



DEPARTMENT OF  
**COMMUNITY &**  
**HUMAN SERVICES**

# Commissioner Priority Area Discussion

December 10, 2025

# CYCP Priority Areas



- **Cost of Living / Affordability:**
  - The financial pressures that affect youth and families' ability to live, learn, and thrive in Alexandria, including housing costs, food insecurity, transportation barriers, and the stress these challenges create.
- **School Conditions & Student Well-being:**
  - The day-to-day physical and operational environment of schools, such as facilities, maintenance, lunch schedules, bathrooms, transportation, and class transitions, and how these factors impact learning, wellness, and belonging.
- **Safety & Violence Prevention:**
  - Physical and psychological safety across schools and communities, including bullying, fights, emotional harm, discrimination, online conflict, and exposure to community violence, plus the root causes and supports needed to create safe, connected environments.



# Purpose of Tonight's Activity

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- Deepen understanding of youth experiences
- Explore root causes
- Reflect on student recommendations
- Begin identifying policy and strategy directions
- Prepare for the Commission's role in the next CYCP



# What You'll Do Tonight

- Break into 3 priority-area groups
- Review the Youth Issue Brief
- Discuss guided questions
- Connect youth experiences to broader system challenges
- Begin identifying where the Commission may want to lead or advocate



# Group Instructions

Each group should:

- Choose a notetaker (spokesperson for the report-out)
- Review the Issue Brief together
- Work through the guiding questions
- Identify:
  - What stands out
  - What the root causes seem to be
  - Which youth recommendations resonate
  - Emerging strategy/policy opportunities

**Youth Issue Briefs**  
What They Are & Why They Matter

**WHAT ARE THESE BRIEFS?**

- Short, easy-to-read snapshots of the top issues youth in Alexandria care about.
- Based on what youth told us during the 2024-2025 Listening Sessions.
- Designed to help our community take action on youth priorities.

**WHERE THE INFORMATION COMES FROM**

- 94 Youth Listening Sessions
- 1,140+ middle & high school students
- Local data showing how youth experiences fit larger trends

**WHO PARTICIPATED**

- 5 schools (4 Public, 1 Private)
- 22% LGBTQ+ youth
- 816 BIPOC youth
- 277 White youth
- 40 Middle Eastern or Northern African youth

**WHAT YOU'LL FIND IN EACH BRIEF**

- Theme Overview.
- Why it matters.
- What Youth Want vs. What They Experience Now.
- Direct Quotes from youth.

**WHY IT MATTERS**

- Youth are experts in their own experiences.
- Listening builds trust and leads to better programs and policies.
- Acting on this feedback can help all youth thrive.

**HOW TO USE THESE BRIEFS**

- Shape programs, policies, and funding to reflect youth priorities.
- Share with colleagues, partners, and decision-makers.
- Start conversations with youth about solutions that work for them.



## Your Charge

By the end of your discussion, aim to have:

- A clearer understanding of the priority area
- 2–3 emerging strategy or policy directions => considerations for the Commission's advocacy agenda

# Report-Out

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Each group will have **3–5 minutes** to share:

- **Key themes** from your discussion
- Insights about **youth experiences**
- **Root causes** you identified
- **Promising strategies**, recommendations, or system-level ideas

