

**BOARD BRIEF**

Date: 1/21/2022

**BOARD INFORMATION:**   X  

**MEETING PREPARATION:** \_\_\_\_\_

**FROM:** Kurt Huffman, Executive Director of Community Partnerships & Engagement

**THROUGH:** Julia Burgos, Chief of School and Community Relations  
Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

**TO:** The Honorable Meagan L. Alderton, Chair, and  
Members of the Alexandria City School Board

**TOPIC:** ACPS Partnerships Update

**ACPS 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL:**

- Goal 1: Systemic Alignment
- Goal 2: Instructional Excellence
- Goal 3: Student Accessibility and Support
- Goal 4: Strategic Resource Allocation
- Goal 5: Family and Community Engagement

**SY 2021-2022 FOCUS AREA:**

- Focus Area 1: Social Emotional and Academic Learning Recovery
- Focus Area 2: Hispanic Males
- Focus Area 3: Middle School Educational Experience
- Focus Area 4: Early College
- Focus Area 5: Talented and Gifted

**FY 2022 BUDGET PRIORITY:**

- Implementation of 2025 Strategic Plan
- K-4 Literacy Continued Implementation
- Continue Engagement with Hispanic Families to Improve Graduation and Chronic Absenteeism

**SUMMARY:**

As part of its charge, the Office of Community Partnerships and Engagement continues to focus on building and strengthening broad-based, innovative partnerships that strengthen all ACPS students' education. Through these partnerships, Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) inspires civic engagement in students and encourages lifelong learners. This commitment to building strong partnerships has resulted in being able to provide the ACPS educational community with the supplemental resources and high-impact support needed, even through the past and current pandemic challenges.

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In alignment with our goal of continuous improvement and best practices, we are exploring and implementing strategies and tactics that will provide additional clarity for our partners, community, schools and departments.

### **BACKGROUND:**

Currently, ACPS and the Office of Community Partnerships and Engagement (CPE) has approximately 160 partners who have signed official agreements with our office. Those partnerships are mainly non-profit with a non-exchange of funding. These official partners support various focus areas, buildings/departments and align strongly with our ACPS 2025 Strategic Plan. CPE continues to strengthen current partnerships with multiple types of support, information/guidance and data requests through in-person and virtual meetings, email/phone correspondence and newsletters. We also guide new potential partners through the agreement process and connect them with the aligned school/department leadership as needed. The executive director of community partnerships and engagement is part of multiple city organizations, commissions and boards (e.g. Children Youth and Families Collaborative Commission, City and Schools Staff Group, Volunteer Alexandria, Youth Support Network, Unified Implementation) which allows for continuous connection and latest information to be brought back to the partnership team as needed. Throughout the year, the office reflects and analyzes the impact of our partnerships and identifies potential support gaps that are based on alignment with school and department plans.

Moving forward, CPE is currently analyzing the data that was collected during a partnership forum that was conducted in collaboration with Education Elements. That data spotlighted the following key takeaways from our partners that would strengthen our partnerships:

- **Idea + Key Takeaway #1:** Portal for partners to share ideas and view each other's metrics, post updates, requests for support and other news in one place.
- **Idea + Key Takeaway #2:** Partnership Council - The creation of consistent and targeted support from school buildings and central office by assembling an advisory group of partners to support the design of the aforementioned portal, as well as other broader partner support initiatives in ACPS.
- **Idea + Key Takeaway #3:** Partner liaisons in Schools - related to the point above, to ensure all partners have a specific point-person to connect with, regardless of building and division turnover.

In addition to these key takeaways, the office has also added the following as aligned strategic plan tactics:

- Conduct quarterly partnership relationship meetings with large-scale partners to check implementation and progress of agreements and Memorandums of Understanding. This includes large partnerships such as Amazon, Running Brooke, Virginia Tech Innovation Campus and Alexandria Tutoring Consortium.
- Based on school improvement plans and reflection meetings, provide each school and

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department analysis and information of current and potential newly-aligned partner opportunities.

- Strengthen and develop new partnerships with higher education universities (For example: George Washington-Governor's Health Science Academy, Virginia State-Teachers for Tomorrow, George Mason-Facility Student Intern Program).
- Explore national and regional partnership best practices to design and implement a learning partner network. This learning network will implement tiered partnership membership levels that will provide various supports and expectations (e.g. data impact reports) based on their organization details and student/division programming reach.

Strategic Plan Strategy/Tactic	Timeline
Portal for partners to share ideas and view each other's metrics, post updates, requests for support and other news in one place.	Regional and National research and discovery is currently in motion with a plan to select a portal by summer 2022. Portal will be tested with a select group of partners over the summer and fully implemented, in collaboration with the Alexandria Youth Support Network, in fall 2023.
Partnership Council	Planning and goal setting for the council is currently underway with selection and first quarterly meeting in spring 2022.
Partner liaisons	Best practice research and discovery is currently underway. Implementation fall 2023.
Learning Partner Network	Discovery and design is currently underway. Focus Groups will occur summer 2022. Implementation of the network in winter 2022.
Principal/Building Leadership Partnership Survey	Survey form that will provide the partnership team with important feedback relative to satisfaction with current partners, successes experienced and areas needing attention/improvement will be sent out to building leadership for their responses in February 2022.
Conduct quarterly partnership relationship meetings with large-scale partners to check implementation and progress of agreements and Memorandums of Understanding	Ongoing

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<p>Strengthen and develop new partnerships with higher education universities</p> <p>Based on school improvement plans and reflection meetings, provide each school and department analysis and information of current and potential newly-aligned partner opportunities.</p>	
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**RECOMMENDATION:** The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review the information in this memo to gain a better understanding of the path moving forward to expand and strengthen partnership opportunities to meet the ever-growing needs of our school community.

**IMPACT:**

Through exploration of partnership best practices and reflection of current ACPS partnerships, the Office of Community Partnerships and Engagement will continue to focus on building and strengthening broad-based, innovative partnerships that strengthen all ACPS students' education. Through these partnerships, we can inspire civic engagement in students and encourage lifelong learners.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. ACPS Partner Data

**CONTACT:**

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