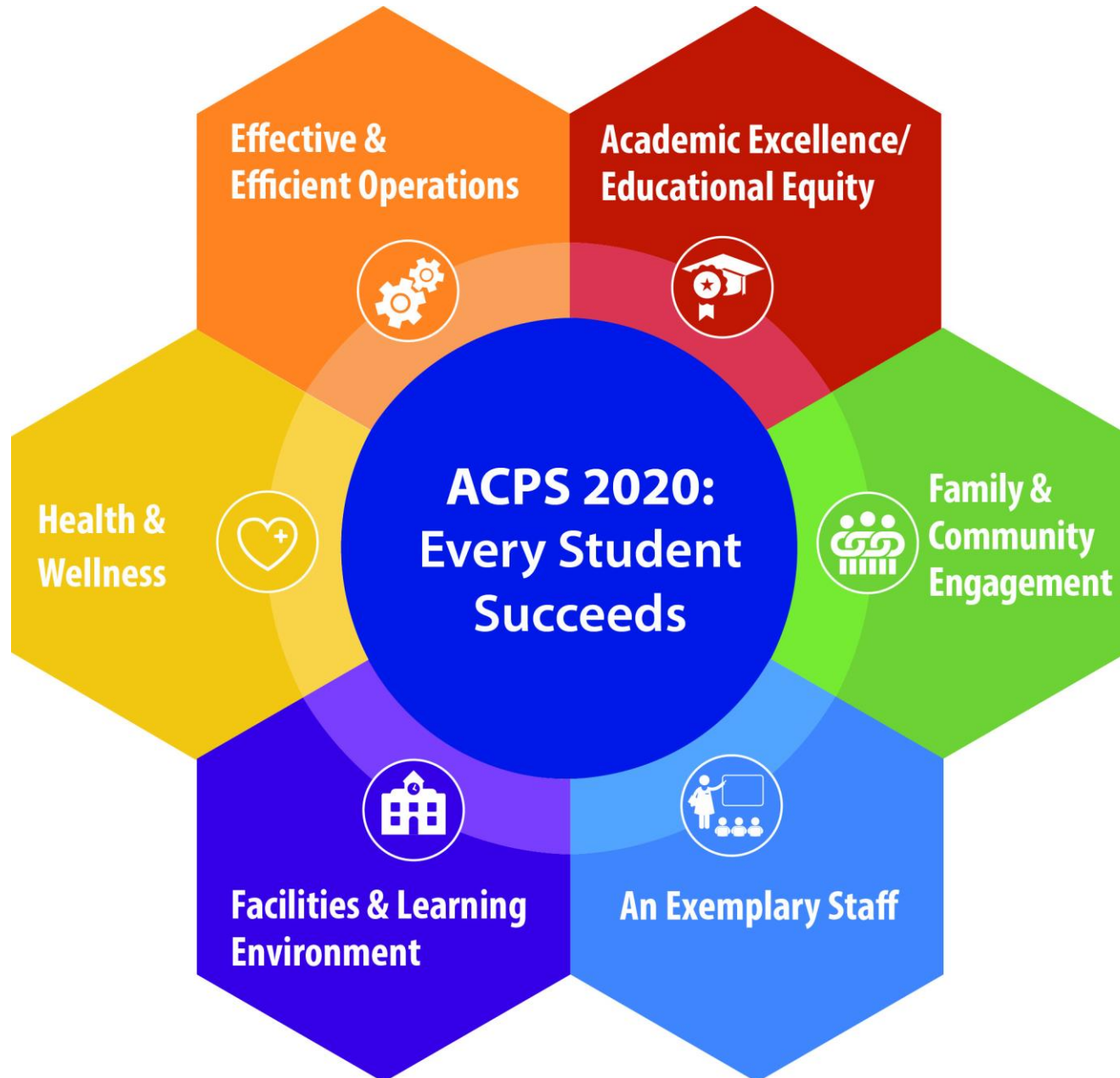


ACPS 2020: Every Student Succeeds



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Mission

Every student succeeds: Educating lifelong learners and inspiring civic responsibility.

Vision

Our students achieve at high levels, are well-rounded, critical thinkers, and have a passion to learn.

ACPS has an engaging and collaborative climate that promotes ethical behavior and values diversity.

ACPS is a vital part of the fabric of our community, and Alexandria residents and businesses take pride in our schools.

Principles

We Believe In Educational Excellence

We Believe In High Achievement for All

We Believe In a Culture of Collaboration

We Believe In Continuous Improvement and Accountability

We Believe In Environmental Stewardship

Goals

1. **Academic Excellence and Educational Equity:** Every student will be academically successful and prepared for life, work, and college.
2. **Family and Community Engagement:** ACPS will partner with families and the community in the education of Alexandria's youth.
3. **An Exemplary Staff:** ACPS will recruit, develop, support, and retain a staff that meets the needs of every student.
4. **Facilities and the Learning Environment:** ACPS will provide optimal and equitable learning environments.
5. **Health and Wellness:** ACPS will promote efforts to enable students to be healthy and ready to learn.
6. **Effective and Efficient Operations:** ACPS will be efficient, effective, and transparent in its business operations.

Introduction

In the summer of 2014, the Alexandria City School Board initiated a stake-holder driven process to develop a new long-range plan for the Alexandria City Public Schools. It began the process by drafting new Mission and Vision statements for the school division and by appointing co-chairs for the planning effort – John Lennon and Janet Eissenstat – and a Steering Committee to guide the effort. It then appointed a Stakeholder Committee responsible for reviewing the needs of the school division, the educational landscape, and the aspirations of the Alexandria community. The Stakeholder Committee consisted of Bill Campbell, Michael Carrasco, Amelia Castañeda, Trisha Christopher, Dr. Alvin Crawley, Keenan Cooper, Erin Davidson, Daria Dillard, McKenya Dilworth, Janet Eissentstat, Pilar Garcia, Bill Hendrickson, Purvi Irwin, Justin Keating, Ellen Kennedy Folts, Ellen Klein, John Lennon, Mari Lou Livingood, Dr. Tammy Mann, Dr. Terri Mozingo, Linda Odell, Denny Okudinani, Clinton Page, Joyce Rawlings, Marguerite Rippey, Tricia Rodgers, Dr. Nancy Runton, LaDonna Sanders, Cynthia Skinner, Jennifer Walker, and Deborah Warren.

The Stakeholder Committee met frequently between October 2014 and May 2015 and conducted a number of forums to gather community input into the process of settling on the Goals and Objectives for ACPS 2020. The committee was assisted by an [External Scan of Local, State, National, & International Factors Influencing the Future of the School Division](#) and by a [Survey of the Alexandria Community](#) that attracted 1200 respondents. Following completion of the first draft of ACPS 2020, the committee conducted two forums and met with various stakeholder groups, including students at the school division’s secondary schools. The committee presented its recommendations to the School Board on May 6.

The draft plan was introduced as new business at the School Board’s May 14 meeting. The Board conducted public hearings on the plan on May 14 and May 28 and held work sessions on May 21 and June 2. It adopted the plan on June 11 and directed the Superintendent of Schools to deploy the plan throughout the school division and to formulate a strategy for regular reporting to the Board and to the community on progress toward meeting the goals and objectives of ACPS 2020.

1. Academic Excellence and Educational Equity: Every student will be academically successful and prepared for life, work, and college.

Why this is important: The preparation of students for post-secondary life is a fundamental purpose of PK-12 education. ACPS pledges to educate students in an atmosphere of excellence and educational equity, and to ensure that students are challenged to stretch their talents and aspirations. Upon graduation, students will be ready to pursue college, or a career, or independent living. Although educational equity does not mean that all students will have the same experiences or the same results, it does mean that the education provided by ACPS will respond to each student's individual challenges, interests, and abilities, and that each student will be provided with the tools needed to excel.

1A: A Curriculum that Challenges and Engages: Every student will experience a rigorous, relevant, and engaging learning environment that responds to his or her interests and challenges.

Why this is important: Students who are challenged learn to problem-solve and create solutions to difficult issues. They stretch themselves to do things they did not know they could do, and they prepare for facing and resolving issues and circumstances they will face in other settings. All students can be challenged and thereby motivated to reach beyond perceived limits. A challenging education engages students and encourages them to reach new levels of personal excellence.

Objectives

1.1 Educational Excellence

ACPS will regularly assess and respond to the needs, interests, and abilities of individual students.

1.2 Achievement Gaps

ACPS will target academic achievement gaps and increase positive educational outcomes across race/ ethnicity, income, disability, and language subgroups.

1.3 Disproportionality

ACPS will focus on increasing representation of minority students in talented and gifted programs and in Honors and Advanced Placement courses; decreasing suspension rates of minority students, particularly males; and preventing over-identification of racial/ethnic minorities for remedial or special education services. ACPS will also focus on eliminating gender and racial/ethnic disparities among students enrolling in science, technology, engineering, math, and literature classes and in advanced classes such as honors and Advanced Placement.

1.4 Educational Equity

ACPS will provide each student with opportunities to be challenged and supported.

1.5 Teacher Resources and Supports

ACPS will make available to each teacher the resources and supports needed to provide an outstanding education for each and every student, differentiated according to the student's learning style and background.

Objectives

1.6 Early Childhood Education

ACPS will continue to participate with the Early Care and Education Work Group to create an early care and education (ECE) system focused on improved access, quality, and public awareness of ECE services available for children and families.

1.7 Adult Education and Services for Adult English Language Learners

In pursuit of its desire to provide life-long learning opportunities, ACPS will facilitate English-language education programs in support of individual economic advancement and civic engagement in Alexandria.

1.8 Alternative Education

ACPS will create or expand alternative education strategies and programs that will respond to individual learning styles, minimize out of school suspensions, and improve opportunities for all students.

1B: An Inclusive Organizational Culture: Every student will develop habits and attitudes that reflect the principles of cultural inclusiveness, civic responsibility, and ethical and respectful behavior.

Why this is important: In the change-dominated and technology-driven world of the 21st century, students must “see themselves” in the curriculum they study. They must be challenged and supported to maximize their achievement. This process requires that the demographic diversity of the school division guide and inform educators’ commitment to cultural competence and building an atmosphere of mutual respect in every school and office. In addition to a rigorous, relevant, and engaging curriculum, students must also have access to a range of school and community service opportunities that promote civic engagement. Finally, ACPS must set expectations for the habits and behaviors that every student needs to succeed, laying the foundations for students’ exploration and demonstration of ethical conduct.

Objectives

1.9 Cultural Competence and an Atmosphere of Respect

ACPS will implement practices that maximize the benefits of cultural, linguistic, racial, ability, religious, gender, gender-identity, and ethnic diversity within the student body to ensure optimal levels of cultural competence among staff members and students, and that engage every student in a respectful school environment.

1.10 Civic Engagement and Civic Responsibility

ACPS will engage with its students in an atmosphere conducive to mutual respect, civic engagement, and good citizenship.

1.11 Ethics and Behaviors for Success

ACPS will set expectations for the habits and behaviors students need to succeed and will lay the foundations for student explorations of ethical conduct.

2. Family and Community Engagement: ACPS will partner with families and the community in the education of Alexandria's youth.

Why this is important: The education of Alexandria's young people is a shared responsibility of families and schools, and by recognizing the important role that families play and by assisting families to understand curricula and ways they can support children, we all benefit. By recognizing the role of the community in its public schools, we can extend the reach of the school division and strengthen the supports we provide to students. By nurturing welcoming environments at school facilities, we can help make schools centers of civic activity and help develop pride in school facilities. Community engagement, including outreach to the business community, can expand the number of partnerships that provide services to schools, including tutoring, internships and jobs, and other opportunities for students.

Objectives

2.1 Family Engagement

ACPS will collaborate with parents and guardians in providing the high-quality services they need to be leaders in the education of their children.

2.2 School Engagement

ACPS will create an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect to ensure effective communication in schools, enhanced engagement with families, and culturally responsive relationships.

2.3 Community Engagement

ACPS will actively engage families, students, staff, and community members regarding school programs and activities, volunteer opportunities, and events.

2.4 Partnerships and Civic Engagement

ACPS will partner with external organizations to extend its services and programs, to encourage a sense of community ownership of our schools, and to support the development of the academic, social, physical, creative, and emotional needs of students.

2.5 Media and Public Outreach

ACPS will use a wide variety of media to reach out to the community on issues of importance to the people of Alexandria.

2.6 Collaboration with Social Service Organizations

ACPS will promote the general welfare of its students, their families, and members of its community by collaborating with local and state agencies and non-profit organizations.

3. An Exemplary Staff: ACPS will recruit, develop, support, and retain a staff that meets the needs of every student.

Why this is important: Our employees need to be resourceful, flexible, and creative. They must value diversity and collaboration and work well in teams. To this end, we must actively recruit, hire, train, and retain our staff using innovative methods and incentive. We must empower our people to be educational leaders. We must be driven by research and a constant adaptation in light of evidence. We must seek to reflect in our workforce the diversity of our community and meet the diverse needs of a multicultural student body. The school district needs to ensure that there are no barriers between the central office and school sites to create an effective flow of services and support. Pockets of excellence—programs and methods proven to work for students—should be shared, replicated, and made systemic.

Objectives

3.1 Staff Recruitment and Retention

ACPS will hire the best employees possible and create an environment that motivates, competitively compensates, and retains them.

3.2 Collaborative Instructional Achievement

ACPS will nurture a school culture in which professionals collaborate closely to share knowledge, skills, and best practices aimed at improving student achievement.

3.3 Individual Professional Development Opportunities and Strategic Plan Focus

ACPS will expand professional development opportunities that include self-identified goals and that provide teachers and other staff members with multiple opportunities for improving their individual effectiveness and that respond to Strategic Plan priorities.

3.4 Staff Wellness

ACPS will promote the health and wellbeing of all members of the staff.

3.5 Leadership Development

ACPS will establish programs to identify talent and provide opportunities for future leadership roles.

3.6 Staff Evaluation and Performance Improvement

ACPS will provide multiple opportunities for all employees to receive feedback and coaching on their performance and resources needed to improve and excel.

4. Facilities and the Learning Environment: ACPS will provide optimal and equitable learning environments.

Why this is important: High quality facilities and a comprehensive infrastructure are fundamental to learning and teaching. The physical environment of school buildings and school grounds is a key factor in the overall health and safety of students, staff members, and visitors. Student achievement can be affected positively by the physical environment. Safe and clean environments are most conducive to learning and teaching. A robust infrastructure, including central office supports and an ever-improving technological framework, facilitates student learning and high quality teaching. Schools should be a source of pride for students, teachers, and community members.

Objectives

4.1 Optimal Learning Environments and Infrastructure

In collaboration with City partners, ACPS will move aggressively to modernize all learning environments, expand or otherwise adapt facilities to meet projected changes in school enrollment, and ensure equitable application of capital improvements throughout the school division.

4.2 Well Maintained Facilities

ACPS will ensure that facilities are maintained at high levels and that repair needs are addressed in a timely and efficient manner to support the educational mission and daily operations of the district.

4.3 Sustainable Facilities

ACPS will model sustainable environmental practices.

4.4 Safe and Secure Facilities

ACPS will ensure that its facilities are safe and secure.

4.5 Information Technology Infrastructure

ACPS will maintain an IT infrastructure within which an equitable distribution of resources provides support to every educational program and learning environment.

4.6 Outdoor Learning and Recreational Opportunities

ACPS will ensure its outdoor recreation and learning spaces are accessible and appealing to the community.

5. Health and Wellness: ACPS will promote efforts to enable students to be healthy and ready to learn.

Why this is important: Students who are healthy are better able to learn and attend school than those who are not. Students with high levels of such “developmental assets” as family support, relationships with caring non-family adults, an ethos that promotes service to others, and safe environments are more likely to engage in positive social interactions and exhibit respect, tolerance, and self-discipline. Families that are knowledgeable about health and wellness activities are able to encourage their students to make healthy decisions and pursue active lifestyles.

Objectives

5.1 Student Physical, Social, and Emotional Health

ACPS will develop, implement, and monitor effective programs that promote physical, social, and emotional wellness in order to maximize students’ learning potential.

5.2 Values, Experiences, Relationships, and Qualities that Benefit Young People

ACPS will help students develop positive attitudes, self-confidence, and self-direction by increasing the values, experiences, relationships, and qualities that have been identified to benefit young people.

5.3 Physical Fitness, Recreation, and Play

ACPS will promote activities and curricula designed to promote lifelong commitments to active, healthy lifestyles among its students and to creative expression.

5.4 Safe Routes to Schools

ACPS will encourage walking and bicycling and collaborate with city authorities to ensure that safe routes are available and publicized in order that students will develop a sense of autonomy and healthy, life-long habits.

5.5 Healthy Meals and Nutrition

ACPS will ensure that all students are ready to learn by having the benefit of access to nutritious, appealing school meals and that lessons on the importance of nutritious foods are included in the curriculum.

5.6 Persistence and Resilience

ACPS will provide opportunities and motivations for students to develop the attributes, dispositions, social skills, attitudes, and intrapersonal resources that high-achieving individuals draw upon to succeed.

6. Effective and Efficient Operations: ACPS will be efficient, effective, and transparent in its business operations.

Why this is important: To maintain the confidence and trust of stakeholders, an organization must be responsible for implementing, and accountable for maintaining, sound business practices. As a steward of taxpayers' funds, ACPS must implement fiscal, administrative, and personnel practices that meet both legal requirements and accepted professional standards. All procedures regarding current and future budgets must be transparent, and ACPS must live within its means. ACPS must protect Alexandria's financial investment in its children and, in so doing, maintain its credibility and integrity through the use of a comprehensive performance management system.

Objectives

6.1 Fiscal Policies and Practices

ACPS will plan, manage, monitor, and report spending to provide decision-makers and the community with a reliable, accurate, and complete view of the financial performance of the educational system at all levels.

6.2 Continuous Improvement

ACPS will engage in cycles of continuous improvement at every level of the school division, and it will employ evidence-based decision-making in its consideration of process improvements, policy making, and budgeting and accountability.

6.3 Operational Efficiency and Performance Management

ACPS will focus resources on student learning by utilizing a comprehensive performance management system that ensures efficient, cost-effective business operations.