



CHILDREN & YOUTH REPORT CARD REVIEW BY ALEXANDRIA CITY HIGH SCHOOL



Almaz Yohannes, Emily Lemus, Layla Benitez

TOPIC

12th grade team- Our Team will be covering Safety and Security in our schools and communities. This is a highly concerning and relevant topic that needs to be addressed and solved immediately before it starts affecting more peoples lives.

TOPIC DESCRIPTION

Our topic will be on the safety and security of students in our community. In our small district of ACPS, parents and guardians send their children to school with the reasonable expectation of protection and security. Schools are places where children are expected to thrive and grow and they need that feeling of safety to do such. Students should have the expectation of good preventative measures such as locked doors, proper safety drills, and better security. With the proper measures and precautions

- bad drill timing
- locked bathrooms
- glass walls

RESULT

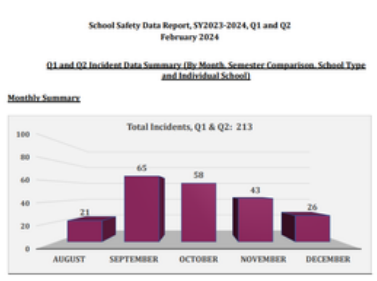
Our Team intends on making schools more safe and secure for the emotional and physical well being of our students and staff. ACPS schools have already installed and have been using metal detectors but we want to go beyond that since there are still concerns.



SIGNIFICANCE

This is a very important issue as the safety and security students are an expectation by all. Limiting violence and superiority complexes are the goal of the students. In the 2023-2024 semester, the rate of incidents was higher than the 2021-2022 and previous semester. The majority of incidents that occurred were a result of: General injuries, trespassing on school property, school fights, weapons brought on campus.

Quarter 3 and 4 incident report:



CYCP GOAL AND STRATEGIC AREA

It aligns with goal number 1 which is, all Children, Youth and Families will be Physically Safe & Healthy. One of the strategies that stood out is “Prevent Risk-Taking Behaviors” which is so crucial to the prevention of violence in schools. Preventing is more important then addressing.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

The district is not doing great in their role as officials to make our schools safer. Incident reports from 2022-2023 provide prime examples as to how newly implemented rules and regulations are doing more harm than good

| School Safety Data Report, SY2023-2024, Q1 and Q2 February 2024 | | | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|---|--|-----------------------------|
| Incident Reporting: Comparison by Reporting Period | | | | | | |
| Data Category | SY21-22 (Semester 1: August 2021-December 2021) | SY21-22 (Semester 2: January 2022-June 2022) | SY22-23 (Semester 1: August 2022-December 2022) | SY22-23 (Semester 2: January 2023-June 2023) | SY23-24 (Semester 1: August 2023-December 2023) | Change from Previous Report |
| Incidents | 191 | 194 | 188 | 263 | 213 | -50 |
| APD Calls for Service | 96 | 84 | 74 | 137 | 118 | -19 |
| Arrests | 20 | 26 | 17 | 41 | 31 | -10 |

IMPLEMENTATION

- Ways to ensure safety of students include:
- Thoroughly planned drills held at least once or twice a month at every campus
 - better trained and more experienced security
 - better communication between students and ACPS leadership
 - Utilizing technology by sending reminders on multiple platforms
 - Exterior and perimeter security

The main way that ACPS can thrive is by encouraging students to speak up about the issues they face. Often times, students may feel threatened or scared to speak up on issues regarding school, a place in which they feel small and looked down upon. It is the job of our leaders to encourage students to criticise when necessary.

PARTNERSHIPS

ACPS proposed the creation of School + Law Enforcement Partnership (SLEP) to add involvement between the Alexandria Police Department and our district.

SLEP advisory mission:
“The mission of the SLEP advisory group is to assist ACPS leadership, the Superintendent and the School Board in reimagining the school law enforcement partnership with the Alexandria Police Department in order to ensure a positive, safe and equitable school experience for all students.”

PERFORMANCE EFFORT

We are not getting the results that we want as incidents continue to rise as well as mental health crises in students. Additional and unnecessary rules are causing young minds to feel unsupported in these environments this can affect mental health, grades, and even performance socially.

New Implementations:

School Safety and Security

To strengthen our security measures, we are completing a review and update of security measures that includes the following:

- **Additional Security Personnel:** We are adding additional School Security Officers (SSOs) at Alexandria City High School (ACHS) to provide extra coverage and support.
- **Changes and Updates to Our Security Protocols:** We are reviewing our current security protocols—including camera positioning, weapons abatement screening process, etc. If adjustments are needed, they will be made to support improved security.
- **Hall Sweeps and Duty Stations:** We will conduct increased hall sweeps at both campuses. Additionally, staff will be assigned duty stations in high-volume areas to maintain a visible, supportive presence.
- **Elevated Lunch Supervision:** Lunch blocks will have increased oversight, including the use of MINGA ID check-ins and control access to meal areas.
- **Staggered Dismissal and Transition Process:** The staggered dismissal process currently in place will continue, along with additional detention sessions during lunch and after school to hold students accountable for infractions.
- **Staff Hallway Monitoring:** Our staff has worked with the ACHS administration team and has agreed to contribute portions of their planning time to provide additional monitoring and support during high traffic times, and as needed.
- **Student Movement Compliance:** There will be no tolerance for students that are found to not be in their assigned location, and disciplinary actions will be imposed.

PERFORMANCE EFFECT

Students and admin feel that the other is responsible for the unsafe environment of our school, while this is partially true, it is up to our leaders to ensure the safety of our environment, not the students. New regulations restrict the freedom of students which has the potential to worsen daily habits like taking the bus v. walking to and from campuses.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Schools are meant to be places where students feel protected, but safety concerns in ACPS have made that expectation difficult to fulfill. Preventative measures like better-trained security, locked doors, and properly timed drills must be prioritized to ensure students and staff can respond effectively to emergencies. Technology can also play a critical role—multi-platform alerts and stronger perimeter security help keep students informed and campuses secure. However, safety cannot come at the expense of student well-being. The School + Law Enforcement Partnership (SLEP) was created to foster a safer learning environment, but incidents continue to rise, suggesting the need for policy reevaluation. New restrictions, such as locked bathrooms and overly strict regulations, have led to a disconnect between students and administration, worsening mental health concerns and limiting student freedoms. A true solution must balance security with open communication—empowering students to speak up, reducing unnecessary policies, and ensuring access to mental health resources. ACPS leadership must recognize that genuine safety comes not only from physical protections but also from fostering trust and support within the school community.

ONLINE

To learn more on these topics you can look at ACPS data reports and check out ACPS safety policies at this website <https://www.acps.k12.va.us/departments/facilities-operations/office-of-safety-and-security-services/crisis-emergency-information>

CITATIONS

School +Law Enforcement Partnership (SLEP). Alexandria City Public Schools. (n.d.). <https://www.acps.k12.va.us/departments/facilities-operations/office-of-safety-and-security-services/slep-advisory-group>
Safety policies. Alexandria City Public Schools. (n.d.-a). <https://www.acps.k12.va.us/departments/facilities-operations/office-of-safety-and-security-services/crisis-emergency-information>
Safety policies. Alexandria City Public Schools. (n.d.-a). <https://www.acps.k12.va.us/departments/facilities-operations/office-of-safety-and-security-services/crisis-emergency-information>
Important updates regarding ACHS Safety & Security. Alexandria City High School. (n.d.). <https://achs.acps.k12.va.us/important-updates>

IN PERSON

After interviews with students at ACHS, more than 80% of students stated that they do not feel safe at school. The list of reasons included: overbearing security guards, violent students, and bad safety construction at the Minnie Howard campus.