

Date: October 9, 2015

For ACTION \_\_\_\_\_

For INFORMATION  X

Board Agenda: Yes \_\_\_\_\_  
No  X

**FROM:** Clinton Page, Chief Accountability Officer, Department of Accountability  
Gerald R. Mann, Executive Director of Secondary Instruction

**THROUGH:** Alvin L. Crawley, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

**TO:** The Honorable Karen Graf, Chair, and Members of the Alexandria  
City School Board

**TOPIC:** Middle School Metrics Update

**BACKGROUND:**

In February 2014, the ACPS School Board voted to consolidate the middle schools into one school per campus. Metrics were developed with corresponding baseline data to monitor the progress of the middle schools on key indicators moving forward. As outlined in the Middle School Transition Timeline, the metrics have now been updated to include results from the most recent school year as well as targets for the current year.

**Determining Targets**

Targets were established through a collaborative effort which included: the principals of Francis C. Hammond and George Washington middle schools, the Executive Director of Secondary Instruction, the Department of Accountability, and the Superintendent of Schools. The well-established goal-setting principles of "S.M.A.R.T" goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) established the overall approach taken in determining the current targets.

A uniform methodology for all SOL Performance goals was developed and agreed upon as a ten percent reduction in the most recent year's failure rate (R10). This is the same method allowed within the federal accountability system under the Safe Harbor provision for meeting Federal AMOs. In regards to the Achievement in Advanced Coursework goals, the R10 methodology was used to determine targets for pass proficient rates and final grades of "B" or higher in World Language courses. The target for pass advanced rates was set to increase by five percentage points across all content areas.

As course enrollments have already been confirmed for the 2015-2016 school year, targets were set for 2016-2017 to either improve or maintain enrollment rates. For both middle schools, which have high rates of participation in Algebra I (>92%), the goal is to maintain their respective rates. George Washington aims to maintain current enrollment trends in honors English, History, and Science courses while Francis C. Hammond will work to increase honors enrollment by 10 percentage points in 2016-2017. As each school's rate of underrepresentation in honors courses for Black and Hispanic students varies, Francis C. Hammond hopes to maintain the percentage of Black students enrolled in honors classes proportional to the population while George Washington will focus on

increasing the representation of Black students. Both schools will work on reducing the underrepresentation of Hispanic students in honors courses by four percentage points. While schools continue to encourage incoming students to enroll in world language courses, the goal is to maintain enrollment for 2016-2017.

At both middle schools the aim is to limit out-of-school suspensions to no more than 200. At Francis C. Hammond, all other discipline metric outcomes by 50% were established, while George Washington is targeted to maintain 2014-2015 levels except in the area of disproportionate suspension rates for Black male students. Both schools aim to maintain daily attendance rates, while also reducing chronic absenteeism by 50%. Climate targets were set to reduce the rate of disagreement to survey items by 10% for the reported metrics for 2015-16, with the exception of maintaining the SY 13-14 rate at which teachers reported requiring students to work hard. Data will be obtained from the Developmental Assets (student) and TELL (staff) surveys, which are scheduled for administration this year.

### **Results for 2014-2015**

George Washington Middle School met nine out of 13 targets set in SOL performance in the most recent year. Francis C. Hammond Middle School did not achieve the growth in SOL performance seen at George Washington with six out of 13 metrics remaining constant to prior year achievement levels. Achievement in Advanced Coursework continues to improve in the areas of Reading, History, and Science, increasing between one and five percentage points across schools. Both middle schools stayed constant in regards to access to advanced coursework in regards to both all student measures and the underrepresentation of Black and Hispanic students. George Washington saw large improvements in the area of discipline cutting the number of suspensions by nearly half and reducing the annual percentage of students suspended from 15% to 5%. With that said, discipline and attendance will remain areas of focus, particularly at Francis C. Hammond, for the coming school year. The formal school climate measures identified for student (Developmental Assets) and staff (TELL) will be administered in SY 15-16 based on the previously set survey administration schedule. Targets were set for the coming administrations with results reported next year. To track school climate as reported by students a locally developed brief survey was administered to middle school students in SY 14-15 and results may be found in the attached 2015 Middle School Climate Analysis report.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Review the Middle School Metrics for both George Washington and Francis C. Hammond Middle Schools for consideration in future planning, programmatic, or budgetary decisions.

### **IMPACT:**

Targets have been set across all goal areas. Both schools saw improvement or remained constant across a majority of academic performance and access to advanced coursework. Gains were seen in discipline results at George Washington; however, discipline and attendance results will remain a focus for SY 15-16. In addition, a heavy focus has been put on each school's specific areas of decline and next steps.

### Next Steps:

Both Middle Schools have reviewed their metrics and have begun to implement action to specifically address areas of decline. Some examples of the specific work in progress are provided.

#### *Francis C. Hammond*

- Math End-of-Course (EOC) SOL Pass Rate:
  - To begin, teachers have identified students who were unsuccessful on last year's SOL and a progress monitoring protocol has been established. Interventions are being implemented for each student and progress will continue to be monitored throughout the school year using pre-assessment and common assessment data.
- Number of Out-of-School Suspensions & Percentage of Students Suspended More than Once Annually:
  - FCH's administrative team continues to monitor referrals, including repeat referrals. In the instance of a repeat referral, parent conferences take place and school counselors are be involved. In addition, out-of-school suspension alternatives have been put into place such as grade level team support, mentors, peer mediation, community service, and in-school suspension.
- Percentage of Students Identified as Chronically Absent:
  - Hammond's SST team is meeting biweekly to review absences and tardies. As concerns arise, the administrative team and counselors intervene with parent conferences and additional support to address individual student needs and prevent chronic absenteeism.

#### *George Washington*

- Special Education & ELL Math SOL Pass Rates:
  - GW has begun by modifying the service delivery models for students with Special Education and ELL students. Modifications will lend to better collaboration and co-teaching in which differentiation is sure to be implemented.
- Percentage of Grade 8 Students in World Languages earning a final grade of "B" or higher:
  - Consulting with World Language teachers will shed further light onto this drop in performance and help to identify challenges to students.

#### *Both Francis C. Hammond and George Washington Middle Schools*

- Disproportionately between suspensions and enrollment for Black male students:
  - In a joint meeting with the middle school principals it was agreed that an important first step is to further analyze additional characteristics of these students (such as school performance, absences, etc.) to get a more complete picture.
  - At GW, progress monitoring has been intensified and the SST structure has been changed with team leads assigned. Early intervention is critical and will be an area of focus this school year.

**CONTACT PERSON:** Clinton Page & Gerald Mann

**ATTACHMENT:** (1) *George Washington Middle School Summative Metrics*  
(2) *Francis C. Hammond Middle School Summative Metrics*  
(3) *2015 Middle School Climate Survey Analysis*