STRATEGIC PLAN

2022-2027

ACS BOARD APPROVED JUNE 2022



REVIEWING WHAT WE'VE DONE

2018 - 2023 STRATEGIC PLAN

MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS

2018 - 2023

Our Identified Pillars

- Improve Student Achievement
- Maximize Employee Capacity
- Improve Organizational Efficiency & Effectiveness
- Engage Community Support

Some Major Initiatives

- Incorporating eMints district-wide
- Spotlight on Employees
- Extra personal day for those at the top step
- Superintendent Leadership Roundtable
- Transition AMS to the Tigers

Other Take Aways

- Employee Benefits Presentations
- Quarterly Food Trucks
- Align ACT Standards Into Pacing Guides
- Transition select AP Coursework & opportunities to lower high school grades

A NEW APPROACH.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

should touch every employee and serve as a forward-focused vision for the entire district.

yet...

We found the 2018 -2023 plan was:

- Not a long term vision (the past two strategic plans have been accomplished 1+ years prior to end date
- Central Office Based (not widely known district-wide)
- Too much of a check list of givens
- Not transformational/didn't become part of our culture



PHASE ONE.





PORTRAIT OF AN ACS GRADUATE





The Portrait of an ACS Graduate is

our vision

for students and what they will need to succeed in college, career and life by identifying 21st century skills, character traits and social/emotional competencies.



WHAT WE SET OUT TO ANSWER

In order to form the Portrait of the ACS Graduate, we needed to answer:

- What skills are essential for our students' futures?
- What are the hopes, aspirations and dreams that our community has for our young learners?
- What traits, skills and mindsets do students need to be successful, regardless of the area they choose to pursue?
- What do we want our students to have beyond test scores when they graduate or promote grade levels?
- What skills do our students currently lack when graduating & what can we do about it?









FEEDBACK PERIOD

Diverse ACS Strategic Plan Committee

AHS Student Listening Session

AMS Student Listening Session

Elementary Listening Session

AHS Alumni Listening Session

School Leadership Team Feedback

District Learning Day Session

ACS Parent Survey

Arlington Chamber of Commerce/Board Survey

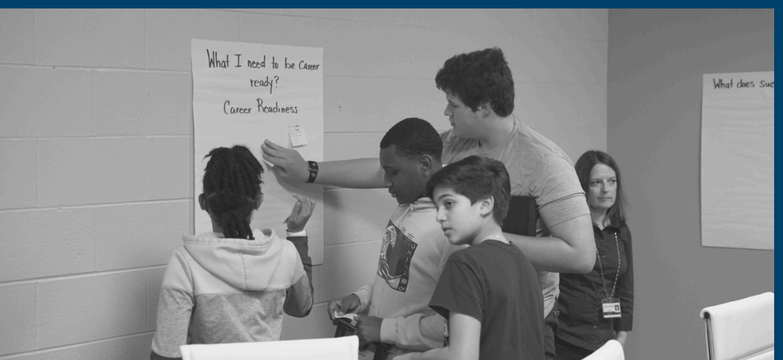
ACS Strategic Plan Findings Reports

Listening and feedback sessions were developed and led by school teams to create school-level ownership and buy-in.









WE HEARD FROM...

400+ EMPLOYEES

800+ PARENTS

70+ STUDENTS

18 ALUMNI

31 CHAMBER MEMBERS

1,300+ VOICES

ACS **GRADUATES** WILL...



- COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY
- COLLABORATE INTENTIONALLY
- CULTIVATE CREATIVITY
- BE RESILIENT
- LEAD WITH EMPATHY

COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY

"I think the biggest shock to my system going into college is that I was terrified of communicating with people I didn't know. **Communication is such an essential skill that I wasn't even aware that I lacked**, and I wish I had been forced into those uncomfortable situations before I had graduated high school."

- ACS Alumni, Class of 2018



ACS **GRADUATES** WILL...

COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY

listens to others to generate understanding

unafraid and empowered to ask questions

knows how to engage in thoughtful communication even in the absence of technology

presents information in a variety of contexts using digital and non-digital tools

uses technology and contemporary digital tools to explore and exchange ideas that are productive and respectful

aware of how body language and nonverbal communication reinforces what is being conveyed

COLLABORATE INTENTIONALLY

"Most projects nowadays are done on keynote or powerpoint, but I would like the opportunity to work with and learn from others more even in regular classes. I think COVID has shown us that **there's value in building relationships and working together to solve the world's problems.**

- AMS Student



ACS **GRADUATES** WILL...

COLLABORATE INTENTIONALLY

seeks out diverse opinions to grow in their learning

builds and nurtures collaborative relationships through diverse networking

recognizes, respects and celebrates strengths in self and others

assumes shared responsibility for collaborative work

values the individual contributions made by each team member

CULTIVATE CREATIVITY

"There's nothing like **seeing a kid create something themselves** instead of filling out the same old worksheet I've used for the past 10 years."

- ACS Elementary Teacher



ACS **GRADUATES** WILL...

CULTIVATE CREATIVITY

designs and implements solutions to complex problems

explores multiple possibilities and challenges the status quo

expresses thoughts, ideas and emotions in varied ways – design, art, writing and speaking

thinks about the “big picture” while not being confined by predetermined norms

BE RESILIENT

"**Resilience and perseverance.** Whether in college or the workforce, they need to have the strength and **GRIT** to not give up when the going gets tough. We can teach them how to follow a path forward, and most importantly, ROOT for them along the way by investing in THEM, not their final grade."

- Parent of AMS Student



ACS **GRADUATES** WILL...

BE RESILIENT

able to bounce back from difficult or disappointing experiences

exhibits a tolerance for ambiguity and the capacity to work with open-ended problems

embraces failure and humility as essential steps towards success

focuses on goals through dedication and hard work

demonstrates belief in self by realizing one's potential

engages in self-improvement and advocacy

LEAD WITH EMPATHY

"**Service to others.** In workforce this means helping a business succeed by being an asset to that business.
Not the typical 'What's In It For Me.'"

- Arlington Community Business Owner



ACS **GRADUATES** WILL...

LEAD WITH EMPATHY

understands and is aware of the needs, feelings and thoughts of others
confident in discussing emotions to find understanding
navigates relationships with generosity and patience
actively participates in the community by giving back in positive ways; civic-minded

ACS **GRADUATES** WILL...

COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY
COLLABORATE INTENTIONALLY
CULTIVATE CREATIVITY
BE RESILIENT
LEAD WITH EMPATHY

PHASE TWO.

Our Strategies to Attain the

PORTRAIT OF AN ACS GRADUATE

Innovators of the Future.



Align the POG competencies to every course PreK-12 through tailored professional development and lesson planning.

This is our commitment district-wide to keep the Portrait of an ACS Graduate competencies at the forefront of everything we do. District Office departments, administrative teams, classroom teachers, PLCs and other ACS teams should find ways to promote and highlight: Communicate Effectively, Collaborate Intentionally, Cultivate Creativity, Be Resilient, Lead with Empathy.



Identify and develop a K-12 college and career platform that helps learners discover interests, strengths and post-ACS goals to create a long-term road map from the moment they enter the district.

The district has begun researching robust platforms that will track student interest data from the time they enter ACS. The goal of this platform will be to eventually track career interests, college programs matching those interests, nationwide scholarship opportunities, alumni directory information and more. This will also help give parents a road map to future colleges and careers for their students.



Define and implement student-centered approaches to teaching and learning by emphasizing K-12 project-based learning and blended learning strategies to ensure students are actively engaged in and taking ownership of real-world learning.

Throughout this process, we heard from students, alumni and teachers that they wanted more of an emphasis on project-based learning opportunities to help further engage students. Many also felt there could be a more balanced use of technology. In many classrooms, this means shifting from **lecturer to facilitator** to create an environment where students are active rather than passive learners.



Continue rigorous and inclusive professional development content by seeking administrator, educator and staff input.

In order to keep the Portrait of an ACS Graduate at the forefront, we must be intentional about how professional development ties back to the five competencies. We will also continue to seek administrator, educator and staff suggestions as to what type of professional development opportunities they would like to have available in ACS.



Define and build essential student life skills in a PreK-8 progression: Organization & Planning; Initiating Tasks; Time Management; Emotion Management; Effective Oral, Written & Non-Verbal Communication Skills

"What skills do our students currently lack" was one of the primary questions asked of students, teachers, parents and community members during the Portrait of an ACS Graduate Strategic Plan. "Life skills" for students in Grades PreK-8 look very different from those of their older peers. This action step challenges and encourages us to embed the life skills stated above as frequently as possible to prepare students for high school.



Define and build essential student life skills in a 9-12 progression: Money Management; Organization & Planning; Networking; Stress Management; Professional Communication; Building Healthy Physical & Mental Habits

"Kids need to learn how to do taxes." We heard that line continuously throughout the process, and while learning how to do taxes is important, we think there are other foundational money management skills and life skills that can help high school graduates succeed. This action step challenges Arlington High School to find ways to intentionally incorporate these life skills throughout our students' high school careers.



Implement and encourage school and district-wide service-learning projects that positively impact the community at large and promote empathetic citizenry

We know that community service is a major component of college admissions, particularly when it comes to obtaining competitive scholarships. The more you give back to the community through service the greater ability you have to show your well-roundedness as a student. But through this strategic plan process, we've learned how much our stakeholders value community service and what it can do to create a resilient and empathetic citizen. This is our commitment to support and encourage more service-learning projects in our schools to develop empathetic leaders.



District commitment to additional mental health resources through staffing, educator and staff training, social-emotional supports; and promote regular and intentional wellness solutions for students, teachers and staff.

Research now shows that nearly 1 in 5 children struggle with some form of mental health illness (anxiety, depression, ADHD, among other disorders), and even locally, we've seen how the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated this in some children. In line with Tennessee's Whole Child initiative, we want to ensure that students have the support they need to succeed not just through academics alone but through cognitive, physical, social and emotional development.

But to have the healthiest student body, we must also keep our focus on supporting our teachers and staff by promoting regular and intentional wellness solutions.



Host annual school-level student listening sessions to ensure student voice is being considered, heard and incorporated where appropriate.

Student listening sessions were held at all elementary, middle and high school levels during the strategic plan process, and truthfully, we loved it! Our school-level teams found great value in hearing unadulterated and honest feedback from our students about what they love and, frankly, hate about school and how we can more effectively educate and reach them on their levels. They were also honest about themselves by self-evaluating themselves and their peers.



Support the interests and involvement of students by identifying clubs and organizations that actively engage students in real-world learning.

We asked teachers, staff members, students and parents what they loved about schools in ACS. While academics was at the top of the list, another overwhelmingly popular answer was clubs, organizations and ways for students to get involved beyond the classroom. Engaged and involved students will not only fuel their love for school, it will also better help them master our five competencies: Communicate Effectively, Collaborate Intentionally, Cultivate Creativity, Be Resilient, Lead with Empathy.



Develop and implement strategies to improve and expand parent education programs in areas such as: academics, social-emotional learning and child mental health, preparing for your child's next steps, etc.

2022-2027 will present new challenges yet also new opportunities in our students' educational journeys. ACS is ripe with talented educators, counselors, social & transition specialists, nurses and so many more experts who can help parents "parent" by offering their expertise through our already established ACS PEP Talks Program.



Empower school administrative and leadership teams to incorporate building-specific solutions to model and attain the Portrait of an ACS Graduate competencies.

If it's one thing this strategic plan doesn't do, it's that we don't pretend to have all the answers. We know that these visionary goals will look much differently at each educational level, and that's okay and welcomed. The goal of this Portrait of an ACS Graduate is that WE ALL (students, teachers, staff, parents and community members) take ownership of the five competencies, and that will thrillingly take on many different shapes and sizes.

Final Thoughts

This strategic plan notably doesn't include timelines, dates of completion and specified action steps.

Instead, it gives us a visionary set of goals, a north star through our Portrait of an ACS Graduate, and it's a living document...

allowing us to adapt to the needs of our students.

