



An Achievable Dream (AAD) Academy: *Comprehensive Evaluation*

By: Allison M. Bock, Ph.D., Program Evaluation Specialist and
Heidi L. Janicki, Ph.D., Director of Research and Evaluation

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Introduction

Background

An Achievable Dream (AAD) began in 1992 in Newport News Public Schools and offers a public-school program designed to close the achievement gap and support students' success regardless of their socioeconomic background. The goal of AAD is to work with schools in primarily under-served communities and provide additional resources to level the playing field for students. More generally, An Achievable Dream's mission is to develop independent, productive citizens. The program offers an extended school day and year, as well as additional opportunities for students, such as field trips and numerous clubs. Students also participate in a specialized curriculum that provides opportunities to develop social, academic, and mindset skills that help them become strong adults. The program also stresses high expectations through student and parent educational contracts, as well as a dress code for students. At the secondary level, there is also a strong focus on preparing students for their college and career plans.

The contract between An Achievable Dream, Inc. and Virginia Beach City Public Schools (VBCPS) was presented to the School Board on June 18, 2013 and approved on July 16, 2013. An Achievable Dream Academy began in VBCPS at Seatack Elementary School in the 2014-2015 school year with implementation in kindergarten through second grade. The AAD program expanded to include third grade in 2015-2016, fourth grade in 2016-2017, and fifth grade in 2017-2018. The sixth through eighth grades were added at Lynnhaven Middle School in 2018-2019 through 2020-2021 and operates as a school within a school. From 2021-2022 through 2024-2025, the ninth through twelfth grades were added to AAD. Initially, ninth and tenth grades were located in learning cottages at Lynnhaven Middle School for core content courses, and students were transported to First Colonial High School for elective courses.¹ During 2023-2024, a new wing at Lynnhaven Middle School was opened for the high school AAD students, and all high school students were relocated to this separate, independent wing at Lynnhaven Middle School.

Background and Purpose of Program Evaluation

During the elementary school implementation of An Achievable Dream Academy at Seatack Elementary School, the VBCPS Office of Research and Evaluation (ORE) conducted two comprehensive program evaluations with the School Board receiving reports on October 24, 2017 and November 13, 2018. An additional evaluation update was conducted during the 2018-2019 school year, which focused on the recommendation areas from the prior evaluation and follow-up for the first cohort of sixth-grade students.²

Because An Achievable Dream reached full implementation across all planned grade levels (K-12) with its first group of twelfth graders in 2024-2025 and because the program operates with local resources, an evaluation of AAD was required by School Board Policy 6-26. The comprehensive evaluation during 2024-2025 provides the School Board, Superintendent, and program managers with AAD information about the implementation of AAD for all school levels (K-12), student outcomes for the 2024-2025 school year, and information about the accomplishment of the program's goals and program effectiveness. The comprehensive evaluation addressed alignment with the school division's strategic framework, the operation of the program, enrollment patterns and characteristics of students enrolled, progress toward meeting established goals and objectives, stakeholder perceptions, and the additional cost of AAD (K-12) to the school division.

Program Goals and Objectives

Goals for this comprehensive evaluation were based on the AAD Academies' ten Strategic Goals for 2024-2025 provided by the president and CEO of An Achievable Dream, Inc. that are monitored by AAD, Inc. to assess

improvement from year to year. The goal areas were categorized into two types of goals by program evaluators: implementation goals and student outcome goals. Implementation-related strategic goals included: family engagement; Social, Academic, and Mindset Education (SAME) curriculum implementation; teacher retention; and student retention. The implementation goals were primarily assessed using teacher retention, student enrollment data, and stakeholder perception data. The student outcome-related strategic goals included: student performance on core content Standards of Learning (SOL) tests, literacy, attendance, discipline, and graduation. The student outcome goals were primarily evaluated through matched comparison group analyses, which provided a comparison of outcomes with demographically similar students who were not enrolled in the program to assess the extent to which performance was related to the program. An additional goal related to alumni was not included in this evaluation because there were no VBCPS AAD alumni during the 2024-2025 school year.

Evaluation Design and Methodology

Evaluation Design and Data Collection

The purpose of this comprehensive evaluation was to assess the implementation of AAD during its year of full implementation from kindergarten through grade 12 and assess the progress toward meeting the goals of AAD. The evaluation included mixed methodologies to address each of the evaluation questions. Quantitative data were gathered through closed-ended survey questions and from the VBCPS data warehouse. Qualitative data were collected through interviews with program managers, document reviews, observations during site visits, open-ended survey questions, and a focus group with graduating AAD seniors.

The Office of Research and Evaluation evaluators used the following data collection methods:

- Reviewed the An Achievable Dream and VBCPS websites, the partnership contract with VBCPS, the AAD Parent and Student Handbook, the AAD staff handbook, and AAD Academies Strategic Goals document to obtain information about the operational components of the program.
- Gathered and analyzed data from the VBCPS data warehouse related to student demographics and student progress in the school and division (e.g., enrollment, academic performance, discipline, attendance, graduation, course enrollments).
- Administered surveys to students in grades 4 through 12, parents, administrators, and instructional staff.
- Conducted a focus group with graduating AAD seniors.
- Collected staffing data for 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 from AAD (i.e., staff receiving a stipend), as well as collected staffing data for 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 for Lynnhaven Middle School from the Department of School Leadership.
- Collected AAD instructional staff characteristics for 2024-2025 from the Department of Human Resources.
- Collected cost information from the departments of Budget and Finance and School Division Services (e.g., facilities, transportation).
- Conducted school site visits at Seatack Elementary School and Lynnhaven Middle School to observe implementation aspects of the program. During the site visits, interviews were conducted with AAD program administrators, including the academy coordinator at the secondary level.

Surveys

As part of a larger survey effort of multiple initiatives, the Office of Research and Evaluation invited students in grades 4 through 12, parents, instructional staff, and administrators to complete survey items regarding their perceptions of AAD. Staff and parents received an email invitation with a link to participate in the online survey in April 2025. Students accessed the survey through a link on their ClassLink dashboard in April 2025. Of the

AAD students in grades 4 through 12 invited to complete the survey, 83 percent completed the survey. Results by school level are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Student Survey Response Rates by Level

Group	Elem	Middle	High	Overall Rate	Overall Number of Respondents
Students (Grades 4-12)	96%	85%	67%	83%	316

Of the parents of AAD students in kindergarten through grade 12 invited to take the survey, 7 percent completed the survey (see Table 2). Due to low numbers of parents responding to the survey at the middle school and high school levels (n=13), parent results were combined for the secondary level throughout the report.

All administrators and instructional staff who indicated they worked at Seatack Elementary School received the AAD-related survey items. In addition, all administrators who indicated they worked at Lynnhaven Middle School received the AAD-related survey items. Lynnhaven Middle School instructional staff received an initial survey item asking whether they taught or worked with Lynnhaven Middle School students only, An Achievable Dream Academy students only, or both. If instructional staff indicated they worked with An Achievable Dream Academy students at all, they received the AAD-related survey items. Of the seven Seatack and Lynnhaven administrators invited to take the survey, 43 percent (n=3) completed the survey. Of the 138 Seatack and Lynnhaven instructional staff invited to the survey, 41 percent responded to the AAD portion of the survey (see Table 2).

Table 2: Instructional Staff and Parent Survey Response Rates by Level

Groups	Elem	Secondary	Overall Rate	Overall Number of Respondents
Parents (Grades K-12)	9%	5%	7%	46
Instructional Staff	36%	44%	41%	56

Note: At the secondary level, approximated response rates are based on instructional staff at Lynnhaven Middle School.

As previously mentioned, in the initial staff survey, secondary instructional staff were asked whether they worked with Lynnhaven Middle School Students only, AAD students only, or both. Only four respondents (11%) indicated they taught AAD students exclusively, while the remaining 33 secondary instructional staff reported teaching both groups of students. Follow-up discussions with AAD and Department of School Leadership staff confirmed overlap among secondary teachers at Lynnhaven Middle School, with some serving both AAD and non-AAD students during the 2024-2025 school year.

Because AAD-designated instructional staff have distinct expectations, such as extended work hours and additional professional learning opportunities, there were concerns that including teachers who were not AAD-designated staff could affect interpretation of the perception data. To address this, a follow-up survey was administered in September 2025 to the 27 designated AAD secondary teachers only in 2025-2026. Twelve teachers completed the survey (44% response rate), including nine who indicated they also taught in 2024-2025. This represents participation from approximately 75 percent of the twelve returning AAD-designated secondary teachers in 2025-2026 who remained from 2024-2025.

The perceptions of secondary classroom teachers who taught AAD students in the spring were compared to the perceptions of these nine returning secondary AAD-specific classroom teachers in the fall. Overall, the patterns of results between the two administrations were consistent; areas that were lower in the spring generally remained lower in the fall. Given this consistency, and because the spring survey yielded a substantially larger number of responses and therefore more stable results, the Spring 2025 data was used as

the primary source of secondary staff perceptions in this report. As noted previously, these data included staff who indicated they taught both Lynnhaven Middle School and AAD students during the 2024-2025 school year.

Any notable differences between the spring and fall administrations (i.e., differences of 10 percentage points or more) will be identified in the report. However, results from the fall follow-up survey should be interpreted with caution, as the small number of respondents may contribute to more variability in the data. Additionally, because some staff worked across both middle and high school levels, instructional staff data are reported at the secondary level overall.

For all stakeholders, survey agreement percentages reported in the evaluation are based on those who answered the survey item (i.e., missing responses were excluded from the percentages).

VBCPS Spring SEL Survey

Data from four items from the VBCPS Spring Social Emotional Learning (SEL) survey were obtained for AAD students that were related to the goal area of student behavior and discipline. Response rates were estimated based on student enrollment as of the first day of the VBCPS Spring SEL survey window, March 24, 2025. Response rates for the spring survey were 92 percent at elementary school (grades 4 and 5), 98 percent at middle school, and 93 percent at high school.

Senior Focus Group

All AAD seniors who were enrolled in the program as of May 2025 were provided an opportunity to participate in a focus group to share their experiences in the program. Parents of all AAD seniors were emailed in May 2025 describing the opportunity for their child to participate in the focus group and with a request to provide active consent for their child's participation. Overall, eight parents provided permission for their AAD seniors to participate in the focus group, which was approximately 30 percent of the total 27 seniors. All eight students participated in the focus group that occurred in May 2025. The focus group lasted approximately one hour and covered topics such as the impact of the program on academic performance, as well as specific aspects of the program including the specialized coursework, support and resources, and preparation for graduation and postsecondary plans. In addition, improvement areas were also discussed. Themes that emerged from the discussion will be highlighted throughout the report where appropriate.

Site Visits

In March 2025, program evaluators from the Office of Research and Evaluation conducted site visits at Seatack Elementary School and Lynnhaven Middle School to gain a deeper understanding of AAD's implementation and operations. The visits provided valuable context for reviewing related documentation and data. During the site visits, evaluators also held interview discussions with leaders from An Achievable Dream, Inc. leaders at both schools, as well as the AAD academy coordinator.

Student Information From Data Warehouse

Quantitative data extracted from the VBCPS data warehouse included AAD student enrollment, demographic information, course enrollments and completions, academic performance, attendance, discipline, and graduation data. In addition, similar data were obtained for all students throughout the school division enrolled during the 2024-2025 school year to obtain a matched comparison group. Data from the summer intersession were not included in the analyses, as they are not kept in the VBCPS data warehouse.

Staff Information

Lists of staff members who received the AAD stipend during the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 school years were obtained from An Achievable Dream, Inc. To supplement this information and identify AAD-specific teaching assignments and allocations at the secondary level, staffing data files for Lynnhaven Middle School and An Achievable Dream Academy at the high school level were obtained from the Department of School Leadership. Data files were compared across years to determine teacher retention.

As previously noted, AAD-designated teachers have additional program-specific expectations, such as working the extended day and professional learning. However, AAD secondary staff are not differentiated from other Lynnhaven Middle School staff in official files maintained by the Department of Human Resources, which lists all AAD secondary teachers as Lynnhaven Middle School staff. This lack of differentiation complicated efforts to identify AAD-specific staff.

Matched Group Analyses

Analyses were conducted to compare performance data for AAD students to matched groups of students from comparable schools. The AAD students were matched with similar peers from comparable schools through a statistical technique called propensity score matching (PSM), implemented through R within SPSS. This approach estimates the likelihood or propensity that a student would participate in the AAD program based on documented characteristics. Using these likelihood scores, students currently in the AAD program were matched with students who never participated in the program but were likely to have participated in the program based on demographic characteristics. Demographic variables (i.e., sex, race/ethnicity, free and reduced lunch status, special education, gifted, and English learner) were used as the variables in the matching process. In addition, grade level was used as a variable to select exact matches between the groups to ensure students were compared within the same grade. This process of matching produced a comparison group that was as similar as possible to AAD participants based on documented characteristics, effectively serving as a control group for evaluating and understanding program outcomes. However, the process does not account for all differences between groups, and some factors that are not able to be measured may influence the results. Outcomes for AAD students were compared to the matched comparison group using t-tests and chi-square tests to uncover statistically significant differences in students' academic, attendance, and behavioral outcomes by grade or school level where appropriate.

Evaluation Questions

Evaluation questions for this comprehensive evaluation were developed by evaluators with feedback from AAD staff and are listed below.

1. How does AAD align with the VBCPS strategic framework, *Compass to 2030*?
2. What were the operational components of AAD from K-12 in VBCPS?
 - a. Where is AAD housed?
 - b. What students were eligible for AAD enrollment, what was the application and opt-out process for each grade level, and what were the transportation options?
 - c. How were families involved in AAD?
 - i. What expectations were included in the parent and student educational contracts (e.g., commitment to the program's requirements)?
 - ii. What family engagement and involvement opportunities were provided and what progress was made toward the related implementation goal and objectives?
 - iii. What wraparound services were provided for AAD students in VBCPS?

- d. What were the program components offered to students through AAD?
 - i. What specialized curricula were implemented (i.e., Social, Academic, and Mindset Education Curriculum) and what progress was made toward the related implementation goal and objectives?
 - ii. What additional opportunities did AAD provide for students (e.g., extended day, summer intersession, field trips, mentors, etc.)?
 - iii. What college preparation and workforce readiness opportunities (e.g., What It Takes) were provided for AAD students?
 - iv. What support was available to assist students with their post-secondary plans (e.g., scholarships, guidance)?
- e. What was the staff selection process, what were the staff members' characteristics, and what, if any, specialized professional learning opportunities were provided for AAD staff and what progress was made toward the related implementation goal and objectives?
- 3. What were the enrollment patterns and characteristics of the students enrolled at AAD?
 - a. How many students enrolled in AAD by school zone during 2024-2025?
 - b. What were the characteristics of the students enrolled at AAD in 2024-2025?
 - c. How many students, if any, opted out of AAD at Seatack Elementary for 2024-2025?
 - d. How many students withdrew during 2024-2025 and why did they leave the program?
 - e. What percentage of students in elementary school continued to middle school and what percentage of middle school students continued to high school and what progress was made toward the related implementation goal and objectives?
 - f. How many students remained in AAD since initial implementation?
 - g. What was the beginning of the year 2025-2026 enrollment?
- 4. What progress was made toward meeting the student outcome goals of AAD?
 - a. What was the performance of 2024-2025 AAD students relative to a demographically similar matched comparison group of non-AAD students?
 - i. SOL scores
 - ii. Literacy
 - iii. Attendance
 - iv. Behavior and Discipline
 - v. Graduation
 - b. What were longitudinal trends for students enrolled in AAD for various lengths of time throughout their educational experience in VBCPS compared to demographically similar students who were never enrolled in AAD?
- 5. What were the general perceptions of stakeholders of AAD (i.e., students, parents, and staff)?
- 6. What was the additional cost of implementing AAD to the school division and what costs were covered by An Achievable Dream, Inc. in 2024-2025?

Evaluation Results and Discussion

Alignment with Strategic Framework

The first section of the evaluation report discusses the alignment of aspects of the An Achievable Dream program with the school division's strategic framework, *Compass to 2030*, that was launched July 1, 2025. Many of the core aspects of *Compass to 2030* are similar to the division's previous strategic framework, *Compass to 2025*. The core components of An Achievable Dream directly align with several goals within the school division's strategic framework, *Compass to 2030*. The first *Compass to 2030* goal is to challenge and

support each student to excel academically and be future ready, which is directly aligned with the priorities of AAD to ensure students are prepared for college and career. A key component of AAD is ensuring students are provided opportunities to ensure they are ready for future pathways. Related strategies within the first *Compass to 2030* goal include increasing access to and sustaining support in courses and programs aligned with students' future aspirations; and providing increased opportunities for career awareness, exploration, and experience through the K-12 Academic and Career Planning process to ensure students are enrolled, enlisted, or employed after graduation. The work of AAD also aligns with the second *Compass to 2030* goal to enhance student well-being, resilience, and responsibility. In particular, a core principle of AAD involves ensuring that social-emotional needs are being met, especially through the Social, Academic, and Mindset Education (SAME) curriculum. Several strategies within this second goal are related to their work: integrating instructional practices that support students to learn about, practice, and develop social-emotional skills; and strengthening students' sense of belonging through increased access to mentors, extracurricular activities, and leadership opportunities. Lastly, AAD aligns with many strategies of the fourth *Compass to 2030* goal to partner with families and community to support students. AAD values partnerships with families and community partners, as well as meeting the needs of students and families through wraparound services. Several strategies within the fourth *Compass to 2030* goal are related, including creating and maintaining open and accessible communication channels to enhance family and community engagement; matching community needs with appropriate resources and support services to empower families to make informed decisions about their children's education and well-being; establishing and maintaining a wide range of partnerships with local and regional businesses and organizations to offer students real-world work experiences, with a focus on inclusivity and support for students with disabilities; identifying and addressing any barriers that may exist for family and community involvement and engagement; and collaborating with community and business partners to leverage resources, support opportunities, and provide comprehensive wraparound services.

Operational Components

The second evaluation question focused on the operational components of AAD. This section of the report focuses on the location of AAD; student eligibility, applications, and transportation options; family engagement and involvement; the various program components, such as the SAME curriculum, additional opportunities for students, college preparation and workforce readiness opportunities, and post-secondary support; and staff selection and professional development. Progress toward related implementation goals is discussed in this section where appropriate.

AAD Academy Location

Beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, the AAD academy was implemented at Seatack Elementary School with kindergarten through second grade. The program expanded each year to include an additional grade level at Seatack Elementary School until 2017-2018 when the entire elementary school was fully implementing the AAD academy. Sixth grade was added at Lynnhaven Middle School in 2018-2019, which operates as a school within a school. The program continued to expand to include an additional middle school grade level until 2020-2021 when all AAD students in sixth through eighth grades were at Lynnhaven Middle School. In 2019, an ad hoc committee was established by the School Board to make recommendations related to the implementation of the AAD program at the secondary level, including planning for a school location, programming, staffing, and support services.³ The ad hoc committee recommended building a new wing at Lynnhaven Middle School to accommodate the continued expansion to additional secondary grade levels.

In April 2020, the School Board approved the expansion of the program to include the new addition at Lynnhaven Middle School, which would be used for the AAD high school students.⁴ The wing began construction in fall 2021 and was completed in August 2023. This wing has a separate entrance but shares several common areas with Lynnhaven Middle School, such as the gym, library, and athletic fields. While

construction was being completed, ninth grade was added to AAD during the 2021-2022 school year and tenth grade was added to AAD during 2022-2023. During these school years when the wing was being built, the AAD high school students attended school in learning cottages at Lynnhaven Middle School for their core content courses and were transported to First Colonial High School for elective courses. During the 2023-2024 school year, when eleventh-grade students were added to the program, all AAD high school students began participating in the program in the new wing at Lynnhaven Middle School. However, according to the academy coordinator, during that year, students may have continued to complete some courses at First Colonial High School. During the 2024-2025 school year, when the program reached full implementation, high school students were fully receiving their education at the Lynnhaven Middle School wing.

Eligibility, Application Process, and Transportation

Program Eligibility

Within the initial AAD contract with VBCPS in 2013, it was noted that students must meet historical performance criteria to be selected for the program; however, at the elementary school level, students from the Seatack Elementary School attendance zone were automatically accepted into the AAD program. Families within the Seatack Elementary School attendance zone have the option to opt out of the program and attend a nearby school if they prefer.

In addition to students who are zoned for Seatack Elementary School, the AAD program accepts students in kindergarten through ninth grade throughout the school division who apply for the program. Under the initial contract between VBCPS and AAD in 2013, students could apply for the program from kindergarten through fourth grade. This was expanded to seventh grade by the School Board in August 2019. When AAD was approved as an academy prior to the 2024-2025 school year, incoming ninth-grade students were eligible for enrollment into the program.

Although the most recent 2019 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between VBCPS and AAD did not include detailed information about student acceptance criteria, it references that AAD serves a targeted student population. According to the initial contract with VBCPS in 2013, students will be selected for the program based on several factors, including eligibility for free and reduced-price lunch, single-parent household status, and sibling participation in AAD.

While students across the division are eligible to apply, transportation is limited to certain attendance zones, which may affect access. In addition, because students zoned for Seatack Elementary School are automatically eligible for enrollment and do not complete an application, the number of available seats for other applicants at the elementary level may be limited. Capacity at each grade level is also influenced by the number of students continuing in the program from prior years.

According to the chief strategy officer for AAD, Inc., student acceptance and enrollment decisions are based on whether the program can appropriately meet each student's needs.⁵ Efforts are made to balance maintaining program capacity with ensuring that enrolled students are well served.

Application Process

To apply for the AAD program, families must complete an online application on the An Achievable Dream, Inc. website.⁶ Families must also submit a copy of the student's most recent report card and attend an information session either in-person or virtually. Information sessions are typically held in December and January, with admission decisions provided to students and families in February or March.

Data provided by AAD showed there was a total of 108 applications received for enrollment in AAD for the 2024-2025 school year (see Table 3). Of these 108 student applications, 74 students (69%) were accepted into the program. Overall, acceptance rates varied by school level with acceptance rates of 71 to 74 percent at the elementary school and middle school levels, and an acceptance rate of 42 percent at the high school level.

Beginning in 2024-2025, because AAD was considered an academy by the school division with a new AAD academy coordinator, AAD staff could attend the high school academy night and advertise the program to students and families for the 2025-2026 school year. Applications for the program opened around October and were due in January. The AAD academy coordinator noted that she also worked with the Department of Communications and Community Engagement to discuss recruitment strategies at the secondary level for incoming ninth-grade students, which is the high school grade level that new students can enroll in the program. According to the executive director of high schools, additional efforts to increase enrollment included recruitment tours and site-based information nights.

According to the executive director of high schools, as of February 2025, there was a total of 204 applications, which was a large increase in comparison to the previous year. There were 59 applications for elementary school, 124 applications for middle school, and 21 applications for rising ninth-grade students. This notable increase may have been due to additional efforts to increase enrollment as noted above. On March 11, 2025, the School Board approved expansion of the transportation zones at the elementary and secondary levels, which allowed for potentially more students to participate in the program. Although the primary application window had closed, there was another round of information sessions and the application window was extended after the expanded zones were approved. According to the AAD academy coordinator, information about the opportunity was sent directly to the schools within the newly expanded zones. A total of 59 additional applications were received during this extended application period with most (n=48) at the elementary school level. This increase at the elementary school level may have been due to the expansion of school attendance zones that were eligible for transportation to AAD schools for 2025-2026.

Based on the data provided by AAD, there was a total of 263 applications for the 2025-2026 school year. Of these 263 applications, 153 students (58%) were accepted into the program. There were acceptance rates of 73 to 80 percent at the secondary levels, while there was an acceptance rate of 36 percent at the elementary school level.

Table 3: Total Number of Applications and Number of Students Accepted

School Year and Measure	ES	MS	HS	Total
2024-2025				
Total student applications	62	34	12	108
Total students accepted	44	25	5	74
Acceptance rate	71%	74%	42%	69%
2025-2026				
Student applications as of February 2025	59	124	21	204
Total student applications as of summer 2025	107	131	25	263
Total students accepted	38	95	20	153
Acceptance rate	36%	73%	80%	58%

On the secondary student survey, students who indicated the 2024-2025 school year was their first year attending AAD were asked questions about the application process. Overall, 93 percent of secondary students

who responded to the survey item agreed the application process was clear, and 90 percent agreed the application process was easy to access, navigate, and complete.

Program Capacity

To assess the program's ability to accept additional students prior to the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 school years, enrollment capacity was calculated by grade level. According to the AAD MOA with VBCPS, each grade level within AAD was intended to have a minimum of 75 students and a maximum of 90 students. Based on these guidelines, the maximum enrollment capacity is 90 students per grade, resulting in a total capacity of 540 students at the elementary level and 270 students at the middle school level. Although the program generally accepts ninth-grade students at the high school level, high school capacity is provided for illustrative purposes.

As shown in Table 4, at the end of the 2023-2024 school year, the elementary school was operating at approximately 71 percent capacity, while middle school was at approximately 54 percent and the high school (grades 9 through 11) was operating at 26 percent capacity. In addition, all grade levels were below capacity, suggesting available capacity to enroll additional students in the program for the 2024-2025 school year.

At the end of the 2024-2025 school year, while the capacity percentage at high school increased slightly from the previous year (from 26% to 32%), elementary and middle school capacity percentages decreased (from 71% to 69% at elementary and from 54% to 46% at middle). As shown in Table 4, all grade levels were below capacity again suggesting room for acceptances into the AAD program for the 2025-2026 school year.

Table 4: Percent of Enrollment Capacity at Each Grade Level (90 Students Per Grade Level)

Grade Level	Enrollment EOY 2023-2024	Percent of Capacity EOY 2023-2024	Enrollment EOY 2024-2025	Percent of Capacity EOY 2024-2025
K	63	70%	58	64%
1	52	58%	60	67%
2	71	79%	48	53%
3	67	74%	67	74%
4	63	70%	81	90%
5	66	73%	57	63%
K-5	382	71%	371	69%
6	49	54%	52	58%
7	38	42%	39	43%
8	58	64%	33	37%
6-8	145	54%	124	46%
9	24	27%	48	53%
10	16	18%	26	29%
11	29	32%	14	16%
12	N/A	N/A	27	30%
9-12	69	26%	115	32%

Note: Students are generally not accepted after grade 9.

Transportation

When the AAD program began in 2014-2015, only students who were zoned for Seatack Elementary School and an additional nearby elementary school (i.e., Birdneck Elementary School) were eligible for transportation to Seatack Elementary School for the AAD program, and only students who were zoned for Lynnhaven Middle School were eligible to receive transportation to Lynnhaven Middle School for the AAD program. On August 27, 2019, the School Board approved an expansion to three additional middle schools as well as the elementary schools in these feeder patterns, which included a total of 19 elementary school zones and 4 middle school

zones.^{7,8} Eligibility for transportation for high school students is based on their middle school zone. These 19 elementary and 4 middle schools were the approved zones for transportation for the 2024-2025 school year.

Analyses of the school attendance zones of students enrolled at AAD at the end of the 2024-2025 school year showed 93 percent of elementary school students were zoned for one of the 19 elementary schools that were eligible for transportation to AAD. At the secondary level, 75 percent of middle school students and 78 percent of high school students were zoned for one of the four middle schools that were eligible to receive transportation.⁹

When secondary students were surveyed regarding transportation to AAD, 93 percent of secondary students agreed school bus transportation allowed them to participate fully in AAD. In addition, 92 percent of parents who responded to the survey agreed school bus transportation allowed their child to participate fully in AAD (see Table 5).

Table 5: Parent Agreement Regarding Transportation Allowing for Participation

Survey Item	ES	Secondary	Total
School bus transportation allows my child to participate fully in An Achievable Dream Academy.	93%	91%	92%

As noted previously, the School Board approved expansion of the transportation zones in March 2025, which allowed for potentially more students to participate in the program. As of the 2025-2026 school year, students who are zoned for six middle schools are eligible to receive transportation. Students who are zoned for a total of 33 elementary schools can receive transportation to Seatack Elementary School for the AAD academy.¹⁰

Family Involvement

According to the AAD website, parent/guardian involvement is crucial and “AAD places a high value on relationships with the entire family.”¹¹ In this section, details are provided regarding the educational contracts that outline the expectations of parents and students, the wraparound services offered to students and families, and the family engagement opportunities provided by AAD, as well as family involvement.

Parent and Student Educational Contracts

To ensure parents and students were aware of the program expectations, all students and parents signed an educational contract with AAD. The contracts were general agreements that students and parents would adhere to the responsibilities as outlined by the program, although the information included in the contracts varied slightly by school level. For example, elementary school and middle school parents were requested to support their child’s education through discussions with him/her about school and ensure their child attends school, dresses appropriately, follows school behavior and drug-free policies, and communicates with teachers. There were additional expectations for high school parents related to college preparation, such as ensuring their child takes college entrance examinations, such as the SAT, and completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). At the elementary school level, students were asked to pledge to not use drugs or engage in criminal behavior, to be respectful, attend school on time, have good manners, and to try their best. Middle school and high school students were requested to attend school, follow the uniform/dress code policy, and follow behavior rules and expectations. An expectation specific to middle school students was maintaining a 2.5 grade-point average, while high school students were requested to take college entrance exams and apply for scholarships.

If students or parents do not adhere to the contract, there is a possibility that the student may be removed from the program. According to data provided by AAD, for the 2024-2025 school year, there was one student

who was asked to leave the program for this reason. Overall, on the survey, 89 percent of students agreed the expectations in the educational contract were clear, and 93 percent of parents agreed the educational contract helped them understand the academy's expectations for students and families. While there was little variation by level for student agreement (88%-91% depending on level), a higher percentage of elementary school parents (97%) agreed with this item than secondary parents (82%) (see Table 6).

Table 6: Parent Perceptions of Educational Contract Helping Them Understand Expectations

Survey Item	ES	Sec	Total
The educational contract provided by AAD helped me understand the academy's expectations for students and families.	97%	82%	93%

An important component of the program that was reflected in the contract was that students would adhere to a dress code to provide structure and set a tone for the school environment. According to the AAD student and parent handbook, at the elementary school and middle school levels, students were required to wear a shirt/sweatshirt with the AAD logo that is a specific color by grade level and all black shoes. At the elementary school level, students were required to wear dark navy pants or shorts, while middle school students were required to wear tan khaki pants or shorts. Additional requirements, specifically for students in grades 3 through 8, included having well-groomed hair, limited jewelry and makeup, and a black or brown belt. At the high school level, students were required to wear business casual attire, which included plain collared shirts or blouses; casual or dress pants, shorts, skirts, or dresses; socks or hosiery; and dress shoes. Additional requirements for high school students included well-groomed hair, jewelry and/or watches appropriate for the workplace; and trimmed fingernails. According to AAD, the intention of the uniform requirements is to "level the playing field, eliminate social issues, and strengthen the group identity."¹²

When surveyed, overall 59 percent of students agreed the uniform and dress code made them feel part of An Achievable Dream Academy (see Table 7). Agreement was lowest at elementary school (54%), followed by high school (60%) and middle school (65%).

Table 7: Student Perceptions of Uniform and Dress Code Making Them Feel Part of AAD

Survey Item	ES	MS	HS	Total
The uniform and dress code make me feel part of An Achievable Dream Academy.	54%	65%	60%	59%

According to the AAD graduating seniors who participated in the focus group, students felt they were easily identifiable because of their uniforms while middle school students at Lynnhaven Middle School, which also housed students who were not in the program and who did not wear uniforms. Students reported occasionally feeling that they were unfairly blamed for incidents due to being identified as AAD students and wearing the program shirt.

Wraparound Services

AAD makes efforts to ensure students' and families' needs are addressed. To meet families' needs, AAD provides wraparound services including home visits, parent education, clothes closets, medical resources (if needs are identified), food pantries, holiday food baskets, anonymous services (housing, electric bill, groceries, etc.), and community outreach.¹³ According to the AAD, Inc. chief strategy officer, if parents or families are struggling in one of the areas listed above, AAD helps provide the support through emergency funding sources, as well as connecting families with resources. Examples of support provided in the past included paying for lodging when families had no housing, paying for utilities, and providing transportation to students and families when needed. Overall, 92 percent of parents who responded to the survey agreed AAD

provided extra resources and support when their family needed it (see Table 8). In addition, 90 percent of parents agreed AAD supported them with handling student attendance, academic, and/or discipline issues.

Table 8: Parent Perceptions of Extra Resources and Support by AAD

Survey Items	ES	Secondary	Total
AAD provides extra resources and support when my family needs it.	93%	90%	92%
AAD supports me with handling student attendance, academic, and/or discipline issues.	90%	91%	90%

Family Engagement Opportunities and Involvement

According to the AAD, Inc. chief strategy officer and the AAD, Inc. director of academic and student affairs, AAD staff work closely with families to identify specific types of events and activities that align with their interests and needs. This approach ensures that family engagement is purposeful and responsive to the community the program serves.

Related Implementation Goals

In the AAD Academies' Strategic Goals for 2024-2025, two goals addressed family engagement: *increasing the number of collaborative family engagement opportunities* and *increasing parental/familial involvement in students' academic and extra-curricular activities*.

Family Engagement Opportunities Goal

AAD staff provided data regarding the various collaborative family engagement opportunities offered by AAD. Table 9 summarizes these opportunities offered at AAD across the three school levels.

Table 9: Family Engagement Opportunities by Level

ES	MS	HS
Induction Ceremony New family building walkthrough Back-to-School Block Party Open House Fall Festival at Haygood Skating ESL Technology Night 5th-grade Chorus and Strings Winter Concert iFly Showcase Math Family Engagement Night Parent Literversity K-2 Parent Literversity 3-5 STEAM/Book Fair Night 5th Grade Promotion Ceremony	Induction Ceremony Back-to-school party Open House Fall Festival Rising 6th grade night Math/Literacy Night 8th grade promotion ceremony Rising 9th grade night Newly Accepted Families Night 6-8 (two events held) Division-Wide Academy Night Academy Information Nights (multiple throughout the year) NJHS Induction Ceremony	Back-to-school party Fall Festival Math/Literacy Night College/Career Night FAFSA Night Senior Parent Meetings Newly Accepted Families Night (two events held) Division-Wide Academy Night Academy Information Nights (multiple throughout the year) ACCESS College Commitment Day Senior Awards 200+ Scholars Breakfast NHS Induction Ceremony (two events held)

When AAD instructional staff were surveyed about the opportunities offered to parents, 86 percent agreed AAD provides parents events, programs, and resources to support their child's education (see Table 10). While all elementary school instructional staff agreed AAD provides parents with these opportunities, 79 percent of secondary instructional staff agreed. When AAD secondary classroom teachers were surveyed in the fall, 89 percent agreed. In addition, all AAD administrators (n=3) agreed these opportunities were provided to parents.

Table 10: Staff Perceptions of AAD Providing Parents Events, Programs, and Resources

Survey Item	ES	Secondary	Total
AAD provides parents events, programs, and resources to support their child's education.	100%	79%	86%

When parents were surveyed about the opportunities for engagement, 86 percent of AAD parents indicated they were aware of events, programs, and resources that AAD provides for parents to support their child's education. This percentage was higher than the agreement percentage of parents throughout the division with 77 percent of VBCPS parents divisionwide indicating in 2024-2025 they were aware of events, programs, and resources that VBCPS provides. In addition, 90 percent of AAD parents indicated they were satisfied with the events, programs, or resources provided by AAD to help them support their child's education, which was similar to the percentage of parents divisionwide who indicated satisfaction with events, programs, or resources provided by the division (89%).

Parental/Family Involvement Goal

Parents were surveyed about their involvement in students' academic and extra-curricular activities to provide information to assess the program's goal of increasing parental/familial involvement. For example, parents were surveyed about being encouraged to participate in activities held at school. Overall, 88 percent of parents agreed AAD encouraged them to participate in the activities held at school with higher agreement at elementary school (94%) than at the secondary level (73%) (see Table 11).

In addition, overall, 95 percent of parents agreed they were involved in their child's academic and/or extracurricular activities, and 91 percent of parents indicated they were satisfied with the opportunities available to be involved in their child's school. Satisfaction levels with involvement opportunities were higher among elementary parents (94%) than secondary parents (82%). When compared to parents divisionwide, elementary AAD parents reported slightly higher agreement regarding satisfaction with opportunities available for involvement than parents across the division (94% versus 92%), while secondary AAD parents reported slightly lower agreement (82% versus 84%).

Table 11: Parent Perceptions of Academic Involvement

Survey Items	ES	Secondary	Total
AAD encourages me to participate in the activities held at school.	94%	73%	88%
I am involved in my child's academic and/or extracurricular activities.	94%	100%	95%
I am satisfied with the opportunities available to be involved in my child's school.	94%	82%	91%

From a student perspective, overall 71 percent of AAD students agreed their family was involved in their academic and/or extracurricular activities with higher agreement at the secondary level (74%-76%) than at the elementary school level (64%). Lower percentages of staff indicated that parents/families were involved in their child's academic and/or extracurricular activities (see Table 12), while all AAD administrators (n=3) agreed parents/families were involved.

Table 12: Instructional Staff Perceptions of Parent/Family Involvement

Survey Items	ES	Secondary	Total
Parents/families are involved in their child's academic and/or extracurricular activities.	44%	58%	53%

Parents were also surveyed more generally about effective communication and feeling welcomed in the school. Overall, 86 percent of parents agreed the school effectively communicated important school-related information to families with higher agreement at the elementary level (91%) than secondary level (73%) (see Table 13). In comparison to parents divisionwide, AAD parents had lower agreement regarding effective communication from their child’s school than across the division, although the difference was more notable at the secondary level (ES: 91% versus 94%; Secondary: 73% versus 86%). In addition, 93 percent of AAD parents agreed AAD makes them feel welcomed with little difference between the elementary and secondary levels (see Table 13).

Table 13: Parent Perceptions of AAD Effectively Communicating Information and Feeling Welcomed

Survey Items	ES	Secondary	Total
My child’s school effectively communicates important school-related information to families.	91%	73%	86%
AAD makes me feel welcomed.	94%	91%	93%

Program Components

The next section within the operational components section of the report focuses on the various program components offered to students through AAD. The program components include the specialized curricula (i.e., the Social, Academic, and Mindset Education (SAME) curriculum), additional opportunities offered to students (e.g., extended day, summer intersession, field trips, mentors), college preparation and workforce readiness opportunities, and support for post-secondary plans.

Social, Academic, and Mindset Education Curriculum

The Social, Academic, and Moral Education (SAME) Curriculum is a key component adopted by AAD. Within this specialized curriculum, there was an emphasis on “ethics, etiquette, peaceful conflict resolution, and Speaking Green®.” There is also a morning program for elementary and middle school students that involves recitation of banners that involve positive affirmations. In addition, AAD students are provided the daily VBCPS academic curriculum.

Social Rotations

At the elementary and middle school levels, there are several social rotation classes that are the core components of the SAME curriculum framework. These rotations focus on the whole child through social-emotional and character development with an emphasis on relationships. These social rotations include classes on etiquette, ethics and conflict resolution, mindfulness and meditation, and Speaking Green®. Elementary and middle school AAD students had a rotation of classes that focused on each of these areas of social and mindset education that lasted two weeks at a time. At the elementary school level, grade levels took turns being assigned to each of these areas. Students rotated between these social rotation classes and participating in the banners/morning program. The AAD values and standards for behavior were reinforced throughout these classes. At the high school level, students participate in dedicated time for social-emotional development through reflective writing prompts and discussions that build on the foundations of the SAME framework.

During the class on etiquette, students learn lessons on manners, respect, and professionalism, such as table etiquette and appropriate social interactions. During the Speaking Green® class, students are encouraged to use clear, positive, and professional language, emphasizing Standard English, confident speaking, and effective body language. During the ethics or conflict resolution class, students explore real-life examples of ethical decision-making and constructive strategies for managing conflict. During the mindfulness and meditation class, students engage in guided practices designed to build focus, emotional awareness, and self-control.

When students were surveyed, from 82 to 85 percent of students agreed AAD provided them opportunities to gain academic, social, and mindset skills needed to be successful. Slightly higher percentages of high school students agreed compared to elementary school and middle school students (see Table 14).

Table 14: Student Perceptions of AAD Providing Opportunities to Gain Academic, Social, and Mindset Skills

Survey Items	ES	MS	HS	Total
AAD gives me opportunities to gain academic skills I will need to be successful.	83%	86%	88%	85%
AAD gives me opportunities to gain social skills I will need to be successful.	81%	82%	83%	82%
AAD gives me opportunities to gain mindset skills I will need to be successful.	81%	83%	88%	83%

Similarly, when instructional staff were surveyed about AAD providing these opportunities, from 72 to 83 percent of instructional staff agreed opportunities were provided for students to gain academic, social, and mindset skills to be successful (see Table 15). In the follow-up survey of secondary AAD classroom teachers, agreement was higher regarding opportunities for students to gain social skills and mindset skills (89%-100%), while agreement was consistent regarding opportunities for students to gain academic skills. In addition, all administrators (n=3) also agreed these opportunities were provided for students. Overall, nearly all parents agreed these opportunities were provided for their child (95%-97%).

Table 15: Instructional Staff and Parent Perceptions of AAD Providing Students Opportunities to Gain Academic, Social, and Mindset Skills

Groups and Survey Items	ES	Secondary	Total
Instructional Staff - AAD provides opportunities for students to gain academic skills needed to be successful.	83%	83%	83%
Instructional Staff - AAD provides opportunities for students to gain social skills needed to be successful.	78%	69%	72%
Instructional Staff - AAD provides opportunities for students to gain mindset skills needed to be successful.	78%	79%	78%
Parents - AAD provides my child opportunities to gain academic skills needed to be successful.	96%	100%	97%
Parents - AAD gives my child opportunities to gain social skills needed to be successful.	93%	100%	95%
Parents - AAD gives my child opportunities to gain mindset skills needed to be successful.	96%	100%	97%

When elementary school and middle school students were surveyed more specifically about the impact of the various social rotation classes on helping them in key improvement areas, somewhat lower percentages of students agreed. Regarding the etiquette class, 78 percent of students agreed the class helped them be polite and well-mannered with others, while 75 percent of students agreed the Speaking Green® class helped them learn communication skills. In addition, 72 percent of students agreed the ethics/conflict resolution class helped them resolve conflicts with other people, and 69 percent agreed the mindfulness and meditation class helped them better control what they are feeling. Results varied somewhat by school level with elementary students having more positive perceptions about the etiquette and Speaking Green® class and middle school students having more positive perceptions about the ethics/conflict resolution and mindfulness and meditation class (see Table 16).

Table 16: Student Perceptions of Social Rotations Impacting Key Improvement Areas

Survey Items	ES	MS	ES & MS Total
Etiquette class helps me be polite and well-mannered with others.	81%	74%	78%
Speaking Green class helps me learn communication skills.	76%	74%	75%
Ethics/conflict resolution class helps me resolve conflicts with other people.	70%	74%	72%
Mindfulness and meditation class helps me better control what I am feeling.	68%	71%	69%

Staff were asked similar survey items about the social rotation classes helping students in these various areas. While all administrators who responded to the survey items (n=3) agreed, lower percentages of instructional staff agreed with these items. Overall, 52 percent of instructional staff agreed the etiquette social rotation helped students be polite and well-mannered with others, while 58 percent of instructional staff agreed the Speaking Green® class helped students learn communication skills (see Table 17). In addition, 59 percent of instructional staff agreed the ethics/conflict resolution class helped students learn how to resolve conflicts with other people, and 62 percent agreed the mindfulness and meditation class helped students regulate their emotions and behavior better. Overall, higher percentages of elementary instructional staff agreed with statements about the impact of these classes on students' skill development than middle school. In the follow-up survey of AAD secondary classroom teachers, agreement was lower for the etiquette, Speaking Green®, and ethics/conflict resolution social rotations, ranging from 0 to 33 percent agreement regarding the impact of these classes. However, agreement regarding the mindfulness and meditation social rotation was slightly higher (67%). Because the number of middle school teacher respondents was very small (n=3), these percentages from the follow-up survey should be interpreted with caution.

Table 17: Elementary and Middle School Instructional Staff Perceptions of Social Rotations Impacting Key Improvement Areas

Survey Items	ES	MS	Total
The etiquette social rotation helps students be polite and well-mannered with others.	61%	46%	52%
The Speaking Green social rotation helps students develop communication skills.	67%	52%	58%
The ethics/conflict resolution social rotation helps students learn how to resolve conflicts with other people.	67%	52%	59%
The mindfulness and meditation social rotation helps students regulate their emotions and behavior better.	71%	56%	62%

At the high school level, 79 percent of students who responded to the survey agreed the social-emotional time with prompts helped them build their social and emotional skills. Additional information was provided by AAD seniors who participated in the focus group. Seniors who participated reflected on several aspects of the SAME curriculum in previous years, including finding benefits in learning how to write checks and learning about etiquette. Some seniors also identified liking a specific event called Tie Tuesday in which they would learn how to put on ties.

From the staff perspective, 78 percent of high school staff agreed the social-emotional time with prompts helped students build their social and emotional skills. In the follow-up survey of AAD secondary classroom teachers, agreement was approximately 50 percent, although the number of high school teacher respondents was low (n=6). In addition, all the administrators who responded to this item agreed (n=3) the social-emotional time helped students build skills.

Banners and Morning Program

Another aspect of the SAME curriculum for the students at AAD includes the daily morning program. When not participating in the social rotation classes, students met as a group in the morning to recite the “Banners,” which are “positive affirmations that remind them of the school’s beliefs and expectations.” Students at Seatack Elementary School participated in this morning program within the gym. Portions of the sayings recited included “Decisions are up to me. Success in school – helps me be successful in life. I can go to college if I work hard. Being a success means doing my best. An Achievable Dream loves me. I am someone special. Believe in yourself.” The goal of reciting the Banners each morning was to reinforce AAD’s values and standards for proper behavior as well as encourage self-confidence. Physical banners with the affirmations were also placed throughout the Seatack Elementary School and Lynnhaven Middle School buildings and served as an additional reminder for the students.

On the survey, approximately 62 percent of elementary school and middle school students agreed the morning program and Banners helped them be confident in themselves, with higher agreement for middle school students (71%) than elementary school students (55%) (see Table 18).

Table 18: Student Perceptions of Morning Program and Banners Helping Them Be Confident

Survey Item	ES	MS	ES & MS Total
The morning program and Banners help me be confident in myself.	55%	71%	62%

While all administrators (n=3) who responded to the survey item agreed, instructional staff had somewhat lower agreement regarding the effectiveness of the morning program with 65 percent of elementary school and middle school instructional staff agreeing the morning program and Banners helped students be confident in themselves (see Table 19). A higher percentage of elementary school instructional staff (72%) agreed with this item than middle school instructional staff (60%). When middle school classroom teachers were surveyed in the follow-up survey administration, there was lower agreement regarding the effectiveness with 0 percent agreement (although the number of middle school teacher respondents was low).

Table 19: Elementary and Middle School Instructional Staff Perceptions of Morning Program and Banners Helping Students Be Confident

Survey Item	ES	MS	ES & MS Total
The morning program and Banners help students be confident in themselves.	72%	60%	65%

Related Implementation Goals

Within the AAD Academies’ Strategic Goals for 2024-2025, there were two goals related to the SAME framework: *streamlining the delivery and implementation of SAME curricula through morning program and social rotations* and *incorporating the SAME framework into K-12 core content instruction*.

Elementary and middle school staff were surveyed about their perceptions related to these goal areas. When surveyed about the delivery and implementation of the SAME curriculum being streamlined through the morning program and social rotations, 73 percent of elementary and middle school instructional staff agreed. A higher percentage of middle school staff (78%) agreed than elementary school staff (67%) (see Table 20). A lower percentage of staff agreed (49%) the SAME curriculum was effectively incorporated in the core content. Again, agreement was higher at middle school (67%) than elementary school where 22 percent of elementary school staff agreed with this item. All administrators who responded to these items (n=3) agreed the delivery and implementation was streamlined and the SAME curriculum was effectively incorporated in core content.

Table 20: Instructional Staff Perceptions of SAME Curriculum Being Streamlined and Effectively Incorporated in Core Content

Survey Items	ES	MS	ES & MS Total
The delivery and implementation of the SAME curriculum is streamlined through the morning program and social rotations.	67%	78%	73%
The SAME curriculum is effectively incorporated in the core content instruction.	22%	67%	49%

Curricula Alignment and Rigorous Course Opportunities

Students at all levels participate in the standard VBCPS curriculum in addition to AAD’s program components. At the elementary school level, all students and staff in the building are part of AAD and follow the VBCPS elementary school curriculum within the framework of AAD. At the secondary level, the middle school operates as a school within a school at Lynnhaven Middle School. Therefore, although AAD students are part of the distinct program, students have opportunities to take elective courses with other teachers within Lynnhaven Middle School. This allows students to have access to a range of courses. At the high school level, beginning in 2024-2025, AAD functioned as an academy located in the dedicated wing within Lynnhaven Middle School. Therefore, AAD high school students took courses with the AAD-specific teachers, which was reported by students and staff as potentially limiting access to a broader range of courses. According to the AAD academy coordinator, prior to 2024-2025, AAD high school students could participate in courses at First Colonial High School; however, AAD transitioned to a model in which all students remained in the building and were no longer transported to First Colonial for courses. The coordinator noted that students had the ability to enroll in courses online if they expressed interest in a course that was not offered. According to the academy coordinator, at the middle school level, there are some students who participate in the Old Donation School dance program. In addition, high school students are eligible to participate in the Environmental Studies Academy, Advanced Technology Center, and the Technology and Career Education Center. During the 2024-2025 school year, there were 12 AAD high school students who were enrolled in either ATC or TCE.

On the student survey, 77 percent of AAD high school students agreed they had access to the courses they needed to support their plans after high school and 76 percent of high school AAD students agreed their school provided them with rigorous learning opportunities. Agreement for these items was lower than the percentage of high school students divisionwide who agreed they had access to needed courses (87%), and they were offered rigorous opportunities (86%). During the graduating senior focus group, some students expressed concerns about the limited variety of high school course offerings. Some students commented on having an interest in taking other electives such as weightlifting and not having access to world languages beyond Spanish through a face-to-face option. Students also mentioned that not having access to classes at First Colonial High School was viewed as limiting opportunities. This theme was also prevalent when staff and students provided comments on the survey about areas of improvement for AAD. In particular, some secondary staff commented about the lack of course offerings, such as options in arts or music as well as advanced options in Advanced Placement (AP) and dual enrollment courses. Some staff also commented about students needing to be enrolled in multiple study halls a day due to the lack of available courses. Some student comments mirrored these concerns by noting their desire to take courses at an external high school for additional opportunities related to interests and elective courses.

An analysis of distinct courses completed by AAD high school students enrolled in 2024-2025 (n=124) was conducted. The results showed that students took a relatively limited variety of courses across several content areas compared to the matched group of peers. However, courses taken online through Virtual Virginia or Edgenuity appeared to expand students’ access to additional courses, especially in world languages and marketing and entrepreneurship (see Table 21). As shown in Table 21, during the 2024-2025 school year, no courses in Music or Technology Education were taken by AAD high school students either face-to-face or

online, and only one course was taken in Art. Although World Language courses were limited to Spanish in a face-to-face environment, courses available through Edgenuity allowed students to take courses in three other languages (French, German, and Latin). Although six English courses were offered, nearly all AAD students took Honors English and AVID was taken in grades 9 and 10. Two students took a regular English course online. More courses were offered in Math and Social Studies, while other content areas had a smaller number of distinct course options.

As shown in Table 21, compared to a matched group of demographically similar high school peers (n=113), AAD students had access to fewer distinct course options. The matched comparison group completed a broader variety of both core and elective courses. In addition, while the matched comparison group completed five dual enrollment courses and nine AP courses, the AAD high school students took one dual enrollment and five AP courses (see Appendix B for the full list of unique courses).

Table 21: Unique Courses Completed at AAD by High School AAD Students During 2024-2025

HS Courses - Areas	AAD High School Students			High School Matched Comparison Group
	Face-to-Face Courses	Online Courses**	Total	
Art	1	0	1	5
Business & IT	3	0	3	4
English & Reading	6	2	8	23
Family & Consumer Science	2	0	2	4
Health & PE	2	0	3	4
Math	6	2	8	12
Marketing & Entrepreneurship	0	2	2	6
Music	0	0	0	9
Naval Science	1*	0	1*	1
Science	5	3	7	6
Social Studies	8	1	9	14
World Languages	3	4	7	11
Technology Education	0	0	0	8
Total	37	14	51	107

Note: Various course levels (i.e., Advanced, Honors, AP, Dual enrollment) were considered different course offerings. For this analysis, various course formats (i.e., in-person, online, year-long, 4x4) were combined to simplify comparisons. Academic concepts courses were excluded.

*Students could take an ROTC course at Cox High School.

**Courses listed here were additional unique courses not offered through a face-to-face option. Some courses offered online were also offered face-to-face and are included in the face-to-face column.

Comparisons were also made regarding the percentage of students enrolled in a study hall during the school year. According to the executive director of student support services for VBCPS, study halls can provide opportunities for enrichment, remediation, and structured peer interaction. AAD high school students also enrolled in study hall courses during the periods in which they were completing coursework for their online courses. Overall, 84 percent of AAD high school students were enrolled in at least one study hall at one point during the 2024-2025 school year. In comparison, 10 percent of students in the matched group were enrolled in at least one study hall during the school year.

Additional Opportunities

AAD offers additional opportunities that extend beyond the typical curriculum and school day. These opportunities included an extended school day and year with enrichment opportunities, field trips, community partnerships and mentors, numerous clubs and extracurricular activities, and a merit program.

Extended Day and School Year

The first additional opportunity for students is extending the time spent at school to allow for additional instruction and out-of-classroom experiences. The MOA noted that the extended day would be a total of 8 and a half hours, which is 2 hours longer than the typical day. In contrast, as implemented during 2024-2025, the school day was extended by 1 hour and 15 minutes each day except for Friday at the elementary school level, making the full school day 7 hours 45 minutes (see Table 22 for 2024-2025 school year hours by level). At the secondary levels, the school day was extended by approximately one and a half hours each day, Monday through Friday, making the full day 8 hours.

At the elementary school level, on two of the days, the extended portion was for academics (reading and mathematics), whereas on the other two days, the extended portion was for clubs. During the days where additional time was spent on academics, AAD also held instructional enrichment classes that focused on novel studies, coding activities, and math problem-solving concepts. At the secondary level, the extended day was considered the zero block at the beginning of the school day when students participated in the SAME curriculum components, such as the social rotations, the What It Takes program, or the social-emotional reflection time.

The extended day begins with first graders in their second semester. All second- through twelfth-grade students were required to stay for the extended school day. High school students could apply to be excluded from the extended day due to extracurricular or employment reasons. According to AAD staff, there were no students who applied for this exclusion during the 2024-2025 school year.

Table 22: AAD School Hours by Level

Grade Level	Hours	Length of Day	Comparison with Other VBCPS Schools
Kindergarten	Mon-Fri, 8:45 a.m.-3:15 p.m.	6 hours, 30 minutes	Same hours
First grade	Semester 1: Mon-Fri, 8:45 a.m.-3:15 p.m. Semester 2: Mon-Thurs, 8:45 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Fri, 8:45 a.m.-3:15 p.m.	Semester 1: 6 hours, 30 minutes Semester 2: Mon-Thurs: 7 hours, 45 minutes Fri: 6 hours, 30 minutes	Semester 1: Same hours Semester 2: Mon-Thurs: 1 hour, 15 minutes longer Fri: Same hours
Second through Fifth grade	Mon-Thurs, 8:45 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Fri, 8:45 a.m.-3:15 p.m.	Mon-Thurs: 7 hours, 45 minutes Fri: 6 hours, 30 minutes	Mon-Thurs: 1 hour, 15 minutes longer Fri: Same hours
Middle school	Mon-Fri, 8:05 a.m.-4:05 p.m.	8 hours	1 hour, 30 minutes longer
High school	Mon-Fri, 8:05 a.m.-4:05 p.m.	8 hours	1 hour, 20 minutes longer

Note: The length of the school day across other VBCPS schools is: 6.5 hours at elementary and middle school and 6.67 hours at high school.¹⁴

The year was also extended to include a summer intersession and Saturday programming as needed. As reported in the contract, the program is “an 8 and a half hour day program, up to 26 weeks of Saturday School and four weeks of summer intersession.” For the summer intersession following the 2024-2025 school year, there was an additional four-week block with half-days on Monday through Thursday. All elementary school students, including kindergartners, were required to attend the summer intersession. At the secondary level, rising sixth through tenth graders were required to participate at Lynnhaven Middle School. Rising eleventh- and twelfth-grade students were not required to participate. Although, it was mandatory for all secondary students to attend if there was concern that they may be retained.

During the 2025 summer intersession, students were taught by their teachers for the upcoming 2025-2026 school year, which allowed the teachers to consider curriculum for the next year and prepare for the school year when it began in August. During the summer intersession, there was a focus on academics (i.e., reading and mathematics) and work on summer learning loss. In addition, there was a focus on the social and mindset curricula and opportunities for field trips. At the secondary level, students were also provided additional college tours. According to the secondary academy coordinator, families and students were also provided assistance with application completion and funding for other summer camps.

As shown in Table 23, data provided by AAD showed 336 AAD students participated in the summer intersession during summer 2024, and 404 AAD students participated in the summer intersession during summer 2025. For the 2024 summer intersession, this was an approximate participation rate of 61 percent based on the 551 students enrolled at the end of the 2023-2024 school year in grades K through 9. Participation varied by level with higher percentages of elementary (63%) and rising middle (62%) school students than rising ninth and tenth graders (50%). For the 2025 summer intersession, this was an approximate participation of 74 percent based on the 543 students enrolled at the end of the 2024-2025 school year in grades K through 9, which was an increase from the previous year. A higher percentage of rising middle school students (91%) participated than elementary school (68%) and rising ninth and tenth graders (69%).

Table 23: Number of AAD Students Who Participated in Summer Intersessions

Summer Intersession	ES	MS	HS	Total
2024	200	95	41	336
2025	213	135	56	404

Only students who were identified as needing additional academic instruction were required to attend school on Saturdays. This identification of need was based on previous SOL scores, current school division benchmark scores, and teacher recommendations (i.e., classroom behavior or performance). During the 2024-2025 school year, there was a total of 14 Saturday sessions at the elementary school level and 15 Saturday sessions at the secondary level. Overall, 142 elementary school students participated across these events, while 73 middle school students and 39 high school students participated (see Table 24). This was an approximate participation rate of 36 percent out of the 704 students enrolled at any point during the 2024-2025 school year. Approximated participation rates ranged from 52 percent at middle school to 32 percent at elementary school and 31 percent at high school.

Table 24: Number of Saturday Sessions Offered During 2024-2025 and AAD Students Who Participated

Saturday Sessions	ES	MS	HS
Number of Saturday sessions	14	15	15
Number of students participated	142	73	39

When students were surveyed about these additional opportunities, students could also indicate whether they participated. Overall, 89 percent of students who responded to the survey indicated they participated in the extended day (93% for elementary students and 86% to 87% for secondary students). Overall, 77 percent of students indicated they participated in summer intersession (66% for elementary students and 84% to 85% for secondary students). Regarding Saturday school, overall, 66 percent of students indicated they participated in Saturday school. There were higher percentages of secondary students who indicated they participated (72%-79%) compared to elementary students (52%).

Of those who indicated they participated in these additional opportunities, 71 percent of students agreed the longer school day provided them with more opportunities to learn, 75 percent agreed the summer intersession

helped prepare them for the next school year, and 77 percent agreed Saturday school provided them with extra academic support. Elementary students' perceptions about these opportunities were more positive than secondary students' perceptions (see Table 25). When surveyed about the academic support received from their teachers more generally, 83 percent of students agreed their teachers provided support in subject areas where they needed support. Agreement was highest at high school (96%), followed by elementary school (84%) and then middle school students (71%) (see Table 25). When compared to students across the division, high school AAD students had higher agreement (96%) regarding teachers providing support where needed than high school students divisionwide (89%), whereas elementary school and middle school AAD students had lower agreement than students divisionwide (ES: 84% versus 92%; MS: 71% versus 85%).

Table 25: Student Perceptions of Extended Day, Summer Intersession, Saturday School, and Being Provided Support in Subject Areas

Survey Items	ES	MS	HS	Total
The longer school day provides me with more opportunities to learn.	74%	69%	68%	71%
Summer intersession helped prepare me for the next school year.	79%	72%	75%	75%
Going to school on Saturday(s) provides me with extra support for my academics.	83%	71%	78%	77%
My teachers provide support in subject areas where I need support.	84%	71%	96%	83%

According to AAD seniors who participated in the focus group, there were comments about the extended day being too late at the high school level. Seniors commented that the schedule in a previous year with the extended time in the morning was preferred to the current schedule, which was extended in the afternoon.

When instructional staff and parents were surveyed about these additional opportunities for learning, 88 percent of instructional staff agreed AAD provided additional opportunities for students to learn through the extended day, 94 percent agreed AAD helped prepare students for the next school year through the summer intersession, and 96 percent agreed AAD provided students with extra academic support through Saturday school (see Table 26). There was high instructional staff agreement for all items at all levels (at least 83%). All administrators who responded to these items (n=3) agreed regarding these opportunities being offered. From a parent perspective, 89 percent of parents agreed AAD provided opportunities and support through the extended day and Saturday school (see Table 26). There was little variation by school level regarding the extended day. Lower percentages of secondary parents (80%) agreed extra academic support was provided through Saturday school compared to elementary school parents (94%). In addition, 88 percent of AAD parents agreed teachers provided support in subject areas where needed with higher agreement at elementary (91%) than secondary (82%). AAD parent agreement regarding teachers providing support where needed was similar to the agreement from parents divisionwide (ES: 91%; Secondary: 83%).

Table 26: Instructional Staff and Parent Perceptions of Extended Day, Summer Intersession, and Saturday School

Groups and Survey Items	ES	Secondary	Total
Instructional Staff - AAD provides additional opportunities for students to learn through the extended day.	83%	90%	88%
Instructional Staff - AAD helps prepare students for the next school year through the summer intersession.	94%	94%	94%
Instructional Staff - AAD provides students with extra academic support through Saturday school.	94%	97%	96%
Parents - AAD provides additional opportunities for my child to learn through the extended day.	88%	90%	89%
Parents - AAD provides my child with extra academic support through Saturday school.	94%	80%	89%
Parents - Teachers provide support in subject areas where my child needs support.	91%	82%	88%

Field Trips

Another aspect of AAD is providing opportunities for students to attend field trips to locations throughout the community. The goal of these experiences was to help students understand their academics, as well as provide additional experiences for the students. Throughout the 2024-2025 school year, there were 76 field trips in total at the elementary school level, while there were 15 field trips at the middle school level and 49 field trips at the high school level. Examples of field trips for elementary school students included visits to the Naval Station Norfolk, Chrysler Museum of Art, and the Virginia Beach Sports Center. Examples of field trips for middle school students included visits to the Aquarium, American Rover, and Virginia Tech STEM Weekend. Examples of field trips for high school students included various college tours and visits to Washington D.C. and the Flamenco Dance Company. See a summary of example field trip opportunities in Table 27.

Table 27: Number of Field Trips by Level and Examples

Field Trips	ES	MS	HS
Number of field trips	76	15	49
Example of field trips	Naval Station Norfolk Slover Library Busch Gardens Norfolk Zoo Sandler Center Chrysler Museum of Art Virginia Beach Sports Center Aquarium	Aquarium American Rover Wells Theater Busch Gardens Virginia Living Museum Virginia Tech STEM Weekend	College Tours Washington DC False Cape State Park Hampton Roads Sanitation District Wells Theater Flamenco Dance Company

Overall, when students were surveyed about the field trips, 82 percent of AAD students agreed field trips helped them learn outside of school (see Table 28). Slightly higher percentages of secondary students (84%-85%) agreed with this item than elementary school students (80%).

Table 28: Student Perceptions of Field Trips

Survey Item	ES	MS	HS	Total
Field trips help me learn outside of school.	80%	85%	84%	82%

As shown in Table 29, high percentages of instructional staff (96%) and parents (92%) agreed AAD provided field trip opportunities for students to learn outside of school and all administrators who responded to the item (n=3) agreed.

Table 29: Instructional Staff and Parent Perceptions of Field Trips

Groups and Survey Item	ES	Secondary	Total
Instructional Staff - AAD provides students with field trip opportunities to learn outside of school.	94%	97%	96%
Parents - AAD provides field trip opportunities for my child to learn outside of school.	93%	91%	92%

Community Partners and Mentors

During the 2024-2025 school year, AAD engaged with multiple community partners that supported students across all school levels. In total, the AAD program in VBCPS collaborated with 23 community partners at the elementary school level, 5 at the middle school level, and 14 at the high school level. Several partners worked directly with students and offered special opportunities. In particular, iFly, which is a company that offers indoor skydiving, has been an ongoing partner at the elementary school level with AAD since its initial implementation in 2014-2015. In the current partnership, students can participate with iFly through a club at Seatack. In addition, for elementary school students, Zeiders American Dream Theater provided songwriting workshops, while EquiKids offered equine therapy for students who were identified as potentially benefiting from this additional social-emotional support. In addition, several other community partners were involved with the AAD program across all school levels (see Table 30 for examples).

Table 30: Number of Community Partners by Level and Examples

Community Partners	ES	MS	HS
Number of community partners	23	5	14
Example of community partners	Zeiders American Dream Theater NAS Oceana Prince Hall Masons Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Delta Sigma Theta Sorority United Way Sentara Galilee Episcopal Church	VBPD Kaleo Legal Sentara Capital Group ACCESS College	VBPD Kaleo Legal Sentara Capital Group ACCESS College Chrysler Museum EXIT Realty HRSD Illuminate Beauty Boutique Plaza Bakery VB Commonwealth Attorney Yorkies Deli

As AAD has continued implementation through grade 12, community sponsors became a part of the program with the first graduating class in 2024-2025. To ensure students' future success, the initial contract with VBCPS in 2013 stated, "AAD may, but shall not be obligated to, develop a merit college scholarship program." As part of the merit scholarship program, every class of AAD students receives a community sponsor that provides merit college scholarships to fund students' college careers. For the 2024-2025 graduating class, a sponsor was established that provided a minimum scholarship of \$3,000 per student.

Another way community partners or community members have been involved with AAD is through serving as mentors and role models to help ensure AAD students envision their own achievable dream. At the elementary school level, there is an established mentorship program that involves students from any grade being matched with a mentor based on student need as identified by an administrator. At the secondary level, there were also opportunities for students to meet with individual mentors or mentorship groups (e.g., Young Men of Distinction). During the 2024-2025 school year, at the elementary school level, there were approximately 20

students who met with mentors individually during lunch or at the end of the day during the extended time (see Table 31). During this time, mentors helped students with academics, played games, talked, or engaged in art activities. At the secondary level, there were 34 middle school students and 46 high school students who worked with either an individual mentor or met with a mentor group. At the secondary level, mentors and mentor groups typically worked with students on career readiness. Mentor groups typically met on a weekly basis.

Table 31: Number of Students Who Worked With a Mentor or Mentor Group by Level and Examples

Mentors	ES	MS	HS
Number of students who had a mentor (or mentor group)	20	34	46
Example of mentors or mentor groups	Individual Mentors Young Men of Distinction	Individual Mentors Young Men of Distinction Men In Black The Village	Individual Mentors Young Men of Distinction Ladies of Distinction

On the survey, overall, 27 percent of AAD students indicated they had an adult mentor or mentor group during the 2024-2025 school year. Of those who indicated they had a mentor or mentor group, 97 percent indicated their mentorship experience was very or somewhat useful. Approximately 94 percent of elementary school students indicated the experience was very or somewhat useful, while all secondary students indicated it was. In addition, when students were surveyed about having at least one adult who cared about their future, 85 percent of students agreed (see Table 32). A lower percentage of middle school AAD students agreed (79%) compared to the other levels (87%-90%). In comparison to students divisionwide, AAD students had lower agreement regarding having an adult who cared about their future, especially at the middle school level. Across the division, 90 percent of elementary school, 89 percent of middle school, and 92 percent of high school students agreed.

Table 32: Student Perceptions of Having an Adult Who Cares About Their Future

Survey Item	ES	MS	HS	Total
I have at least one adult who cares about my future.	87%	79%	90%	85%

Morning Greetings

Another opportunity provided to students is being greeted every morning by school staff when they arrive at the school. Every morning, staff and administrators welcomed students and shook their hands while ensuring students looked them in the eye. This was also an opportunity for staff to conduct a uniform inspection prior to the school day. In practice, students must form a line upon arrival at the building to conduct handshakes with staff members. Students are required to go through this line prior to going to their classrooms. At the elementary school level, students entered through the front door and formed a line to shake hands with the administration and teachers. When program evaluators visited the school, the line of students extended outside the building at times. At the secondary level, the academy coordinator indicated that students entered the school through the cafeteria to shake hands with staff and then recited the morning rotations (i.e., a version of the banners recited by elementary school students).

When surveyed about the morning greetings, 66 percent of students agreed the morning greetings helped them start their day in a positive way (see Table 33). A higher percentage of secondary students agreed with this item (70%-72%) than elementary school students (59%).

Table 33: Student Perceptions of Morning Greetings Helping Them Start Their Day in a Positive Way

Survey Item	ES	MS	HS	Total
The morning greetings help me start my day in a positive way.	59%	72%	70%	66%

Instructional staff had more positive perceptions of the morning greetings with 89 percent of instructional staff agreeing the morning greetings helped students start their day in a positive way (see Table 34). In the follow-up survey of secondary classroom teachers in the fall, all teachers (100%) agreed with this item. In addition, all administrators who responded to the item (n=3) agreed the morning greetings helped students start their day in a positive way.

Table 34: Instructional Staff Perceptions of Morning Greetings Helping Students Start Their Day in a Positive Way

Survey Item	ES	Secondary	Total
The morning greetings help students start their day in a positive way.	88%	90%	89%

Clubs and Extracurricular Activities

Students had access to several different clubs and extracurricular activities while at AAD. Examples of clubs included athletics (e.g., dance, yoga), science- and math-related clubs (e.g., Lego), arts-related clubs (e.g., Culinary Arts), and various other club opportunities (e.g., Kindness Club) (see Table 35). At the elementary school level, students participated in these clubs during two of the four extended days. At the middle school level, students had access to clubs that were unique to AAD, as shown in Table 35, as well as any clubs offered through Lynnhaven Middle School. At the high school level, students had access to AAD clubs shown in Table 35 and primarily participated during lunchtime. While high school students had access to athletics available at First Colonial High School, they did not have access to participate in their clubs. To participate in athletics at First Colonial High School, high school students took transportation after the extended day. In addition, ROTC is offered at Cox High School for AAD high school students. During 2024-2025, there were two high school AAD students who completed ROTC-related courses at Cox High School. Some AAD seniors who participated in the focus group noted that students not having access to the clubs at First Colonial High School was a change from a previous year when they were able to participate. Some seniors also indicated the current format of holding clubs during lunchtime was not effective because they did not have enough time to participate. Table 35 provides the total number of clubs offered through AAD during 2024-2025 with examples.

Table 35: Number of Clubs Offered by AAD by Level and Examples

Clubs	ES	MS*	HS
Number of AAD clubs	18	12	6
Example of clubs	BeYOUtiful Sewing Club Kindness Club MixxedFit Dance Fitness Lego Club Culinary Arts Yoga Club American Sign Language	Basketball Game Board Chess Art Photography No Bake Step	Ladies of Distinction Men of Distinction Latin Student Union Garden Operation Smile Pickleball

Note: *At the middle school level, in addition to these 12 clubs unique to AAD, students also had access to all clubs offered through Lynnhaven MS.

When surveyed about participation in extracurricular activities, 72 percent of AAD students indicated they participated in extracurricular activities, clubs, or athletics, which was a higher percentage than at the division level overall (66%) (see Table 36). A higher percentage of elementary AAD students (84%) indicated they participated in one of these activities compared to secondary AAD students (62%-63%). In comparison to the division, a much higher percentage of elementary AAD students (84%) indicated they participated in one of

these activities compared to division elementary school students (69%). The percentages for middle school were more similar (63% versus 64%), while the percentage was slightly lower for AAD high school students compared to the division (62% versus 65%).

AAD students were also surveyed about the benefit of clubs. Overall, 86 percent of students agreed clubs helped them explore new interests with high percentages at elementary and middle school levels (see Table 36). Agreement was lower at the high school level (79%).

Table 36: Student Perceptions of Clubs

Survey Items	ES	MS	HS	Total
Did you participate in any extracurricular activities, clubs, or athletics through your school?	84%	63%	62%	72%
Clubs help me explore new interests.	86%	90%	79%	86%

From a staff perspective, 90 percent of instructional staff agreed clubs allowed students to explore new interests with little difference by school level (see Table 37). All administrators who responded to the item (n=3) agreed.

Table 37: Instructional Staff Perceptions of Clubs

Survey Item	ES	Secondary	Total
Clubs allow students to explore new interests.	89%	90%	90%

Dream Merit Program

To encourage positive behavior, students are also provided the opportunity to be rewarded with “dream merits.” Dream merits are reward points that students can earn to purchase items at the school shop, such as school supplies or small toys or gifts. Staff members could reward students with these merits for appropriate behavior or appropriate dress throughout the school day.

At the elementary school level, to educate third- through fifth-grade students about budgeting and finances, students managed their merits and could write checks to use merits to purchase items. Students in the younger grades had others who managed their merits but were allowed to use them for designated opportunities. At the middle school level, students managed their merits through Dream Dollars, while high school students used a punch card.

When students were surveyed about the effectiveness of the dream merit program, 75 percent of students agreed earning merits or dollars motivated them to make good choices and follow school expectations (see Table 38). There was slightly higher agreement at the secondary levels (75%-79%) than at the elementary school level (71%).

Table 38: Student Perceptions of Dream Merit Program Motivating Them to Make Good Choices

Survey Item	ES	MS	HS	Total
Earning dream merits/dream dollars motivates me to make good choices and follow school expectations.	71%	79%	75%	75%

As shown in Table 39, when instructional staff were surveyed about the effectiveness of this program component, 50 percent of instructional staff agreed the program motivated students to make good choices and follow school expectations, while all administrators who responded to the item (n=3) agreed. A higher percentage of secondary instructional staff agreed (61%) than elementary school instructional staff (33%),

although agreement was relatively low overall. In the follow-up survey of secondary classroom teachers in the fall, agreement was lower regarding this item (44%).

Table 39: Instructional Staff Perceptions of Dream Merit Program Motivating Students to Make Good Choices

Survey Item	ES	Secondary	Total
The dream merit/dream dollar program motivates students to make good choices and follow school expectations.	33%	61%	50%

College Preparation and Workforce Readiness Program Opportunities

Another opportunity offered by AAD primarily to secondary students is the “What It Takes,” program. As part of this workforce readiness program that begins in middle school, representatives from corporate partners visit with AAD students to help prepare students for postsecondary success in college or the workforce. This includes professional guest speakers leading sessions introducing students to future career pathways, as well as teaching various workforce readiness skills, such as a workshop on LinkedIn. These opportunities through What It Takes are typically offered during the zero bell at the beginning of the school day.

Related Implementation Goal

In the AAD Academies’ Strategic Goals for 2024-2025, one goal addressed the college preparation and workforce readiness program: *fully and consistently implementing What It Takes initiative.*

When secondary students were surveyed about the What It Takes program, 75 percent of secondary AAD students agreed the program prepared them for the workforce by teaching them important professional skills with higher agreement from high school students (79%) than middle school students (72%) (see Table 40). In addition, when secondary instructional staff were surveyed, 85 percent agreed the program prepared students for the workforce by teaching them important professional skills.

Table 40: Secondary Student Perceptions of What It Takes Program Helping Them Prepare for the Workforce

Survey Item	MS	HS	Secondary Total
The What It Takes program is preparing me for the workforce by teaching me important professional skills.	72%	79%	75%

The What It Takes program also involves a Job Shadow Day that occurs during students’ junior year. On the survey, students in grades 11 and 12 were provided an item about Job Shadow Day. All students in grades 11 and 12 who responded to the survey item agreed it helped them get a better understanding of workplace opportunities.

Students were also surveyed more generally about receiving assistance, resources, and information at their school that helped them make informed decisions about their options after they graduate from high school. As shown in Table 41, nearly all high school AAD students agreed (94%) with this item, while 84 percent of middle school students agreed. AAD student agreement for this item was higher than at the division level for high school students (88%), while it was similar for middle school students (85%).

Table 41: Secondary Student Perceptions of Receiving Assistance to Make Informed Decisions About Postsecondary Options

Survey Item	MS	HS	Secondary Total
I receive assistance, resources, and information at this school that help me make informed decisions about my options after I graduate from high school.	84%	94%	88%

When high school students were further surveyed about support received regarding their postsecondary plans, 84 percent agreed their experience in VBCPS prepared them for what they planned to do after high school, and their school provided them with learning experiences that were relevant to their future goals (see Table 42). Agreement regarding these items was slightly higher for AAD high school students compared to high school students divisionwide who had agreement ranging from 80 to 83 percent. Additionally, 89 percent of AAD high school students agreed they had a plan and knew what they were going to do after graduation, which was also slightly higher than across the division high school students (85%).

Table 42: High School Student Perceptions of Support Received Regarding Postsecondary Plans

Survey Items	HS
My experience in VBCPS has prepared me for what I plan to do after high school.	84%
My school provides me with learning experiences that are relevant to my future goals.	84%
I have a plan and know what I am going to do after graduation.	89%

From a parent perspective, all secondary parents agreed AAD provided opportunities to prepare their child for college and the workforce. In addition, 82 percent of secondary parents agreed their child received assistance, resources, and information at their school that helped him/her make informed decisions about college, employment, or military service, which was higher than across all secondary parents divisionwide (76%). Nearly all secondary instructional staff (97%) agreed that students received assistance, resources, and information at AAD to help them make informed decisions.

Of the AAD seniors who responded to the survey, 91 percent indicated their plan was to enroll in college after graduation, while 9 percent indicated they were unsure at the time. This was higher than the percentage of students at the division level (70%) who indicated they planned to pursue college.

Postsecondary Plan Support

The final additional opportunity for high school students is the support they receive in their planning for after high school. Within the high school AAD parent and student contracts, there are expectations related to college preparation, such as ensuring students take the PSAT, SAT, or ACT examinations and complete the FAFSA. The contract also includes applying for scholarships.

According to the AAD academy coordinator, there is a Director of Graduation Success who is employed by AAD, Inc. and located at the AAD high school wing at Lynnhaven Middle School. The Director of Graduation Success works individually with each student to ensure students complete the FAFSA and apply for scholarships. As noted previously, each AAD graduating class also has a class sponsor that provides a base scholarship to all seniors. For the 2024-2025 school year, the minimum scholarship per student was \$3,000 per year as reported by the AAD academy coordinator. AAD staff work to fill funding gaps through college and community partnerships and through ensuring federal funding applications and external scholarship applications are completed.

All seniors who responded to the survey indicated they received help and support to find and apply for scholarship opportunities. This was higher than the agreement from seniors divisionwide (81%). Overall, data provided by AAD showed that all seniors in 2024-2025 received scholarships with a total of \$2,516,132 across all students.

In addition, according to the AAD academy coordinator, all AAD graduates will always be part of the program even after graduation. AAD continues to maintain contact with alumni through monthly check-ins to provide ongoing support. One major theme that emerged from the AAD graduating senior focus group regarding an

area of strength of the program involved financial support and scholarships. Several seniors commented on this being the biggest benefit of their participation in the AAD program.

Staff Selection Process and Characteristics

The next section of the report focused on AAD staff, including the staff selection process, staff characteristics, staff retention, and professional learning opportunities.

Staff Selection Process

Instructional staff for AAD were identified based on the Department of Human Resources classification of “instructional,” which excludes administrators and classroom assistants. At Seatack Elementary School, all instructional staff were considered part of the AAD program after it was fully implemented in 2017-2018, making the identification process straightforward. At the secondary level, staffing was more complex because AAD secondary instructional staff were officially classified as Lynnhaven Middle School staff within Department of Human Resources files, and some staff worked with both LMS and AAD students.

According to the MOA with VBCPS, instructional staff are selected based on their talents, experiences, and commitments for the target population and SAME enhancement. When AAD was first implemented in 2014-2015, all existing staff had the opportunity to transfer if they did not want to be a part of the AAD program. Instructional staff members who stayed went through the interview process. The selection processes for new instructional staff each year involved joint interviews with the principal and an AAD representative. In selecting teachers, AAD prioritized those with experience in Title I schools and being receptive to the social and mindset program components.

Instructional staff members were also required to sign a contract with AAD, Inc., which spans a three-year term. Similar to contracts signed by parents and students, instructional staff members were provided the mission of the program and asked to commit to specific aspects of the program, such as focusing students’ attention on the Banners, integrating the SAME curriculum throughout the day, and wearing professional dress. In the contract, staff are required to model expected student behavior and take part in the morning greetings with students. AAD staff who work the extended day are provided an additional stipend directly from AAD, Inc. for their extra time (\$8,500/year).

Secondary Staffing Allocations

At the secondary level, due to AAD staff being identified as working at Lynnhaven Middle School in all official Human Resources files, there were some challenges related to identifying the secondary AAD instructional staff. According to the Office of Budget Development, during the 2024-2025 school year, there were 19 additional classroom teacher full-time equivalent (FTE) budgeted allocations for AAD secondary students. An additional four FTE allocations were provided by the high school executive director to support instruction challenges.

Cross-referencing multiple internal records revealed slight inconsistencies in staffing lists. These internal documents included the AAD Stipend List obtained from AAD and Lynnhaven Middle School Staffing Workbooks maintained by the department of school leadership. These differences illustrated a need for more transparency and clarity about which staff were considered AAD staff. In addition, based on the spring survey, 89 percent of secondary instructional staff at Lynnhaven Middle School who responded to the survey and who worked with AAD students indicated they taught both LMS and AAD students, while only 11 worked exclusively with AAD students.

According to the AAD academy coordinator, secondary teachers may teach across multiple grade levels, but do not teach across content areas. In addition, according to the building principal, some students, particularly self-contained special education students, were often taught by non-AAD teachers due to not having a dedicated special education AAD teacher at the middle school level in 2024-2025. Although the intention was for all AAD teachers to teach only AAD students, some AAD secondary teachers also instructed non-AAD LMS students in practice and non-AAD secondary teachers instructed AAD students. In response to areas of improvement on the staff survey, one staff member provided a comment related to the lack of an AAD-specific special education teacher, as well as staff who commented that teachers who taught AAD students did not receive the stipend. However, it is important to note that although non-AAD teachers may teach AAD students, they may not have the additional requirements of being an AAD teacher (e.g., professional learning, working the extended day).

During the focus group with AAD seniors, students commented that there were teachers who taught multiple courses. They also expressed some concern about this, including the workload for staff (i.e., lesson planning), that teachers may not have the expertise needed, and that students may not be getting the appropriate depth of information from these courses.

Instructional staff were surveyed about the clarity of responsibilities as an AAD staff member, as well as the communication and collaboration with AAD (see Table 43). Overall, 86 percent of instructional staff agreed their responsibilities as an AAD staff member were clear with slightly higher percentages of agreement at the elementary level (89%) than the secondary level (84%). In addition, overall, 80 percent of instructional staff agreed AAD was consistent and clear in its communication with them and AAD provided communication in a timely manner. Similarly, higher agreement was found at the elementary school level (94%) compared to the secondary level (73%). Overall, a lower percentage of instructional staff agreed the collaboration between AAD and school staff was effective (66%) with again higher agreement at elementary school (78%) than at the secondary level (59%). In the follow-up survey of secondary classroom teachers in the fall, agreement was higher regarding receiving timely communication (88%), while agreement in the other areas were more similar to data from the spring survey. When administrators were provided similar items about responsibilities, communication, and collaboration, all administrators who responded to the survey items (n=3) agreed responsibilities were clear and communication was consistent, clear, and timely and collaboration with AAD was effective.

Table 43: Instructional Staff Perceptions of Clarity of Responsibilities and Communication and Collaboration with AAD

Survey Items	ES	Secondary	Total
My responsibilities as an AAD staff member are clear.	89%	84%	86%
AAD has been consistent and clear in its communication with me.	94%	73%	80%
AAD has communicated information to me in a timely manner.	94%	73%	80%
The collaboration between AAD and school staff is effective.	78%	59%	66%

Related Implementation Goals

In the AAD Academies’ Strategic Goals for 2024-2025, there was one goal related to staff: *increasing the teacher retention rate*. The percentage of classroom teachers who remained working with AAD was examined over two time periods (2023-2024 to 2024-2025 and 2024-2025 to 2025-2026) based on the list of classroom teachers who received the AAD stipend for working the extended day. As shown in Table 44, overall, 74 percent of classroom teachers remained working with AAD from 2023-2024 to 2024-2025, although there were slight variations by level. A higher percentage of secondary AAD teachers (81%) remained with AAD into 2024-2025 compared to the elementary AAD teachers (71%). There was a slightly lower overall percentage of teachers who were retained when examining teacher retention from 2024-2025 into 2025-2026 (70%). While

there was a slight increase in retention of teachers at the elementary school level (from 71% to 75%), there was a notable decrease in retention at the secondary level (from 81% to 63%).

Table 44: Percentage of Classroom Teachers Who Remained With AAD Across Years

School Years	Number of Teachers	Number of Teachers Retained the Following Year	Retention Rate
2023-2024 to 2024-2025			
Elementary	31	22	71%
Secondary	16	13	81%
Total	47	35	74%
2024-2025 to 2025-2026			
Elementary	28	21	75%
Secondary	19	12	63%
Total	47	33	70%

Instructional Staff

The characteristics of AAD’s instructional staff members for the 2024-2025 school year are provided in Table 45. Elementary school AAD instructional staff were slightly more likely to be male (10%) compared to the elementary division instructional staff overall (6%). At the elementary school level, AAD had a higher percentage of Black instructional staff (22%) than at the division level (9%), and a lower percentage of White instructional staff (68%) compared to the division (82%). AAD instructional staff at the elementary level were more likely to be new to the division (15%) than at the division level (8%). Although, elementary school AAD instructional staff had higher average years of experience compared to the division, while secondary AAD instructional staff had lower average years of experience. A higher percentage of elementary school AAD instructional staff held graduate degrees (61%) compared to the elementary division (55%).

Table 45: Instructional Staff Characteristics

Characteristic	AAD ES Staff (n=41)	ES Division (n=2,416)	AAD MS and HS Staff (n=20)	Secondary Division (n=2,546)
Female	90%	94%	70%	71%
Male	10%	6%	30%	29%
Asian	2%	3%	5%	4%
Black	22%	9%	15%	12%
Hispanic	2%	3%	5%	5%
Multiracial	5%	2%	0%	2%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0%	0%
White	68%	82%	75%	76%
Percent New to Division	15%	8%	10%	7%
Average Years of Experience	16 years	14 years	12 years	MS: 14 years HS: 15 years
Percent Graduate Degrees	61%	55%	55%	53%

Staff Professional Development

Overall, AAD staff members are provided site-focused professional learning. During the professional learning week in August 2025, there was a professional learning day focused on AAD specific topics. In addition, during the summer, there was a summer retreat offered for staff and administrators. During the 2024-2025 school year, some AAD staff participated in a professional learning session through Eastern Mennonite University focused on Strategies for Trauma Awareness & Resilience (STAR). In addition, AAD offers support for teachers to ensure they are engaging in trauma-informed practices.

Perceptions of professional learning provided by AAD showed 67 percent of instructional staff agreed AAD provided them sufficient professional development in the delivery of the AAD program (see Table 46). A slightly higher percentage of secondary instructional staff (70%) agreed with this item than elementary instructional staff (61%). However, in the follow-up survey of secondary AAD classroom teachers, agreement was lower for this item (50%). When administrators were surveyed, all administrators who responded to the item (n=3) agreed professional learning was sufficient.

Table 46: Instructional Staff Perceptions of AAD Providing Sufficient Professional Learning in Delivery of AAD Program

Survey Item	ES	Secondary	Total
AAD has provided me sufficient professional development in the delivery of the AAD program.	61%	70%	67%

Student Enrollment Patterns and Student Characteristics

The next evaluation question addressed the enrollment patterns and characteristics of students enrolled at AAD during the 2024-2025 school year, including students’ school attendance zones and demographic characteristics. Additionally, the numbers of students who opted out of AAD and who withdrew from AAD were also determined. Based on the program reaching full implementation from grades K through 12, the percentage of students who continued throughout the program was also determined.

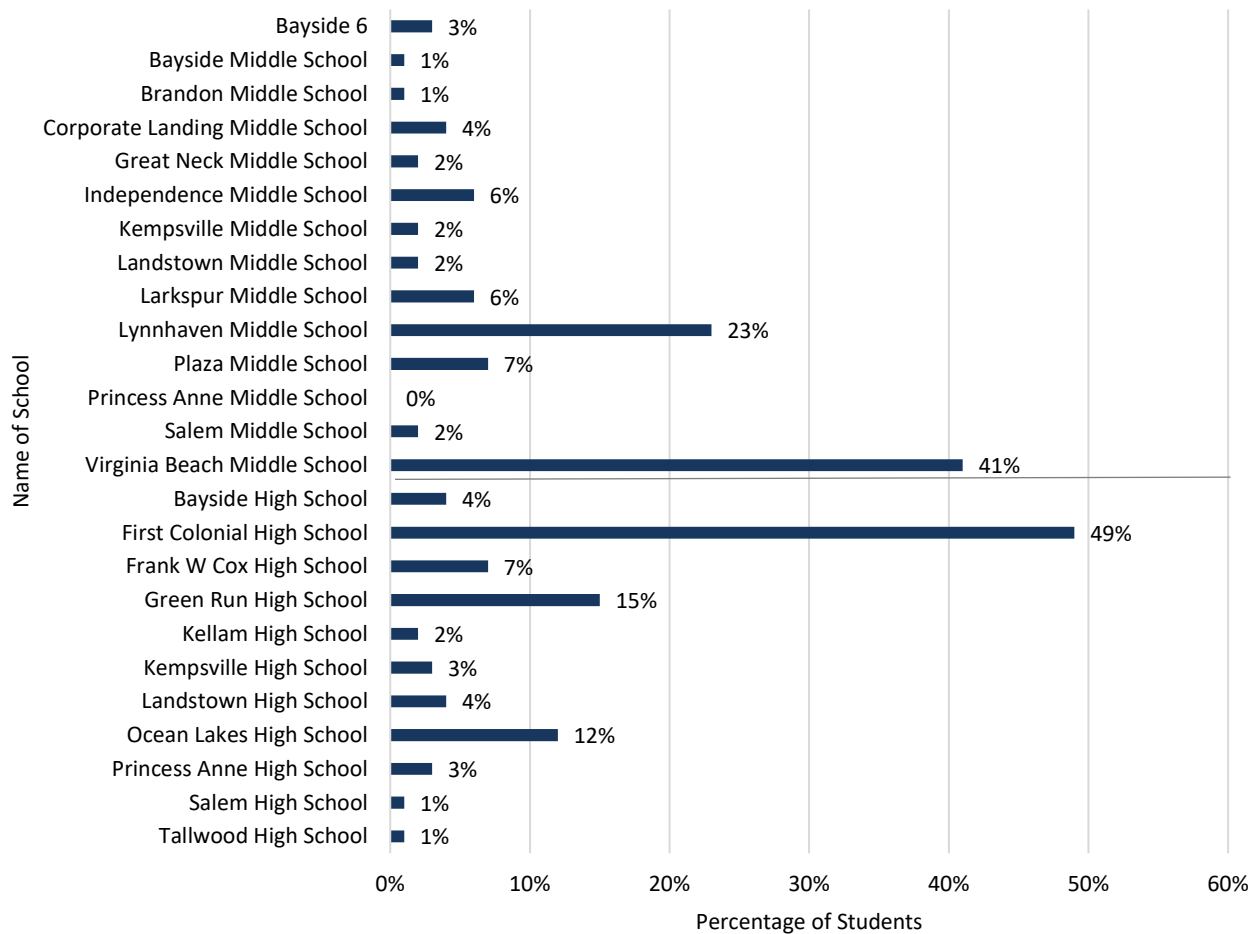
Student Enrollment By School Zone

Within the initial 2013 contract, it was noted that students must meet historical performance criteria to be selected for the program. In addition, students from the targeted attendance zones were automatically accepted into the AAD program at Seatack Elementary School. The AAD program also accepted students from throughout the division primarily in grades K through 9.

An analysis was conducted of students’ school attendance zones.¹⁵ At the elementary level, the majority of students enrolled at Seatack Elementary School at the end of the 2024-2025 school year resided within the Seatack attendance zone (68%) (n=254). The remaining 117 elementary school students were not zoned for Seatack. The next largest groups at the elementary school level were from the Birdneck (8%) and Alanton (3%) school zones. Students from 27 additional elementary schools had 10 or fewer attendees each (approximately 2% or less per school), indicating that Seatack Elementary School served students from across the division.

As shown in Figure 1, as of the end of the school year, the highest percentage of students at the middle school level was from the Virginia Beach Middle School zone (41%). The next highest percentage of students was from the Lynnhaven Middle School zone (23%), followed by Plaza Middle School (7%). The highest percentage of students at the high school level was from the First Colonial High School zone (49%), followed by Green Run High School (15%) and Ocean Lakes High School (12%).

Figure 1: Percentage of AAD Secondary Students by Zoned Middle School and High School



Student Characteristics

Table 47 shows the demographic characteristics of students enrolled at AAD at any point during the 2024-2025 school year (n=704). Any notable differences from patterns at the division level are noted. See Appendix A for demographic characteristics of students enrolled at any point in grades K through 12 throughout the division during the 2024-2025 school year.

As shown in Table 47, at the middle school level, there was a larger percentage of students who were male (57%) than female (43%), while the percentages by sex were more evenly split at the elementary school and high school levels. Overall, across all levels, the majority of AAD students were Black (55%-64%) and from 16 to 27 percent were Hispanic. Lower percentages of students were White (7%-11%) and Multiracial (10%-13%). The majority of AAD students at all levels were economically disadvantaged (66%-72%). At the elementary school level, 7 percent of students were identified English Learners, 10 percent were identified gifted, and 12 percent were identified special education. At the secondary level, there were lower percentages of English Learners (2%-3%) and higher percentages of gifted (16%-20%) and special education students (19%-21%). Across all levels, between 8 and 10 percent of students were military-connected.

Compared to students at the division level, there were notably higher percentages of Black and economically disadvantaged students at all levels and a higher percentage of special education students at the secondary

level. There were notably lower percentages of White, gifted, and military-connected students at AAD than students in the division at all levels and lower percentages of Asian students at the secondary levels.

Table 47: Demographic Characteristics of AAD Students

Characteristic	ES (n=439)	MS (n=141)	HS (n=124)	Overall (n=704)
Female	52%	43%	50%	50%
Male	48%	57%	50%	50%
Asian	1%	0%*	0%*	< 1%*
Black	60%**	64%**	55%**	60%**
Hispanic	16%	16%	27%	18%
Multiracial	13%	10%	10%	12%
White	10%*	11%*	7%*	10%*
Economically Disadvantaged	70%**	66%**	72%**	70%**
Identified English Learner	7%	3%	2%	5%
Identified Gifted	10%*	20%*	16%*	13%*
Identified Special Education	12%	21%**	19%**	15%
Military Connected	10%*	9%*	8%*	9%*

Note: Based on cumulative enrollment.

*More than 5 percent **below** the percentage at the division level based on cumulative enrollment.

More than 5 percent **above the percentage at the division level based on cumulative enrollment.

Student Opt-Outs

Another aspect of the evaluation question focused on how many elementary school students opted out of the program. As a reminder, families within the Seatack Elementary School attendance zone may decide to opt out of the program and attend a nearby school. To examine the number of students who opted out of the program at the elementary school level, the enrolled school and the designated attendance zone school based on home location were compared. Any other potential elementary school within the division was included, but special schools (e.g., Old Donation) or other programs (e.g., Southeastern Cooperative Educational Programs, [SECEP]) were excluded.

There were 94 students who lived in the designated Seatack Elementary School attendance zone but who were enrolled at a different school in 2024-2025 and were not enrolled at Seatack at any point during the school year. Therefore, these students may have opted out of AAD. Six possible reasons were provided for attending a school that was different from Seatack (see Table 48). The most common reason for not attending Seatack Elementary School was listed as “required courses or programs” or “other” in the VBCPS data warehouse. Of the 94 students who were enrolled elsewhere, 69 students (73%) attended a nearby school, Birdneck Elementary School.

Table 48: Number of Students Who Potentially Opted-Out of AAD With Reasons

Reason Provided for Opt-Out	2024-2025 (K-5)
Opt-Out Total	94
Childcare hardships	15
Extenuating circumstances	6
Moving	1
Other reasons	22
Out of VB, continued enrollment	1
Required courses or programs	38
No reason provided	11

Note: Table includes students enrolled at any point throughout the year.

Student Withdrawals

Related Implementation Goal

In the AAD Academies' Strategic Goals for 2024-2025, there was one goal related to student retention: *fewer students will withdraw from the program*. For this section of the report, withdrawal refers to students who were enrolled at AAD at any point during the 2024-2025 school year but were not enrolled in AAD at the end of the year. There was a total of 704 students who were enrolled at any time during the 2024-2025 school year. Of those 704, 94 students (13%) withdrew from the program during the school year and were not enrolled in AAD at the end of the school year. As shown in Table 49, there was a slightly higher percentage of students who withdrew from the program at the elementary school level (15%) than at the middle school (12%) and high school (7%) levels. The overall percentage of students who withdrew from the program remained consistent with the previous school year (2023-2024) when 13 percent of students enrolled at any time throughout the school year (89 of 685 students) withdrew from the program and were not enrolled in AAD at the end of the 2023-2024 school year. Comparisons by level were also relatively consistent with 14 percent of elementary school students, 13 percent of middle school students, and 8 percent of high school students withdrawing from the program at some point during the 2023-2024 school year.

Further examinations focused on the reasons why students left the program during the 2024-2025 school year. Of the 704 students enrolled at any point during the school year, 44 students (6%) left the AAD program then re-enrolled in another school in the division, while 7 students (1%) left the program and enrolled in a specialized program (e.g., SECEP, Renaissance Academy [RA]). The remaining students who withdrew from AAD (n=43) left the school division entirely during the school year after enrollment at AAD (6%).

Of the 44 students who re-enrolled in another VBCPS school, the majority of these students were in elementary school (64%), while one-fourth were in middle school (23%), and 14 percent were in high school. Of the 43 students who left the school division, the vast majority were in elementary school (88%), while the remaining students were in middle school (9%) and high school (2%).

Table 49: Percentage of Students Who Withdrew From AAD During 2024-2025

2024-2025 Withdrawals Within School Year	ES	MS	HS	Total
Total enrolled any time	439	141	124	704
Stayed until end of year	371 (85%)	124 (88%)	115 (93%)	610 (87%)
Withdrew from program prior to the end of year	68 (15%)	17 (12%)	9 (7%)	94 (13%)
Left AAD and re-enrolled in another VBCPS school	28 (6%)	10 (7%)	6 (5%)	44 (6%)
Left division	38 (9%)	4 (3%)	1 (1%)	43 (6%)
Enrolled in a specialized program	2 (<1%)	3 (2%)	2 (2%)	7 (1%)

Data provided by AAD detailed the various reasons students withdrew from the program during the 2024-2025 school year (see Table 50). Most withdrawals were due to family relocation or transportation barriers, while a smaller number reflected programmatic reasons such as schedule changes, discipline, or uniform requirements.

Table 50: Percentage of Students Who Withdrew From AAD Program With Reasons

2024-2025 School Year	ES	MS	HS
Overall withdrawal percentage	15%	11%	6%
Moved out of state or VB	8%	3%	0%
Moved to zoned school due to something specific with the program	2%	3%	2%
Moved to zoned school due to transportation	4%	2%	2%
Alternative setting (RA, SECEP, Homeschool)	1%	4%	2%
Deselection	0%	0%	1%

Note: Data included in this table was provided by AAD. Any discrepancies in percentages with VBCPS data may be due to differences in timing of student enrollment.

Additional analyses examined demographic characteristics of students who withdrew from the AAD program. As shown in Table 51, demographic characteristics varied across those who re-enrolled in another school within the division compared to those who left the division and those who remained at AAD.

Comparisons across the groups showed a lower percentage of students who left AAD and re-enrolled elsewhere in the division were Black students (50%) in comparison to those who stayed (60%). Alternatively, a higher percentage of Hispanic students left AAD and re-enrolled elsewhere (25%) compared to the other groups who stayed (18%) or left the division (7%). In addition, a higher percentage of students who re-enrolled elsewhere were identified as receiving special education services (25%) compared to those who stayed at AAD (13%). Similarly, a higher percentage of elementary school students who were zoned for Seatack but attended another elementary school were special education students (21%) compared with enrolled AAD elementary school students (12%). Finally, a larger percentage of students who re-enrolled elsewhere were in their first year at AAD (48%) compared to those who left the division (23%) or stayed at AAD (25%).

Table 51: Demographic Characteristics of Students by Withdrawal Status Compared to Students Who Stayed at AAD

Characteristic	Re-Enrolled in Another School (n=44)	Left Division (n=43)	Stayed at AAD (n=610)
Female	45%	67%	49%
Male	55%	33%	51%
Asian	0%	0%	0%
Black	50%	72%	60%
Hispanic	25%	7%	18%
Multiracial	14%	16%	11%
White	11%	5%	10%
Economically Disadvantaged	73%	0%	74%
Identified English Learner	2%	0%	6%
Identified Gifted	7%	2%	14%
Identified Special Education	25%	21%	13%
Military Connected	14%	7%	9%
First year in AAD	48%	23%	25%

Note: Students who left AAD and enrolled in a specialized program were excluded from this table.

Student Continuation in Program

Additional analyses examined student continuation in the AAD program across school years. Analyses were conducted to examine student continuation in the AAD program from the end of the 2023-2024 school year to the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year (i.e., September 30), with an additional focus on specific transition points (i.e., from elementary school to middle school and middle school to high school). As shown in Table 52, overall, the majority of students (83%) remained in the program from the end of 2023-2024 into 2024-2025. Higher percentages of high school students in 2023-2024 remained in the program into the 2024-2025 school year (94%) compared to students who were in middle school (83%) and elementary school (80%) in 2023-2024.

Table 52: Percentage of Students Who Continued and Withdrew Between 2023-2024 and 2024-2025

From EOY 2023-2024 to BOY 2024-2025	ES	MS	HS	Total
Remained in program	80%	83%	94%	83%
Overall between years withdrawal percentage	20%	17%	6%	17%

When focused specifically on the transition points between school levels, approximately 67 percent of fifth-grade students in 2023-2024 continued into sixth grade in 2024-2025, while 78 percent of eighth-grade students in 2023-2024 continued into ninth grade (see Table 53). These findings suggested that continuation in the program was lower at transition points, although the majority of students remained in the program.

Table 53: Percentage of Students Who Continued and Withdrew at Transition Points Between 2023-2024 and 2024-2025

From EOY 2023-2024 to BOY 2024-2025	Fifth Grade to Sixth Grade	Eighth Grade to Ninth Grade
Remained in program	67%	78%
Overall between year withdrawal percentage	33%	22%

Potential reasons students may have decided to no longer continue with the AAD program from the 2023-2024 school year into the 2024-2025 school year were obtained from AAD. According to AAD, students may have moved out of zone and no longer had transportation, moved out of the division or state, behavior/discipline,

parent choice (e.g., homeschool, transfer, return to zoned school, Virtual Virginia), change in hours, uniform/dress code requirements, or high school sports/extracurricular activities.

Long-term Student Continuation in Program

To examine longer-term student continuation with the AAD program, the number of students in the original group enrolled in 2014-2015 (kindergarten through second grade at that time) who stayed with the AAD program into the 2024-2025 school year (tenth through twelfth grades) was determined. Students were included in the original group if they were enrolled in AAD for at least half of the 2014-2015 school year and were considered as having stayed with the program if they were enrolled in AAD at least half of the 2024-2025 school year.

As shown in Table 54, overall, low percentages of students in the original K-2 group in 2014-2015 stayed with the AAD program into the 2024-2025 school year. The highest percentage of students who stayed with AAD was the original second graders, with 21 percent staying with AAD from second grade into twelfth grade. The lowest percentage was the original first graders, with 7 percent staying with AAD from first grade into eleventh grade. In addition, 18 percent of the original kindergarteners in 2014-2015 stayed with AAD as tenth graders into 2024-2025. To determine whether the other students in the initial group may have left the AAD program at some point and enrolled in another school within VBCPS, students’ enrollment in other schools in 2024-2025 was also examined. Approximately half of the original kindergarten (51%) and first-grade students (47%) were enrolled as tenth- and eleventh-grade students at another VBCPS school in 2024-2025, while 31 percent of the original second-grade students were enrolled as seniors at another school. The remaining students (40% overall) were either not enrolled at least half of the year in 2024-2025 or were not enrolled in VBCPS at all suggesting they may have left the division entirely.

Table 54: Percentage of Original Students in 2014-2015 Who Remained Enrolled in 2024-2025

Original Grade Level in 2014-2015	Number of Original Students	% Enrolled in AAD in 2024-2025	% Enrolled in Another School in 24-25
Kindergarten	83	18%	51%
Grade 1	55	7%	47%
Grade 2	70	21%	31%
Total	208	16%	43%

Students Since Initial Implementation

An additional analysis focused on how many of the current 2024-2025 AAD students have been enrolled since the initial implementation with a focus on the high school grades. In contrast to the analyses above that started with the groups of students in the first year of the program and monitored their enrollment to 2024-2025, this analysis started with the current group of AAD high school students and looked backward to see if they had been enrolled from the beginning of the program. Students must have been enrolled in the AAD program at least half of the year in 2024-2025 and the student’s first year in AAD.

As shown in Table 55, approximately half of the current tenth- (50%) and twelfth-grade students (54%) have been enrolled in the AAD program since the beginning (i.e., kindergarten and second grades in 2014-2015). These rates may partly reflect the small number of students in these grades and limited replacement of the students who left the program over time. Lower percentages of current ninth- (37%) and eleventh-grade students (29%) have been enrolled in the AAD program since the beginning (i.e., kindergarten in 2015-2016 and first grade in 2014-2015).

Table 55: Percentage of 2024-2025 High School AAD Students Who Have Been Enrolled Since Initial Implementation Year

Current Grade in 2024-2025	Number of Current Students	% of Current Students Enrolled From Beginning
Grade 9	51	37%
Grade 10	26	50%
Grade 11	14	29%
Grade 12	28	54%

Students Enrolled During 2025-2026

The enrollment at AAD at the beginning of the 2025-2026 school year was also examined. As of September 30, 2025, there was a total of 630 students enrolled in AAD across all school levels. As shown in Table 56, in comparison to the beginning of the year enrollment at AAD in 2024-2025, there was a slight decrease in the total number of students enrolled (from 648 to 630), although there were differences by level. There was an increase at the middle school level (from 137 to 158), while there was a decrease at the elementary school level and the number at the high school level remained the same. This slight increase at the middle school level may have been due in part to the School Board's approved expansion of eligible school attendance zones for transportation to AAD. However, there was not a visible impact of this decision at the elementary or high school levels.

As noted previously, according to the 2019 AAD MOA with VBCPS, each grade level within AAD was intended to have a minimum of 75 students and a maximum of 90 students. Overall, the AAD program was at 54 percent maximum capacity showing that the AAD program remained well-below capacity at the beginning of the 2025-2026 school year. The program was operating closer to capacity at elementary school (65%) and middle school (59%) than at high school (33%). If capacity percentages were based on the minimum targeted enrollment numbers in 2025-2026, elementary school was operating at 78 percent of the minimum targeted enrollment of 450, middle school was operating at 70 percent of the minimum targeted enrollment of 225, and high school was operating at 40 percent of the minimum targeted enrollment of 300.

Table 56: Student Enrollment in 2025-2026 and Percent of Capacity (90 Students Per Grade Level)

Current Grade	Sept 30 Enrollment in 24-25	Percent of Capacity as of Sept 30, 2024	September 30 Enrollment in 25-26	Percent of Capacity as of Sept 30, 2025
Kindergarten	57	63%	44	49%
Grade 1	66	73%	55	61%
Grade 2	57	63%	64	71%
Grade 3	70	78%	47	52%
Grade 4	77	86%	64	71%
Grade 5	64	71%	78	87%
K-5	391	72%	352	65%
Grade 6	56	62%	62	69%
Grade 7	46	51%	58	64%
Grade 8	35	39%	38	42%
6-8	137	51%	158	59%
Grade 9	51	57%	40	44%
Grade 10	26	29%	40	44%
Grade 11	15	17%	25	28%
Grade 12	28	31%	15	17%
9-12	120	33%	120	33%
Total	648	55%	630	54%

Progress Toward Meeting Outcome Goals and Objectives

The next evaluation question focused on progress made toward meeting the student outcome goals and objectives. The outcome goals for AAD were related to student academic achievement (i.e., SOL performance, literacy), as well as attendance, discipline, and graduation. The analyses in this evaluation focused on assessing the goal areas through comparing performance of AAD students with matched groups of students from similar schools during the 2024-2025 school year.

Matched Group Process

The demographic variables used to match students across comparison groups included students' grade level, sex, race/ethnicity, free/reduced lunch status, gifted status, English Learner (EL) status, and special education status. At the high school level, students were also matched based on enrollment in ATC or TCE. High school students who were enrolled in another academy were excluded from matching with an AAD student because the focus was on comparing performance of AAD students to other similar students not enrolled in a program. In addition, matched comparison group students were enrolled at a school that was previously determined to be similar to Seatack or the secondary AAD school in a comparable school analysis. At the high school level, the previous analysis determined there was not a comparable school to An Achievable Dream Academy; therefore, additional analyses were conducted to determine the school(s) that were most similar. All students from any comparable school could have been included in the matched comparison group.

To ensure data were comparable, only AAD students and potential matched comparison group students who were enrolled on September 30 and at the end of the year were included. There were no differences between groups regarding the number of days enrolled. The matched comparison group was also limited to students who were only enrolled at the comparable school during the 2024-2025 school year (i.e., did not attend multiple schools). Additionally, the matched comparison group included students who had never been previously enrolled in AAD at any time or grade level.

Overall, there were 573 AAD students who were enrolled at AAD on September 30, 2024, as well as at the end of the year. Following matching procedures, there were 569 AAD students who were successfully matched with a demographically similar peer from a comparable school who had never been enrolled in AAD at any point. Therefore, only four AAD students were unable to be matched with a similar peer. These students were excluded from additional analyses, consistent with best practice.¹⁶

All students from the matched comparison groups were in the same grade level as their AAD matches. Table 57 provides the demographic characteristics of AAD students and their matched comparison group by level. As can be seen from the table, following the propensity score matching procedure, the AAD group was similar to their matched comparison group based on each of the following variables (i.e., with less than three percentage point difference): sex, race/ethnicity, free/reduced lunch status, gifted status, English Learner (EL) status, and special education status.

Table 57: Comparison of Demographic Characteristics for AAD Groups and Comparison Group

Characteristics	AAD Elementary (n=333)	Matched Elementary (n=333)	AAD Middle (n=123)	Matched Middle (n=123)	AAD High (n=113)	Matched High (n=113)
Female	50%	50%	41%	42%	50%	50%
Male	50%	50%	59%	58%	50%	50%
Asian	< 1%	2%	0%	2%	0%	1%
African American	61%	65%	64%	64%	55%	55%
American Indian	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Caucasian	11%	9%	11%	9%	7%	6%
Hispanic	17%	15%	15%	14%	27%	27%
Multiracial	11%	10%	11%	11%	12%	12%
Economically Disadvantaged	77%	78%	67%	67%	73%	72%
Gifted	11%	10%	20%	20%	15%	15%
EL	8%	6%	3%	3%	2%	2%
Special Education	10%	10%	17%	16%	17%	18%

Appendix C provides a high-level summary of the matched comparison results discussed in the following sections in which there was evidence of AAD outperforming the matched comparison group across all goal areas.

Where possible in the student outcome section of the report, statistical tests were run to determine if differences observed between the AAD and matched comparison group were statistically significant rather than being due to chance. Results of the statistical tests, including t-tests and chi-square tests, are included where applicable. However, it is important to note that small group sizes may limit the ability to detect statistically significant differences. Because of this, results that were statistically significant at different probability levels were noted and summarized based on a liberal .10 probability level.

Goal 1: SOL Scores

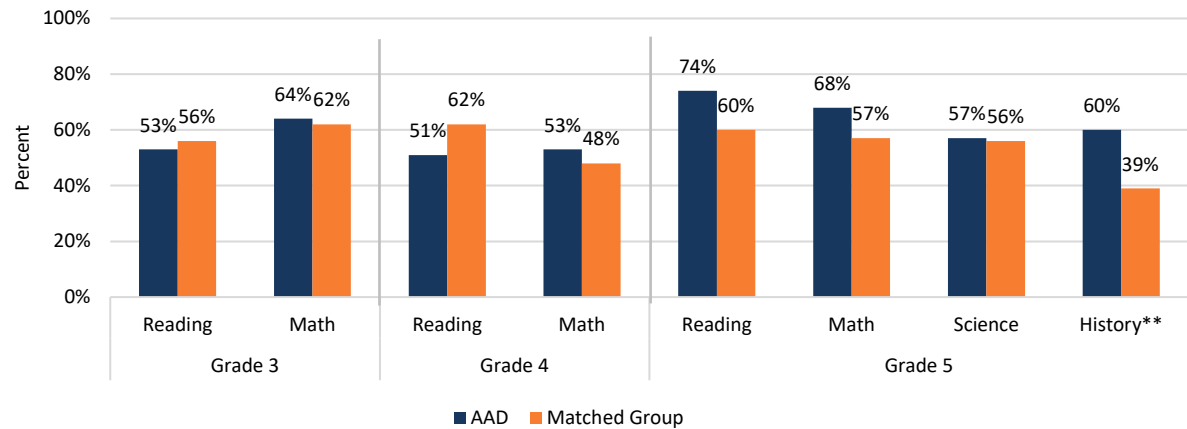
The first student outcome goal focused on SOL performance within the core content areas, including Reading, Writing, Math, Science, and History/Social Studies, as measured by the percentage of students who passed the SOL tests in these core subject areas, as well as the average scaled score. While the percentage of students who passed the SOL tests measured whether students met a benchmark, the average scaled scores measure the quality of the performance on the SOL tests. For these analyses, students’ best performance on an SOL test

was used if students had more than one SOL test within a content area. In addition, students who completed their SOL through Virginia Alternate Assessment Program (VAAP) were excluded from the analyses. To ensure comparability across groups, analyses were conducted by individual SOL test and students' grade level. SOL tests were included in the matched comparison group analysis if ten or more students took the test within a grade level for both groups. For other SOL tests completed by ten or more AAD students only, the percentage of AAD students who passed the SOL is provided without the comparison data.

Elementary School

Figure 2 shows the percentage of elementary school AAD students who passed their SOLs in core content areas in comparison to their matched comparison group. Statistically significant differences between groups are noted in the figure. As shown in Figure 2, a significantly higher percentage of grade 5 AAD students (60%) passed the History SOL compared to their matched comparison group (39%). In addition, although not statistically significant, higher percentages of grade 5 AAD students passed the Reading and Math SOLs compared to their matched comparison group (Reading: 74% versus 60%; Math: 68% versus 57%) and a higher percentage of grade 4 AAD students passed the Math SOL in comparison to their matched comparison group (53% versus 48%), although the difference was smaller. In contrast, although not statistically significant, a lower percentage of grade 4 AAD students (51%) passed the Reading SOL compared to their matched comparison group (62%). The differences between the grade 3 AAD students and their matched comparison group who passed Reading and Math tests were smaller (i.e., within 5 percentage points). The percentage of grade 5 AAD students who passed the Science SOL was also relatively similar to the percentage of their matched comparison group who passed.

Figure 2: Percentage of Students Passing Elementary School SOLs

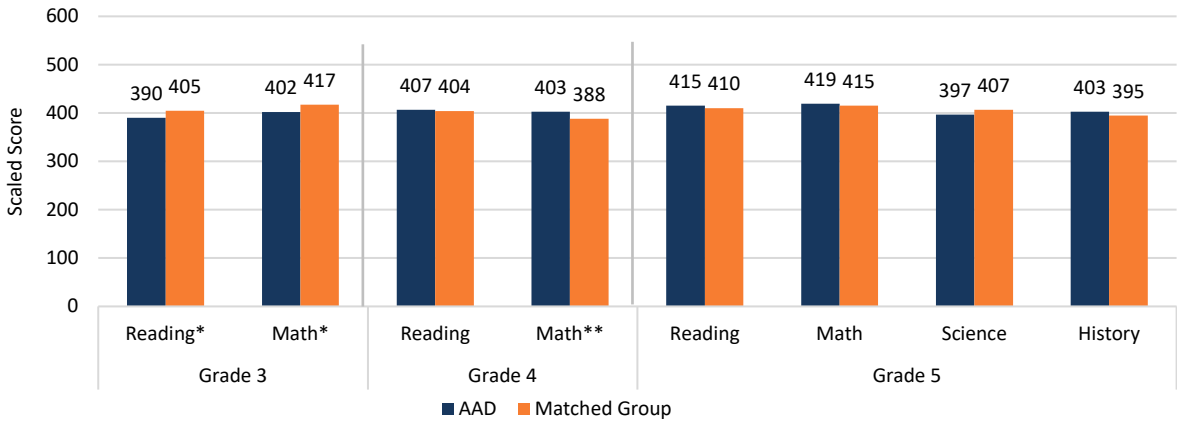


Note: Asterisks denote statistically significant differences from comparison group. * $p < .1$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$.

Figure 3 shows the average scaled scores on the SOLs for the elementary school AAD students' SOLs in comparison to their matched comparison group. Statistically significant differences between groups are noted in the figure. In comparison to the percentages of students passing the grade 3 SOLs, a different pattern emerged with the average scaled scores. As shown in Figure 3, grade 3 AAD students had significantly lower average scores on the Reading (390 versus 405) and Math SOLs (402 versus 417) compared to their grade 3 matched comparison group. In contrast, grade 4 AAD students (403) had a significantly higher average scaled score compared to their matched comparison group on the grade 4 Math SOL (388), while there was no notable difference between the average scores on the grade 4 Reading SOL between the two groups (see Figure 3). Regarding the Grade 5 SOLs, although there were some notable differences between the groups

in the percentage of students who passed the SOLs, there were no notable significant differences in their average scaled scores (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Average Scaled Scores on Elementary School SOLs



Note: Asterisks denote statistically significant differences from comparison group. * $p < .1$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$.

Middle School

Figure 4 shows the percentage of middle school AAD students who passed their SOLs in core content areas in comparison to their matched comparison group. As a reminder, SOL tests were excluded from analysis if fewer than 10 students took the test within a grade level for both groups. As shown in Figure 4, there were no notable statistically significant differences between the two groups in the percentage who passed the SOLs taken by middle school students. Although not statistically significant, a slightly lower percentage of grade 6 AAD students passed the Grade 6 Math SOL (56% versus 61%) compared to their matched comparison group, while the difference for Reading was less noticeable. Regarding SOLs taken by grade 7 students, the same percentage of AAD and matched group students passed the Reading (79% for both groups) and Grade 8 Science SOLs (100% for both groups). Lastly, although differences were not statistically different, a higher percentage of grade 8 AAD students passed the Reading, Grade 8 Math, Grade 8 Science, and History SOLs compared to their matched comparison group (see Figure 4). For other SOL tests completed by at least ten middle school AAD students only, the percentage of AAD students who passed the SOL is provided without the comparison data. An additional ten grade 6 AAD students took the Math 8 SOL, and all of these AAD students (100%) passed. In addition, 24 grade 7 AAD students took the Math 8 SOL, and 96 percent passed. There were also 21 grade 8 AAD students who took the Algebra I SOL, and all (100%) passed. In Science, 18 grade 8 AAD students took the Earth Science SOL, and 89 percent passed.

Figure 4: Percentage of Students Passing Middle School SOLs

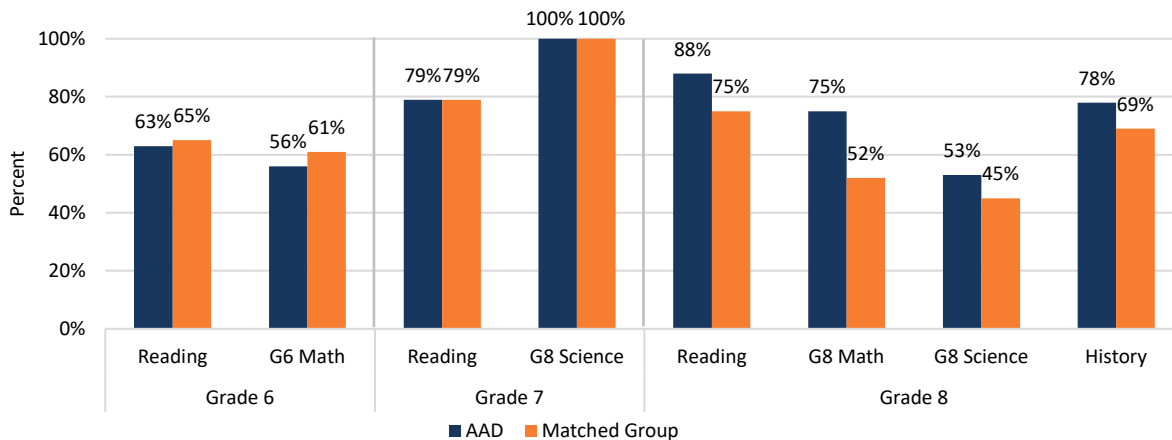
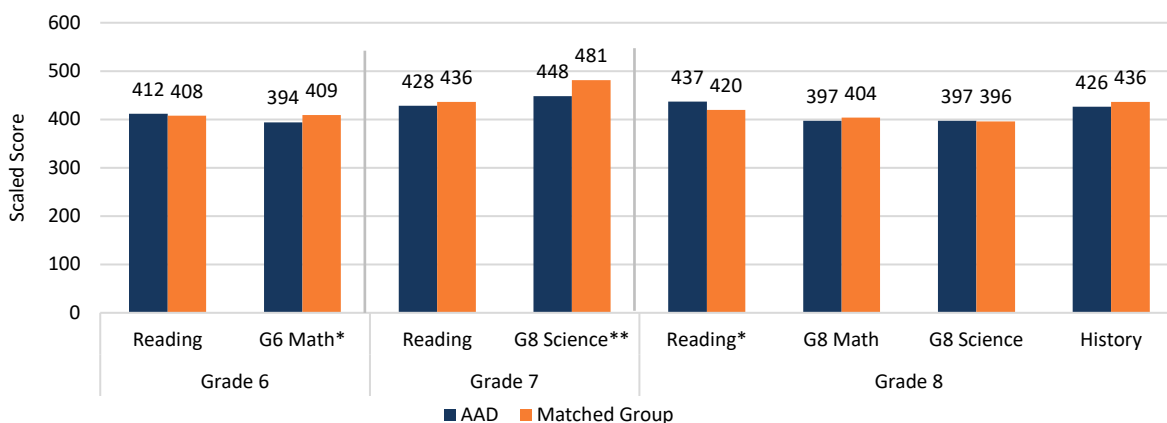


Figure 5 shows the average scaled scores for the middle school AAD students' SOLs in comparison to the matched comparison group. Overall, the grade 6 AAD students had a significantly lower average score on the Grade 6 Math SOL (394) compared to their matched comparison group (409) and the grade 7 AAD students had a significantly lower average score on the Grade 8 Science SOL (448) compared to their matched comparison group (481). There were not statistically significant differences between the average scaled scores on the Grade 6 and Grade 7 Reading SOLs (see Figure 5). Regarding the SOLs taken by Grade 8 students, AAD students had a significantly higher average score on Reading (437 versus 420), while there were no notable differences on the other SOLs taken (i.e., Grade 8 Math, Grade 8 Science, and History) (see Figure 5).

Figure 5: Average Scaled Scores on Middle School SOLs



Note: Asterisks denote statistically significant differences from comparison group. * $p < .1$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$.

High School

Figure 6 shows the percentage of high school AAD students who passed their End-of-Course (EOC) SOLs in core content areas in comparison to the matched comparison group. Again, SOL tests were excluded from analysis if fewer than ten students took the test within a grade level across both groups. Although differences were not statistically significant, slightly higher percentages of grade 9 AAD students passed the Algebra I (96% versus 87%) and Biology SOLs (94% versus 75%) and a higher percentage of grade 11 AAD students

passed the Reading SOL (100% versus 83%) compared to their matched comparison group. In contrast, slightly lower percentages of grade 9 AAD students (93%) passed the Geometry SOL compared to the matched comparison group students (100%), and grade 11 AAD students (71%) passed the Writing SOL compared to the matched comparison group students (83%). For other SOL tests completed by at least ten high school AAD students only, the percentage of AAD students who passed the SOL is provided without the comparison data. An additional 14 grade 10 AAD students took the Biology SOL, and 86 percent passed. In addition, 21 grade 10 AAD students took the World Geography SOL, and 76 percent passed.

Figure 6: Percentage of High School Students Passing EOC SOLs

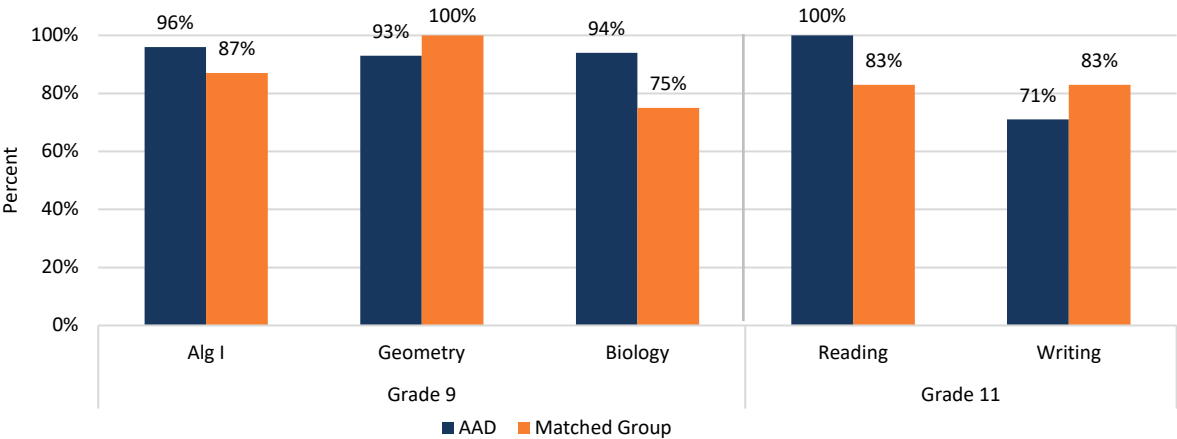
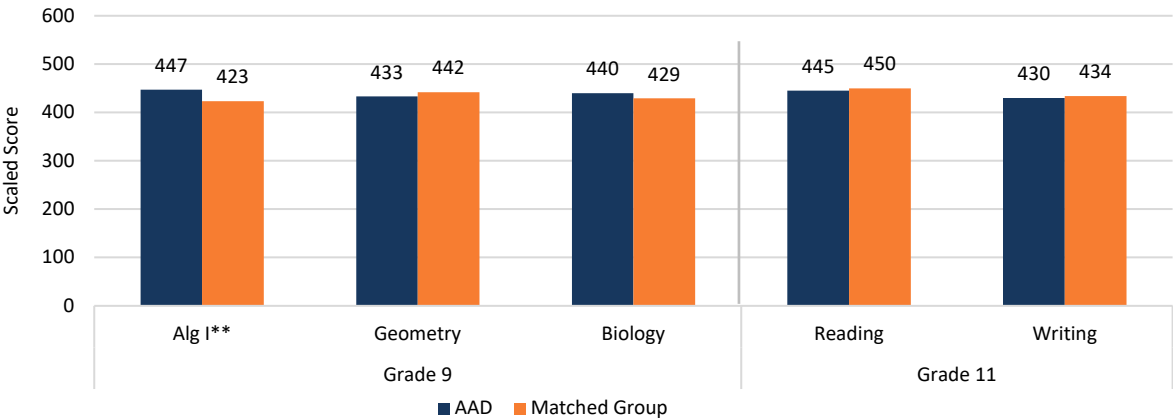


Figure 7 shows the average scaled scores on the SOLs for the high school AAD students' EOC SOLs in comparison to the matched comparison group. Overall, the grade 9 AAD students (447) had a significantly higher average score on the Algebra I SOL compared to grade 9 matched comparison group students (423). There were not statistically significant differences between the average scaled scores on the Biology or Geometry SOLs taken by grade 9 students or the Reading or Writing SOLs taken by the grade 11 students (see Figure 7).

Figure 7: Average Scaled Scores on EOC SOLs



Note: Asterisks denote statistically significant differences from comparison group. * $p < .1$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$.

In summary, across all grade levels, AAD students generally performed comparably to their matched peers on the SOL tests, with notable strengths in the areas of Math and History for AAD students. At the elementary level, AAD students slightly outperformed comparison group students in Math beginning in grade 4 and had a significantly higher percentage of students who passed the grade 5 History SOL.

Reading outcomes were more variable, with slightly lower performance among younger AAD students but performing better in grade 5. In middle school, grade 8 AAD students scored significantly higher on the Reading SOL, while earlier grades (particularly grade 6 Math and grade 7 Science) were more positive for the comparison group. At the high school level, AAD students had significantly higher average scores on the Algebra I SOL, with comparable performance in Biology, Geometry, and English.

Perception Data

Stakeholders including students, parents, and staff were surveyed about their perceptions of academic support provided to students in the program. Overall, 82 percent of students agreed the instruction they received met their academic needs with agreement ranging from 81 percent at elementary school to 86 percent at high school (see Table 58). In comparison to student agreement divisionwide, AAD students had lower agreement at all levels regarding this item. Across the division, 90 percent of elementary school, 86 percent of middle school, and 88 percent of high school students agreed.

Table 58: Student Perceptions of Instruction Meeting Academic Needs

Survey Item	ES	MS	HS	Total
The instruction I receive in my school meets my academic needs.	81%	82%	86%	82%

In addition, 91 percent of parents agreed the services met their child’s academic needs, and 83 percent of instructional staff agreed the instruction and services offered met students’ academic needs (see Table 59). There was no variation by level regarding this item. Overall, 87 percent of parents agreed AAD provided their child the level of academic support he/she needed with a higher percentage at the secondary level (100%) than the elementary school level (82%). Notably lower percentages of instructional staff agreed with a similar item with 67 percent of instructional staff agreeing AAD provided students with the level of academic support students needed. A higher percentage of secondary instructional staff agreed (74%) than elementary school instructional staff (56%). In addition, all administrators who responded to the items (n=3) agreed regarding students’ academic support.

Table 59: Parent and Instructional Staff Perceptions of Instruction and Academic Support

Groups and Survey Items	ES	Sec	Total
Parent - The services offered in my child’s school meet my child’s academic needs.	91%	91%	91%
Parent - AAD provides my child the level of academic support he/she needs.	82%	100%	87%
Instructional Staff - The instruction and services offered at AAD meet students’ academic needs.	83%	83%	83%
Instructional Staff - AAD provides students with the level of academic support students need.	56%	74%	67%

Goal 2: Literacy

The second student outcome goal focused on literacy for all students. An additional focus area of the literacy goal was regarding literacy growth for students with disabilities. For students in kindergarten through second grades, students’ literacy was assessed by performance on the Virginia Language and Literacy Screening System (VALLSS). VALLSS measures early reading and language skills to identify students’ risk levels for reading

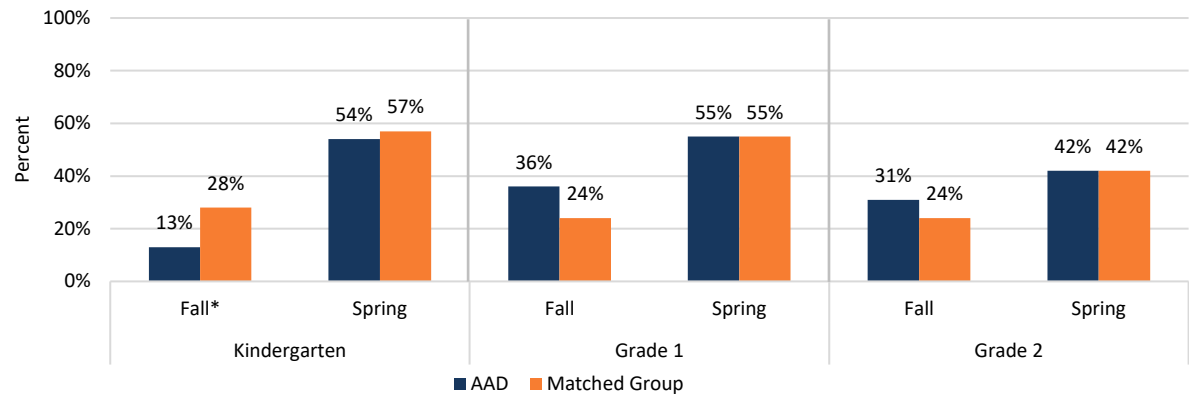
difficulties. Results were summarized by grade level and included the percentage of students scoring within the low-risk band in the fall and spring. A low-risk band on the VALLSS is considered to be at low risk for developing reading difficulties.¹⁷ In addition, average scaled scores on both the fall and spring assessments were provided. Improvement from a higher risk band to a lower risk band was also analyzed.

For students in grades 3 through 8, literacy was assessed using the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) reading assessment, which assesses students’ reading achievement and growth. Results from the Reading MAP include percentile-based performance bands (i.e., on a 5-point scale) and RIT scale scores. The percentile-based performance is categorized based on NWEA national norms (i.e., based on percentile ranges): Low (< 20th percentile), Average Low (21st to 40th percentile), Average (41st to 60th percentile), Average High (61st to 80th percentile), and High (> 81st percentile). For the purposes of this evaluation, students in the Average, Average High, and High categories were combined to represent students performing in the higher percentile categories relative to their peers nationwide. Growth from fall to spring was also examined based on data provided by NWEA about whether students met their projected growth as of their spring reading scores. In addition, due to the focus area of literacy for students with disabilities, improvement on VALLSS risk band and growth on the Reading MAP was examined for special education students. However, due to lower numbers of special education students within grade levels, analyses were conducted at the overall school level where appropriate.

VALLSS

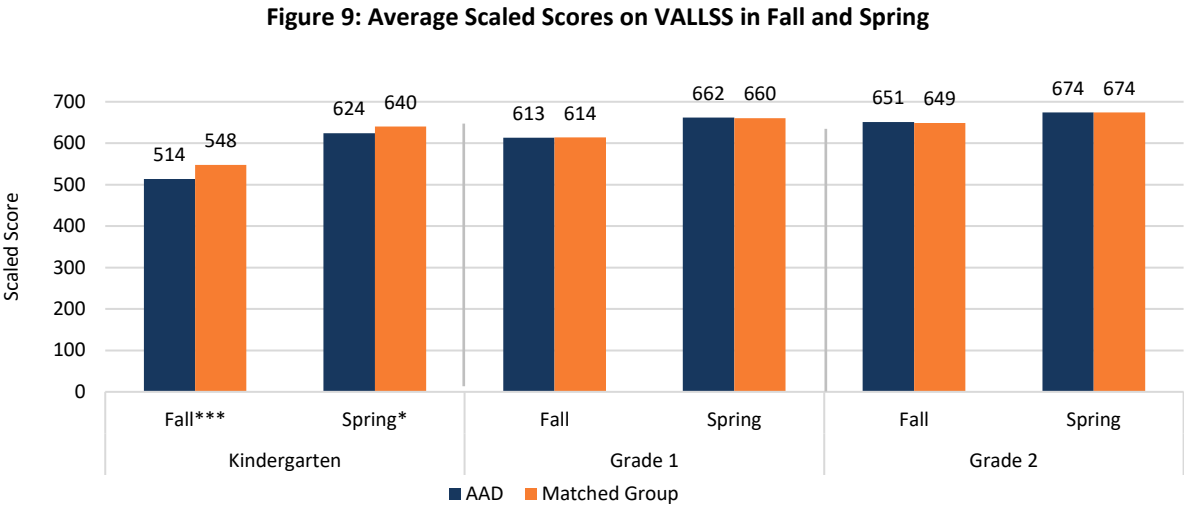
Figure 8 shows the percentage of K-2 students who scored in the low-risk band on the VALLSS in the fall and in the spring in comparison to the matched comparison groups. Statistically significant differences between groups are noted in the figure. While there was a significantly lower percentage of kindergarten AAD students who were in the low-risk category in the fall compared to their matched comparison group, there was not a significant difference between the groups in the spring. In contrast, for both first- and second-grade students, although the difference was not statistically significant, slightly higher percentages of grade 1 AAD and grade 2 AAD students were at low risk in the fall compared to grade 1 and grade 2 matched comparison group students, whereas there were no differences between the groups in the spring. This suggests that similar percentages of AAD and matched comparison group students were considered to be in the low-risk category in the spring across all grade levels.

Figure 8: Percentage of Students Scoring in Low-Risk Band on VALLSS in Fall and Spring



Note: Asterisks denote statistically significant differences from comparison group. * $p < .1$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$.

Figure 9 shows the average scaled scores on the VALLSS for students in kindergarten through second grade in comparison to their matched comparison group. While kindergarten AAD students had a significantly lower average scaled score in the fall compared to comparison group students, the AAD students continued to have a significantly lower average score in the spring. For first and second graders, students had similar average scores in the fall and the spring.



Note: Asterisks denote statistically significant differences from comparison group. **p* < .1, ***p* < .05, ****p* < .01.

To more directly examine growth from fall to spring on the VALLSS, whether students had a change in their risk band from fall to spring was evaluated. Because the VALLSS has three risk bands, students could have shown improvement by moving from a high-risk band in the fall to a moderate or low risk band in the spring. Students who scored in the moderate risk band in the fall could have shown improvement by moving to the low-risk band in the spring. Only students who had room for growth were included in these analyses (i.e., students scoring in the moderate or high-risk bands in the fall). At all grade levels, higher percentages of AAD students had growth in their band of risk compared to their matched comparison group, although the differences were not statistically significant (see table 60).

Table 60: Percentage of Students Who Showed Improvement in Their Band of Risk Status From Fall to Spring

Grade Level	AAD	Matched Group
Kindergarten	69%	58%
Grade 1	55%	46%
Grade 2	29%	26%

In summary, while kindergarten AAD students began the year with lower average scaled scores and a smaller percentage at low risk than their peers, they demonstrated greater growth from fall to spring. In grades 1 and 2, AAD students generally performed similarly to their matched peers in both the fall and spring, with slightly higher proportions scoring at low risk in the fall. Across all primary grades, higher percentages of AAD students improved their risk levels from fall to spring of those who were at high or moderate risk. These results suggest that AAD students, particularly in kindergarten, are growing in their literacy over the course of the school year.

Student Group Analyses

To assess the focus area of literacy for students with disabilities, an additional analysis examined the growth in literacy for special education students. Due to low numbers of special education students within each grade

level, the analysis examined all special education students in kindergarten through second grades combined. Overall, a higher percentage of AAD special education students (27%) showed improvement by moving to a lower-risk band from the fall to the spring compared to the special education matched comparison group students (13%) (see Table 61).

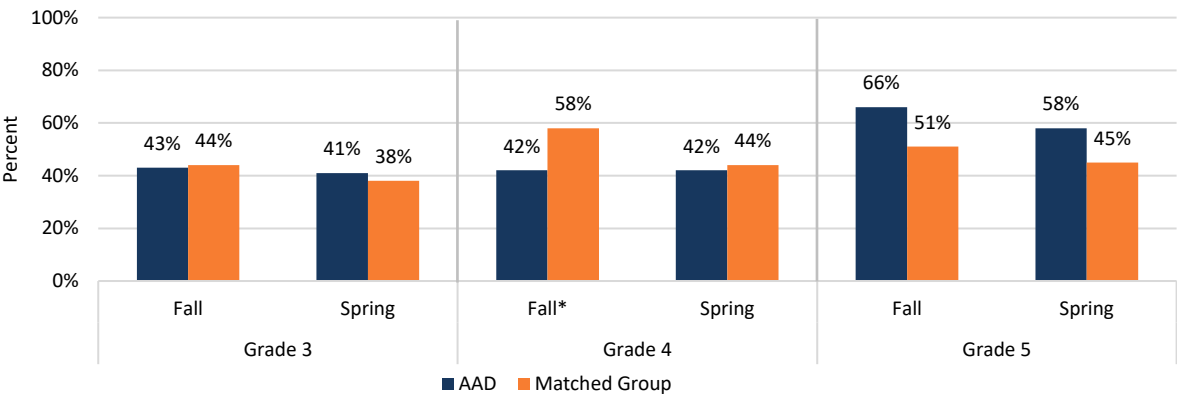
Table 61: Percentage of Special Education Students Who Showed Improvement in Their Band of Risk Status From Fall to Spring

Student Group	AAD	Matched Group
Special Education Students	27%	13%

Reading MAP

Figure 10 shows the percentage of elementary school students in grades 3 through 5 who scored average or higher on the Reading MAP in the fall and in the spring in comparison to the matched comparison groups. Statistically significant differences between groups are noted in the figure. For third graders, there were no differences between the AAD and matched comparison groups in the percentages of students who scored average or higher on the MAP in the fall and the spring. While there was a significantly lower percentage of grade 4 AAD students who scored average or higher in the fall compared to grade 4 matched comparison group students , there was not a significant difference between the groups in the spring. In contrast, although not statistically significant, higher percentages of grade 5 AAD students scored average or higher in the fall and the spring compared to the matched comparison group.

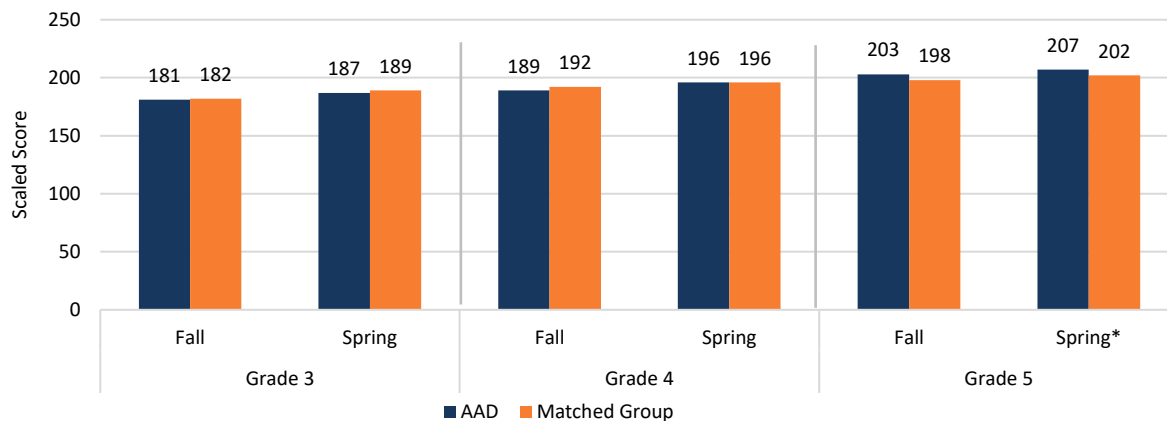
Figure 10: Percentage of Students Scoring Average or Above on Reading MAP Achievement



Note: Asterisks denote statistically significant differences from comparison group. **p* < .1, ***p* < .05, ****p* < .01.

Figure 11 shows the average RIT scores on the Reading MAP for elementary students in comparison to the matched comparison group. For grades 3 and 4, RIT scores were nearly identical for both AAD and matched groups in the fall and spring with no statistically significant differences. For grade 5, AAD students had a significantly higher RIT score in the spring compared to comparison group students.

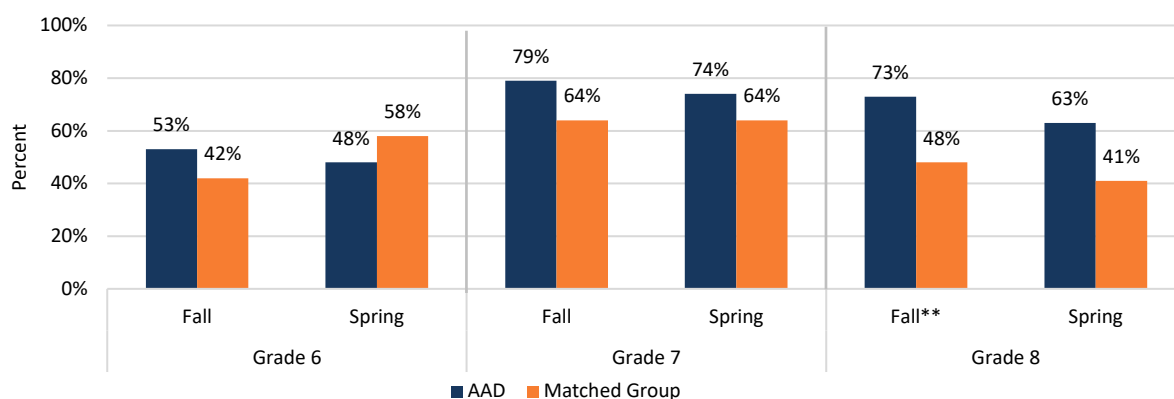
Figure 11: Average RIT Scores on Reading MAP in Fall and Spring



Note: Asterisks denote statistically significant differences from comparison group. * $p < .1$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$.

Figure 12 shows the percentage of middle school students who scored average or higher on the MAP in the fall and in the spring in comparison to the matched comparison groups. For sixth graders, although the differences were not statistically significant, a higher percentage of grade 6 AAD students scored average or higher in the fall, while a higher percentage of grade 6 matched comparison group students scored average or higher in the spring. Again, although differences were not statistically significant, higher percentages of AAD grade 7 students scored average or higher in the fall and spring in comparison to their matched group students. For eighth graders, a higher percentage of grade 8 AAD students scored average or higher in the fall and the spring, with a significantly higher percent in the fall but not the spring.

Figure 12: Percentage of Students Scoring Average or Above on Reading MAP Achievement

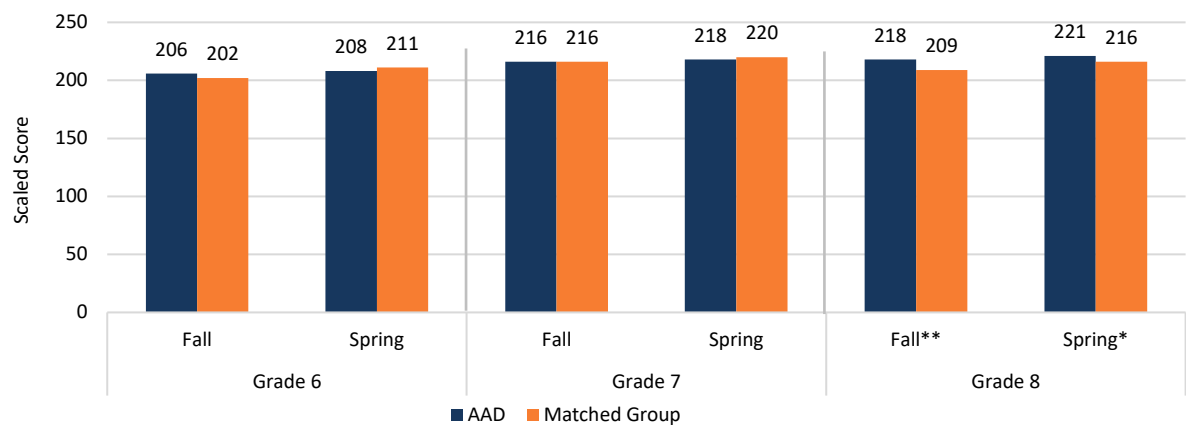


Note: Asterisks denote statistically significant differences from comparison group. * $p < .1$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$.

Figure 13 shows the average RIT scores on the MAP for middle school students in comparison to the matched comparison group. For grades 6 and 7, the RIT scores remained similar between AAD and matched students

across middle school grades in the fall and spring. For grade 8, AAD students had a significantly higher RIT score in the spring compared to comparison group students.

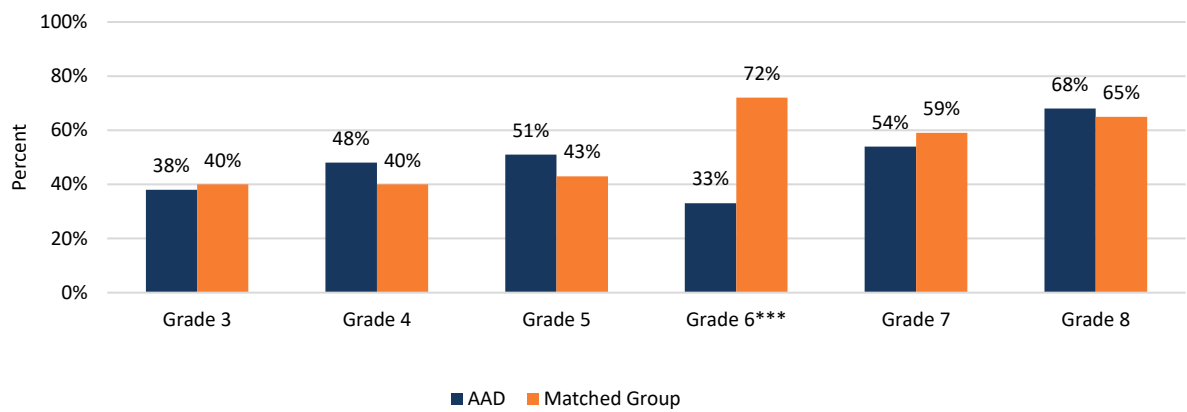
Figure 13: Average RIT Scores on Reading MAP in Fall and Spring



Note: Asterisks denote statistically significant differences from comparison group. * $p < .1$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$.

To evaluate growth on the MAP, the percentage of students who met the projected growth within the Reading MAP from fall to spring was examined. There was a significantly higher percentage of grade 6 matched comparison group students who met their projected growth in comparison to grade 6 AAD students (see Figure 14). Although other differences were not statistically significant, there were slightly higher percentages of AAD students who met their projected growth in grades 4, 5, and 8 compared to their matched groups, while there were slightly lower percentages of AAD students who met their projected growth in grades 3 and 7.

Figure 14: Percentage of Students Who Met Projected Growth on Reading MAP in Spring



Note: Asterisks denote statistically significant differences from comparison group. * $p < .1$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$.

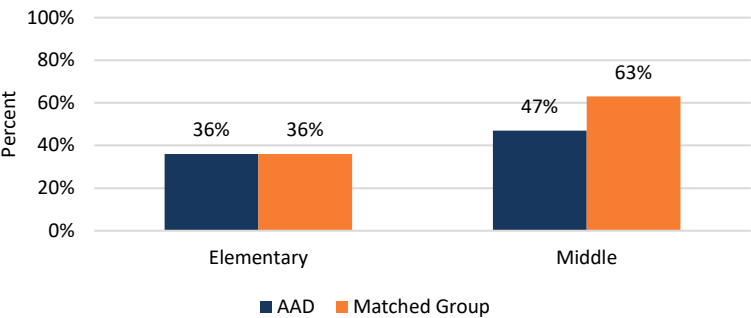
In summary, for students in grades 3 through 8, AAD students performed similarly to their matched peers on the MAP, with some trends of stronger performance in upper grades. At the elementary level, grade 5 AAD students had higher percentages scoring average or higher in both fall and spring compared to the comparison group, while grade 4 AAD students closed an initial fall gap by spring. In middle school, grade 8 AAD students

demonstrated higher rates of average or above performance in both fall and spring, aligning with SOL reading results. Although grade 6 matched group students were more likely to meet their projected growth targets, AAD students in grades 4, 5, and 8 showed slightly higher growth overall. Taken together, MAP data indicated that AAD students achieved at comparable levels to their peers and often made stronger gains in upper grades.

Student Group Analyses

To assess the focus area of literacy for students with disabilities, an additional analysis examined the percentage of special education students who met their projected growth. Due to low numbers of special education students within each grade level, the analyses examined special education students in elementary school and middle school separately rather than by grade. At the elementary school level, the same percentage of AAD special education students (36%) met their projected growth on the Reading MAP as the matched comparison group special education students (36%) (see Figure 15). At the middle school level, a lower percentage of AAD special education students (47%) met their projected growth on the Reading MAP compared to their matched comparison group special education students (63%).

Figure 15: Percentage of Special Education Students Who Met Projected Growth on Reading MAP in Spring



Summary

When all academic data from goal 1 and goal 2 were examined collectively, the assessment data indicated that AAD students performed at levels comparable to their matched peers across subject areas and grade levels. As shown in Appendix C, of the 69 total academic measures, there were patterns to show that AAD students outperformed the matched comparison group students on 36 academic measures (52%) based on any degree of difference when rounding to whole numbers. There was a slightly higher percentage at elementary school (59%) than secondary (46%). In comparison to matched comparison group students, areas of strength for AAD students were kindergarten through second grade student growth in literacy within the school year, elementary student math achievement, and specific cohorts of students who performed particularly well across content areas (i.e., fifth grade and eighth grade). Overall, when examining statistically significant differences, there were patterns to show that AAD students outperformed the matched comparison group students on six measures (9%), whereas there were statistically significant differences favoring the matched comparison group students on six measures (9%). For the SOL measures, there were patterns to show that AAD students outperformed the matched comparison group students on 23 measures (55%) with a higher percentage at elementary school (69%) than middle school (44%) or high school (50%). For the literacy measures, there were patterns to show that AAD students outperformed the matched comparison group students on 13 measures (27%) with a higher percentage at elementary school (50%) than middle school (44%).

Goal 3: Attendance

The third student outcome goal focused on attendance as measured by the percentage of students who were consistently attending school (i.e., not chronically absent) as defined by students with an attendance rate of 90 percent or higher based on days enrolled. Students' average attendance rates were also examined.

As shown in Table 62, although the differences were not statistically significant, at the elementary school and middle school levels, slightly higher percentages of AAD students consistently attended school compared to their matched comparison groups, while there were equivalent percentages of high school students who consistently attended school. In addition, when examining students' attendance rates, there were relatively similar average attendance rates at each school level when compared to their matched comparison groups (see Table 62).

Table 62: Attendance Data for AAD and Matched Comparison Group

Measures	ES		MS		HS		Total	
	AAD	Matched Group	AAD	Matched Group	AAD	Matched Group	AAD	Matched Group
Percentage of Students with Attendance Rate of 90 Percent or Higher	89%	85%	91%	89%	83%	83%	88%	85%
Average Attendance Rate	94.1%	93.9%	94.9%	95.0%	93.5%	93.5%	94.1%	94.2%

Of the 6 attendance measures, there were patterns to show that AAD students outperformed the matched comparison group students on three measures (50%) based on any degree of difference. While at the elementary school level, there was evidence of AAD students outperforming the matched comparison group students on both measures (100%), and there was evidence of AAD secondary students outperforming the matched comparison group on one measure at the secondary level (25%). There were no statistically significant differences between the groups on these measures.

To complement the attendance data, student perception results provide a broader view of engagement by examining how students feel about attending school. Students were surveyed about their perceptions related to looking forward to going to school. Overall, 63 percent of students agreed they looked forward to coming to school, and 69 percent agreed they looked forward to coming to school to learn (see Table 63). A higher percentage of high school students (67%) and elementary school students (64%) agreed they looked forward to going to school than middle school students (58%).

Table 63: Student Perceptions of Looking Forward to Coming to School

Survey Items	ES	MS	HS	Total
I look forward to coming to school.	64%	58%	67%	63%
I look forward to coming to school to learn.	75%	59%	73%	69%

Goal 4: Discipline

The fourth student outcome goal focused on student discipline. In particular, AAD's goals were specifically related to peer-to-peer conflicts, student-to-staff conflicts, and students with multiple offenses. The percentage of students who had at least one discipline referral and percentage of students with multiple referrals were examined, as well as the average number of referrals, in-school suspensions, and out-of-school suspensions per student. These data measures were examined overall, as well as for specific types of disciplinary referrals that related to the goal areas (i.e., student-to-student aggression, student-to-staff aggression). Within the 2024-2025 VBCPS Discipline Guidelines, various behavior categories were grouped

together based on the nature of the behavior, which included categories for student-to-student aggression and student-to-staff aggression. The discipline data related to student-to-student aggression and student-to-staff aggression described in this report were based on descriptions of the behavior categories in the guidelines.

Due to adjustments in divisionwide policies related to cell phone usage during this timeframe, which may have led to changes in referrals, all cell phone policy violations were excluded from the analyses. Statistically significant differences between groups are noted in the tables.

Overall Discipline Trends

As shown in Table 64, at the elementary school level, overall disciplinary data showed significantly higher percentages of AAD students received at least one referral and received multiple referrals. Although not statistically significant, at the high school level, slightly higher percentages of AAD students received at least one referral and received multiple referrals. At the middle school level, while there was a slightly lower percentage of AAD students who had at least one referral compared to their matched comparison group, there were similar percentages of students who received multiple referrals.

When examining average numbers of referrals and suspensions per student, at the elementary school level, there were significantly higher numbers of referrals and in-school suspensions for AAD students compared to their matched comparison group, while there was a significantly lower number of out-of-school suspensions. At the middle school level, there were higher numbers of referrals and in-school suspensions for AAD students compared to their matched comparison group (although the difference was significant for in-school suspensions only), while there were lower numbers of out-of-school suspensions. At the high school level, there were lower average numbers of referrals, in-school suspensions, and out-of-school suspensions for AAD students compared to their matched comparison group, although these differences were not statistically significant.

Table 64: Overall Discipline Data for AAD Students and Matched Comparison Group

Measures	ES		MS		HS		Total	
	AAD	Matched Group	AAD	Matched Group	AAD	Matched Group	AAD	Matched Group
Percentage of Students with At Least One Referral	33%**	24%**	38%	41%	39%	38%	35%	31%
Percentage of Students with Multiple Referrals	22%***	13%***	25%	25%	20%	19%	22%**	17%**
Average Number of Referrals Per Student	1.08***	.62***	1.43	1.23	.86	1.24	1.11*	.87*
Average Number of ISS	.15***	.06***	.47*	.29*	.27	.38	.25*	.17*
Average Number of OSS	.07***	.29***	.20	.29	.11	.12	.10***	.26***

Note: Asterisks denote statistically significant differences from comparison group. * $p < .1$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$.

Discipline Trends Related to Peer-to-Peer Conflict

For student-to-student aggression, AAD students consistently had higher percentages of students with at least one or multiple referrals across all levels. Elementary students had the largest differences, with 27 percent of AAD students receiving at least one aggression-related referral compared to 17 percent of their similar peers, which was statistically significant (see Table 65). The percentages of AAD students receiving multiple aggression-related referrals were significantly higher at the elementary school and high school levels (see Table 65). Average referrals per student followed similar patterns, with elementary AAD students having more than double the average of their matched peers (.69 versus .26). ISS related to peer-to-peer aggression

was significantly higher for AAD students at all levels, while OSS patterns were mixed, with elementary and middle school AAD students showing slightly lower OSS rates than peers.

Table 65: Student-to-Student Aggression Discipline Data for AAD Students and Matched Comparison Group

Measures	ES		MS		HS		Total	
	AAD	Matched Group	AAD	Matched Group	AAD	Matched Group	AAD	Matched Group
Percentage of Students with At Least One Student-to-Student Aggression Referral	27%***	17%***	20%	19%	13%	7%	23%***	15%***
Percentage of Students with Multiple Student-to-Student Aggression Referrals	15%***	6%***	9%	7%	4%*	1%*	12%***	5%***
Average Number of Student-to-Student Aggression Referrals Per Student	.69***	.26***	.33	.29	.18*	.09*	.51***	.24***
Average Number of Student-to-Student Aggression ISS	.11***	.02***	.16*	.09*	.11**	.03**	.12***	.04***
Average Number of Student-to-Student Aggression OSS	.05**	.11**	.09	.15	.05	.05	.06**	.11**

Note: Asterisks denote statistically significant differences from comparison group. * $p < .1$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$.

Discipline Trends Related to Student-to-Staff Conflict

Referrals related to student-to-staff aggression were low overall across grade levels. Percentages of students with at least one referral were comparable between AAD and matched comparison groups, ranging from 0 to 6 percent (see Table 66). Multiple referrals and average referrals per student were minimal for both AAD and comparison groups, indicating that student-to-staff conflicts were relatively rare, although the average number of referrals for the AAD high school students was significantly lower than their matched comparison group.

Table 66: Student-to-Staff Aggression Discipline Data for AAD Students and Matched Comparison Group

Measures	ES		MS		HS		Total	
	AAD	Matched Group	AAD	Matched Group	AAD	Matched Group	AAD	Matched Group
Percentage of Students with At Least One Student-to-Staff Aggression Referral	6%	5%	2%	2%	0%	2%	4%	3%
Percentage of Students with Multiple Student-to-Staff Aggression Referrals	2%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%
Average Number of Student-to-Staff Aggression Referrals Per Student	.09	.07	.02	.02	.00*	.02*	.05	.05

Note: Asterisks denote statistically significant differences from comparison group. * $p < .1$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$.

Summary

Overall, analyses of student discipline suggest that AAD students experienced higher rates of referrals than their matched peers in several categories, though patterns varied by school level and type of behavior. Of the 15 discipline measures overall, there were patterns to show that AAD students had better discipline outcomes than the matched comparison group students on six measures (40%) based on any degree of difference. There was one measure (7%) that showed statistically significant differences with AAD students having better discipline outcomes than the comparison group, while there were five measures (33%) showing statistically significant differences with the matched comparison group having better discipline outcomes. At the secondary level, there was evidence of AAD students having better discipline outcomes than the matched comparison group students on 50 percent of measures, while there was evidence of elementary school AAD students having better discipline outcomes than the matched comparison group on one measure (20%).

Perceptions

Stakeholders, including students, parents, and staff, were surveyed about their perceptions of student behavior and behavioral support provided by AAD. Overall, at least 82 percent of high school students agreed with various items related to positive behavior, including getting along well with other students, working out disagreements with other students, and having positive relationships with teachers, school administrators, and AAD administrators (see Table 67). Although agreement was relatively high, agreement was slightly lower than at the division level, with agreement at least 2 percentage points higher divisionwide across the general items. At the elementary school level, 87 to 88 percent of AAD students agreed they had positive relationships with administrators and 79 percent agreed they had positive relationships with teachers, whereas 63 to 64 percent agreed they got along with other students and worked out disagreements by talking with them. In comparison to the division level, agreement was notably lower for elementary school AAD students regarding relationships with peers and teachers. At the division level, 85 percent of elementary students agreed they got along with other students and 77 percent agreed they worked out disagreements by talking (compared to 63%-64% for AAD students), and 92 percent agreed they had positive relationships with teachers divisionwide (compared to 79% for AAD students). In addition, while 82 percent of AAD middle school students agreed they got along well with other students and had positive relationships with the AAD administrators, lower percentages agreed they worked out disagreements with other students by talking (58%), had positive relationships with teachers (76%), and had positive relationships with the other administrators (68%). In comparison to the division, agreement was also lower for AAD middle school students regarding all items. At the division level, 87 percent of middle school students agreed they got along with other students and 78 percent agreed they worked out disagreement by talking. In addition, 89 percent of middle school students divisionwide agreed they had positive relationships with teachers and 85 percent agreed they had positive relationships with administrators (compared to 68%-76% for AAD students).

Table 67: Student Perceptions of Relationships With Students, Teachers, and Administrators

Survey Items	ES	MS	HS	Total
I get along well with other students at this school.	63%	82%	91%	78%
I work out disagreements with other students by talking with them.	64%	58%	82%	67%
I have positive relationships with teachers at this school.	79%	76%	90%	81%
I have positive relationships with the principal and assistant principal(s) at this school.	87%	68%	82%	79%
I have positive relationships with the AAD administrators at this school.	88%	82%	86%	85%

According to AAD seniors who participated in the focus group, one of the major areas of strength of the AAD program was the strong sense of community and the relationships between the cohort of students. In particular, seniors commented about feeling like a family and having deep connections with other students

and staff. However, AAD seniors also shared perceptions that there was more leniency in behavioral expectations towards AAD students, especially the graduating seniors. Some students commented that there was trust from the staff that students will act appropriately and act as “role models” due to being the first graduating class.

Instructional staff and parents were also surveyed about students’ behavior at school. Overall, while 51 percent of instructional staff agreed students got along well with other students, 80 percent agreed students had positive relationships with teachers and staff. Higher percentages of secondary staff agreed with these items than elementary school staff, which was notably low with 28 percent agreement regarding students getting along well with other students (see Table 68). In the follow-up survey of secondary classroom teachers, agreement was higher with all teachers who responded to the item agreeing that students had positive relationships with teachers and staff. Overall, at least 92 percent of parents agreed their child got along well with other students and 97 percent agreed their child had positive relationships with teachers and staff (see Table 68).

More generally, 61 percent of instructional staff agreed the instruction and services offered at AAD met students’ social and emotional needs with notably lower agreement at elementary school (44%) compared to secondary (71%). Overall, 81 percent of parents agreed with a related item regarding the services offered at their child’s school meeting their child’s social and emotional needs, again with higher agreement at secondary (91%) than at elementary (78%). In comparison to parents divisionwide, elementary school AAD parents (78%) had lower agreement regarding this item than elementary parents across the division (91%), while AAD secondary parents (91%) had higher agreement than parents across the division (81%). In addition, all administrators who responded to the items (n=3) agreed students got along well with other students, had positive relationships with teachers and staff, and students were offered instruction and services to meet their social and emotional needs.

Parents were also surveyed about students’ ability to manage conflict. Overall, 90 percent of parents agreed AAD enhanced their child’s ability to manage conflict with all secondary parents agreeing with this item, while 86 percent of elementary school parents agreed.

Table 68: Instructional Staff and Parent Perceptions of Students Getting Along With Other Students, Having Positive Relationships with Students and Staff, and Services Meeting Social and Emotional Needs

Groups and Survey Items	ES	Sec	Total
Instructional Staff - Students get along well with other students at this school.	28%	65%	51%
Instructional Staff - Students have positive relationships with teachers and staff at this school.	72%	84%	80%
Instructional Staff - The instruction and services offered at AAD meet students’ social and emotional needs.	44%	71%	61%
Parents - My child gets along well with other students at this school.	89%	100%	92%
Parents - My child has positive relationships with teachers and staff at this school.	96%	100%	97%
Parents - The services offered in my child’s school meet my child’s social and emotional needs.	78%	91%	81%

Instructional staff were further asked about support for students’ behavior and students’ relationship with instructional staff. As shown in Table 69, 43 percent of staff agreed AAD provided strategies and consistency to support students’ behavior at school with similar agreement at both elementary and secondary levels (39%-45%). All administrators who responded to this item (n=3) agreed strategies and consistency were provided to support students’ behavior. In addition, 67 percent of instructional staff agreed students treated them with respect with higher agreement for secondary instructional staff (75%) than elementary instructional

staff (53%). In comparison to instructional staff divisionwide, AAD staff agreement regarding students treating them with respect was notably lower, especially at the elementary school level (ES: 89%; Secondary: 87%). In the follow-up survey of secondary classroom teachers, agreement was higher with 67 percent of teachers agreeing that strategies and consistency were provided to support students’ behavior, and 89 percent agreed students treated them with respect.

Table 69: Instructional Staff Perceptions of AAD Providing Strategies and Consistency to Support Students’ Behavior and Students Treating Them With Respect

Survey Items	ES	Sec	Total
AAD has provided strategies and consistency to support students’ behavior at school.	39%	45%	43%
Students at this school treat me with respect.	53%	75%	67%

Goal 5: Graduation

The final student outcome goal focused on graduation outcomes, including on-time graduation and diploma type (Standard or Advanced). This analysis focused on AAD seniors in 2024-2025 who were enrolled in the program on September 30 and remained enrolled through the end of the school year. Graduation and diploma data for the matched comparison group of seniors were also examined. Two students in the matched group were excluded from the on-time graduation calculation because they belonged to adjacent Virginia Department of Education cohorts (e.g., 2026 or 2024) and graduated early or late.

Of the 27 AAD seniors in the 2025 VDOE cohort, all (100%) graduated on time in 2025. As shown in Table 70, all (100%) of the 25 seniors of the matched group who were in the comparable 2025 VDOE OTG cohort also graduated on time. Overall, 74 percent of the AAD seniors graduated with an advanced diploma, which was notably higher than their matched comparison group seniors (24%).

Table 70: Graduation Data

Groups	Graduated On Time	Advanced Diploma
AAD Graduates (n=27)	100%	74%
Matched Group (n=25)	100%	24%
All Grade 9 AAD Student OTG Cohort (n=34)	97%	64%
All Students (n=5,112)	97%	58%

Of the two graduation measures, there were patterns to show that AAD students outperformed the matched comparison group students on one measure (50%) based on any difference.

According to data provided by AAD, as of the end of the 2024-2025 school year, 81 percent of seniors planned to enroll in college, while 11 percent planned to enroll in trade school and 7 percent planned to become employed. As of summer 2025, there were 22 AAD seniors (81%) who were enrolled in college for the 2025-2026 fall semester.

Longitudinal Trend Analysis

A longitudinal analysis was planned to examine trends in data related to the student outcome goal areas for students who participated in AAD for varying lengths of time, as well as in comparison to students who were never enrolled in AAD. The plan was to focus on the 2024-2025 senior cohort and examine student outcome data from the initial implementation year, 2014-2015, through the most recent school year, 2024-2025.

Students were grouped based on their AAD participation history across school level: enrolled in AAD in elementary school through high school, enrolled in AAD in elementary school only, enrolled in elementary

school and middle school only, enrolled in middle school and high school only, enrolled in middle school only, and never enrolled in AAD. These groupings were expected to evaluate the impact of the program when examining trend data before, during, and after participation in the program, as well as in comparison to students who never enrolled.

However, preliminary data showed the number of students in each group was low. As shown in Table 71, overall, of the 2024-2025 seniors, only 18 were enrolled in all three school levels. The numbers of students was even lower when limiting student enrollment across all years since 2014-2015, which would be necessary for longitudinal analyses over these years. With the low number of students in each group, the longitudinal analysis could not be conducted as planned because it would be difficult to confidently interpret the data due to the variability that can result with small numbers of students in an analysis.

Table 71: Number of 2024-2025 Seniors in AAD Participation Groups

Groups	AAD in ES and MS Only	AAD in ES Only	AAD in ES, MS, and HS	AAD in MS and HS Only	AAD in MS Only	Never in AAD
Enrolled in 24-25	18	31	18	12	3	5,024
Enrolled every year since 14-15	16	24	16	4	0	2,733

Stakeholder Satisfaction and Program Strengths and Areas for Improvement

The sixth evaluation question focused on stakeholder satisfaction and areas of strength and improvement.

Satisfaction

When surveyed about satisfaction with their educational experience, 82 percent of students indicated they were satisfied (see Table 72). A higher percentage of high school students (88%) indicated they were satisfied than elementary school (79%) and middle school students (82%). In comparison to students divisionwide who were surveyed about satisfaction with their educational experience at their school, there were lower satisfaction percentages for elementary and middle school AAD students compared to students across the division (ES: 89%; MS: 84%), while the satisfaction at high school was the same (88%).

Table 72: Student Satisfaction With Educational Experience

Group	ES	MS	HS	Total
Student	79%	82%	88%	82%

Parents were surveyed about their satisfaction with their child’s educational experience. Overall, 91 percent of parents indicated they were satisfied with no difference by school level. In comparison to parents divisionwide who were surveyed about satisfaction with their child’s educational experience, elementary school AAD parents (91%) had slightly lower satisfaction than elementary school parents across the division (94%), while secondary AAD parents (91%) had higher satisfaction than secondary parents across the division (86%). In addition, 92 percent of AAD parents indicated they would recommend AAD to other families for their child (93% at elementary, 91% at secondary).

When administrators were surveyed, all administrators who responded to the item (n=3) indicated they were satisfied with AAD. For instructional staff, 57 percent indicated they were satisfied with AAD (see Table 73). A higher percentage of elementary school instructional staff (67%) indicated they were satisfied with AAD than secondary instructional staff (52%). When AAD secondary classroom teachers responded to the follow-up survey in the fall, a notably higher percentage indicated they were satisfied (89%). Although this was a much higher percentage reporting they were satisfied when surveyed in the fall, it is important to note that

combined with the teacher retention rate of 63 percent, it is possible that staff who indicated they were dissatisfied with AAD may have left the school prior to the 2025-2026 school year.

Table 73: Parent and Instructional Staff Satisfaction

Groups	ES	Secondary	Total
Parent	91%	91%	91%
Instructional Staff	67%	52%	57%

Strengths and Improvements

Through open-ended survey items, staff, students, and parents had the opportunity to provide comments regarding benefits and areas for improvement. For staff, the most common theme that emerged regarding benefits was the additional resources, support, and opportunities students received, such as field trips and clubs. Staff noted the program provided multiple resources for students' academic, social, and emotional needs. Other strengths included the additional academic support offered, including the benefit of smaller class sizes and more specialized instruction, as well as the ability for staff to build relationships with the students and focus on their social-emotional needs. Staff also mentioned that AAD aided families with resources like transportation and provided opportunities to connect students with various career fields and universities.

From a parent perspective, the most commonly identified strengths included the positive environment, as well as the resources offered to students and families. Parents commented about the different opportunities available, such as the field trips, clubs, and wraparound resources like free meals and school supplies. For students, common themes regarding benefits included academic learning and gaining social-emotional skills such as responsibility, confidence, self-control, and respect. Students also commented about liking the clubs and field trips. Many secondary students highlighted the importance of college preparation opportunities, especially financial help and scholarships. Students also valued the relationships and connections within the program.

Regarding improvement areas, staff comments predominantly focused on issues with negative student behavior and perceived inconsistent or lack of appropriate disciplinary actions. Related to this area, some staff commented on the perceived lack of enforcement of the behavioral expectations in the AAD contract, and some staff expressed concerns regarding students remaining in the program even with behavior issues. A few staff also commented about taking away instructional time. Some secondary staff noted the lack of a variety of course offerings at the high school level.

Similar to staff, students and parents also commented on student behavior as an area for improvement. Students more generally commented about observing their peers' negative behavior, such as the need for less fighting and bullying at the school, as well as more consistent consequences for behavior. Some parents expressed specific concerns about student bullying.

Other student comments regarding improvement areas focused on the uniform or dress code, including expressing not liking this aspect. Other students commented about the extended day and summer intersession being too long and interfering with other things, such as sports. Some parents also commented on more frequent communication regarding academic progress as well as concerns regarding teachers' classroom experience and reliance on substitute teachers.

Additional Cost

The final evaluation question focused on the cost to VBCPS for implementation of AAD during 2024-2025. The MOA between AAD, Inc. and VBCPS outlined the cost responsibility for each party, and a summary of responsibilities is included in Appendix D.

Cost Responsibilities

According to the summary of responsibilities, VBCPS was responsible for paying for the following costs to the same level as would be provided to any of its schools: technology, computer maintenance personnel, educational supplies, field trips and related transportation, food (i.e., breakfast and lunch), program staff professional learning, daily and summer intersession transportation, after school tutoring, and maintenance of school property. Additionally, VBCPS was responsible for ensuring staff maintained technology at the school. However, there were no additional costs to VBCPS as computer maintenance personnel were offered to all schools in the division. In addition, VBCPS was responsible for the highest level of appropriate technology and educational supplies that are typically offered in all of its schools. The curriculum design and specialized support was the responsibility of VBCPS, which included any teams based on math specialists, academic interventionist, coaches, reading specialists, curriculum coach, and oversight of the instructional program. There were no additional costs to VBCPS for technology, educational supplies, or curriculum design as these are offered to all schools in the division. The support, supplies, and services required for administrative or health clinic purposes were also the responsibility of VBCPS. However, there were no additional costs to VBCPS beyond those for any of the division's schools.

According to the agreement, AAD, Inc. was responsible for paying for additional enhancements (e.g., technology, professional learning), needs for specific programming provided by AAD, Inc. (e.g., field trips, clubs, physical banners, student awards and incentives, uniforms, program-specific AAD personnel), and costs for the extended day, summer intersession (except transportation), Saturday school, administration, and fundraising. In addition, AAD, Inc. was to reimburse VBCPS for certain costs incurred such as field trips beyond typical allocations, any enhancements to technology, and incremental costs to VBCPS for support, supplies, or services.

According to the MOA with VBCPS, "VBCPS will allocate sufficient funds in its annual budget to provide the same level of support for the AAD Program as is provided for other comparable comprehensive/traditional schools and programs within the school division, including for example, staffing ratio/staffing allocation." In addition, it was noted that "VBCPS recognizes that matters such as the staffing ratio/staff allocations may exceed standard and within its budgetary constraints will endeavor to meet the needs of the Achievable Dream Program."

Staffing Costs

At the elementary school level, there were no additional costs to the school division for staffing because all staff at Seatack Elementary School would have been employed at this school regardless of the AAD program. At the secondary level, according to the Office of Budget Development, there were additional allocations for An Achievable Dream, which included ten middle school teacher FTEs, nine high school teacher FTEs, academy coordinator, administrative assistant, clinic assistant, and school office associate. The staffing files maintained by the Department of School Leadership for Lynnhaven Middle School and An Achievable Dream High School were examined to confirm these allocations were used. To calculate the specific costs related to these allocations, the Department of Human Resources provided the average total salaries, including total allowances and supplements, for each of these positions. For the middle school and high school teacher positions, the average salaries specifically at Lynnhaven Middle School were used and multiplied by the

number of FTEs to determine a total amount. For the positions that had only one staff member at Lynnhaven Middle School (e.g., academy coordinator, administrative assistant, clinic assistant), the average salary across all high schools was used. The total estimated salary across the secondary positions totaled \$1,536,065. There were five high school teachers who were provided additional class supplements; however, these additional supplements would have been included in the average salary estimates. Additional costs for fringe benefits and health insurance for these staff allocations were included (26.82% plus \$9,431 for 2024-2025), which totaled \$628,886. Therefore, the staffing cost for the additional allocations for the secondary program totaled \$2,164,950. There were four additional high school teacher allocations provided by funds from the Department of School Leadership; however, the costs for these four FTEs were not included in the total additional cost to VBCPS due to these costs not specifically being additional to AAD and because they could have been used at another high school if they had not been provided to AAD. In addition, although AAD secondary has an exclusive school counselor, the funds for the position were not based on the AAD student enrollment exclusively.

A separate examination was conducted to determine whether there would be any potential changes in regular budgeted FTE allocations due to AAD secondary student enrollment. Additional staffing costs or cost offsets could have been due to additional students enrolling in Lynnhaven Middle School and fewer students enrolling at other comprehensive schools. At the middle school level, Lynnhaven Middle School received an increase of four regular budgeted FTE teacher allocations due to an increase in AAD middle school students who were not zoned for Lynnhaven. Virginia Beach Middle School had a theoretical loss of two FTE teacher allocations due to a decrease in AAD middle school students who were zoned for VBMS but attended AAD instead.¹⁸ At the high school level, no increases in FTEs would have been expected based on the schools in which students were zoned. First Colonial High School had a theoretical loss of two FTE teacher allocations due to a decrease in AAD high school students who were zoned for FCHS but attended AAD high school. Therefore, because of the increase of four FTE teacher allocations at Lynnhaven Middle School and the theoretical loss of a total of four FTE teacher allocations at Virginia Beach Middle School and First Colonial High School, this investigation showed there were no additional costs or cost offsets to regular budgeted FTEs based on student enrollment.

In regards to costs paid by AAD, Inc. related to staffing, according to the MOA, AAD, Inc. was to pay a stipend to staff who worked during the extended day and extended year. All AAD staff receive an annual stipend directly from AAD for \$8,500. Additionally, some staff, including clerical and support staff who do not receive the stipend, are compensated for their overtime. For these costs, VBCPS paid staff the amount and the costs were reimbursed by AAD, Inc. The total overtime cost for these staff was \$34,125, but this cost is not included in the additional cost to VBCPS because it was reimbursed by AAD, Inc.

Transportation Costs

Transportation costs were provided by the Office of Transportation and Fleet Management Services. At the elementary school level, daily transportation costs for students zoned for Seatack Elementary School were not included because they were not considered an additional cost to the school division. Daily transportation costs for students to attend Seatack Elementary School who were not zoned for Seatack (i.e., opted in to the program) during the regular school year totaled \$201,769. Additional transportation costs at the elementary school level related to the extended day programming totaled \$160,747. VBCPS was also responsible for transportation related to the summer intersession, which totaled \$31,033 for elementary school students. Transportation costs for students who opted out of the program to attend Birdneck Elementary School was also the responsibility of VBCPS, which totaled \$25,615. Therefore, the total transportation costs at the elementary school level were \$419,164.

At the secondary level, all transportation to and from Lynnhaven Middle School was an additional cost to VBCPS due to the different hours for AAD in comparison to other Lynnhaven Middle School students. The daily

regular transportation for all AAD secondary students totaled \$304,921. The transportation costs related to shuttles transporting students to and from extracurricular activities, ROTC participation, ATC courses, and TCE courses totaled \$57,905, and transportation costs for afterschool activities for secondary students totaled \$23,815. In addition, the transportation related to the summer intersession totaled \$30,035 for secondary students. The total transportation costs at the secondary level were \$416,676.

Overall, transportation was the second largest cost of the program for VBCPS and totaled \$835,839. However, per the MOA, AAD, Inc. paid VBCPS \$100 per enrolled student for transportation, which totaled \$61,000 during 2024-2025. Therefore, the total additional transportation cost for VBCPS was \$774,839. There were transportation costs that were initially paid by VBCPS but were reimbursed by AAD, Inc. These costs included transportation to Saturday school (totaling \$31,270) and transportation for field trips (totaling \$10,010). Because they were reimbursed by AAD, Inc., these costs were not included in the additional cost to VBCPS.

Facilities Costs

There were several additional facilities-related costs for AAD that were the responsibility of VBCPS. The agreement stated that “VBCPS agrees to fund the additional operational (i.e., utilities, maintenance, supplies, etc.) costs” of the longer day and longer school year. Based on information provided by Maintenance Services, the additional utilities cost for the Lynnhaven Middle School wing totaled \$59,552, while the utilities cost estimate for the extended day, summer intersession, and Saturday school at Seatack Elementary School totaled \$15,485. There were no additional costs for building maintenance or enhancements during the 2024-2025 school year. Lastly, all school buildings have a security-related subscription to Raptor. According to the Office of Security and Emergency Management, there was an additional subscription for the Lynnhaven Middle School wing, which totaled \$1,300. Therefore, the costs to VBCPS for facilities totaled \$76,337. However, according to the MOA, AAD, Inc. paid VBCPS \$75,000 for rental of the building. Therefore, the total additional facilities-related cost for VBCPS was \$1,338.

Instructional Materials and Supplies

AAD secondary students are included in the student enrollment counts for per pupil School Allocation funds at Lynnhaven Middle School (e.g., instructional materials, technology supplies and support, special education classrooms). Therefore, school allocation funds covering these areas were not included because they would have been allocated wherever the students were enrolled and are therefore not considered additional costs.

Total Additional Cost

In total, the additional costs paid by VBCPS for AAD in 2024-2025 were approximately \$2,941,127 as shown in Table 74. Staffing-specific costs were for AAD staff at the secondary level only and were the largest portion of the cost to VBCPS for the AAD program. Transportation costs included daily transportation for all AAD students not zoned for Seatack Elementary School, as well as costs related to the extended day programming, summer intersession, and transporting students to and from extracurricular activities, specialized programs, or afterschool activities. In addition, transportation costs included students who opted out of the program to attend Birdneck Elementary School. Costs for facilities included the utilities for the extended day, summer intersession, and Saturday school at Seatack Elementary School, as well as the utilities for the high school wing at Lynnhaven Middle School.

Table 74: Total Additional Cost of AAD to VBCPS in 2024-2025

Cost Categories	Total Cost
Staffing (Secondary)	\$2,164,950
Transportation	\$774,839*
Facilities (i.e., Utilities, Security)	\$1,338*
Total Cost Paid by VBCPS	\$2,941,127

*This figure takes into account offsets due to payments by AAD, Inc. to VBCPS (\$61,000 for transportation and \$75,000 for facilities rental).

Summary

An Achievable Dream (AAD) began in 1992 in Newport News Public Schools and offers a public-school program designed to close the achievement gap and support students' success regardless of their socioeconomic background. The partnership between AAD and VBCPS began at Seatack Elementary School in the 2014-2015 school year with implementation in kindergarten through second grades. The program expanded to include the additional elementary school grades from 2015-2016 through 2017-2018. Sixth through eighth grades were added at Lynnhaven Middle School in 2018-2019 through 2020-2021 and the program operates as a school within a school. From 2021-2022 through 2024-2025, the ninth through twelfth grades were added to AAD with ninth and tenth grades initially being located within learning cottages at Lynnhaven Middle School for core content courses with transportation to First Colonial High School for elective courses. During 2023-2024, a new wing at Lynnhaven Middle School was opened for the high school AAD students, and all high school students were relocated to this separate, independent wing at Lynnhaven Middle School.

At the elementary school level, students from the Seatack Elementary School attendance zone were automatically accepted into the AAD program. In addition, students in kindergarten through grade nine throughout the school division may apply for the program, although transportation is limited to certain school attendance zones. Data provided by AAD showed approximately 69 percent of students who applied for the program for the 2024-2025 school year were accepted, while 58 percent of students who applied for the 2025-2026 school year were accepted. To assess the program's ability to accept additional students prior to these school years, enrollment capacity was calculated based on a capacity of 90 students per grade level reported in the MOA. At the elementary school level, AAD was operating at 71 percent capacity as of the end of the 2023-2024 school year, and 69 percent capacity as of the end of the 2024-2025 school year. Operational capacity was much lower at the secondary levels. Middle school was operating at 54 percent capacity at the end of 2023-2024 and 46 percent capacity at the end of 2024-2025, and the high school was operating at 26 percent capacity at the end of 2023-2024 and 32 percent at the end of 2024-2025.

An analysis of the attendance zones of the enrolled AAD students showed 93 percent of elementary school, 75 percent of middle school, and 78 percent of high school AAD students were zoned for one of the 19 elementary or 4 middle schools eligible to receive transportation during 2024-2025. On March 11, 2025, the School Board approved an expansion of the transportation zones, which allowed potentially more students to participate in the program in the 2025-2026 school year.

To ensure parents and students were aware of program expectations, all students and parents signed an educational contract with AAD, which included details regarding the uniform and dress code policy. On the survey, 89 percent of students agreed the expectations in the educational contract were clear, and 93 percent of parents agreed the educational contract helped them understand the academy's expectations for students and families. To support students and families, AAD provides various wraparound services, such as home visits, parent education, and holiday food baskets, as well as offers several family engagement related events. AAD established two goals related to family engagement: *increase the number of collaborative family engagement opportunities* and *increase parental/familial involvement in students' academic and extra-curricular activities*. Overall, 86 percent of AAD instructional staff agreed AAD provides parents with events, programs, and

resources to support their child's education. Parent survey data related to these goals also showed high percentages of parents were aware of events, programs, and resources that AAD provides for parents to support their child's education (86%) and were involved in their child's academic and/or extracurricular activities (95%).

The Social, Academic, and Moral Education (SAME) Curriculum is a key component adopted by AAD. Within this specialized curriculum, there was an emphasis on "ethics, etiquette, peaceful conflict resolution, and Speaking Green®." There is also a morning program for elementary and middle school students that involves recitation of banners that involve positive affirmations. When students and instructional staff were surveyed, depending on the survey item, from 82 to 85 percent of students and 72 to 83 percent of instructional staff agreed AAD provided students opportunities to gain academic, social, and mindset skills needed to be successful. When elementary and middle school students and instructional staff were surveyed more specifically about the impact of the social rotation classes and morning program/Banners on helping students in key improvement areas, such as being polite or learning communication skills, lower percentages of students (62%-78% depending on item) and instructional staff agreed (52%-65% depending on item). At the high school level, where students are offered social-emotional time with writing prompts to support their social-emotional skills, higher percentages of students (79%) and instructional staff (78%) agreed this time helped build these skills. AAD established two goals related to implementation of the SAME framework: *streamline the delivery and implementation of SAME curricula through morning program and social rotations* and *incorporate the SAME framework into K-12 core content instruction*. When surveyed about these areas, overall, 73 percent of instructional staff agreed the delivery and implementation was streamlined, while 49 percent agreed the SAME curriculum was effectively incorporated in the core content.

In addition to being provided the SAME curriculum, students at all levels participate in the standard VBCPS curriculum. At the elementary school level, all students and staff in the building are part of AAD and follow the VBCPS elementary school curriculum within this framework. At the secondary level, the middle school operates as a school within a school at Lynnhaven Middle School and students have opportunities to take elective courses with other teachers within Lynnhaven Middle School. At the high school level, beginning in 2024-2025, AAD functioned as an academy located in the dedicated wing within Lynnhaven Middle School. Therefore, AAD high school students took courses with the AAD-specific teachers, which was reported by students and staff as potentially limiting access to a broader range of courses. On the survey, 77 percent of high school AAD students agreed they had access to the courses they need to support their plans after high school and 76 percent of high school AAD students agreed their school provided them with rigorous learning opportunities, which were lower than the percentage of students divisionwide who agreed with these items (86%-87%). Distinct courses completed by AAD high school students enrolled in 2024-2025 were compared to a matched group of demographically similar high school peers. Overall, AAD students had access to fewer distinct course options, although taking courses online expanded their access to additional options. In addition, while the matched comparison group completed five dual enrollment courses and nine AP courses, the AAD high school students took one dual enrollment and five AP courses in 2024-2025. There were 12 AAD high school students who were enrolled in ATC or TCE during 2024-2025.

AAD offers additional opportunities that extend beyond the typical curriculum and school day, including an extended school day and year, Saturday school, field trips, community partnerships and mentors, numerous clubs and extracurricular activities, and a merit program. The regular school day was extended to 7 hours, 45 minutes at elementary and 8 hours at secondary, and the regular school year was extended to include four additional weeks Monday through Thursday during the summer. Students who needed additional academic support were also required to attend school on Saturdays throughout the school year. Of students who indicated they participated in these additional opportunities, 71 percent agreed the longer school day provided them with more opportunities to learn, 75 percent agreed the summer intersession helped prepare

them for the next school year, and 77 percent agreed Saturday school provided them with extra academic support.

Throughout the 2024-2025 school year, elementary school students took 76 field trips, while there were 15 field trips at the middle school level and 49 field trips at the high school level. Overall, when students were surveyed about field trips, 82 percent of AAD students agreed field trips helped them learn outside of school. Multiple community partners were involved in supporting AAD students across school levels, including as a mentor. On the student survey, of those who indicated they had a mentor or mentor group, 97 percent indicated their mentorship experience was very or somewhat useful. Other opportunities included daily morning greetings by staff, additional opportunities for clubs, and a dream merit program. While 66 percent of students agreed the morning greetings helped them start their day in a positive way, 86 percent agreed clubs helped them explore new interests. In addition, 75 percent of students agreed earning dream merits motivated them to make good choices.

Another opportunity offered to secondary students was the “What It Takes” program, which involves corporate partners working with students to prepare them for postsecondary success in college or the workforce. One goal identified by AAD addressed the college preparation and workforce readiness program: *fully and consistently implementing What It Takes initiative*. When secondary students were surveyed about the What It Takes program, 75 percent of secondary AAD students agreed the program prepared them for the workforce by teaching them important professional skills. Other postsecondary support for high school students included help with planning for after high school, such as support applying for the FAFSA and scholarships. In addition, for the 2024-2025 school year, a class sponsor provided \$3,000 per year minimum for scholarships per student.

Regarding staffing, while all staff at Seatack Elementary were AAD-designated staff, this designation was more complicated at Lynnhaven Middle School due to staff not being differentiated in official Department of Human Resources documents. There were 19 additional classroom teacher FTE budgeted allocations for AAD secondary students; however, cross-referencing multiple internal records revealed slight inconsistencies in staffing lists. These differences illustrated a need for more transparency and clarity about which staff were considered AAD secondary staff. When AAD instructional staff were surveyed about the clarity of responsibilities, as well as the communication and collaboration with AAD, from 80 to 86 percent of instructional staff agreed responsibilities as an AAD staff member were clear and communication from AAD was consistent, clear, and timely. Lower percentages of instructional staff (66%) agreed the collaboration between AAD and school staff was effective, with higher agreement at elementary (78%) than secondary (59%). In addition, 67 percent of instructional staff agreed AAD provided them sufficient professional development in the delivery of the AAD program. Another goal identified by AAD related to staff: *increase the teacher retention rate*. Overall, 74 percent of classroom teachers remained working with AAD from 2023-2024 to 2024-2025, with a higher percentage at secondary (81%) than elementary (71%). In contrast, from 2024-2025 into 2025-2026, a higher percentage of elementary teachers (75%) remained working with AAD than secondary (63%), which decreased notably.

Overall, there were 704 students enrolled in AAD at any point during the 2024-2025 school year. In comparison to the division, there were notably higher percentages of Black and economically disadvantaged students at all levels and a higher percentage of special education students at the secondary level. There were lower percentages of White, gifted, and military-connected students at AAD than students at the division at all levels and lower percentages of Asian students at the secondary levels. One goal identified by AAD was related to student retention: *fewer students will withdraw from the program*, which was defined as students who were enrolled at any time during the year but unenrolled prior to the end of the year. Of the students enrolled through the 2024-2025 school year, 13 percent withdrew from the program during the school year and were not enrolled in AAD at the end of the school year, which included students who re-enrolled in another school

(6%), left the division entirely (6%), and those who enrolled in a specialized program (1%). In comparison to students who remained at AAD at the end of the school year, a higher percentage of students who re-enrolled elsewhere were special education students (25% versus 13%) and in their first year at AAD (48% versus 25%).

When examining student continuation in the AAD program across school years, the majority of students (83%) remained in the program from the end of 2023-2024 into 2024-2025, although the percentage of students who continued was lower at transition points with 67 percent of fifth-grade students in 2023-2024 continuing into sixth grade in 2024-2025 and 78 percent of eighth-grade students continuing into ninth grade. To examine longer-term student continuation with the AAD program, the number of students in the original group enrolled in 2014-2015 (kindergarten through second grade at that time) who stayed with the AAD program into the 2024-2025 school year (tenth through twelfth grades) was determined. Overall, low percentages of students in the original K-2 group in 2014-2015 stayed with the AAD program into the 2024-2025 school year (16%). In contrast, 43 percent of the original K-2 group were enrolled in another VBCPS school. The remaining students were either not enrolled half the year or were not enrolled in VBCPS at all, suggesting they may have left the division entirely.

In contrast to the analyses above that started with the groups of students in the first year of the program and whose enrollment was monitored to 2024-2025, another analysis started with the current group of AAD high school students and looked backward to see if they had been enrolled from the beginning of the program. Overall, from 29 to 54 percent of ninth- through twelfth-grade students were enrolled since initial implementation. These rates may partly reflect the small number of students in these grades and limited replacement of the students who left the program over time.

Beginning of the year enrollment at AAD in 2025-2026 showed a slight decrease in the total number of students enrolled (from 648 to 630) in comparison to the beginning of 2024-2025. There was an increase at the middle school level, which may be due in part to the School Board's approved expansion of eligible school attendance zones for transportation to AAD. However, there was a decrease at the elementary school level and the number at the high school level remained the same, with no visible impact of this expansion at the elementary or high school levels. In regard to the percent of capacity, overall, the AAD program was at 54 percent capacity showing that the AAD program remained well-below capacity. The percent of capacity was higher at elementary school (65%) and middle school (59%) than at high school (33%).

The student outcome goals for AAD were related to student academic achievement (i.e., SOL performance, literacy), as well as attendance, discipline, and graduation. Goal area analyses focused on comparing performance of AAD students with matched groups of students from similar schools during the 2024-2025 school year. Students were matched using demographic variables.

The goals related to academic achievement were measured through performance on SOLs in core content areas, the VALLSS (K-2), and Reading MAP (3-8). Growth from fall to spring on the VALLSS and Reading MAP were also examined. When all academic data were examined collectively, the assessment data indicated that AAD students performed at levels comparable to their matched peers across subject areas and grade levels. Of the 69 total academic measures, there were patterns to show that AAD students outperformed the matched comparison group students on 36 academic measures (52%) based on any degree of difference when rounding to whole numbers. There was a higher percentage of comparisons where AAD students performed better than the matched comparison group at elementary school (59%) than secondary (46%). In comparison to matched comparison group students, areas of strength for AAD students were elementary student growth in literacy within the school year, elementary student math achievement, and specific cohorts of students who performed particularly well across content areas (i.e., fifth grade and eighth grade). Based on statistical significance tests, there were patterns to show that AAD students outperformed the matched comparison

group students on six measures (9%), whereas there were statistically significant differences favoring the matched comparison group students on six measures (9%).

The attendance goal was assessed at each school level by the percentage of students who were consistently attending school (i.e., not chronically absent), as well as students' average attendance rates. Of the six attendance measures, there were patterns to show that AAD students outperformed the matched comparison group students on three measures (50%) based on any degree of difference. There was evidence of AAD students outperforming the matched comparison group students on both measures (100%) at the elementary school level, and there was evidence of AAD secondary students outperforming the matched comparison group on one measure at the secondary level (25%). There were no statistically significant differences between the groups on these measures.

The discipline goal was assessed at each school level through the percentage of students with at least one discipline referral and percentage of students with multiple referrals, as well as the average number of referrals, in-school suspensions, and out-of-school suspensions. Of the 15 discipline measures overall, there were patterns to show that AAD students had better discipline outcomes than the matched comparison group students on six measures (40%) based on any degree of difference. There was one measure (7%) that showed statistically significant differences with AAD students having better discipline outcomes than the comparison group, while there were five measures (33%) showing statistically significant differences with the matched comparison group having better discipline outcomes. At the secondary level, there was evidence of AAD students having better discipline outcomes than the matched comparison group students on 50 percent of measures, while there was evidence of elementary school AAD students having better discipline outcomes than the matched comparison group on one measure (20%). When staff were surveyed about student behavior, overall 51 percent of instructional staff agreed students got along well with other students, and 67 percent agreed students treated them with respect. Higher percentages of instructional staff agreed students had positive relationships with teachers and staff (80%). More generally, 61 percent of instructional staff agreed the instruction and services offered at AAD met students' social and emotional needs, and 43 percent agreed AAD provided strategies and consistency to support students' behavior at school.

Regarding the final outcome goal focused on graduation outcomes, all 27 AAD seniors graduated on time in 2025 and all 25 seniors of the matched group who were in the comparable OTG cohort also graduated on time. Overall, 74 percent of the AAD seniors graduated with an advanced diploma, which was notably higher than their matched comparison group seniors (24%). According to data provided by AAD, as of the end of the 2024-2025 school year, 81 percent of seniors planned to enroll in college, while 11 percent planned to enroll in trade school and 7 percent planned to become employed. As of summer 2025, there were 22 AAD seniors (81%) who were enrolled in college for the 2025-2026 fall semester according to information provided by AAD, Inc.

When surveyed about satisfaction with their educational experience, 82 percent of students indicated they were satisfied, while 91 percent of parents indicated they were satisfied. Satisfaction with AAD was lower for instructional staff. For instructional staff overall, 57 percent indicated they were satisfied with AAD, with higher satisfaction for elementary school staff (67%) than secondary staff (52%). When surveyed about benefits of the program, staff most often commented about the additional resources, support, and opportunities students received, such as field trips and clubs, while parents commented about the positive environment, as well as the resources offered to students and families. Students also commented about liking the clubs and field trips, and many secondary students highlighted the importance of college preparation opportunities, especially financial help and scholarships. Regarding improvement areas, staff comments predominantly focused on issues with negative student behavior and perceived inconsistent or lack of appropriate disciplinary actions. Similar to staff, students and parents also commented on student behavior as an area for improvement. Students more generally commented about observing their peers' negative

behavior, such as the need for less fighting and bullying at the school, as well as more consistent consequences for behavior. Some parents expressed specific concerns about student bullying. Other student comments regarding improvement areas focused on the uniform or dress code, including expressing not liking this aspect, as well as the extended day and summer intersession being too long and interfering with other things, such as sports.

The additional costs paid by VBCPS for AAD in 2024-2025 were approximately \$2,941,127. Staffing-specific costs were for AAD staff at the secondary level only and were the largest portion of the cost to VBCPS for the AAD program. Transportation costs included daily transportation for all AAD students not zoned for Seatack Elementary School, as well as costs related to the extended day programming, summer intersession, and transporting students to and from extracurricular activities, specialized programs, or afterschool activities. In addition, transportation costs included students who opted out of the program to attend Birdneck Elementary School. Costs for facilities included the utilities for the extended day, summer intersession, and Saturday school at Seatack Elementary School, as well as the utilities for the high school wing at Lynnhaven Middle School. At the elementary school level, costs were predominantly for transportation, while at the secondary level, costs were predominantly for staffing.

Recommendations and Rationales

Recommendation #1: Continue AAD with modifications noted in recommendations 2 through 7 with the addition of a sunset provision. *(Responsible Groups: An Achievable Dream, Inc.; Department of School Leadership; Seatack Elementary School; Lynnhaven Middle School)*

Rationale: The first recommendation is to continue AAD with modifications noted in recommendations 2 through 7 with the addition of a sunset provision. Based on School Board Policy 6-26, following an evaluation, a recommendation must be made to continue the initiative without modifications, continue the initiative with modifications, expand the initiative, or discontinue the initiative. Although not statistically significant for most measures, there were patterns to show that elementary school AAD students outperformed the matched comparison group students on 59 percent of academic-related student outcome measures. Areas of relative strength included literacy growth in kindergarten through second grade, elementary mathematics, and specific student cohorts (i.e., fifth and eighth grades) who performed particularly well across content areas relative to the comparison groups. In addition, of the 27 seniors, 74 percent graduated with an advanced diploma on time, which was higher than their matched comparison group (24%). In addition, according to data provided by AAD, Inc., 81 percent of seniors were enrolled in college for the 2025-2026 school year and across all seniors, there was a total of \$2.5 million in scholarships received. Overall, there were high percentages of students (82%) and parents (91%) who indicated they were satisfied with their educational experience during the school year.

According to School Board Policy 6-26, existing programs that receive a comprehensive evaluation may be subject to the inclusion of a sunset provision at the discretion of the Superintendent and/or the School Board. It is recommended that the Superintendent or School Board add a sunset clause based on student enrollment given the cost of the program to the school division and the mixed student outcome results, especially at the secondary level. As outlined in the most recent MOA between VBCPS and AAD, Inc. from 2019, the target enrollment per grade level is a minimum of 75 students and a maximum of 90 students per grade level, which is a total minimum of 975 students and maximum of 1,170 students across all grade levels. In September 2024, elementary school was operating at 72 percent of the maximum capacity, middle school was operating at 51 percent of maximum capacity, and high school was operating at 33 percent of maximum capacity. After the expansion of transportation zones by the School Board in March 2025, there was an increase in enrollment at middle school, but not elementary or high school for 2025-2026 (65% of maximum capacity at elementary school, 59% at middle school, and 33% at high school). If capacity percentages were based on the minimum targeted enrollment numbers in 2025-2026, elementary school was operating at 78 percent of the minimum targeted enrollment, middle school was operating at 70 percent of the minimum targeted enrollment, and high school was operating at 40 percent of the minimum targeted enrollment. In accordance with School Board Policy 6-45, the phase out of an existing academy may be recommended to the School Board by the Superintendent if enrollment for an incoming academy class is 25 percent less than projected for three consecutive years after the year in which the academy is fully implemented.

Recommendation #2: Investigate and implement strategies to increase AAD student enrollment for the program to operate at or near capacity across all grade levels, including identifying acceptance criteria and strategies for student retention overall and for specific groups with higher rates of withdrawal. *(Responsible Groups: An Achievable Dream, Inc.; Seatack Elementary School; Lynnhaven Middle School)*

Rationale: The second recommendation is to investigate and implement strategies to increase AAD student enrollment for the program to operate at or near capacity across all grade levels, including identifying acceptance criteria and strategies for student retention overall and for specific groups with higher rates of withdrawal. As outlined in the most recent MOA between VBCPS and AAD, Inc. from 2019, the target enrollment per grade level is a minimum of 75 students and a maximum of 90 students per grade level, which is a total minimum of 975 students and maximum of 1,170 students across all grade levels. Although the School Board expanded transportation zones for AAD in March 2025 and there were increases in the number of applications for the AAD program from the 2024-2025 to 2025-2026 school year, the program continues to operate below its capacity, particularly at the high school level. As of September 2025, the program was operating at 65 percent of the maximum capacity at elementary school, 59 percent at middle school, and 33 percent at high school. Increases in enrollment would help maximize program resources. For the 2024-2025 school year, overall, 69 percent of applicants were accepted with higher rates at the elementary school (71%) and middle school (74%) than high school level (42%), although specific acceptance criteria could not be determined. In 2025-2026, there were higher acceptance rates at the middle school (73%) and high school (80%) levels than elementary school level (36%). Continuation and retention data further highlights opportunities for improvement areas, such as at key transition points and with specific groups of students. Continuation of students from the 2023-2024 school year to the 2024-2025 school year showed lower percentages of students remained in the program at the transition points between school levels, with 67 percent of grade 5 and 78 percent of grade 8 students in 2023-2024 remaining in the program in 2024-2025. Although annual continuation rates were generally high, continuation in the program was lower longer-term. A longitudinal analysis of retention for the initial cohort groups showed only 16 percent of the initial K-2 cohort in 2014-2015 remained in the AAD program, while 43 percent of the students in those initial cohorts were enrolled elsewhere within VBCPS. Further examinations of enrollment patterns for specific student groups showed that a higher percentage of special education students withdrew from the program and re-enrolled in another school (25%) in 2024-2025 compared to those who stayed at AAD (13%). In addition, a larger percentage of students who withdrew and re-enrolled elsewhere were in their first year in AAD (48%), which suggested that the program could implement strategies to support new students entering the program for the first time.

Recommendation #3: Support and monitor the effectiveness of the SAME curriculum implementation to ensure it meets students' social, academic, and mindset needs. *(Responsible Groups: An Achievable Dream, Inc.; Seatack Elementary School; Lynnhaven Middle School)*

Rationale: The third recommendation is to support and monitor the effectiveness of the SAME curriculum implementation to ensure it meets students' social, academic, and mindset needs. A core AAD program component is implementing the Social, Academic, and Mindset Education (SAME) curriculum. For the 2024-2025 school year, AAD established two goals related to the implementation of the SAME curriculum, which involved streamlining the delivery and implementation, as well incorporating the framework into content. When staff were surveyed about these areas, 73 percent of instructional staff agreed the delivery and implementation of the SAME curriculum was streamlined through the morning program and social rotations, with higher agreement at middle (78%) than elementary (67%). In addition, 49 percent of elementary and

middle school instructional staff agreed the SAME curriculum was effectively incorporated in the core content instruction, again with higher agreement at middle (67%) than elementary (22%). Further, when instructional staff were surveyed about the various social rotations helping students in related areas, relatively low percentages of instructional staff agreed. Overall, 52 percent of elementary and middle school AAD instructional staff agreed the etiquette social rotation helped students be polite and well-mannered with others, 58 percent of instructional staff agreed Speaking Green® class helped students learn communication skills, 59 percent of instructional staff agreed ethics/conflict resolution class helped students learn how to resolve conflicts with other people, and 62 percent agreed mindfulness and meditation class helped students regulate their emotions and behavior better. Overall, higher percentages of elementary instructional staff agreed with these items than middle school. In addition, instructional staff had somewhat lower agreement regarding the effectiveness of the morning program, which included recitations of positive affirmations, with 65 percent of elementary school and middle school instructional staff agreeing the morning program and Banners helped students be confident in themselves. A higher percentage of elementary school instructional staff (72%) agreed with this item than middle school instructional staff (60%). Other results from instructional staff related to professional learning and collaboration suggested that improvements in these areas could positively impact the delivery of the SAME curriculum. Overall, 67 percent of instructional staff agreed AAD provided them sufficient professional development in the delivery of the AAD program, and 66 percent of instructional staff agreed the collaboration between AAD and school staff is effective.

Recommendation #4: Strengthen student behavior supports and consistent disciplinary strategies at AAD to improve social-emotional outcomes, reinforce program expectations, and support consistent implementation of behavioral standards. *(Responsible Groups: An Achievable Dream, Inc.; Department of School Leadership; Seatack Elementary School; Lynnhaven Middle School)*

Rationale: The fourth recommendation is to strengthen student behavior supports and consistent disciplinary strategies at AAD to improve social-emotional outcomes, reinforce program expectations, and support consistent implementation of behavioral standards. Overall, referral and suspension data showed that higher percentages of elementary and high school AAD students had at least one referral and higher percentages of students with multiple referrals compared to their matched comparison group peers, with statistically significant differences at elementary school. In addition, at the elementary and middle school levels, the average numbers of referrals and in-school suspensions were higher for AAD than their matched comparison group with several statistically significant differences. Focusing specifically on discipline incidents related to student-to-student aggression, at all levels, the percentage of students who had at least one referral, the percentage of students who had multiple referrals, and average numbers of referrals and in-school suspensions were higher for AAD students with several statistically significant differences. Staff survey data showed 43 percent of instructional staff agreed AAD provided strategies and consistency to support students' behavior at school with low agreement at both elementary (39%) and secondary (45%). When surveyed about student behavior, 51 percent of instructional staff agreed students got along well with other students, with notably low agreement at the elementary school level (28%). In addition, 61 percent of instructional staff agreed the instruction and services offered at AAD met students' social and emotional needs, again with notably lower agreement at elementary school (44%). In addition, 67 percent of instructional staff agreed students treated them with respect with higher agreement for secondary staff (75%) than elementary school staff (53%). Students also reported relatively low agreement regarding their own behavior with 63 percent of elementary school students agreeing they got along well with other students and 64 percent of elementary school and 58 percent of middle school students agreeing they worked out disagreements with other students by talking with them. In addition, in response to a survey item about areas for improvement, instructional staff comments predominantly focused on issues with negative student behavior and inconsistent or lack of

appropriate disciplinary actions. Related to this area, some staff commented on the lack of enforcement of the behavioral expectations in the AAD contract and some staff expressed concerns regarding students remaining in the program when those expectations were not met.

Recommendation #5: Strengthen the effectiveness of academic supports at AAD to ensure students' instructional needs are met and promote consistent academic growth across grade levels. *(Responsible Groups: An Achievable Dream, Inc.; Seatack Elementary School; Lynnhaven Middle School)*

Rationale: The fifth recommendation is to strengthen the effectiveness of academic supports at AAD to ensure students' instructional needs are met and promote consistent academic growth across grade levels. Although the AAD program offers a range of academic support during the extended day and offers Saturday school as needed, survey data showed 67 percent of instructional staff agreed that AAD provided students with the level of academic support they needed, with lower agreement among elementary staff (56%) compared to secondary staff (74%). In addition, two student outcome goals focused on academic performance, including performance on the SOLs and literacy. When all academic measures were examined collectively, AAD students generally performed comparable to their matched peers across subjects and grade levels although they had access to the extended day, Saturday school, and summer intersession. Of the 69 total academic measures that were assessed, AAD students outperformed the matched comparison group on 36 measures (52%), with slightly stronger patterns at the elementary level (59%) than at the secondary level (46%), although there were few comparisons that favored AAD students statistically. AAD students outperformed comparison group peers on four measures (6%) at statistically significant levels, while the comparison group of non-AAD students outperformed AAD students on six measures (9%), suggesting room for continued improvement in academic outcomes given the extended learning opportunities provided.

Recommendation #6: Explore additional ways to expand access to courses at the high school level, including for AP and dual enrollment options. *(Responsible Groups: An Achievable Dream, Inc.; Seatack Elementary School; Lynnhaven Middle School)*

Rationale: The sixth recommendation is to explore additional ways to expand access to courses at the high school level, including for AP and dual enrollment options. Beginning in 2024-2025, AAD high school functioned as an academy located in the dedicated wing within Lynnhaven Middle School. Therefore, high school AAD students took courses with AAD-specific teachers, which appeared to limit access to a broader range of courses. When surveyed, 77 percent of AAD high school students agreed they had access to the courses they needed to support their plans after high school, which was below the divisionwide average of 87 percent. Based on an analysis of courses completed during 2024-2025, compared to a matched group of demographically similar high school peers, AAD high school students had access to fewer distinct and advanced course options (51 unique courses). The matched comparison group completed a broader variety of both core and elective courses (107 unique courses). In addition, five AP courses were completed by AAD students and one dual enrollment course. In comparison, there were nine AP and five dual enrollment courses completed by the matched comparison group students. Students and staff also provided feedback related to course options. During the focus group, AAD seniors provided comments related to wanting to take certain electives they were not able to take, and some teachers commented about there being limited course options in the areas of arts and music, as well as advanced options in AP and dual enrollment.

Recommendation #7: Formalize An Achievable Dream secondary staff in official Department of Human Resources files and staffing lists. *(Responsible Groups: An Achievable Dream, Inc.; Department of Human Resources; Seatack Elementary School; Lynnhaven Middle School)*

Rationale: The seventh recommendation is to formalize An Achievable Dream secondary staff in official Department of Human Resources files and staffing lists and resolve operational overlap between AAD and LMS. As of 2024-2025, while AAD secondary students are formally designated in records as part of the academy, secondary AAD teachers and staff are not. Without a formal AAD designation, the Department of Human Resources and administrators cannot easily identify which teachers are contractually responsible for implementing the AAD program. Performance expectations (e.g., SAME curriculum integration, morning greetings, professional dress, extended-day teaching) are tied to the supplemental AAD contract; therefore, it may be difficult to monitor these staff expectations. Formal designation within VBCPS ensures that all staff interacting with AAD students are clearly required to meet the same professional expectations, aligning performance standards and workload. The operational overlap between AAD and LMS also complicates staffing. In 2024-2025, according to the staff survey, several secondary staff at LMS taught both AAD and LMS students, which makes it difficult to ensure program fidelity. In addition, VBCPS allocated specific classroom teacher FTEs for AAD and formal designation of AAD staff would allow the staffing-related funding being dedicated to AAD to be monitored more efficiently. Finally, professional learning specific for AAD staff could be monitored more effectively because only formally designated staff would be required to participate.

Appendices

Appendix A: Division Student Demographic Characteristics

Characteristic	ES (n=29,723)	MS (n=14,917)	HS (n=20,779)	Overall (n=65,423)
Female	49%	48%	49%	49%
Male	51%	52%	51%	51%
Asian	6%	6%	7%	6%
Black	22%	24%	24%	23%
Hispanic	15%	14%	14%	15%
Multiracial	12%	11%	10%	11%
White	44%	44%	44%	44%
Economically Disadvantaged	40%	41%	36%	39%
Identified English Learner	5%	4%	3%	4%
Identified Gifted	16%	26%	22%	20%
Identified Special Education	14%	13%	11%	13%
Military Connected	23%	18%	14%	19%

Note: Based on students enrolled at any point during the 2024-2025 school year.

Appendix B: Courses Completed by High School AAD Students and Matched Comparison Group During 2024-2025

HS Courses - Areas	AAD High School Students	High School Matched Comparison Group
Art	Art I	Art I Art II (2D Approaches, 3D Approaches, Digital Media and Design) Art III (Digital Media and Design)
Business and IT	Econ & Personal Finance Computer Information Systems Advanced CIS	Econ & Personal Finance Computer Information Systems Advanced CIS Marketing
English & Reading	Honors English 9 through 12 English 9* English 11* AVID 9 & 10	English 9 through 12 Honors English 9 through 12 AP English 10 & 11 AVID 9 through 12 Journalism Public Speaking Media Studies Introduction to Theatre Arts
Family & Consumer Science	Virginia Teachers for Tomorrow DE Virginia Teachers for Tomorrow	Culinary Arts DE Virginia Teachers for Tomorrow Independent Living Parenting and Earling Learning Careers
Health & PE	Health and PE I, II	Health and PE I, II, III
Math	Algebra I AFDA Geometry Algebra II/Trig AP Pre-Calculus AP Statistics* Probability and Stats* Computer Programming	Algebra I AFDA Geometry & Geometry Honors Algebra II/Trig AP Pre-Calculus AP Statistics Computer Programming Discrete Math & Probability/Statistics Trigonometry & Probability/Statistics
Marketing & Entrepreneurship	Advanced Marketing* Innovation and Entrepreneurship*	Entrepreneurship & Innovation Marketing Fashion Marketing Sports Entertainment Recreation Marketing
Music	None	Intermediate & Advanced Orchestra Beginning, Intermediate, & Advanced Band Madrigal Vocal Ensemble Garage Band Guitar Piano
Naval Science	<i>Available at Cox for AAD HS students</i>	Naval Science I

HS Courses - Areas	AAD High School Students	High School Matched Comparison Group
Science	AP Environmental Science Biology Chemistry Earth Science* Environmental Science Health Science Concepts* Oceanography Physics*	Environmental Science Astronomy Biology Chemistry Oceanography
Social Studies	AP Human Geography Sociology I, II Psychology I, II AP Psychology World Geography* World History & Geography Virginia & US History	Sociology I, II Psychology I, II Leadership Skills Development AP Psychology AP Human Geography AP US History AP European History AP US Government & Politics World Geography World History & Geography Virginia & US History Virginia & US Government
World Languages	French II and III* German III* Latin III* Spanish I, II, and III	Spanish I, II, III, IV French I, II, III German I, III Japanese I
Technology Education	None	Electronic Systems I, II Construction Technology Basic Technical Drawing Engineering Drawing Introduction to Engineering Technology Foundations Photography & Communication Technology

*Unique courses taken online only.

Appendix C: Summary of Patterns of AAD Students Outperforming Comparison Group

Goal Area	Measure	K AAD: n=53 Matched Group: n=53	1 AAD: n=51 Matched Group: n=51	2 AAD: n=45 Matched Group: n=45	3 AAD: n=58 Matched Group: n=58	4 AAD: n=73 Matched Group: n=73	5 AAD: n=53 Matched Group: n=53
Reading	VALLSS Low-Risk %	No	No	No			
	VALLSS Scores	No*	AAD: 662 Matched Group: 660	No			
	VALSS Improvement in Risk Band	AAD: 69% Matched Group: 58%	AAD: 55% Matched Group: 46%	AAD: 29% Matched Group: 26%			
	MAP Avg or Above %				AAD: 41% Matched Group: 38%	No	AAD: 58% Matched Group: 45%
	MAP Scores				No	No	AAD: 207* Matched Group: 202*
	MAP Projected Growth Met				No	AAD: 48% Matched Group: 40%	AAD: 51% Matched Group: 43%
	SOL Pass %				No	No	AAD: 74% Matched Group: 60%
	SOL Scores				No*	AAD: 407 Matched Group: 404	AAD: 415 Matched Group: 410
Math	SOL Pass %				AAD: 64% Matched Group: 62%	AAD: 53% Matched Group: 48%	AAD: 68% Matched Group: 57%
	SOL Scores				No*	AAD: 403* Matched Group: 388*	AAD: 419 Matched Group: 415
Science	SOL Pass %						AAD: 57% Matched Group: 56%
	SOL Scores						No
History	SOL Pass %						AAD: 60%* Matched Group: 39%*
	SOL Scores						AAD: 403 Matched Group: 395

Note: Asterisks and bolded text denote significant differences from comparison group.

Goal Area	Measure	6 AAD: n=51 Matched Group: n=51	7 AAD: n=39 Matched Group: n=39	8 AAD: n=33 Matched Group: n=33	9 AAD: n=46 Matched Group: n=46	11 AAD: n=14 Matched Group: n=14
Reading	MAP Avg or Above %	No	AAD: 74% Matched Group: 64%	AAD: 63% Matched Group: 41%		
	MAP Scores	No	No	AAD: 221* Matched Group: 216*		
	MAP Projected Growth Met	No*	No	AAD: 68% Matched Group: 65%		
	SOL Pass %	No	No	AAD: 88% Matched Group: 75%		<i>English:</i> AAD: 100% Matched Group: 83%
	SOL Scores	AAD: 412 Matched Group: 408	No	AAD: 437* Matched Group: 420*		<i>Writing:</i> No
						<i>English:</i> No
Math	SOL Pass %	<i>Grade 6 Math:</i> No		<i>Grade 8 Math:</i> AAD: 75% Matched Group: 52%	<i>Alg I:</i> AAD: 96% Matched Group: 87%	
					<i>Geom:</i> No	
	SOL Scores	No*		No	<i>Alg I:</i> AAD: 447* Matched Group: 423*	
					<i>Geom:</i> No	
Science	SOL Pass %		<i>Grade 8 Sci:</i> No	<i>Grade 8 Sci:</i> AAD: 53% Matched Group: 45%	<i>Bio:</i> AAD: 94% Matched Group: 75%	
	SOL Scores		<i>Grade 8 Sci:</i> No*	AAD: 397 Matched Group: 396	<i>Bio:</i> AAD: 440 Matched Group: 429	
History	SOL Pass %			AAD: 78% Matched Group: 69%		
	SOL Scores			No		

Note: Asterisks and bolded text denote significant differences from comparison group.

Goal Area	Measure	Elementary AAD: n=333 Matched Group: n=333	Middle AAD: n=123 Matched Group: n=123	High AAD: n=113 Matched Group: n=113
Attendance	Percent Attending 90% of Days Enrolled	AAD: 89% Matched Group: 85%	AAD: 91% Matched Group: 89%	No
	Average Attendance Rate	AAD: 94.1% Matched Group: 93.9%	No	No
Discipline	% Referred	No*	AAD: 38% Matched Group: 41%	No
	% Referred Multiple Times	No*	No	No
	Avg Number of Referrals	No*	No	AAD: .86 Matched Group: 1.24
	Avg Number of ISS	No*	No*	AAD: .27 Matched Group: .38
	Avg Number of OSS	AAD: .07* Matched Group: .29*	AAD: .20 Matched Group: .29	AAD: .11 Matched Group: .12
Graduation	On-time Graduation			No
	Advanced Diploma			AAD: 74%* Matched Group: 24%*

Note: Asterisks and bolded text denote significant differences from comparison group.

These tables present a summary of comparisons that were made between AAD students and the matched group of students. Of the 92 measures across various grade levels and goal areas, there were patterns to show that AAD students outperformed the matched comparison group students on 46 measures (50%) based on any degree of difference when rounding to whole numbers. Focusing exclusively on the statistically significant differences, there were patterns to show that AAD students outperformed the matched comparison group students on eight measures (9%). See bolded and starred findings in the table for statistically significant differences favoring AAD students. However, there were 11 measures (12%) for which there were statistically significant differences favoring the matched comparison group students (designated in the table as No*). In comparison to matched group students, areas of strength for AAD students were elementary student growth in literacy within the school year, elementary student math achievement, and specific cohorts of students who performed particularly well across content areas (i.e., fifth grade and eighth grade).

Appendix D: Matrix of AAD Cost Responsibility

	AAD	VBPS
PROGRAMS		
Awards & Incentives for Students	X	
Book Store	X	
Clubs	X	
Computers/Printers/Software-Highest level of technology as would be offered in any of its schools.		X
Computers/Printers/Software-Any enhancements to technology in the school.	X	
Computer Maintenance Personnel		X
Educational supplies as would be provided by schools.		X
Educational Supplies needed for additional programming provided by AAD.	X	
Field Trips and transportation as would normally be provided by schools.		X
Field Trips and transportation needed as a result of additional programming provided by AAD.	X	
Snacks	X	
Food - Breakfast & Lunch		X
Program Administration Costs	X	
Program Staff Professional Development as would normally be provided by schools.		X
Program Staff Professional Development needed as a result of programming provided by AAD.	X	
Daily Transportation		X
Program Payroll & Benefits	X	
Rotation Teachers Payroll	X	
Messages/Banners Throughout the School	X	
Extended Day Program		
After School and Tutors Payroll	X	
After School and Tutors Payroll that would be provided through Federal funding.		X
Teacher Stipends for Extended Day program	X	
Educational Supplies for Extended Day program	X	
Snacks	X	
Intersession		
Intersession Payroll for Supervision by AAD	X	
Stipends for Intersession Teachers Payroll	X	
Curriculum Dev	X	
Educational Supplies	X	
Field Trips/Enrichment	X	
Snacks	X	
Transportation		X
Saturday School		
Saturday School - Payroll	X	
Saturday School - Snacks	X	
Saturday School - Supplies	X	
Saturday School - Transportation	X	
Uniforms	X	
Tennis Program	X	***

	AAD	VBPS
PROGRAMS		
Maintenance of School Property		X
ADMINISTRATION		
Admin & Gen Payroll	X	****
Admin & Gen Operational Costs	X	
Insurance	X	
Accounting/Auditors	X	
Legal	X	
FUNDRAISING		
Development & Donor Relations	X	
P/R & Marketing	X	
*** If applicable		
**** These are management positions at AAD		

Endnotes

¹ C. Middleton, personal communication, November 17, 2025.

² An evaluation for the 2014-2015 school year was also conducted by The College of William and Mary under contract with the Achievable Dream Academies, Inc., and as an approved research project in VBCPS. In addition, academic, discipline, and attendance outcomes from the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years were assessed by the VBCPS Office of Research and Evaluation (ORE) and presented in an Evaluation Brief to the School Board, AAD representatives, and the Superintendent's Senior Staff. Brief obtained on the VBCPS website: <https://resources.finalsites.net/images/v1658347798/vbschoolscom/e1tuhhrbfrgrjucupq1e/EvaluationBrief-2.pdf>

³ Virginia Beach City Council Meeting, December 10, 2019 agenda, *Discussing use of reversion funds and recommendations from a 2019-2020 school year committee*. Accessed at: <https://clerk.virginiabeach.gov/archives>

⁴ <https://resources.finalsites.net/images/v1675369820/vbschoolscom/xaw5ptzgwobedcnnzhpm/042820A.pdf>

⁵ Source: A. Andes, interview, March 12, 2025.

⁶ <https://achievabledream.org/academies/admissions/>

⁷ <https://achievabledream.org/news-release-students-in-23-school-zones-across-virginia-beach-now-eligible-to-apply-to-an-achievable-dream-academy/>

<https://resources.finalsites.net/images/v1675369740/vbschoolscom/am3ycnmxmzis4ec3ydaqh/081319M.pdf>

<https://resources.finalsites.net/images/v1675369741/vbschoolscom/p1krpns3et7mdnfhzany/082719M.pdf>

⁸ Eligible elementary school zones: Alanton, Birdneck, Brookwood, Christopher Farms, Cooke, Corporate Landing, Holland, King's Grant, Kingston, Linkhorn Park, Lynnhaven, Malibu, Ocean Lakes, Seatack, Strawbridge, Three Oaks, Trantwood, Windsor Oaks, Windsor Woods. Eligible middle school districts: Corporate Landing, Lynnhaven, Plaza, Virginia Beach.

⁹ At the secondary level, transportation eligibility is based on students' zoned middle schools. The alignment between students' zoned high school or students' home address was used to determine transportation eligibility.

¹⁰ <https://achievabledream.org/academies/admissions/> Note: Students in two elementary school zones would only be eligible for transportation if they are within certain middle school zones.

¹¹ <https://achievabledream.org/academies/>

¹² An Achievable Dream Pamphlet provided by AAD, Inc.: AAD Model & SAME Framework.

¹³ <https://achievabledream.org/academies/>

¹⁴ <https://www.vbschools.com/about/hours>

¹⁵ Due to the potential that students may move during the school year and attendance zones could be adjusted, this analysis focused on students who were enrolled at the end of the school year.

¹⁶ <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC3144483/pdf/hmbr46-399.pdf>

¹⁷ <https://literacy.virginia.edu/sites/g/files/jsddwu1006/files/Language-and-Literacy-Screening-in-Virginia-Brochure.pdf>

¹⁸ This estimate was based on the 2024-2025 regular allocation staffing ratio at the secondary level of 21.75 students : 1 FTE.

Donald E. Robertson Jr., Ph.D., Superintendent
Virginia Beach City Public Schools
2512 George Mason Drive, Virginia Beach, VA 23456-0038

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For further information, please call (757) 263-1199

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