

## BOARD BRIEF

Date: July 30, 2021

BOARD INFORMATION:   X  

MEETING PREPARATION:       

**FROM:** Julia Burgos, Chief of School & Community Relations

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

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

**TOPIC:** PowerSchool Access and Electronic Back to School Forms

**ACPS 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL:**

Goal 2: Instructional Excellence

Goal 4: Strategic Resource Allocation

Goal 5: Family and Community Engagement

**SY 2020-2021 FOCUS AREA:**

Focus Area 1: Reopening of School

Focus Area 5: Academic Disparities

**FY 2022 BUDGET PRIORITY:**

Implementation of 2025 Strategic Plan

Professional Learning and Cultural Competency Training for all Staff and Partners

**SUMMARY:**

To empower families to use PowerSchool Parent Access, and ensure that 90 percent of students across all demographics have their back to school forms (which includes contact information) updated or verified by Sept. 30, 2021 while supporting sustainability, being good stewards of funds and reallocating time dedicated to registrar data entry.

**BACKGROUND:**

Planning was initially underway in February 2020 to drastically cut the number of printed packets, then COVID-19 hit and disrupted these plans. Due to 100 percent virtual learning, packets were then printed and mailed in August 2020 to all student homes in the student's family preferred language. Families were directed to complete the forms online via PowerSchool or complete them in print and return to the school.

Each year, these packets contain:

- Directions to complete the forms online via PowerSchool Parent Access
- Access codes for PowerSchool Parent Access ("Virtual PLUS+ Access" in 2020) and how

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to create a PowerSchool Parent account

- Forms from previous years (Student Info Update Form, Health Info Form, Signature Form, free and reduced meals (FARM) application, etc.)
- Flier with info about online Family Handbook and Code of Conduct
- Printing cost in 2020: \$21,612 (mailing cost separate)

### **Plans for Back to School Fall 2021**

Back to School Forms packets for the 2021-22 school year will be completely online via PowerSchool Parent Access, as a continuation of the original plan started in February 2020. Our goal is to empower all families to learn how to use PowerSchool Parent Access. Printed packets will be provided in Amharic and Arabic for students whose families have those preferred languages, in addition to a small amount of printed blank forms that are being provided to schools for families who request them. Virtual students will also be included in the outreach for back to school forms packets. The School and Community Relations Team will host webinars and conduct engagement efforts in September 2021 to help families register for PowerSchool Parent accounts and complete the forms. This allows registrars to reallocate their time to other critical work instead of data input. This is considered a short-term investment cost for engagement with the long-term benefits of empowering families. The return rate for printed packets from Fall 2019 was 70 percent.

### **Delivery Dates for Printed Packets and Parent Access Letters**

- Aug 4: Print packets delivered to Tucker
- Aug 16: Print packets delivered to all remaining schools
- Aug 4: Tucker Parent Access letters mailed out
- Aug 16: Traditional calendar schools Parent Access mailed out

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review the plan for PowerSchool Parent Access and electronic Back to School Forms for fall 2021.

### **IMPACT:**

This new process is environmentally friendly and supports our efforts to be good stewards of funds. It also empowers families to use PowerSchool as a tool to support their child and be a partner with the school division. The benefits to staff are measurable as registrars do not have to manually enter data from printed forms which leads to better quality control (however they do still need to verify the data and push it to PowerSchool). Also, teachers have one less task on the first days of school since they will no longer have to distribute and collect packets. This approach supports our Strategic Plan goals of instructional excellence, strategic resource allocation and family and community engagement.

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

None

### **CONTACT:**

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