

## BOARD BRIEF

Date: September 24, 2020

BOARD INFORMATION: \_\_\_\_\_

MEETING PREPARATION:   X  

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

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

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

**TOPIC:** The Identity Project: Renaming Our Schools  
Working Plan for Communications and Engagement

### 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 3: Strategic Plan Implementation  
Focus Area 4: Renaming of Schools  
Focus Area 5: Academic Disparities

### FY 2021 BUDGET PRIORITY:

Cultural Competence for All Staff  
Outreach to Hispanic Families to Improve Attendance and Graduation  
Outreach to Underserved Communities to Increase Engagement

### SUMMARY:

The School & Community Relations team, along with support from various departments, has designed a Working Plan for Communications and Engagement to support [The Identity Project: Renaming Our Schools](#). The plan includes various opportunities to capture student, staff and community feedback through read-ins, student and community chats and an online public feedback process. This student-led public engagement process provides a unique opportunity to allow students of color to lead this discussion and utilize this platform to highlight racial inequities and provide curriculum in classrooms to support this educational effort.

### BACKGROUND:

Instead of two separate processes, it was decided to enlarge the education and engagement around the consideration of a name change for T.C. Williams, include Matthew Maury, and

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have both conversations at the same time. This would streamline and align the process while also recognizing that each would need their own separate considerations and forums.

The process needs to:

- Be student-led with support of ACPS staff
- Ensure the voices of all students, not just a few, are heard and represented
- Educate students in age appropriate ways on the history of Alexandria, T.C. Williams the person, and both school histories
- Incorporate the voices of key stakeholders in the community who believe ACPS has not listened to them fully in the past
- Involve the '71 Titans, other alumni and groups who rely on the support of the alumni such as the Scholarship Fund of Alexandria
- Be sensitive to the timing of the process and more pertinent needs of students during a pandemic
- Tied in with the *2025 Strategic Plan: Equity for All* communication and engagement work
- Aligned with ACPS' internal racial equity work

**RECOMMENDATION:** The superintendent recommends that the School Board review and know the “The Identity Project: Renaming Our Schools Working Plan for Communications and Engagement” to support the launch of this process and support the educational opportunities presented in this working plan.

### **IMPACT:**

To assess whether a name change has support across the entire student body at T.C. Williams High School, the Matthew Maury community, and among all key demographic groups in the wider Alexandria community.

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

The Identity Project Working Plan for Communications and Engagement

### **CONTACT:**

For more information, contact Julia Burgos, chief of school & community relations at [julia.burgos@acps.k12.va.us](mailto:julia.burgos@acps.k12.va.us).