

# City of Alexandria, Virginia

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## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** APRIL 13, 2016  
**TO:** THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL  
**THROUGH:** MARK B. JINKS, CITY MANAGER   
**FROM:** MORGAN ROUTT, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET   
**SUBJECT:** BUDGET MEMO #11: ACPS PRE-K OPERATING PLAN

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The attached memorandum from the ACPS School Board was delivered to City Council on April 4, 2016 to respond to questions from City Council regarding the plan for operating the proposed centralized Pre-K facility.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment 1 – ACPS School Board Memo to City Council Regarding the Pre-K Operating Plan



**DATE:** April 4, 2016

**TO:** The Honorable Allison Silberberg, and Members of the Alexandria City Council

**FROM:** Honorable Karen A. Graf, Chair, and Members of the Alexandria City School Board

**THROUGH:** Alvin L. Crawley, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools  
Stacey B. Johnson, Chief Financial Officer

**TOPIC:** Responses Regarding Pre-K Center CIP and Contingency Funding (from the March 9, 2016, Joint City Council-School Board Budget Work Session)

Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) is excited to be a part of the citywide effort to strengthen the provision of early care and education services to our youngest learners and their families. One of the strategic actions that the school division has put forward is the creation of two early learning centers – the first to open in the fall of 2017. The following summary is in response to requests for additional information regarding the proposed centers and the impact on the school division, City Council funding, pre-K partners, private pre-K providers and the community.

There are two main drivers for this proposal. First, our school division is committed to and is proud to be providing high quality pre-K in the city. A way to enhance these services and increase opportunities is to offer families the ability to attend a center-based program that houses a *variety of wrap-around services* in an environment specially designed and programmed for early learners. A *blended model of educational services* promotes equity and excellence through an aligned curriculum, allows for shared resources, and facilitates common planning and professional learning of staff regardless of funding streams.

A second critical driver is the ability to synchronize our academic goals with our long range planning necessary to provide quality learning spaces for our City's increasing student enrollments. ACPS faces *current and future space constraints* which limits our ability to accommodate current enrollment and totally eliminates the opportunities for future growth of pre-K programs. Current pre-K school sites are significantly over capacity and many have less than optimal learning spaces. As a result, many students in the K-5 program are unable to attend their neighborhood school. For example: John Adams currently has 1,017 students and a 2020 projection of 1,192 students with a building capacity of 858. William Ramsay has 917 students and projected 2020 enrollment of 950 students with a building capacity of 748!

ACPS has proposed the funding of one — and then later two — pre-K centers. The first center would provide the capability to transfer up to 360 pre-K students (20 classrooms) from elementary schools, freeing up spaces for approximately 462 to 546 K-5 students (depending on grade level configurations). While existing space constraints provided part of the motivation for the creation of this new center, this year's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and synchronizing of space utilization also represent an opportunity to re-imagine and continue to improve the pre-K experience in Alexandria.

**Case Studies: Examples**

ACPS, in line with the guiding principles of Alexandria’s Early Care and Education Workgroup (ECEW), recognizes that Alexandria has a rich history of collaboration and mixed service delivery. Early childhood services are needed in all of our neighborhoods. ACPS does it intend to work unilaterally on pre-K in Alexandria. Execution of the plans in the 2017-2026 CIP will not negatively affect the continued delivery of quality pre-K services provided not only by ACPS but also our partners and private providers. This proposal presents an opportunity for an enhanced solution along a continuum of early care and education provision.

There are many examples of quality preschool centers that can be examined to show that the model ACPS is pursuing can be extremely successful. In order to move forward with the planning and the replication of best practices, ACPS has partnered with the Early Care and Education Workgroup (ECEW). The ECEW is developing a report to look at how the following organizations and communities manage complex funding streams, share costs, make decisions, and enable equitable access:

Name	Type	Web Reference
Ounce of Prevention	Expert	<a href="http://www.theounce.org/">http://www.theounce.org/</a>
Virginia Department of Education	Expert	<a href="http://www.doe.virginia.gov/">http://www.doe.virginia.gov/</a>
Educare (Chicago)	Private Provider	<a href="http://www.educareschools.org/">http://www.educareschools.org/</a>
FirstStep NYC (New York)	Private Provider	<a href="http://sco.org/programs/early-childhood/">http://sco.org/programs/early-childhood/</a>
Austin ISD	School Division	<a href="https://www.austinisd.org/academics/early-childhood-education/prekindergarten">https://www.austinisd.org/academics/early-childhood-education/prekindergarten</a>
Henrico County	School Division	<a href="http://henricoschools.us/foundational-learning-family-engagement/">http://henricoschools.us/foundational-learning-family-engagement/</a>
New York City	School Division	<a href="http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/EarlyChildhood/default.htm">http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/EarlyChildhood/default.htm</a>
Richmond Public Schools	School Division	<a href="http://web.richmond.k12.va.us/Programs/RegionalPreschoolLearningCenters.aspx">http://web.richmond.k12.va.us/Programs/RegionalPreschoolLearningCenters.aspx</a>
San Antonio ISD	School Division	<a href="http://www.saisd.net/main/index.php?option=com_content&amp;view=article&amp;id=5686&amp;Itemid=0">http://www.saisd.net/main/index.php?option=com_content&amp;view=article&amp;id=5686&amp;Itemid=0</a>
Tulsa, OK	School Division	<a href="http://captulsa.org/families/early-childhood-education/">http://captulsa.org/families/early-childhood-education/</a>

**Current ACPS Preschool Population & Data**

This chart summarizes the number of students ACPS is currently serving. We previously provided the Council information and confirming data indicating that the majority of the students attending preschool at an ACPS campus are not attending a school that would be their home school. Currently, 65% of ACPS pre-K children are enrolled in classes held in schools outside of their boundary school. The following chart illustrates the out-of-boundary population at each school:

Pre-KSchool	Number of ACPS Preschool Students	Summary
Charles Barrett	20 students	65% of preschoolers are outside of their home school boundary (13 of 20 students)
Cora Kelly	2 students	100% of preschoolers are outside of their home school boundary (2 of 2 students)
Jefferson-Houston	53 students	81% of preschoolers are outside of their home school boundary (43 of 53 students)
John Adams	126 students	61% of preschoolers are outside of their boundary (77 of 126 children)
Patrick Henry	95 students	78% of preschoolers are outside of their boundary (75 of 95 children)
William Ramsay	32 students	9% of preschoolers are out of their school boundary (3 of 32)
<b>Total</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>65% of preschoolers are out of their school boundary (211 of 328)</b>

### ***Crosswalk for ACPS and Campagna***

Many divisions have modeled ways for multiple funding streams that are combined so the student and staff experience is seamless. In communities that have successfully braided funding and blended classrooms, stakeholders plan and negotiate the details of combining funding, services and costs. ACPS and Campagna Center (our Head Start partner) continue to explore these details together including:

- Eligibility Criteria
- Age of Child
- Set Rate Funding in State and Federal
- Match Amount & Sources
- Transportation
- Student-to-Staff Ratio
- Program Sites
- Health & Social Offerings
- Family Services
- Teacher Qualification, Pay & Evaluations
- Curriculum & Professional Learning
- Length of Day
- Before & After Care
- Enrollment Period
- Food & Nutrition
- Student Evaluation
- Professional Development
- Field Trips

### ***The CIP and Operating Budget***

Funding for the pre-K center project is included in both the operating and CIP budgets. The project needs to be funded in the same fiscal year to give ACPS authority to execute contracts for both the lease agreement and the construction contract for building improvements. The items included in this funding are:

- Retrofitting space to accommodate 20 classrooms
- Administrative offices, resource rooms and common areas
- Furniture
- Security equipment
- Indoor & outdoor play spaces and equipment
- Technology resources

**Preschool Specification**

The Long Range Educational Plan includes preschool and kindergarten specifications that are being used to define the space and design of the centers. Each classroom will be designed at 1175 square feet and include a bathroom of 50 square feet and storage closet of at least 100 square feet. Preschool center specifications will be further developed as part of the next version of the Long Range Educational Plan to be completed this fall.

**Building Procurement**

ACPS is currently in the procurement process to acquire the initial preschool center which will be located on the West End of the city. Below is the timeline for acquiring the building lease:

Month	Task
February 2016	Issue RFP
March – April 2016	Finalize Location
May – June 2016	Define contract details & issue letter of intent
July 2016	Execute the contract and begin design

**Wrap-Around Services**

ACPS currently provides the following supports to students and these services will continue in the pre-K centers:

- Child Find
- Nurse
- Psychologist
- Speech Pathologist
- Translation and interpretation services
- Social services
- Hearing & vision testing

Additionally, ACPS is working with Head Start and the ECEW to increase services for dental, medical services, food needs, materials and supplies and Family and Community Engagement (FACE)-sponsored family engagement activities.

**Master Timeline**

The goals for ACPS working with Head Start and ECEW to develop the initial preschool center and wrap-around services are represented in the chart below:

Date Range	Task & Deliverables
March – May 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Side-by-side comparison of Head Start &amp; VPI</li><li>• External benchmarking of blending/braiding and wrap-around services</li><li>• Development of blending/braiding solutions</li></ul>
June – Sept. 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Secure building &amp; start designing</li><li>• Stakeholder interview &amp; asset mapping of preschool space</li><li>• Continue development of blending/braiding model</li></ul>
Sept 2016- Feb 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Retrofit building</li><li>• Continue planning with providers and other partners</li></ul>
Feb – May 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prepare for school year (transportation, wrap-around services, marketing and communications)</li><li>• Open student registration</li></ul>