

BOARD BRIEF

Date: March 8, 2019
For ACTION _____
For INFORMATION X____
Board Agenda: Yes ___
No X____

FROM: Helen Lloyd, Director, Communications Office

THROUGH: Dr. Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., Superintendent of Schools

TO: The Honorable Cindy M. Anderson, Chair, and
Members of the Alexandria City School Board

TOPIC: Communications Update

SUMMARY:

The Office of Communications continues to focus on telling our own story, a major part of the communications strategy as outlined in the [Communication Strategic Plan 2018-20](#).

- Each week, ACPS publishes an original story highlighting the themes of the strategic plan: student success, opportunity and diversity.
- These original stories are actively promoted to the media (three local papers, Washington Post, three local TV channels). Our weekly Media Roundup tracks “earned media,” which is content that we have actively and successfully pitched to be included in local news media.

While **every** aspect of our work is involved in marketing the school division, there are some specific marketing campaigns and materials worth highlighting. All events and major marketing campaigns have communication plans drafted to ensure a smooth rollout. This also helps staff from other departments focus on the goal and outcome, and not the product in itself. When staff come to Communications asking for a flier or video, for example, we always ask what they want to achieve. Our team then crafts a rounded campaign that focuses on achieving that outcome.

Teacher recruitment campaign

Bus driver recruitment campaign

Kindergarten Registration will start on April 3. Registration packets are currently being updated with new policy language.

High School Project: The High School Project website is in the process of being updated and we are working with Operations on the next phase of the project including a white paper for a K-12 partnership with Virginia Tech.

School Communications: Communications oversees, trains, supports and continuously evaluates a School PR Liaison at each school, who earns a stipend for posting content to school social media channels each week. School newsletter and website editors continue to be supported through training and platforms that we oversee.

Transportation community meetings: Supporting a series of community meetings around potential walkzone changes.

Equity: We continue our focus with Express posts, Op-Eds and a new [web page](#) on equity.

Upcoming projects:

- Rebranding of ACPS aligned with the 2025 strategic plan.
- Marketing brochure and video for all schools.
- Rethink of the website with a view to redesigning it in the next year. The platform selected for the website is limited, expensive and not as sleek or interactive as we would like it. With a full-time web designer and ADA compliance expert on the team beginning July 1, 2019, we will be looking to update our web presence to include more interactive video content, audio and podcast galleries.
- Measuring What Matters (Year 2) linked to video and audio content to highlight programs and student successes, and including interactive graphs and charts.
- Professional media training for leadership.

RECOMMENDATION: The Superintendent recommends the School Board review the information provided in the brief.

ATTACHMENTS: None

CONTACT: Helen Lloyd, 703-619-8009