

BOARD MEMO

Date: May 4th, 2023

For ACTION

For INFORMATION

Board Agenda: Yes

No

FROM: Kurt Huffman, Executive Director of Community Partnerships and Engagement
Julia Burgos, Chief of School and Community Relations

THROUGH: Melanie Kay-Wyatt, Ed.D., Interim Superintendent of Schools

TO: The Honorable Meagan L. Alderton, Chair, and
Members of the Alexandria City School Board

TOPIC: ACPS Out of School Time Update

ACPS 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL:

- Goal 1: Systemic Alignment
- Goal 2: Instructional Excellence
- Goal 3: Student Accessibility and Support
- Goal 4: Strategic Resource Allocation
- Goal 5: Family and Community Engagement

SY 2022-2023 FOCUS AREA:

- Social Emotional and Academic Learning Recovery
- Hispanic Males
- Middle School Educational Experience
- Strategic Plan Implementation
- Continuous Improvement in KPI Disparities

FY 2023 BUDGET PRIORITY:

- K-4 Literacy
- Social and Emotional Supports for Students
- Expand Access and Improve Quality of Out of School Learning

SUMMARY:

In 2017, Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) was awarded the U.S. Department of Education's 21st Century Community Center Grant (21st CCLC) to support out of school time programming. Through this grant funding, the Office of Community Partnerships and Engagement created LINK Club (Linking Instruction, Nurturing Knowledge). This after school program is designed to provide high-quality after-school services with an emphasis on academic support, enrichment, social-emotional support and family engagement to high-need, economically-disadvantaged students and their families.

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In 2019, ACPS was awarded an additional four 21st CCLC grants out of 28 awarded in Virginia. To date, the five LINK Club programs continue to be funded by the U.S. Department of Education's 21st CCLC Grants and additional funding support provided by smaller foundational grants; and have been made possible through collaboration with co-applicants (Homes For America, Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority/ARHA and City of Alexandria Department of Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities/DRPCA) and community partners that contribute in-kind facilities, staffing and other wrap-around services that significantly leverage the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) grant funds.

With the identified success that the LINK Club has experienced (both traditional programming and the pivot to at home during the pandemic), the Office of Community Partnerships and Engagement applied and received additional Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funding to support the expansion of the LINK club services in collaboration with the school administration and the DRPCA. The additional program sites are designed to leverage the school's existing extended learning and Title I funding and made possible through our strong partnership with DRPCA.

In addition, the ESSER funding is also being utilized to implement "Change Maker" curriculum aligning with the Project GLAD (Guided Language Acquisition Design) and AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) models for academic out of school time support and the RULER (recognizing, understanding, labeling, expressing, and regulating) curriculum for social-emotional supports. RULER aims to infuse the principles of emotional intelligence into the immune system of preK to 12 schools, informing how leaders lead, teachers teach, students learn and families support students. This curricular development is a true collaboration with the Departments of Teaching, Learning and Leadership and Student Services and Equity.

In alignment and response to the ACPS 2025 Strategic Plan and the City of Alexandria's Children and Youth Community Plan, ACPS is currently in strategy sessions with internal and external stakeholders, including the ACT for Alexandria Youth Support Network, to create the plan for sustainability after the period of 21st (CCLC) Grants and relief funding expires. This convening of stakeholders will discuss areas such as current staffing analysis, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis and needs identification. Even as the program has experienced staffing transition, new reporting mandates from the state, monitoring visits, continuation grant applications and partner adjustments, the success of this program has remained at a high level according to reflective sessions and stakeholder assessments/evaluations. As proof of that continued high level of success, the LINK Club program was recently recognized by the Virginia State Boards Association as a "Showcase For Success" recipient.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Alexandria's Children and Youth Community Plan, which was unanimously approved in June 2014 by the Alexandria City Council and the Alexandria City School Board, placed a significant focus on services available for Alexandria's youth during out-of-school time, including the following goals:

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- o Ensure that out of school time programs are offered in all areas of the city, are free or low-cost and located at neighborhood schools/recreation centers.
- o Align in-school and afterschool programs that deliver academic/social enrichment with school curriculum in instances where students are not meeting grade-level expectations.
- o Create an integrated and aligned out-of-school time system that includes review of best practices/quality, assessment of needs and preferences, identification of service gaps, access, affordability and opportunities to develop civic responsibility.
- o Call for the development of a work group to address the City's OSTP needs (established 2017)
- o Conduct a citywide assessment of out of school time opportunities (conducted in 2018)

To address the goals of the *Children and Youth Community Plan* and various areas of the *ACPS' 2025 Strategic Plan: Equity for All*, particularly as it related to addressing achievement gaps and strengthening out of school time programming, the ACPS Office of Community Partnerships and Engagement designed and implemented LINK Club, (Linking Instruction, Nurturing Knowledge), a high-quality afterschool program with an emphasis on academic achievement support and opportunity for high-need, low-income students at no cost to families.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review the information in this memo to gain a better understanding of the current programming and the path moving forward to expand and strengthen out of school time opportunities to meet the ever-growing needs of our school community .

IMPACT:

Through current out of school time programming and the opportunity to expand to additional sites, additional identified students/families in need will be provided high quality out of school time programming to support their academic, social/emotional and health and wellness success.

ATTACHMENTS:

230504_Board_Presentation_Out_of_School_Time_Update_V1
Children and Youth Community Plan
2023-VSBA-Showcases-for-Success
Youth Support Network Overview

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