

Date: September 21, 2018

For ACTION \_\_\_\_\_

For INFORMATION  X

Board Agenda: Yes \_\_\_\_\_

No  X

**FROM:** Clinton Page, Chief Accountability Officer  
Theresa Werner, Executive Director of Specialized Instruction

**THROUGH:** Dr. Gregory C. Hutchings, Superintendent of Schools

**TO:** The Honorable Ramee A. Gentry, Chair, and Members of the Alexandria City School Board

**TOPIC:** Students with Disabilities Evaluation Update

**SUMMARY:**

The purpose of this update is to provide the Board with details on how the Division plans to engage the community in the action planning including specific timelines for the upcoming rollout. The goals of this process are to ensure clear communication, transparency, and opportunities for comment across stakeholder groups to yield the highest quality action plan for the Division and to begin to engender the necessary support drive sustainable change.

**BACKGROUND:**

As the Board is aware, external evaluators from the Public Consulting Group (PCG), hired by ACPS to evaluate services to students with disabilities, are preparing to present the final report to the Board from their review over the 2017-2018 school year. At the end of August, the division provided an update to the Board on the progress made over the summer months as a group of 36 stakeholders met to move toward a purposeful implementation of the evaluation's recommendations.

Since the last update to the Board on August 31, the Steering Committee has convened to discuss and refine planning guidance documents based upon feedback from fellow Steering Committee members and the products of their respective Subcommittees. The goal of the Steering Committee has been create a draft plan that aspires to go beyond striving for outcomes on summative statewide assessments and aims to address systemic issues surrounding culture and climate, accountability, and fidelity of implementation. These areas must first be strategically targeted in order for ACPS to realize sustained progress and positive outcomes for students with disabilities.

**NEXT STEPS:**

The draft action plan will be submitted to PCG and Senior Leadership on September 24 for their review and input as a gap analysis. Upon receiving the feedback from Senior Leadership

and PCG, the Steering Committee will make revisions as necessary prior to presenting to the Board on November 8.

Once the draft action plan is shared with the Board, ACPS will actively introduce the draft action plan to the community and seek comment through a variety of mechanisms with a broad range of stakeholder groups. ACPS has contracted with a neutral third-party, Hanover Research, to facilitate public comment both face-to-face and through online communications. Hanover will synthesize the comments received through public comment and provide the results of their analysis to the division to inform the finalization of the action plan. Efforts will be made to elicit comment from parent and community groups through a series of publicly announced face-to-face comment forums, an electronic comment form will be made available to all, and staff comment forums will also be held. ACPS will reach out to families of students with disabilities specifically and will also partner with SEAC and other special education groups to ensure engagement of critical stakeholders including culturally and linguistically diverse populations throughout the public comment period.

Below is a detailed timeline of upcoming events with targeted dates.

**September to December 2018 Tasks:**

| <b>Action Item</b>  | <b>Date</b>      |
|---|------------------|
| <b>Steering Committee Submits Draft Action Plan for PCG/SLT Comment</b>   | September 24     |
| <b>SLT provides comment of Draft Action Plan</b>  | October 1        |
| <b>SEAC Meeting with update provided on evaluation timeline</b>   | October 3        |
| <b>PCG provides comment of Draft Action Plan</b>  | October 5        |
| <b>SEAC discussion of Final PCG report</b>  | October 22       |
| <b>Steering Committee Submits Updated Draft Action Plan to SLT based on PCG/SLT comment</b>                       | October 22       |
| <b>Presentation of PCG Final Report and Draft Action Plan to Principals</b>                                       | October 25       |
| <b>Presentation of PCG Final Report to Board</b>  | October 25       |
| <b>Invitation letters sent to families of students with disabilities for public comment forums</b>                | October 29       |
| <b>ACPS Express and ACPS Insider notice of public comment forums and link to Board presentation and materials</b> | October 29       |
| <b>SEAC Draft Action Plan Presentation</b>  | November 7       |
| <b>Draft Action Plan Presented to Board</b>   | November 8       |
| <b>Online comment forum opens</b>   | November 9       |
| <b>Parent/Community/SEAC comment face-to-face forums with ACPS and External Vendor</b>                            | November 13 & 14 |
| <b>Staff comment face-to-face forums with ACPS and External Vendor</b>  | November 13 & 14 |
| <b>Online comment forum closes</b>  | November 20      |
| <b>External Vendor Submission of Analysis of Comments Received on Draft Action Plan</b>                           | December 7       |

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| <b>Steering Committee Meeting to Finalize Action Plan</b>                     | December 10 |
| <b>Steering Committee Meeting Submits Final Action Plan to Superintendent</b> | December 12 |
| <b>SEAC Final Action Plan Presentation</b>                                    | December 12 |
| <b>Final Action Plan Presented to School Board</b>                            | December 20 |

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review the attached materials for possible planning, procedural, programmatic, and/or budgetary changes.

**IMPACT:**

This update provides the Board with upcoming next steps from the comprehensive evaluation of services for Students with Disabilities within ACPS through December 2018. This information will be leveraged by the division to chart the course for the future of services provided to students with disabilities and their families within ACPS for the next three years including potential additional funding requests to support implementing the recommendations.

**CONTACT:**

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