



2021-25

ACPS Strategic Communications & Community Engagement Plan

Core Values



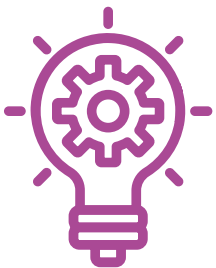
Welcoming



Equity-Focused



Empowering



Innovative



Results-Driven



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Executive Summary

Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) prides itself on its diverse student population, the world-class education that the division provides and the stellar team that it has assembled to deliver on its promise of instructional excellence - one that takes into account - equity for all. Part of that promise includes effective and transparent communications to ensure that students, families and staff feel valued, heard and included in every step of their child's academic journey at ACPS. In July 2020, as part of the superintendent's reorganization of the Senior Leadership Team, the Department of School and Community Relations (SCR) was created with the charge to fulfill this promise and elevate the importance of communications in the successful operation of the school division. The department brought together two vital components under one team: the Office of Communications and the Office of Community Partnerships and Engagement led by the newly created roles of the chief of school and community relations, an executive director of communications and an executive director of community partnerships & engagement - all cabinet-level positions.

This structure has offered the team an opportunity to build a solid framework for its work and create a deep alignment to the ACPS 2025 Strategic Plan: Equity for All. While the team supports all aspects of the Strategic Plan, you will see that the *2021-25 ACPS Strategic Communications & Community Engagement Plan* is organized by four of the Strategic Plan goals most closely affiliated with the work of the SCR team. The department comprises many facets of the school division's work including media and public relations, social, web and digital communications, photography and videography, crisis communications, internal communications, partnerships, family and community engagement, community outreach, grants, volunteers and out of school time programming. The team supports every aspect of the school division's mission and core values and is poised to bring its work to new heights under this structure.

What this plan offers is a glimpse into the work of this team that is underway with short-term deliverables and work that spans over the next four years. It also addresses the recommendations from the [2019 Communications Audit](#) and the [2020 Family and Community Engagement Evaluation](#). The SCR team has carefully crafted this plan and is excited about completing all components with the support of all of ACPS' key audiences. It has been built to be strategic, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-based with an organized approach to evaluating the progress along the way. ACPS has entrusted this pivotal work to the SCR team and it is ready to communicate and engage at a deeper level to ensure that all students, families and staff feel part of the ACPS community through a shared voice - one that supports students to be at their very best while meeting their individual needs. The team is confident that this plan will get us there.





Background

Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) is an urban-suburban school division serving a diverse student population with a bold vision of providing equity and empowerment for our students and families in alignment with our goal of inspiring students to thrive. ACPS is committed to ensuring that each and every student succeeds, and we place racial equity at the center of everything that we do as a school division. This challenges us to ensure our students are engaged in classroom teaching and learning and have access to the educational resources needed to enhance their learning experiences. We work to ensure that our schools offer a safe, friendly and welcoming environment for all. We set clear division-wide priorities and programs to address opportunity and achievement gaps, and to make sure that all students graduate ready for life, college and careers.

Through the strategic leadership and commitment of the School Board, superintendent, executive and school-based leaders, and staff, ACPS has made great strides in delivering a high-quality education to ALL its students and has attracted some of the best and brightest to join its world-class instructional and support team.

In fact, ACPS has achieved in 2021 the highest on-time graduation rate and lowest student dropout rate since Virginia began reporting these data in 2008. The school

division had a nine-percentage point increase in the on-time graduation rate, from 82% in 2020 to 91% in 2021, and a nine-percentage point decrease in the overall student dropout rate, from 14% in 2020 to 5% in 2021, with the largest gains seen among Hispanic and economically disadvantaged students. Even though there is still much more work to accomplish, this progress validates our efforts to continue engaging all students in their learning.

To address our incredible student population, ACPS

has developed the [2025 Strategic Plan: Equity for All](#) - that promises to empower all students to thrive in this diverse and ever-changing world so that they can attain their dreams and achieve their goals. In addition, the plan has five primary strategic goals: Systemic Alignment; Instructional Excellence; Student Accessibility and Support; Strategic Resource Allocation; and Family and Community Engagement. Each of these goals ensures that students are engaged in classroom instruction, have access to the educational resources needed to enhance their learning, and participate while in safe, friendly, and welcoming environments. It also sets clear division-wide priorities and programs that will eliminate opportunity and achievement gaps as well as ensure that all students graduate ready for college, careers and life. Progress toward these strategic goals will be measured with rigorous metrics.

For the first time in the history of ACPS, the strategic planning process was aligned with the planning process for multiple citywide departments and organizations with the goal of ensuring that City and school plans have shared goals and outcomes. This Unified Planning Team included the Department of Community and Human Services' Children and Youth Master Plan (CYMP), and the Alexandria Health Department and the Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria's Community Health Improvement Plan

(CHIP). These organizations embraced a shared understanding of racial equity and kept that principle at the heart of all decision making. The key focus areas of the Unified Planning Team are racial equity, developmental assets and a trauma-informed approach. They aim to add value through collective community engagement, the sharing of data, and a focus on joint outcomes.

The following plan builds upon the communication efforts underway in the individual departments and school buildings to support the strategic plan through the work of the superintendent and Senior Leadership Team (SLT), their department plans and work with their teams as well as school improvement plans. It supports our current methods of engaging daily with students, staff and families. The goal is to further existing efforts to foster strong relationships and provide other avenues to cultivate existing relationships through an array of communications channels, school-based visits and active involvement.



About ACPS



ACPS Highlights

15,477

Enrollment as of September 30, 2021

\$377,182,335

FY22 Combined Funds Budget

\$18,732

Per Pupil Cost

\$551,483,000

Capital Improvement Budget (FY 2022-31)



Teacher Highlights

1,334*

Teachers

82%

Advanced Degree

\$50,569.35

Teacher starting salary (BA)

\$57,725.85

Teacher starting salary (MA)

\$81,121

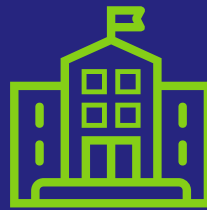
Teacher average salary

79

National Board Certified

240

Other Licensed Staff



18 Total Number of Schools

1 Pre-K

12 Elementary

2 K-8

2 Middle

1 High School (4 campuses)



Student Demographics

as of September 30, 2021

(see demo comparison below)

143

Countries of birth

123

Native languages

60%

Eligible for free or reduced price meals

11%

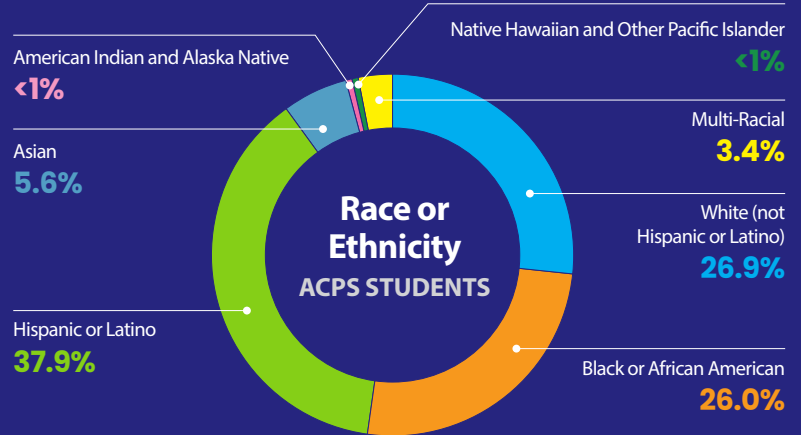
Receiving talented and gifted services

10%

Students receiving special education services

33.5%

Students requiring English Learners (EL) services



Historical ACPS demographic data available in the [ACPS iDashboard](#) | [Alexandria City Census Data](#)

*Please note that the total number of teachers does not include the following positions: eleven/twelve month staff, psychologists, school counselors, nurses, speech pathologists, occupational therapists and physical therapists.



Core Opportunities

The School & Community Relations team worked together in summer 2021 to begin to consider how to streamline communications to stakeholders, create two-way engagement opportunities with families, staff and the community and use all ACPS communications channels. During this planning session, the team took into consideration the various audiences and their preferred methods of receiving information and engaging with the school division. The planning identified the following core opportunities:

- Build an internal communications structure to enhance staff supports and professional learning through the lens of communications.
- Provide schools and departments with tools and resources for consistent, efficient communications across the school division.
- Continue working to make it easier for stakeholders, especially our underrepresented populations, to engage with ACPS on division-wide issues that are important for all students and the future of the school division.
- Deepen staff and partner's understanding of family engagement and welcoming environments through multiple new and innovative best practice initiatives.
- Strengthen collaboration between community partners and ACPS to better support the needs of students and their families.
- Continue to coordinate and facilitate staff and department efforts in acquiring grant funding for unmet student needs.
- Work collaboratively with aligned departments and community partners to explore strategic expansion of out of school time programming to support the social, emotional and academic success of ACPS' most vulnerable students.
- Continue to provide meaningful, inclusive volunteer opportunities that utilize the talents of our families and community members to support the students and staff of ACPS.

Goal

To ensure staff, families, students and the community have timely access to information and engagement opportunities, feel welcome and supported, and have confidence in ACPS so that students are empowered to thrive in a diverse and ever-changing world.



Objectives

- 1 Connect directly with 90% of students, families and staff through new and streamlined communications channels that provide timely, relevant and transparent communications by June 30, 2025.
- 2 Strengthen employee engagement, communication and connections with 90% of staff through staff-focused events, new or refined communications channels and listening sessions to address employee morale and internal communications by June 30, 2025.
- 3 Develop professional learning and assessment tools to measure impact of communications and community engagement efforts by June 30, 2025.
- 4 Provide additional opportunities to enhance family and community engagement through additional outreach and customized school blueprints to reach diverse communities through effective grassroots communications and expanded out-of-school time activities by June 30, 2025.
- 5 Redefine partnerships through a new partnership program and identify additional grant opportunities to support the work of the School & Community Relations team by June 30, 2025.



Key Audiences

Key audiences are described as segmented groups of the Alexandria City Public Schools and ACPS communities who are pivotal to realizing our strategic plan goals and serve as partners of the school division to accomplish the objectives outlined in this plan.

ACPS internal community: all staff and School Board

We often find as communicators that much emphasis is placed on external audiences and little to no focus is placed on internal audiences leading to a lack of employee engagement and connection with the audience that is most in touch with the school division. To reach the ACPS workforce, we must institute a systematic approach to ensure critical information is provided and personal connections are made with the superintendent and the ACPS leadership. When we engage our staff as brand ambassadors and maintain regular contact with them, we better understand the challenges that are faced in the school division and prepare staff to more effectively answer questions from external stakeholders. In addition, employee

engagement provides opportunities for ACPS leaders to keep current with changes that may affect staff, thus providing opportunities for dialogue with staff and developing opportunities for changes along the way to ensure success.

ACPS external community: Students and Families, including alumni

Building trust with students and families, including parent teacher associations and the Alexandria Parent Teacher Council, is reliant on accurate and timely information using a variety of grassroots and digital communications tools. This supports a better two-way engagement process to ensure that our students are ready to thrive and learn throughout their academic careers. Our leadership team understands the crucial partnership between staff and families to support our students and families for optimal outcomes and to provide the social, emotional and academic learning

supports that each student is entitled to based on their individual needs. Our aim is to leverage our relationships with families to build on our work to place racial equity at the heart of all our decision-making.

Alexandria Community Stakeholders:

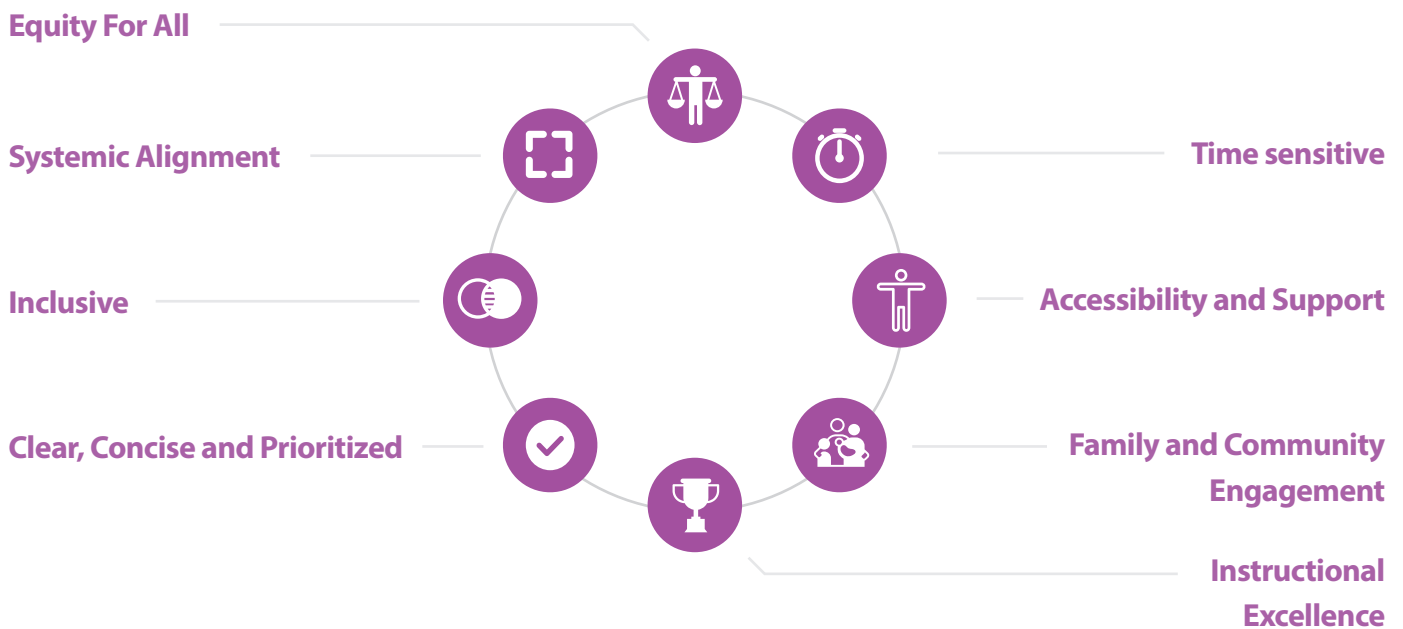
Transparent and consistent messaging are the key to building trust in the Alexandria community that reaches far and wide beyond our school buildings. These relationships are vital to creating buy-in and support to deliver on our promise of a high-quality education. The superintendent and ACPS key leaders are dedicated to partnering and engaging the ACPS community through the various communication methods they employ to ensure that our community is well-informed and kept abreast of the ever-evolving happenings at ACPS. We also know that community members and leaders are significant brand

ambassadors and are critical in spreading the good news, key messages, division accomplishments and challenges of the school division. The following represent the Alexandria community stakeholders:

- Prospective employees
- City and elected officials
- Community partners, including faith-based institutions
- Businesses and business leaders
- Alexandria City residents
- Volunteers and funders
- Realtors
- Neighboring school divisions
- Higher education institutions

Messaging

Develop and disseminate clear, concise and timely messages that reach and inform target audiences and align with the ACPS brand and strategic plan utilizing the bite, snack and meal concept. Strategic messaging should be framed around the following key elements:



INTENDED AUDIENCE: ALL

Primary Message Number One

ACPS has pledged to place racial equity at the center of the school division's every decision in order to address barriers to learning and provide an equitable, high quality education which is accessible and engaging to all students.

Secondary Messages:

- The five-year strategic plan approved by the Alexandria City School Board in June 2020--"Equity For All 2025"--provides a roadmap to redefine PreK-12 education as a deliberately inclusive and supportive experience where all succeed.
 - The first ACPS equity climate survey in June 2021 identified specific issues of focus for future equity work and found that the majority of the nearly 5,000 participants reported positive views of the learning environment, social-emotional support and staff relationships with students and colleagues.
 - The ACPS Equity for All 2025 Dashboard tracks progress on access to programs and academic and behavioral outcomes for student groups; it is updated twice a year and provides leadership with regular data to inform school and department work plans.
 - In 2020, ACPS launched the Identity Project, a student-centered initiative that included extensive community outreach, to replace school names intrinsically linked to Alexandria's racist past with new names that honor the diverse, inclusive and anti-racist community that ACPS is striving to become.
- In October 2021, the School Board created the Equity Policy Audit School Board Committee charged with reviewing all School Board policies and providing recommendations for revisions, taking into consideration input from staff and the community to do the following:
 - ensure each policy aligns with, guides and supports educational equity and the Strategic Plan;
 - identify root causes of disparities;
 - Focus on the most marginalized populations to ensure equity for all;
 - Uncover and revise policies that thwart the success of historically marginalized groups; and
 - Dismantle current systems that are barriers to student success.



INTENDED AUDIENCE: ALL

Primary Message Number Two



With the ACPS 2025 Strategic Plan: Equity for All, ACPS celebrates the rich diversity of our school community, ensures the needs and interests of all students are taken into account and aims to ensure success by inspiring and empowering students to thrive in a diverse and ever-changing world.

Secondary Messages:

- ACPS has five areas of focus in 2021-22 which are aligned with the School Board's budget priorities, the ACPS 2025 Strategic Plan and all school and department improvement plans:
 - Social, Emotional and Academic Learning Recovery--MTSS (RULER), Literacy Grades K-4, Math Recovery, and SST Support Expansion
 - Hispanic Males--Academic Enrichment and Advancement, Early Warning System, and Internships, Externships, and Workforce Development
 - Middle School Educational Experience--Scheduling, Math Pathways, Middle School Transitions (Grades 5-6 & 8-9)
 - Early College--Partnerships with NOVA and VA Tech, Course Sequencing, Program Development
 - Talented and Gifted--Identification Process, Service Model, Annual Plan
- ACPS partners with City of Alexandria agencies on unified planning and collaboration to maximize collective community engagement, share data and coordinate outputs on mutual goals and outcomes in order to improve lives for all children, families and individuals.
- A Graduation Task Force, led by Alexandria City High School Executive Principal Peter Balas, formalized the collaboration of leaders and stakeholders from all high school campuses, Central Office, the adult education and alternative pathway programs, and the juvenile detention center to monitor the graduation status of all ACPS students, identifying those who need extra support and developing plans to help them stay on track for graduation.
- In 2021, ACPS achieved the highest on-time graduation rate since Virginia began reporting these in 2008, with a nine-percentage point increase, going from 82% in 2020 to 91% in 2021.
 - This same year, the student dropout rate decreased by nine-percentage points from 14% in 2020 to 5% in 2021.
 - Graduation and dropout rates improved overall and across a vast majority of subgroups, with the largest gains seen among Hispanic, English Learner and economically disadvantaged students.
- The social, emotional and academic learning (SEAL) supports offered to ACPS students includes daily lessons that provide students with the opportunity to explore understandings of their emotions, build connections with their peers and school staff, and explore additional academic and career topics; additional supports are offered to students that need them.
- ACPS has launched the first pilot program in our schools from our innovative partnership with Virginia Tech focused on providing opportunities for ACPS students to develop the skills they will need to be successful in the workforce of tomorrow.



Strategies and Tactics

This plan is aligned with the ACPS 2025 Strategic Plan: Equity for All. You will find that the strategies and tactics are organized under four of the strategic plan goals which guide the work of the School and Community Relations team.

Strategic Plan Goal Number One

Systemic Alignment



ACPS will build a culture of continuous improvement and design equitable systems for school and instructional improvement.

Strategy Number One: Building, strengthening and systematizing communications in schools and departments.

Tactics:

- Conduct an annual Listening Tour with all schools and departments to better understand and plan for the support needed from School & Community Relations (SCR) throughout the year.
- Develop tools and resources for schools and departments to empower, train and coach (see Appendix E).
- Message and design templates including emergency notifications, fliers, brochures and other publications.
- Training for school-based staff including photo training and tipsheet for PR liaisons and refresher web training and best practices for web liaisons.
- Re-expand role of social media liaisons as “PR liaisons” to encourage sharing of stories, events, activities, photos for use in media outreach, Express and Insider, and website.
- Establish Communications and Engagement Support Team at each school including the website editors, PR liaison, newsletter editor, parent liaison, partner liaisons, volunteer liaisons and other aligned support team members.

Strategy Number Two: Reorganize the Department of School and Community Relations (completed in July 2021 – see new organizational chart).

Tactics:

- Consolidate the community outreach positions in the Community Partnerships and Engagement team.
- Fill the newly created external relations specialist position to support ask@acps (see strategy seven and Appendix E).
- Create an assistant director of communications position (see Appendix E).
- Collaborate with Human Resources staff to redefine all job descriptions and titles on the communications team to better align with responsibilities.

Strategy Number Three: Streamline all ACPS communications channels to better serve internal and external audiences.

Tactics:

- Redevelop Express and Insider format.
- Hold weekly editorial meetings to determine which communication channels to use for various items to feature in division-wide communications.
 - Develop a comprehensive annual communications calendar, which includes content, projects, events, and observances. See also: Diversity and Inclusion Calendar.

- Meet regularly to determine editorial content for superintendent's voice in our communications.
- Share messages from Dr. Hutchings to staff and community through Supe's Spotlight monthly video and targeted communications.
- Leverage Alexandria Times op-eds to share pertinent information with Alexandria community.
- Launch superintendent's podcast: "Unapologetic Talk with the Supe."
- Review current messaging and engagement platforms and implementation of new platform(s) that allows two-way messaging between teachers and parents, cuts down on the number of platforms/tools/locations that parents/students/teachers have to use for sending and receiving communications, and provides automated two-way machine translation, in addition to the functionality already provided by existing mass notification platform.
- Develop a new ACPS website for launch in June 2022 (see Appendix E).
- Use visual content and a mobile-first approach that reflects best practices.
 - Keep it simple (following plainlanguage.gov guidelines).
 - Eliminate dual (top and left) navigation.
- Procure and launch a digital asset management system for more accessible storage, organization and sharing of photos, graphics, video and other assets for internal use.
- Develop a revised Emergency Communications Plan (see Appendix E).

Strategy Number Four:
Develop a plan to establish an internal communications structure that includes professional learning opportunities for staff that incorporates a communications and family and community engagement lens. (see Appendix E).

Tactics:

- Fill the newly created internal communications specialist position to oversee all staff communications
- Create a new Intranet as part of the website redesign to serve as hub for all things ACPS staff
- Institute a system to allow for texting staff for pertinent and timely information
- Support Human Resources with the onboarding process
- Liaise with HR to ensure that there is communications support, particularly with recruitment and retention
- Prepare and deliver media and crisis communications training for ACPS leadership and School Board members
- Train appropriate staff on the newly developed customer relationship management system and process, and the appropriate use of existing and new platforms that will be introduced over the coming year
- Produce training guides and videos to better equip staff to assist with outreach to families

Strategy Number Five:
Develop rich, compelling and diverse stories showcased in multi-media formats that cast our students, staff and programs as the main characters with ACPS in the supporting role and build upon the ACPS brand.

Tactics:

- Use storytelling to define our WHY.
- Connect with emotion and clarify how each story sets us apart from other educational divisions
- Build on “Equity for All” and the ACPS brand platform
- Survey families and launch new social media channels specifically for Amharic and Arabic speaking communities
- Redesign the ACPS visual brand and logo
- Explore new ways to tell ACPS stories in addition to newsletters and social media
 - Web stories
 - Photo essays
 - Word of mouth



Strategy Number Six:
Design a media relations strategy to support storytelling, deliver timely key messages and utilize a proactive approach to sharing newsworthy information. (see Appendix E)

Tactics:

- Build trust and develop strong relationships with reporters and correspondents with local, regional and industry specific media that will share stories that represent the ACPS brand and key messages
- Identify, craft and pitch storylines that resonate strongly with media outlets and also ensures ACPS key messaging and brand is being shared with a wider audience.
- Respond to media inquiries in a timely and organized method through collaborative work with content leaders
- Learn and utilize the new media tracking system Cision to its fullest potential to reach all media and specific media reporters to pitch stories and to also track media mentions more thoroughly

Strategy Number Seven:
Establish a customer service system that provides consistent messaging across multiple channels. (see Appendix I)

Tactics:

- Complete hiring and onboarding process for the external relations specialist position
- Establish and promote centralized email: ask@acps.k12.va.us to help ensure that the ACPS community has clear and accurate information about division-wide initiatives and issues including teaching and learning. (see Appendix E)

- Maintain multilingual HelpLine
- Promote Language Line Direct Response Tool (see Appendix H)

Strategy Number Eight:
Increase visibility by expanding intentional use of grassroots communications. (see Appendix E)

Tactics:

- Continue relationship building with trusted community and cultural organizations
- Conduct outreach at targeted community events
- Create outreach tools and resources for PTAs, community organizations, faith-based organizations, neighborhood homeowner associations and realtors
- Transform ACPS fleet into mobile billboards with vehicle wraps
- Schedule speaking engagements for the superintendent at strategically selected community organizations, including “Quarterly Breakfast with Superintendent” events
- Design and schedule “ACPS Coalition” quarterly meetings with community non profit, city and business organizations to provide an opportunity for timely information dissemination and advocacy support through collaboration with the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce
- Implement a new brand campaign with the moniker of “Simply the Best” that promotes ACPS’ instructional best practices/promising practices and achievements of student and staff through regular posts/installments across channels

Strategic Plan Goal Number Three

Student Accessibility and Support



Student Accessibility and Support - ACPS will ensure students have equitable access to and engagement with programs and supports that reduce barriers to learning.

Strategy Number Nine:
Work with ACPS building and department leadership, higher education, city and nonprofit partners to address the health, social service and academic needs of students and their families (see Appendix G).

Tactics:

- Create an official ACPS online partnership portal to serve as an information connector for partners and ACPS including maintenance of database and web pages
- Lead monthly Partnership Council meetings to discuss topics and current initiatives with ACPS
- Conduct quarterly partnership relationship meetings with large scale partners to check implementation and progress of agreements and Memorandums of Understanding
- Develop formal agreement process from initiation through execution
- Based on school improvement plans and reflection meetings, provide each school and department analysis and information of current and potential newly aligned partner opportunities
- Advise new/existing partners to ensure their services appropriately align with the goals of ACPS
- Connect partners to aligned school/department leadership through email and partner introduction meetings
- Schedule and facilitate yearly check-ins with each official partners to reflect on current year and visionary planning for upcoming year
- Support various organizations and committees by attending meetings, being on agendas as needed and being an active participant

- Invite, through outreach, new partners to connect with ACPS through an updated partner information webpage
- Provide quarterly achievement data reports to community partners
- Maintain and share internal ACPS partner database information
- Maintain and develop new partnerships with higher education universities. For example: George Washington-Governor's Health Science Academy, Virginia State-Teachers For Tomorrow, George Mason-Facility Student Intern Program, Virginia Tech-Innovation STEM programming, NOVA-Early College Program
- Work with ACPS Technology and Health, Safety and Risk Management teams to provide support (resources, guides, information, tools) for staff and the community regarding the new Raptor volunteer system
- Provide volunteer management training and ongoing support to school-based parent/volunteer liaisons
- Create recruitment opportunities by working with parent liaisons, school volunteer coordinators and administrators
- Maintain all volunteer database entries and records
- Continue to engage in a broad-based needs assessment to establish priorities for the division's volunteer needs

Strategy Number 10:

Provide support and foster growth of the ACPS volunteer program to ensure high levels of community volunteer engagement.

Tactics:

- Provide clear volunteer application guidelines and updated volunteer opportunities through the ACPS volunteer webpage
- Verify newly screened volunteers, conduct background checks and collect signed Code of Conduct forms
- Facilitate monthly collaborative discussions with internal and external educational stakeholders, to identify outreach and volunteer engagement opportunities
- Collaborate, through discussions and action planning, with Volunteer Alexandria to help identify and increase the effectiveness and diversity of community volunteers
- Facilitate meetings each quarter with community partners regarding ACPS volunteer programs, processes and practices

Strategy Number 11:

Improve alignment and communications and increase opportunities between out-of-school-time program activities and state learning standards to support the academic success of ACPS' most vulnerable students (see Appendix F).

Tactics:

- Collaborate with the ACPS Office of School Improvement and the Office of Instructional Support to identify specific reading and mathematics intervention strategies
- Utilize additional grant funds to pilot project-based, experiential curriculum/activities
- Coordinate with the Office of School Improvement, school administration and improvement coaches to assess 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) program learning needs and accomplishments quarterly

- Ensure 21st CCLC teachers utilize students' WIDA tests scores and IEPs at a Glance to individualize support for the students
- Develop a monitoring form to be used by 21st CCLC site coordinators to assess the performance expectations for all activities provided by community partners
- Collaborate with the City of Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) to pilot teen leadership programs
- Provide 21st CCLC site coordinators the opportunity to participate in a Life Skills facilitation training to develop the skills necessary to facilitate leadership activities
- Incorporate the City of Alexandria's Kids are Terrific (KAT) Camp, which focuses on social, emotional and leadership skills development into 21st CCLC summer programming for elementary students
- Quarterly, allow students to provide 21st CCLC program feedback and participate in decision-making opportunities as a part of community circles
- Improve communications with out-of-school-time program stakeholders to ensure a common vision and enhanced collaboration through meetings, progress reports, social media engagement and collaboration with FACE

Strategy Number 12: Develop a sustainability plan to supplement 21st CCLC programming requirements.

Tactics:

- Collaborate with ACPS Grants & Partnership Management to identify and solicit additional funding sources
- Meet with ACPS leadership (i.e. Office of School Improvement/Title I) to identify supplemental funds necessary to sustain 21st CCLC programming
- Use the 21st CCLC as a model of success and in alignment with ACPS 2025, to design a plan of extended day program support for students throughout the division in collaboration with aligned department leadership support
- Collaborate with new and existing community partners to strengthen and grow city-wide opportunities for accessible, high-quality out-of-school time programming



Strategic Plan Goal Number Four

Strategic Resource Allocation



ACPS will strategically provide differentiated resources and supports to schools and departments.

**Strategy Number 13:
Support staff, departments and community partners/members in acquiring grants and community funding for unmet student needs.**

Tactics:

- Strategically collaborate with ACPS departments by identifying and applying for grant opportunities with aligned department leadership
- Meet with community partners to provide grant application expertise and serve as liaison for grant identification opportunities using Ecivics monthly email outreach
- Facilitate, as needed, data and fiscal discussions with aligned department and building leads to ensure high level of grant requirements are being met
- Maintain ACPS grants website that provides information and opportunities for staff and community partners
- Facilitate Donor's Choose opportunities and provide data and information to ACPS staff
- Attend and provide monthly updates to the City and Schools Commission regarding current and potential new grant opportunities
- Support the newly acquired ACPS federal grants
 - Manage allowable spending through identified fiscal portals
 - Support, through discussions and correspondence, aligned departments to ensure federal compliance
 - Compile all department spending for federal auditing
 - Compile all department measured objectives for federal auditing

Strategy Number 14: Provide support to community members/organizations to encourage donations that enhance the educational experiences of students.

Tactics:

- Provide community donation support
- Deliver donation submission information to community stakeholders through various outreach methods
- Manage the Community Funded Facility Project submissions
- Maintain the ACPS Community Funded Facilities Project and ACPS donation webpage



Strategic Plan Goal Number Five

Family & Community Engagement



ACPS will ensure that all families and community members feel welcomed, respected and valued.

Strategy Number 15:
Create and Implement new Family Engagement programs/initiatives that will fill information gaps and provide relevant information and strategies to help them navigate ACPS resources (see Appendix D).

Tactics:

- Create a framework, establish goals and key messages and implement a Parent Ambassador Program. This includes recruitment, kick off and reflective meetings, training and creation of a resource hub
- Creation and implementation of a newcomer program. This includes:
 - Develop guidance, procedures, system and a data collection process
 - Training
 - Timeline creation
 - Monthly reflection meetings and implementation monitoring
 - Metrics - Evaluation and survey
 - Visual support (posters, flyers)
 - Collaborate with Communications, English Learners (EL) office and partners
 - Welcoming school environment assessment tool
 - Toolkits
 - Parent Liaison best practice supported workshops/events and school sessions

- Institute Academic Parent Teacher Teams to enhance parental/family self-efficacy and capabilities to support their children's learning at home and social-emotional development. This includes:
 - Workshops and training for families that are linked to learning to increase their knowledge on how to support their children
 - Collaboration with school leadership and community partners to strengthen understanding and support of the Academic Parent Teacher Teams
 - Developing multi-layered, division-wide family engagement tool kits and outreach plans and materials

Strategy Number 16:
Building infrastructure systems and educator capacity for collaborating with families to bridge the divide and create equitable, productive relationships in schools and Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Community sites (see Appendices C and D).

Tactics:

- Create a school Family Engagement Action Team (FEAT) to develop and monitor a school-wide comprehensive plan that supports family engagement activities and strategies to strengthen the school and the achievement of all students
- Redesign family engagement coordinator position
- Develop a tool to guide schools on how to develop Family Action teams in their schools
- Plan meetings with school teams to collaborate and co-create yearly building family engagement best practice action plans

- Utilize the Family Engagement Evaluation findings (see Appendix D) and family feedback to guide planning and initiatives
- Establish opportunities for parents/families to build their own skills and deepen knowledge regarding how to support students learning at home
- Provide guidance about effective family engagement practices aligned with the FACE Dual-Capacity Framework
- Provide technical assistance and support to schools and community sites regarding family engagement practices and implementation

Strategy Number 17:
Conduct home visits to strengthen parent-family-school relationships and provide training on advocacy in the school setting (see Appendices C and D).

Tactics:

- Facilitate family engagement home-visit training for teachers and school-based staff
- Provide professional learning for staff on how to build relationships and empower immigrant and refugee families
- Collaborate with registrars, the student support team (SST) and the Office for English learners (ELs) to ensure families are connected to parent liaisons or the identified "connector" at each school
- Provide a toolkit on how to build relationships with families
- Collaborate with ACPS' SST, Special Education, ELs and Teaching & Learning offices to provide relevant information about re-entry and grade level transitions

Family & Community Engagement

Strategic Plan Goal Number Five

- Increase family participation in decision-making
- Provide families with training on how to become advocates for their children and work with school administrators and division leadership
- Empower families to become involved in policy making and participation in various community and school committees through training
- Work with ACPS Talent Development to develop and implement family engagement professional learning sessions (Canvas portals, in person) for staff throughout the division
- Create a Family Engagement Academy to build families' skills and knowledge on how to support student learning and to become connectors in their communities

Strategy Number 18:
Provide professional learning and training for teachers, family-facing staff and school leaders to build systemic family engagement in all schools: Capacity Building for Staff & Families (see Appendices C and D).

Tactics:

- Integrate family engagement professional learning sessions into yearly ACPS staff professional learning days
- Create a tool kit for educators and staff to work in partnership with families
- Redesign FACE web portal where staff can access resources, training and information
- Collaborate with EL Language Access Office and communications to offer information to support learning in accessible formats and languages
- Train parent liaisons to facilitate family engagement training for staff in their buildings
- Provide professional learning opportunities to strengthen staff knowledge of family engagement and welcoming environment best practices, including using language line, webportal to request interpretation and outreach strategies

- Create a rubric and planning with examples and levels of family engagement practices for buildings to assess and plan activities/events aligned with the FACE dual-capacity framework





Calendar

In order to successfully complete the strategies and tactics outlined in this plan, the team must keep a keen focus on timely execution and inclusion of each suggested activity and initiative. In the calendar provided in Appendix J, each strategy and tactic has been given a specific timeline that spans over a four-year period. Given that this work began in July 2021, some of the strategies and tactics have been completed or are well underway.

Over the course of four years, the team will assess and measure the efficacy of the plan and adjust the timeline as needed. In the latter part of this plan, the team will work to synthesize data and use the information to inform their plans moving forward. This requires that all key stakeholders become fully invested in all the strategies and tactics outlined in this plan within the given timelines.



Measurement & Evaluation

A final evaluation of the plan will be conducted in June 2025 to measure efficacy and help direct future communications plans for the school division. Annual progress will be shared in the ACPS Measuring What Matters publication. In addition, numerous measurement tools will be used throughout the duration of the plan to gauge success and modify efforts as necessary. In addition to social media and web analytics and measurement of ACPS surveys, targeted outreach will be conducted among select students, families, staff and community leaders to assess impact. The various teams will also use best practice assessment tools to measure impact and provide regular reports.

The **Evaluation Monitoring Tool** provided in Appendix B will also serve as a valuable instrument to regularly measure completion and execution of all strategies and tactics to realize all objectives. A good indicator of success will be assessed by the number of completed projects at the end of June 30, 2025.



Conclusion

Alexandria City Public Schools has positioned itself as a beacon in Alexandria City boasting a diverse population that adds to the rich fabric of the city. With the tremendous support it receives from its residents, partners and the business community, it is well-equipped to deliver a world-class education to its students. It also attracts the best of the best as illustrated through its highly-qualified team that delivers innovation and teaching and learning into every classroom. We are excited to present this plan that outlines the work for the School & Community Relations team to lead and accomplish over the next four years that is closely aligned to the ACPS 2025 Strategic Plan: Equity for All.

This plan also affords us the opportunity to raise the profile of Alexandria City Public Schools through the strategic communications and community engagement efforts put forth by every member of the school division. It also represents new thinking and methods to enhance awareness and facilitate two-way engagement with all key audiences through a variety of communications and community engagement channels. You will see that it elevates staff in a whole

new way to be brand ambassadors for the school division while also celebrating their expertise and creating spaces for them to contribute as trusted partners. With the commitment from staff and our school community to build the foundation of success for ACPS in the communications realm, we will achieve the objectives in this plan and will set a solid foundation for quality communications and community engagement for years to come.



Appendix

Appendix A: SWOT Analysis

S

Strengths

- High level of individual skill sets
- Committed, passionate, hardworking, professional
- Seek to do things well
- Good under pressure
- Strategic planning
- Creative and innovative as a team
- Work well together as a team, especially in the remote environment
- Strong relationship with hard-to-reach stakeholders
- Outstanding partnerships and volunteers
- Equity is at the heart of all decision-making
- Wealth of resources offered to families and staff to help navigate school division
- Breadth of information and range of communication channels in multiple languages
- Division celebrates and embraces diversity

W

Weaknesses

- Siloed and lack of consistent collaborative approaches among staff and partners
- Need to build capacity
- Lack of onboarding process leads to internal communication issues and confusion. Staff need to feel welcomed and informed to work well.
- Too many systems and logins to learn which creates communications challenges for staff.
- Too many communications platforms for families, and then staff need to master them.
- Communications channels are lengthy and text heavy leading to low open rates
- Lack of intranet - all is communicated through Insider or email
- No function to text staff with emergency or pertinent messages
- Lack of a diverse candidate pool that reflects the demographics of the school division.
- Need to recover from the facilities issues and highlight work done on this front
- Challenged with communicating and engaging beyond the school community
- SCR is not the only department responsible for communicating and engaging families. Disconnect with what FACE, Outreach and Communications is responsible for in the bigger picture
- Fidelity of implementation and lack of consistency across programs and processes.
- Inconsistent approach throughout the division regarding high quality out of school time programming that can be accessed for all families

O

Opportunities

- Establish a customer relationship management system
- Professional Learning
- Aligned social media across the department
- New community outreach team serves as bridge for SCR
- Website overhaul
- Redesigning partner impact through metrics and recognition
- Creating customized FACE plans for each school to measure progress
- Targeted outreach through a multi-layered approach
- Strengthen media relations resulting in more earned media
- Need to streamline communications channels
- Maintaining and expanding high-quality out-of-school programs at low/no-cost.
- Engaging staff through robust internal communications focus
- Successful utilization in alignment with our strategic plan of recovery funding (grants) to better serve students/families and school community.

T

Threats

- Understaffed and salaries are not on market rate creating difficulty to recruit and retain staff, particularly with lack of affordable housing
- Team is forced to be reactive during a global pandemic and lacks planning time, resulting in last-minute requests and decisions ultimately affecting the quality of our work and staff morale
- Lasting effects from pandemic on workload and stress level/morale of staff
- Grant sustainability past grant funding period
- Academic achievement as compared to surrounding school divisions
- High rates of students requiring increased resources and access are connected to Social, Emotional and Academic Learning
- Address space capacity issues



APPENDIX B

Evaluation Tracking Tool

Evaluation Monitoring Tool for All Strategies and Tactics in the 2021-25 Plan

This tool will be reviewed quarterly during our School & Community Relations (SCR) Staff meetings to assess progress for all objectives. Each strategy will be compared to the proposed calendar for timely execution. The SCR leadership team will check off the boxes to the left once each strategy and tactic is deemed completed.

Strategy 1: Building, strengthening and standardizing communications in schools and departments.

- Conduct annual Listening Tour with all schools and departments
- Develop tools and resources for schools and departments
- Message and design templates
- Training for school-based staff
- Re-expanded role of social media liaisons as “PR liaisons”
- Establish Communications and Engagement Support Team at each school

Strategy 2: Reorganize the Department of School and Community Relations.

- Consolidate the community outreach positions in the Community Partnerships and Engagement team
- Fill the newly created external relations specialist position to support ask@acps
- Creation of an assistant director of communications position
- Redefine all job descriptions and titles on the communications team to better align with responsibilities

Strategy 3: Streamline all ACPS communications channels to better serve internal and external audiences.

- Redevelop Express and Insider format
- Hold weekly editorial meetings to determine communication channels
- Launch superintendent’s podcast: “Unapologetic Talk with the Supe”
- Review of current messaging and engagement platforms and implementation of new platform(s)
- Develop a new ACPS website for launch in June 2022
- Use visual content and a mobile-first approach that reflects best practices
- Procure and launch a digital asset management system
- Develop a revised Emergency Communications Plan

Strategy 4: Develop a plan to establish an internal communications structure that includes professional learning opportunities for staff that incorporates a communications and family and community engagement lens.

- Fill the newly created internal communications specialist position
- Create a new Intranet as part of the website redesign to serve as hub for all things ACPS staff
- Institute a system to allow for texting staff for pertinent and timely information
- Support Human Resources with the onboarding process
- Liaise with HR to ensure that there is communications support
- Prepare and deliver media and crisis communications training for ACPS leadership and School Board
- Train appropriate staff on the newly developed customer relationship management system and process, and the appropriate use of existing and new platforms
- Produce training guides and videos to better equip staff to assist with outreach to families

Strategy 5: Develop rich, compelling and diverse stories showcased in multimedia formats.

- Use storytelling to define our WHY.
- Connect with emotion and clarify how each story sets us apart
- Build on "Equity for All" and the ACPS brand platform
- Survey families and launch new social media channels for Amharic & Arabic communities
- Redesign the ACPS visual brand and logo
- Explore new ways to tell ACPS stories

Strategy 6: Design a media relations strategy to support storytelling.

- Build trust and develop strong relationships with reporters and correspondents
- Identify, craft and pitch storylines that resonate strongly with media outlets
- Respond to media inquiries in a timely and organized method
- Learn and utilize the new media tracking system Cision

Strategy 7: Establish a customer relationship management system.

- Develop and onboard external relations specialist position
- Establish and promote centralized email: ask@acps.k12.va.us
- Maintain multilingual Helpline
- Promote Language Line Direct Response Tool

Strategy 8: Increase visibility by expanding intentional use of grassroots communications.

- Continue relationship-building with trusted community and cultural organizations
- Conduct outreach at targeted community events
- Create outreach tools and resources
- Transform ACPS fleet into mobile billboards with vehicle wraps
- Schedule speaking engagements for the superintendent at strategically selected organizations
- Implement a new brand campaign with the moniker of "Simply the Best"

Strategy 9: Work with ACPS building and department leadership, higher education, city and nonprofit partners to address the health, social service and academic needs of students and their families.

- Creation of an official ACPS online partnership portal
- Lead monthly Partnership Council meetings to discuss topics and current initiatives with ACPS
- Conduct quarterly partnership relationship meetings with large scale partners
- Develop liaison formal agreement process from initiation through execution
- Based on school improvement plans and reflection meetings, provide each school and department analysis and information of current and potential newly aligned partner opportunities
- Advise new/existing partners to ensure their services appropriately align with the goals of ACPS
- Connect partners to aligned school/department leadership
- Schedule and facilitate yearly check-ins with each official partners
- Invite, through outreach, new partners to connect with ACPS
- Provide quarterly achievement data reports to community partners
- Maintain and share internal ACPS partner database information
- Maintain and develop new partnerships with higher education universities

Strategy 10: Provide support and foster growth of the ACPS volunteer program to ensure high levels of community volunteer engagement.

Provide clear volunteer application guidelines and updated volunteer opportunities through webpage
Verify newly screened volunteers, conduct background checks and collect signed Code of Conduct forms
Facilitate monthly collaborative discussions with internal and external educational stakeholders
Collaborate, through discussions and action planning, with Volunteer Alexandria
Facilitate meetings each quarter with community partners regarding ACPS volunteer programs
Work with ACPS Technology and Health, Safety and Risk Management teams to provide support (resources, guides, information, tools) for staff and the community regarding the new Raptor volunteer system
Provide volunteer management training and ongoing support to school-based parent/volunteer liaisons
Create recruitment opportunities by working with parent liaisons, school volunteer coordinators and administrators
Maintain all volunteer database entries and records
Continue to engage in a broad-based needs assessment to establish priorities for the division's volunteer needs

Strategy 11: Improve alignment and communications and increase opportunities between out-of-school-time program activities and state learning standards to support the academic success of ACPS' most vulnerable students.

Collaborate with the ACPS Office of School Improvement to identify specific reading and mathematics intervention strategies
Utilize additional grant funds to pilot project-based, experiential curriculum/activities
Coordinate with the Office of School Improvement, school administration and improvement coaches to assess 21st CCLC program learning needs and accomplishments quarterly
Ensure 21st CCLC teachers utilize students' WIDA tests scores and IEPs at a Glance to individualize support for the students
Develop a monitoring form to be used by 21st CCLC site coordinators to assess the performance expectations for all activities provided by community partners
Collaborate with the City of Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) to pilot teen leadership programs
Provide 21st CCLC site coordinators the opportunity to participate in a Life Skills facilitation training
Incorporate the City of Alexandria's KAT Camp, which focuses on social, emotional and leadership skills development into 21st CCLC summer programming for elementary students
Quarterly, allow students to provide 21st CCLC program feedback and participate in decision-making opportunities as a part of community circles
Improve communications with out-of-school-time program stakeholders

Strategy 12: Develop a sustainability plan to supplement 21st CCLC programming requirements.

Collaborate with ACPS Grants & Partnership Management to identify and solicit additional funding
Meet with ACPS leadership to identify supplemental funds necessary to sustain 21st CCLC programming
Use the 21st CCLC as a model of success and in alignment with ACPS 2025, design a plan of extended day program support for students throughout the division in collaboration with aligned department leadership support
Collaborate with new and existing community partners to strengthen and grow city-wide opportunities for accessible, high-quality out-of-school time programming

Strategy 13: Support teachers, departments and community partners/members in acquiring grants and community funding for unmet student needs.

	Strategically collaborate with ACPS departments by identifying and applying for grant opportunities
	Meet with community partners to provide grant application expertise and serve as liaison for grant identification opportunities using Ecivics monthly email outreach
	Facilitate, as needed, data and fiscal discussions with aligned department and building leads to ensure high level of grant requirements are being met
	Maintain ACPS grants website
	Facilitate Donor's Choose opportunities and provide data and information to ACPS staff
	Attend and provide monthly updates to the City and Schools Commission
	Support the newly acquired ACPS federal grants

Strategy 14: Provide support to community members/organizations to encourage donations that enhance the educational experiences of students.

	Provide community donation support
	Deliver donation submission information to community stakeholders
	Connect requests to Facilities and Operations in alignment with ACPS policies and regulations
	Maintain the ACPS Community Funded Facilities Project and ACPS donation webpage

Strategy 15: Create and Implement new Family Engagement programs/initiatives that will fill information gaps and provide relevant information and strategies to help them navigate ACPS resources.

	Create a framework, establish goals and key messages and implement a Parent Ambassador Program.
	Creation and implementation of a newcomer program.
	Institute Academic Parent Teacher Teams to enhance parental/family self-efficacy and capabilities to support their children's learning at home and social-emotional development.

Strategy 16: Building infrastructure systems and educator capacity for collaborating with families to bridge the divide and create equitable, productive relationships in schools and Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Community sites.

	Create a school Family Engagement Action Team (FEAT)
	Redesign family engagement coordinator position
	Develop a tool to guide schools on how to develop Family Action teams in their schools
	Plan meetings with school teams to collaborate and co-create yearly building family engagement best practice action plans
	Utilize the Family Engagement Evaluation findings and family feedback to guide planning
	Establish opportunities for parents/families to build their own skills and deepen knowledge regarding how to support students learning at home
	Provide guidance about effective family engagement practices aligned with the FACE Dual-Capacity Framework
	Provide technical assistance and support to schools and community sites regarding family engagement practices and implementation

Strategy 17: Conduct home visits to strengthen parent-family-school relationships and provide training on advocacy in the school setting.

	Facilitate family engagement home-visit training for teachers and school-based staff
	Provide professional learning for staff on how to build relationships and empower immigrant and refugee families
	Collaborate with registrars, the student support team (SST) and the Office for English learners (ELs) to ensure families are connected to parent liaisons or the identified “connector” at each school
	Provide a toolkit on how to build relationships with families
	Collaborate with ACPS’ SST, Special Education, ELs and Teaching & Learning offices to provide relevant information about re-entry and grade level transitions
	Increase family participation in decision-making
	Provide families with training on how to become advocates for their children and work with school administrators and division leadership
	Empower families to become involved in policy making and participation in various community and school committees through training
	Facilitate family engagement home-visit training for teachers and school-based staff

Strategy 18: Provide professional learning and training for teachers, family-facing staff and school leaders to build systemic family engagement in all schools: Capacity Building for Staff & Families.

	Integrate family engagement professional learning sessions into yearly ACPS staff professional learning days
	Create a tool kit for educators and staff to work in partnership with families
	Redesign FACE web portal where staff can access resources, training and information
	Collaborate with EL Language Access Office and communications to offer information to support learning in accessible formats and languages
	Train parent liaisons to facilitate family engagement training for staff in their buildings
	Provide professional learning opportunities to strengthen staff knowledge of family engagement and welcoming environment best practices, including using language line, web portal to request interpretation and outreach strategies
	Work with ACPS Talent Development to develop and implement family engagement professional learning sessions (Canvas portals, in person) for staff throughout the division
	Create a Family Engagement Academy to build family’s skills and knowledge on how to support student learning and to become connectors in their communities
	Create a rubric and planning with examples and levels of family engagement practices for buildings to assess and plan activities/events aligned with the FACE dual-capacity framework

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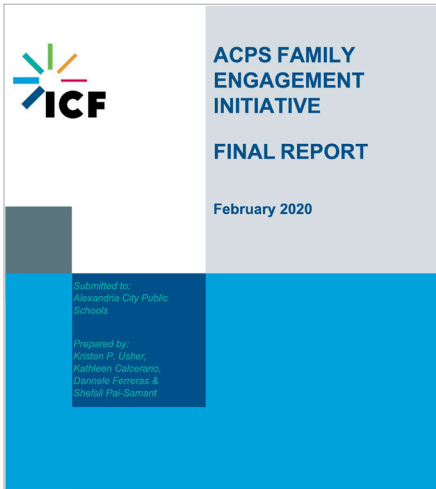
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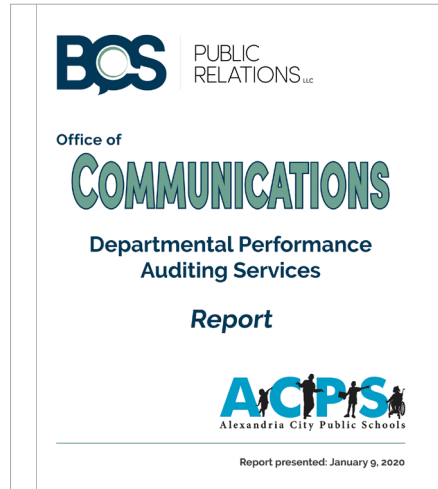
Family and Community Engagement Plan (Blueprint)
Name _____ Year _____ School _____

Activity (Low, medium or high impact)	Month	Action Steps	Targeted Area (s) (Relationships, Welcoming, Literacy, Math, Social Emotional, other)	Person (s) responsible	Evidence of Progress/Completion

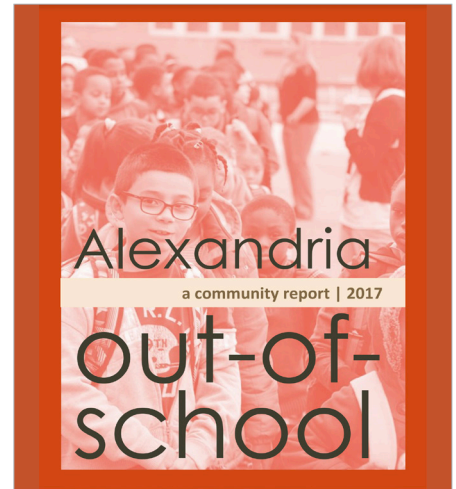
Appendix C: Family Engagement Blueprint Template, Assessment and Rubric and Board Brief



Appendix D: ACPS Family Engagement Evaluation



Appendix E: Communications Audit



Appendix F: Out of School Time Community Report



Appendix G: ACPS Partner Focus Group Findings

School Name & School Enrollment	Spanish	Amharic	Arabic	Dari	Pashtu (Northern)
Division-Wide	28.64%	4.43%	3.02%	1.49%	
**John Adams (672)	231/34.38%	40/5.95%	47/6.99%	24/3.57%	21/3.13%
**Ferdinand T. Day (690)	184/31.19%	84/14.43%	66/11.19%	24/4.07%	24/4.07%
Charles Barrett (521)	130/24.95%				
**Patrick Henry (K-8) (905)	199/21.99%	116/12.82%	31/3.43%	50/5.52%	28/3.09%
**Jefferson Houston (K-8) (661)	101/15.28%	27/4.08%			
**Cora Kelly (303)	183/60.40%				
Lylee- Crouch (447)		28/6.26%			
Douglas MacArthur (567)	107/18.87%				
George Mason (380)	102/26.84%				
Naomi Brooks (360)					
**Mount Vernon (887)	414/46.67%				
**James K. Polk (728)	218/29.95%	48/6.59%	48/6.59%	22/3.02%	19/2.61%
**William Ramsay (886)	46.76%/274	4.27%/25	4.44%/26		

Appendix H: ACPS Language Access Information

FROM: Taneika Tukan, School Engagement & Community Outreach Manager
Kurt Huffman, Executive Director of Community Partnerships & Engagement

THROUGH: Julia Burgos, Chief of School and Community Relations
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: Customer Relations Management System

ACPS 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL
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
Focus Area 2: Hispanic Males
Focus Area 3: Middle School Educational Experience

Appendix I: CRM Plan Board Brief

Calendar for Alexandria City Public Schools

2021-25 Strategic Communications and Community Engagement Plan

Strategy 3: Streamline all ACPS communications channels to better serve internal and external audiences.

Check-off	Major Tasks	2021					2022					2023					2024					2025																													
		Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec								
TRUE	Redevelop Express and Insider format	P	I																																																
TRUE	Hold weekly editorial meetings to determine communication channels	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O		
	Launch superintendent’s podcast: “Unapologetic Talk with the Supe”				P	P	P	I																																											
	Review of current messaging & engagement platforms and implementation of new platform(s)	P	P				I	I	I/P	I/P	I/P	I/P	I/P	I	I	I	I	I	I	O	O	O	O	O	O	A	A	I	I	I	I	I	O	O	O	O	O	A	A	I	I	I	I	O	O	O	O	O			
	Develop a new ACPS website for launch in June 2022	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	I	I																																					
	Use visual content and a mobile-first approach that reflects best practices											P	P	I	I	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	
	Procure and launch a digital asset management system						P	P	I	I	I	I	I																																						
TRUE	Develop a revised Emergency Communications Plan			P	P	I																																													

Strategy 4: Develop a plan to establish an internal communications structure that includes professional learning opportunities for staff that incorporates a communications and family and community engagement lens.

Check-off	Major Tasks	2021					2022					2023					2024					2025																													
		Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec								
	Fill the newly created internal communications specialist position				P	P	I	I																																											
	Create a new Intranet as part of the website redesign to serve as hub for all things ACPS staff	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	I	I																																					
	Institute a system to allow for texting staff for pertinent and timely information	P	P				I	I																																											
	Support Human Resources with the onboarding process	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	
	Liaise with HR to ensure that there is communications support	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	
	Prepare and deliver media and crisis communications training for ACPS leadership and School Board						P	P	P	I																																									
	Train appropriate staff on the newly developed customer relationship management system and process, and the appropriate use of existing and new platforms	P	P	P	I	I	I	I	I																																										
	Produce training guides and videos to better equip staff to assist with outreach to families						P	P	P	I																																									

I = Implementation
 P = Planning
 A = Analyzing
 O = Ongoing
 A/I = Analyzing + Implementation
 A/P = Analyzing + Planning
 I/A = Implementation + Analyzing
 I/P = Implementation + Planning
 O/A = Ongoing + Analyzing

Calendar for Alexandria City Public Schools

2021-25 Strategic Communications and Community Engagement Plan

Strategy 5: Develop rich, compelling and diverse stories showcased in multimedia formats.

Check-off	Major Tasks	2021						2022						2023						2024						2025																																																				
		Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun																													
	Use storytelling to define our WHY.	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o											
	Connect with emotion and clarify how each story sets us apart	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o							
	Build on "Equity for All" and the ACPS brand platform	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o
	Survey families and launch new social media channels for Amharic & Arabic communities													P	P	P	I																																																													
	Redesign the ACPS visual brand and logo	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	I	I																																																															
	Explore new ways to tell ACPS stories	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o																					

Strategy 6: Design a media relations strategy to support storytelling.

Check-off	Major Tasks	2021						2022						2023						2024						2025																																
		Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun									
	Build trust and develop strong relationships with reporters and correspondents	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o				
	Identify, craft and pitch storylines that resonate strongly with media outlets	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o		
	Respond to media inquiries in a timely and organized method	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o
True	Learn and utilize the new media tracking system Cision	P	P	I	I	I																																																				

Strategy 7: Establish a customer relationship management system.

Check-off	Major Tasks	2021						2022						2023						2024						2025																																		
		Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun											
	Develop and onboard external relations specialist position					I	I	I	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o							
	Establish and promote centralized email: ask@acps.k12.va.us		P	P	I	I	I	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o			
	Maintain multilingual HelpLine	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	A	A	A/I	I	o	o	o																																									
	Promote Language Line Direct Response Tool	P	P	P	I	I	I	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o

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Strategy 11: Improve alignment and communications and increase opportunities between out-of-school-time program activities and state learning standards to support the academic success of ACPS' most vulnerable students.

Check-off	Major Tasks	2021					2022					2023					2024					2025																														
		Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun															
	Collaborate with the ACPS Office of School Improvement to identify specific reading and mathematics intervention strategies	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	I	I	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
TRUE	Utilize additional grant funds to pilot project-based, experiential curriculum/activities	I	I	I	I	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	
TRUE	Coordinate with the Office of School Improvement, school administration and improvement coaches to assess 21st CCLC program learning needs and accomplishments quarterly	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
TRUE	Ensure 21st CCLC teachers utilize students' WIDA tests scores and IEPs at a Glance to individualize support for the students	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
	Develop a monitoring form to be used by 21st CCLC site coordinators to assess the performance expectations for all activities provided by community partners	P	P	P	P	I	A																																													
TRUE	Collaborate with the City of Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) to pilot teen leadership programs	P	P	I																																																
TRUE	Provide 21st CCLC site coordinators the opportunity to participate in a Life Skills facilitation training	P	P	I																																																
TRUE	Incorporate the City of Alexandria's KAT Camp, which focuses on social, emotional and leadership skills development) into 21st CCLC summer programming for elementary students	I	I																																																	
TRUE	Quarterly, allow students to provide 21st CCLC program feedback and participate in decision-making opportunities as a part of community circles	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	A	A	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	A
TRUE	Improve communications with out-of-school-time program stakeholders	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

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Strategy 12: Develop a sustainability plan to supplement 21st CCLC programming requirements.

Check-off	Major Tasks	2021					2022					2023					2024					2025																				
		Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun					
TRUE	Collaborate with ACPS Grants & Partnership Management to identify and solicit additional funding				○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	
	Meet with ACPS leadership to identify supplemental funds necessary to sustain 21st CCLC programming	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	
	Use the 21st CCLC as a model of success and in alignment with ACPS 2025, design a plan of extended day program support for students throughout the division in collaboration with aligned department leadership support	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○																										
	Collaborate with new and existing community partners to strengthen and grow city-wide opportunities for accessible, high-quality out-of-school time programming	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Strategy 13: Support teachers, departments and community partners/members in acquiring grants and community funding for unmet student needs.

Check-off	Major Tasks	2021					2022					2023					2024					2025																				
		Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun					
	Strategically collaborate with ACPS departments by identifying and applying for grant opportunities	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	
	Meet with community partners to provide grant application expertise and serve as liaison for grant identification opportunities using Ecivics monthly email outreach	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
TRUE	Facilitate, as needed, data and fiscal discussions with aligned department and building leads to ensure high level of grant requirements are being met	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
TRUE	Maintain ACPS grants website	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
TRUE	Facilitate Donor's Choose opportunities and provide data and information to ACPS staff	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
TRUE	Attend and provide monthly updates to the City and Schools Commission	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
TRUE	Support the newly acquired ACPS federal grants	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

I = Implementation
 P = Planning
 A = Analyzing
 ○ = Ongoing
 A/I = Analyzing + Implementation
 A/P = Analyzing + Planning
 I/A = Implementation + Analyzing
 I/P = Implementation + Planning
 O/A = Ongoing + Analyzing

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Strategy 14: Provide support to community members/organizations to encourage donations that enhance the educational experiences of students.

Check-off	Major Tasks	2021						2022						2023						2024						2025											
		Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
TRUE	Provide community donation support	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o
TRUE	Deliver donation submission information to community stakeholders	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o
TRUE	Connect requests to Facilities and Operations in alignment with ACPS policies and regulations	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o
TRUE	Maintain the ACPS Community Funded Facilities Project and ACPS donation webpage	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o

Strategy 15: Create and Implement new Family Engagement programs/initiatives that will fill information gaps and provide relevant information and strategies to help them navigate ACPS resources.

Check-off	Major Tasks	2021						2022						2023						2024						2025										
		Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
	Create a framework, establish goals and key messages and implement an Ambassador Program.	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	I	I	I	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	A/P	A/P	I	I	I	o	o	o	o	o	o	o
	Creation and implementation of a newcomer program.	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	I	I																				
	Institute Academic Parent Teacher Teams to enhance parental/family self-efficacy and capabilities to support their children's learning at home and social-emotional development.	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	I	I																				

Strategy 16: Building Infrastructure systems and educator capacity for collaborating with families to bridge the divide and create equitable, productive relationships in schools and Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Community sites.

Check-off	Major Tasks	2021						2022						2023						2024						2025										
		Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
	Create a school Family Engagement Action Team (FEAT)	P	P	P	I	I	I																													
	Redesign family engagement coordinator position	I																																		
	Develop a tool to guide schools on how to develop Family Action teams in their schools	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	I	I																				
	Plan meetings with school teams to collaborate and co-create yearly building family engagement best practice action plans	P	P	I	I	I	I	I	I																											
TRUE	Utilize the Family Engagement Evaluation findings and family feedback to guide planning	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o

= Implementation
 = Planning
 = Analyzing
 = Ongoing
 = Analyzing + Implementation
 = Analyzing + Planning
 = Implementation + Analyzing
 = Implementation + Planning
 = Ongoing + Analyzing

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Strategy 18: Provide professional learning and training for teachers, family-facing staff and school leaders to build systemic family engagement in all schools: Capacity Building for Staff & Families.

Check-off	Major Tasks	2021					2022					2023					2024					2025															
		Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
	Integrate family engagement professional learning sessions into yearly ACPS staff professional learning days	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P																							
	Create a tool kit for educators and staff to work in partnership with families	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P																							
	Redesign FACE web portal where staff can access resources, training and information	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P																							
	Collaborate with EL Language access office and communications to offer information to support learning in accessible formats and languages	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
	Train parent liaisons to facilitate family engagement training for staff in their buildings	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
	Provide professional learning opportunities to strengthen staff knowledge of family engagement and welcoming environment best practices, including using language line, web portal to request interpretation and outreach strategies	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
	Work with ACPS Talent Development to develop and implement family engagement professional learning sessions (Canvas portals, in person) for staff throughout the Division	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P																							
	Create a Family Engagement Academy to build family's skills and knowledge on how to support student learning and to become connectors in their communities	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P																							
	Create a rubric and planning with examples and levels of family engagement practices for buildings to assess and plan activities/events aligned with the FACE dual-capacity framework	P	P	P	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I																							