

BOARD MEMO

Date: November 30, 2023

For ACTION X

For INFORMATION

FROM: Carmen Sanders, Executive Director of Instructional Support

THROUGH: Pierrette Finney, Ed.D., Chief Academic Officer
Melanie Kay-Wyatt, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

TO: The Honorable Michelle Rief, Chair, and
Members of the Alexandria City School Board

TOPIC: Program of Studies for 2024–2025 for Secondary Schools: Academies and
Pathways Development

ACPS 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL:

Goal 2: Instructional Excellence
Goal 3: Student Accessibility and Support
Goal 5: Family and Community Engagement

SY 2023-2024 PRIORITY AREA:

Academic Achievement
The High School Project
Student Supports
CASEL Social Emotional Learning Competencies
Student Connection and Attendance

FY 2024 BUDGET PRIORITY:

Increase Support for Social and Emotional Learning
Communications Support

SUMMARY:

With the approval of the Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) Secondary Program of Studies, the next level of work for the High School Project includes providing clarity and understanding regarding academies and pathways. The Virginia Department of Education states that *“Virginia acknowledges the importance of career and technical education to students and the commonwealth through diploma seals awarded by the Board of Education, by recognizing industry credentialing in its diploma requirements, and through the use of Career Pathways as an integral part of the **newly required** Academic and Career Plan.”*

Alexandria City High School (ACHS) academies and pathways will be developed in alignment with approved pathways from the Virginia Department of Education. Moving toward whole school academies and pathways allows ALL students to benefit from an exploration of their passion and interests in college and career, small learning communities, and the ability to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and attributes aligned with the profile of a Virginia graduate.

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DETAILS:

The 2024–2025 Program of Studies outlines the approved Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) course offerings for grades 6–12 in Alexandria City Public Schools. We continue to align our curriculum and instruction to the VDOE curriculum standards. The ACPS Program of Studies document was approved by the ACPS School Board on November 2, 2023. With this approval, the completion of academies and pathways can be fully developed utilizing approved courses in the ACPS Program of Studies and **VDOE-approved** career cluster pathways.

Academies will be located at both Minnie Howard and King Street Campuses based on specialty equipment and the number of sections needed for courses. Pathway locations have been determined in collaboration with the master schedule team, CTE director, and the school administration. Pathways have been completed with the instructional team using the **VDOE-approved** career cluster pathways and the guidance of the CTE Director. Pathway locations will be publicly announced in conjunction with student academic advisement.

BACKGROUND:

The development of the academy and pathways model is in alignment with the results of The High School Project: Educational Programming and Site Analysis released on August 19, 2019. As the Connected High School Network was previously selected as the educational design model, planning has continued based upon the tenets of this model to include:

- An emphasis on the learners' future success in post-secondary educational options;
- Meaningful and experience-based preparation for the rapidly changing world of work and career pathways; and
- Instructional delivery that is personalized, engaging, and culturally responsive (p.7)

RECOMMENDATION:

The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review and approve the ACHS Academies and Pathways.

IMPACT:

ACPS School Board review and support of the ACHS academies and pathways will allow continued planning to continue on the High School Project.

REFERENCES:

Virginia Department of Education Academic and Career Plans: <https://tinyurl.com/437d2wmx>
August 16, 2019: The High School Project: Educational Programming and Site Analysis
Virginia's CTE Resource Center <https://www.cteresource.org/career-clusters/>

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 231102_Secondary_Schools_Program_of_Studies_2024–2025_v.2
2. 231102_2024-2025_Program_of_Studies_Draft_v.2

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