MEASURING WHAT MATTERS

# ONE COULTAR 2023-24

gniziMann



Alexandria City Public Schools Annual Report



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### LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

The power of our community uniting for a common good, such as ensuring the success of our students, made for a year filled with opportunities and achievements within Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS). Our "one team, one journey" mission guided us through the 2023-24 school year, as the school division moved forward redevelopment efforts while upholding the core principles of our 2025 Equity For All Strategic Plan to provide equity-focused, innovative and resultsdriven programs that aim toward helping to eliminate opportunity and achievement gaps.

ACPS kicked off the new school year by celebrating the opening of its newly constructed Douglas MacArthur Elementary School in August of 2023. This new building stands as a beacon for the community, offering a modern, welcoming and innovative space for our students and staff. Winding down the school year, ACPS was able to host a ribbon-cutting ceremony in May 2024 at the new Alexandria City High School (ACHS) Minnie Howard Campus, just as it prepared to graduate 954 Titans. This ribbon-cutting served as an historic moment for ACPS as the school division redefines the high school experience under the Academies at Alexandria City pathways model and is the culmination of years of planning and an integral part of the High School Project, which launched in 2018.

I am proud to share our achievements within ACPS through our annual award-winning publication, "Measuring What Matters." It is through the efforts of our families, staff and community partners that our school division and its students thrive.

One example is through our Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Center, which has strengthened family and school partnerships, cultural understanding and academic achievement. Implementation of the division-wide Family Engagement Action Team (F.E.A.T) serves as an advisory and advocacy body to help advance ACPS' mission and creates an effective partnership to ensure academic success and healthy development for our students.

In addressing attendance challenges, a nationwide crisis, family engagement and community partnerships have made a difference throughout our school division helping to ensure our students are in school every day, on time and ready to learn each day and on time Through the efforts of our dedicated and caring staff, we saw significant decreases in chronic absenteeism as we leveraged the



tools and resources available to ACPS to increase positive attendance rates. These included maximizing the features of the ParentSquare app we rely on to help keep families informed. By sending out three notifications each school day, we let our families know when their student is not in school. Student-centered videos were also created and shared, speaking directly to the importance of school attendance. Attendance task force teams were put in place at the central and school-based levels and members worked diligently to message and encourage the importance of attendance and to foster the development of it becoming a good life habit. ACPS educators were deeply focused on how to best support students experiencing attendance challenges and addressing their needs together with their families.

As a result, I am proud of the success our students realized over the past year. It was a rewarding experience to see our 905 graduates of the Alexandria City High School (ACHS) Class of 2024 receive diplomas. Forty-five percent of the class graduated with an Advanced Studies Diploma, the highest percentage of ACHS students to achieve that accomplishment. Many of our students received merit scholarships from various organizations and 216 students received scholarships from The

Scholarship Fund of Alexandria totaling \$644,800 for their first year of college, to be renewed throughout their four years of study, totaling \$2,330,300 in value.

I am also encouraged to see the latest information shared by the Virginia Department of Education concerning ACPS' Standards of Learning (SOL) testing. Over the past three years, ACPS Annual Proficiency Pass Rates have increased in Math (+6 percentage points), Science (+4 percentage points), and History (+10 percentage points). Reading pass rates have remained stable over the past three years. Academic achievement disparities have

narrowed in Math across most student groups while Reading has remained stable over the three-year period for most groups. While we still have work to do, these are numbers to build on in the years ahead.

As ACPS addresses its students and families' needs, we recognize and promote initiatives that can best serve our community. In October 2023, seeing the need to assist students with mental health concerns, ACPS launched a new partnership with Hazel Health. This telehealth service connects students with a licensed therapist at no out-of-pocket cost to families. Hazel Health professionals help students cope and address such issues as anxiety, bullying, withdrawal, grief, peer and family relationships, depression or stress.

ACPS also enlisted a helping hand to keep families informed about our school bus arrival times and locations. The Office of Pupil Transportation and Fleet Management launched the Edulog Parent Portal app which is available free of charge to our parents, caregivers and students.

It is our one team, one journey mission that drives our school division forward to a future filled with the promise of excellence for all ACPS students, staff, our families and school community.

Edulog provides real-time information pertaining to the scheduled time and location information for bus rides to and from school, including a push notification when the bus is nearing a stop.

Staff recruitment and retention efforts have culminated in making great strides toward reaped rewards in helping the school division find candidates for hard-to-fill positions. The ACPS Department of Human Resources has attended or hosted numerous licensed hiring fairs, and recruitment events and worked on attractive bonus offers for those positions most challenging to fill and deficient in our system. The creation and sharing of award-winning recruitment videos inviting the community to join our equity journey have also proven to be an effective means to find quality candidates to fill positions within the school division.

Our school division also values and realizes the importance of community support services which play an essential role in ensuring our teaching and learning environments are safe and welcoming and for the a third consecutive year, ACPS joined with the City of Alexandria in celebrating Alexandria City Essential Workers Appreciation Week, March 11-15, 2024. ACPS appreciates the contributions of all essential

> workers from healthcare staff to include school nurses, as well as that of law enforcement, firefighters, bus drivers and monitors, snow plow drivers, nutrition staff, building engineers, custodians, security personnel, teachers, instructional assistants, counselors and support staff, all of whom are an integral part of our one team, one journey mission.

> Transparency and clear and open communication is also what ACPS strives toward and in keeping with that priority, I keep our lines of communication open. That is why we have endeavored to host meetings with our

students at every academic level through the #TitansRising elementary school campaign, Slices with the Supe conversations with middleschoolers and the Superintendent's Student Advisory Council with high school students, as well as with community members through events like our Superintendent's Community Chat and Chats on the Spot. Through these opportunities and more, at our schools, bus stops and community partner venues, I have been afforded the opportunity to meet with our families and community members where they are to assure them that their voices are being heard. I want all of our stakeholders to know, your voice is heard!

It is our one team, one journey mission that drives our school division forward to a future filled with the promise of excellence for all ACPS students, staff, our families and school community. ACPS is on the road to continued success. Be a part of our journey!



**Dr. Melanie Kay-Wyatt** Superintendent of Schools

### SCHOOL BOARD

#### **District A**



Jacinta Greene



Michelle Rief (Chair)



Willie Bailey July - Dec. 2023



Tim Beaty *Beginning Jan. 2024* 

### **District B**



Kelly Carmichael Booz (Vice Chair)



Tammy Ignacio

Ashley Simpson Baird

### **District** C



Meagan L. Alderton

Abdel-Rahman Elnoubi

Christopher Harris

### OFFICE OF THE SCHOOL BOARD

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

Susan Neilson School Board Clerk

Alexandra Bourdouane Deputy School Board Clerk

### SCHOOL BOARD STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES:

Zahra Rahimi Torenzo Ricks Zeinab Yassin

Alexandria City Public Schools

### ACPS LEADERSHIP



#### **OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT**

**Dr. Grace Taylor** Chief of Staff



ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESEARCH

**Dr. Clinton Page** Chief of Accountability and Research



### FACILITIES AND OPERATIONS

**Dr. Alicia Hart** Chief Operating Officer



### FINANCIAL SERVICES

**Dominic Turner** Chief Financial Officer



#### SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Julia A. Burgos Chief of School and Community Relations



#### STUDENT SERVICES AND EQUITY

**Dr. Marcia Jackson** Chief of Student Services and Equity



#### TEACHING, LEARNING AND LEADERSHIP

Dr. Pierrette Finney Chief Academic Officer



#### **TECHNOLOGY SERVICES**

**Dr. Elizabeth Hoover** Chief Technology Officer



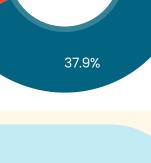


## FAST FACTS

Enrollment numbers as of September 2024 (Total ACPS system, high school, middle school and elementary level totals)

16,335 Total Division High 4,634 School (all 9-12) Middle 3,432 School (all 6-8)7,861 Elementary (all PreK-5)

2024-25 Total Membership		.3%
Division Membership by Ethnicity	Number of Students	4.8% 6.5%
Sian	1,058	
<mark>e</mark> Black	3,817	26.9%
Hispanic	6,198	TOTAL
🛑 White	4,394	- 16,335
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	55	
Native American/Alaskan	26	37.9%
Multi-Racial	787	- 37.37



23.4%

118

Countries of Birth

### 127

Native Languages Spoken

38%

12%

### 47% Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Price Meals

**English Learners** 

### Students with Disabilities

Students who participate in Advanced Academic Studies (formerly Talented and Gifted) are identified throughout the year and reported on the end-of-year state report. For the school year 2023-24, there were 1,965 students identified in Advanced Academic Studies out of the 16,425 active students reported on the end-of-year state report comprising 12% of the total population.

**Alexandria City Public Schools** 



### STAFF DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographic make-up of ACPS (administrative/teachers/professional staff) - gender (male/female/other) /race/ethnicity (Total ACPS system, high school, middle school and elementary level totals)

### **2024-25** School-based Administrator Staff Breakdown

	School-based Administrators	School-based Teachers	School-based Professionals
Total	77	1146	186
Division Membership by Ethnicity	y		
Black	41	340	46
Hispanic	3	94	36
White	32	628	94
Other	1	84	10
Division Membership by Gender			
Female	53	884	133
Male	24	262	53

	Elementary (K-8 Schools)	<b>Middle School</b> (Hammond & George Washington)	<b>High School</b> (ACHS King Street, ACHS Satellite, ACHS International, ACHS Minnie Howard)	<b>High School</b> Chance For Change
Total	979	331	438	14
<b>Division Me</b>	mbership by Ethnie	city		
Asian	40	11	18	0
Black	277	138	161	10
Hispanic	140	40	48	1
White	493	131	200	3
Other	29	11	11	0
<b>Division Me</b>	mbership by Gend	er		
Female	850	234	296	6
Male	129	97	142	8

### EQUITY CLIMATE SURVEY

Students in grades 6-12, staff members and families had the opportunity to share their views in the school division's equity climate survey. Over 6,000 ACPS stakeholders participated in the survey, which gathered vital feedback to help identify critical areas for improvement related to the ACPS 2025 Equity for All Strategic Plan.

Survey results indicate continued focus on feelings of safety (although responses improved compared to 2023) as well as student and staff relationships. The equity climate survey is part of ACPS' ongoing action to address racial inequities and remove barriers to learning for all students.



Academic environment



Equity



Restorative practices



Socialemotional supports and environment



Stakeholder engagement and inclusiveness



Staff social environment

#### Overall, results were consistent with the previous year. Key areas of strength include:

The survey focused on six main themes:



Most families, staff and students have **positive perceptions of the learning environment, teachers and school climate overall** particularly at the elementary level. Stakeholders also report **positive impressions of the social-emotional environment and supports at their school**. In particular, 79% of families say that adults at school care about all students and the majority also agree that staff knows how to connect students with supports and help students with problems other than schoolwork. Student agreement that adults at school care about all students increased by four percentage points from 2023 to 2024.

**Staff social environment scores slightly increased from the 2023 survey**. Most staff members agree that they have positive relationships with both students (96%) and other staff (92%) at their school. Staff also typically agree that their colleagues care about them (84%) and they have a positive relationship with their supervisor (87%).

### FY 2024 BUDGET

### Operating Fund

	Operating Fund	Grants and Special Projects	School Nutrition
Instruction	\$240,135,637	\$16,947,330	\$-
Administrative, Attendance and Health	\$30,141,537	\$498,511	\$-
Pupil Transportation	\$12,302,651	\$10,000	\$-
<b>Operations &amp; Maintenance</b>	\$30,153,731	\$15,930	\$-
School Nutrition Services	\$-	\$-	\$12,584,871
School Nutrition Services & Other Ops	\$978,685	\$84,590	\$16,000
Facilities	\$1,505,185	N/A	N/A
Technology	\$16,191,246	\$385,202	N/A
Division-wide	(\$1,962,261)	(\$90,784)	\$-
Total	\$329,446,411	\$17,850,778	\$12,600,871
Grand Total			\$359,898,060

### FY 2024 (Revenue)

	Operating Fund	Grants and Special Projects	School Nutrition
City Appropriations	(\$258,686,800)	\$0	N/A
State Revenue	(\$63,650,600)	(\$4,735,089)	(\$211,099)
Local Revenue	(\$1,035,000)	(\$310,484)	(\$1,623,675)
Federal Revenue	(\$148,000)	(\$10,774,660)	(\$10,766,097)
Total	(\$323,520,400)	(\$15,820,233)	(\$12,600,871)
Grand Total			(\$351,941,504)

ACPS Teachers Achieve New and Renewed National Board Certification Fifteen ACPS teachers were awarded – new (5) or renewed (10) National Board Certification (NBCT) in 2024.



### <sup>2023-24</sup> GRANTS



National Institutes of Health

### The National Institutes of Health (NIH) awarded ACPS \$497,830

to provide middle school students with an after school Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) experience.



### In 2023-24, ACPS received over \$47 million in grants

representing a 39% decrease in ESSER funding as part of its phased reduction and a 19% increase in other grant funding over the 2022-23 school year.

13

### AWARDS DIVISION WIDE

#### ACPS Among Forbes Best-in-State Employers 2023



Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) was iincluded among the Forbes America's 2023 Best-In-

State Employers in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

#### Award-Winning ACPS Initiatives and Communications

Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) is three-for-three as all of the division's Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA) 28th annual Showcases for Success submissions were recognized.

- Alexandria City Public Schools: You're Speaking My Language: ACPS' Culturally Responsive Approach to Substance Abuse Prevention – This culturally diverse division wide substance abuse prevention campaign offers clear messaging to engage families and community partners in prevention as it takes into account a multicultural landscape.
- 2

Alexandria City Public Schools: Tasting Tuesdays Tasting Tuesdays – provide a new and strategic way for School Nutrition Services to engage with students and spotlight our vegan, vegetarian, and culturally inclusive meal options.

2

Alexandria City Public Schools: Emergency Management Video Series – This Emergency Management Video Series includes "Secure the Building," "Evacuation,""Lockdown" and "Shelter in Place." Each video is translated into four languages and helps to ensure the school community can differentiate between the four statuses that may affect schools during a crisis or emergency situation.



#### 2023 Council of Government (COG) Award for School Bus **Electrification Project**



Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) received a Metropolitan Washington

**Council of Governments (COG) 2023** Climate and Energy Leadership Award for its School Bus Electrification Project. Through its partnership, ACPS now has 15 electric buses and charging stations, making it the second

largest Electric Vehicle (EV) fleet in Virginia.

### The Alexandria **Beautification Commission**

Named Alexandria City Public Schools' Ferdinand T. Day Elementary School (FTD) was among its 2023 Excellence in Architecture Award recipients.

### **Government Finance Officers** Association of the United States and Canada's (GFOA)

Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) was awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial **Reporting** for its annual comprehensive financial report

#### Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO)

The Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) financial services team was awarded the Certificate of Excellence (COE) in Financial Reporting.

### 2023 Chesapeake School Public Relations (CHESPRA)

Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS)

received 16 awards at the fall conference in the categories of special publications,



website, video production and social media to include:

### National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA)

The Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) Department of School and Community Relations (SCR) received 15 national awards for its outstanding work in school



#### communications and community engagement

at the NSPRA Summit held in July 2023.



three Golden

Achievement

six for







### awards STAFF

**ACHS former English Teacher Eva Irwin** was recognized with the prestigious Milken Educator Award, the first ACPS teacher to earn this high honor.

Golden Apple Awards from the Alexandria PTA Council (PTAC) honored recipients from Alexandria City High School, George Washington Middle School, Charles Barrett, Cora Kelly, James K. Polk, John Adams, Mount Vernon Community School and William Ramsay as well as the Departments of Student Services and Equity and Teaching, Learning and Leadership. They include: Ratna Hilscher, Heather Lindsey, Mary Whorl, Victor Espinosa Sanchez, Anne Booth, Susan Lathrop, Jessica Sayler, Desiree McNutt, Bridget Tomich and Michel Rollo.

**Tiggbee Impact Award** recipients included Career and Technical Education Business Teachers Mr. Clemmons from GWMS and Dr. Laura Moore from Patrick Henry.

The Del Ray Business Association Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Alexandria City High School's (ACHS) longtime employee Patty Moran.

John Adams Elementary School's late Richard Thomas was among the recipients of the **Virginia Safe Routes to School** (SRTS) Most Outstanding Crossing Guard Award for 2023. Mount Vernon Community School General Education Teacher Wendy Morciglio received the **Anne R. Lipnick Award** for Specialized Instruction.

**Move To Learn (M2L) Financial Awards** of \$1K each were given to four teachers, Kelsey Lebuhn, Rebecca De Louise, Tahsin Cash, and Tina Jobkar, at Samuel W. Tucker Elementary School.

Samuel W. Tucker Elementary School was declared the winner of the **Division Greatest Overall Proportionality Award** for the Equity Climate Survey 2023-24.

<u>The Chamber ALX</u> selected ACPS Chief Financial Officer Dominic B. Turner as one of its **40 Under 40 honorees**.

Assistant Director of the Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Center Krishna Leyva was selected as a recipient of the **Shanita Burney Award** for District Leadership in Family and Community Engagement.

ACPS Director of Pupil Transportation and Fleet Management Mechale' Johnson was recognized by the **Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments** for the ACPS School Bus Electrification Project.



### RECOGNITIONS DIVISION WIDE



**Common Sense Education**, the national nonprofit organization dedicated to helping kids and families thrive in a world of media and technology, recognized 100% of ACPS' schools as Common Sense Schools for completing the requirements for teaching Digital Citizenship to our students.

### ACPS' SCHOOLS

Communities in Schools (CIS) is a nonprofit organization that connects students to community resources and caring adults in 25 states and the District of Columbia. Communities in Schools of NOVA (CIS NOVA) works locally to empower Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) students and help the division carry out our 2025 Strategic Plan: Equity for All. CIS NOVA first partnered with ACPS during the 2015-16 academic year at Francis C. Hammond Middle School. The organization has added four other school sites: John Adams Elementary School, William Ramsay Elementary School, and Alexandria City High School - King Street and Minnie Howard campuses. Across the five schools, 80% of CIS NOVA's case managed students are English Language Learners. Each year, CIS NOVA site coordinators and school leadership in each building carry out a needs assessment and develop a plan, and equity is always a big part of that conversation. Areas of focus include attendance, academics and behavior.

The Governor's Health Sciences (GHS)

**program** is a collaboration between ACPS and The George Washington University -School of Medicine and Health Sciences (GWU) that allows our high school students to receive up to 18 college credits from GWU. Students who successfully complete an academy pathway in this program, while

### 18 COLLEGE CREDITS FROM GWU

meeting minimum credit and GPA requirements, are offered guaranteed admission to the GWU School of Medicine and Health Sciences.

#### Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)

is a national nonprofit that plays a key role in closing the achievement gap and ensuring that students go to college. In February 2024, ACPS celebrated the 15-year anniversary of AVID's presence in ACPS. Learn more about the AVID framework and how it transforms our students' lives in a video that debuted during the celebration.

#### **Douglas MacArthur Elementary School**

student Thomas Nguyen Le was awarded first place in the Virginia Black History Month Association Children's Writing Contest.



**George Mason Elementary School** fourth grade student Nicholas Huntsman was named as one of the brightest students worldwide by the Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth (CTY).

#### Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS)

Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy (Lyles-Crouch) is among 110 public and private schools in the Commonwealth to earn a 2023 Purple Star Award from the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) and the



Virginia Council on the Interstate Compact on the Educational Opportunity for Military Children.

**Mount Vernon Community School** fourth grader Elizabeth Jones was named 2023-24 ACPS Elementary School Poet Laureate. The award-winning poem "Let It Wash Over You" is a beautiful reflection on the student's experience moving to the United States from Spain.

**Alexandria City Hall** extended an invitation to the Tucker student chorus group under the guidance of Dr. Smith to perform at Proclamation Day at the DAR Constitution Hall.

#### **The National Education Association**

selected Tucker third graders to participate in the Read Across America event. This was an exclusive event for the third graders



in which our Superintendent Dr. Melanie K. Wyatt, other ACPS Central Office staff and the local media attended.

### COMMUNITY EVENTS DIVISION WIDE

### ACPS celebrated the opening of the newly constructed Douglas MacArthur Elementary

**School** with an official ribbon-cutting ceremony in August 2023. ACPS Superintendent Dr. Melanie Kay-Wyatt called the building a "beacon for the community." Alexandria City School Board Chair Dr. Rief presented a commemorative plaque from the School Board to Douglas MacArthur's principal.

Students and staff at Charles Barrett Elementary School celebrated its 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary in October 2023, with the planting of a willow oak. The tree was donated by the North Ridge Citizens' Association's Tree Canopy Program, as oak is symbolic of this milestone year.



On February 6, 2024, the Washington Commanders joined Mount Vernon Community School staff and volunteers to donate and pack eight weeks worth of food for our weekly Blessings In a Backpack program.



The two organizations, Amazon and Operation Warm, hosted gifting events at William Ramsay Elementary School and Cora Kelly School for Math, Science and Technology during which all students received brand new coats and Grade K-2 students also received a new pair of shoes.

On January 31, 2024, ACPS hosted its very first Student Equity Conference titled, The Innovator's Lab 2024. The goal was to uplift the voice and agency of students who have diverse perspectives and skills.



Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) and community leaders gathered on March 13, 2024, at Mount Vernon Community School for the Third Annual Alexandria City Essential Workers Appreciation Week celebration. The event paid tribute to all essential workers from healthcare staff including school nurses — to law enforcement officers, firefighters, bus drivers, snow plow drivers, nutrition staff, building engineers, custodians, security personnel, teachers, instructional assistants, counselors and support staff.

The ribbon-cutting ceremony held at the new Alexandria City High School (ACHS) Minnie Howard Campus on May 29, 2024, was a historic moment for Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS). This endeavor redefines the high school experience for future generations of Alexandrians. This video captures this momentous event. The new campus is the culmination of years of planning and an integral part of the High School Project, which launched in 2018. As part of the High School Project, the building includes the new Academies at Alexandria City and the career pathways model that will allow for approximately 4,600 students to engage in a new high school learning experience. This innovative hands-on, interactive and engaging approach to education allows students at the high school level to personally select and pursue studies in particular areas of concentration. It also promotes high-quality education in professional fields that will best enable each student to prepare for their future, while potentially impacting and meeting the business needs of the D.C. metro region and beyond. **The six academies within ACHS** focus on an array of subject areas that students can choose to study from including the:



Academy of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math



Academy of Education, Liberal Arts & Human Services



Academy of Visual, Performing and Applied Arts



Academy of Global Studies

Academy of General Studies

## ACADEMIC SUCCESS



Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) serves more than

### **16,300** STUDENTS

hailing from more than **118 COUNTRIES** 

### and speaking **127 LANGUAGES**



ACPS has **18** SCHOOLS

> **2** MIDDLE SCHOOLS

**2** K-8 SCHOOLS

PRE-K SCHOOL

THE INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED Alexandria City High School (ACHS)

### Standards of Learning Results

Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) data indicates that Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) made considerable strides in combined pass rate results in English across all schools achieving at or above the highest (VDOE) state accountability standard, Level One designation.

### 

Within the Math Academic Achievement indicator, **15 of 17 schools met the Level One designation** with the other **two schools earning a Level Two designation** of near standard or making sufficient improvement.

### 

In addition, **16 of 17 schools met Level One designation for Chronic Absenteeism** with 10 schools, showing a five-percentage point increase or greater improvement from the previous school year.

### 

Thirteen schools within ACPS are fully accredited. Four schools are accredited with conditions, including Naomi L. Brooks Elementary School, Ferdinand T. Day Elementary School, Jefferson-Houston PreK-8 IB School and Alexandria City High School; however, these four schools realized year-over-year improvements across 16 out of 19 student indicators.



### Graduation and Dropout Rates

#### On-time graduation rates improved to

the second highest rate seen in 10 years, the last highest rate in 2021 was achieved with COVID-19 provisions.

Compared to last year, the 2024 outcomes **improved overall by four percentage points** to 87 percent and also improved for most student groups.

**Dropout rates decreased** by four percentage points to 9% and saw the largest decreases among English Learners (EL) (-9 percentage points) and economically disadvantaged (-10 percentage points) students.

Over the last three years, the percentage of **ninth** grade students on track to graduate increased by nine percentage points.

Most notably, the percentage of English Learners on track to graduate increased

from 34% in 2022 to 51% in 2024.



## CLASS OF 2024

905

### ALEXANDRIA CITY HIGH SCHOOL (ACHS) GRADUATES

received their diplomas in 2024. The new graduates plan to:

- attend more than 135 UNIVERSITIES
  - serve in the **MILITARY**

work at a

take GAP YEARS

learn a **TECHNICAL VOCATION** 

### CLASS DIVERSITY

- American Indian/Alaska Native: 0.2%
- **Asian:** 6.2%
- Black/African American (non-Hispanic): 26.68%
- White (non-Hispanic): 29.06%
- Hispanic (all races): 36.56%
- Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Island: 0.0%
- Multi (non-Hispanic): 2.29%

**The Scholarship Fund of Alexandria** awarded 216 students scholarships totaling \$644,800 for their first year of college, with renewal throughout their four years of study, totaling \$2,330,300 in value.



## **427** SENIORS



seniors (45% of the Class of 2024) graduated with an Advanced Studies Diploma, the highest percentage of ACHS students to earn an Advanced Studies Diploma

### **21** SENIORS

have planned gap years through the following organizations: Year Up, AmeriCorps and employment/internships.

### **19** STUDENTS



will pursue other post-secondary education in fields such as real estate, skilled trades, cosmetology and public safety.

**19** STUDENTS

have indicated a commitment to serve in the U.S. military.

### **30** TITAN ATHLETES

signed letters of intent to compete in collegiate athletics in nine sports.

The graduates in the class of 2024 were awarded at least \$2,000,000 in scholarships from colleges/universities and non-profit organizations and corporations like Historic Black College University (HBCU) Week Foundation, Inc., QuestBridge College Match, POSSE Foundation, Gates Foundation, Akerson Family Foundation, Beat the Odds Program (BTO), Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC), Air Force ROTC, Navy ROTC, Alexandria Sportsman Club, Educational Opportunities for Alexandrians (EOA), United Fund (UNCF), Dell Scholars Program, Amazon Future Engineers, Harry F. Byrd Scholarship Foundation, Alfred Street Baptist Church (ASBC) Foundation, Cooley-Moore Scholarship and Thurgood Marshall College Fund (TMCF), as well as from many of the schools they will be attending.



### ALEXANDRIA CITY HIGH SCHOOL (ACHS) STUDENTS AND TEAMS

Alexandria City High School King Street Campus Minnie Howard Campus Satellite Campus Chance For Change Campus (CFC)

ACHS had two 2024 National Merit Scholarship Program recipients, Silas B. Adkins-Hooke and Abigail Shih Gerstein, each earning \$2,500 scholarships.

ACHS had a college-sponsored Merit Scholarship recipient, Benjamin D. Turney, who was awarded the National Merit Purdue University Scholarship.

ACHS Class of 2024 senior Iris Rodriguez Rivera was a Dell Scholarship recipient.

**ACHS senior Yahney-Marie Sangare** was selected as the winner of the Harry F. Byrd Jr. Leadership Award from Virginia's 8th Congressional District.

**The Titan Robotics Team** at Alexandria City High School (ACHS) came up with a big win at the 2024 FIRST Robotics District Championship hosted by Virginia State University.

National Hispanic Recognition Award: Julio Barroso-Perez, Lia Fitzgerald, Sienna Lardizabal, Elvert Nunez, Sofia Reyes, Erika Vidal, Alexander Witebsky and Victoria Zambrano-Argueta.

#### 34 students from Alexandria City High School (ACHS)

were recognized by the College Board National Recognition Programs in October 2023, and honored with the following awards.

- National Merit Scholarship Semifinalists: Abigail Gerstein, Silas Adkins-Hooke, Bennett Imlay and Benjamin Turney.
- National Merit Scholarship Commended Students: Ned Brown, Maxwell Ellis, Sam Espach, Thomas Lane, Josephine Lawson, Anna Turney and Chloe Yokitis.
- National African American Recognition Award: Alem Alem, Jenaba Bah, Malia Cozier, Daniel Dawit, Caleb Etse, Taylor Frazier, Hayat Ismael, Yasmeen Mukhtar, William Price, Catherine Salomons, Yahney-Marie Sangare, Girum Tekle, Essey Tesfai, Sara Woube and Nahom Yohannes.

**Two ACHS Class of 2024 students, William Gomez-Palacios and Zuha Hassen** were among the 400 recipients nationwide this year to receive an Amazon Future Engineer Scholarship.



#### ACHS earned nominations in The Cappies, the D.C.

region's Tony Awards of high school theater. The musical "Bring It On" received two nominations that included: Jayden Benitez for Featured Actor in a Female Role in a Musical and Ariana Singleton for Dancer in a Female Role.

**Virginia House of Delegates member Elizabeth Bennett-Parker** presented an official resolution recognizing the civic efforts of ACHS student Zahra Rahimi.

**ACHS had three QuestBridge Scholarship recipients:** Sara Woube, Lucia Stakem and Zuha Hassen as well as four Posse Foundation Scholarship recipients: Chloe Yokitis, Zahra Rahimi, Mohammed Rahman and Krissia Rodriguez Rivera.

ACHS Colore Dolce and Advanced Choir won the Grand Champion Award at the OrlandoFest National Music Festival, where two students, LaNya Williams and Anna McMahon, also received most outstanding soloist awards.

Two ACHS teams qualified for the Virginia High School League (VHSL) State Final Tournament in Policy Debate. Members included Alena Cooper, Sophia Bassingthwaite, Harlow Babic and Andrew Bell.

**ACHS student Quinn MacBride** placed third at the Virginia High School League (VHSL) State Forensics meet.

ACHS students Alisha Jackson, Kye Robinson and Darius Bivins were among the Washington Post Winter All-Met honorees for being the best high school athletes in the D.C., Maryland and Virginia in both public and private schools.

The Titan School Store at ACHS achieved Gold Level re-certification for the 2023-24 school year and was named the #2 BEST School-Based Enterprise in the Commonwealth out of 461 by DECA.

**ACHS sophomore Zeanise Grandberry** was named the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Washington's Youth of the Year. The Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) Drill Team took top honors in the Unarmed category in the "Best of the Best" competition at the D.C. National Guard Armory. ACHS' awards included Overall Unarmed Division, first place Color Guard, first place inspection, second place unarmed platoon and first place and fifth place knockout.



#### ACHS Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA)

students shined at the Student Leadership Conference (SLC). Eleven Alexandria City High School Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA) students: Anait Wilson, Esinam Dedoo, Jasmine Bailey, Parker Graham, Alex Cirmo, Victoria Laschet, Carroll Fortune Jr, Jack Sutherland, Matthew Ralis, Leia Hubbard and Sally Cox advanced to the International Stage which recognizes emerging leaders and entrepreneurs for careers in marketing, finance, hospitality and management; in addition to 17 ACHS students: Nathan Biru, Armani Bocaud, Alex Cirmo, Gabriella Rosa Escobar, Carroll Fortune Jr., Parker Graham, Victoria Laschet, Ermilia Mazariegos, Ainsley McDermott, Finn McNabb, Karol De La Cruz Ortega, William Price, Matthew Ralis, Max Vilar-Ramos, Angie Sosa, Jack Sutherland and Peyton Turnbull received top honors in their test, `and/or role play events.

ACHS student musician Patrick Johannes Ostermann-Healey was the recipient of the James Bland Award. ACHS students Lester Hernandez Aleman and Lester Tercero were each awarded the highest value scholarship from The Scholarship Fund of Alexandria.



All Star Jazz selected ACHS participants included Julian Ambrose, Zachary Baker-Heil, Silas Adkins-Hooke, Eva Mulrooney, Nathaniel Niblock, Violet Planey, Josue Sanchez, Tyler Stone, Zacharia Stover and Lucas Williams. All District Bands' selected participants were: Silas Adkins-Hooke, Nathan Huang, Maggie Montero, Cole Austin, Zoe Foster, Saron Yewondwossen, Parker Lo, Nate Niblock, Violet Planey, Eva Mulrooney,Tyler Stone, Legend Barnes, Julia Dresen, Laura Barry-Lenger, Shulamite Yawson, Sam Cantrell, Eliza Costle-Tyler, Nyima Brown, Julian Ambrose, Douglas Patrick and Josue Sanchez-Albiter.

ACHS We the People team members William Gomez, Thomas Lane, Briana Mason, Francess Pombor and Camille Revah Tacher won Best Unit Four at the State Finals.

The Fall Coach of the Year Award was presented to Titan Volleyball Coach Danielle Thorne in her fourth-year coaching with the Titans. Thorne is an ACHS graduate where she was a three-year Varsity starter.

ACHS athletes Grace Metzler, Gretta Anderson, Abigail Altenburg, Aidan O'Brein and Niko Hales signed National Letters of Intent to play a sport at the collegiate level.

### Alexandria City School Board student representative Zahra

Rahimi was one among 15 young women recognized by First Lady Jill Biden, during the Girls Leading Change ceremony at the White House in October 2023, in celebration of International Day of the Girl Child.



**ACHS senior Mohommed Abir Rhaman** earned an incredible perfect score on the Advanced Placement (AP) U.S. History exam, making him one of only 13 students to earn every point possible on this college-level examination.

**ACHS student Joshua Smith** was one of five recipients to receive the 2023 Financial Literacy Ambassador Award. The Working in Support of Education (W!SE) award is presented to high school students for exemplary applications and who passed the W!SE Financial Literacy Certification Test with a score of 95% or better.

ACHS had its first student representative Salma El Gourchal appointed to the DASH Advisory Committee (DAC).

**Two ACHS seniors Zahra Rahimi and Hosai Rasuli** wrote and produced an eight-minute documentary called "Desperate" were honored with a special screening at George Mason University's (GMU) Johnson Center Cinema.

ACHS Teachers Hope Bachman and Leslie Jones were recognized for their 20-Year ACHS Theater partnership.











### ACPS ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

**Two Francis C. Hammond Middle School students, Sydney Robasson and Jada Ashun**, were recognized by Virginia Senator Adam Ebbin for their participation in the Senate of Virginia Page Program.

**Francis C. Hammond Middle School** was the only school from Virginia whose students qualified to have the honor of competing in the 2024 National Championship and the 2024 FAI F9A Drone Soccer Open International World Cup hosted by Virginia Tech.

The George Washington Middle School Symphonic and Jazz Bands competed in the Music in the Parks Festival in Williamsburg, Virginia. The Symphonic Band took second place. The Jazz Band won first place in the middle school division and Best Overall Jazz Ensemble and three students (Tori Kuem, Axel Kotuby and Damani Kim) received scholarships to the Shenandoah Jazz Camp.

The George Washington Orchestras under the direction of Orchestra Director Jonathan Jones competed in the Showcase Music Festival. The

Philharmonic Orchestra garnered a Superior Rating and took first place, Best Overall Instrumental Ensemble. The Sixth Grade Symphonic Orchestra got an Excellent Rating and second place. The Prelude Orchestra won an Excellent Rating and first place for Outstanding Soloists, Georgia Vogel and Samuel Thulson as well as Outstanding Accompanist, Scarlett Yang. The George Washington Choirs under the direction of Choral Director Jessica Sayler competed in the Showcase Music Festival and won the award for the Best Overall Choir of the Competition. The Concert Choir received Superior ratings and a first place trophy, the Advanced Choir received Superior ratings and a first place trophy, and Adrian Lawlor, June Gunter and Sadie Szamosfalvi received awards as Outstanding Student Accompanists.

Five George Washington Middle School (GW) students Paul Loberg, Theodore Marvin, Callen Ohlandt, Ruby Atkisson and Nora Plunkett advanced to the National History Day state competition.

George Washington Middle School's (GW) robotics program, Prexie Robotics, had three of its four SeaPerch underwater robotics teams advance to the international competition based on their results in the regional event at the United States Naval Academy.

Patrick Henry K-8 School seventh grader YoselinAchulle Pachacama was awarded the Best of the DivisionGrade Level Award at the annual ACPS Poetry Contest.

**Early Education Center (EEC) student achievements** 

included GOLD Objective for Learning 3b: Participates cooperatively and constructively in social situations by solving problems, 73% of VPI students and 49% of EEC students met or exceeded age level expectations; on GOLD Objective for Learning 11e: Demonstrates positive



approaches to learning-Shows flexibility and inventiveness of thinking, 97% of VPI students and 47% of EEC students met or exceeded age level expectations; on GOLD Objective for Learning 23: and Demonstrates knowledge of patterns, 86% of VPI students and 56% of EEC students met or exceeded age-level expectations.

**Two Ferdinand T. Day Elementary School students, Emerson Hunte and Malick Diallo**, took second and third places at the 2024 Virginia Black History Month Writing Contest.

"Pirates! The Musical" put the spotlight on Douglas MacArthur Elementary School's students in fourth and fifth grade chorus.

Former John Adams Elementary School Eagle Niko Tejeda organized an Eagle Scout project to benefit the John Adams Gardens and Habitat. Part of the Eagle Scout project included planting trees in memory of teacher, Alice Merbeth and instructional assistant, Erin Turner Waldron, who passed away.

Artwork by two Mount Vernon Community School students, Teegan Philyaw and Cam Byrnett, was chosen to be displayed for the next year in the ACPS School Board meeting room.

All K-5 grade levels Naomi L. Brooks students engaged in hands-on Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) programming with community partner Rosie Riveters.

The Third Annual Fun Run was sponsored, organized, and led by the Brooks Student Council Association, who created a fun and high-energy experience for the student body.

#### 119 students in Grades 2-5 participated in After School

**Intervention** over three sessions (fall, winter, spring). Additionally, 18 of our kindergarten and first grade students received one-on-one support from a trained tutor. 11 first grade students participated in the Book Buddies program, and seven students participated in the Kindergarten Reading Readiness program.

All fifth grade students were honored with the Samuel W. Tucker Award at the promotion ceremony for exhibiting excellence in academics and citizenship.

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**Students at William Ramsay Elementary School** put their creative skills to a test, performing in a Standards of Learning (SOL) hype song video, "Do My Best," in advance of non-writing tests conducted between May 1 and June 7, 2024 for all Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) students in grades 3-12.

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## ACPS ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL TEAMS

In an effort to invite families to join Alexandria City Public Schools' (ACPS) longstanding equity journey and promote Family Engagement Month, the Office of Community Partnerships & Engagement partnered with Kindred Communities to facilitate a ten-session race and equity dialogue experience, bringing together a diverse group of ACPS family members and staff from across the division. As part of the Family Engagement Blueprint Action Plan to integrate best practices for family engagement across the division, the Family and Community Engagement (FACE) team extended the Kindred Communities partnership to Charles Barrett Elementary School (Charles Barrett).

James K. Polk Elementary School (Polk) English Language Learner Teachers Bridget Brown (long-term sub), Lynsie Cody, Carrie Drummond, Nancy Kelce, Lauren Vanni, Juanita Gavan, Amanda Priestley, Elyse Thomas Erin Weleski, led by Ms. Hines created a memorable family engagement learning experience for all with Heritage Night.





**Polk**, in conjunction with the Psi Nu Alumni chapter of Omega Phi Psi Fraternity, created a Boys Meeting Program to mentor boys in grades 3-5.

**Early Education Center (EEC)** staff designed and implemented their new "Family Staff Alliance," a model for family engagement and empowerment that is intended to bring partners in education together to better serve children and to empower families.

**EEC successfully completed the first year of its new preschool dual-language program** which delivers instruction in both Spanish and English.

Mount Vernon Community School hosted over 20 international educators through the U.S. Department of State International Visitor Leadership Program.

Naomi L. Brooks continues to have a strong relationship with Move2Learn and Running Brooke through its "Reading & Riding" program with stationary bikes, as well as, consistent engagement in school-wide movement challenges.

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS ACPS DEPARTMENTS

**Capstone presentations that highlight ACPS' datadriven accomplishments** were made by the office of school improvement analysts as part of their participation in the Strategic Data Project (SDP) which is part of the Center for Education Policy and Research at Harvard University.

The ACPS Office of Pupil Transportation and Fleet Management introduced Parent Portal, an application that allows families to track their students' buses in real-time. The launch of Parent Portal is a communication engagement tool for families and one that is helping close the gap between bus arrival/dismissal times and timely communication.

#### ACPS hosted its annual Licensed Hiring Fair in February

and representatives from the Department of Human Resources attended and/or hosted nearly 40 events over the course of the 2023-24 school year. Additionally, ACPS launched our partnership with iTeach in February, establishing another pipeline for professionals who switch careers to enter teaching roles in our school division. The ACPS partnership with George Washington University is another important recruitment program that focuses on specialized instruction and offers ongoing information sessions for discussing the opportunities offered to potential job candidates. A similar partnership with the residency program in the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Education (VCU) School of Education is also being explored.

All students in ACPS were provided with the opportunity to access free teletherapy to support students' academic and social development. The Hazel Health program is available regardless of the student's economic status or citizenship and is provided in multiple languages at school or at home.



After submitting and receiving approval for the All In Virginia spending plan to focus on addressing chronic absenteeism, the Department of Student Services and Equity worked to ensure that all elementary and secondary schools were prepared to address the attendance needs of students. Attendance liaisons were identified at each school and they met regularly to discuss attendance best practices, to ensure that each school had an attendance team and to plan for the 2024-25 school year. Attendance rates improved in 15 ACPS schools during the 2023-24 school year.

The ACPS Adult Learning Center hosted its first annual "Chatterbox Series" to help English Learners (ELs) practice conversation with a fluent speaker.

### The Alexandria City Digital Certification Cohort provided an opportunity for teachers to earn

**certifications** in ACPS-approved resources/tools to impact student learning through improved technology integration by participating in the cohort and completing requirements for earning digital certifications/badges from at least two out of six ACPS-approved resources. **Technology advances included the installation of new SMARTBoards** installed in all George Washington and Francis C. Hammond Middle School classrooms and the replacement of the wireless network for improved connectivity at the Alexandria City High School- King St campus.

**CyberSecurity Highlights include:** increased ACPS' security posture by enforcing Two Factor Authentication (2FA) and the procurement of 24/7 monitoring of the ACPS network.

#### 17 educators participated in the first

**Teacher Leadership Project (TLP)** cohort, a year-long cohort that gives teachers the chance to collaborate with other teacher/leaders across the division, enhance their technology integration practice and develop their leadership skills through a series of in-person and asynchronous learning opportunities.



### 2024 ACPS Principal and Teacher of the Celebrati

### TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR

The Alexandria City School Board celebrated academic excellence in Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) at its May 9, 2024, meeting. Jasibi Crews, former principal of Cora Kelly School for Math, Science and Technology, was honored as the 2023-24 ACPS Principal of the Year. Tiffany Lee-Clarke, who teaches third grade at Naomi L. Brooks Elementary School (NLB), was recognized as the 2023-24 ACPS Teacher of the Year.

### Jasibi Crews - Former Principal, Cora Kelly School for Math, Science and Technology

Jasibi Crews was appointed Principal of Cora Kelly School for Math Science and Technology in June 2017, after serving as an assistant principal of John Adams Elementary School. Crews has more than 24 years of experience as an educator. The California native earned a Bachelor's in Elementary Education with a concentration in Spanish from California State University. She later went on to earn a Master's in Educational Leadership from Pepperdine University. Crews is also a Certified Project GLAD trainer.

#### Tiffany Lee-Clarke - Teacher, Naomi L. Brooks Elementary School

Tiffany Lee-Clarke has been teaching for over 30 years and currently teaches third grade at Naomi L. Brooks Elementary School in Alexandria City. Born and raised in Baltimore, Maryland, Ms. Lee-Clarke, affectionately known as Mrs. TLC, a nickname fashioned after her name's initials, appropriately describes the tender loving care she provides and inspires students each and every day as well as their families and her fellow co-workers throughout the NLB school community. She learned the importance of teamwork when given the opportunity to play collegiate-level basketball and volleyball. In college, she was also a member of the Alpha Kappa Sorority Inc. while she pursued a degree in education at Delaware State University.

### CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS





### Completion of School Security Vestibules

The ACPS Office of Educational Facilities completed construction of the final school security vestibules. Security vestibules are secure structures at the entrances of all school facilities. The vestibules prohibit public access to our school facilities without the proper ID verification process occurring. The completion of security vestibules add to our security posture as a division and help further the goal of keeping all students and staff safe while in our facilities.



### Modernization of Educational Facilities

**The athletic fields and playground opened** for school and community use in November 2023 at Douglas MacArthur Elementary School.

The design of the 1703 N. Beauregard swing space was finalized and the demolition of interior spaces was completed.

**The FY25-34 Capital Improvement Budget** was adopted in June to include construction funds for George Mason Elementary School. The Request For Proposal (RFP) process to select an architecture and engineering firm began and VMDO Architects was brought on board.

Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Improvements were made at Cora Kelly School for Math, Science and Technology, Charles Barrett Elementary School, Francis C. Hammond Middle School, George Washington Middle School, Samuel W. Tucker Elementary School and William Ramsay Elementary School.

#### Luxury Vinyl Tile (LVT)

**installation** was completed at Cora Kelly, Barrett, Hammond, James K. Polk Elementary School, John Adams Elementary School, Lyles-Crouch Elementary School, Mount Vernon Community School,



Naomi L. Brooks Elementary School, Tucker and Ramsay.

**Stormwater improvements** at James K. Polk, John Adams and Mount Vernon.

**Asbestos remediation** at Barrett, Hammond, Polk, Adams, Lyles-Crouch, MVCS, Brooks and Ramsay.

**Gymnasium renovations** at Alexandria City High School - King St. Campus, Early Childhood Center, Hammond and George Washington.

New ceiling at Barrett, Polk and Ramsay.

### PARTNERSHIPS AND VOLUNTEERS

187	187 community partnerships that offer all types of student and family support, including emotional/ social/tutoring/mentoring/STEM/literacy/math/family engagement, to all of our schools throughout the division.
55	Higher Education Partnerships - We have approximately 55 higher education intern partnerships throughout the division.
3,987	In 2023-24, ACPS approved a total of 3,987 volunteer applications. ACPS also continues to have a strong partnership with Volunteer Alexandria, providing opportunities for our community members.
130	Community Lodgings serves approximately 130 Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) students each year who live in the city's Arlandria neighborhood through its youth education programs.
130	Amazon funded STEM experiences for all eighth grade students and STEM Academy students as well as facilitated the Northern Virginia Reading is Fundamental (RIF) donation of two books for every PreK-2 student.



#### Family Information Line

Family liaisons and outreach assistants continued to connect families in need of assistance through the Family Information Line. Families can text or call the Family Information Line Monday-Friday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. For **English and Spanish**, text or call 703-619-8055 For **Amharic**, text or call 703-927-6866 For **Arabic**, text or call 703-927-7095

### Language Line Direct Response

A new language-support service makes calling ACPS schools easier for thousands of families who speak Spanish, Amharic, Arabic, Pashto, or Farsi. Language Line's Direct Response service allows ACPS families to contact their school with interpretation service already on the line, eliminating language barriers they may have encountered in the past. ACPS is the first school system in Virginia and the third in the country to implement this Language Line service. Call us at 1-833-611-1667.

### Follow us on Social Media





To share a concern or comment with ACPS leadership or to ask a question about division-wide issues, community members can write to **ask@ acps.k12.va.us**.



