

Subject: Enhanced Student Well-Being, Safety and Security Measures for 2022-23 School Year

Dear ACPS Families,

We hope that you are enjoying the well-deserved break this summer to get recharged and set for the new school year. The team at Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) is looking forward to welcoming our students, staff and families back to begin the 2022-23 school year. We are hard at work preparing to open up the school doors and return to teaching and learning. In keeping with our core value of being welcoming, part of that preparation includes an emphasis on student well-being, safety and security to ensure that our students feel welcomed, supported and safe in all of our school buildings. This is integral to fostering connections with students and advancing our focus on social, emotional and academic learning, which ultimately supports improved behavioral and safety outcomes.

To that end, it is important for us to share these important student well-being, safety, and security updates and reminders for the start of the school year.

Topic/Item	School Level	Information
Social and Emotional Supports for Students	Elementary, K-8 and Secondary	Each school will have 30 minutes of designated time daily in which students will receive social-emotional learning. Structures such as community circles will be used to deliver the RULER curriculum from the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence and reinforce positive behavior interventions and supports. Each school's Student Support Team will also provide more targeted and intensive small group and individual interventions to students identified through their school's Multi Tiered System of Support (MTSS) process. Students will also be assessed using the Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA) social-emotional tool to identify and grow individual and collective strengths.
Technology and Communications	Elementary, K-8 and Secondary	Regularly scheduled preventative maintenance of public announcement (PA) systems and phone systems have occurred over the summer, and school communications systems are being replaced throughout the year. In addition, cellular service has been expanded throughout the Alexandria City High School (ACHS) King St. Campus.
Clear Designation of Student and Staff Entrances	Elementary, K-8 and Secondary	Each school will designate entrances specific for student, staff and visitor entry. This practice will allow for better control regarding facility

		access.
Closed Campus	Elementary, K-8 and Secondary	As a reminder to all students, staff and community members, ACPS campuses are closed campuses. "Closed Campus" means that students are not allowed to come and go without permission, including during lunch time. All criteria for early dismissal are required to be followed through the attendance offices. Any students found leaving campus during the school day who are not in compliance with attendance requirements will have interventions with school administration.
New Student ID Requirements	Secondary	<p>In an effort to reinforce a safety best-practice, we are requiring all students at the secondary level (middle and high school) to have their student identification present with them every day. This practice will allow building administration and security officers to ensure that only registered students are accessing the campus during instructional hours.</p> <p>We are also piloting a digital student identification (ID) program at the high school campuses; this program will allow students the option of using a traditional or digital ID (stored on a smartphone/smart device) to scan into school upon entry. A soft launch of the digital student ID program will occur during the first few weeks of school. The digital ID is not required, and you can opt your student out of the digital ID program by notifying the appropriate school administrator. Information on obtaining/activating IDs will be shared in a separate communication to families and students from ACHS leadership.</p>
School Security Officers	Secondary	All secondary school locations will receive additional school security officers (SSOs) to support school administrators.
Staggered Dismissals at High School Campuses	High School Campuses	We will maintain the staggered dismissal process at Alexandria City High School (ACHS) King Street and Minnie Howard campuses throughout the 2022-23 academic year. This practice was successfully implemented at the end of the 2021-22 school year and reduces the volume of student congregation within the facility and the amount of students exiting the facility simultaneously.
Instructional Day Logistics for High School	High School Campuses	The leadership teams at all campuses of ACHS have reviewed the logistics of the instructional

<p>Campuses</p>		<p>day and made changes that help support continuous safety improvement.</p> <p>At the Minnie Howard and King Street Campuses, students will still have schedules that have up to eight classes. The lunch block will be restricted to certain spaces on campus and include time for students to eat lunch, participate in social-emotional and academic learning, participate in advisory periods and be a part of clubs and organizations. The lunch block will have staff supervision throughout the campuses and include outdoor eating spaces on campus as well as student activities.</p> <p>Any students taking classes at multiple campuses will be transported by ACPS Transportation Services. The only time students may be leaving early or arriving late to school is if they have a pre-approved schedule that designates early release or late arrival (i.e. - no morning or no afternoon classes).</p>
<p>Staff ID Requirement</p>	<p>All Division Staff</p>	<p>As a reminder, all ACPS staff are required to visibly display their badge while in schools, Central Office and/or ACPS-owned properties. This best practice allows administration and school security officers to easily identify staff or visitors who are in school facilities or on school grounds.</p>

As the school year progresses, additional measures will be implemented as warranted and communicated to families, staff and the community. Also, the School Law Enforcement Partnership (SLEP) advisory group has met twice during the summer and will continue to do so in the upcoming months. You can find updates on the SLEP advisory group here: [SLEP Advisory Group](#). At this time, the school resource officer (SRO) program remains in effect through June 30, 2023.

How can you partner with us?

We appreciate your partnership as we embark upon this new school year. We recognize that everyone in our school community plays a role in ensuring the well-being, safety, and security of our students. You can support our efforts by staying up to date on ACPS student well-being, safety and security measures, ensuring your student and family comply with all requirements and sharing any concerns you may have with school officials.

We are so excited about having all of our students back this fall and are committed to providing a welcoming, safe and secure learning environment that allows them to thrive in school. Thank you for your continued partnership as we kick off a new school year of teaching and learning.

Sincerely,

Dr. Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr.
Superintendent of Schools