in scholarships to 300 T.C. graduates, both first-time recipients and scholarship renewals for returning college students. This year, the SFA received the largest gift in its 32-year history, expected to help send 30 ACPS students to college over the next two decades. The Scholarship Fund of Alexandria has helped more than 4,600 T.C. Williams High School students get to college and has provided more than \$14.5 million in scholarships over the past 32 years. More than half of the 2018 recipients are the first in their family to go to college.



“Public school is much more inclusive. You feel more confident about yourself and your future and who you want to be. I’ve loved my experience at ACPS. I have grown as a student, a musician, a friend and a supporter of others. My experience here has helped me to learn values and important life skills that have taken me along and helped pave my future.”

~ Scholarship Recipient Anya Faruki, University of Virginia

MADELINE WALDHOFF

Was named a finalist in the National Merit Program and was consequently accepted to a wide array of top colleges, including the University of Chicago, her top choice.



STERLING JOHNSON

A soft-spoken football player who says he came into his own while a student at T.C. Williams and credits his coaches and counselor, Stacy Morris, for helping him graduate. He was accepted by Virginia University of Lynchburg where he'll play football and study design and business. Sterling is now studying to become a clothing designer, focusing on trendier styles for larger men like himself.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP) EXAMS

+

22%

Of T.C. students who took AP tests scored a five, the top score possible in AP tests.

+

72%

A record 72% of all T.C. students who took the tests in 2018 achieved a score of 3, 4 or 5, the scores required by the College Board for college credit.

+

36%

More than a third of all students in grades 10 through 12 took at least one AP test in 2018.



“ I take AP classes because I want to engage in more rigorous coursework and I want to be surrounded by other students who feel the same way. My experience with those who teach AP courses is that they are able to share a depth of knowledge about their subject that’s more than one might experience in a regular class. ” ~ AIDAN DONNELLAN

“ My AP courses really shaped my educational experience at T.C. Williams. While much can be and is taken from honors and general courses, AP classes are taught in a different way. As students, we are given work that really matters to us and we are really pushed as thinkers and learners. We are in classes with other students who are interested in exploring different ways to approach a topic. The fact that ACPS pays for students to take the AP exams means that students are not limited in the number of AP classes they can take based on financial constraints. We are given an opportunity to take as many AP classes as we want in so many different subjects. ” ~ JASSELENE PAZ





CEAIRAH BRITT

Early Identification Changes the Course of the Lives of First Generation College Students

When then seventh-grader Ceairah Britt received a letter saying that she had been recommended for a program designed to help potential first-generation college-goers on their journey through high school and into college, she was puzzled.

She wondered why she had even been chosen. She wasn't the best student and even had a D in one of her classes. But, she nervously completed the application, submitted her essay and waited. A few weeks later, she learned that she was accepted into George Mason University's Early Identification Program (EIP) through a partnership with ACPS.

Five years later, Ceairah credits the program with helping her earn a 3.5 GPA, admission to George Mason University (GMU) and a three-year full scholarship covering tuition and fees at GMU.

Ceairah is one of five class of 2018 Titans who walked the stage at George Mason University to mark their successful completion of the EIP. ACPS 2014 EIP graduate Amira Delmazio also received a full scholarship from EIP and is now graduating from college and is planning to attend medical school in the fall.

AVID FACTS

The Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) system is playing a key role in closing the achievement gap and ensuring that students get to college. The AVID system has seen tremendous gains in growing participation rates in elementary through high school, increasing grade point averages (GPAs) and increased enrollment in rigorous courses.

More than **82%** of students in the AVID elective in grades 6-12 in ACPS are eligible for free and reduced-price meals, and approximately **70%** are first-generation college students.

ACPS AVID students in grades 9-12 had a **98.3%** attendance rate in the 2017-18 school year.

More than **98%** of AVID middle school students are taking an honors course and are successfully completing Algebra in the eighth grade.

Three T.C. AVID students were chosen to be AVID student leaders at the **annual AVID Summer Institute** held in Philadelphia this past year.

98% of 2018 AVID seniors completed both the ACT and SAT test at least once.

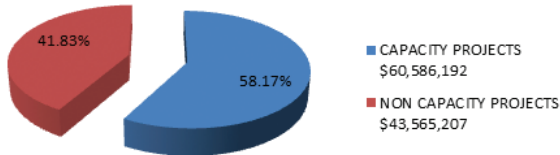
AVID seniors have boasted a **100%** on-time graduation and college/military acceptance rate for the past five years.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

93% Graduation rate for Career and Technical Education (CTE) completers this year.

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

FY 2019 CIP BUDGET:
Capacity Vs. Non-Capacity Projects

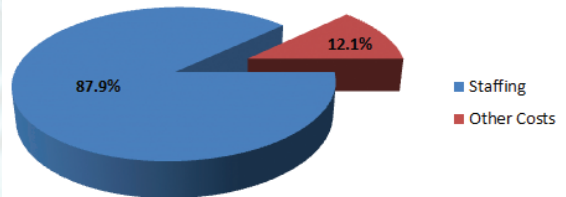


The School Board approved a study around high school capacity to take place next school year, as well as funding for other projects to solve capacity issues.



More than 87% of the ACPS Operating Budget is dedicated to staffing.

FY 2019 Final Budget
\$273,809,451



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

As the new school year begins, the ACPS Grants Office has already received more than \$900,000 to support multiple areas. These include STEM, professional development, alternative programs and health programs. This is a 248 percent increase from the previous year (2016-17).

One highlight is our partnership with Running Brooke, which awarded \$40,050 in grant funding for the 2018-19 academic school year, supporting 13 different programs across 10 different schools, including the LINK Club at Brent Place.

DID YOU KNOW?

The school division holds itself to a very high standard concerning the use of taxpayer funds. It does its best to maximize resources and compete its dollars to get the best prices and best quality on behalf of the school division and the entire community. ACPS was named as one of only 26 school divisions in the United States and Canada to be officially recognized for its procurement processes.



STUDENT STORIES 2017-2018



Bethlehem Hadgu, a T.C. Williams High School violist was awarded a full scholarship Kovner Fellowship to The Juilliard School.

Kathy remembers her first day in a U.S. school, she was just eight years old, had just arrived from Honduras, and spoke no English. Two years later, Kathy is now working on the same level as her English speaking peers, is a model student, and excels in math. She aspires to be a lawyer or a doctor and use her skills to help people like her in the future.

Two T.C. Williams students were invited to attend the **Project Green Challenge** 2017 Finals in California, where they explored a different environmental topic — energy, zero waste, food waste, biodiversity, economics — each day of the month.



Aiden White, a junior at T.C. Williams, won first place in the state and went on to compete on the national stage at the National History Day competition.

Four T.C. Williams students developed an app to help fellow teens cope with anxiety and won the opportunity to present it at a national conference.

A George Mason Elementary School student won the National Award of Merit (third place) in photography in the **National PTA Reflections** contest for telling her own story as a cancer survivor.

Arianna Espiritu and Yahney-Marie Bostick Sangare are two of our 2017-2018 student poet laureates.



TEACHER PROFILES

LAURA SIMONS PHYSICS TEACHER T.C. WILLIAMS HIGH SCHOOL

AP Physics Teacher Laura Simons has been named ACPS Teacher of the Year and was our nominee for The Washington Post Outstanding Teacher of the Year. Simons is a lead member of the science department and a lead for the physics professional learning community who actively promotes a love of science in teaching and learning communities. She established "Nerdy T-shirt Thursday," where she and her colleagues wear physics or science-themed t-shirts to promote content. She is also a liaison for the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program, which helps to prepare typically under-represented students for four-year college eligibility.

JONATHAN FORBES MUSIC TEACHER JAMES K. POLK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



Jonathan Forbes is a homegrown Titan who has joined the staff of ACPS as a music teacher at James K. Polk Elementary School. An alum of Charles Barrett Elementary School and George Washington Middle School, Forbes graduated from T.C. in 2013. He was inspired to pursue a career in music by his middle school band teacher, Rick Seracino. It was during his second year in college that he knew that he wanted to teach music. After teaching in Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam for a year, he returned to Alexandria and knew he wanted to teach at ACPS, like his sister, Meredith Forbes, a fourth-grade teacher at Matthew Maury Elementary School.

DR. BEVERLY VICK FIRST GRADE TEACHER DOUGLAS MACARTHUR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Dr. Beverly Vick has been with ACPS for 21 years. She came to MacArthur in 2006 by way of Jefferson-Houston and Patrick Henry Elementary Schools. Dr. Vick has served on many leadership teams, including curriculum development, shared decision-making and faculty councils. She has demonstrated her commitment to the community through her involvement with the Sunshine Team, which builds community in the school and supports colleagues in times of trouble; the Giving Tree program she runs each year to collect new hats, gloves, coats and boots for local homeless shelters; her work with the Boys-to-Men mentoring group; and her pride and joy, the American Girl Literacy Club, which focuses on building self-esteem, friendships and resiliency.



DID YOU KNOW? 77% of all ACPS teachers have advanced degrees.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

BLENDING LEARNING THROUGH TECHNOLOGY ACCESS

Each student in grades 4-12 is issued a Chromebook for educational purposes. At the middle and high school campuses, a student can check out a personal wifi device if he or she does not have internet access at home.

In 2017-18, all ACPS schools met the requirements for ACPS to be recognized by Common Sense Education as a division “committed to creating a culture of digital learning and citizenship.” Students in ACPS receive digital citizenship instruction using resources from Common Sense Education. These age-appropriate resources cover a wide variety of topics, including internet safety, information literacy, digital communication, and cyberbullying.

CURRICULUM

This school year, ACPS has been writing new curriculum for all courses. The curriculum is more easily accessible for teachers, contains supporting links and materials and is aligned with state requirements. ACPS has also purchased new K-12 reading materials to align our teaching materials with current standards to better support teachers.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

During the 2018-19 school year, every school will be involved in school improvement planning, to ensure that teaching staff are working collaboratively and providing the specific supports and services to each and every student based on needs that have been identified through analysis of the data.

DID YOU KNOW?

ACPS issues Chromebooks to students in grades 4-12 for individual use.



HOW ARE
WE DOING?

OUR COMMITMENT TO IMPROVING

ACPS 2020

ACPS remains committed to the work necessary to ensure that it meets the goals of the ACPS 2020 Strategic Plan and its mission that every student succeeds. The mission of the plan is: Every student succeeds: *Educating lifelong learners and inspiring civic responsibility*. It is focused on six areas: academics, family and community engagement, exemplary staff, facilities, health and wellness and effective and efficient operations.

TALENTED AND GIFTED PROGRAM

The findings of the ACPS Talented and Gifted (TAG) evaluation will yield a roadmap for continuous progress to ensure high achievement for all students and will form the basis of an action plan for the next three to five years.

DELIVERY OF SERVICES TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

This past year, ACPS carried out an evaluation of the services provided to students with disabilities. This fall, ACPS will put together an action plan around the findings.

WHAT OUR TEACHERS THINK

Teachers have given ACPS a positive endorsement in a recent staff survey while noting that student discipline and the involvement of teaching staff in decision-making remain areas that need work. The TELL (Teaching, Empowering, Leading and Learning) survey, which is administered every two years and yields important data used by schools to drive improvement, saw overall increases in six of the eight areas relating to school climate, no change in one area, and a decrease in one area.



HOW ARE WE DOING?

Of the **2,186** community members who participated in the 2017-2018 ACPS 2020 Community Survey...

74%

rated the quality of ACPS as excellent or good.

93%

feel welcome to attend school activities.

83%

believe there is mutual respect and trust between ACPS and the community.

72%

said the division has a positive public image.

The areas that still need our focus are:

68%

said ACPS provides optimal (excellent) learning environments within each school.

63%

believe ACPS facilities are well-maintained.

ACPS IN NUMBERS

13,000 ACPS Express now goes out to more than 13,000 parents, staff and community members each week.

Did you know? ACPS has 5,000 registered volunteers who support our students.

5,000

500 ACPS provides 500 wifi devices to students without internet access at home.

ACPS has students from **118** countries who speak **120** different languages.

ACPS
students are:

37% Hispanic

27% Black

28% White

5% Asian

DID YOU KNOW?

ACPS collected and distributed more than **2,000 backpacks** with the support of more than **50 community partners** to equip students on their first day of school.

GET CONNECTED TO ACPS

Make sure your school has your updated contact information for you, including email and text.

Sign up for school newsletters and emergency alerts at www.acps.k12.va.us/lists.

Follow ACPS on Twitter and Facebook at @ACPSk12.

Follow our schools on social media:
www.acps.k12.va.us/socialmedia.

Watch School Board meetings on ACPS-TV, cable channel 71 and streamed on the ACPS website at www.acps.k12.va.us/acpstv.

Download the ACPS mobile app for school lunch menus, upcoming events and the latest news.

Visit m.acps.k12.va.us to download the app for iPhone or Android.

ALEXANDRIA CITY SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

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Hal Cardwell
Karen A. Graf

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