

## Resources and References:

### *Indicators of Academic Excellence*

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The following resources and references are provided to support your discussion around the formation of the Division's *Academic Excellence Scorecard*.

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## **Our Mission**

The core purpose of Albemarle County Public Schools is to establish a community of learners and learning through relationships, relevance, and rigor, one student at a time.

## **Our Core Values**

### **Excellence**

We believe in meaningful learning that stretches people to the frontiers and boundaries of their abilities.

### **Young People**

We believe young people deserve the best we have to offer. Each individual child is capable and has the right to safety, mutual respect, and learning.

### **Community**

We believe in our collective responsibility to work together in a cooperative effort to achieve common goals by building communities of practice, establishing a high quality learning community, and listening to the community.

### **Respect**

We believe in treating all individuals with honor and dignity.

## **School Board Priority 4.3**

Assemble a collection of rigorous performance indicators and recognized benchmarks that define a world-class educational system.

## Overview of Benchmarking

*“An organization’s performance measurements need to focus on key results. Results should be used to create and balance value for your students, your key stakeholders, the community, parents, employers, workforce, suppliers, and partners, and the public. By creating value for your students and your key stakeholders, your organization builds loyalty, contributes to growing the economy, and contributes to society.”*

*Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence in Education*

**Why Benchmark?** To build credibility and value with our community. The objective of applying benchmarking concepts to the school environment is to drive towards the identification and implementation of “best practices.” Simply reporting outcomes without studying the actions associated with them will not lead to continuous improvement. Outcome measures used for benchmarking should be worthy of study and lead to actionable plans.

- **Benchmarking provides a good look at what others are accomplishing.** It's one thing when the “experts” say you should be able to enact a plan and accomplish a particular goal; it’s another thing when you see what others are really doing with this goal.
- **Benchmarking gives you a good look at yourself.** Real data, no fudging. Clean comparisons. Any successful journey starts with an effective assessment of “where are we?”
- **Benchmarking is an avenue for learning.** The first thing we do when we get results is to start asking ourselves many *study* questions from the PDSA process.
- **Benchmarking provides a common language.** From the student and employee to the school board, everyone can use the same metrics. They should be clear, intuitive, and credible. Everyone can get on the same page.
- **Benchmarking can help us identify and incorporate best practices.** How are the leading districts dealing with this issue? We will learn ideas we may not have discovered on our own.
- **Benchmarking helps prioritize our efforts.** There is way too much to do. Focus on the key areas to drive improvement.

**How do we select benchmark data?** In order to adequately study our results, we first need good measurements that are associated with *Albemarle County Public Schools* Division Goals and desired curricula outcomes. If we don’t start with good data, we will not have good information in order to make good decisions. As we identify

performance indicators for a world-class educational system, we should ask the following questions:

- What are the key metrics?
- How can we insure that we are working with quality and meaningful data?
- How do we strike a balance between the quality control business model and a more holistic and evidentiary approach to evaluating our work?
- What are the ethical considerations we should take into account when choosing performance indicators and our response to reports?
- How do our choices communicate our curriculum: The ACPS Life Long Learner Standards and Framework for Quality Learning?

#### **Questions from the Baldrige Criteria.**

- How does your *projected performance* on key performance measures and indicators compare with your competitors or comparable organizations?
- If there are current or projected gaps in *performance* against your competitors or comparable organizations, how will you address them?
- What are your student-focused and process *results*?
- How do these *results* compare with the performance of your competitors and other organizations with similar offerings?

#### **ACPS Performance-Related Resources**

- [Lifelong-Learner Competencies](#)
- [State of the Division 2011-12 Report](#) (*includes the following indicators used by the Division*)
  - o Elementary – PALS, QRI, SOL
  - o Middle – MAP, SOL
  - o High – SAT, STAMP
- Links to other [ACPS Reports and Data](#) and [DART Reports](#) available online

## Example of Hierarchical Student Indicators

National Baldrige Winner, Montgomery County Public Schools

[Seven Keys to College Readiness](#)

**SEVEN KEYS TO COLLEGE READINESS**

A pathway for students to follow that will increase their chances of being ready for and successful in college. [Learn More >](#)

www.mcps7keys.org

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**Pick a key**

Learn how to help your child prepare for college

- KEY 7: 1650 SAT, 24 ACT**
- KEY 6: 3 on AP exam, 4 on IB exam**
- KEY 5: Algebra 2 by Grade 11, 'C' or higher**
- KEY 4: Algebra 1 by Grade 8, 'C' or higher**
- KEY 3: Advanced math in Grade 5**
- KEY 2: Advanced reading MSA in Grades 3-8**
- KEY 1: Advanced reading in Grades K-2**

## Examples of Assessments for National Comparisons

The following assessments are available Kindergarten – 12<sup>th</sup> grade and are either norm-referenced or criterion-referenced, or both. These assessments are listed because they are not currently used in the Division, and have not previously been used in the Division.

### [Terra Nova](#) (paper/pencil achievement test)

Being a primarily diagnostic assessment, students are given a battery of multiple choice questions that determine how well they have mastered content. Their mastery is then normed against other students in the same grade to compare how they performed in relationship to their peers.

### [PerformanceSeries](#) (computer adaptive achievement test)

As a computer-adaptive assessment, PerformanceSeries offers questions below, on, and above a student's particular grade level. Student's scores are computed based on their responses to a variety of multiple choice items and given a grade-level equivalency.

Those equivalencies are used to norm student scores and provide comparisons to their peers.

**Metropolitan Achievement Test** (paper/pencil achievement test)

Using both traditional questions (i.e. multiple choice, true false) and real world scenarios, the assessment measures foundational skills, as well as critical thinking processes and strategies. All tests include multiple choice and open-ended sections to measure how well students have mastered the content and how well they can apply what they have learned.

**Terms:**

**Criterion-referenced:** how do I compare to where I should be?

**Norm-referenced:** how do I compare to other students who are my age/in my grade across the country?

**Examples of Division Quality Indicators**

1. [EdLeader 21 Seven Steps for Education Leaders](#) ©



2. [AdvancED – Why does accreditation matter?](#) and [AdvancED Standards for Quality](#)

### AdvancED Standards for Quality School Systems

#### Standard 1: Purpose and Direction

The system maintains and communicates at all levels of the organization a purpose and direction for continuous improvement that commit to high expectations for learning as well as shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning.

#### Standard 2: Governance and Leadership

The system operates under governance and leadership that promote and support student performance and school effectiveness.

#### Standard 3: Teaching and Assessing for Learning

The system's curriculum, instructional design, and assessment practices guide and ensure teacher effectiveness and student learning across all grades and courses.

#### Standard 4: Resources and Support Systems

The system has resources and provides services in all schools that support its purpose and direction to ensure success for all students.

#### Standard 5: Using Results for Continuous Improvement

The system implements a comprehensive assessment system that generates a range of data about student learning and system effectiveness and uses the results to guide continuous improvement.

3. [Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence in Education – A Systems Perspective](#)

