



APS and APCYF Release Countywide Results from New “Your Voice Matters” Survey

Provides Insight on Youth and Family Well-being to Help Inform Work Across Schools and County

ARLINGTON, VA (October 16, 2018)—Arlington Public Schools (APS) and the Arlington Partnership for Children, Youth and Families (APCYF) today released an [Insights Report](#) with countywide results of the new “Your Voice Matters” survey. Conducted in April and May 2018, the new survey provides insight from more than 12,000 respondents, including APS families, students and staff, on topics such as safety (school and community climate), health and well-being, and engagement.

“We were proud to partner with APS and the community to help create a new survey that provides a comprehensive look at student well-being and family and staff engagement in our schools. We thank everyone who participated, and invite Arlington residents to join us in discussing the findings at one of our APCYF community conversations,” said Anne O’Brien, Chair, APCYF Board of Directors.

The Your Voice Matters survey—which was conducted by the independent research organization Panorama Education—sets new benchmarks for future surveys and aggregates several previous County and APS surveys* into one bi-annual APS-APCYF survey. An advisory group helped prioritize questions and themes for the new survey, which was completed by more than 5,700 students in grades 5-12, nearly 1,750 staff and teachers, and about 4,820 family members.

“This new survey broadens our understanding of family, student and staff well-being across APS and the community. It is important to hear these positive views of safety and mutual respect among APS students and staff, and we are also focused on the areas where we can continue to improve,” said Superintendent Dr. Patrick K. Murphy.

Countywide survey results can be found in an Insights Report and results dashboard available on the APS website (www.apsva.us/your-voice-matters) and at the APCYF website (www.apcyf.org), and will be the focus of community conversations hosted by APCYF on November 13 and December 5. School-specific survey findings will be released in January 2019.

Some key findings from the 2018 Your Voice Matters Survey countywide report include:

Safety (school and community climate) was the most favorable topic across all stakeholder groups.

- Safety, which measures perceptions of factors in the school, community, and home that cause the respondent to feel safe, is reported at 60% favorable or higher by all stakeholders
- Approximately 2/3 of students say they feel extremely or quite safe at school
- 92 percent of families report that teachers are quite or extremely respectful towards them; likewise, most students and teachers (71 percent or higher) report high levels of mutual respect

Responses on health, well-being and stress vary as students move from elementary to secondary school.

- 70 percent of students in grades 5-6 eat breakfast every day while only 49 percent of students in grades 7-12 do

- 72 percent of students in grades 5-6 eat fruits and vegetables almost every day or several times a day, compared with 59 percent of students in grades 7-12
- Students in grades 5-6 report less stress, with 74 percent of them saying they almost never, rarely or only sometimes feel stress, compared to 48 percent of students in grades 7-12

APS staff engagement is an area of strength and staff seek greater opportunity to be heard.

- Staff Engagement, which measures the degree to which staff and teachers feel invested and have tools necessary to build an engaging environment for students, is among the most favorable topics (79 percent for teachers and 78 percent for non-instructional staff)
- Voice, or feeling heard, is among the least favorable topics for teachers and non-instructional staff (31 percent)

Perspectives on the level of challenge in schoolwork are uneven.

- Nearly 2/3 of teachers say they and their colleagues individualize learning well to challenge all students, while over 1/3 of students and families find schoolwork challenging
- Overall, students feel more challenged by schoolwork as grade level increases, as corroborated by both student and family data

“The Your Voice Matters survey is a valuable tool to establish a benchmark and measure progress as we implement our new Strategic Plan, especially in the areas of healthy, safe and supported students, and an engaged workforce,” said Dr. Murphy. “We appreciate the opportunity to deepen our understanding of how APS students view the rigor of our academic program, as well as ways we can improve communication to ensure every employee knows their voice is valued and heard in our growing school division.”

For more information about the 2018 Your Voice Matters survey, visit the APS website [here](#). For information about the APCYF community conversations on this survey, visit www.apcyf.org.

**In an effort to reduce the number of surveys sent to families, students, staff and the community, this new 2018 Your Voice Matters survey was developed to replace multiple separate surveys conducted in the past: the Search Institute’s Developmental Assets Survey, the Site-based Satisfaction Surveys for schools, and the APS Community Satisfaction Survey. The survey will be administered bi-annually.*