

BOARD BRIEF

Date: June 17, 2022

BOARD INFORMATION: X
MEETING PREPARATION: _____

FROM: Tina Constantine, M.Ed., Evaluation & Assessment Analyst
Clinton Page, Ed.D., Chief of Accountability and Research Officer

THROUGH: Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

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

TOPIC: 2022 Equity Climate Survey Results

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 2021-2022 FOCUS AREA:

Focus Area 1: Social Emotional and Academic Learning Recovery

FY 2022 BUDGET PRIORITY:

Implementation of 2025 Strategic Plan

SUMMARY:

The annual Equity Climate Survey is a key measurement component tied to the Equity for All Strategic Plan. Results inform school and division staff on key indicators of climate, through an equity lens, to inform areas of strength and continued focus based on stakeholder perceptions. During the 2021-22 school year, school districts across the country continued to deal with unprecedented disruptions and challenges. This is an important context to understand and through which to view the Equity Climate Survey results. Areas of strength identified include continued positive perceptions of the learning environment, teachers, and school climate overall. Areas of continued focus revolve around stakeholders' feeling of safety as well as relationships between students and student and staff relationships.

BACKGROUND:

During the 2021-2022 school year, K-12 districts across the nation continued to deal with unprecedented disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic, economic uncertainty, and the continued impacts from historical and current systemic racism. Research has shown that continued challenges included: severe staffing shortages, high rates of absenteeism for students and staff, and mental health, including internalizing and externalizing behaviors. It is important to understand and consider this context in the review of the Equity Climate Survey results and in planning for next steps.

As a component of the new Equity for All strategic plan, ACPS partnered with Hanover Research to administer an equity climate survey to staff, students, and families. The survey combined elements of a traditional climate survey and past ACPS equity audits to create an instrument

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that gauges school and division climate through the specific lens of equity. The survey was administered to staff, students, and families from March 11 to April 3.

This year's survey saw almost 2,000 more participants (n=6,960) when compared to last year's effort with increased participation across all stakeholder groups. Multiple efforts were put in place to actively seek participation from historically underrepresented stakeholder groups leading to a more representative sample than in the past. Representation by race/ethnic groups within student stakeholders was largely proportional to division enrollment ratios while White parents were overrepresented (approximately +11pp) compared to the overall population.

Areas of strength identified include most families, staff, and students having positive perceptions of the learning environment, teachers, and school climate overall. Survey respondents are most likely to agree that students feel welcome at school, that teachers provide extra support when needed, and students are encouraged to be active participants in learning. The social-emotional environment and school supports are also considered a strength with a majority of stakeholders reporting that adults at school care about all students. While still a majority in agreement, student responses did decline from 2021 to 2022 across most related questions, while family/guardian and staff responses were more likely to remain the same or increase slightly.

Areas of continued focus revolve around feeling of safety, which declined between 2021 and 2022 as seen in response to two particular survey items. Students are less likely to agree that they feel safe at school (58%) than staff (76%) and family/guardians (73%). Agreement that they (or their child) feel safe during school declined in 2022 by 17 percentage points for students, 11 percentage points for staff, and 9 percentage points for family/guardians. Agreement that students are frequently bullied at school (Family: 36%, Staff: 23%, and Students: 41%) also increased by about 11 percentage points for all stakeholder groups between 2021 and 2022.

There are opportunities to strengthen student and staff relationships. Only a slight majority of students (52%) agree that students respect other students from different backgrounds, a 15-percentage point decline from 2021. Students and staff members report varying use of restorative practices in classrooms. Fewer than half (Student: 29%; Staff: 39%) report that they participate in or facilitate community circles at least once a week and 36% of students report never participating. Slightly more than half of staff (59%) agree that they are comfortable using restorative practices. These results are similar to 2021.

Data from the survey will be used to inform school and department improvement efforts this school year and will serve to continue to establish a trend baseline for future survey outcomes. The attached summary provides more detailed survey results.

RECOMMENDATION: The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review this information for an understanding of the ACPS Equity Climate survey results.

IMPACT: The ACPS Equity Climate survey generates understanding on how stakeholders are experiencing ACPS as an organization each and every day through an equity lens.

ATTACHMENT: *1. 2021-2022 Equity Climate Survey Results Summary*

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