FourPoint
Education Partners

Conducting a Needs Assessment of Alexandria City Public Schools

As part of its support in facilitating the development of a new strategic plan for Alexandria Public Schools, FourPoint Education Partners is conducting a review of six "domains" of interest to the district. FourPoint's review and the selection of these domains is intended to complement the reviews of key district systems -including the audits of curriculum, the Talented and Gifted program, services to students with disabilities, procurement, facilities, and human resources - conducted recently by ACPS and summarized in 2025 Strategic Planning Committee Data Workbook.

To address each domain, FourPoint has drafted research questions (outlined in Table 1) to be studied. To investigate these questions, FourPoint will use multiple methodologies— including analysis of existing data and information, an online survey of principals and teachers, interviews and focus groups with internal and external stakeholders, and observations of classrooms. Findings and recommendations stemming from this data collection will be summarized in a needs assessment to be delivered to the district and presented to the strategic planning committee in October 2019.

Christopher T. Cross
Chairman
chris@fourpointeducation.com
925.314.1863

Scott Joftus, Ed. D.
President
scott@fourpointeducation.com
301.229.3049

Sharon Deich
Vice President
sharon@fourpointeducation.com
703.534.6486

Rudy Ruiz
Partner
rudy@fourpointeducation.com
414.841.6031

Table 1. Proposed Domains and Research Questions for District Needs Assessment

Domain	Research Questions
Community Voice	• What do external stakeholders believe to be the district's greatest strengths and challenges? • In what ways do external stakeholders assess the quality of their schools and the district? What would convince them that schools and the district were improving? • What are the biggest priorities for different external stakeholder groups? • How do different stakeholder groups define equity?
Finance	• How are resources currently allocated to schools? • What are current funding priorities for the district? • How equitably and strategically are resources allocated to schools? • In what ways could resources be allocated more equitably and strategically?
Instructional Delivery	• To what extent are research-based instructional strategies used in classrooms? • To what extent are students engaged and challenged?
College, Career, Life Readiness	• What is the district's profile of a successful graduate? • How are the district's college and career readiness programs and opportunities promoted and made available equitably? • How are all students connected with the surrounding community to explore, learn, and serve in ways that meaningfully develop their progress toward postsecondary pathways of interest?
Governance	• To what extent do school board members believe that the board is using best practices? • What are the priorities of the board? • What would convince city leaders that schools and the district are improving? • What are the biggest priorities for city leaders? • How can city agencies support improved outcomes for students?
School Management	• What are the characteristics and challenges of schools across the district? Of those identified as needing to improve? • How much autonomy do schools have? Is this well understood by key stakeholders? • What is the district's strategy for school improvement? To what extent is this strategy consistent with the district's goals and theory of action? How effectively does the district implement the strategy?

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