1. Systemic Alignment

Objective: Create and implement a plan for school and instructional improvement that:

- Supports the ACPS mission

- Provides a clear, concise, system-wide understanding of what instructional improvements need to happen and why (incl. ACPS staff, students, parents, and the community)

- Focuses attention, energy, and resources on a limited number of strategic, non-negotiable initiatives that all schools implement with fidelity, based on a common understanding and agreement that will lead to cohesion

- Ensures Division leaders provide schools and school leaders with the support, collaboration, and monitoring they need to be successful, incorporating a clear definition of instructional leadership

Measures:

- Knowledge of the Division's approach to systemic alignment and identified strategic initiatives by ACPS staff, students, families, and the broader community (survey)

- Support from ACPS staff, students, families, and community for the Division's approach to systemic alignment and identified strategic initiatives (survey)

- Implementation of strategic initiatives by each school (rubric)

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2. Instructional Excellence	
Objective: Ensure that all students have access to high-quality instruction that is: • aligned to an instructional framework and high-quality curricula • engaging and rigorous • culturally relevant, and sensitive to students' strengths and needs • focused on a few high-leverage instructional strategies supported and monitored by school and Division administrators and instructional coaches, creating a systemic culture of substance, depth, and critical thinking in curriculum and instruction	**Measures:** • Student performance on formative assessments at school and Division levels • Percentage of classrooms in each school demonstrating use of high-impact (engaging, rigorous, culturally relevant) strategies (observation) • Percentage of teachers planning lessons utilizing the ACPS instructional framework • Percentage of teachers agreeing that they feel well supported (survey)

Needs Assessment report pp. 23-32

3. Student Accessibility and Support	
Objective: Ensure students have access to programs and supports that: • are demographically proportionate to the ACPS student population • demonstrate high expectations for all students • engage students and inspire and support them in taking ownership of their learning • provide teachers and staff with the professional development and support needed for successful implementation • will enable them to succeed in their postsecondary pathway	**Measures:** • Percentage of students completing specified grade-level steps for academic and career planning by school and student demographics • Percentage of students in TAG, honors, AP, dual enrollment, and CTE by school and student demographics • Number of students chronically absent by school and student demographics • Percentage of students referred to special education by school and student demographics • Quality of implementation of selected programs (external or internal evaluation) • Percentage of students and families who feel safe, valued, knowledgeable about key transitions, and engaged in their learning (survey) • Dropout rate by student group • Percentage of students suspended (out of school and in school) by school and student demographics • Percentage of students identified for, and amount of, supports provided by school and student demographics

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4. Strategic Resource Allocation	
Objective: Strategically provide resources and supports to schools that are: • effective • based on the strengths and needs of the Division • aligned with the strengths and needs of the students in each school • responsive to schools' needs	**Measures:** • Size of projected annual deficit • Resource allocation to each school • Academic return on investment • Access to and effectiveness of professional development • Quality of data entry (periodic mini audits) • Timeliness and safety of buses • Effective use of time • Efficiency of facilities support and responsiveness

Needs Assessment report pp. 6-15, 39

5. Family and Community Engagement	
Objective: Ensure the Division takes active steps to ensure that all families feel • welcomed in schools • respected and valued by all staff • empowered to support the delivery of education and services to students	**Measures:** • Percentage of families feeling welcomed, valued, and empowered to help their children be successful (survey, with methodology to ensure demographically proportionate representation, incl. across language groups) • Percentage of families who feel their voices are included and valued in ACPS decision-making processes (survey) • Percentage of service providers and volunteers feeling welcomed and empowered to support the delivery or education and services to students (survey) • Percentage of students who feel safe, valued, and cared for (survey) • Differentiated strategies to engage all families equitably, based on their needs • Training on quality family engagement practices across schools • Quality of communication between teachers and parents, and supports to support it • School culture: customer service and equity orientation in tone

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1. Systemic Coherence

Some Potential Strategies to Consider as Starting Points:

a) Clearly define areas and conditions in which schools have autonomy and do not.

b) Clearly define principals as instructional leaders and develop and implement a systematic approach to instructional-leadership development.

c) Clearly define the role and responsibilities of the Executive Director of School Leadership to be focused on supporting and supervising principals to be instructional leaders.

d) Clearly define the responsibilities and processes of the integrated teams.

e) Clearly define strategic initiatives that all schools must implement with proper support from the central office. Consider having 1-2 classroom-based initiatives (e.g., MTSS, Balanced Literacy, instructional strategy), one school-level initiative (PLCs), and one initiative connecting each school and the central office (superintendent's quarterly meetings). Each initiative should have clear frameworks that support their implementation and monitoring.

f) Restructure the Division's professional development to be focused on established strategic initiatives. Assess the quality and impact of the professional development on instruction.

g) Consider transforming the Division into a "learning network":

- Across the Division and schools, create and manage systems and structures that identify key barriers to high student performance and that implement "plan-do-study-act" cycles of continuous improvement.

- Identify schools and programs that outperform others on given indicators, define their processes, and work to adapt their processes to other schools and programs through protocol development, coaching, and networks.

h) Ensure the board receives regular, formative updates on students' academic progress and on implementation levels of key strategic initiatives focused on improving student progress.

i) Regularly monitor and report on progress in implementing the strategic plan.

2. Instructional Excellence

Some Potential Strategies to Consider as Starting Points:

a) Ensure Division curricula are high-quality: aligned with Virginia standards of learning and assessment as well as the state definition of a graduate, supported by teachers and principals, vertically integrated, properly paced with clear learning targets, and supported with instructional materials.

b) Working collaboratively with educators, refine the instructional framework and ensure its use.

c) Clearly define high-leverage instructional strategies that support learning among a diverse student population.

d) Refocus professional development, Division integrated teams, and instructional coaching on instructional framework and identified high-leverage instructional strategies.

e) Require all schools to support and monitor implementation of high-leverage strategies.

f) Consider piloting instructional rounds and evaluating implementation and impact; scale use depending on evaluation.

g) Consider piloting a systematic approach to MTSS; scale use depending on evaluation.

3. Student Accessibility and Support

Some Potential Strategies to Consider as Starting Points:

a) Work with the Alexandria City Health Department to increase mental health supports in all schools.

b) Depending on assessed need at each school, increase supports for SEAL.

c) Increase the percentage of low-income, Hispanic, Black, and other under-represented groups participating in honors, AP, and other high-level secondary courses.

d) Create networked improvement communities around special education disproportionality, chronic absenteeism, and access to TAG and high-level secondary courses for under-represented students.

e) Take a case management approach to serving an identified group of students most at risk of failure at each school.

f) Establish and implement consistent practices to introduce all students to the high school campuses beginning in the middle grades, providing in-person introductions to available programs, resources, and supports.

4. Strategic Resource Allocation

Some Potential Strategies to Consider as Starting Points:

a) Enhance equity work by increasing resources dedicated to facilitating equity-focused conversations, and eventual improvements in policy and practice.

b) Work with all senior leadership to identify cost savings that will narrow the Division's structural deficit.

c) Adopt a new funding formula —ideally a weighted student formula that includes central office positions—to drive additional resources to high-need schools.

d) Create a schedule for revamping central office data systems—including Munis, Timeclock and Zimbra—and strengthen systems to improve the accuracy of data entry.

e) Conduct an evaluation of school transportation with a focus on timeliness and safety of buses.

5. Parent and Community Engagement

Some Potential Strategies to Consider as Starting Points:

a) Continue to meet regularly with city agencies through the Unified Planning Process around key issues of common interest, including the health and mental health of students and their families.

b) Conduct an analysis of community need at each school and the resources available at each school to address the need. Work with DHS, DCHS, other city agencies, and local nonprofits to fill gaps in needed services at each school.

c) Apply a case-management approach for students and families that are not being served effectively.

d) In collaboration with partners, develop plans for use of high-tech hub opportunities in Northern Virginia.

e) Work with schools to create clear guidelines for the role of and outreach to PTAs and other nonprofit and volunteers in all schools.

f) Work with PTAs to increase the diversity of participation.

g) Hold regular information sessions in schools across the Division; work with parent liaisons to maximize parent attendance.

h) Pilot and evaluate a community school approach in a number of high-need schools; depending on the evaluation, expand the approach to other schools.

i) Increase the number of bilingual staff in schools as needed.

j) Consider piloting an Amharic and Arabic language class in a middle school and T.C. Williams.

k) Use annual surveys of students, parents, and school staff to regularly assess parent and community engagement efforts.

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