Anti-Racism Policy Evaluation Report

November 2021

WE STRIVE TO BECOME
ANTI-RACIST

The Albemarle County
School Board and School Division
· · · · · **reject all forms of racism** · · · · ·
as destructive to our mission,
vision, values and goals.

Albemarle County Public Schools

401 McIntire Road, Charlottesville, VA 22902 | 434-296-5820 | www.k12albemarle.org

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Introduction

For more than 100 years, among the most treasured moments throughout the history of flight has been the first liftoff of a new aircraft. It is a historic and emotional occasion for all involved with the mission as well as for all who would go on to benefit from its success.

Although Albemarle County Public Schools did not launch any aircraft in 2020-21, our employees and students did launch something far more powerful and enduring—the implementation, even in the midst of a global pandemic, of our life-changing Anti-Racism Policy.

The high points included the completion of online training for all 3,000 of our employees, a valuable pathway for meeting our universal commitment—establishing and sustaining an equitable community that unlocks the potential for greatness inside every student and staff member. Our policy firmly rejects all forms of racism as destructive to our mission, vision, values and goals and this year, as a community, we began to perfect our skills and ability to do what we say.

Our adoption of a new strategic plan, based on the advice and counsel of a broad and representative cross-section of staff, students, parents and community partners, adds fuel to the policy's implementation. Among the competencies our strategic plan promises to deliver to all learners are anti-racism itself, together with empathy and social justice and inclusion.

This second annual report is an honest and comprehensive assessment of our progress in fulfilling several key objectives but I would like to call attention to three in particular.

Students were essential partners in the drafting of our policy and are even more valuable in its implementation. The Student Equity Advisory Team (SEAT), which brings student leaders together from across the division, has already been helpful in raising community awareness on how fairness and equity in our relationships with one another improves the lives and learning experiences of all. This extraordinary group of leaders will be instrumental in the year ahead in our schools with the return of more than 13,000 of our students to in person learning.

Additionally, the development of our Anti-Racism and Equity Decision-Making Tool will be a significant resource in guiding how we design and conduct policies, programs, activities and priorities to ensure, even inadvertently, that we are not excluding any of those we serve.

Finally, although not formally part of our Anti-Racism Policy but very much a part of our commitment to equal opportunity, is our award-winning culturally responsive teaching program. This report notes that as of October of this year, 208 educators have earned culturally responsive teaching credentials since its inception in 2016. Early indications are that in the year ahead, we will more than double this number.

Research has shown that culturally responsive teachers are having an impact in the classroom, leading to rising test scores for many of our minority students. Coincidentally, this year our on-time graduation numbers for our Black and Hispanic students, for our special education students, our English language learners and those from economically disadvantaged homes, all exceeded the statewide average.

I urge you to become a partner with us in unlocking the potential for greatness and not only within our students and staff but within all who live in the greater Albemarle community. Equal opportunity, fairness and respect, racial justice and inclusiveness are not concepts bounded by the walls of any school. They advance the interests of us all in meeting the often-cited challenge of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. who reminded us many years ago that," *I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be, and you can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be."*
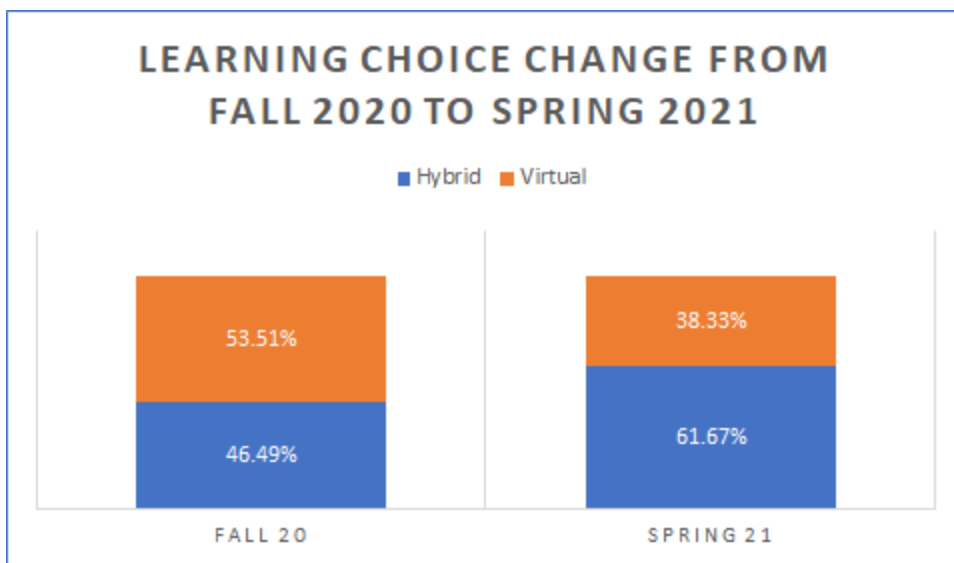

Superintendent Dr. Matthew Haas

Executive Summary

The 2020-2021 school year marked the second year of implementation of the Anti-Racism Policy, adopted in February 2019 by the School Board. The school year began with most of our 14,000 students attending school virtually because of the COVID-19 pandemic. As the year progressed, students gradually returned to school in person, using a staged return-to-school strategy.

The COVID-19 pandemic challenged the school division and nation, and opened up further inequalities of opportunity. Our steering team shifted gears to not only move the Anti-Racism Policy work forward, but also address the needs of various communities during this difficult time. Despite the unprecedented year, much of our anti-racism work was able to move forward. And, the division underscored its commitment to anti-racism by adopting a new strategic plan, *Learning for All,* that not only adopted "anti-racist" as a competency for our graduates, but also identified the full implementation of the Anti-Racism Policy as a key strategy.

LEARNING CHOICE CHANGE FROM FALL 2020 TO SPRING 2021

■ Hybrid ■ Virtual

FALL 20: Virtual 53.51%, Hybrid 46.49%

SPRING 21: Virtual 38.33%, Hybrid 61.67%

Overview of the Steering Committee

In an effort to oversee the implementation of the Anti-Racism Policy, a division-wide steering committee was established. The committee is composed of staff members from schools, departments, and division leadership. Together, we are tasked with carrying out the deliverables within the policy that are aimed at dismantling individual, institutional and structural racism.

In alignment with the regulations stipulated within the Anti-Racism Policy, the steering committee includes five subcommittees:

- Policy Communication;
- Leadership and Administration;
- Curriculum and Instruction;
- Training; and
- Policy Enforcement.

The steering committee meets monthly, and the subcommittees meet in between the committee meetings.

Additionally, we have a Student Equity Advisory Team (SEAT) that provides critical feedback on the development of some of the key deliverables, specifically around communications and training.

Refer to Appendix B to view the list of steering committee members and Appendix C for a list of students who serve on SEAT.

Status Update: Policy Communication

The Anti-Racism Policy is directed at both division employees and students; therefore, the Policy Communication Subcommittee has the two-fold mission of engaging and informing the ACPS community about the policy as well as fostering opportunities for students to be its advocates. The policy is translatable into the top seven languages spoken in the school division through the technology offered by FinalSite, the ACPS communications platform. This enables the entire community to learn about the anti-racist work being done in our schools.
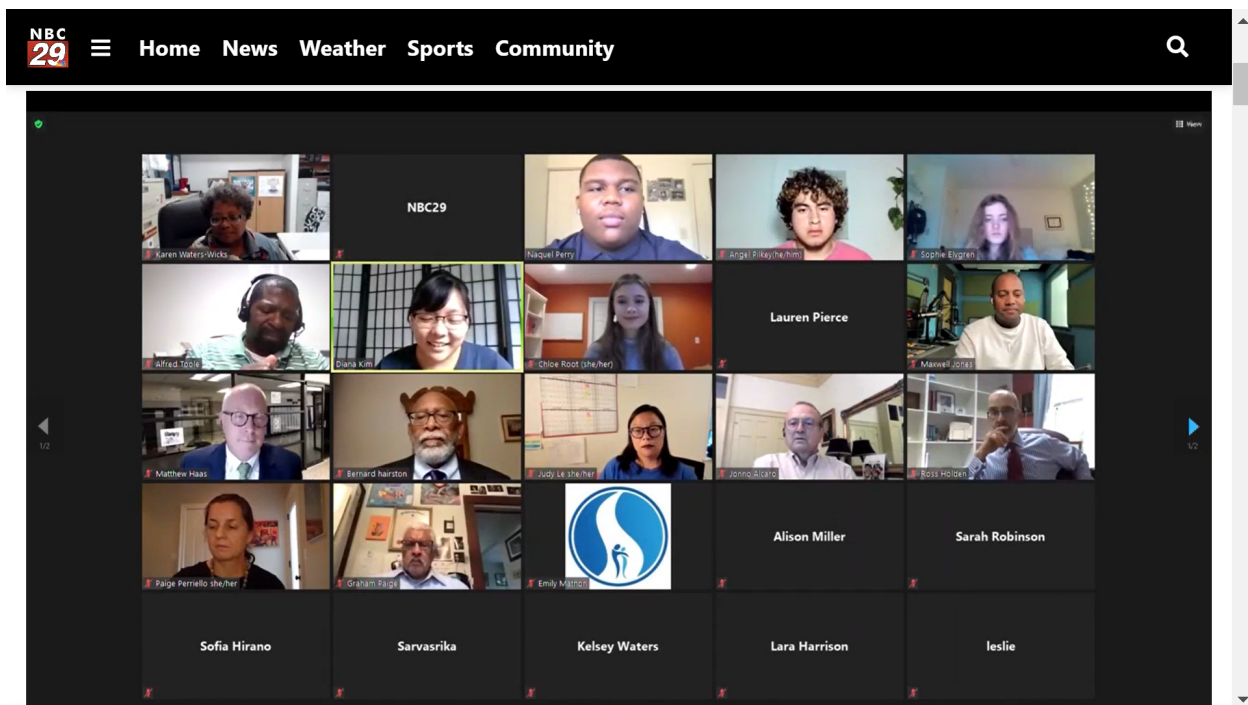
Regulations in Anti-Racism Policy	Implementation Status
1. Each school shall post a public statement against racism in a location visible to students, staff, and visitors entering the school. The division will also post a public statement in high traffic locations at its main offices and on the division website. The public statement shall read: "Albemarle County Public Schools is committed to establishing and sustaining an equitable community that achieves the school division's equity mission to end the predictive value of race and ensure each individual student's and staff's success. The Albemarle County School Board and school division reject all forms of racism as destructive to their mission, vision, values, and goals."	**Fully Implemented**
2. The Board shall establish an organization or committee of students in the division to promote equity and diversity and to serve as leaders and spokespersons within their schools and the division.	**Fully Implemented**
3. This policy shall be included in student handbooks provided to students and families.	**In Progress**
4. This policy shall be translated into other languages and be made available for families.	**Fully Implemented**

Key Project: Student Equity Advisory Team (SEAT)

The work of the Student Equity Advisory Team continues to stand out. In the 2020-21 school year, the team expanded to include middle school students and further their mission to "Give everyone a SEAT at the table."

Our second Town Hall took place on June 2, 2021 on zoom, and there were 39 participants, which included students, staff, parents and community members of various races. The title was "Removing Our Masks," and the panelists discussed the concept of hypervisibility. One of the main discussion questions on the agenda was, "What does a safe and anti-racist school division look and feel like, and how is that different from what we have now?"

The Town Hall was featured on NBC 29 news. SEAT partnered with the Young Asian American and Pacific Islanders of Charlottesville in an effort to raise awareness around violence being suffered by members of that community nationwide, as well as the pressures related to being misperceived as a "model minority." Additional speakers included students from Albemarle High School's Black Student Union and Progressive Albemarle County Teens.

Key Project: Anti-Racism Policy included in student handbooks

The Policy Communication team has provided language for updates to Principals in Volume 16, Issue 17 of the Superintendent's Advisory Bulletin, and will monitor this progress with the expectation that all handbooks will be updated before the start of the end of the school year.

Additional Project: Anti-racism course offered to the public

In an effort to engage and educate the broader public about our work, in conjunction with the ACPS Community Education's Open Doors program, we facilitated a modified version of the Anti-Racism Orientation "Unpacking what it means to be anti-racist." The session provides an overview of the Anti-Racism Policy, definitions, and small group discussions about race and racism. The course offering was highlighted in the Open Doors Fall catalog, ACPS website, Compass, and Superintendent's Advisory Bulletin (SAB). A total of 20 registrants, including members of the school division's Parent Advisory Council, joined members of the Anti-Racism Steering Committee.

Status Update: Leadership and Administration

The Leadership & Administration Subcommittee is tasked with identifying and addressing inequitable practices at the school and district level.

Regulations in Anti-Racism Policy	Implementation Status
Develop and conduct a systemic equity needs assessment for the division to identify processes and practices that cause or contribute to inequitable outcomes. The assessment shall also include an inventory of what equity-related data is currently collected by the division.	**In Progress**
To address disparities in course participation (including AP/honors participation): a. All school staff making class recommendations shall provide a written electronic explanation for the recommendation to students and/or families. b. School counselors shall be responsible for educating students and families as equitable partners in the selection process and course sequencing. c. Middle and high schools will offer opportunities for supplementary coursework, such as summer bridge programs or tutoring during or after school, to students interested in moving to higher level courses.	**In Progress**
The Board shall implement alternative discipline processes, such as restorative justice, to reduce racial disparities in discipline and suspension.	**In Progress**

This subcommittee recognizes the need and urgency to ensure that the ACPS Leadership Team (including division, school and department leaders) implements anti-racist practices and structures that disrupt racial inequities.

Key Project: Equity Needs Assessment

The Human Resources (HR) team began the work of piloting an equity needs assessment last year in order to be leaders moving forward to support other departments as they conduct their own equity needs assessments.

This HR team has continued to meet as a group each third Thursday of the month. *The team's work has been centered around the following objectives:*

- Creating HR staff self-awareness, focus, and intention;
- Centering racial equity in HR communications and operational protocols;
- Codifying HR/ACPS internal practices which tend toward racial diversity and equity;
- Creating an environment for open and honest dialogue, to include regular feedback; and
- Deepening our understanding of educators of color experience, including why teachers of color leave and what type of work environment is most important and supportive to teachers of color.

Some of the activities that the HR Equity Team engaged in during the last school year included:

- Refining the HR logic model;
- Continuing yearlong HR professional development (PD) focus on racial equity (In addition, various HR Team Members engaged in HR Book Club and attended Local Government equity sessions);
- The HR Equity Team leading the review and discussion of the Anti-Racism Orientation with the entire team; as well as discussed implications (i.e. policies, processes, and systems) and identified areas related to HR for further exploration/study;
- Revising the Annual Report to reflect the following: equity focus in mission, specific efforts towards equity; community and student demographics data for context (consider when to include data by location, impact on individuals who may be identified); staff accomplishments (Culturally Responsive Teaching, or CRT, etc.); staff testimonials; lessons learned (what went well/growth areas); balance of qualitative and

quantitative data (what is the story you want to tell); expand equity focus to benefits, safety, other areas in HR; and PD activities.

Strategies implemented this past year to make internal practice shifts in *recruitment* include:

- Collaborating with a member of the Equity Team, Lars Holmstrom, and the division's Anti-Racism Program Manager, Jasmine Fernández to revise the teacher job posting language and included the Anti-Racism Policy on job postings, our employer profile on Handshake, other job boards, and in our job fair invitations;
- Offering more early contracts: 12 this year compared to three to five in past years; nine of the 12 are Teachers of Color. Two of the early contracts were extended to participants from the African American Teaching Fellows (AATF) Program;
- Providing new guidelines for structure and selection of interview panelists for school-based teacher interviews (administrators expected to have diverse group of staff members participate and give feedback in the interviews, and take feedback into account during final decision-making);
- Targeting job fairs to colleges/universities with more diverse student populations, including George Mason University, Hampton University, Marymount University, Norfolk State University, Old Dominion University, University of Maryland-Eastern Shore, Virginia Commonwealth University, and Virginia State University;
- Participating in Teachers of Promise Institute, in collaboration with the Equity Specialists who facilitated the ACPS Culturally Responsive Teaching Session, with over 50 attendees in the session. We shared information about the school division and invited participants to review job postings and participate in the interview process;
- Conducting active recruiting campaign using K12Jobspot, the Virginia Department of Education's job platform;
- Completing our first ACPS Recruitment Video;
- Communicating with all historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) on the east coast;
- Investing funding for postings on Indeed and LinkedIn;

- Working with the Department of Communications on social media campaigns with Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

Strategies engaged in this past year to make internal practice shifts in *retention* include:

- Refining HR Equity Team logic model;
- Developing RFP/Entered Procurement Process for a division-wide needs assessment (i.e. Gallup survey), which will assess employee engagement, organizational culture, and overall attitudes regarding working conditions/environment;
- Conducting policy revisions, including, Equal Employment Opportunity/Non-Discrimination Policy Statement; Prohibition Against Harrassment & Retaliation; applied an equity lens to policies including, Payment for Advanced Degrees, Lactation, Tobacco Use, and Student Teachers; and
- Entire HR team participating in Non-Discrimination and Harassment Training.

Key Project: Addressing course enrollment disparities

A key focus in the 2020-2021 school year and going into the 2021-22 school year, was removing barriers to academy enrollment. The Department of Instruction removed applications for academies and allowed any student who is interested to enroll in the academy. Students fill out a one-page interest sheet and submit by the deadline to enroll. All students have been accommodated, thus far, and the numbers have increased in academy enrollment, in general, across the division. The metrics section shows the current state.

Center I enrollment opened up from only seniors, to sophomores through seniors, and the director worked tirelessly with school counselors and families to ensure that students could participate at Center I so that transportation or scheduling was not a barrier to enrollment. He also added core courses, such as English or math, as needed to help with scheduling students.

2019-2020 Center I Demographics

	12th Grade Students		Center I Students	
Total Enrollment	1081		41	
Asian	49	5%	3	7%
Black	118	11%	3	7%
Hispanic	112	10%	0	0%
White	744	69%	34	83%
Two or more races	58	5%	1	2%
Econ Disadv	276	26%	12	29%
ELs	60	6%	2	5%
SWD	154	14%	5	12%

* Center I was only open to 12th grade students in the 2019-2020 school year

2020-2021 Center I Demographics

	High School Students		Center I Students	
Total Enrollment	4379		107	
Asian	234	5%	3	3%
Black	470	11%	6	6%
Hispanic	570	13%	4	4%
White	2858	65%	85	79%
Two or more races	240	5%	9	8%
Econ Disadv	1302	30%	18	17%
ELs	303	7%	0	0%
SWD	579	13%	15	14%

Older initiatives allowing students to choose their own coursework are still in place and we may be seeing the benefits with some movement with our Advanced Placement and Dual Enrollment demographics. The Department of Instruction will continue to monitor and evaluate all courses, including academy and center enrollment, for racial disparities.

As a reminder, the 2020-2021 school year schedule changed to a 4x4 schedule for our secondary students. This means that instead of having eight blocks all year, students took four courses for half of the year and another four the other half. This was a big change for many of our students, particularly in addition to learning virtually during the pandemic.

As a part of our equity mission, ACPS aspires to have a proportionate representation of our student demographics in all classes, including our center and academy enrollment. The work that the leadership and administrative teams did this year starts moving us toward that goal by partnering with students and families to become more knowledgeable of their options and removing some systemic barriers that may have kept students from certain courses. This year we made some progress in moving towards more proportional representation.
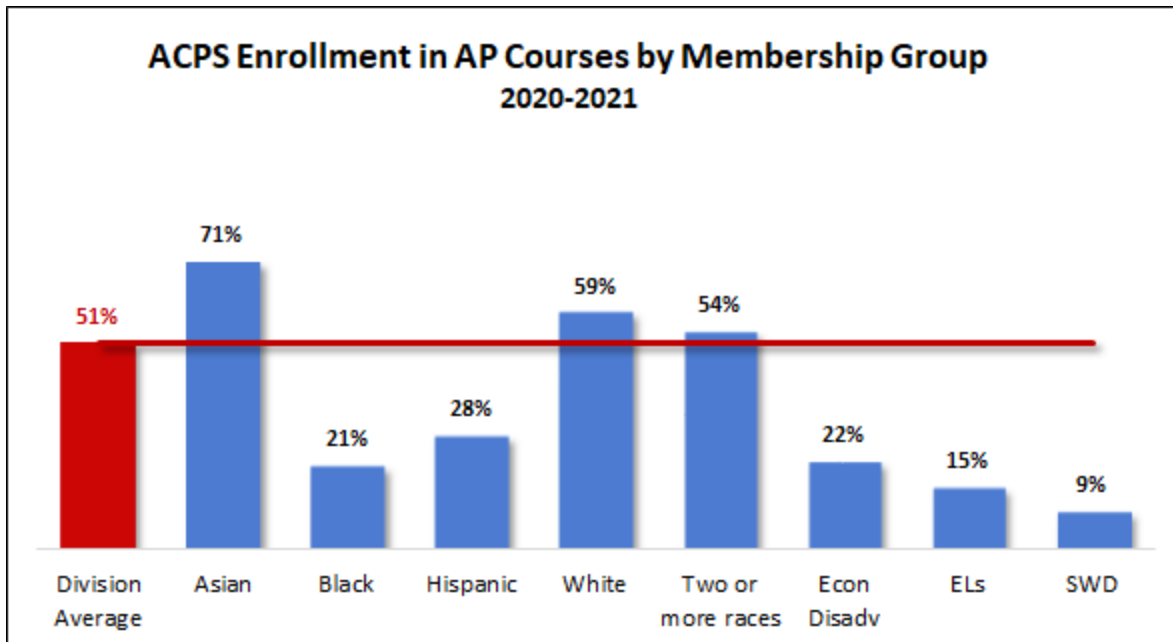
The following charts illustrate student enrollment in our Advanced Placement (AP) and Dual Enrollment (DE) courses by membership group for the 2019-20 and the 2020-21 school year:

Percentages indicate the distinct number of high school students who were enrolled in an AP or DE course last year, divided by the number of students in the given category.

> *Ex. There were 570 Hispanic/Latino students in grades 10-12 last year. 116 of the 570 were enrolled in at least one AP course. 20% of the Hispanic/Latino students were enrolled in an AP course. 116 / 570 = 0.20 or 20%*

Students enrolled in multiple Advanced Placement courses or Dual Enrollment courses are only counted once.

Advanced Placement Enrollment 10th-12th grade students, have taken at least one course

ACPS Enrollment in AP Courses by Membership Group
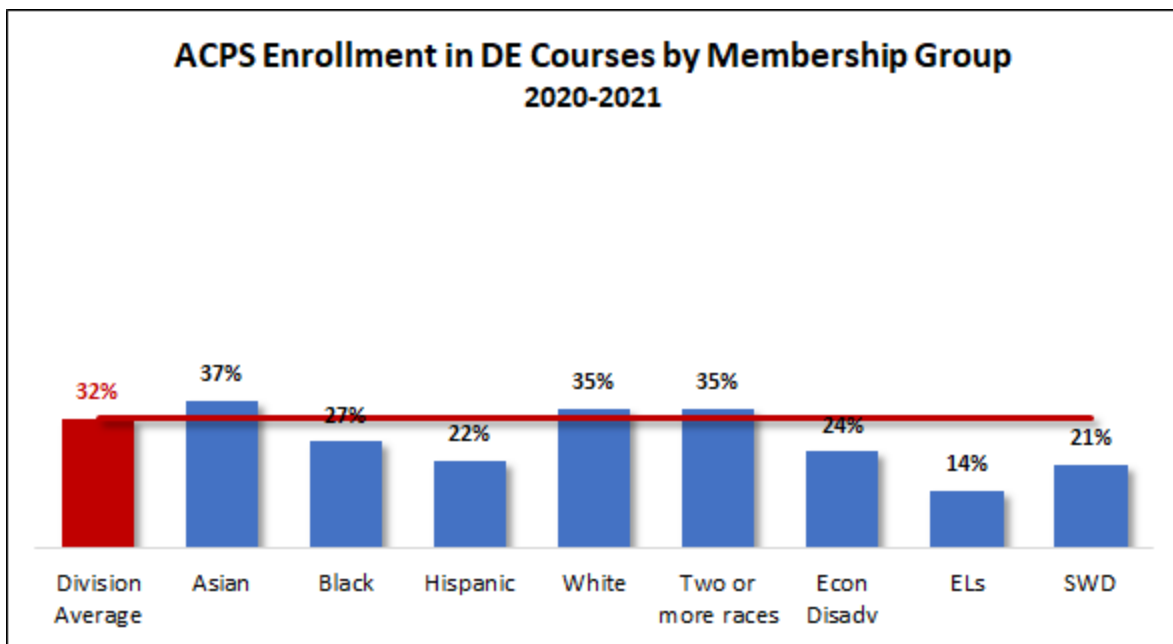### 2019-2020

Group	Percentage
Division Average	48%
Asian	68%
Black	17%
Hispanic	25%
White	55%
Two or more races	45%
Econ Disadv	18%
ELs	10%
SWD	7%

ACPS Enrollment in AP Courses by Membership Group
2020-2021

Group	Percentage
Division Average	51%
Asian	71%
Black	21%
Hispanic	28%
White	59%
Two or more races	54%
Econ Disadv	22%
ELs	15%
SWD	9%

Dual Enrollment, 10th-12th grade students, have taken at least one course

ACPS Enrollment in DE Courses by Membership Group
2019-2020

Division Average	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White	Two or more races	Econ Disadv	ELs	SWD
32%	34%	24%	23%	34%	32%	22%	13%	16%

ACPS Enrollment in DE Courses by Membership Group
2020-2021

Division Average	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White	Two or more races	Econ Disadv	ELs	SWD
32%	37%	27%	22%	35%	35%	24%	14%	21%

12th grade students who have taken at least one Advanced Placement or Dual Enrollment course

ACPS Enrollment in AP/DE Courses by Membership Group
2019-2020 12th Graders

Division Average: 75%, Asian: 78%, Black: 42%, Hispanic: 67%, White: 82%, Two or more races: 72%, Econ Disadv: 53%, ELs: 53%, SWD: 28%

ACPS Enrollment in AP/DE Courses by Membership Group
2020-2021 12th Graders

Division Average: 78%, Asian: 92%, Black: 55%, Hispanic: 58%, White: 85%, Two or more races: 74%, Econ Disadv: 60%, ELs: 48%, SWD: 39%

Key Project: Alternatives to Suspension

Many strategies rolled out in the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year, including the new Leveled Administrative Responses to Behavior and a focus on restorative justice. We also required all staff members to use the electronic behavior referral for better tracking and understanding of discipline issues. All of these strategies will need to be re-implemented this school year because there were not very many discipline challenges in the 2020-21 school year. Many students, particularly secondary students remained at home learning virtually from March 2020 through June 2021.

Additionally, Dr. Jesse Turner was hired in July of 2021 to replace Dr. Nick King as the Director of Student Services. This position was vacant for several months. One policy, JFC, *Student Conduct* was updated in 2021 to include major revisions from the Virginia Department of Education's *Model Guidance for Positive and Preventive Code of Student Conduct Policy and Alternatives to Suspension* and our own new policies and procedures.

Metrics at the end of this report, contained in the Equity Dashboard, show that there were 14 students suspended out of school during the year.

Additional Project: Anti-Racism and Equity Decision-Making Tool

As a means to reduce racial harm and inequitable outcomes, we developed an Anti-Racism & Equity Decision-Making Tool. The tool originated after a series of equity issues occurring in schools and as a response to a grant with the Charlottesville Area Community Foundation (CCAF).

A subset of members from the Anti-Racism Steering Committee worked together over the spring to align the decision-making tool to ACPS priorities (i.e., equity, anti-racism, and culturally responsive teaching). We created a checklist for school administrators and departmental leaders to consider using when processing a related issue. The checklist includes reflection questions for key areas of consideration:

1. Pause and reflect;
2. Consider alternatives explanations and perspectives;
3. Assess harm and benefits and make a plan;
4. Communications;
5. Assess plan effectiveness;
6. Strategize opportunities to further advance racial equity

The initial draft was presented to the Anti-Racism Steering Committee followed by the school division's Cabinet and Leadership Team for feedback.

As a next step, we will be piloting the tool in a subset of schools and departments (refer to the next steps section for more information).

Status Update: Curriculum and Instruction

The Department of Instruction has taken the following steps to implement the *Anti-Racism Policy* as it relates to providing a guaranteed viable curriculum. A guaranteed viable curriculum gives students access to a comprehensive, equitable, rigorous, and standards-based education. It ensures that all students have access to the course and grade level standards through the curriculum framework provided from the school division.

Regulations in Anti-Racism Policy	Implementation Status
Curriculum and instructional materials for all grades shall reflect cultural and racial diversity and include a range of perspectives and experiences, particularly those of historically underrepresented groups of color.	**In Progress**
All curriculum materials shall be examined for racial bias by the division's Department of Instruction. Where materials reflect racial bias, teachers utilizing the materials will acknowledge the bias and communicate it to students and parents.	**In Progress**
Develop an anti-racism curriculum that provides educational resources at every grade level.	**In Progress**
Design student in-class and extra-curricular programs and activities that provide opportunities for cross-cultural and cross-racial interactions to foster respect for cultural and racial diversity.	**In Progress**

Key Project: Reflecting cultural and racial diversity in curriculum and instructional materials

Revised [ACPS Framework for Quality Learning](#) (FQL): *The FQL articulates for ACPS teachers the essential, research-based elements of how students learn. It is the foundation on which decisions about curriculum and instruction are made.*

The FQL document was distilled into its key elements to strengthen its accessibility and usability for all educators. A section on the *Invitational Learning Environment (i.e.,* one that is *safe* for all students to take the risks needed to grow and learn) has been added to ensure ACPS teachers understand the importance of teacher-student relationships. Language was clarified to illustrate the connectivity to Culturally Responsive Teaching (e.g, "teachers act as an ally and warm demander" to form learning partnerships). During summer and fall of 2021, groups of teachers have been giving feedback to the framework. Revisions are currently being made with full revision by December 2021.

Developing Curriculum Frameworks for all courses: Curriculum Frameworks shared across schools ensure equitable access to standards of learning as well as to complex concepts and ideas, higher order, critical thinking and, skills of the discipline.

A [universal template](#) with learning goal structures that embeds high expectations for *all* (i.e., essential questions and understandings, standards of learning as baseline) has been created to facilitate the development of curriculum frameworks. Curriculum Frameworks, using teacher teams (see content-specific examples below), are being developed for all courses.

Created collaborative structures for teachers to co-construct understanding of guaranteed viable curriculum: At the division level, *Professional Learning Communities* (DPLC) have been established and monthly meetings are being attended by every ACPS teacher. These cross-division content or grade level

groups are intended to assist in the implementation of the guaranteed viable curriculum. By determining the guaranteed curriculum, which includes creating common assessments, analyzing data, discussing key teaching strategies, and reflecting on best practices, the Division Professional Learning Community (DPLC) will begin to remove inequitable practices across the school division.

Key Project: Examining curricula for racial bias

Identify and apply [vetting tool](#): The development of this vetting tool occurred during the 2019-20 school year. The revision of the Culturally Responsive Teaching framework is the impetus for an update to this tool. Content departments are currently working to implement the tool as they design lessons. The development of a lesson designing template is in progress to both provide reflective questions that allow materials to be considered regarding bias and to guarantee the inclusion of in-class opportunities for cross-cultural and cross-racial interactions to foster respect for cultural and racial diversity.

Key Project: Developing an anti-racism curriculum

Middle School Advisory Framework: Over the summer, a multidisciplinary team of ACPS educators, including Diversity Resource Teachers and teachers certified in Culturally Responsive Teaching, convened to develop a [sample framework](#) for a middle school advisory experience. As a starting point, the team recommended four domains that are designed to anchor future middle school advisory curriculum: Affiliation, Identity, Mindset, and Success. One of the age-appropriate and relevant concepts that middle school teachers will explore as a subset of the Middle School Advisory Framework will be anti-racism.

Upon the completion of the sample framework, the Department of Instruction consulted a researcher in anti-racism and developmental psychology from UVA's School of Education and Human Development. The expert offered some preliminary feedback on the framework and the design process.

Reframing the Narrative

We have completed the second year and have started the third year of our three-year grant-funded initiative, *Reframing the Narrative*, which was intended to develop anti-racist and culturally responsive curricula for grades 6-12. We have expanded our *Reframing the Narrative* initiative to grades PreK-5. *Reframing the Narrative* centers on three components: professional learning, field experiences, and curriculum design.

The following initiatives are complete:
- 2020-2021: Secondary Reframing the Narrative cohort completed professional learning and wrote anti-racist, inquiry-based units in 3rd grade World Civilizations, World Geography, World History I, and World History II.
- 2019-2020: Secondary Reframing the Narrative cohort completed professional learning and wrote anti-racist, inquiry-based units in 3rd grade World Civilizations, United States History I, United States History II, and Virginia and United States History.
- 2019: Virginia Studies teachers participated in professional learning and wrote anti-racist, inquiry-based units in Virginia Studies.

The 2021-2022 Secondary Reframing the Narrative cohort is currently engaging in professional learning and will write anti-racist, inquiry-based units for Civics and Economics, Virginia and United States Government, and Economics and Personal Finance. The 2021-2022 elementary Reframing the Narrative cohort (40 educators from across our elementary schools) is engaging in professional learning around anti-racist instruction for our youngest learners and will write anti-racist, inquiry-based units for PreK-5. Of additional note is the fact that participation in *Elementary Reframing the Narrative* is now an established pathway towards CRT certification and micro-credentialing.

Key Project: Ensuring student in-class and extra-curricular programs provide cross-cultural and cross-racial interactions

Current State of in-class and extra-curricular programs: With COVID-19 disrupting many of the in-class and extra-curricular programs, this project was paused for the 2020-21 school year. Regarding in-class activities and field experiences, a cross-division teacher group has been formed to collect, analyze, and recommend at least two common in-class experiences for each grade level and course. Student surveys as well as activity sponsors' participation data will be used to determine the participation rates.

Status Update: Training

The Training Subcommittee, composed of instructional and support staff, is responsible for developing and implementing professional learning opportunities that enhance staff's racial consciousness and ability to take action.

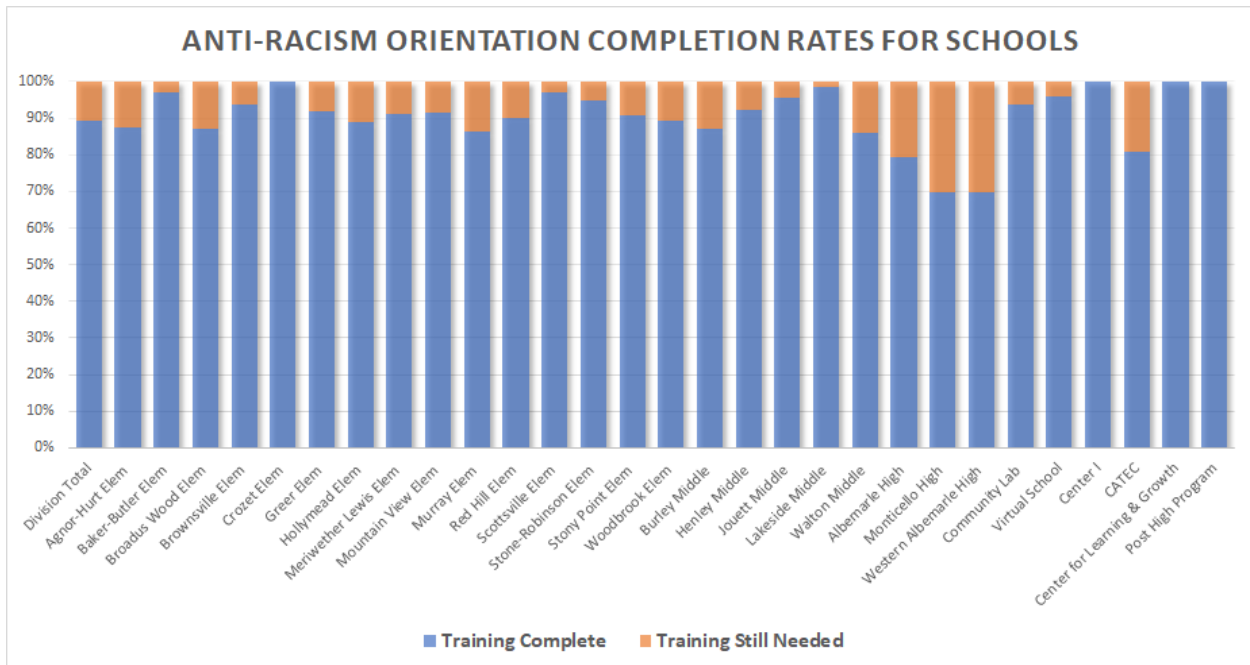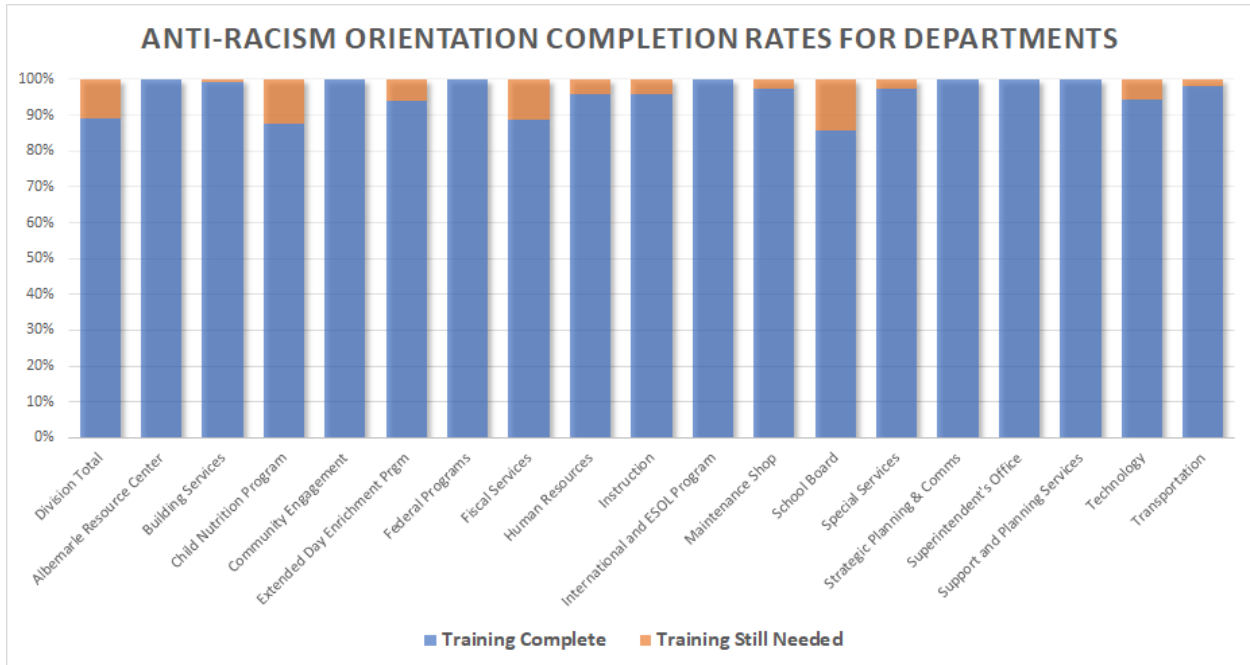| Regulations in Anti-Racism Policy	Implementation Status
All Board and division staff shall be trained in this Anti-Racism policy.	**In Progress**
All teachers and administrators shall be trained in cultural awareness and/or culturally responsive teaching practices. Culturally responsive teaching practices shall be incorporated into Board approved appraisal systems, including the teacher appraisal system and the administrator performance appraisal.	**In Progress**
All division staff shall be trained about racism and about how racism produces inequitable practices and outcomes.	**In Progress**

Key Project: Anti-Racism Orientation

ACPS Anti-Racism Policy Orientation

"The Albemarle County School Board and Albemarle County Public Schools reject all forms of racism as destructive to the Division's mission, vision, values, and goals."

- ACPS Policy ACC, "Anti-Racism," Adopted February 19th, 2019

ANTI-RACISM ORIENTATION COMPLETION RATES FOR DEPARTMENTS

ANTI-RACISM ORIENTATION COMPLETION RATES FOR SCHOOLS

The two graphics above show completion rates for the Anti-Racism Orientation for all schools and departments. Completion of the orientation was required by the end of September, 2021. Completion rates as of October 7th, 2021 range from 70% to 100% completion for various schools and departments. In some cases, schools and departments completed the orientation together as a group,

resulting in assured 100% completion. The total completion rate for the division is 89%. While this represents a high rate of completion for this important training, we will continue to push towards completion for the remaining 314 individuals who have yet to complete the Anti-Racism Orientation.

The process of delivering and collecting feedback from all division educators on this orientation has also given us valuable insight into adjustments that may be made to ensure a high quality experience for all employees. We look forward to considering accessibility in languages beyond English and Spanish, and to continuing to ensure that our non-instructional staff can relate their roles to this training in future iterations.
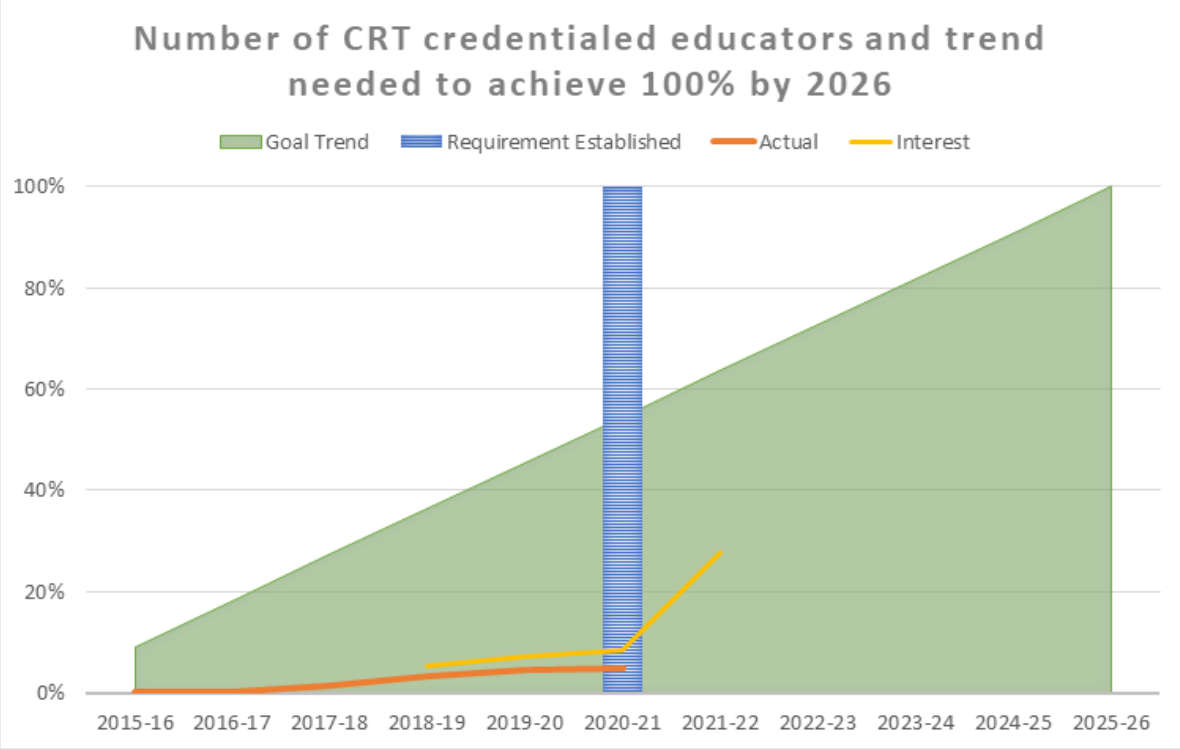
Key Project: Training in cultural awareness and culturally responsive teaching

In support of the goals and processes of the Anti-Racism Policy, ACPS continues to expand its professional development opportunities for educators around Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT). At the beginning of the 2021-22 school year, all School Improvement Plans included a goal of 100% completion of a CRT Credentialing program by 2026. CRT Credentialing is available at both a "CRT Micro-credential" and full "CRT Certification" level. Both programs involve a rigorous year-long process that provides an opportunity for ACPS educators to receive recertification credit and compensation for:

- Documenting their learning across the three ACPS characteristics of CRT;
- Providing clear evidence of having integrated Culturally Responsive Teaching practices into their instruction and leadership; and
- Demonstrating a positive impact on student achievement and learning.

Since October of 2015, a total of 208 CRT awards have been earned by our educators through the Micro-Credential or Certification programs. This CRT Data chart represents the current placement of the 174 educators who have successfully completed the programs and are still employed by ACPS, organized by their current location.

The inclusion of CRT pursuits within our School Improvement Plans, tied to quantitative measures, as well as the development of school-based equity dashboards, all hold promise for continuing to measure the impact of Culturally Responsive Education in our schools.

The above graphic is composed of four distinct parts, which, taken together, help visualize our progress towards 100% completion by ACPS educators in our Culturally Responsive Teaching program.

The green shaded area shows a hypothetical trajectory that would be created if an equal number of the roughly 1,400 educators in the division pursued CRT certification or micro-credentials each year, beginning the first year that the CRT certification program was offered in 2015-16 and continuing to the target completion year of 2026.

The blue vertical line indicates the year when participation in either the CRT micro-credential or certification programs became a requirement for all educators, with the goal of 100% completion by 2026.

The orange line shows the actual curve of educators completing CRT micro-credentials and certification from the onset of those programs through to the present.

Finally, The yellow line indicates interest in these programs, which we began to document in 2018-19 at the beginning of each year to properly plan programs that supported the increasing desire to participate in CRT Programming. While the difference between the "completion" curve and the "interest" curve appears small at this scale, it should be noted that there are significant percentages of educators each year that express interest, but do not complete either of the CRT programs.

If completion tracks closely with interest and continues the trajectory established at the beginning of the 2021-22 school year, we will be on course to achieve our 2026 goal. However, if completion does not track closely with initial interest, or if both interest and completion decrease significantly, steps will have to be taken to increase participation to achieve our 2026 target.

Key Project: Redesigning the Performance Appraisal process to incorporate culturally responsive practices

Over the last five months, the Educator Performance Appraisal Committee has developed a new [framework](#) for improving the quality of instruction and strengthening the practices of educators. In addition to aligning with the requirements by the Virginia Department of Education, the updated appraisal process is grounded in our key levers: anti-racism and equity priorities, Culturally Responsive Teaching practices, the ACPS Framework for Quality Learning, and Professional Learning Communities. We have deliberately included language that is reflective of culturally responsive practices throughout the performance appraisal process. Through each of the performance standards, our key levers are evident. The activities associated with the performance appraisal provide reflective opportunities for educators around student academic performance and personal growth goals, student feedback, and instructional processes and
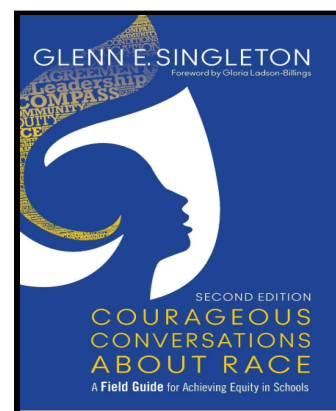
related outcomes. To meet the needs of novice educators, a three-year growth model is used to allow them to develop their skills while focusing on the performance standards and indicators. For all, the feedback provided by students, peers, and evaluators, along with personal reflection, will allow educators to make the necessary adjustments to their practice–continuing to affirm students' cultures, building trust, and providing learning opportunities that meet the needs of all students.

Key Project: Training about race and how racism produces inequitable practices

Last year, we launched the division-wide book study and the train-the-trainer model focused on Glenn Singleton's *Courageous Conversations About Race: A Field Guide for Achieving Equity in Schools*. The Training subcommittee worked collaboratively to train divisional leaders, including the School Board. Additionally, the Training subcommittee offered additional opportunities for staff to strengthen their racial consciousness throughout the 2020-2021 school year.

School Board & Cabinet
To ensure buy-in and commitment at every level throughout the division, the School Board and Cabinet members participated in the book study. During fall 2020, the School Board was trained to apply the CCAR protocol and deepen their professional growth around race. Throughout eight sessions, the School Board committed themselves to read the book and participate in small group discussions. The sessions were tailored to them as Board members, although the sessions primarily focused on their personal experiences with race and racism.
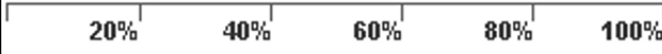
The Cabinet team met over the course of 24 sessions to engage in conversations about their lived experience with race and to examine how race and racism has contributed to inequitable outcomes within the division.

<u>Division's Leadership Team</u>
As a continuation to sustaining conversations about race, throughout the school year, we facilitated six professional learning sessions for the division-level Leadership Team. The team includes school administrators, central office liaisons, and departmental directors. Each session utilized Singleton's protocols and relevant activities, facilitated by the Anti-Racism Professional Development Implementation Team (i.e., our home-grown trainers).

At the end of the school year, we circulated a survey to assess growth in conversations about race and shifts in practices. 25% of the Leadership Team completed the reflection survey. Below are snippets of the responses. *Note:* to account for *competing priorities at the end of the year, in the future, we will recirculate the survey.*

To what degree has participating in the Courageous Conversations with the leadership team helped you to feel more comfortable engaging in conversations about race?				
Answer	**Responses**	**Value**	**%**	**Percentage of total respondents**
1 - Very Helpful	20	1	55.56%	
2 - Somewhat Helpful	8	2	22.22%	
3 - Not Sure	2	3	5.56%	
4 - Somewhat Unhelpful	2	4	5.56%	
5 - Very Unhelpful	4	5	11.11%	
Weighted <u>Score</u> : 1.94				
Total Responses	36			20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

To what degree do the leadership team meetings help you further assess racist structures/barriers within the division and create action plans to challenge acts of racism?				
Answer	Responses	Value	%	Percentage of total respondents
1 - Very Helpful	10	1	27.03%	
2 - Somewhat Helpful	17	2	45.95%	
3 - Not Sure	3	3	8.11%	
4 - Somewhat Unhelpful	4	4	10.81%	
5 - Very Unhelpful	3	5	8.11%	
Weighted Score : 2.27				
Total Responses	37			

The responses indicate a need for continued tailored training and space for staff to offer constructive feedback. At this time, 20 of the schools/departments reported having started facilitating the book study and training their staff. In particular, the Department of Transportation, our largest support department (i.e., 200+ staff), circulated a departmental survey to assess staff's experience with race and racism within the department. Additionally, alongside their lead drivers, they started engaging in conversations about race and racism.

Division-wide professional learning session with Glenn Singleton

On March 26th, we hosted a division-wide professional development session, "Becoming an Anti-Racist School System: A Courageous Conversation," with Glenn Singleton, the author of *Courageous Conversations About Race*. More than 2,000 employees, including school and departmental staff, attended the webinar. The shared experience provided the foundation for deeper professional learning and personal reflection around anti-racism. After the session, we hosted an optional debriefing session for people to process the session and brainstorm next steps.

Monthly Courageous Conversations About Race series for all staff

Similar to the sessions for the division's Leadership Team, we have facilitated monthly afternoon sessions open to all staff. The monthly sessions were organized by feeder patterns to allow for staff to cultivate greater trust and sustain deeper conversations about race. On average, a total of 60 people participated in the optional monthly series.

Training Athletic Coaches

On August 16th, in collaboration with the Department of Instruction, members of the Anti-Racism Steering Committee co-facilitated a training aimed at all athletic directors and sport coaches across the division. The keynote speaker was Dr. Tomika Ferguson, Assistant Dean at the Virginia Commonwealth University. Dr. Ferguson talked about her experience as a student athlete, coach, and higher education administrator. She elaborated on best practices for creating an inclusive sports environment. Afterward, each sports program developed a mission statement for their specific sport aligned to the ACPS Community Statement of Anti-Racism and Anti-Bias in Athletics.

"our goal and expectation is to create an environment for all to participate in the athletics/activities they love in a climate free of racist, sexist or other intimidating comments or actions that are not conducive to the mission of educational-based extra-curricular programs."

ACPS Community Statement of Anti-Racism & Anti-Bias in Athletics

Status Update:Policy Enforcement

The regulations specified within the Policy Enforcement section of the Anti-Racism Policy center on implementing and evaluating the policy.

Regulations in Anti-Racism Policy	Implementation Status
Staff shall collect, review, and provide an annual report to the School Board on data regarding racial disparities in areas including, but not limited to, student achievement, enrollment, suspension/discipline, graduation rates, and gifted identification. The report shall also include evidence of growth in each area outlined by the Anti-Racism Policy (i.e., communication, leadership and administration, curriculum and instruction). The written reports shall also be made available to the public, to the student diversity committee, and to school equity teams.	**Fully Implemented**
The assistant superintendent for school and community empowerment shall be responsible for implementation and evaluation of division strategies for implementation. Adequate resources shall be appropriated.	**Fully Implemented**
The division shall ensure there are various, including anonymous, means for students and staff to report racism and other forms of discrimination.	**Fully Implemented**

Key Project: Equity Dashboard

Our outcome metrics include the Equity Dashboard, which serves to document and monitor certain indicators that demonstrate disparities across student membership groups. The Equity Dashboard currently includes "Equity Tables" for each school year beginning in 2016-17 and continuing through 2020-21. This effort supports the shared mission of our schools to end the predictive value of race, class, gender, and special capacities on student success by working together with families and communities to ensure each individual student's success.

In 2020-2021, the table appears to show a more diverse division as many of our students who left for private schools and homeschool during the pandemic are White. The overall number of students is down by 811 students.

As the division moves away from the Gifted Identification model towards a Talent Development Services model, all division students will have opportunities to receive services. Currently we identify students around a general intellectual ability designation, and we focus on creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, and performance. As we move forward with a Talent Development framework, we will examine how to recognize and serve students with domain-specific talents. Domain specific talents include, but are not limited to: visual and performing arts, leadership, and technology. The concept of "domain-specific talents" aligns with the new career pathways model that is a state-wide initiative. We are also working to align identification with the Response to Intervention (RTI) services. In this model, a gifted label is assigned because the student's needs are not being met in the traditional classroom and instructors have determined that the label will help better serve the student (for instance: in the case of Twice Exceptional, where a child's diagnosis may shade or prevent strengths from being noticed). We are considering how to include "progress monitoring" in the RTI model of gifted identification, to systematically address the idea that abilities are not fixed.

Our overall percentage of students who are chronically absent stayed the same; however the demographics of the students who were chronically absent during the pandemic shifted quite a bit. Black and Hispanic students and economically disadvantaged students were far more chronically absent in 2020-21 than they were in 2019-20.

Due to the combination of virtual and hybrid instruction, there were virtually no suspensions in the 2020-21 school year.

Similarly, far fewer students took the Standards of Learning (SOL)end of year tests in grades 3-8 (students were given the option to take a remote test or decline testing if they were uncomfortable going to school to take their official test. Those students who did not take their test at school were not equally distributed across all membership groups, which impacts the representation in

the pass rate columns displayed on the Equity Table.) The SOL testing program has returned to pre-pandemic expectations for testing for the 2021-22 school year.

On a positive note, the percentage of students who are taking middle school math improved as well as the percentage and number of students who received an advanced studies diploma.

Key Project: Reporting racism and other forms of discrimination

The "Policy Enforcement" subcommittee is tasked to identify staff and student channels to report racism. To this end, the Student Equity and Advisory Team is working to promote the Anonymous Alerts application for use among students to report acts of racism. The application is also available for employees' use.

During the start of the 2021-22 school year, the application is being "reintroduced" so that the new safety coaches can be oriented to using the application and investigating the trends. Each school essentially has two new classes of students because of the number of students learning virtually the last school year. Anonymous Alerts is an additional means through which students, staff and community members can share information with school based and division-level administrators. Information received through Anonymous Alerts is not deemed to be factual *until and unless* that information has been *investigated and substantiated*. Multiple languages are available on the application and new language has been added to encourage reporters to include as much information as possible. Finally, new posters have been given to all schools for the promotion.

The Policy team also updated policy [GB, Equal Employment Opportunity](#); Policy [JB, Equal Educational Opportunity](#), and [Policy GBA/JHFA, Prohibition Against Harassment and Retaliation.](#) These policies outline clear procedures for reporting and monitoring acts related to racism (GB/JB) and also harassment. These efforts are intentional to review and update policies, practices, and procedures that often unintentionally produce inequitable outcomes or systemic racism.

The policy implementation is entering its third year. The regulations on Policy Communications, Training, and Policy Enforcement are almost fully implemented, or, in the case of Training, well on their way to being fully operationalized as part of the division's day-to-day. The Leadership and Administration and Curriculum and Instruction regulations contain projects that will span several years. . The policy was implemented according to the policy requirements and, to do this properly in curriculum and instruction, it will take time across all subjects and grade levels. In terms of policy evaluation, the policy is being given the appropriate resources to achieve its goals and is progressing in its implementation each year. The policy is now tied directly into the newly adopted strategic plan, [Learning for All.](#)

Lessons Learned

Amid the pandemic and racial injustice this year, our steering committee demonstrated a deep commitment to advancing equitable and anti-racist strategies. As a committee, we engaged in thoughtful discussions about race and the manifestation of racism in order to deepen our knowledge as facilitators and leaders of this work. Throughout the year, we invested time beyond regular work hours to serve as thought partners and lead additional training for staff. One of the major successes included anti-racism strategies being embedded into division-wide structures. However, eliminating all forms of racism takes time, continuous reflection and accountability.

Some of our key lessons learned this year include:

Capacity building

In addition to new members on the steering committee, we formally launched the Anti-Racism Professional Development Implementation Team (i.e., our homegrown trainers). To help build internal capacity and ensure high-quality professional learning experiences, we developed and empowered them to facilitate additional trainings for staff.

It is important to acknowledge the team has taken on this responsibility without additional compensation. We need to consider pathways for compensating staff and embedding more anti-racism trainings into the workday as opposed to after hours.

Oversight of the Anti-Racism Orientation

While we are incredibly proud that 89% of the division has completed the Anti-Racism Orientation, the management of the orientation presented some operational challenges. One of the biggest challenges was that the Google spreadsheet's algorithm was matched to people's K12 email addresses; this resulted in us manually editing the data to correct the forms of people who accidentally misspelled their names or used their personal email address.

Second, when cleaning up the data, we cross-referenced the responses with the data in our Great Plains (GP) system, which is the platform we use to house all staff records. The Great Plains data included many staff members who transferred to another school or left the division, which also caused us to manually change or remove employees on our orientation spreadsheet. Moving forward, to streamline tracking the data, we think it would be beneficial to include this orientation as part of the Human Resources onboarding.

Creating space for constructive feedback

For the most part, as it relates to our efforts this past year, we have received affirmation and support from staff and the broader community. However, we received some backlash, after the rollout of Courageous Conversations About Race and Henley's middle school advisory lessons on anti-racism. We recognize everyone is in different points in their equity journey. While we remain committed to advancing anti-racism and equity at ACPS, we also acknowledge the need to create more spaces for community members and staff to offer us constructive feedback on the implementation of our projects and trainings.

Institutionalizing the priorities

This year, in particular, our anti-racism efforts have been institutionalized into other division-wide structures, including the newly approved strategic plan, School Improvement Plans, and Professional Learning Communities. The intentionality to ground anti-racism strategies into our structures and practices is pivotal for ensuring alignment and sustainability of our efforts.

Looking Ahead: Future priorities

This report marks two years since the School Board adopted the Anti-Racism Policy. While we have made strides in strengthening the racial consciousness of the division, we still have a long way to go in eliminating racial inequities and structures in and outside of the classroom. However, we remain passionate and persistent in becoming an anti-racist school district. In the calendar year ahead (2021-2022), we intend on addressing institutional and individual racism by implementing the following practices and projects:

Policy Communication: The Policy Communication subcommittee plans to coordinate consistent communication of policy throughout the division, both on school-specific websites and on our division-wide website. Expand SEAT membership to include representation from all middle and high schools.

Leadership and Administration: After exiting the procurement process, the HR Department will disseminate the division-wide needs assessment (i.e., Gallup survey), which will examine trends related to employee engagement and organizational culture. Upon finalizing the data collection, the HR Department will partner with members of the Anti-Racism Steering Committee to facilitate a series of follow-up focus groups to further assess patterns and practices.

The division will determine an appropriate venue for piloting the Anti-Racism & Equity Decision-Making Tool. The five schools/departments piloting the tool will be assigned a thought partner to process issues related to equity and race. Each month at our division-wide Leadership Team meetings, the pilot schools will rotate, sharing their experience utilizing the tool to problem solve a real-life scenario.

Curriculum and Instruction: Highlights for ongoing development include: the completion of curriculum frameworks for each course by fall of 2023; development of lesson designing template which includes focus on the inclusion of in-class opportunities for cross-cultural and cross-racial interactions to foster respect for cultural and racial diversity and a structure of support teachers to review instructional resources to ensure that they are anti-racist and anti-bias;

and the development of anti-racism lessons and alignment of all lessons to the Middle School Advisory Framework. By the fall of 2022, determined field experiences for each grade level (cross-cultural, cross-curricular, and cross-racial) will be part of the guaranteed viable curriculum.

Training: ACPS will offer increased opportunities to grow our community through authentic conversations and shared experiences. The ongoing strategies will include: ensuring all substitute teachers complete the Anti-Racism Orientation; providing tailored training options for departments across the division with a focus on anti-racism and cultural competency; expanding monthly Courageous Community discussions to caretakers, community members, and non-instructional staff; and continuing to facilitate tailored Culturally Responsive Teaching professional development in all schools.

In alignment with the Educator Performance Appraisal, by the end of the 2022 calendar year, we will update the appraisal process for administrators and classified staff. The forthcoming appraisal processes will also be anchored in our key levers: anti-racism and equity priorities, Culturally Responsive Teaching practices, the ACPS Framework for Quality Learning, and Professional Learning Communities.

Policy Enforcement: The Assistant Superintendent for School and Community Empowerment will ensure program and project management of this extensive portfolio of projects is addressed when the Program Manager leaves this temporary assignment. Additionally, the team recommends for the assistant superintendent to consider an outside evaluation in the 2022-2023 or 2023-24 school year, when the policy will be five years post adoption.

Appendices

Appendix A. Anti-Racism Committee Members

Committee Leadership

- **Cabinet Sponsor:** Dr. Bernard Hairston | Assistant Superintendent for School Community Empowerment
- **Program Manager:** Jasmine Fernández | Project Advisor

Policy Communication Subcommittee

- Alfred Toole | Learning Technology Integrator
- Dr. Helen Dunn | Legislative and Public Affairs Officer
- Karen Waters-Wicks | Community Education Program Coordinator
- Monica Laux | Librarian
- Chad Ratiliff | Principal

Leadership and Administration Subcommittee

- Dr. Daphne Keiser | Director of Education Quality
- Irvin Johnson | Director of Counseling Services
- Jay Thomas | Director of Secondary Education
- Kasaundra Blount | Principal
- Pearl Early | Student Support Program Manager
- Seth Kennard | Principal
- Dr. Jesse Turner | Director of Student Services
- John Hobson | Assistant Principal Intern

Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee

- Catrina Sims | Lead Coach
- Kimberly Gibson | Lead Coach
- Neeley Minton | Lead Coach

- Leilani Keys | Equity Specialist
- Leslie Wills-Taylor | Equity Specialist
- Michele Castner | Director of Elementary Education

Training Subcommittee

- Ayanna Mitchell | Equity Specialist
- Jim Foley | Director of Transportation
- Jennifer Sublette | Principal
- Lindsay Snoody | Assistant Director of Building Services
- Lars Holmstrom | Equity Specialist
- Rosaura González-Muñiz | Assistant Principal
- Quaneilia "Shay" Carter - Shifflett | Equity Specialist
- Dr. Vicki Hobson | Equity Specialist

Policy Enforcement Subcommittee

- Chris Gilman | Coordinator of Research and Program Evaluation
- Gwedette Crummie | Principal
- Jamie Gellner | Division Program Evaluator
- Mark Leach I Assistant Director of Enterprise Applications
- Sara Dusenberry I Data Analyst and Reporting Specialist

Appendix B. Student Equity Advisory Team Members

Staff Facilitator: Karen Waters-Wicks | Community Education Program Coordinator

- Elizabeth Elvgren* | Albemarle High School | Grade 12
- Naquel Perry | Albemarle High School | Grade 12
- Angel Pilkey-Chevez | Albemarle High School | Grade 12
- Princey Reyes-Lopez | Albemarle High School | Grade 12
- Amya Edwards | Monticello High School | Grade 11
- Brian Bryne* | Western Albemarle High School | Grade 11
- Ada Kindrick | Community Lab School | Grade 10
- Aliyah Hawkins | Monticello High School | Graduate
- Catherine Taylor | Monticello High School | Graduate
- Judah Brown | Community Lab School | Graduate
- Kaydin Edwards | Community Lab School | Graduate
- Mary Govan | Albemarle High School | Grade 10
- Sophie Elvgren | Community Lab School | Grade 8

Member of the original committee that drafted the Anti-Racism Policy

Appendix C. Evaluation Plan

Year 2 Evaluation Plan

2021-22 School Year Deliverables/Outputs

Year 2 Report, Fall 2022:

1. What key activities were completed during policy implementation? Did the activities result in the anticipated outputs?
2. Was the policy implemented consistently across communities or environments?
3. Were there any unintended consequences?
4. What external factors influenced implementation?
5. What is the status of the policy implementation indicators (i.e., number of acknowledgements on the community survey and measure of interest; AP/DE enrollment shifts; number of educators trained in CRT and the Anti-Racism Policy; update on minority new hires; update on impact of CRT on student success; status and impact of reassessed curricula)?
6. Based on the fall 2021 report, what is the current status of implementation and objectives?

Year 3 Evaluation Plan

2022-23 School Year Deliverables/Outputs

Year 3 Report, Fall 2023:

1. Evaluate annual report indicators based on logic model outcomes and required indicators.
2. Report changes in:
    - Participation in AP and DE courses;
    - Suspension rates;
    - Leadership pipeline/staffing demographics;
    - Acknowledgment and understanding of the Anti-Racism Policy and what it means to be anti-racist;

- ○ Student achievement due to changes in the curriculum framework;
- ○ Teacher practice due to anti-racism and/or CRT training; and
- ○ Student data based on School Improvement Plans.