

BOARD BRIEF

June 21, 2024

BOARD INFORMATION: X

MEETING PREPARATION: _____

FROM: Daryl Johnson, Executive Director of Communications
Jasmine Washington-Price, Media and Internal Communications Coordinator

THROUGH: Julia Burgos, Chief of School and Community Relations
Melanie Kay-Wyatt, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

TO: The Honorable Michelle Rief, Chair, and
Members of the Alexandria City School Board

TOPIC: Media Relations Report for 2023-24: Jan. 1-June 10, 2024

ACPS 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL:

Goal 1: Systemic Alignment
Goal 2: Instructional Excellence
Goal 3: Student Accessibility and Support
Goal 5: Family and Community Engagement

SY 2023-2024 PRIORITY AREA:

Academic Achievement
Tier 1 Instruction: Alignment, Rigor, Engagement
The High School Project
Student Supports
CASEL Social Emotional Learning Competencies
Student Connection and Attendance
Staff Supports
Continue Culture Building
Recruitment and Retention

FY 2024 BUDGET PRIORITY:

K-4 Literacy
Restorative Practices Supports
Target Planned Compensation Enhancement and Staff Retention Efforts
Increase Support for Social and Emotional Learning
Building Upgrades
Modernization
Capacity Projects
Communications Support
Transparency and Engagement for CIP Projects

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SUMMARY:

The Office of Communications has prepared a biannual report summarizing earned media coverage for the division from January 1 through June 10, 2024. The report contains the number of media inquiries that the Office of Communications received and addressed during this time period, main topics related to ACPS in the news, the number of mentions of ACPS leadership, regional and national coverage, positive stories pitched by the Office of Communications and successfully covered by news media, as well as how ACPS' media coverage compares to nearby school divisions and more. The Office of Communications produces a media relations report twice a year. The next media relations report will summarize earned media coverage for the division from July 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024.

DETAILS:

From January 1 and June 10, 2024, ACPS received 112 media requests and had more than 3,200 mentions in broadcast and online news coverage. Mentions are defined as the number of television, radio and online news stories where ACPS was included (not including print).

Highlights include:

- The top topics for the second half of the 2023-24 school year were the opening of the newly constructed Alexandria City High School (ACHS) Minnie Howard Campus, academic recovery, the ACHS Class of 2024 graduates, safety and security, Black History Month school programming, ACHS educator receiving the Milken Educator Award, the ACPS theater program and the division receiving the Environmental Protection Agency's Clean School Buses Grant.
- Top ACPS leaders featured in the news included Superintendent Dr. Melanie Kay-Wyatt, School Board Chair Dr. Michelle Rief, Executive Director of Athletics and Student Activities James Parker, Chief of School and Community Relations Julia Burgos and Chief Technology Officer Dr. Elizabeth Hoover.
- The top stories from the division included stories from several of our schools including Alexandria City High School, Mount Vernon Community School, Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy, Cora Kelly School for Math, Science and Technology and Charles Barrett Elementary School.
- The overall media sentiment for the division is positive, reflecting a 54% positive sentiment and 40% of the stories receiving a neutral sentiment. Stories further amplified by social media are included on platforms such as Facebook, Reddit, X (formerly known as Twitter) and Pinterest.

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BACKGROUND:

The 2021-25 ACPS Strategic Communications & Community Engagement Plan identifies media and public outreach as a core opportunity to engage with the community on division-wide issues that are important for all students and the future of the school division. This report shows the work our media relations team has done with a broad range of news outlets to effectively reach the Alexandria community and stakeholders, as well as some national audiences, on the important issues and activities of our school division.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review this presentation to become familiar with the work of the communications team and some key metrics, such as the number of media inquiries that ACPS receives, the stories pitched to reporters and their media outlets, how often the division appears in the news and the type of earned media coverage that affects public opinion of the school division.

IMPACT:

The report will serve to address how working with journalists and shaping our messages for the media can assist the division in addressing timely issues and our work within our school community, helping to foster relationships between families and staff and furthering community engagement plans as outlined in the Department of School and Community Relations plan: ensuring staff, families, students and the community have timely access to information and engagement opportunities, feel welcome and supported and have confidence in ACPS.

REFERENCES:

Jan. 5, 2024 Board Brief: Media Relations Report: July 1-Dec. 31, 2023

Sept. 8, 2023 Board Brief: Media Relations Report 2022-23 School Year

June 23, 2023 Board Brief: Media Relations Quarterly Report: April - June 2023 May 5, 2023

Board Brief: Media Relations Quarterly Report: Jan. - March 2023 March 3, 2023 Board Brief:

Media Relations Quarterly Report: Oct. - Dec. 2022 Oct. 21, 2022 Board Brief: Media Relations

Quarterly Report: July - Sept. 2022 April 22, 2022 Board Brief: Media Relations Interim Report

ATTACHMENTS:

Media Relations Report for 2023-24: Jan. 1- June 10, 2024

CONTACT:

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