Middle Schools Evaluation Report

Prepared for Alexandria City Public Schools

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

In 2009, the Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) identified a pattern of low student achievement and implemented a plan to improve the quality of education offered by the division. ACPS reported some of the highest drop-out rates in Northern Virginia and the lowest performance on the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOLs), with about 70 percent of students passing the exams.¹

In April 2009, the ACPS division superintendent proposed an improvement plan that focused on transforming the division's two middle school campuses. The plan included a proposal to restructure George Washington Middle School and Francis C. Hammond Middle School into five smaller middle schools across the two campuses. The plan also included the implementation of the International Baccalaureate (IB) Middle Years Programme (MYP). The reform was motivated by a pattern of low performance, discipline issues, and low expectations at the two middle schools.

SCHOOL REDESIGN

The plan to redesign ACPS middle schools focused on the goals of higher achievement for all students, a personalized environment, and opportunities to accelerate through the curriculum.²

To create personalized learning environments, ACPS planned to improve the relationships between students and adults at the school by providing an enhanced curriculum and plan for professional development.³ To give students more opportunities to accelerate through the curriculum, the division added Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) courses, language arts and math interventions, Odyssey of the Mind, and Model UN, among other programs.⁴

The plan to redesign ACPS middle schools was based on the schools' performance metrics as well as feedback from stakeholders with an interest in the division's improvement. The Tenants and Workers United, an association of Northern Virginia African Americans and Latinos, reported that ACPS students would benefit from closer adult support and monitoring. Similarly, the Virginia Association of School Superintendents called for updated practices in special education programs. Overall, the proposal for redesign was intended to offer all ACPS students an education better aligned with the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.⁵

¹ Sherman, M. "Proposal for a New Middle School Model." ACPS, May 27, 2009. p. 2. http://www.acps.k12.va.us/middle-schools/background/20090604-proposal.pdf

² Sherman, M. "Proposal for a New Middle School Model." Op. cit., p. 1.

³ Sherman, M. "Proposal for a New Middle School Model." Op. cit., p. 2.

⁴ Sherman, M. "Proposal for a New Middle School Model." Op. cit., p. 2

⁵ Sherman, M. "Proposal for a New Middle School Model." Op. cit., p. 2

At the start of the 2009-10 school year, the two middle school campuses were divided into five middle schools, each with an enrollment ranging from 430-470 students. The small school model was used to end the cycle of low performance, perceived and at times real discipline issues, and low expectations. The smaller learning environments were created to provide more personalized and customized learning environments, to raise achievement, and to offer greater opportunities for all students to take more rigorous courses.⁶

Throughout this report, the division's five middle schools are referred to using the following abbreviations:

- Francis C. Hammond 1 (FCH 1)
- Francis C. Hammond 2 (FCH 2)
- Francis C. Hammond 3 (FCH 3)
- **§** George Washington 1 (GW 1)
- **§** George Washington 2 (GW 2)

ACADEMIC PROGRESS TO DATE

A May 2013 brief on the ACPS Middle School Model identified metrics that indicate improvement in each of the division's target areas – personalization, acceleration, and achievement. Initial indicators of low performance have improved, with recent trends in SOL achievement higher than in previous years, and a decrease in risk behavior in all categories from 2007 to 2012.⁷ The following figure summarizes the 2009 redesign plan's objectives and the corresponding trends that indicate improvement in each target area.

| Academic Progress by | ACPS Middle | Schools in Redesiar | Plan Objectives |
|----------------------|-------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| - J J | | | |

| REDESIGN OBJECTIVE | Ουτςομε |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Personalized environment | S Decreases in risk behaviors were seen across key health indicators, as identified by the Centers for Disease Control |
| Opportunity to accelerate | Eighth grade enrollment has quadrupled in Algebra I and Geometry since 2007, with an estimated 78% participation rate in 2013. |
| through curriculum | Increases were seen across all content areas and race/ethnic groups for grade 8 students accessing honors courses from 2010 to 2013. |
| Higher achievement for all students | Recent success in SOL achievement was seen when compared to historical trends since 1998 |

Source: ACPS⁸

⁶ Sherman, M. "Middle School Brief: Highlights and comments." Op. cit., p. 1.

⁷ Sherman, M. "Middle School Brief: Highlights and comments." Op. cit., p. 2.

⁸ Page, C. "Middle Schools Model: An Initial Brief." ACPS, May 10, 2013. http://www.acps.k12.va.us/middleschools/ms-brief.pdf

SOL results from the 2010-2011, 2011-2012, and 2012-2013 school years are presented in Figure 2, below. **Year-to-year trends in SOL results should be interpreted with caution.** The mathematics SOL test changed substantively in 2011-2012, and the English, science, and Writing SOL tests changed in 2012-2013. The more rigorous SOLs proved much more difficult for students across the entire Commonwealth. As such, the Virginia Department of Education emphasizes that SOL passage rates embarked on a new trajectory in 2011-2012, complicating comparisons with results from prior years.⁹

| SOL - | | 2010-2011 | | 2011· | -2012 | 2012-2013 | |
|---------|--------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|
| SUBJECT | School | % PASSED | % TESTED | % PASSED | % Tested | % PASSED | % Tested |
| | FCH 1 | 81 | 100 | 86 | 100 | 57 | 100 |
| | FCH 2 | 87 | 100 | 86 | 100 | 63 | 100 |
| English | FCH 3 | 84 | 100 | 83 | 100 | 57 | 100 |
| | GW 1 | 85 | 100 | 83 | 100 | 69 | 100 |
| | GW 2 | 83 | 100 | 79 | 100 | 63 | 100 |
| | FCH 1 | 66 | 100 | 56 | 100 | 54 | 100 |
| | FCH 2 | 64 | 100 | 56 | 100 | 55 | 100 |
| Math | FCH 3 | 65 | 100 | 45 | 100 | 48 | 100 |
| | GW 1 | 79 | 100 | 64 | 100 | 75 | 100 |
| | GW 2 | 72 | 100 | 52 | 99 | 59 | 100 |
| | FCH 1 | 80 | 100 | 86 | 100 | 59 | 97 |
| | FCH 2 | 82 | 100 | 83 | 99 | 68 | 97 |
| Writing | FCH 3 | 80 | 100 | 78 | 100 | 61 | 96 |
| | GW 1 | 87 | 96 | 90 | 99 | 71 | 96 |
| | GW 2 | 90 | 99 | 84 | 94 | 73 | 95 |
| | FCH 1 | 86 | 100 | 85 | 99 | 83 | 99 |
| | FCH 2 | 82 | 100 | 88 | 97 | 81 | 97 |
| History | FCH 3 | 81 | 100 | 81 | 100 | 83 | 97 |
| | GW 1 | 75 | 100 | 80 | 99 | 76 | 98 |
| | GW 2 | 79 | 100 | 73 | 99 | 77 | 98 |
| | FCH 1 | 88 | 100 | 91 | 100 | 55 | 98 |
| | FCH 2 | 84 | 100 | 89 | 100 | 52 | 100 |
| Science | FCH 3 | 85 | 99 | 80 | 100 | 52 | 99 |
| | GW 1 | 84 | 100 | 85 | 100 | 69 | 100 |
| | GW 2 | 89 | 100 | 79 | 99 | 67 | 99 |

Percentage of Students Passing SOL exam at each ACPS Middle School

Source: Virginia Department of Education

⁹ "2011-2012 Math SOL Results Begin New Trend Line." Virginia Department of Education, August 14, 2012. http://www.doe.virginia.gov/news/news_releases/2012/aug14.shtml

EVALUATION OF MIDDLE SCHOOL REDESIGN

Since the implementation of the middle school redesign plan, the division has collected data to help evaluate its success. In addition to reports by the ACPS Department of Accountability on the efficacy of school transformation, the division collected feedback from staff, parents, students, and other community members to conduct a thorough investigation of the redesign.¹⁰ The following questions guide discussions for evaluating progress at the division's middle schools:

- **§** Where are we today? What do the data tell us?
- **§** Where do we want to be?
- How do we get there, and how do we sustain that progress?¹¹

MIDDLE SCHOOLS FOR TOMORROW WORKGROUP

In June, 2013 the ACPS Middle Schools for Tomorrow Workgroup was formed to provide ACPS community members, students, and staff with the opportunity to contribute to the discussion about the changing middle schools and to help create a model for the types of experience middle school students will have at ACPS in the future.

The Middle Schools for Tomorrow Workgroup consists of ACPS parents, students, employees and community members. The division's Department of Accountability randomly selected members out of the individuals who applied to participate. During the selection process, the department ensured there was equal representation across middle school campuses within each stakeholder group and that members of each stakeholder group were weighted equally.¹² See Appendix I for a complete list of the Middle Schools for Tomorrow Workgroup members.

Members of the Middle Schools for Tomorrow Workgroup were divided into five subcommittees to evaluate each of the five core elements of the redesign, described in greater detail below.¹³ Each sub-committee group is composed of 10 to 11 members, with at least one representative from each stakeholder group (ACPS employees, students, parents, and community members) in each sub-committee.¹⁴ The sub-committees worked to evaluate the five elements of student achievement and to design a model for future middle school programs.

Throughout the summer and fall of 2013, the workgroup met once or twice a month to create and approve a plan for evaluating the middle schools, discuss priorities within each of

¹⁰ Sherman, M. "Middle School Brief: Highlights and comments." Op. cit., p. 2.

¹¹ Bulleted points adapted from: "ACPS Middle Schools for Tomorrow Workgroup." Alexandria City Public Schools, 2013. http://www.acps.k12.va.us/middle-schools/

¹² Ibid.

¹³ "ACPS Middle Schools for Tomorrow Workgroup Meeting." ACPS, July 25, 2013. http://www.acps.k12.va.us/middleschools/minutes-20130725.pdf

¹⁴ "ACPS Middle Schools for Tomorrow Workgroup Meeting." ACPS, September 4, 2013. p. 1. http://www.acps.k12.va.us/middle-schools/minutes-20130904.pdf

the five core elements of the redesign, and build consensus around recommendations for the future direction of the division's middle schools.

FIVE ELEMENTS OF THE REDESIGN PROCESS

Five primary dimensions of the middle school have been found to directly affect student achievement: personalization, curriculum and instruction, school climate, school structure, and student services. The evaluation of middle schools by the Middle Schools for Tomorrow Workgroup follows this organization. See Appendix II for a detailed visualization of the evaluation framework with subareas within each dimension.



Personalization, the strategies schools use to provide learning that is based on student experience and learning styles, ensures no student is overlooked or ignored. Curriculum and instruction refers to the content and materials taught within and across grade levels. The ACPS curriculum merges Virginia Standards of Learning with higher order thinking, problem solving, and real world application. A positive school climate incorporates values, culture, safety practices, and organizational structures that cause schools to function and react in particular ways. Students, staff, parents, and the community make distinct contributions to the school climates. Student services include support systems, staff, and programs that address the unique challenges that students face. Finally, an effective school structure, a broad term that encompasses every element of how a school operates, establishes a framework through which personalization can be built, curriculum and instructional practices can be implemented, school climate can flourish, and student services may prove effective. To promote student achievement, division and community leaders must recognize and understand how each of these five dimensions converge and impact the school as a whole. This report servers as a record of the work of the Middle Schools for Tomorrow workgroup and the ACPS Department of Accountability to evaluate the success of the division's middle schools. These findings are organized into five sections, one for each of the five dimensions listed above.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

As part of this evaluation, ACPS middle school students, staff, parents, and community members were surveyed to gather feedback on the middle schools. Surveys were administered online by Hanover Research in September 2013. Results were also analyzed by Hanover Research in order to ensure the confidentiality of individual survey respondents. The division did not receive individual survey responses or results that may permit identification. Survey participation is shown in the table below. See Appendix III for survey participant demographics.

| Saucou | Staf | f Survey | STUDENT SURVEY | PARENT SURVEY | COMMUNITY SURVEY |
|--------|------|----------|----------------|-------------------|------------------|
| SCHOOL | N | % | N | N | N |
| FCH 1 | 41 | 61% | 403 | 23 | |
| FCH 2 | 39 | 65% | 406 | 15 | 32 |
| FCH 3 | 40 | 73% | 443 | 28 | |
| GW 1 | 44 | 59% | 511 | 54 | 20 |
| GW 2 | 39 | 60% | 449 | 47 | 29 |
| Total | 210 | 63% | 2,212 | 167 ¹⁵ | 61 ¹⁶ |

Middle School Survey Participation

Throughout this report, the results of the survey are presented for each survey group overall – staff, students, parents, and community members. In some cases the results are also disaggregated by campus (FCH or GW), school (FCH 1, FCH 2, FCH 3, GW 1, or GW 2), or other demographic characteristics (e.g., grade level or number of years working at school). The surveys also included a small number of open-ended questions. Hanover Research analyzed these open-ended responses and identified common themes. These themes are reported along with the number of responses that addressed the theme. In some cases, one response covers several different themes. As such, the total number of themes may exceed the number of individual responses received.

Each graph with survey results includes two additional values beyond the results for a given question - the number of responses include in the calculation (e.g., N=100) and, when given as an option, the number of respondents who selected "Don't Know" (e.g., DK=10). The results (percentages) were calculated *without* respondents who selected "Don't Know" for a given question.

In addition to the September 2013 stakeholder surveys, this evaluation also draws on content from internal departmental reviews and evaluations, documentation from the

¹⁵ Parents were asked to select all the middle schools that their children currently attend. Two parents selected multiple schools and two parents did not select any schools.

¹⁶ Community members were asked to select the middle school campus(s) that they have past experience with, if any. In addition to the responses recorded in Figure 3, 16 community members said they do not have any experience with either FCH or GW.

division about middle school programming and progress, and available student-level achievement data.

EVALUATION OUTCOMES

The sections below summarize Hanover Research's overall findings within each of the five core dimensions.

PERSONALIZATION

- S Nearly 80 percent of middle school staff agree or strongly agree that students benefit academically from progress monitoring. Further, about 70 percent of staff agree or strongly agree that teachers are able to effectively use data from progress monitoring and 75 percent agree or strongly agree that progress monitoring techniques accurately identify students who need additional support. These results suggest that progress monitoring is widely viewed as an important aspect of student academic achievement, however additional training or resources for teachers may lead to greater student benefit.
- **Group statistics reveal positive trends in terms of achievement growth.** On average, students showed growth on both the SRI and SMI assessments. LEP students, while starting and ending with scores lower than all students overall, saw a larger numeric increase in scores over the course of the year. Generally, about one-fourth of students saw a decline in SRI and SMI scores, while the remaining three-fourths saw positive growth.
- Middle school students have mixed opinions on Advisory. For example, while 38 percent of students agree or strongly agree that they feel more engaged in school because of advisory, 41 percent disagree or strongly disagree with this statement. Similarly, 34 percent of students agree or strongly agree that they learn better in school because of advisory, while 43 percent disagree or strongly disagree.
- Individualized Career and Academic Plans (ICAP) are understood and valued by some but not all students and staff. Thirty five percent of students agree or strongly agree that they understand the purpose of the ICAP. A slightly higher percentage of staff (46 percent) also agree or strongly agree with this statement. A similar percentage of students (32 percent) also agree or strongly agree that the ICAP helps them to monitor their academic progress. A smaller percentage of staff (30 percent) agree or strongly agree with this statement. These results suggest that while some students are benefiting from their ICAP, many are not.
- S The majority of students are personally offered tutoring when requested or on a weekly or daily basis, while very few (14 percent) students were offered mentoring. Only 27 percent of students said they are never offered tutoring. Of those who are offered tutoring, 54 percent attend. Forty-five percent of students agree or strongly agree that they would benefit academically from tutoring. Thirty-seven percent of students said they would benefit academically from mentoring.

- S Nearly all staff members agree or strongly agree that they offer tutoring to their students and that students benefit academically from tutoring. However, fewer than half (47 percent) of staff agree or strongly agree that the students who would benefit most from tutoring participate in tutoring.
- **S** The number of students participating in AVID has increased only slightly from 134 students in 2010-11 to 148 in 2012-13. In 2012-13, GW 2 had the highest concentration of AVID students, at approximately 8.5 percent. Data from two cohorts of AVID students reveal that there was an 85 percent retention rate from 2011-11 to 2011-12, and a 79 percent retention rate from 2011-12 to 2012-13.
- Students who participate in Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) feel that the program is beneficial. About three-fourths of AVID students agree or strongly agree that they feel more prepared to take on rigorous courses and that the AVID Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration, Organization, and Reading (WICOR) strategies have helped them to learn in a better way. Further, 51 percent of AVID students *strongly* agree that they are on course to attend college. An additional 28 percent agree with this statement.
- **§ GPAs of AVID and non-AVID students are similar.** In 2011-12 and 2012-13 AVID students' GPAs on average were between 0.1 and 0.6 points higher. Over time, AVID student GPAs have increased at a faster rate than non-AVID students. In particular, students who completed two consecutive years of AVID (from 2010-11 to 2011-12) saw an overall average increase in GPAs from 2.95 to 3.10. Note that participants in the following cohort (2011-12 to 2012-13) did not see an increase in GPA over time.
- **S** AVID student participation in honors courses is high: in many instances, approximately 50 to 80 percent of AVID students were enrolled in the honors course for a given subject area. With few exceptions, AVID students were more likely to be enrolled in honors courses in Grade 8 compared to Grade 7.
- Sixty percent of students participated in intramurals and extracurricular clubs last year and most value the intramurals and extracurricular clubs that they participated in. The majority of teachers and parents agree or strongly agree that they encourage students to participate in intramurals and extracurricular clubs.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

- While the majority of students do *not* see differentiation in their class assignments, they do recognize that teachers explain things in different ways to help them understand content. However, nearly all staff members agree or strongly agree that their lesson plans include different assignments for different students based on his or her needs. Nearly all staff members also agree or strongly agree that they use student data to plan for individual students.
- S Among students enrolled in honors and rigorous courses, White and Asian demographic groups were generally overrepresented compared to overall school

demographic trends, while Black, Hispanic, and free or reduced lunch status students were underrepresented. Demographic trends in honors mathematics courses were more similar to overall school trends compared to the other disciplines.

- **Students enrolled in honors or accelerated course typical earn high grades.** With few exceptions, more students earned an A in these courses than any other grade, and the vast majority of students earned a B or better. SOL scores were much higher across the earlier versions of each test, though in all cases, a minority of students enrolled in honors or accelerated courses failed any exam.
- Sonly 15 percent of students reported that they do not use technology during a typical week to learn in school. Conversely, 45 percent of students use technology to learn 3-5 days per week. Students typically use one or two different types of technology in school to help them learn. Technology was a frequent theme seen in open-ended comments. Seventy-four students recommended more technology as their "one change to make school better," while both students and staff noted that they needed additional computer and technology resources to maximize student achievement.
- **§** Fifty-five percent of staff agree or strongly agree that students in special education enrolled in their classes can achieve grade level standard. Similarly, 51 percent of staff agree or strongly agree that students in special education in their classes are provided the support they need to succeed. Open-ended comments related to the special education program show that some staff members would like additional resources and opportunities for co-teaching and other support for students with special education designations.
- A higher percentage of staff (65 percent) agree or strongly agree that English language learners in enrolled in their classes can achieve grade level standards. Sixty-one percent of staff agree or strongly agree that English language learners in their classes are provided the support they need to succeed. As with special education, several staff members recommended additional resources for coteaching and ELL student supports in open-ended comments.
- S Achievement rates among special education students as well as ELL students are low. Among both groups, the majority of students failed their SOL exams, and the remaining students typically received a score designation of Pass Proficient. Though few ELL and special education students received a score of Pass Advanced, it was most common to receive the highest score designation on social studies exams compared to all other disciplines.

SCHOOL CLIMATE

S Overall, 63 percent of students and 78 percent of staff agree or strongly agree that they like their school or like working at their school. Generally, students, staff, and parents have positive or neutral opinions about most aspects of School Climate. The

majority agree or strongly agree or were neutral with statements about physical security, support for learning, respect for diversity, social support, physical surroundings, leadership, and professional relationships.

- Students have a less positive opinion of their social-emotional security. Thirtyseven percent of students disagree or strongly disagree that students feel emotionally safe from verbal abuse and teasing. Twenty-seven percent of staff and 29 percent of parents disagree or strongly disagree that students feel emotionally safe from verbal abuse and teasing.
- Staff, students, and parents have a less positive opinion of rules and norms at their school. Forty-one percent of staff, 24 percent of students, and 37 percent of parents disagree or strongly disagree that enforcement of rules is the same for every students or consistent and 29 percent of staff, 27 percent of students, and 26 percent of parents disagree or strongly disagree that school consequences are appropriate for the violation. Twenty-eight percent of staff and 25 percent of parents disagree or strongly disagree that enforcement of rules is clear. However, only 13 percent of students disagree or strongly disagree.
- Survey results suggest that many students and parents do not believe that teachers know about students' lives outside of school. Half of students and 42 percent of parents disagree or strongly disagree that teachers know about students' lives outside of school. However, 64 percent of teachers agree or strongly agree that they know about their students' lives outside of school.
- A notable percentage of teachers and parents feel that they are not involved in making important school decisions. Thirty-two percent of teachers and 41 percent of parents disagree or strongly disagree with this statement. However, only 19 percent of students disagree or strongly disagree that they are involved in decision making about things that affect them.
- Survey results suggest that the majority of community members do not feel a strong connection to or engagement with the middle schools. Over half disagree or strongly disagree that their local middle school makes an effort to inform the community about their goals and achievements (55 percent), that they feel connected to their local middle school (57 percent), that they feel pride in their local middle school (54 percent), and that they look forward to sending a child to their local middle school (62 percent).

STUDENT SERVICES

- S The Student Support Team (SST) provides a range of services to students, parents, and staff to promote positive mental, emotional, and social relationships within the school community. Interviews with SST members reveal that a variety of services are offered to students, including group and individual counseling, behavior interventions, crises intervention, and referrals to community agencies.
- S About half of students who participated in the survey said that they have met with a counselor, social worker, or school psychologist while in middle school. Of those

students, 48 percent feel that discussing their problem allowed them to concentrate of learning. Twenty-seven percent were unsure of the outcome, while 25 percent did *not* believe that it helped with their concentration on learning.

S About 20 percent of students who participated in the survey said they have attended a group meeting with a counselor, social worker, or school psychologists while in middle school. Of those who participated, over half said that it helped them to understand more about themselves (56 percent) and how they interact with peers (52 percent).

Results from the Centers for Disease Control's Youth Risk Behavior Survey show a decrease in risk behavior among middle school students in the division between 2007 and 2012. Across all risk areas, the percentage of students dropped in 2012. For example, there was a 12.2 percent decrease in the percentage of students who have carried a weapon. Conversely, positive behaviors, such as exercise and team sport participation saw a 10 percent increase.

SCHOOL STRUCTURE

- S On average, staff spent 18 hours of classroom instructional time to attend professional development in 2012-13. The majority of staff agree or strongly agree (73 percent) that their self-selected professional development supported their improvement of student achievement, while 41 percent agree or strongly agree that in-service professional development did the same.
- Sixty-three percent of students said that students do *not* need access to additional materials in order to maximize their learning. Conversely, 53 percent of staff said that students do need access to additional materials. When asked to explain what additional materials students need to maximize their learning, both students and staff frequently cited computers and other digital devises or pieces of technology.
- Student, staff, and parent opinions on the current middle school administrative structure were mixed, though generally positive or neutral. Thirty percent of students disagree or strongly disagree that the current school administration helps to make school feel personalized for each student, while 25 percent of staff felt the same. Thirty-seven percent of staff disagree or strongly disagree that the current administrative structure positively affects an environment that advances student achievement.
- S Community members were more likely to have a negative opinion of the current administrative structure. Fifty-four percent of community members disagree or strongly disagree that the current administrative structure helps to facilitate a personalized environment for each student, while 55 percent disagree or strongly disagree that the current administrative structure positively affects an environment that helps students learn.
- S The administrative structure was a frequent theme in open-ended comments from students, staff, community members and parents when asked for their recommendations to improve student achievement. The recommendation to

combine the separate schools was the most frequent theme among staff (n=41). The combination of schools, or return to "old model," was also the most frequent theme among recommendations by community members (n=17). Students also recommended the re-merger of schools (n=59), though it was not one of top themes in their responses. Parents had mixed opinions on the school structure, with 11 parents recommending that the schools should remain divided and 7 recommending a merger.

- S Most students who were in a co-taught classroom reported that it was a positive learning environment. About half (56 percent) of students were in a co-taught classroom in the 2012-13 school year, and of those in a co-taught classroom 60 percent agree or strongly agree that having two teachers in the classroom helped them to do better academically. Staff were less positive about the outcomes of the co-taught classroom model, with 42 percent agreeing or strongly agreeing that students in co-taught classrooms have improved outcomes.
- Students, staff, and parents have mixed opinions on the current academic calendar and daily bell schedule. Students are most likely to agree or strongly agree that the current academic calendar (52 percent) and daily bell schedule (45 percent) maximizes student achievement. Comparatively, 41 percent of staff and 47 percent of parents agree or strongly agree that the current academic calendar maximizes student achievement and 42 percent of staff and 40 percent of parents agree or strongly agree that the current daily bell schedule maximizes student achievement. When asked for suggestions on how to improve the daily bell schedule, an overwhelming number of students asked for more time between class periods. Students also commented on the need for clearer alerts to students and teachers about class changes. The largest number of staff members suggested longer class periods.

SECTION I: PERSONALIZATION

Personalization refers to strategies that provide learning that is based on student experience and learning style. Leaders praise personalization as a successful strategy that "provides learning that is based on student experience and learning style with a supportive instructional environment that brings a sense of belonging to the school and encourages students to take ownership of their own learning."¹⁷ ACPS has implemented multiple strategies to promote personalization, including an advisory program, individualized career and academic plans (ICAPs), and regular progress monitoring.

The following six areas within personalization are explored in this section:

- **§** Progress Monitoring
- Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)
- **§** Advisory
- Individualized Career and Academic Plan (ICAP)
- **§** Mentoring/Tutoring
- S Extracurriculars/Clubs

¹⁷ "Personalizing the School Experience." College Board. http://leadingsuccess.org/learning-modules/Personalizing-School-Experience

PROGRESS MONITORING

Progress monitoring refers to "a set of assessment procedures for determining the extent to which students are benefiting from classroom instruction and for monitoring effectiveness of curriculum."¹⁸ ACPS middle schools use progress monitoring tools to monitor a student's academic growth and provide research proven interventions, when needed. Examples include Read 180 (System 44), I Can Learn, Mobius Math, and Corrective Reading. ACPS middle schools use the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) and Scholastic Mathematics Inventory (SMI) assessment, among others, as a progress monitoring tool.

Research has shown that effective progress monitoring strategies directly assess skills reflected in state and local academic standards, result in data that teachers may easily use to inform instruction, and accurately identify specific student needs.¹⁹

SURVEY RESULTS

The majority of teachers agreed that students benefit academically from progress monitoring, that teachers are able to effectively use data from progress monitoring efforts, and that progress monitoring techniques accurately identify students who need additional support. Furthermore, teachers from the GW campus as well as novice teachers, compared to teachers from the FCH campus and veteran teachers, were more likely to strongly agree with each statement pertaining to progress monitoring.



Overall Staff Perceptions of Progress Monitoring

¹⁸ Johnson, E., Mellard, D., Fuchs, D., McKnight, M. "Responsiveness to Intervention (RTI): How to Do It." NRCLD, 2006, p. 3.1. http://www.nrcld.org/rti_manual/



Staff Survey: School-wide Progress Monitoring

Note: "Veteran teachers" are those with 6 or more years of experience, "Novice teachers" have less than three years of experience.



Note: "Veteran teachers" are those with 6 or more years of experience, "Novice teachers" have less than three years of experience.



Note: "Veteran teachers" are those with 6 or more years of experience, "Novice teachers" have less than three years of experience.

SRI AND SMI RESULTS

ACPS middle schools use the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) and Scholastic Mathematics Inventory (SMI) assessment as a progress monitoring tool. During the 2012-13 school year a total of 1,353 FCH and GW students completed the SRI assessment at least twice. The table below shows the number of students with at least two 2012-13 test dates, the average first SRI score of the year, the average last SRI score of the year, and the average amount change seen between scores at the first and last test date. Additionally, the two far right columns show the percentage of students who saw an increase in SRI scores ("% Positive") and those who saw a decrease in SRI scores ("% Negative"). This information is shown for two groups – all students overall and students with level 1-5 LEP designations²⁰ in 2012-13.

The second table lists the same information for the 1,173 students who completed at least two SMI assessments in 2012-13.

On average, students showed growth on both the SRI and SMI assessments. LEP students, while starting and ending with scores lower than all students overall, saw a larger numeric increase in scores over the course of the year. Generally, about one-fourth of students saw a decline in SRI and SMI scores, while the remaining three-fourths saw positive growth.

| | STUDENTS | AVERAGE AVERAGE | | Change | E BETWEEN FIRST | and Last |
|--------|------------------|-----------------|----------------|---------|-----------------|------------|
| School | WITH 2 SCORES | FIRST SRI | LAST SRI | Average | % Positive | % NEGATIVE |
| | | A | All Students | | | |
| FCH 1 | 326 | 870 | 944 | +75 | 71% | 29% |
| FCH 2 | 226 | 859 | 941 | +82 | 77% | 23% |
| FCH 3 | 329 | 890 | 965 | +74 | 75% | 25% |
| GW 1 | 187 | 903 | 980 | +77 | 75% | 25% |
| GW 2 | 285 | 948 | 1017 | +69 | 74% | 26% |
| Total | 1,353 | 894 | 969 | +75 | 74%* | 26% |
| | | Activ | e LEP Students | S | | |
| FCH 1 | 66 | 597 | 721 | +124 | 82% | 18% |
| FCH 2 | 44 | 578 | 680 | +102 | 84% | 16% |
| FCH 3 | 72 | 663 | 773 | +111 | 81% | 19% |
| GW 1 | 20 | 494 | 574 | +79 | 60% | 40% |
| GW 2 | 25 | 475 | 577 | +102 | 76% | 24% |
| Total | 227 | 591 | 701 | +109 | 79% | 21% |

2012-13 SRI Results and Change

*Note: 0.2% of students did not see any change between first and last SRI assessment

²⁰ Note: LEP, or Limited English Proficiency, level 1 to 5 designations represent students who are receiving direct services.

| | Students | | | Change | BETWEEN FIRST | AND LAST |
|--------|------------------|-----------|---------------|---------|---------------|------------|
| School | with 2 Scores | FIRST SMI | LAST SMI | Average | % Positive | % NEGATIVE |
| | | A | Il Students | | | |
| FCH 1 | 321 | 758 | 863 | +106 | 78% | 21% |
| FCH 2 | 66 | 734 | 843 | +109 | 79% | 18% |
| FCH 3 | 317 | 742 | 846 | +105 | 76% | 22% |
| GW 1 | 172 | 799 | 815 | +16 | 52% | 47% |
| GW 2 | 297 | 787 | 858 | +71 | 70% | 29% |
| Total | 1,173 | 765 | 849 | +84 | 72%* | 27% |
| | | Activ | e LEP Student | S | | |
| FCH 1 | 68 | 625 | 739 | +114 | 75% | 22% |
| FCH 2 | 18 | 559 | 710 | +151 | 78% | 17% |
| FCH 3 | 73 | 602 | 745 | +142 | 79% | 21% |
| GW 1 | 21 | 640 | 674 | +34 | 48% | 52% |
| GW 2 | 29 | 537 | 613 | +76 | 69% | 31% |
| Total | 209 | 601 | 714 | +114 | 73% | 25% |

2012-13 SMI Results and Change

*Note: 1.2% of students did not see any change between first and last SMI assessment

Advisory

Advisory is a time for extension or supplemental activities that includes IB, Individual Career and Academic Plans (ICAP), character education, tutoring, and individual enrichment. Teachers, students, and counselors engage outside of the traditional instructional context.

Advisory programs are one of the most widely-implemented tools schools across the country use to promote personalization.²¹ When properly implemented, advisory programs provide an opportunity for teachers to engage students outside of the traditional instructional context and build strong relationships that will improve student attitudes toward school and, ultimately, improve student achievement.²² Research has shown that effective advisory programs include the following design elements:

- S Careful organizing, planning, preparing, implementing, and monitoring
- **§** Guidance department, administration, and district-level support
- **§** Teacher, parent, and student input and active involvement
- **§** Teachers/advisors trained and committed to teaching young adolescents
- **§** Relevant, ongoing professional development opportunities
- **§** Regularly scheduled meeting times
- S Length of advisory meetings: 20 to 40 minutes, uninterrupted
- S Number of students assigned to advisory groups: 10 to 20 students²³

All students participate in the advisory program at ACPS middle schools. At both campuses, students use Advisory to meet in small groups with an adult faculty members to engage in activities that support school reform initiatives. At the GW campus, Advisory is held every Wednesday and rotates through the class periods. At the FCH campus, Advisory occurs daily for 20 minutes. FCH students have extended advisory periods twice a month for one hour to complete ICAP activities.²⁴

The Advisory schedule at the GW campus included the following tasks/themes for each week during the months of January and February.

²¹ Yonezawa, S., McClure, L., Jones, M. "Personalization in Schools." Students at the Center: Teaching and Learning in the Era of the Common Core, 2012, p. 11.

http://create.ucsd.edu/_files/publications/Personalization%20in%20Schools.pdf

²² "Characteristics of Exemplary Schools for Young Adolescents." Association for Middle Level Education, 2007. http://www.amle.org/Research/ResearchSummaries/ExemplarySchools/tabid/256/Default.aspx

²³ Taken nearly verbatim from: "Advisory Programs." Association for Middle Level Education, 2006. http://www.amle.org/Research/ResearchSummaries/AdvisoryPrograms/tabid/812/Default.aspx

 ²⁴ [1] "Advisory at GWMS." Alexandria City Public Schools. http://www.acps.k12.va.us/washington/advisory.php
[2] "Advisory at FCHMS." Alexandria City Public Schools. http://www.acps.k12.va.us/hammond/advisory.php

| Date | GRADE 6 | Grade 7 | GRADE 8 |
|--------|-------------------------------|--|--|
| Jan 2 | Reflection | Reflection | ICAP-Career Key Survey |
| Jan 9 | Million Bones #1 | Million Bones #1 | Million Bones #1 |
| Jan 15 | Advisory PD | Advisory PD | Advisory PD |
| Jan 16 | Million Bones #2 | ICAP – Explore Careers from Career Key Survey | Million Bones #2 |
| Jan 23 | Team Builders | Overflow from Career Key Survey to library/Team Builders | Overflow from Career Key Survey to library/Team Builders |
| Jan 30 | Million Bones #3 | Million Bones #2 | Million Bones #3 |
| Feb 6 | ICAP – Academic Advisement | Million Bones #3 | Million Bones #4 |
| Feb 13 | Million Bones #4 | ICAP - Academic Advisement | Million Bones #5 |
| Feb 20 | Million Bones #5 | Million Bones #4 | ICAP Academic Advisement |
| Feb 27 | Reflection | Million Bones #5/Reflection | Reflection |

Example GW Campus Advisory Schedule²⁵

SURVEY RESULTS

Students demonstrated mixed opinions on the advisory program, and in most cases were as likely to agree with each statement as they were to disagree. In particular, students were most likely to agree that advisory times are planned so all students can learn, and least likely to agree that they have better relationships with staff because of advisory. Students in the 6th grade were most likely to agree with each statement pertaining to the advisory program, but students appeared to grow more skeptical of the program's benefits at each subsequent grade level.

In open-ended responses about recommendations for "one change to make school better," 118 students recommended changes to advisory period such as removing altogether, making longer or more frequent, and changing the focus or curriculum. This was the fifth most frequent theme that students mentioned for this open-ended question. A small number of parents (3) also recommended changes to the advisory period.

²⁵ "George Washington Middle School Advisory." Alexandria City Public Schools. http://www.acps.k12.va.us/washington/advisory-schedule.pdf



Overall Student Perceptions of Advisory

Student Survey: Advisory











INDIVIDUALIZED CAREER AND ACADEMIC PLAN (ICAP)

ICAPs provide students with an opportunity to work with counselors to evaluate and review academic progress and goals. Research has found that students who engage in activities relating to individualized learning plans develop "stronger goalsetting skills, increased motivation to attend school, and increased academic self-efficacy which leads to better academic achievement, stress and health management, and readiness to engage in career decision-making."²⁶

In 2009, the Virginia Department of Education commissioned the Center for Innovative Technology (CIT) to produce a report on best practices in implementation of academic and career plans. CIT found:

- **§** Successful implementation requires the involvement of counselors, parents, and students, with students ultimately driving plan development
- **§** Effective tools and resources that allow counselors and teachers to make use of the ICAP may include college and career-oriented activities, lesson plans, and courses.
- **§ Training and development** opportunities for counselors should be ongoing and include a career planning element.²⁷

All middle school students receive an ICAP. Students work with counselors to evaluate and review academic progress and goals, as well as create goals to prepare for college and career. In 2009, the ACPS School Board implemented the strategy of Individual Achievement Plans (IAPs) to support K-10th grades to increase mathematics scores. In the 2011-2012 school year, counselors held pre-IAP conference and IAP meetings with all incoming sixth grade students and newly enrolled seventh and eighth grade students.²⁸ In the 2012-2013 school year, the middle schools implemented ICPAs to help students develop a postsecondary career pathway based on their interests and talents.²⁹

SURVEY RESULTS

Students and staff reported mixed feelings toward ICAPs, and in many cases were as likely to agree with each statement as they were to disagree. Students from the GW campus were slightly more likely than FCH students to voice negative opinions about ICAPs. Compared to students, staff had a more positive perception of ICAPs.

²⁶ "Individualized Learning Plans Fact Sheet." National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability. http://www.ncwdyouth.info/fact-sheet/individualized-learning-plan

²⁷ "Academic and Career Plans Best Practices." Center for Innovative Technology, 2010, p. 1. http://www.cit.org/assets/1/7/VDOEACPBestPracticesSummary.pdf

 ²⁸ "Middle School Counseling Annual Report 2012." Alexandria City Public Schools. p. 3.
²⁹ Ibid.

| Strongly disagree Disagree | □ N | eutral | ■ Agree | ■ Strongly | agree | |
|--|---------|--------|------------------------------|------------|-------|------|
| I understand the purpose of the ICAP. (N=671, DK=461) | | 23% | 19% | 23% | 25% | 10% |
| The ICAP helps me monitor my academic progress. (N=647, DK=472) | | 21% | 19% | 28% | 24% | 8% |
| Last year, I revisited the ICAP multiple times during the school year. (N=650, DK=467) | | 27% | 21% | 26% | 20% | 7% |
| I understand the connection between academics and my ICAP goals. (N=647, DK=466) | | 23% | 17% | 27% | 26% | 9% |
| | + 0% | 20% | ⁶ 40 ⁴ | % 60% | 80% | 100% |

Overall Student Perceptions of ICAP

Overall Staff Perceptions of ICAP

| Strongly disagree 🗖 Disagree 🗖 | Neutra | I ∎ Agr | ree ∎Str | ongly ag | ree | |
|--|--------|---------|----------|----------|-----|----|
| I understand the purpose of the ICAP. (N=151, DK=29) | 8% | 23% | 23% | | 38% | 8% |
| The ICAP helps students monitor their academic progress. (N=136, DK=39) | 15% | 26% | | 29% | 25% | 5% |
| Last year, I revisited the ICAP with my students multiple times during the school year. (N=124, DK=21) | 13% | 32% | 6 1 | 8% | 34% | |
| l understand the connection between academics and ICAP goals. (N=147, DK=31) | 12% | 20% | 21% | , | 40% | 7% |



Student Survey: ICAP





Staff Survey: ICAP







MENTORING/TUTORING

ACPS middle school students have access to several mentoring and tutoring resources, including before and after school tutoring, Saturday school, and a mentoring program.

SURVEY RESULTS

Student usage of tutoring and mentoring opportunities is somewhat low, perhaps because less than half of students believe they would benefit academically from either program. However, those that did participate in tutoring and mentoring tended to recognize the academic and behavioral benefits that both programs can offer. Teachers were especially optimistic about the benefits of tutoring and mentoring; however, a large proportion of teachers at all grade levels and both campuses recognized that students who would benefit the most from tutoring may not actually participate in the program.

Students who were offered mentoring but chose not to participate said they did not feel that they needed it, felt uncomfortable, did not have time, or already have support from other adults in their lives.

| Тнеме | STUDENT SURVEY |
|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Did not need mentoring | 11 |
| Did not want to participate | 7 |
| No comment | 6 |
| Did not know about program | 4 |
| Other | 4 |
| Had other obligations | 3 |
| Already had a mentor | 2 |
| Uncomfortable | 2 |
| Did not have time | 1 |

Reasons that Students did not Participate in Mentoring


Overall Student Perceptions of Tutoring

Overall Student Perceptions of Mentoring



Overall Staff Perceptions of Tutoring and Mentoring

| Strongly disagree Disagree | ∎Neutra | al 🗖 Agree | ∎ Str | ongly agree | |
|--|---------|------------|-------|-------------|--------|
| l feel tutoring benefits students academically. (N=185, DK=12) | 7% | 45% | | 45% | ,) |
| Students that benefit the most from tutoring participate in tutoring. (N=168, DK=13) | 11% | 29% | 13% | 27% | 20% |
| I feel students would benefit academically from mentoring. (N=203, DK=1) | 12% | 41% | | 45% | , D |



Student Survey: Tutoring





Student Survey: Mentoring

Student Survey: Students who were offered mentoring last year

Student Survey: Students who participate in mentoring

Staff Survey: Tutoring/Mentoring

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)

AVID is a seventh through twelfth grade elective designed to prepare first-generation college-bound students in the academic middle. Research has shown that AVID improves participating students' outcomes in both secondary and post-secondary achievement. The three main components of this course are academic instruction, tutorial support, and motivational activities.

The number of students participating in AVID at FCH and GW has slowly increased from 134 in 2010-11 to 142 in 2011-12 to 148 in 2012-13. In 2012-13, GW 2 had the highest concentration of AVID students.

| School | NUMBER OF AVID STUDENTS | PERCENT OF STUDENTS IN AVID |
|--------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| FCH 1 | 23 | 5.25% |
| FCH 2 | 28 | 6.36% |
| FCH 3 | 26 | 5.92% |
| GW 1 | 27 | 5.17% |
| GW 2 | 44 | 8.53% |
| Total | 148 | 6.28% |

2012-13 School Year AVID Participation

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

Across all 2012-13 AVID participations, 78 percent qualified for free or reduced lunch. The majority of 2012-13 AVID participants were Hispanic (41 percent) or Black (48 percent).

PARTICIPANT RETENTION

In order to determine AVID participation and retention, data from two "cohorts" of AVID students were reviewed. A cohort of 48 Grade 7 students participated in AVID in 2010-11. In the following year, 41 of these students remained in the AVID program (85 percent). A cohort of 58 Grade 7 students participated in AVID in 2011-12. In the following year, 46 of these students remained in the AVID program (79 percent). Across both cohorts, the 19 students who did not complete the second year of AVID were spread across each of the five middle schools: FCH 1 (4), FCH 2 (2), FCH 3 (4), GW 1 (5), GW 2 (4). All of these students completed both Grade 7 and 8 at one of the ACPS middle schools.

PARTICIPANT GRADE POINT AVERAGES

GPAs of AVID and non-AVID students are similar. In 2011-12 and 2012-13 AVID students' GPAs on average were between 0.1 and 0.6 points higher. Over time, AVID student GPAs have increased at a faster rate than non-AVID students. Note that average GPAs take into account several cohorts of AVID participants.

| School | AVID STUDENTS | Non-AVID Students | ALL STUDENTS |
|--------|-----------------|----------------------|--------------|
| | 2010-11 Scho | ol Year | |
| FCH 1 | 3.17 | 2.98 | 2.99 |
| FCH 2 | 3.01 | 3.13 | 3.12 |
| FCH 3 | 2.92 | 2.84 | 2.84 |
| GW 1 | 3.14 | 3.30 | 3.28 |
| GW 2 | 2.98 | 3.22 | 3.20 |
| Total | 3.05 | 3.10 | 3.10 |
| | 2011-12 Scho | ol Year | |
| FCH 1 | H1 3.27 2.98 | | 3.00 |
| FCH 2 | FCH 2 3.34 3.16 | | 3.17 |
| FCH 3 | 3.04 | 3.08 | 3.08 |
| GW 1 | 3.23 | 3.31 | 3.31 |
| GW 2 | 3.00 | 3.32 | 3.29 |
| Total | 3.17 | 3.18 | 3.18 |
| | 2012-13 Scho | ol Year | |
| FCH 1 | 3.46 | 2.92 | 2.95 |
| FCH 2 | 3.53 | 3.05 | 3.08 |
| FCH 3 | 3.13 | 3.02 | 3.03 |
| GW 1 | 2.79 | 3.22 | 3.20 |
| GW 2 | 3.06 | 3.27 | 3.25 |
| Total | 3.17 | 3.11 | 3.11 |

2011-11 – 2012-13 School Year Average GPA by AVID Status

Looking specifically at the cohort of 41 students who participated in AVID during the 2010-11 and 2011-12 school years (in Grade 7 and 8), GPAs increased from 2.95 to 3.10. However, the second cohort of 46 2011-12 and 2012-13 participants did not see an increase in GPA over time.

| School | PRE-AVID GPA | AVID Year 1 GPA | AVID Year 2 GPA | % Change |
|--------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| | 2010-11 – 201 | 11-12 AVID Cohort | | 2-Year |
| FCH 1 | N/A | 3.01 | 2.95 | -2% |
| FCH 2 | N/A | 2.52 | 3.19 | 27% |
| FCH 3 | N/A | * | * | * |
| GW 1 | N/A | 3.30 | 3.63 | 10% |
| GW 2 | N/A | 2.99 | 2.94 | -2% |
| Total | N/A | 2.95 | 3.10 | 5% |
| | 2011-12 – 201 | 12-13 AVID Cohort | | 3-Year |
| FCH 1 | 3.31 | 3.36 | 3.18 | -4% |
| FCH 2 | 3.19 | 3.37 | 3.41 | 7% |
| FCH 3 | 3.24 | 3.15 | 3.20 | -1% |
| GW 1 | * | * | * | * |
| GW 2 | 3.09 | 3.11 | 2.88 | -7% |
| Total | 3.18 | 3.21 | 3.10 | -3% |

GPAs of Two-Year AVID Participants

*Fewer than 5 students, data withheld.

PARTICIPANT ENROLLMENT IN HONORS COURSES

The figure below lists the proportion of AVID students enrolled in honors or IB courses, as opposed to general education courses, across three subject areas. During the first two academic years (2011-11 and 2011-12), AVID students were more likely to be enrolled in honors courses in Grade 8 compared to Grade 7. Interestingly, this trend was reversed for Language Arts and Foreign Language classes in 2012-13. Overall, enrollment trends were somewhat similar across subject areas, grade levels, schools, and years: in many instances, approximately 50 to 80 percent of AVID students were enrolled in the honors course for a given subject area.

| Sellool | LANGUAGE ARTS | | Mather | MATICS* | Foreign Language | |
|---------|---------------------|-----------|------------|---------|------------------|---------|
| 3CHOOL | Grade 7 | Grade 8 | Grade 7 | Grade 8 | Grade 7 | Grade 8 |
| | 2010-11 School Year | | | | | |
| FCH 1 | 14.29% | 25.00% | 0.00% | 50.00% | 0.00% | 66.67% |
| FCH 2 | 70.00% | 50.00% | 0.00% | 50.00% | 0.00% | 64.29% |
| FCH 3 | 50.00% | 33.33% | 0.00% | 69.23% | 0.00% | 77.78% |
| GW 1 | 33.33% | 70.83% | 0.00% | 58.33% | 0.00% | 64.71% |
| GW 2 | 29.41% | 27.27% | 0.00% | 36.36% | 0.00% | 50.00% |
| Total | 38.89% | 46.75% | 0.00% | 53.85% | 0.00% | 65.45% |
| | 2011-12 School Year | | | | | |
| FCH 1 | 61.54% | 40.00% | 46.15% | 73.33% | 45.45% | 50.00% |
| FCH 2 | 69.23% | 88.24% | 46.15% | 58.82% | 83.33% | 81.25% |
| FCH 3 | 46.15% | 87.50% | 23.08% | 62.50% | 63.64% | 83.33% |
| GW 1 | 42.86% | 87.50% | 71.43% | 56.25% | 100% | 55.56% |
| GW 2 | 68.75% | 70.83% | 56.25% | 45.83% | 30.00% | 42.86% |
| Total | 59.68% | 73.75% | 46.77% | 57.50% | 59.57% | 61.82% |
| | | 2012-13 S | chool Year | | | |
| FCH 1 | 60.00% | 38.46% | 90.00% | 92.31% | 75.00% | 40.00% |
| FCH 2 | 77.78% | 78.95% | 66.67% | 100% | 42.86% | 22.22% |
| FCH 3 | 75.00% | 59.09% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 13.33% |
| GW 1 | 85.71% | 69.23% | 64.29% | 92.31% | 35.71% | 0.00% |
| GW 2 | 73.91% | 66.67% | 65.22% | 100% | 73.33% | 18.18% |
| Total | 75.00% | 63.64% | 71.67% | 97.73% | 58.70% | 19.05% |

Honors or IB Course Enrollment of AVID Participants

*Algebra I or Geometry in Grade 8, Advanced Math Concepts or Algebra I in Grade 7

SURVEY RESULTS

AVID students as well as staff generally agreed that the AVID program has benefited participants academically, though respondents from the GW campus reflected slightly more favorably on the program than those from the FCH campus.

Student Perceptions of AVID

Staff Perceptions of AVID

| ■ Strongly disagree | Disagree | ■ Neutral | □ Agree | ■ Strongly agree |
|---|--------------|-----------|----------------|------------------|
| I see the value of AVID strategies ir area. (N=27) | n my content | 11% | 11% | 70% |

Student Survey: Responses to AVID-Related Questions

Staff Survey: AVID-Related Questions

EXTRACURRICULARS/CLUBS

Extracurriculars/Clubs refers to the activities available to students after school hours. These programs include intramural sports, SOHO, Power- up, Higher Achievement, RARE, Zumba, Bully Busters, and Hammond Hammer heads.

SURVEY RESULTS

Although participation rates in intramurals and extracurricular clubs were somewhat low (40 percent overall), the majority of students indicated that they were encouraged to participate and also valued the activities in which they chose to participate. A relatively small but notable number of students (n=49) recommended adding more clubs and activities as their "one change to make school better."

Student Survey: Extracurriculars and Clubs

Staff Survey: Intramurals and Extracurricular Clubs

Parent Survey: Intramurals and Extracurricular Clubs

When asked about why they participate in clubs in or extracurricular activities, students said they participated because they enjoy a specific activity, wanted to have fun, wanted to improve a skill, wanted to spend time with friends, or simply because they wanted something to do. Other students participated in clubs after encouragement or the demand from a parent or staff member.

Students who did not participate in extracurricular activities or clubs chose not to do so because lack of interest, conflicting outside of school activities, family obligations, or lack of time. A theme that emerged from the comments of students at all schools was not having permission from parents or having family obligations that prevented them from participating. Several students did not participate because they are already involved in activities outside of school. A minority of students did not participate in clubs and extracurricular activities because they were bullied.

Students most frequently requested dance, sports, and other athletic clubs or activities to be added. Arts, music, and craft-related activities were the second most requested.

| Тнеме | STUDENT SURVEY |
|---|----------------|
| Enjoy the activity | 379 |
| Social/Time with friends | 79 |
| Learn new skills | 66 |
| Something to do after school | 51 |
| To be active/fit/healthy | 47 |
| To improve | 41 |
| Just wanted to | 28 |
| Other | 21 |
| No comment | 18 |
| Previous experience | 15 |
| Encouragement by parents/family members | 11 |
| Encouragement by teachers | 9 |
| College application | 4 |

Reasons Students Participated in Extracurricular Activities

Reasons that Students did not Participate in Extracurricular Activities

| Тнеме | STUDENT SURVEY |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| Not interested | 312 |
| Attended a different school | 146 |
| Involved in other activities | 144 |
| Do not have enough time | 97 |
| No comment/don't know | 66 |
| Need time for homework | 63 |
| Did not know about activities | 56 |
| Other | 52 |
| Family obligations | 25 |
| No friends/negative social pressure | 20 |
| Missed deadline to sign up | 11 |
| Would like to join in future | 10 |

| Тнеме | STUDENT SURVEY |
|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Activities are disorganized | 4 |

Clubs and Activities that Students Participated In

Note: Open-ended responses provided by students and re-grouped

Clubs and Activities that Students Would Like ACPS to Offer

SECTION II: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Curriculum and instruction are the core focus of ACPS middle schools. Although state requirements guide much of the curriculum and the process of evaluating instruction, ACPS leaders are committed to ensuring that the local curriculum provides each middle school student with the foundation necessary to succeed in high school and beyond.

This We Believe: Keys to Educating Young Adolescents, the seminal document of the Association for Middle Level Education, establishes that a middle school curriculum should be "challenging, exploratory, integrative, and relevant." ³⁰ Although schools may successfully improve student learning using many forms of curriculums, research has shown that middle school students may particularly benefit from integrated and exploratory curriculums.³¹

For the purposes of this evaluation, curriculum and instruction is defined as the content and materials taught within and across grade levels. The following aspects of curriculum and instruction are explored in this section:

- **§** Acceleration & Rigor
- **§** Differentiation
- § Grading
- § Technology Integration
- **§** Special Education
- S English Language Learners

³⁰ "This We Believe: Essential Attributes and Characteristics of Successful Schools." Association for Middle Level Education, 2010. http://www.amle.org/aboutamle/thiswebelieve/the16characteristics/tabid/1274/default.aspx

³¹ An integrated curriculum "crosses subject boundaries, connects school learning to the real world, and allows for student voice in what is learned and how it is learned" (Reference to footnote 1). Educators argue an integrated curriculum improves student problem-solving skills and prepares students for the demands of higher education. [1] "Characteristics of Exemplary Schools for Young Adolescents," Op. cit.

^{[2] &}quot;Why Curriculum Integration? Why Now?" NC State College of Education.

http://www.ncsu.edu/chass/extension/ci/whyci.html

An exploratory curriculum supplements the traditional academic curriculum with "courses devoted to exploring areas of learning that are typically given only cursory treatment or are nonexistent in the traditional curriculum."
[3] Anfara, V., Brown, K., "Exploratory Programs in Middle Schools." *National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin*, 2000, 84:617, p. 58.

^{[4] &}quot;Characteristics of Exemplary Schools for Young Adolescents," Op. cit.

ACCELERATION & RIGOR

Acceleration is the advancement of students to higher level course offerings, including honors courses. All middle schools implemented the ACPS Honors Curriculum during the 2012-13 school year. Middle school teachers assigned to Honors-level courses are completing an Honors Teacher Prep course and other professional development modules. The ACPS Honor curriculum is designed to support "middle school students' ability to become highly effective critical, creative, and analytical thinkers." ³² Rigor is the development, delivery, and support for high level academic content. Examples include student engagement in higher order questions, complex problem solving, and cross-text analysis with authentic text. Acceleration and rigor are intertwined, and therefore presented together in this section. Additional research is needed to determine the level of rigor present in all classrooms, including honors courses.

SURVEY RESULTS

In open-ended comments a small number of staff (n=10) recommended changes to improve student achievement that related to Honors classes. The nature of their recommendations were mixed, with some recommending changes to make honors courses more selective and in turn more rigorous (e.g., "enroll in honors only students who can perform at rigorous levels") and others recommending a more inclusive policy and curriculum (e.g., "Provide honors curriculum to all students").

Having high expectations for students was a frequent theme in recommendations made by staff in open-ended survey responses. Consistent high expectations was the second most frequent theme noted by staff (n=26) in their recommendations for changes to improve student achievement. This was also the case among parents, with consistent high expectations as the second most frequent theme (n=29). Fifteen parents also recommended more rigorous honors classes.

CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN HONORS COURSES³³

In general, White and Asian students are overrepresented in honors-level courses. For example, in 2012-13 while 38.83 percent of students at GW 2 overall were white, between 54 and 60 percent of students in honors-level courses were white (depending on subject). The overrepresentation was most pronounced at GW 1 and 2 and least pronounced at FCH 2.

Conversely, students who qualified for free or reduced lunch were generally underrepresented. Across all schools, the percentage of students who qualified for free or reduced lunch at the school overall was greater than the percentage of students who

³² "Middle Schools Annual Report." Alexandria City Public Schools. June 2012. http://www.acps.k12.va.us/middle-schools/ms-report-2012.pdf

³³ Note: Honors course are those that include "Honors" in the course title. Additional details on accelerated mathematics courses can be viewed at the end of this sub-section (e.g., Algebra I and Geometry). Honors Mathematics was only offered at grade 6 and only in the 2011-12 and 2012-13 academic years.

qualified for free and reduced lunch in honors-level courses. However, to some degree, the percentage of students who qualified for free or reduced lunch in honors-level math was closer to the overall student population than in other honors-level course. The proportions of Black students enrolled in honors math course were much closer to the overall school enrollment trends. Meanwhile, White and Asian students remain overrepresented, but also to a much smaller degree than the other subject areas. In general, the demographic characteristics of honors mathematics courses mirror overall school demographic characteristics with more fidelity than the other disciplines.

| | | | • | J | , | |
|----------------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Row Labels | FCH 1 | FCH 2 | FCH 3 | GW 1 | GW 2 | Total |
| | | 2010-11 | | | | |
| School Overall | 10.54% | 10.31% | 13.40% | 35.47% | 34.28% | 21.49% |
| Language Arts | 12.31% | 10.96% | 20.37% | 60.00% | 61.80% | 39.55% |
| Science | 12.31% | 10.96% | 20.37% | 60.00% | 61.80% | 39.55% |
| Social Studies | 14.29% | 13.38% | 21.51% | 57.79% | 61.47% | 40.19% |
| | | 2011-12 | | | | |
| School Overall | 11.37% | 10.95% | 11.82% | 38.82% | 37.21% | 22.78% |
| Language Arts | 13.94% | 12.39% | 19.26% | 52.04% | 55.41% | 35.67% |
| Math | 9.86% | 13.79% | 15.38% | 37.27% | 48.61% | 26.48% |
| Science | 13.94% | 12.39% | 19.26% | 52.04% | 55.41% | 35.67% |
| Social Studies | 14.55% | 13.37% | 21.37% | 59.42% | 59.51% | 39.18% |
| | | 2012-13 | | | | |
| School Overall | 9.95% | 8.72% | 13.56% | 38.80% | 38.83% | 23.16% |
| Language Arts | 15.95% | 9.79% | 14.44% | 54.23% | 56.80% | 35.86% |
| Math | 14.63% | 6.90% | 16.00% | 50.00% | 54.64% | 34.15% |
| Science | 15.95% | 9.79% | 14.44% | 54.23% | 56.80% | 35.86% |
| Social Studies | 15.08% | 9.40% | 20.80% | 56.88% | 60.19% | 39.16% |

Students Enrolled in Honors-Level Courses (Percentage White)

Students Enrolled in Honors-Level Courses (Percentage Qualify for Free or Reduced Lunch)

| Row Labels | FCH 1 | FCH 2 | FCH 3 | GW 1 | GW 2 | Total | | | |
|----------------|---------|---------|---------------|--------|--------|--------|--|--|--|
| | 2010-11 | | | | | | | | |
| School Overall | 63.75% | 69.54% | 65.93% | 49.47% | 52.93% | 59.87% | | | |
| Language Arts | 46.92% | 56.16% | 55.56% | 24.00% | 21.03% | 35.92% | | | |
| Science | 46.92% | 56.16% | 55.56% | 24.00% | 21.03% | 35.92% | | | |
| Social Studies | 43.65% | 59.24% | 52.69% | 26.64% | 22.08% | 36.44% | | | |
| 2011-12 | | | | | | | | | |
| School Overall | 66.59% | 72.24% | 68.32% | 48.43% | 49.37% | 60.42% | | | |
| Language Arts | 53.94% | 66.37% | 57.04% | 32.92% | 28.72% | 44.35% | | | |
| Math | 66.20% | 69.49% | 65.38% | 50.89% | 33.33% | 56.12% | | | |
| Science | 53.94% | 66.37% | 57.04% | 32.92% | 28.72% | 44.35% | | | |
| Social Studies | 51.52% | 63.37% | 50.43% | 25.72% | 25.70% | 39.85% | | | |
| | | 2012-13 | | | | | | | |
| School Overall | 72.37% | 74.55% | 72.21% | 46.93% | 45.93% | 61.32% | | | |
| Language Arts | 55.83% | 65.11% | 60.56% | 30.32% | 24.17% | 42.89% | | | |
| Math | 62.79% | 68.33% | 58.63% | 31.71% | 30.93% | 47.75% | | | |
| Science | 55.83% | 65.11% | 60.56% | 30.32% | 24.17% | 42.89% | | | |

| Row Labels | FCH 1 | FCH 2 | FCH 3 | GW 1 | GW 2 | TOTAL |
|----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Social Studies | 57.14% | 68.38% | 56.00% | 27.22% | 20.71% | 40.59% |

| School | Asian | Black | Hispanic | White | Other or Multi | Free or Reduced Lunch | | | |
|---------------------|--------|---------|------------|--------|-------------------|--------------------------|--|--|--|
| | | 2010-11 | School Yea | r | - | | | | |
| FCH 1 | 10.78% | 42.16% | 33.58% | 10.54% | 2.94% | 63.75% | | | |
| FCH 2 | 7.43% | 51.08% | 30.22% | 10.31% | 0.96% | 69.54% | | | |
| FCH 3 | 11.17% | 39.70% | 33.75% | 13.40% | 1.99% | 65.93% | | | |
| GW 1 | 2.35% | 29.27% | 30.98% | 35.47% | 1.92% | 49.47% | | | |
| GW 2 | 4.15% | 30.79% | 29.04% | 34.28% | 1.75% | 52.93% | | | |
| Total | 6.96% | 38.21% | 31.43% | 21.49% | 1.90% | 59.87% | | | |
| 2011-12 School Year | | | | | | | | | |
| FCH 1 | 11.61% | 38.63% | 35.78% | 11.37% | 2.61% | 66.59% | | | |
| FCH 2 | 6.67% | 49.52% | 31.19% | 10.95% | 1.67% | 72.24% | | | |
| FCH 3 | 8.75% | 41.84% | 34.75% | 11.82% | 2.84% | 68.32% | | | |
| GW 1 | 2.11% | 27.64% | 28.69% | 38.82% | 2.74% | 48.43% | | | |
| GW 2 | 4.23% | 29.18% | 27.27% | 37.21% | 2.11% | 49.37% | | | |
| Total | 6.51% | 36.93% | 31.37% | 22.78% | 2.40% | 60.42% | | | |
| | | 2012-13 | School Yea | r | | | | | |
| FCH 1 | 9.49% | 41.90% | 35.65% | 9.95% | 3.01% | 72.37% | | | |
| FCH 2 | 7.11% | 45.41% | 36.24% | 8.72% | 2.52% | 74.55% | | | |
| FCH 3 | 6.67% | 40.23% | 36.09% | 13.56% | 3.45% | 72.21% | | | |
| GW 1 | 1.93% | 27.99% | 28.57% | 38.80% | 2.70% | 46.93% | | | |
| GW 2 | 2.72% | 27.77% | 28.93% | 38.83% | 1.75% | 45.93% | | | |
| Total | 5.35% | 36.04% | 32.79% | 23.16% | 2.65% | 61.32% | | | |

Overall Student Demographics (Reference)

Demographics of Honors Language Arts Students

| Sellool | School Asian Black Hispanic White | OTHER OR | Free or Reduced | | | |
|---------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| JCHOOL | ASIAN | DLAUK | ΠΙΣΡΑΙΝΙΟ | VVHILE | Multi | LUNCH |
| | | 2010-1 1 | l School Yea | r | | |
| FCH 1 | 13.85% | 43.08% | 23.85% | 12.31% | 6.92% | 46.92% |
| FCH 2 | 11.64% | 55.48% | 19.86% | 10.96% | 2.05% | 56.16% |
| FCH 3 | 16.67% | 37.96% | 20.37% | 20.37% | 3.70% | 55.56% |
| GW 1 | 3.56% | 20.00% | 14.67% | 60.00% | 1.78% | 24.00% |
| GW 2 | 5.15% | 18.88% | 38% 11.16% 61.80% 2.58% | | 21.03% | |
| Total | 8.57% | 31.81% | 16.78% | 39.55% | 3.05% | 35.92% |
| | | 2011-12 | 2 School Yea | r | | |
| FCH 1 | 13.94% | 41.82% | 25.45% | 13.94% | 4.85% | 53.94% |
| FCH 2 | 9.29% | 52.21% | 23.45% | 12.39% | 2.65% | 66.37% |
| FCH 3 | 11.11% | 38.52% | 27.41% | 19.26% | 3.70% | 57.04% |
| GW 1 | 3.13% | 23.20% | 17.55% | 52.04% | 3.13% | 32.92% |
| GW 2 | 4.73% | 21.96% | 14.53% | 55.41% | 3.04% | 28.72% |
| Total | 7.27% | 33.13% | 20.25% | 35.67% | 3.33% | 44.35% |
| | | 2012-13 | 3 School Yea | r | | |
| FCH 1 | 12.88% | 42.33% | 20.25% | 15.95% | 6.75% | 55.83% |

| School | Asian | BLACK | Hispanic | White | Other or Multi | Free or Reduced Lunch |
|--------|--------|--------|----------|--------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| FCH 2 | 7.66% | 48.94% | 30.21% | 9.79% | 2.13% | 65.11% |
| FCH 3 | 10.00% | 40.56% | 27.78% | 14.44% | 5.00% | 60.56% |
| GW 1 | 2.62% | 20.99% | 17.78% | 54.23% | 3.50% | 30.32% |
| GW 2 | 3.63% | 19.94% | 16.62% | 56.80% | 2.72% | 24.17% |
| Total | 6.23% | 31.55% | 21.57% | 35.86% | 3.67% | 42.89% |

Demographics of Honors Science Students

| | Asian | BLACK | HISPANIC WHIT | | | | | | |
|---------------------|--------|---------|---------------|---------------|-------|--------|--|--|--|
| | | 2010-11 | l School Yea | r | WIGEN | Lonon | | | |
| FCH 1 | 16.39% | 43.44% | 23.77% | 9.84% | 6.56% | 45.90% | | | |
| FCH 2 | 12.08% | 55.03% | 19.46% | 12.08% | 1.34% | 58.39% | | | |
| FCH 3 | 13.27% | 39.80% | 21.43% | 20.41% | 5.10% | 52.53% | | | |
| GW 1 | 3.46% | 20.35% | 14.72% | 58.87% | 2.60% | 24.57% | | | |
| GW 2 | 5.19% | 16.88% | 12.55% | 62.34% | 3.03% | 21.55% | | | |
| Total | 8.43% | 31.35% | 17.10% | 39.79% | 3.33% | 35.74% | | | |
| 2011-12 School Year | | | | | | | | | |
| FCH 1 | 16.08% | 42.66% | 23.08% | 13.29% | 4.90% | 51.75% | | | |
| FCH 2 | 9.60% | 52.54% | 18.64% | 18.64% 16.95% | | 63.28% | | | |
| FCH 3 | 12.78% | 36.84% | 27.07% | 20.30% | 3.01% | 52.63% | | | |
| GW 1 | 3.13% | 23.82% | 17.24% | 52.35% | 3.45% | 32.61% | | | |
| GW 2 | 5.43% | 18.84% | 13.04% | 59.42% | 3.26% | 24.19% | | | |
| Total | 7.82% | 31.58% | 18.42% | 38.84% | 3.34% | 40.68% | | | |
| | | 2012-13 | 8 School Yea | r | | | | | |
| FCH 1 | 12.78% | 41.35% | 23.31% | 15.04% | 7.52% | 52.94% | | | |
| FCH 2 | 7.01% | 50.00% | 30.37% | 9.81% | 2.80% | 66.67% | | | |
| FCH 3 | 9.21% | 37.50% | 32.24% | 16.45% | 4.61% | 56.41% | | | |
| GW 1 | 2.69% | 20.36% | 17.07% | 55.99% | 3.89% | 27.81% | | | |
| GW 2 | 3.73% | 14.92% | 15.59% | 62.71% | 3.05% | 18.24% | | | |
| Total | 5.85% | 29.34% | 21.99% | 38.83% | 3.99% | 39.58% | | | |

Demographics of Honors Mathematics Students

| | Asian | BLACK | Hispanic | White | Other or Multi | Free or Reduced Lunch | |
|-------|----------------|---------------|--------------|--------|-------------------|--------------------------|--|
| | | 2011-12 | 2 School Yea | r | | | |
| FCH 1 | 11.27% | 46.48% | 30.99% | 9.86% | 1.41% | 66.20% | |
| FCH 2 | 5.17% | 50.00% | 29.31% | 13.79% | 1.72% | 69.49% | |
| FCH 3 | 11.54% | 33.33% | 34.62% | 15.38% | 5.13% | 65.38% | |
| GW 1 | 0.91% | 31.82% | 27.27% | 37.27% | 2.73% | 50.89% | |
| GW 2 | 2.78% | 23.61% | 19.44% | 48.61% | 5.56% | 33.33% | |
| Total | 5. 9 1% | 35.99% | 28.28% | 26.48% | 3.34% | 56.12% | |
| | | 2012-13 | 8 School Yea | r | | | |
| FCH 1 | 12.20% | 46.34% | 21.95% | 14.63% | 4.88% | 62.79% | |
| FCH 2 | 8.62% | 48.28% | 32.76% | 6.90% | 3.45% | 68.33% | |
| FCH 3 | 14.00% | 46.00% | 20.00% | 16.00% | 4.00% | 58.63% | |

| | Asian | Black | Hispanic | White | Other or Multi | Free or Reduced Lunch |
|-------|-------|--------|----------|--------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| GW 1 | 2.44% | 21.95% | 23.17% | 50.00% | 2.44% | 31.71% |
| GW 2 | 2.06% | 19.59% | 22.68% | 54.64% | 1.03% | 30.93% |
| Total | 6.40% | 32.62% | 24.09% | 34.15% | 2.74% | 47.75% |

Demographics of Honors Social Studies Students

| | Asian | ВІАСК | HISPANIC | White | OTHER OR | FREE OR REDUCED | | | |
|---------------------|--------|---------|--------------|--------|----------|-----------------|--|--|--|
| | | DEMOR | | | Μυιτι | Lunch | | | |
| | | 2010-11 | School Yea | r | _ | | | | |
| FCH 1 | 13.49% | 48.41% | 16.67% | 14.29% | 6.35% | 43.65% | | | |
| FCH 2 | 12.74% | 53.50% | 18.47% | 13.38% | 1.91% | 59.24% | | | |
| FCH 3 | 13.98% | 41.94% | 18.28% | 21.51% | 3.23% | 52.69% | | | |
| GW 1 | 3.69% | 19.26% | 17.62% | 57.79% | 1.64% | 26.64% | | | |
| GW 2 | 5.63% | 17.32% | 12.12% | 61.47% | 3.03% | 22.08% | | | |
| Total | 8.46% | 31.84% | 16.22% | 40.19% | 2.94% | 36.44% | | | |
| 2011-12 School Year | | | | | | | | | |
| FCH 1 | 13.33% | 40.00% | 27.27% | 14.55% | 4.24% | 51.52% | | | |
| FCH 2 | 9.90% | 50.99% | 23.27% | 13.37% | 2.48% | 63.37% | | | |
| FCH 3 | 12.82% | 37.61% | 25.64% | 21.37% | 2.56% | 50.43% | | | |
| GW 1 | 3.26% | 22.46% | 11.23% | 59.42% | 3.26% | 25.72% | | | |
| GW 2 | 5.28% | 19.01% | 13.03% | 59.51% | 3.17% | 25.70% | | | |
| Total | 7.76% | 31.51% | 18.20% | 39.18% | 3.16% | 39.85% | | | |
| | | 2012-13 | 8 School Yea | r | | | | | |
| FCH 1 | 16.67% | 42.06% | 19.05% | 15.08% | 6.35% | 57.14% | | | |
| FCH 2 | 7.26% | 47.86% | 32.48% | 9.40% | 2.14% | 68.38% | | | |
| FCH 3 | 8.80% | 36.00% | 27.20% | 20.80% | 4.80% | 56.00% | | | |
| GW 1 | 2.45% | 19.27% | 16.51% | 56.88% | 3.67% | 27.22% | | | |
| GW 2 | 3.88% | 18.45% | 14.56% | 60.19% | 2.91% | 20.71% | | | |
| Total | 6.16% | 29.44% | 20.79% | 39.16% | 3.57% | 40.59% | | | |

SUCCESS RATES OF STUDENTS IN HONORS COURSES

In honors-level language arts, science, and social studies courses between 50 and 60 percent of students typically earn grades of A or A-. A lower percentage of honors-level math students earn grades of A or A-. When expanding to look at any grade of B- or higher, generally between 85 and 90 percent of students are performing at this level in honors courses across all grades and subjects with few exceptions.

| SUBJECT/GRADE | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | | | | | | | | |
|---------------|---------------|---------|---------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| LEVEL | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Language Arts | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | 58% | 61% | 62% | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | 51% | 57% | 50% | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | 53% | 44% | 45% | | | | | | | | |
| Total | 54% | 54% | 52% | | | | | | | | |
| Math | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | | 42% | 47% | | | | | | | | |
| Science | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | 67% | 68% | 55% | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | 48% | 57% | 44% | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | 66% | 55% | 49% | | | | | | | | |
| Total | 60% | 60% | 49% | | | | | | | | |
| | Social Stud | dies | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | 67% | 70% | 64% | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | 53% | 50% | 56% | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | 64% | 52% | 61% | | | | | | | | |
| Total | 61% | 56% | 60% | | | | | | | | |

Percentage of Students in Honors-Level Courses (Grade of A or A-)

Percentage of Students in Honors-Level Courses (Grade of B- or Higher)

| Subject/Grade Level | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | | | | | | |
|------------------------|-------------------|---------|---------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | Language <i>i</i> | Arts | | | | | | | |
| 6 | 91% | 89% | 89% | | | | | | |
| 7 | 82% | 80% | 85% | | | | | | |
| 8 | 88% | 81% | 74% | | | | | | |
| Total | 87% | 84% | 83% | | | | | | |
| Math | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | | 82% | 86% | | | | | | |
| | Science | ; | | | | | | | |
| 6 | 85% | 90% | 87% | | | | | | |
| 7 | 83% | 87% | 81% | | | | | | |
| 8 | 92% | 85% | 83% | | | | | | |
| Total | 87% | 88% | 83% | | | | | | |
| | Social Stud | dies | | | | | | | |
| 6 | 93% | 92% | 88% | | | | | | |
| 7 | 88% | 84% | 87% | | | | | | |

| Subject/Grade Level | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 |
|------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| 8 | 88% | 89% | 86% |
| Total | 89% | 88% | 87% |

Grade Earned in Honors Language Arts

| Grade | А | A- | B+ | В | B- | C+ | С | C- | D+ | D | F |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------|-------|-------|----------|---------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| | 2010-2011 School Year | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | 34.8% | 23.4% | 13.1% | 9.8% | 9.8% | 4.1% | 3.3% | 1.6% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| 7 | 34.2% | 17.1% | 8.9% | 12.3% | 9.9% | 3.1% | 7.5% | 2.4% | 1.4% | 2.1% | 1.0% |
| 8 | 29.4% | 23.5% | 11.4% | 11.4% | 12.1% | 5.6% | 2.3% | 2.6% | 1.0% | 0.7% | 0.0% |
| Total | 32.7% | 21.3% | 11.0% | 11.3% | 10.7% | 4.3% | 4.4% | 2.3% | 0.8% | 1.0% | 0.4% |
| 2011-2012 School Year | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | 37.9% | 23.0% | 8.4% | 9.2% | 10.2% | 2.6% | 4.3% | 3.6% | 0.3% | 0.3% | 0.3% |
| 7 | 39.4% | 17.4% | 6.3% | 8.6% | 8.6% | 7.7% | 4.6% | 3.4% | 1.4% | 2.6% | 0.0% |
| 8 | 25.3% | 18.5% | 14.8% | 12.5% | 10.3% | 7.5% | 4.3% | 4.3% | 1.0% | 1.0% | 0.8% |
| Total | 33.9% | 19.7% | 10.0% | 10.2% | 9.7% | 5. 9 % | 4.4% | 3.8% | 0.9% | 1.2% | 0.4% |
| | | | | 201 | 2-2013 S | chool Ye | ar | | | | |
| 6 | 43.8% | 18.1% | 8.9% | 8.5% | 9.2% | 5.4% | 2.8% | 2.4% | 0.5% | 0.0% | 0.5% |
| 7 | 31.3% | 18.7% | 11.5% | 12.4% | 11.1% | 6.5% | 5.1% | 1.8% | 0.7% | 0.2% | 0.7% |
| 8 | 27.2% | 17.3% | 9.7% | 7.1% | 12.7% | 6.6% | 6.9% | 6.1% | 2.0% | 2.5% | 1.8% |
| Total | 34.3% | 18.1% | 10.1% | 9.4% | 10.9% | 6.2% | 4.9% | 3.4% | 1.0% | 0.9% | 1.0% |

Grade Earned in Honors Science

| Course | Α | A- | B+ | В | B- | C+ | С | C- | D+ | D | F |
|-----------------------|-----|-----|-----|--------|----------|------|----|----|----|----|----|
| 2010-2011 School Year | | | | | | | | | | | |
| H. Science 6 | 48% | 19% | 7% | 6% | 5% | 3% | 4% | 3% | 2% | 1% | 0% |
| H. Science 7 | 28% | 20% | 11% | 11% | 13% | 5% | 6% | 4% | 1% | 1% | 0% |
| H. Science 8 | 42% | 24% | 8% | 10% | 8% | 3% | 3% | 2% | 1% | 1% | 0% |
| Total | 39% | 21% | 9% | 9% | 9% | 4% | 4% | 3% | 1% | 1% | 0% |
| 2011-2012 School Year | | | | | | | | | | | |
| H. General Science | 45% | 23% | 8% | 7% | 7% | 3% | 4% | 2% | 0% | 1% | 0% |
| H. Life Science | 37% | 20% | 10% | 11% | 9% | 4% | 4% | 1% | 1% | 1% | 0% |
| H. Physical Science | 33% | 22% | 10% | 12% | 8% | 5% | 4% | 4% | 1% | 1% | 1% |
| Total | 38% | 22% | 10% | 10% | 8% | 4% | 4% | 2% | 0% | 1% | 0% |
| | | | 201 | 2-2013 | School \ | /ear | | | | | |
| H. General Science | 35% | 20% | 10% | 10% | 12% | 4% | 4% | 3% | 1% | 1% | 0% |
| H. Life Science | 26% | 18% | 9% | 15% | 13% | 7% | 5% | 4% | 2% | 1% | 1% |
| H. Physical Science | 32% | 17% | 14% | 9% | 11% | 3% | 4% | 5% | 2% | 3% | 1% |
| Total | 31% | 18% | 11% | 11% | 12% | 5% | 4% | 4% | 1% | 1% | 1% |

Grade Earned in Honors Mathematics 6

| Year | Α | A- | B+ | В | B- | C+ | С | C- | D+ | D | F |
|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 2011-2012 | 23% | 19% | 13% | 12% | 15% | 6% | 7% | 4% | 1% | 0% | 0% |
| 2012-2013 | 28% | 19% | 11% | 14% | 14% | 6% | 6% | 3% | 1% | 0% | 0% |

| Course | Α | A- | B+ | В | B- | C+ | С | C- | D+ | D | F | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----|---------|----------|------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|--|--|
| | 2010-2011 School Year | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| H. Social Studies 6 | 50% | 17% | 12% | 7% | 7% | 4% | 2% | 1% | 0% | 0% | 0% | | |
| H. Social Studies 7 | 32% | 21% | 8% | 15% | 12% | 4% | 4% | 2% | 1% | 1% | 0% | | |
| H. Social Studies 8 | 45% | 19% | 10% | 6% | 8% | 5% | 3% | 2% | 0% | 1% | 1% | | |
| Total | 42% | 19% | 10% | 9% | 9 % | 4% | 3% | 2% | 1% | 1% | 0% | | |
| 2011-2012 School Year | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| H. Social Studies 6 | 46% | 24% | 6% | 10% | 6% | 3% | 3% | 2% | 0% | 0% | 0% | | |
| H. Social Studies 7 | 30% | 20% | 13% | 11% | 10% | 5% | 6% | 3% | 1% | 0% | 0% | | |
| H. Social Studies 8 | 34% | 18% | 14% | 11% | 12% | 5% | 3% | 1% | 1% | 1% | 1% | | |
| Total | 36% | 20% | 11% | 11% | 10% | 5% | 4% | 2% | 0% | 1% | 0% | | |
| | | | 2012-20 | 013 Scho | ool Year | | | | | | | | |
| H. US History Part I (6) | 43% | 21% | 8% | 7% | 9% | 4% | 4% | 3% | 0% | 0% | 0% | | |
| H. US History Part II (7) | 37% | 19% | 9% | 10% | 12% | 5% | 4% | 3% | 1% | 0% | 0% | | |
| H. Civics/Economics (8) | 44% | 17% | 8% | 9% | 8% | 5% | 3% | 3% | 1% | 1% | 1% | | |
| Total | 41% | 19% | 9% | 9% | 9 % | 5% | 3% | 3% | 1% | 1% | 0% | | |

Grade Earned in Honors Social Studies

As expected, SOL scores among honors language arts students were higher in the academic years 2010-11 and 2011-12, when the 2002 exam was used, compared to 2012-13, when the new 2010 exam was implemented. In, the first two years, over half of students enrolled in these courses achieved a score designation of Pass Advanced, and a very small minority failed the exam. Meanwhile, 16 percent of students failed the 2010 version of the exam, while the majority of students attained a score designation of Pass Proficient.

| | U | U | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------|-----------------|--------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| GRADE LEVEL/EXAM VERSION | Pass Advanced | PASS PROFICIENT | Fail | | | | | | | |
| | 2010-2011 Sch | ool Year | | | | | | | | |
| 6 (2002) | 67.89% | 30.89% | 1.22% | | | | | | | |
| 7 (2002) | 53.10% | 44.83% | 2.07% | | | | | | | |
| 8 (2002) | 55.88% | 42.48% | 1.63% | | | | | | | |
| Total | 58.43% | 39.90% | 1.66% | | | | | | | |
| 2011-2012 School Year | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 (2002) | 52.82% | 45.13% | 2.05% | | | | | | | |
| 7 (2002) | 51.43% | 43.71% | 4.86% | | | | | | | |
| 8 (2002) | 51.88% | 42.86% | 5.26% | | | | | | | |
| Total | 52.06% | 43.90% | 4.04% | | | | | | | |
| | 2012-2013 Sch | ool Year | | | | | | | | |
| 6 (2010) | 29.55% | 57.21% | 13.24% | | | | | | | |
| 7 (2010) | 23.04% | 60.83% | 16.13% | | | | | | | |
| 8 (2010) | 17.14% | 65.22% | 17.65% | | | | | | | |
| Total | 23.40% | 60.98% | 15.63% | | | | | | | |

Reading SOL Scores of Honors English Students

As expected, SOL scores of honors science students dropped after the new test was implemented: among students taking the 2008 version of the exam (academic years 2010-11 and 2011-12), a very small minority failed. Meanwhile, less than 10 percent of students taking the new 2010 exam were given a score designation of Pass Advanced, while almost 20 percent failed.

| YEAR/EXAM VERSION | Pass Advanced | PASS PROFICIENT | Fail |
|-------------------|---------------|-----------------|--------|
| 2010-2011 (2008) | 56.33% | 42.33% | 1.33% |
| 2011-2012 (2008) | 44.01% | 51.56% | 4.43% |
| 2012-2013 (2010) | 9.71% | 71.13% | 19.16% |

Science SOL Scores of Honors Science Students

Because the new 2009 versions of the various mathematics exams were used in both academic years shown, it thus follows that scores were generally low across both years. Interestingly, however, the share of students attaining a score designation of Pass Advanced increased between years, while the share of students failing the exam decreased considerably.

Mathematics SOL Scores of Honors Mathematics 6 Students

| YEAR/EXAM VERSION | Pass Advanced | PASS PROFICIENT | Fail |
|--------------------------|---------------|-----------------|--------|
| 2011-2012 (Grade 6 2009) | 5.06% | 71.69% | 23.25% |
| 2012-2013 (Grade 6 2009) | 12.99% | 77.04% | 9.97% |

The percentage of students in honors social studies courses that failed the SOL social studies exam has increased from 4.58 to 5.85 to 7.33 percent during the last three academic years (2010-11 to 2012-13). However, nearly half of students earned a pass advanced score.

| GRADE LEVEL/EXAM VERSION | Pass Advanced | Pass Proficient | Fail | | | | | | | |
|---|----------------------|-----------------|--------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | 2010-2011 School Yea | ar | | | | | | | | |
| SOL United States History I (2008) (6) | 57.14% | 38.49% | 4.37% | | | | | | | |
| SOL United States History II (2008) (7) | 39.27% | 55.45% | 5.28% | | | | | | | |
| SOL Civics and Economics (2008) (8) | 47.30% | 48.65% | 4.05% | | | | | | | |
| Total | 47.36% | 48.06% | 4.58% | | | | | | | |
| 2011-2012 School Year | | | | | | | | | | |
| SOL United States History I (2008) (6) | 53.04% | 39.62% | 7.35% | | | | | | | |
| SOL United States History II (2008) (7) | 52.79% | 42.82% | 4.40% | | | | | | | |
| SOL Civics and Economics (2008) (8) | 40.46% | 53.61% | 5.93% | | | | | | | |
| Total | 48.27% | 45.87% | 5.85% | | | | | | | |
| | 2012-2013 School Yea | ar | | | | | | | | |
| SOL United States History I (2008) (6) | 53.64% | 35.85% | 10.24% | | | | | | | |
| SOL United States History II (2008) (7) | 48.10% | 45.92% | 5.71% | | | | | | | |
| SOL Civics and Economics (2008) (8) | 39.84% | 53.83% | 6.07% | | | | | | | |
| Total | 47.14% | 45.26% | 7.33% | | | | | | | |

Social Studies SOL Scores of Honors Social Studies Students

STUDENTS IN HONORS AND ACCELERATED MATH COURSES

Expanding on the analysis of students enrolled in honors courses, the following tables assess student achievement in all rigorous and accelerated mathematics courses, which include Algebra, Geometry, and Advanced Math Concepts in addition to honors courses.

Demographic data for students enrolled in all rigorous and accelerated mathematics courses reveal that White and (to a lesser degree) Asian students are overrepresented, while Black, Hispanic, and free or reduced lunch status students are underrepresented.

| 3 | | | | | | |
|-------|--------|---------|--------------|--------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| | Asian | Black | Hispanic | White | Other or Multi | Free or Reduced Lunch |
| | | 2010-11 | l School Yea | r | | |
| FCH 1 | 16.25% | 38.75% | 25.00% | 13.75% | 6.25% | 47.50% |
| FCH 2 | 14.75% | 45.90% | 26.23% | 13.11% | 0.00% | 62.30% |
| FCH 3 | 13.33% | 41.33% | 28.00% | 13.33% | 4.00% | 57.14% |
| GW 1 | 3.41% | 15.91% | 20.45% | 60.23% | 0.00% | 21.59% |
| GW 2 | 5.75% | 13.79% | 20.69% | 57.47% | 2.30% | 26.97% |
| Total | 10.20% | 29.59% | 23.72% | 33.93% | 2.55% | 41.16% |
| | | 2011-12 | 2 School Yea | r | | |
| FCH 1 | 13.43% | 42.29% | 28.86% | 11.94% | 3.48% | 56.72% |
| FCH 2 | 10.05% | 47.62% | 24.34% | 14.81% | 3.17% | 65.26% |
| FCH 3 | 11.98% | 36.98% | 31.77% | 15.63% | 3.65% | 60.42% |
| GW 1 | 3.18% | 24.84% | 19.75% | 49.68% | 2.55% | 35.96% |
| GW 2 | 5.19% | 19.72% | 15.92% | 56.06% | 3.11% | 29.31% |
| Total | 7.93% | 32.15% | 23.04% | 33.76% | 3.12% | 46.47% |
| | | 2012-13 | 8 School Yea | r | | |
| FCH 1 | 11.43% | 43.81% | 28.10% | 11.90% | 4.76% | 60.47% |
| FCH 2 | 7.82% | 48.56% | 33.33% | 8.23% | 2.06% | 67.89% |
| FCH 3 | 8.86% | 38.01% | 35.79% | 14.02% | 3.32% | 68.36% |
| GW 1 | 2.14% | 23.86% | 20.91% | 49.60% | 3.49% | 34.22% |
| GW 2 | 3.07% | 21.99% | 24.04% | 48.59% | 2.30% | 35.71% |
| Total | 5.85% | 32.80% | 27.49% | 30.78% | 3.09% | 50.10% |

Demographics of Honors and Accelerated Mathematics Students

Overall, grades earned in these courses were quite high, with more students earning an A than any other grade across all courses, grade levels, and years, with only few exceptions. In all instances, the majority of students enrolled in these courses earned a grade of B or better.

| | | | 011013 u | | loiutou | matric | inutios c | /0ui 303 | | | |
|-----------------------|-----|-----|----------|-----|---------|--------|-----------|----------|----|----|----|
| Grade Level/Course | А | A- | B+ | В | B- | C+ | С | C- | D+ | D | F |
| 2010-2011 School Year | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7/Algebra I | 62% | 19% | 6% | 0% | 9% | 4% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| 8/Algebra I | 20% | 15% | 11% | 14% | 14% | 7% | 8% | 2% | 2% | 2% | 6% |
| 8/Geometry | 56% | 17% | 6% | 3% | 3% | 11% | 0% | 3% | 3% | 0% | 0% |
| Total | 28% | 16% | 10% | 11% | 12% | 7% | 6% | 2% | 2% | 2% | 5% |

Grade Earned in Honors and Accelerated Mathematics Courses

| GRADE LEVEL/COURSE | А | A- | B+ | В | B- | C+ | С | C- | D+ | D | F |
|----------------------|-----|-----|------|-----------|----------|-----|----|-----|----|----|-----|
| | | | 2011 | -2012 Sc | hool Yea | r | | | | | |
| 6/Adv. Math Concepts | 68% | 24% | 4% | 3% | 1% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| 6/H. Mathematics 6 | 23% | 19% | 13% | 12% | 15% | 6% | 7% | 4% | 1% | 0% | 0% |
| 7/Adv. Math Concepts | 17% | 24% | 16% | 15% | 15% | 6% | 3% | 2% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| 7/Algebra I | 55% | 18% | 6% | 6% | 5% | 5% | 0% | 3% | 3% | 0% | 0% |
| 8/Algebra I | 16% | 16% | 9% | 13% | 14% | 8% | 7% | 8% | 2% | 2% | 4% |
| 8/Geometry | 49% | 26% | 4% | 6% | 4% | 9% | 0% | 2% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| Total | 26% | 19% | 11% | 12% | 13% | 6% | 5% | 4% | 1% | 1% | 2% |
| | | | 2012 | 2-2013 Sc | hool Yea | r | | | | | |
| 6/Adv. Math Concepts | 59% | 22% | 6% | 10% | 3% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| 6/H. Mathematics 6 | 28% | 19% | 11% | 14% | 14% | 6% | 6% | 3% | 1% | 0% | 0% |
| 7/Adv. Math Concepts | 15% | 14% | 15% | 12% | 18% | 10% | 7% | 6% | 2% | 1% | 0% |
| 7/Algebra I | 58% | 24% | 10% | 5% | 2% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| 8/Algebra I | 10% | 13% | 6% | 10% | 13% | 7% | 8% | 10% | 6% | 6% | 11% |
| 8/Geometry | 55% | 19% | 4% | 7% | 9% | 1% | 3% | 1% | 0% | 1% | 0% |
| Total | 23% | 16% | 9% | 11% | 13% | 6% | 6% | 6% | 3% | 2% | 4% |

Once again, students taking the earlier version of the SOL exams were more likely to receive a score designation of Pass Advanced, and very few students taking the 2001 exam failed. Across all students taking the 2009 version of the various mathematics exams, it was most common to attain a score designation of Pass Proficient. Failure rates were also quite high across in a few individual cases.

Mathematics SOL Scores of Honors and Accelerated Mathematics Students

| GRADE LEVEL/COURSE/TEST | Pass Advanced | PASS PROFICIENT | Fail | | | | | | | |
|---|------------------|-----------------|--------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 2010-: | 2011 School Year | | | | | | | | | |
| 7/Algebra I/SOL Algebra I 2001 | 76.60% | 23.40% | 0.00% | | | | | | | |
| 8/Algebra I/SOL Algebra I/EOC 2001 | 37.86% | 61.49% | 0.65% | | | | | | | |
| 8/Geometry/SOL Geometry EOC 2001 | 83.33% | 16.67% | 0.00% | | | | | | | |
| Total | 47.09% | 52.41% | 0.51% | | | | | | | |
| 2011-2012 School Year | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6/Adv. Math Concepts/SOL Math Gr 7 2009 | 38.16% | 61.84% | 0.00% | | | | | | | |
| 6/H. Mathematics 6/SOL Math Gr 6 2009 | 4.11% | 69.92% | 25.96% | | | | | | | |
| 7/Adv. Math Concepts/SOL Math Gr 7 2009 | 5.71% | 69.52% | 24.76% | | | | | | | |
| 7/Algebra I/SOL Algebra I EOC 2009 | 10.13% | 86.08% | 3.80% | | | | | | | |
| 8/Algebra I/SOL Algebra I EOC 2009 | 0.27% | 77.07% | 22.67% | | | | | | | |
| 8/Geometry/SOL Geometry EOC 2009 | 39.13% | 60.87% | 0.00% | | | | | | | |
| Total | 7.14% | 72.39% | 20.48% | | | | | | | |
| 2012-3 | 2013 School Year | | | | | | | | | |
| 6/Adv. Math Concepts/SOL Math Gr 7 2009 | 28.72% | 69.15% | 2.13% | | | | | | | |
| 6/H. Mathematics 6/SOL Math Gr 6 2009 | 12.99% | 77.04% | 9.97% | | | | | | | |
| 7/Adv. Math Concepts/SOL Math Gr 7 2009 | 4.34% | 51.45% | 44.22% | | | | | | | |
| 7/Algebra I/SOL Algebra I EOC 2009 | 11.49% | 86.21% | 2.30% | | | | | | | |
| 8/Algebra I/SOL Algebra I EOC 2009 | 0.75% | 54.58% | 44.67% | | | | | | | |
| 8/Geometry/SOL Geometry EOC 2009 | 29.33% | 70.67% | 0.00% | | | | | | | |
| Total | 8.23% | 63.59% | 29.18% | | | | | | | |

DIFFERENTIATION

Differentiation is the ability and implementation of curriculum to support and reach students with multiple learning styles and need. Differentiated instruction is one of the nine key components of the ACPS middle school curriculum.³⁴

SURVEY RESULTS

Students generally agreed that their teachers ensure that they understand the material by explaining things a different way and checking that they understand everything before moving on to the next topic. Interestingly, while staff overwhelmingly indicated that they differentiate assignments based on students' needs, the majority of students reported that all students in their classes receive the same assignments.

In open-ended comments, 115 students recommended more engaging classes or curriculum as their "one change to make school better." While not the most frequent theme cited, this suggests that at least some students wish their classes were more engaging, which could be achieved through differentiation.

Overall Student Perceptions of Differentiation

Overall Staff Perceptions of Differentiation

³⁴ "Middle Schools Annual Report." Alexandria City Public Schools. June 2012.

GRADING

For the purpose of this evaluation, grading relates to the consistency of grading within subject areas and across schools and grading policies. To assess the degree to which grading practices are consistent across schools, we review the percentage of students receiving each letter grade in a sample course. First, the middle school grading system is outlined below.

| Letter Grade | NUMERICAL GRADE | GPA POINTS (HONORS AND STANDARD) |
|--------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| А | 93-100 | 4.0 |
| A- | 90-92 | 3.7 |
| В+ | 87-89 | 3.3 |
| В | 83-86 | 3.0 |
| В- | 80-82 | 2.7 |
| C+ | 77-79 | 2.3 |
| С | 73-76 | 2.0 |
| C- | 70-72 | 1.7 |
| D+ | 67-69 | 1.3 |
| D | 60-66 | 1.0 |
| F | Below 60 | 0.0 |

ACPS Middle School Grading System

Source: ACPS

GRADES ACROSS SAMPLE COURSE

The figure below examines the grade distribution across three years and all five schools for one sample course – Language Arts 7. While grades earned were generally similar across all years and schools, more students earned an A in 2010-11 at FCH2 and GW1 compared to all other schools and years.

| CDADE | Δ | ۸ | R I | P | R | | C C | C | D, | П | E | |
|-------|-----------------------|-----|-----|-----|----------|-----------|-----|----------|----|----|----|--|
| GRADE | A | A- | DT | D | D- | 67 | U | <u> </u> | υŦ | U | | |
| | | | | 201 | 0-2011 S | ichool Ye | ar | | | | | |
| FCH 1 | 9% | 9% | 6% | 16% | 18% | 9% | 5% | 10% | 6% | 1% | 9% | |
| FCH 2 | 20% | 14% | 6% | 18% | 10% | 10% | 10% | 8% | 2% | 0% | 0% | |
| FCH 3 | 6% | 8% | 14% | 18% | 8% | 12% | 18% | 10% | 6% | 0% | 0% | |
| GW 1 | 23% | 18% | 10% | 11% | 11% | 10% | 9% | 3% | 5% | 0% | 0% | |
| GW 2 | 10% | 29% | 13% | 16% | 21% | 6% | 2% | 5% | 0% | 0% | 0% | |
| Total | 14% | 16% | 10% | 15% | 14% | 9% | 8% | 7% | 4% | 0% | 2% | |
| | 2011-2012 School Year | | | | | | | | | | | |
| FCH 1 | 1% | 9% | 7% | 12% | 16% | 11% | 19% | 12% | 4% | 5% | 4% | |
| FCH 2 | 6% | 16% | 11% | 14% | 17% | 13% | 11% | 6% | 5% | 0% | 0% | |
| FCH 3 | 9% | 15% | 10% | 19% | 9% | 12% | 10% | 8% | 3% | 2% | 1% | |
| GW 1 | 6% | 26% | 11% | 15% | 17% | 8% | 9% | 2% | 3% | 2% | 0% | |
| GW 2 | 6% | 15% | 19% | 17% | 21% | 9% | 4% | 6% | 2% | 2% | 0% | |
| Total | 6% | 16% | 11% | 16% | 16% | 11% | 11% | 7% | 3% | 2% | 1% | |
| | | | | 201 | 2-2013 S | chool Ye | ar | | | | | |
| FCH 1 | 10% | 14% | 10% | 9% | 18% | 14% | 15% | 5% | 1% | 5% | 0% | |
| FCH 2 | 11% | 23% | 12% | 16% | 14% | 7% | 7% | 5% | 2% | 2% | 2% | |

Grade Earned in Language Arts 7

| GRADE | Α | A- | B+ | В | B- | C+ | С | C- | D+ | D | F |
|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|----|----|
| FCH 3 | 7% | 9% | 19% | 25% | 13% | 12% | 11% | 3% | 0% | 1% | 0% |
| GW 1 | 12% | 8% | 12% | 20% | 20% | 8% | 6% | 10% | 0% | 2% | 0% |
| GW 2 | 7% | 21% | 7% | 19% | 34% | 7% | 2% | 2% | 0% | 2% | 0% |
| Total | 9% | 15% | 12% | 18% | 19% | 10% | 9% | 5% | 1% | 3% | 0% |

TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION

For the purposes of this evaluation, technology integration refers to the use of technology in instruction, learning, and communication.

SURVEY RESULTS

Students, teachers, and parents were asked to indicate the frequency with which technology is used in the classroom, and the number of different types of technology used in school. Interestingly, while the largest proportion of parents and teachers reported that technology is used four or five days per week, students were more likely to indicate that they use technology to learn two or three days each week. While students and their parents were split between reporting that one or two types of technology are used in school, nearly half of teachers reported that two different types of technology are typically used. Responses by middle school campus were not notably different. Note that parent results should be interpreted with caution, as their responses represent the perception of activities that occur within the classroom.

Technology was a frequent theme seen in open-ended comments. Seventy-four students recommended more technology as their "one change to make school better," while both students and staff noted that they needed additional computer and technology resources to maximize student achievement (see Section V – Resource Allocation).

Number of Days per Week Technology is Used


Different Types of Technology Used per Week

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Special Education provides services for students with disabilities based on state eligibility requirements. Once found eligible, an individualized education plan (IEP) is developed cooperatively with parents, educators, principal/designee, student (when appropriate), and other invited participants. Across ACPS, special education programs are implemented in the least restrictive environment in the neighborhood school to provide opportunities, when appropriate, for children with disabilities so they may be educated with children who are not disabled.³⁵

VSAP PERFORMANCE

The figures below examine SOL scores of special education students, defined in this analysis as all students receiving any Special Education Disability Code. With few exceptions, the majority of special education students failed the SOL exam for any given discipline, and the remaining students typically received a score designation of Pass Proficient. Very few special education students attained a score of Pass Advanced on any SOL exam, though higher shares of these students performed better on social science exams compared to the other disciplines.

| Test | Pass Advanced | PASS PROFICIENT | Fail | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|--------|--|
| 2010-2011 School Year | | | | |
| SOL English/Lit Gr 6 (2002 std) | 6.41% | 38.46% | 55.13% | |
| SOL English/Lit Gr 7 (2002 std) | 4.71% | 43.53% | 51.76% | |
| SOL English/Lit Gr 8 (2002 std) | 2.94% | 39.71% | 57.35% | |
| Total | 4.76% | 40.69% | 54.55% | |
| | 2011-2012 School Yea | ar | | |
| SOL English/Lit Gr 6 (2002 std) | 2.44% | 31.71% | 65.85% | |
| SOL English/Lit Gr 7 (2002 std) | 2.47% | 29.63% | 67.90% | |
| SOL English/Lit Gr 8 (2002 std) | 10.26% | 46.15% | 43.59% | |
| Total | 4.98% | 35.68% | 59.34% | |
| 2012-2013 School Year | | | | |
| SOL Reading Level 6(2010) | 0.96% | 9.62% | 89.42% | |
| SOL Reading Level 7(2010) | 1.47% | 14.71% | 83.82% | |
| SOL Reading Level 8(2010) | 0.00% | 12.00% | 88.00% | |
| SOL VMAST Reading Level 7 | 0.00% | 60.00% | 40.00% | |
| SOL VMAST Reading Level 8 | 0.00% | 66.67% | 33.33% | |
| Total | 0.78% | 13.33% | 85.88% | |

Reading SOL Scores of Special Education Students

³⁵ "Special Education." Alexandria City Public Schools. http://www.acps.k12.va.us/curriculum/special-education/

| 5 | • | | | | |
|----------------------------|---------------|-----------------|--------|--|--|
| Теѕт | Pass Advanced | PASS PROFICIENT | Fail | | |
| 2010-2011 School Year | | | | | |
| SOL Writing Test Gr 8 | 0.00% | 45.71% | 54.29% | | |
| 2011-2012 School Year | | | | | |
| SOL Writing Test Gr 8 | 0.00% | 52.56% | 47.44% | | |
| 2012-2013 School Year | | | | | |
| SOL Grade 8 Writing (2010) | 0.00% | 23.46% | 76.54% | | |

Writing SOL Scores of Special Education Students

Social Science SOL Scores of Special Education Students

| Test | Pass Advanced | PASS PROFICIENT | Fail | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|--------|--|
| 2010-2011 School Year | | | | |
| SOL Civics and Economics (2008) | 5.80% | 47.83% | 46.38% | |
| SOL United States History I (2008) | 12.66% | 30.38% | 56.96% | |
| SOL United States History II (2008) | 7.06% | 44.71% | 48.24% | |
| Total | 8.58% | 40.77% | 50.64% | |
| 2011-2012 School Year | | | | |
| SOL Civics and Economics (2008) | 5.19% | 51.95% | 42.86% | |
| SOL United States History I (2008) | 6.33% | 43.04% | 50.63% | |
| SOL United States History II (2008) | 9.72% | 38.89% | 51.39% | |
| Total | 7.02% | 44.74% | 48.25% | |
| | 2012-2013 School Yea | ar | | |
| SOL Civics and Economics (2008) | 7.59% | 26.58% | 65.82% | |
| SOL United States History I (2008) | 9.62% | 32.69% | 57.69% | |
| SOL United States History II (2008) | 9.59% | 35.62% | 54.79% | |
| Total | 8.98% | 31.64% | 59.38% | |

Science SOL Scores of Special Education Students

| Test | Pass Advanced | PASS PROFICIENT | Fail | |
|-----------------------------|---------------|-----------------|--------|--|
| 2010-2011 School Year | | | | |
| SOL Science Gr 8 (2008 std) | 4.35% | 52.17% | 43.48% | |
| 2011-2012 School Year | | | | |
| SOL Science Gr 8 (2008 std) | 14.29% | 41.56% | 44.16% | |
| 2012-2013 School Year | | | | |
| SOL Science Level 8(2010) | 0.00% | 13.92% | 86.08% | |

| Test | Pass Advanced | Pass Proficient | Fail |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|---------|
| | 2010-2011 School Yea | ar | |
| SOL Algebra I EOC (2001) | 33.33% | 66.67% | 0.00% |
| SOL LEP Math Gr 6 (2001 std Plain) | 0.00% | 9.09% | 90.91% |
| SOL LEP Math Gr 7 (2001 std Plain) | 0.00% | 33.33% | 66.67% |
| SOL Mathematics Gr 6 (2001 std) | 1.47% | 13.24% | 85.29% |
| SOL Mathematics Gr 7 (2001 std) | 1.22% | 21.95% | 76.83% |
| SOL Mathematics Gr 8 (2001 std) | 0.00% | 40.63% | 59.38% |
| Total | 1.71% | 25.21% | 73.08% |
| | 2011-2012 School Yea | ar | |
| SOL Algebra I EOC (2009) | 0.00% | 45.00% | 55.00% |
| SOL Mathematics Gr 6 (2009 std) | 0.00% | 18.46% | 81.54% |
| SOL Mathematics Gr 7 (2009 std) | 0.00% | 9.23% | 90.77% |
| SOL Mathematics Gr 8 (2009 std) | 0.00% | 5.36% | 94.64% |
| SOL Plain Engl Math Gr 6 (2009 std) | 0.00% | 30.77% | 69.23% |
| SOL Plain Engl Math Gr 7 (2009 std) | 0.00% | 0.00% | 100.00% |
| SOL Plain Engl Math Gr 8 (2009 std) | 0.00% | 0.00% | 100.00% |
| Total | 0.00% | 15.18% | 84.82% |
| | 2012-2013 School Yea | ar | |
| SOL Algebra I EOC (2009) | 0.00% | 13.64% | 86.36% |
| SOL Geometry EOC (2009) | 100.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| SOL Mathematics Gr 6 (2009 std) | 1.20% | 25.30% | 73.49% |
| SOL Mathematics Gr 7 (2009 std) | 0.00% | 12.90% | 87.10% |
| SOL Mathematics Gr 8 (2009 std) | 0.00% | 5.00% | 95.00% |
| SOL Plain Engl Math Gr 6 (2009 std) | 0.00% | 20.00% | 80.00% |
| SOL Plain Engl Math Gr 7 (2009 std) | 0.00% | 0.00% | 100.00% |
| SOL Plain Engl Math Gr 8 (2009 std) | 0.00% | 0.00% | 100.00% |
| SOL VMAST Algebra I EOC (2009) | 0.00% | 33.33% | 66.67% |
| SOL VMAST Gr 6 Mathematics | 0.00% | 0.00% | 100.00% |
| SOL VMAST Gr 7 Mathematics | 0.00% | 70.00% | 30.00% |
| SOL VMAST Gr 8 Mathematics | 0.00% | 25.00% | 75.00% |
| Total | 0.78% | 19.14% | 80.08% |

| Mathematics | SOL Scores | of Special | Education | Students |
|--------------------|-------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|
| mathomatio | 002000.00 | 0. 0000.0. | Eadoation | 010001100 |

SURVEY RESULTS

Just over half of staff respondents believe that students in special education enrolled in their classes can achieve grade level standards, with slightly more staff at the GW campus feeling this way than staff at the FCH campus. Similarly, just over half of teachers indicated that students in special education who are enrolled in their classes are provided the support they need to succeed, also with more staff from GW feeling this way.

A relatively small number of staff members provided recommendations specifically about the Special Education Program in open-ended comments. Many comments related to the inclusion of special education students in general education classrooms. Five staff members recommended that co-teaching and inclusion classrooms should be either more balanced between special education and general education students or should be more common (more classrooms with co-teaching for special education students). Two other staff members recommended that the schools stop inclusion by offering self-contained classes or smaller classes. A primary recommendation by two staff members and an underlying theme in many comments was the need for additional special education teachers and support staff.



Overall Staff Perceptions of Special Education







ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (ELL)

ELL students face complex academic and cultural challenges that educators have often struggled to address.³⁶ Studies have shown that effective instruction for ELL students must be carefully constructed to account for more than just language barriers and ultimately address broader cultural, academic, and cognitive dimensions.³⁷

The program for English language learners is designed to improve the education of English language learners by assisting them in learning English and in meeting state content standards. Curriculum follows grade level standards of learning and Virginia's English language proficiency (ELP) standards. The ELL teachers push-in, co-teach, or pull students out for instruction. ELL teachers support both the ELL students and the content teacher through differentiating and scaffolding material to make course content comprehensible and to assist ELL students in developing academic language proficiency.³⁸

VSAP PERFORMANCE

The figures below examine VSAP performance of ELL students, defined as all students with an LEP proficiency level of 1 through 5. Note that students with an LEP proficiency status of 6-1, 6-2, and T were not included in this analysis because they are no longer receiving direct services.

Overall, the majority of ELL students failed their exam or received a score designation of Pass Proficient. Though few ELL students received a score of Pass Advanced, the proportions of students attaining this designation was highest for social science exams than for all other disciplines.

| Test | Pass Advanced | PASS PROFICIENT | Fail | |
|---------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|--------|--|
| 2010-2011 School Year | | | | |
| SOL English/Lit Gr 6 (2002 std) | 1.83% | 46.79% | 51.38% | |
| SOL English/Lit Gr 7 (2002 std) | 2.70% | 49.55% | 47.75% | |
| SOL English/Lit Gr 8 (2002 std) | 2.44% | 55.28% | 42.28% | |
| Total | 2.33% | 50.73% | 46.94% | |
| 2011-2012 School Year | | | | |
| SOL English/Lit Gr 6 (2002 std) | 2.52% | 48.74% | 48.74% | |
| SOL English/Lit Gr 7 (2002 std) | 1.74% | 41.74% | 56.52% | |
| SOL English/Lit Gr 8 (2002 std) | 7.41% | 47.41% | 45.19% | |
| Total | 4.07% | 46.07% | 49.86% | |
| 2012-2013 School Year | | | | |

Reading SOL Scores of ELL Students

³⁶ Verdugo, R. "A Report on the Status of Hispanics in Education: Overcoming a History of Neglect." National Education Association. http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/HE/mf_hispaniced.pdf

 ³⁷ Perez, D. "Ensuring Academic Literacy for ELL Students." American Secondary Education, 38:2, 2010. http://search.proquest.com/socialsciences/docview/276321096/fulltextPDF/13EA3870BA65D4A89AF/2?accountid=132487

³⁸ "ELL Instructional Program." Alexandria City Public Schools. http://www.acps.k12.va.us/curriculum/ell/programs.php

| Test | Pass Advanced | PASS PROFICIENT | Fail |
|---------------------------|---------------|-----------------|--------|
| SOL Reading Level 6(2010) | 0.73% | 16.06% | 83.21% |
| SOL Reading Level 7(2010) | 0.00% | 22.39% | 77.61% |
| SOL Reading Level 8(2010) | 0.00% | 24.16% | 75.84% |
| SOL VMAST Reading Level 7 | 0.00% | 33.33% | 66.67% |
| Total | 0.24% | 21.04% | 78.72% |

Writing SOL Scores of ELL Students

| Теѕт | Pass Advanced | PASS PROFICIENT | Fail | |
|----------------------------|---------------|-----------------|--------|--|
| 2010-2011 School Year | | | | |
| SOL Writing Test Gr 8 | 0.00% | 56.39% | 43.61% | |
| 2011-2012 School Year | | | | |
| SOL Writing Test Gr 8 | 0.00% | 48.30% | 51.70% | |
| 2012-2013 School Year | | | | |
| SOL Grade 8 Writing (2010) | 1.50% | 30.08% | 68.42% | |

Social Science SOL Scores of ELL Students

| Теѕт | Pass Advanced | Pass Proficient | Fail | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|--------|--|--|
| | 2010-2011 School Yea | ar | | | |
| SOL Civics and Economics (2008) | 4.32% | 53.24% | 42.45% | | |
| SOL United States History I (2008) | 12.93% | 38.79% | 48.28% | | |
| SOL United States History II (2008) | 7.50% | 49.17% | 43.33% | | |
| Total | 8.00% | 47.47% | 44.53% | | |
| | 2011-2012 School Year | | | | |
| SOL Civics and Economics (2008) | 9.03% | 43.23% | 47.74% | | |
| SOL United States History I (2008) | 12.88% | 43.18% | 43.94% | | |
| SOL United States History II (2008) | 6.98% | 55.04% | 37.98% | | |
| Total | 9.62% | 46.88% | 43.51% | | |
| | 2012-2013 School Yea | ar | | | |
| SOL Civics and Economics (2008) | 3.40% | 51.02% | 45.58% | | |
| SOL United States History I (2008) | 8.03% | 41.61% | 50.36% | | |
| SOL United States History II (2008) | 6.57% | 51.09% | 42.34% | | |
| Total | 5.94% | 47.98% | 46.08% | | |

Science SOL Scores of ELL Students

| Теѕт | Pass Advanced | PASS PROFICIENT | Fail | |
|-----------------------------|---------------|-----------------|--------|--|
| 2010-2011 School Year | | | | |
| SOL Science Gr 8 (2008 std) | 2.10% | 57.34% | 40.56% | |
| 2011-2012 School Year | | | | |
| SOL Science Gr 8 (2008 std) | 4.29% | 47.85% | 47.85% | |
| 2012-2013 School Year | | | | |
| SOL Science Level 8(2010) | 0.00% | 20.50% | 79.50% | |

Mathematics SOL Scores of ELL Students

| Test | Pass Advanced | PASS PROFICIENT | Fail | |
|--------------------------|---------------|-----------------|-------|--|
| 2010-2011 School Year | | | | |
| SOL Algebra I EOC (2001) | 30.43% | 69.57% | 0.00% | |

| Теѕт | Pass Advanced | PASS PROFICIENT | Fail |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|---------|
| SOL LEP Math Gr 6 (2001 std Plain) | 0.00% | 30.43% | 69.57% |
| SOL LEP Math Gr 7 (2001 std Plain) | 5.88% | 11.76% | 82.35% |
| SOL LEP Math Gr 8 (2001 std Plain) | 0.00% | 11.11% | 88.89% |
| SOL Mathematics Gr 6 (2001 std) | 2.08% | 27.08% | 70.83% |
| SOL Mathematics Gr 7 (2001 std) | 4.63% | 31.48% | 63.89% |
| SOL Mathematics Gr 8 (2001 std) | 10.71% | 33.04% | 56.25% |
| Total | 6.96% | 31.70% | 61.34% |
| | 2011-2012 School Yea | ar | |
| SOL Algebra I EOC (2009) | 0.00% | 79.41% | 20.59% |
| SOL Geometry EOC (2009) | 0.00% | 100.00% | 0.00% |
| SOL Mathematics Gr 6 (2009 std) | 0.90% | 29.73% | 69.37% |
| SOL Mathematics Gr 7 (2009 std) | 0.00% | 15.69% | 84.31% |
| SOL Mathematics Gr 8 (2009 std) | 0.00% | 15.79% | 84.21% |
| SOL Plain Engl Algebra I EOC (2009) | 0.00% | 50.00% | 50.00% |
| SOL Plain Engl Math Gr 6 (2009 std) | 0.00% | 22.73% | 77.27% |
| SOL Plain Engl Math Gr 7 (2009 std) | 0.00% | 16.13% | 83.87% |
| SOL Plain Engl Math Gr 8 (2009 std) | 0.00% | 9.68% | 90.32% |
| Total | 0.23% | 24.83% | 74.94% |
| | 2012-2013 School Yea | ar | |
| SOL Algebra I EOC (2009) | 0.00% | 42.71% | 57.29% |
| SOL Mathematics Gr 6 (2009 std) | 0.00% | 40.52% | 59.48% |
| SOL Mathematics Gr 7 (2009 std) | 0.83% | 13.33% | 85.83% |
| SOL Mathematics Gr 8 (2009 std) | 0.00% | 9.09% | 90.91% |
| SOL Plain Engl Algebra I EOC (2009) | 0.00% | 7.14% | 92.86% |
| SOL Plain Engl Math Gr 6 (2009 std) | 0.00% | 17.39% | 82.61% |
| SOL Plain Engl Math Gr 7 (2009 std) | 3.33% | 3.33% | 93.33% |
| SOL Plain Engl Math Gr 8 (2009 std) | 0.00% | 8.33% | 91.67% |
| SOL VMAST Algebra I EOC (2009) | 0.00% | 0.00% | 100.00% |
| SOL VMAST Gr 6 Mathematics | 0.00% | 0.00% | 100.00% |
| SOL VMAST Gr 7 Mathematics | 0.00% | 100.00% | 0.00% |
| SOL VMAST Gr 8 Mathematics | 0.00% | 0.00% | 100.00% |
| Total | 0.44% | 25.49% | 74.07% |

SURVEY RESULTS

Just over half of staff believe that English Language Learners enrolled in their classes can achieve grade level standards, with more staff at the GW campus feeling this way than FCH staff. Similarly, just over half of teachers indicated that English Language Learners enrolled in their classes are provided the support they need to succeed, once again with more staff from GW feeling this way.

A relatively small number of staff members provided recommendations specifically about the ELL Program or students in open-ended comments. Eight staff members recommended additional support and staffing for ELL students, including more co-teachers for ELL students and support for general education teachers with ELL students.



Staff Perceptions of English Language Learners







SECTION III: SCHOOL CLIMATE

School climate incorporates values, culture, safety practices, and organizational structures that cause schools to function and react in particular ways. This dimension comprises the following key subcategories:

- **§** Rules and Norms
- **§** Sense of Physical Security
- **§** Sense of Social-Emotional Security
- **§** Support for Learning
- **§** Social and Civil Learning
- **§** Respect for Diversity
- Social Support Adults
- **§** Social Support Students
- **§** School Connectedness/Engagement
- S Physical Surroundings
- § Leadership
- **§** Professional Relationships
- **§** Cultural Competency

The following sub-sections summarize feedback from students, staff, parents, and community members in each of the areas listed above. Survey participants were also given the opportunity to share recommendations for how to improve their school. A qualitative analysis of these open-ended responses is provided at the end of this section.

RULES AND NORMS

The majority of students agreed that enforcement of rules is clear and the same for every student, though students from the FCH campus were slightly more likely to agree that enforcement of rules is the same for every student compared to those from the GW campus. Students were slightly less likely to agree that appropriate consequences are given for student violations, particularly among GW students, though approximately one-quarter of respondents reported neutral feelings on the topic.



Overall Student Perceptions of Rules and Norms





Over half of staff agreed with the three statements related to rules and norms, with the largest share of respondents agreeing that school consequences are appropriate for the violation and the smallest share agreeing that enforcement of rules is the same for every student. In general, staff from the GW campus were more likely than staff from the FCH campus to agree with all three statements on school rules and norms.









Staff Survey

Of the three statements on rules and norms, parents were most likely to agree that enforcement of rules is clear. Meanwhile, less than half of parents agreed that enforcement of rules is consistent and that school violations are appropriate for the violation.



Overall Parent Perceptions of Rules and Norms

SENSE OF PHYSICAL SECURITY

While approximately two-thirds of students believe that the school environment is physically safe for teachers, a somewhat smaller percentage (57 percent overall) believes that the school environment is physically safe for students. In addition, students in the 6th grade reported the most positive feelings toward school safety, and students appeared to grow progressively more skeptical of school safety with each subsequent grade level. There were no notable differences between the two middle school campuses.



Overall Student Perceptions of Sense of Physical Security





Over three-quarters of staff have a strong sense of physical security at school both for students and for teachers.



Overall Staff Perceptions of Sense of Physical Security

The majority of parents agreed with the two statements related to sense of physical security, with a larger share of respondents agreeing with the physical safety for teachers compared to physical safety for students. Overall, parents of students at the GW campus – and GW 1 in particular – were more likely than parents of students at the FCW campus to report positive feelings regarding physical safety for students.

Overall Parent Perceptions of Sense of Physical Security





SENSE OF SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SECURITY

Across all schools and campuses, students were most likely to report neutral feelings toward their sense of social-emotional safety. However, nearly equal proportions of students agreed and disagreed that they feel emotionally safe from verbal abuse and teasing. Once again, students in the 6th grade had the most positive feelings toward their sense of social-emotional security, with these feelings growing more negative with each subsequent grade level.





Less than half of staff agreed that students feel emotionally safe from verbal abuse and teasing, suggesting that staff have mixed feelings regarding students' sense of social-emotional security. Looking at individual schools, it appears that staff from FCH 1, FCH 3, and GW 1 had the most positive feelings about their students' social-emotional security, while general campus staff from both campuses were most likely to disagree with the statement.





Just over half of parents believe that their child feels emotionally safe from verbal abuse and teasing, though agreement rates are higher among parents of students at the GW campus compared to those at the FCH campus.



SUPPORT FOR LEARNING

The largest share of students neither agreed nor disagreed that most students at school care about learning and getting a good education, and an additional 40 percent agreed with the statement. Meanwhile over half of students agreed that students are encouraged to believe that they can do challenging work, and students were less likely to disagree with this statement than the first statement.



A strong majority of staff reported that students are encouraged to believe that they can do challenging work, while a considerably smaller proportion indicated that most students care about learning and getting a good education. For both statements, agreement ratings were higher from staff at the GW campus.

Overall Staff Perceptions of Support for Learning





The majority of parents reported that their child is encouraged to believe that he/she can do challenging work. Meanwhile, less than half of parents believe that most students at their child's school care about learning and getting a good education, and over one-quarter neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement.



Overall Parent Perceptions of Support for Learning

SOCIAL AND CIVIC LEARNING

Students were asked to rate their agreement with seven statements pertaining to social and civic learning; of them, respondents agreed most that students are encouraged to control their behavior, that students are involved in decisions about things that affect them, that teachers listen effectively to their students, and that students are encouraged to think about their negative behavior. Students were most likely to neither agree nor disagree that students listen effectively and that students exhibit empathy.

| ■ Strongly disagree ■ Disagree | ■Neutral | ■ Agree | Strongly | agree | |
|--|----------------------|--------------------|----------|-------|-----|
| Students exhibit empathy (an understanding of another's situation, feelings, and motives). (N=1796, DK=228) | 11% <mark>10%</mark> | 32% | | 36% | 12% |
| Students listen effectively. (N=1982, DK=118) | 12% 16 | 5% | 38% | 24% | 10% |
| Students are encouraged to think about their negative behavior. (N=1813, DK=263) | 11% 149 | % 24% | 3 | 7% | 15% |
| Students are encouraged to control their behavior. (N=1945, DK=144) | 6% <mark>7%</mark> 1 | 8% | 42% | 2 | 27% |
| Students are involved in decisions about things that affect them. (N=1759, DK=243) | 11% <mark>8%</mark> | 25% | 41 | 1% | 15% |
| Teachers act with empathy (an understanding of another's situation, feelings, and motives). (N=1861, DK=218) | 12% 119 | <mark>%</mark> 27% | | 35% | 15% |
| Teachers listen effectively to their students. (N=2025, DK=96) | 10% <mark>11%</mark> | 26% | 38 | 8% | 16% |

Overall Student Perceptions of Social and Civic Learning

Staff were also asked to rate their agreement with seven statements related to social and civic learning; of them, staff were most likely to agree with the teacher-centered statements. In particular, staff were most likely to agree that teachers exhibit empathy, that teachers listen effectively, students are encouraged to control their behavior, and that students are encouraged to think about their behavior. Meanwhile, staff had considerably less positive feelings toward some of the student-centered statements, namely that students listen effectively and that students are involved in decisions about things that affect them.

| ■ Strongly disagree ■ Disagree | ■ Neutral ■ Agree | Strongly agree | |
|--|------------------------|----------------|------|
| Students exhibit empathy (an understanding of another's situation, feelings, and motives). (N=196, DK=7) | 15% 28% | 48% | 8% |
| Students listen effectively. (N=202, DK=1) | 9% 32% | 27% | 29% |
| Students are encouraged to think about their negative behavior. (N=194, DK=9) | 10% 14% | 52% | 21% |
| Students are encouraged to control their behavior. (N=201, DK=3) | 9% 10% | 51% | 25% |
| Students are involved in decisions about things that affect them. (N=190, DK=14) | 5% <mark>24%</mark> 28 | 3% 389 | % 6% |
| Teachers exhibit empathy (an understanding of another's situation, feelings, and motives). (N=195, DK=8) | % 15% | 54% | 25% |
| Teachers listen effectively to their students. (N=198, DK=4) | <mark>6%</mark> 16% | 63% | 15% |

Overall Staff Perceptions of Social and Civic Learning

The majority of parents agreed with both statements related to social and civic learning, that teachers exhibit empathy and that teachers listen effectively to their student.

| ■ Strongly disagree ■ Disagree | ∎Neutral | □ Agree | ■ Strongly agree | |
|---|----------|----------------|------------------|-----|
| Teachers exhibit empathy (an understanding of another's situation, feelings, and motives). (N=134, DK=32) | 7% | 25% | 48% | 16% |
| Teachers listen effectively to my student. (N=139, DK=28) | 10% | 19% | 53% | 14% |

Overall Parent Perceptions of Social and Civic Learning

RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY

When asked to rate their agreement with six statements on respect for diversity, students were most likely to agree that students of various cultures and ethnic groups and sexual orientations can succeed in their school, and that school staff respect all races and cultures of students. However, students were most likely to disagree that students respect young people of other cultures, ethnic groups, and sexual orientations.

| Strongly disagree | 🗆 Neutral 🛛 🗖 Agr | ree Strongly agr | ee |
|---|---|------------------|-------|
| School staff respects all races and cultures of students. (N=1987, DK=129) | 6% <mark>7%</mark> 15% | 43% | 29% |
| School staff respects students of various sexual orientations. (N=1600, DK=408) | <mark>8% </mark> | 41% | 22% |
| Students respect young people of other cultures and ethnic groups. (N=1925, DK=175) | 12% 15% | 26% 32% | 16% |
| Students respect young people of various sexual orientations. (N=1728, DK=323) | 15% 15% | 25% 32 | % 13% |
| Students of various cultures and ethnic groups can succeed in my school. (N=1862, DK=219) | <mark>6%<mark>1</mark>% 17%</mark> | 43% | 30% |
| Students of various sexual orientations can succeed in my school. (N=1685, DK=347) | 8% <mark>6%</mark> 19% | 40% | 27% |

Overall Student Perceptions of Respect for Diversity

Although staff generally indicated positive feelings toward respect for diversity, there was some skepticism toward students' respect for young people of diverse backgrounds. In particular, just 40 percent of staff reported that students respect young people of various sexual orientations, suggesting that staff have mixed feelings on the matter.

| Strongly disagree 🗖 Disagree 🗖 | Neutral | ■ Agree | ■ Strong | ly Agre | е |
|--|---------------------|---------|----------|---------|--------|
| School staff respects all races and cultures of students. (N=204, DK=1) | <mark>7%</mark> 7% | 49 | 9% | | 37% |
| School staff respects students of various sexual orientations. (N=204, DK=1) | 12% | ! | 51% | | 34% |
| School staff respects all races and cultures of their coworkers. (N=197, DK=6) | <mark>5%</mark> 10% | 44 | l% | | 41% |
| Students respect young people of other cultures and ethnic groups. (N=194, DK=7) | 15% | 20% | 4 | 8% | 14% |
| Students respect young people of various sexual orientations. (N=172, DK=30) | 8% | 28% | 23% | 3 | 1% 10% |
| Students of various cultures and ethnic groups can succeed in my school. (N=197, DK=4) | <mark>8%</mark> 5% | Į | 53% | | 33% |
| Students of various sexual orientations can succeed in my school. (N=183, DK=18) | <mark>8%</mark> 15 | % | 49% | | 27% |

Overall Staff Perceptions of Respect for Diversity

Parent responses to the six statements pertaining to respect for diversity suggest that parents feel positively about staff respect for diversity as well as the opportunities presented to students from different backgrounds, but may feel somewhat skeptical about student respect for other students.

| Strongly disagree 🗖 Disagree 🗖 | Neutral | Agree S | Strongly agree | 2 |
|---|---------------------|---------|----------------|-----|
| Students respect young people of other cultures and ethnic groups. (N=140, DK=28) | 6% <mark>20%</mark> | 19% | 41% | 14% |
| Students respect young people of various sexual orientations. (N=110, DK=58) | 8% 16% | 28% | 36% | 11% |
| Students of various cultures and ethnic groups can succeed at my student's school. (N=144, DK=25) | <mark>7%</mark> 17% | | 60% | 14% |
| Students of various sexual orientations can succeed at my student's school. (N=112, DK=53) | <mark>7%</mark> 26 | 5% | 51% | 13% |
| School staff respects all races and cultures of students. (N=132, DK=36) | 14% | 55' | % | 26% |
| School staff respects all races and cultures of their coworkers. (N=107, DK=58) | 20% | 5 | 4% | 23% |

Overall Parent Perceptions of Respect for Diversity

SOCIAL SUPPORT – ADULTS

Over three-quarters of students agreed that teachers have high expectations for all students to learn. However, students were considerably less likely to agree with the other three statements pertaining to social support from adults. In particular, half of students disagreed that teachers know about their students' lives after school, and over one-third of students neither agreed nor disagreed that students treat teachers with respect. Across all four statements, students from the FCH campus were slightly more likely to agree than students from the GW campus, and the difference was most noticeable for the statement, "students treat teachers with respect."



Overall Student Perceptions of Social Support (Adults)

Student Survey



A strong majority of staff believe that teachers have high expectations for all students to learn and that school staff value what students have to say. Meanwhile, staff were somewhat less likely to indicate that teachers know about their students' lives outside of schools, and even more so that students treat teachers with respect. Over 30 percent of staff disagreed that students treat teachers with respect - this was true among staff at both campuses.

Strongly disagree Disagree ■ Neutral ■ Agree ■ Strongly Agree School staff value what students have to say. 14% 60% 23% (N=204, DK=1) Students treat teachers with respect. (N=201, 6% 9% 22% 40% 22% DK=3) Teachers have high expectations for all students 12% 48% 35% to learn. (N=202, DK=2) Teachers know about their students' lives outside 11% 22% 13% 51% of school. (N=176, DK=24)

Overall Staff Perceptions of Social Support (Adults)

When asked to rate their agreement with statements related to social support from adults, parents were most likely to agree that teachers have high expectations for their student to learn and that school staff value what students have to say. Meanwhile, just about half of parents agreed that school staff value what parents have to say and that students treat teachers with respect, and parents disagreed most that teachers know about their child's life outside of school.

| Strongly disagree 🗖 Disagree 🛙 | ∎Neutral | ■ Agree | Strongly agree | |
|---|----------------------|---------|----------------|-----|
| School staff value what students have to say. (N=136, DK=33) | 11% | 21% | 50% | 13% |
| School staff value what parents have to say. (N=147, DK=21) | 8% 13% | 29% | 42% | 8% |
| Students at this school treat teachers with respect. (N=133, DK=33) | 21% | 25% | 42% | 10% |
| Teachers have high expectations for my student to learn. (N=161, DK=7) | 5% <mark>9%</mark> 1 | 4% | 55% | 17% |
| Teachers know about my student's life outside of school. (N=131, DK=35) | 11% | 31% | 25% 24% | 8% |
| | | | | |

Overall Parent Perceptions of Social Support (Adults)

SOCIAL SUPPORT – STUDENTS

Just over half of students indicated that students work together, and a slightly smaller proportion agreed that students help each other. Meanwhile, students reported mixed feelings on whether or not students treat each other with respect, with the largest share of respondents neither agreeing nor disagreeing with the statement.

| Strongly disagree Disagree | ∎Neutral | ■ Agree | Strongly | agree | |
|---|--------------------|---------|----------|-------|-----|
| Students treat each other with respect. (N=2038, DK=79) | 13% | 19% | 33% | 23% | 11% |
| Students help each other. (N=2035, DK=76) | 8% 11% | 34% | | 35% | 12% |
| Students work together. (N=2030, DK=71) | 7% <mark>8%</mark> | 32% | 3 | 9% | 14% |

Overall Student Perceptions of Social Support (Students)

Less than half of staff reported that students treat each other with respect, and agreement ratings were only slightly lower among GW staff.

Staff Survey



Parents reported mixed feelings regarding the extent to which students treat each other with respect, though parents of children attending the GW campus were somewhat more likely to agree with this statement than parents of FCH students.





SCHOOL CONNECTEDNESS/ENGAGEMENT

The majority of students agreed with both statements pertaining to school connectedness and engagement, though students were more likely to agree that teachers are respectful of parents than they were to agree that they like their school.



Overall Student Perceptions of School Connectedness/Engagement

Across the five statements related to school connectedness and engagement, staff were most likely to agree that teachers are respectful of parents and that they, personally, like working at their school. Meanwhile, staff were less likely to agree that they would look forward to sending their own children to this middle school and that teachers like working at this school. Over half of staff indicated that staff turnover at their school is high, though agreement ratings were much higher from FCH staff than GW staff.

Overall Staff Perceptions of School Connectedness/Engagement

| Strongly disagree Disagree | Neutral I | ⊐ Agree | Strongly a | agree | |
|--|----------------------|----------------|------------|-------|-----|
| Teachers are respectful of parents. (N=194, DK=8) | 9% | 58 | % | 3 | 1% |
| Staff turnover at this school is high. (N=185, DK=18) | 11% <mark>12%</mark> | 17% | 26% | 35 | % |
| Teachers like working at this school. (N=184, DK=15) | 8% 15% | 27% | 3 | 4% | 16% |
| I like working at this school. (N=202, DK=1) | <mark>6%</mark> 13% | | 45% | 33 | 3% |
| If I had a child of middle school age, I would look forward to sending him/her to this middle school. (N=184, DK=10) | 20% | 17% | 27% | 19% | 17% |
Staff Survey



While the majority of parents agreed that teachers are respectful of parents, parent agreement ratings for the remaining (positive) statements pertaining to school connectedness and engagement were relatively low. In particular, parents were least likely to agree that parents are involved in making important school decisions and that school administrators communicate effectively with families. Meanwhile, parents seemed undecided overall on the degree to which staff turnover is high, with the largest share of parents neither agreeing nor disagreeing with the statement. Of note, parents of FCH students were more likely than parents of GW students to report positive feelings regarding communication with teachers.



Overall Parent Perceptions of School Connectedness/Engagement

Parent Survey



Community members generally disagreed (or neither agreed nor disagreed) with all four statements pertaining to school connectedness and engagement, suggesting that perceptions of the ACPS middle schools' climate are quite low within the Alexandria community. In particular, community members were most likely to disagree that they would look forward to sending their own child to the local middle school.

| Strongly disagree | Neutral | ■ Agree ■ Stro | ngly agree |
|--|---------|----------------|-------------------------|
| My local middle school makes an effort to inform the community about their goals and achievements. (N=52, DK=8) | 13% | 42% | 29% <mark>12%</mark> 4% |
| I feel connected to my local middle school. (N=56, DK=1) | 18% | 39% | 21% 14% 7% |
| l feel pride in my local middle school. (N=60, DK=1) | 17% | 37% | 30% <mark>10%</mark> 7% |
| If I had a child of middle school age, I would look forward to sending him/her to my local middle school. (N=59, DK=2) | 31% | 6 31% | 20% 10% 8% |

Overall Community Perceptions of School Connectedness/Engagement

PHYSICAL SURROUNDINGS

Over half of students agreed with both statements pertaining to their school's physical surroundings, though students were more likely to agree that classrooms are well-equipped and properly sized than they were to agree that their school is well-maintained.



Overall Student Perceptions of Physical Surroundings

Over 70 percent of staff indicated that areas for instruction are appropriate for how they are being used, while a smaller proportion reported that their school is well-maintained.

Overall Staff Perceptions of Physical Surroundings



Parents generally agreed that areas for instruction are appropriate for how they are being used than they were to agree that their child's school is well maintained.



Overall Parent Perceptions of Physical Surroundings

Approximately half of community member respondents indicated that the middle school(s) they are familiar with are well-maintained, though a large share of respondents reported neutral feelings on the matter.





LEADERSHIP

Nearly three-quarters of students agreed that their principal models good behavior, and this was true of students at both campuses.



The majority of staff agreed with the statements pertaining to school leadership, with one exception: that teachers are involved in decisions about things that affect their work. In particular, staff were most likely to agree that their principal models respectful behavior.

Overall Staff Perceptions of Leadership



Over half of parents agreed that the school administration is accessible and supportive of parents, while parents were somewhat less likely to agree that the school administration has created a clear vision for the school.



Overall Parent Perceptions of Leadership

PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

The majority of students agreed with all three statements on professional relationships, suggesting that students generally acknowledge that teachers help each other, work together, and treat one another with respect.



Overall Student Perceptions of Professional Relationships

Approximately 90 percent of staff agreed with the three statements on professional relationships, suggesting that nearly all staff have positive feelings regarding the extent to which teachers help each other, work together, and treat one another with respect. Staff from FCH campus were only slightly less likely to agree with each statement than staff from the GW campus, but the most notable difference was that GW staff were more likely to *strongly* agree with each statement than FCH staff.

Overall Staff Perceptions of Professional Relationships





Staff Survey: Professional Relationships



CULTURAL COMPETENCY

According to the US Department of Health and Human Services, cultural competence is a set of behaviors, attitudes, and policies that enable effective work in cross-cultural situations.

The majority of students agreed with all four statements related to cultural competency, indicating that ACPS middle school students are generally culturally competent. In particular, students were most likely to agree that they try hard not to judge people based on their skin color. Although students were somewhat less likely to indicate that they feel comfortable around students of various sexual orientations, the low disagreement rates and large share of neutral responses for this item are more suggestive of student beliefs.

Overall Student Perceptions of Cultural Competency Items



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING SCHOOL AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

When asked to recommend one change to make school better, the item suggested most frequently was better food. Students also requested more down time, either as locker time in between classes or recess/break time. A number of students also suggested that teachers should be less strict.

| Тнеме | STUDENT SURVEY |
|---|----------------|
| Better food | 257 |
| More time between classes/locker time | 161 |
| Nicer/less strict teachers | 141 |
| Recess/break time | 136 |
| Change advisory period | 118 |
| Better student behavior, attitude | 116 |
| More lenient rules | 116 |
| More engaging classes/curriculum | 115 |
| Improve or build new facilities | 114 |
| No change necessary | 103 |
| Reduce bullying and fighting | 90 |
| More lenient dress code | 89 |
| Change class schedule | 87 |
| More technology | 74 |
| Longer lunch period | 73 |
| More interaction with other students in schools, grades | 60 |
| Re-combine separate schools | 59 |
| Fewer students in hallway, classrooms | 56 |
| Less homework | 55 |
| More clubs and activities | 49 |
| Other | 43 |
| Shorter school days | 40 |
| Everything | 27 |
| Bell schedule | 20 |
| Honors course policy | 17 |
| Vacation/time off | 16 |
| Bus | 12 |

Students Recommend One Change to Make School Better

When prompted to recommend changes to improve achievement, the most common response from staff was to combine the separate schools. Other common responses related to consistent high expectations and discipline, teaching teams, and polices to support staff.

| Тнеме | STAFF SURVEY |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| Combine separate schools | 41 |
| Consistent high expectations | 26 |
| Teaching teams | 23 |
| Consistent discipline | 20 |
| Policies to support staff | 18 |
| Class size | 12 |
| Facilities/resources | 11 |
| New principal/staff | 10 |
| Special Education support | 10 |
| Honors class policy | 10 |
| Class schedule | 9 |
| ELL | 8 |
| Discontinue IB | 7 |
| Other | 6 |
| No changes necessary | 4 |

Staff Recommend Changes to Improve Achievement

When given the opportunity to recommend changes to improve achievement, the most common response by a wide margin was the opportunity to develop specific skills. A number of parents also indicated that consistent high expectations and communication with parents could be improved.

| Тнеме | PARENT SURVEY | |
|---------------------------------|---------------|--|
| Develop specific skills | 66 | |
| Consistent high expectations | 29 | |
| Communication with parents | 23 | |
| Support teachers/administrators | 15 | |
| More rigorous honors classes | 15 | |
| Consistent discipline | 14 | |
| Keep schools divided | 11 | |
| Small class size | 10 | |
| More resources, after school | 9 | |
| programs | | |
| Consistent policies each year | 8 | |
| Class schedule | 8 | |
| Combine separate schools | 7 | |
| Change IB MYP program | 6 | |
| Other | 4 | |
| Change advisory period | 3 | |

Parents Recommend Changes to Improve Achievement

When prompted to recommend changes to improve achievement, the most common responses among community members were to combine schools/return to the old model, to hire strong teachers and administrators, and to encourage high quality and academic achievement. Community members also suggested adding new volunteer opportunities to support the ACPS middle schools.

| Тнеме | Community Survey |
|--|---------------------|
| Combine schools/return to old model | 17 |
| Hire strong teachers, administrators | 12 |
| Encourage quality, academic achievement | 10 |
| Address safety/discipline issues | 8 |
| Improve communication | 6 |
| Diversity | 4 |
| Consistent policies | 4 |
| Other | 3 |
| Change schedule | 2 |
| Improve facilities | 2 |

Community Members Recommend Changes to Improve Achievement

Ways Community Members Would Like to Support ACPS Middle Schools

| Тнеме | Community Survey |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| Volunteer/other | 11 |
| Tutoring | 6 |
| None | 5 |
| PTA | 4 |
| Mentoring/counseling | 4 |
| Already supporting | 4 |
| Funding | 2 |
| Support teachers | 2 |

SECTION IV: STUDENT SERVICES

Student support services include mental health services and additional academic support systems designed to meet the unique challenges many young adolescents face. A large body of research has found that comprehensive and coordinated student support services improve student behavior, social and emotional well-being, and academic achievement.³⁹

Student services include support systems, staff, and programs that address the unique challenges that students face. This dimension comprises three key subcategories.

- **§** Student Support Team
- **§** Mental Health Services
- **§** Physical Health Services

STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM

The Student Support Team provides a comprehensive range of services to students, parents and staff. The Student support Team strives to promote positive mental, emotional and social relationships/health in the school community by providing interventions, prevention, advocacy, and education and strengthening communication amongst the school members.

Middle school students may receive a variety of individual and group social, emotional, and behavioral supports from the Student Support Team. According to a Psychologist at GW 1, students may receive individual counseling, behavior interventions (check-ins and behavior development plan), skill/support groups (social skills, loss, and friendship), and crisis counseling. In addition, a counselor at GW 2 noted that the school provides support groups for bully prevention, anger management, anxiety, and conflict resolution. Social workers at FCH 1, 2, and 3 note that their schools offer the same programs as well as referral to community agencies and in-school therapeutic counseling provided by community agencies. According to a counselor at FCH 1, strategies taught by the Student Support Team help students remain focused in the classroom, help students with self-esteem, and reinforce positive behaviors. Counselors at FCH 2 add, "participation in groups and counseling helps to reduce stressors in [students'] lives that impede their learning. Through counseling, we help students adjust to changes and develop coping strategies."

All individuals involved in student support teams at FCH 1, 2, and 3 and GW 1 and 2, including counselors, social workers, nurses, and psychologists, have supported students through crisis situations. A GW 1 counselor has provided support to students exhibiting self-injurious behaviors, anxiety and depression, and at risk of suicide. Counselors at FCH 1, 2,

 ³⁹ "Safe, Supportive Conditions for Learning: Making Connections for Student Success—Key Concepts." Communique, 40:5, 2012, p. 24.

http://search.proquest.com/socialsciences/docview/919192979/fulltextPDF/13EA49D75475BF2A1ED/4?accountid=132487

⁴⁰ "Interview Responses." Middle Schools for tomorrow. Excel spreadsheet.

and 3 have supported students that are at risk of suicide, running away from home, substance abuse, sexual assaults, physical abuse, and cutting, among other crisis situations. A social worker at GW 1 believes that the school's procedure for responding to crisis situations is effective in identifying situations, coordination with other Student Support Team members, informing administration, and communicating with families across cultures. Counselors at FCH 2 note that the school's procedures are effective and include "assessing situation to determine need, documenting incident contacting administration and parents, making necessary referrals, and collaborating with outside agencies." Social workers at FCH 1, 2, and 3 suggest that Student Support team members and administration need to be trained on the appropriate response to crisis situations, as their responses to threats have been too slow.⁴¹

Students support services provided to families at FCH schools include referral to community agencies (Alexandria Center for Children, Multicultural Counseling Center, Mental Health Services, and Reach and Rise for Excellence), an afterschool math tutoring program for families in needs, and liaison with court services as necessary. Support services at George Washington schools include home visits, consultation by phone or in person, referral to community resources, and presentations at PTA and Back to School Night. A counselor at GW 1 believes that the resources offered by the Student Support team are adequate, though there is room for improvement. A social worker at FCH 1, 2, and 3 believes the school's services are effective, but have been underutilized in the past.⁴²

STUDENT ASSISTANCE COUNSELING

The Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services offers Student Assistance counseling for FCH 1, 2, and 3 students. Counselors support K-12 youth to get the most out of school and make healthy decisions.⁴³ Hammond Student Assistance programs are evidence-based programs that include youth leadership and mentoring, staff consultation and support, and parent support and education. Student Assistance counseling programs include a "peer advising" program for youth volunteers who are trained to mentor other children; an "Untouchables" program that focuses on building the physical, emotional, educational, and spiritual capacities of young men; a Girls Circle program that seeks to foster self-esteem and create connections with peer and adult women; a Decisions 101 leadership program that focuses on role modeling, skills building and healthy decision-making; and an early intervention program for seventh and eighth grade students who have started experimenting with alcohol and drugs called Project Alert.⁴⁴

The School Age Youth Development Team also offers counseling and mediation services at both middle school campuses. In 2012, the services were highly effective, with 99 percent

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ "Hammond Student Assistance 2013-2014." Department of Community and Human Services. p. 1.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 2.

of students indicating that individual supportive counseling helped them resolve their problem. $^{\rm 45}$

COUNSELING PROGRAM EVALUATIONS

To evaluate the counseling system, both middle school campuses conducted focus groups of students, parents, and teachers and administered pre- and post- tests to collect data from students participating in large and small group activities.⁴⁶

A survey of students who participated in individual counseling sessions through Hammond Student Assistance found that 100 percent of students agreed that meeting with the counselor helped them make better decisions and will help them in the future. All students who met with another counselor agreed that their meeting helped them deal with stress and helped them do better in school.⁴⁷ One hundred percent of students who participated in the Girls Circle group program agreed that what they learned was useful and important. Twenty-one out of 23 students who participated in Girls Circle indicated that the program helped them feel like they belong, and 19 out of 23 agreed that the program helped them have better relationships with adult women in their community.⁴⁸ Seven out of seven students who participated in the 2013 Peer Advisor program agreed that the program helped them set short and long term goals, communicate more effectively, and have better relationships with friends, family, peers, teachers, or other adults.⁴⁹ Out of five students who participated in the Untouchables program, 100 percent agreed that what they learned was useful and important, that the program helped them set short and long term goals, that the program helped them have better relationships with friends, family, peers, teachers, or other adults, and that the program helped them believe in themselves.⁵

SURVEY RESULTS

A little over half of middle school staff have brought a social, emotional, or behavioral concern about a student to the Student Support Team (SST). Of these staff members, 56 percent reported that the assistance provided by the SST was helpful in improving the student's availability to learn.

⁴⁵ "DCHS School Age Youth Development Team."

⁴⁶ "Middle School Counseling Annual Report 2012." Op. cit., p. 6.

⁴⁷ "Theodore Jones & Kim Hurley Outcomes Summary." City of Alexandria, Department of Community and Human Services, Center for Children & Families, July 2012-June 2013. p. 2.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 3.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 4.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 4.



Staff Survey: Student Support Team



MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

In this evaluation, mental health services include wrap-around services provided by social workers, counselors, and other mental health professionals. School mental health services may include many forms of support that address the needs of individual students and proactively address the mental health of the student population as a whole.⁵¹ In practice, schools frequently employ mental health specialists to address needs within the school and develop partnerships with service providers in the community to meet additional needs.⁵²

SURVEY RESULTS

About half of the students who participated in the survey have met with a counselor, social worker, or school psychologist while enrolled at an ACPS middle school. Students in 6th grade are more likely to report meeting with a counselor, social worker, or school psychologist (74 percent). Of those students who did meet with a member of the mental health team, 48 percent felt that discussing their problem helped them to concentrate on learning, while 25 percent did not feel this was the case and 27 percent were unsure. Parents who have discussed a concern with a counselor, social worker, or school psychologist generally reported that it was beneficial (68 percent).

A smaller percentage of students have attended group meetings (19 percent), however over half of students that did participate said that the group meeting was useful in helping them to understand more about themselves and how they interact with their peers.

Future research and data collection is needed to understand the effectiveness of specific short term and long term behavior interventions.

⁵¹ Committee on School Health. "School-Based Mental Health Services." *American Academy of Pediatrics*, 113:6, 2004. http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/113/6/1839.full

⁵² "School Health Policies and Programs Study – Mental Health and Social Services." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2006.

http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/shpps/2006/factsheets/pdf/FS_MentalHealthSocialServices_SHPPS2006.pdf



Student Survey: Mental Health Services

















PHYSICAL HEALTH SERVICES

Physical Health Services includes services provided by School Nutrition Services, and nurses.

GW 1 and 2 include vision and hearing screening for seventh graders and new sixth and eighth graders, first aid, and the dispensing of medications. Nurses also distribute sheets to staff with information about students' chronic conditions. At FCH 1, 2, and 3, students may receive vision and hearing screenings, medications, and referral to community agencies if necessary. Nurses also develop and communicate procedures for chronic illness and first aid to teachers, ensure all immunization records are up-to-date, and manage cases of students that require follow-up.

A nurse at GW 1 and 2 considers the school's current health practice "pretty good," as it "helps to keep student in class as much as possible, helps identify students with chronic conditions and ensure that necessary information is communicated to all pertinent parties, and improves the school's response to conditions like allergic reactions and asthma attacks." A nurse at FCH 1, 2, and 3 believes that the schools would benefit from "increased follow-up in connecting our students and families to community resources and ensuring that students are getting the vision and dental care that they need outside of school." The nurse at the FCH schools believes that the school needs to "improve our reinforcement of the division policies and procedures around immunizations and other health-related requirements."⁵³

The Centers for Disease control identified decreases in risk behaviors across several key health indicators for students at ACPS middle schools in 2012. The CDC's Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) was administered to ACPS middle school students in 2006-07 and 2011-12. The table below shows increases and decreases seen between the two years.⁵⁴

Future research and data collection is needed to understand the specific health-related concerns of ACPS middle school students and their families, and how the division is meeting these needs.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ "Middle Schools Model: An Initial Brief." Op. cit., p. 5.

| | 2007 | 2012 | Change | |
|---|-------------------|------|--------|--|
| | (%) | (%) | (%) | |
| Sexual Activity | | | | |
| Ever had sex | 27.1 | 15.1 | -12 | |
| Sex prior to age 13 | 15.6 | 9.9 | -5.7 | |
| Number of partners >= 4 in lifetime | 8 | 4.1 | -3.9 | |
| Cigarettes | | | | |
| Tried smoking | 34.1 | 19.1 | -15 | |
| Smoked a cigarette prior to age 13 | 14.6 | 8.7 | -5.9 | |
| Alcohol | | | | |
| Ever used alcohol | 44 | 33 | -11 | |
| Alcohol use prior to age 13 | 28.5 | 24.8 | -3.7 | |
| Marijuana | | | | |
| Ever used marijuana | 14 | 8.2 | -5.8 | |
| Marijuana use prior to age 13 | 7.7 | 7.2 | -0.5 | |
| Other Drug Use | | | | |
| Ever used inhalants | 16.9 | 11.6 | -5.3 | |
| Ever used steroids | 2.5 | 2.3 | -0.2 | |
| Ever used prescription drugs without prescription | NA | 5.2 | NA | |
| Ever used over-the-counter drugs to get high | NA | 13.4 | NA | |
| Suicide | | | | |
| Seriously considered suicide | 23.1 | 18.8 | -4.3 | |
| Made a suicide plan | 15.7 | 11.5 | -4.2 | |
| Attempted suicide | 12.3 | 9.4 | -2.9 | |
| Violence | | | | |
| Carried a weapon | 33.5 | 21.3 | -12.2 | |
| Fight | 66.1 | 52.5 | -13.6 | |
| Injury treated by a doctor | 9 | 7 | -2 | |
| Bullied on school property | NA | 37.3 | NA | |
| Electronically bullied | NA | 15 | NA | |
| Weight Status | | | | |
| Described self as overweight (slightly or very) | 26.2 | 23.3 | -2.9 | |
| Tried to lose weight | 48.1 | 41.6 | -6.5 | |
| Physical Activity | Physical Activity | | | |
| 5+ days of 60 mins of exercise/wk | 42.4 | 53.2 | 10.8 | |
| Watched TV 3+ hrs/day | 55.3 | 40.6 | -14.7 | |
| Used computer 3+ hrs/day (not for school work) | 34.3 | 39.1 | 4.8 | |
| Played on 1+ sports team in past 12 months | 57.1 | 67.7 | 10.6 | |

|--|

SECTION V: SCHOOL STRUCTURE

The concept of *school structure* is necessarily broad, and may ultimately encompass every element of how a school operates. The Laboratory for Student Success and the Institute for Educational Leadership describes seven "core elements" of an effectively structured school:

- Staffing and professional development
- S Organization of the curriculum (including student assessment and testing)
- **§** Allocation of time and space
- **§** A collegial community of teachers
- **§** High expectations of achievement and a climate to support them
- § Firm, fair, and timely discipline
- **§** A sense of community⁵⁵

In this evaluation, structure is used to describe how a school operates. An effective school structure establishes a framework through which personalization can be built, curriculum and instructional practices can be implemented, school climate can flourish, and student services may prove effective. This dimension comprises eight key subcategories that are included in this section:

- **§** Professional Development
- **§** Resource Allocation
- **§** Administrative Structure
- **§** Teaming
- Scheduling
- S Classroom Distribution
- **§** Hiring Practices
- § Discipline

⁵⁵ Taken verbatim from: "Effective Schools: Structure, Environment, and Processes." E-Lead. http://www.e-lead.org/principles/structure.asp

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional development refers to learning opportunities to gain skills and knowledge to develop professionally. Such opportunities include ongoing learning and progress monitor by the teacher of their use of effective pedagogy to support language acquisition, differentiation, literacy and metacognition, and student engagement and cultural competency.

SURVEY RESULTS

On average, staff spent 18 hours of classroom instructional time to attend professional development in 2012-13. About 60 percent of staff agreed or strongly agreed that professional development in-services in 2012-13 were aligned with school and division level priorities. However, only 41 percent agreed to some extent that in-services supported them in improving student achievement levels. Conversely, nearly 75 percent of staff felt that their self-selected professional developments supported them in improving student achievement.



Staff Survey: Professional Development





RESOURCE ALLOCATION

Resource allocation refers to the distribution of resources, such as books, supplies, lockers, and classrooms.

SURVEY RESULTS

Sixty-three percent of students said that students do *not* need access to additional materials in order to maximize their learning while 53 percent of staff said that students *do* need access to additional materials. When asked to explain what additional materials students need to maximize their learning, both students and staff frequently cited computers and other digital devises or pieces of technology.

Do students need access to additional materials in order to maximize their learning? Student Survey Staff Survey





Additional Materials Students Need to Maximize Learning

| Тнеме | Total | STUDENT SURVEY | STAFF SURVEY |
|-------------------------|-------|----------------|--------------|
| Computers | 222 | 184 | 38 |
| Digital devices/tablets | 217 | 207 | 10 |
| Pencils, pens, markers | 183 | 178 | 5 |
| Basic School supplies | 158 | 142 | 16 |
| Books and textbooks | 135 | 111 | 24 |
| Other technology | 117 | 93 | 24 |
| Other | 99 | 91 | 8 |
| Notebooks | 85 | 79 | 6 |
| Calculators | 48 | 44 | 4 |
| No comment | 22 | 20 | 2 |
| Time | 16 | 14 | 2 |
| Food | 15 | 15 | 0 |
| Facilities/space | 11 | 2 | 9 |

Students and staff were also asked about specific materials and resources that are needed to support student learning. As in the question above, staff were more likely than students to disagree that students have access to materials or resources.





Staff were also asked a similar set of questions about their own access to resources and materials. Sixty-four percent of staff members said that staff do need access to additional materials to maximize student learning, compared to 53 percent who said students need additional materials. When asked about the materials that staff need, most noted a need for computers and other technology and books and textbooks.



Additional Materials Staff Need to Maximize Learning

| Тнеме | STAFF SURVEY |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| Computers | 42 |
| Books and textbooks | 41 |
| Other technology/online resources | 35 |
| Other | 22 |
| Basic school supplies | 17 |
| Facilities/space | 13 |
| Digital devices/tablets | 10 |
| Pencils, pens, markers | 8 |
| Notebooks | 2 |
| Calculators | 2 |
| Time | 2 |



Staff Survey: Resource Allocation – Staff Access









ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

Administrative structure refers to the structure of the middle school administration. As of 2009, George Washington and Francis C. Hammond Middle Schools were divided into five schools, each with their own principal and associate principal.

SURVEY RESULTS

Student, staff, and parent opinions on the current middle school administrative structure were mixed, though generally positive or neutral. Thirty percent of students disagree or strongly disagree that the current school administration helps to make school feel personalized for each student, while 25 percent of staff felt the same. Thirty-seven percent of staff disagree or strongly disagree that the current administrative structure positively affects an environment that advances student achievement.

Community members were more likely to have a negative opinion of the current administrative structure. Fifty-four percent of community members disagree or strongly disagree that the current administrative structure helps to facilitate a personalized environment for each student, while 55 percent disagree or strongly disagree that the current administrative structure positively affects an environment that helps students learn.

The administrative structure was a frequent theme in open-ended comments from students, staff, community members and parents when asked for their recommendations to improve student achievement. The recommendation to combine the separate schools was the most frequent theme among staff (n=41). The combination of schools, or return to "old model," was also the most frequent theme among recommendations by community members (n=17). Students also recommended the re-merger of schools (n=59), though it was not one of top themes in their responses. Parents had mixed opinions on the school structure, with 11 parents recommending that the schools should remain divided and 7 recommending a merger.




TEAMING

Teaming refers to team teaching and collaboration of two teachers teaching equally within a single classroom. At ACPS middle schools, this arrangement is referred to as "co-teaching."

Researchers have highlighted various benefits of co-teaching as an instructional strategy. According to the New Mexico Department of Education, for instance, co-teaching has the potential to:⁵⁶

- Further a philosophy of inclusion by reducing the stigma (as well as increasing understanding and respect) of students with special needs and creating a heterogeneous classroom community;
- Improve instruction for all students of all abilities;
- S Reduce the instructional fragmentation students with special needs might experience if they were removed from the classroom, and ensure that their instructor/s know the general curriculum being addressed in the classroom; and
- **§** Foster a sense of support among teachers.

Several characteristics of co-teaching distinguish it from other types of instructional partnerships. First, the two teachers delivering content to the class have equivalent licensure or status and participate fully in the instructional process. In other words, both teachers work with *all* students.⁵⁷ The special education teacher is not solely responsible for the students in the class that have special needs, nor is the general education teacher responsible for presenting content exclusively to the rest of the class. In order to achieve this system of organization, co-teachers must clearly define their classroom roles and responsibilities and provide support to individual students so that the instructional flow of the whole class is maintained. The curriculum of the class should reflect the needs of all students—academic, developmental, compensatory, and life skills.⁵⁸

Collaboration during the planning stage is a key aspect of effective co-teaching. If possible, co-teachers should set aside a period for planning once or twice a week. They may choose to meet once for a longer period (e.g., 90 minutes) to plan one or two weeks' worth of material, or they may choose to meet for shorter periods. On average, one lesson can be planned by secondary co-teachers in 10 minutes or fewer.⁵⁹ One study found that co-

⁵⁶ Cook, L. "Co-Teaching: Principles, Practices, and Pragmatics." New Mexico Public Education Department Quarterly Special Education Meeting, 29 April 2004, p. 7.

⁵⁷ Friend, M and D. Hurley-Chamberlain. "Is Co-Teaching Effective?" Council for Exceptional Children. http://www.cec.sped.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Home&TEMPLATE=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&CONTE NTID=7504&CAT=none

⁵⁸ Cook. Op. cit., p. 9.

⁵⁹ Murawski, W.W. and L. A. Dieker. "Tips and Strategies for Co-Teaching at the Secondary Level." *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 36:5.

teachers reported desiring, on average, approximately 15 minutes to an hour each day for planning.⁶⁰

SURVEY RESULTS

Most students who were in a co-taught classroom reported that it was a positive learning environment. About half (44 percent) of students who participated in the survey were in a co-taught classroom in the 2012-13 school year, and of those in a co-taught classroom 60 percent agreed or strongly agreed that having two teachers in the classroom helped them to do better academically. Staff were less positive about the outcomes of the co-taught classroom model, with 43 percent agreeing or strongly agreeing that students in co-taught classroom shave improved outcomes. When looking at results by staff position, Classroom teachers, special education teachers, and ELL teachers reported similar levels of disagreement overall, however ELL teachers were most likely to strongly disagree (33 percent), compared to 16 percent of classroom teachers and 7 percent of special education teachers.

Co-teaching was an underlying theme in open-ended comments from staff members, often in reference to the Special Education and ELL Programs (see Section II). Generally, staff requested more opportunities or resources for co-teaching. Reflecting this, 44 percent of ELL teachers and 40 percent of Special Education teachers disagreed or strongly disagreed that the co-taught classroom model improved outcomes for students as compared to nonco-taught classrooms.



⁶⁰ Dieker, L. "What Are the Characteristics of 'Effective' Middle and High School Co-Taught Teams for Students with Disabilities?" *Preventing School Failure*, 46:1, 2001. http://search.proquest.com/docview/228517387/13494F4A1C760CCF61E/5



Staff Survey



As discussed previously, collaboration is an important aspect of the co-teaching model. While only 29 percent of all staff members agreed or strongly agreed that licensed staff are allocated an appropriate amount of time for collaboration, 66 percent agree to some extent that collaboration time has a significant effect in improving student outcomes. Staff who were in co-teaching classrooms in 2012-13 were less likely to agree that staff are allocated an appropriate amount of time for collaboration (19 percent), compared to those who were not in co-teaching classrooms (37 percent).





SCHEDULING

Scheduling includes scheduling within the school day (e.g., class times, transition times between classes, planning time), length of school days, length of calendar year, and scheduling of activities throughout the year. ACPS' 6-8 middle schools follow a traditional calendar, with classes running between early September and mid-June.⁶¹ All five middle schools are open from 8:30 am to 3:15 pm. An example 2013-14 bell schedule from George Washington Middle School is provided below.

| Period | Αсτινιτγ | Тіме |
|--------|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| 1 | Class | 8:30-9:19 |
| 2 | Class | 9:23-10:12 |
| 3 | Class | 10:16-11:05 |
| | GW2 7/8 th Grade Lunch | 11:09-11:39 |
| 4 | GW1/2 6 th Grade Lunch | 11:39-12:09 |
| | GW1 7/8 th Grade Lunch | 12:09-12:39 |
| 5 | Class | 12:43-1:31 |
| 6 | Class | 1:35-2:23 |
| 7 | Class | 2:27-3:15 |

| GW Midd | le School | Bell Schedule | (2013-14) |
|---------|-----------|----------------------|-----------|
|---------|-----------|----------------------|-----------|

Source: ACPS

SURVEY RESULTS

Students, staff, and parents have mixed opinions on the current academic calendar and daily bell schedule. Students are most likely to agree or strongly agree that the current academic calendar (52 percent) and daily bell schedule (45 percent) maximizes student achievement. Comparatively, 41 percent of staff and 47 percent of parents agree or strongly agree that the current academic calendar maximizes student achievement and 42 percent of staff and 40 percent of parents agree or strongly agree that the current daily bell schedule maximizes student achievement.

When asked for suggestions on how to improve the academic calendar, most students did not provide specific comments. Of those who did, students suggested improved communication about the academic calendar and more days off. Parents and staff often suggested ending the school year earlier and adopting a modified calendar.

When asked for suggestions on how to improve the daily bell schedule, an overwhelming number of students asked for more time between class periods. Students also commented on the need for clearer alerts to students and teachers about class changes. The largest number of staff members suggested longer class periods.

⁶¹ "2013-14 Traditional Calendar." Alexandria City Public Schools. http://www.acps.k12.va.us/calendars/calendar-2013-2014-traditional.pdf





Parent Survey



| Тнеме | STUDENT SURVEY |
|--|----------------|
| No comment | 227 |
| Other | 199 |
| Improve communication about/presentation of calendar | 177 |
| More days off | 151 |
| Improve class schedule | 122 |
| Longer vacations | 77 |
| Longer lunch, recess, break time | 73 |
| Does not need improvement | 57 |
| More after school programs and fun activities | 52 |
| End school year earlier | 43 |
| Better schedule for tests, assignments | 43 |
| More class time and support from teachers | 30 |
| Start school year later | 17 |
| Snow days | 10 |
| Implement modified calendar | 10 |

Students' Suggestions to Improve the Academic Calendar

Staff and Parents' Suggestions to Improve the Academic Calendar

| Тнеме | Total | PARENT SURVEY | STAFF SURVEY |
|--|-------|---------------|--------------|
| End school year earlier | 40 | 21 | 19 |
| Adopt modified calendar | 40 | 13 | 27 |
| Change class schedule | 26 | 17 | 9 |
| Other | 20 | 9 | 11 |
| Start school year earlier | 19 | 13 | 6 |
| More breaks | 16 | 7 | 9 |
| Summer/extended learning opportunities | 12 | 5 | 7 |
| No comment | 8 | 5 | 3 |
| Does not need improvement | 6 | 6 | 0 |
| Low attendance after breaks | 5 | 1 | 4 |
| Do not adopt modified calendar | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Snow days | 1 | 0 | 1 |

| | - |
|--|----------------|
| Тнеме | STUDENT SURVEY |
| More time between class periods | 547 |
| More clearly alert students and teachers of class changes | 273 |
| Other | 105 |
| The current schedule is satisfactory | 80 |
| Longer class periods | 79 |
| No comment | 76 |
| Longer lunch period, more breaks | 57 |
| Block schedule | 53 |
| Return to 2011-2012 schedule | 43 |
| Fewer classes each day | 36 |
| Shorter class periods | 27 |
| Change rules regarding tardiness | 20 |
| Teachers should dismiss students on time | 20 |
| Change the length of the school day | 16 |
| Eliminate or change advisory period | 13 |
| Start the school day earlier | 6 |
| Earlier lunch period | 5 |
| | |

Students' Suggestions to Improve the Daily Bell Schedule

Staff Suggestions to Improve Daily Bell Schedule

| Тнеме | STAFF SURVEY |
|--|--------------|
| Longer class periods | 40 |
| Block schedule | 35 |
| Eliminate or change advisory period | 9 |
| The current schedule is satisfactory | 8 |
| More clearly alert students and teachers of class changes | 7 |
| Other | 7 |
| Longer lunch period, more breaks | 5 |
| Keep the schedule consistent each year | 4 |
| More time between class periods | 3 |
| Change the length of the school day | 3 |
| Shorter class periods | 2 |
| Return to former schedule | 2 |
| No comment | 1 |

Parents' Suggestions to Improve the Daily Bell Schedule

| Тнеме | PARENT SURVEY |
|---------------------------|---------------|
| More time between classes | 21 |
| Block schedule | 18 |
| Longer class periods | 17 |

| Тнеме | PARENT SURVEY |
|--|---------------|
| Longer lunch, more breaks | 14 |
| Schedule is satisfactory | 8 |
| Other | 8 |
| Eliminate or change advisory period | 5 |
| Don't "split" classes with lunch | 5 |
| Change the length of the school day | 4 |
| Keep the schedule consistent each year | 3 |
| Fewer classes each day | 2 |
| No comment | 2 |
| Return to former schedule | 1 |

CLASSROOM DISTRIBUTION

Classroom distribution refers to the distribution of students within schools by gender, race/ethnicity, special education participation, English language learners, participation in the free/reduced lunch program.

The table and charts below show the distribution of students across the FCH and GW campuses and schools with regards to grade level, race/ethnicity, economic disadvantage (represented by free or reduced lunch), students with limited English proficiency (LEP), students with special education designations, and students with talented and gifted (TAG) designations. All enrollment information is from the 2012-13 school year and includes students enrolled at the end of the school year only.

While the GW campus is smaller overall than FCH, the individual schools (GW 1 and GW 2) are slightly larger than the individual schools at FCH. Each school has a fairly even distribution of students across each grade level. The FCH campus is more diverse than the GW with regards to race/ethnicity. While 39 percent of GW campus students are white, 11 percent of FCH campus students are also white. The FCH campus has a larger population of students who qualify for free or reduced lunch (73 percent compared to 46 percent at the GW campus) and who are receiving direct LEP services (25 percent compared to 14 percent at the GW campus). Conversely, GW campus students are more likely to have a Talented and Gifted (TAG) designation (21 percent of GW campus students compared with 9 percent of FCH campus students).



2012-13 School Year Enrollment

| Scuool | TOTAL | % | % | % |
|------------|------------|---------|---------|---------|
| JCHOOL | ENROLLMENT | GRADE 6 | GRADE 7 | GRADE 8 |
| FCH 1 | 438 | 34% | 32% | 34% |
| FCH 2 | 440 | 35% | 32% | 33% |
| FCH 3 | 439 | 33% | 33% | 34% |
| GW 1 | 522 | 38% | 32% | 30% |
| GW 2 | 516 | 38% | 33% | 30% |
| FCH Campus | 1,317 | 34% | 33% | 34% |
| GW Campus | 1,038 | 38% | 32% | 30% |
| Total | 1,856 | 36% | 32% | 32% |

2012-13 School Year Enrollment

2012-13 School Year Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

| School | % American Indian | % Asian | % Black | % Hispanic | % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | % White | % Other or Multiethnic |
|------------|-------------------------|------------|------------|---------------|--|------------|------------------------------|
| FCH 1 | 0.2% | 9% | 41% | 35% | 1.1% | 10% | 3% |
| FCH 2 | 0.5% | 7% | 45% | 36% | 0.5% | 9% | 3% |
| FCH 3 | 0.5% | 7% | 40% | 36% | 0.5% | 13% | 3% |
| GW 1 | 0.4% | 2% | 28% | 28% | 0.4% | 39% | 3% |
| GW 2 | 0.2% | 3% | 28% | 29% | 0.0% | 39% | 2% |
| FCH Campus | 0.4% | 8% | 42% | 36% | 0.7% | 11% | 3% |
| GW Campus | 0.3% | 2% | 28% | 29% | 0.2% | 39% | 2% |
| Total | 0.3% | 5% | 36% | 33% | 0.5% | 23% | 3% |

2012-13 School Year Student who Qualify for Free or Reduced Lunch

| School | % Qualify for Free or Reduced Lunch |
|------------|--|
| FCH 1 | 72% |
| FCH 2 | 75% |
| FCH 3 | 72% |
| GW 1 | 47% |
| GW 2 | 46% |
| FCH Campus | 73% |
| GW Campus | 46% |
| Total | 61% |

| Limited English Frencency (LEF) Designations | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|------------------|
| School | RECEIVING DIRECT LEP SERVICES (LEVEL 1-5) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6-1 | 6-2 | Т | No LEP Status |
| FCH 1 | 24% | 3% | 3% | 6% | 9% | 3% | 3% | 3% | 10% | 59% |
| FCH 2 | 26% | 4% | 4% | 8% | 7% | 3% | 4% | 5% | 11% | 56% |
| FCH 3 | 27% | 4% | 4% | 8% | 8% | 3% | 2% | 4% | 10% | 57% |
| GW 1 | 14% | 2% | 1% | 3% | 7% | 1% | 2% | 2% | 6% | 75% |
| GW 2 | 13% | 3% | 1% | 3% | 5% | 1% | 0% | 4% | 4% | 79% |
| FCH Campus | 25% | 4% | 3% | 7% | 8% | 3% | 3% | 4% | 11% | 57% |
| GW Campus | 14% | 3% | 1% | 3% | 6% | 1% | 1% | 3% | 5% | 77% |
| Total | 19% | 3% | 2% | 5% | 7% | 2% | 2% | 4% | 8% | 66% |

2012-13 School Year Percentage of Students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Designations⁶²

2012-13 School Year Percentage of Students with Special Education Designations⁶³

| School | Special Education Status | No Special Ed Status |
|------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| FCH 1 | 13% | 87% |
| FCH 2 | 9% | 91% |
| FCH 3 | 11% | 89% |
| GW 1 | 14% | 86% |
| GW 2 | 13% | 87% |
| FCH Campus | 11% | 89% |
| GW Campus | 13% | 87% |
| Total | 12% | 88% |

| 2012-13 School | Year Percentage | of Students with | Talented and Gi | fted (TAG` |) Designation ⁶⁴ |
|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------|-----------------------------|
| 2012 10 3011001 | rour roroontugo | or stadents with | ruicintea una or | | Designation |

| School | TAG Student | No TAG Status |
|------------|----------------|------------------|
| FCH 1 | 8% | 92% |
| FCH 2 | 9% | 91% |
| FCH 3 | 8% | 92% |
| GW 1 | 21% | 79% |
| GW 2 | 20% | 80% |
| FCH Campus | 9% | 91% |

⁶² Note: LEP Proficiency level 1 is the lowest level of English proficiency. Levels 6-1 and 6-2 represent students who have reached a high enough proficiency to not receive direct services but remain in "monitoring status" for two years (6-1 is year one of monitoring, 6-2 year two). Students with a "T" designation have fully exited the LEP program.

⁶³ Note: Special Education designations include Autism, other health impairment, intellectual disability, multiple disabilities, visual impairment, deafness, specific learning disability, emotional disability, and speech/language impairment.

⁶⁴ Note: Students may have multiple subject-area TAG designations, including "special placement," language arts, math, science, social studies, music, and art.

| School | TAG | No TAG | |
|-----------|---------|--------|--|
| | Student | Status | |
| GW Campus | 21% | 79% | |
| Total | 14% | 86% | |

HIRING PRACTICES

Hiring practices include the qualifications, processes, and structures that are used to hire staff.

SURVEY RESULTS

Two staff survey questions gathered feedback on hiring practices within ACPS. Nearly half (46 percent) of staff members agreed to some extent that division level offerings and programs for new hires (e.g., New Teacher Orientation, Mentoring Program, etc.) effectively support new staff members. A similar percentage of staff felt the same about school-specific offerings.



Staff Survey: Hiring practices



DISCIPLINE

Discipline refers to rules and actions to maintain a school's code of conduct. Expectations for student behavior are summarized in the division's annual Student Guidelines document.⁶⁵

SURVEY RESULTS

Students were more likely that staff and parents to agree or strongly agree that staff and administrators have the same expectations for student behavior and that student disciple is uniformly enforced. In their recommendations for "one change to make school better" students frequently noted a desire for nicer or less strict teachers (n=141), more lenient rules (n=116), and better student behavior or attitudes (n=116). Consistent discipline was the fourth most common theme identified by staff in their recommendations to improve academic achievement (n=20).



⁶⁵ "Student Guidelines 2013-2014." Alexandria City Public Schools. http://www.acps.k12.va.us/student-guide.pdf



