

Date: August 25, 2017

For ACTION _____

For INFORMATION X

Board Agenda: Yes _____
No X

FROM: Clinton Page, Ed.S., Chief Accountability Officer
Julie Crawford, Ed.D., Chief Student Services Officer

THROUGH: Lois Berlin, Ed.D., Interim Superintendent of Schools

TO: The Honorable Ramee Gentry, Chair, and Members of the Alexandria City School Board

TOPIC: Youth Risk Behavior Survey 2017 Report

BACKGROUND:

The Alexandria Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), based on the original Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, is a voluntary, anonymous, self-reported survey administered on a three year cycle within Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) to students in grades 8, 10 and 12. The survey administration and the attached report were a result of the collaboration among a wide range of academic, government, volunteer and non- governmental organizations working to improve the health and wellness of adolescents in Alexandria. In particular, the Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Alexandria (SAPCA) and the Alexandria Health Department teamed with ACPS in all phases of the survey administration. This YRBS administration represents the fourth collaborative effort across local organizations/agencies to garner these important data dating back to 2006-2007.

The goal of the survey is to obtain information on youth behaviors in six risk areas identified as contributing to the leading causes of death, disability, and social problems among youth in the United States. These risk areas are: physical health; dietary behavior; behaviors that contribute to unintentional or intentional injuries; alcohol and other drug use; tobacco use; and sexual behaviors that contribute to unintended pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections. The results from the survey are then utilized across organizations within the city to target programming and services to best meet the needs of students and families.

RECOMMENDATION:

Review the attached Youth Risk Behavior Survey Report for possible planning, procedural, programmatic, and/or budgetary changes.

IMPACT:

Overall, results show a consistent decrease across the last three YRBS administrations (2017, 2014, and 2011) in many risk behaviors regarding substance use, sexual behavior, and aggressive and violent behaviors. Further, Alexandria results were better than national averages where comparison results were available in these critical risk

areas. A major finding in the 2014 survey results was the increase in the ratio of respondents reporting depression and/or suicidal ideation. These indicators decreased in almost all areas in the 2017 results and fell below national averages where comparisons were available. This finding is a good indication of the productive steps being taken and reinforces the need for sustained efforts of all across the community to continue this positive trend. Additional areas that warrant continued attention are within physical health and activity where respondents fell below national estimates by 18 percentage points for exercise. Significant differences were present across subgroups with higher levels of risk factors reported by Hispanic and Black respondents. The crux of this work will continue to be the collaboration that has occurred in recent years across organizations, non-profits, and individual community members to propel change and improve outcomes for the youth of Alexandria.

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