





ACPS 2020 and Blended Learning



ACPS adopted its Strategic Plan, ACPS 2020, in June 2015 as a roadmap for the future of the division. ACPS 2020 is founded on six key goals:





1. **Academic Excellence and Educational Equity:** Every student will be academically successful and prepared for life, work, and college.
2. **Family and Community Engagement:** ACPS will partner with families and the community in the education of Alexandria's youth.
3. **An Exemplary Staff:** ACPS will recruit, develop, support, and retain a staff that meets the needs of every student.
4. **Facilities and the Learning Environment:** ACPS will provide optimal and equitable learning environments.
5. **Health and Wellness:** ACPS will promote efforts to enable students to be healthy and ready to learn.
6. **Effective and Efficient Operations:** ACPS will be efficient, effective, and transparent in its business operations.

Each ACPS 2020 goal aligns to an aspect of blended learning. ACPS defines blended learning as *the deliberate connection of educational technology with face-to-face instruction to enhance and personalize a deep and meaningful curriculum.*

 Academic Excellence and Educational Equity		 Family and Community Engagement	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1A: A Curriculum that Challenges and Engages: Every student will experience a rigorous, relevant, and engaging learning environment that responds to his or her interests and challenges. 2. 1B: An Inclusive Organizational Culture: Every student will develop habits and attitudes that reflect the principles of cultural inclusiveness, civic responsibility, and ethical and respectful behavior. 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ACPS will partner with families and the community in the education of Alexandria's youth.
<p>Blended learning is an instructional practice that enables teachers to personalize instruction for individual students based on their present level of performance. By using technology to power differentiation, blended learning enables classroom teachers to address several Academic Excellence and Educational Excellence objectives, including:</p> <p>1.1 Educational Excellence - blended learning uses technology to continually assess students and target instruction in their zone of proximal development.</p> <p>1.2 Achievement Gaps - blended learning treats all students as capable learners and helps to eliminate gaps with highly differentiated instruction.</p> <p>1.3 Disproportionality - because instruction is targeted to individual learning needs, blended learning often leads to a decrease in discipline referrals.¹ This enables students to spend more time in class and increases their readiness for advanced courses.</p> <p>1.4 Educational Equity - blended learning is an instructional method designed to challenge each student at his or her ability level.</p>		<p>Blended learning helps each teacher gain a deeper understanding of each student's learning needs. This level of understanding promotes effective communication and cooperation for student growth among parents and teachers. Blended learning enables ACPS to address the following Family and Community Engagement objectives:</p> <p>2.1 Family Engagement - blended learning teachers will be able to provide families with prescriptive resources to support individual student academic growth. This level of support and relevance in learning helps engage families in their student's education.</p> <p>2.3 Community Engagement - the ACPS blended learning implementation is complete with a communication plan that engages parents and community members in two-way dialogue throughout the implementation.</p>	

¹ <http://goo.gl/vgLHku>

<p>1.5 Teacher Resources and Supports - the ACPS blended learning implementation is deliberately designed with intense supports for teachers as they understand and integrate blended learning. The pace of the blended learning implementation is deliberately controlled so that growth does not outpace the supports for teachers.</p> <p>1.9 Cultural Competence and an Atmosphere of Respect - blended learning engages each student at his or her present level of performance. Because of this, students are not singled out by any group identifier for additional support or acceleration. This level of personalization helps to foster a culture of learning that is focused on individual student success.</p> <p>1.11 Ethics and Behaviors for Success - blended learning often leads to more engaged students, which helps to foster behaviors for success.</p>	
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 An Exemplary Staff		 Facilities and the Learning Environment	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ACPS will recruit, develop, support, and retain a staff that meets the needs of every student. 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ACPS will provide optimal and equitable learning environments.
<p>The best blended learning teachers exhibit a new vision for teaching and learning, an orientation toward change and improvement, grit, transparency, collaboration, reflection, innovation, and effective communication². These qualities are hallmarks of exemplary staffs. Blended learning enables ACPS to address the following Exemplary Staff objectives:</p> <p>3.1 Staff Recruitment and Retention - blended learning classrooms, when combined with a rigorous curriculum, empower teachers to be experts at the art of teaching, thus leading to increased job satisfaction.</p> <p>3.2 Collaborative Instructional Achievement - blended learning relies on collaboration within and across classrooms. The ACPS blended learning implementation is deliberately designed with in-person, online, and asynchronous opportunities for teachers to collaborate across the division.</p> <p>3.3 Individual Professional Development and Strategic Plan Focus - all support for blended learning teachers is being designed for small cohorts of teachers across the division so that each teacher is able to participate in professional development and coaching that is at their level. All support for blended learning teachers will model best practices in blended learning.</p> <p>3.5 Leadership Development - the ACPS blended learning</p>		<p>Blended learning relies on each student having equitable access to curricular and technology resources. Each student in blended learning classrooms will have equitable access to the digital resources that they need to succeed. Blended learning enables ACPS to address the following Facilities and Learning Environment objectives:</p> <p>4.1 Optimal Learning Environments and Infrastructure - blended learning classrooms are rich with technology, enabling teachers and students to access an almost unlimited number of resources.</p> <p>4.5 Information Technology Infrastructure - blended learning relies on the technology infrastructure to provide teachers with information about student's' present levels of performance. All blended learning classrooms will have access to the same infrastructure and be equipped to provide teachers and students with the technology they need to successfully implement blended learning.</p>	

² <http://goo.gl/qg30M4>

<p>implementation is designed to foster a cadre of teacher leaders each year. These teacher leaders will continue to grow in their knowledge of blended learning and serve as mentors to new blended teachers in the future.</p> <p>3.6 Staff Evaluation and Performance Improvement - all blended learning teachers will have access to and support from professional blended learning coaches.</p>			
 <h2>Health and Wellness</h2>		 <h2>Effective and Efficient Operations</h2>	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ACPS will promote efforts to enable students to be healthy and ready to learn. 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ACPS will be efficient, effective, and transparent in its business operations.
<p>Because blended learning is designed to meet students where they are at, students often feel less emotional stress after adjusting to blended learning. Students are able to measure growth against their own learning targets and rely less on comparison to the whole class as a measure of ability. Blended learning enables ACPS to address the following Health and Wellness objectives:</p> <p>5.1 Student Physical, Social, and Emotional Health - blended learning promotes authentic collaboration for learning, which provides students with opportunities to experience appropriate social interactions. Since instruction in blended learning classes is tailored to each student, there is often less stress for students who are accustomed to comparing their success to the whole class.</p> <p>5.2 Values, Experiences, Relationships, and Qualities that Benefit Young People - blended learning provides students with more choice and voice in their learning. This ownership of learning promotes positive attitudes and self-confidence.</p> <p>5.6 Persistence and Resilience - blended learning enables each student the opportunity to master concepts. Encouraging mastery builds persistence that will benefit students outside of their classrooms.</p>		<p>Blended learning encourages transparency between classrooms and relies on continuous improvement by teachers and students. Teachers in blended learning classrooms are able to be more efficient with their instructional time. Blended learning enables ACPS to address the following Effective and Efficient Operations objective:</p> <p>6.2 Continuous Improvement - the success of blended learning relies on teachers to make evidence-based decisions about individual student's learning needs. Then, teachers design and deliver instruction that is targeted to address the needs of each student. This process relies on a continuous cycle of evidence-based curricular decisions to ensure that students are constantly learning in their zone of proximal development.</p>	