Reinventing the Titans:
Ending Modern-Day Segregation and Creating Equity at T.C. Williams High School

2019 NSPRA Gold Medallion Award Entry
Special Communication Projects/Campaigns

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Type of School/Organization:
School district: 10,001-25,000 students
Number of Communication staff: 8

Please also consider this entry for Golden Achievement Award.
SYNOPSIS

In the 2000 movie Remember the Titans, Disney immortalized the role of the Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) 1971 high school football team, who won the Virginia state championship following the consolidation of the district’s racially segregated high schools into one: T.C. Williams High School. The Titans have since developed into a national brand, symbolic of school desegregation and racial unity.

Today, T.C. Williams remains the city’s only high school. Although the Alexandria community embraces the concept of diversity, many are less willing to embrace it in practice, and the vestiges of modern-day segregation still exist. Research indicated that 60 years after Alexandria first began desegregation, the community is still divided.

In July 2018, the need to resolve capacity issues at T.C. Williams created an opportunity to assess the high school experience as a whole. It also created a conflict. Key community influencers have campaigned for years for a second high school, which, given the demographics of the city, could perpetuate segregation long-term.

Analysis showed that to garner support for an equitable long-term solution to high school capacity issues, the goal would be to first challenge deep-seated attitudes about race and inequity in our community.

Harnessing current high school students — as a voice of change and symbol of future generations — and the voice of business and higher educational institutions was critical to reaching this goal. In addition, using the voice of the older African-American community and 1971 Titan football players — who lived through the creation of the one high school model 60 years ago — created a blame-free historical context to drive a conversation around race among key influencers with the most political impact.

Having achieved its initial outcomes, the campaign went on to exceed its goals. By March 2019, the concept of equity was publicly established as a foundation on which to deliver services for both city and schools, and a Northern Virginia innovation hub — a business/higher education partnership with three school districts — had been formed, establishing ACPS as an innovative leader in equity, opportunity and programming.
Joint City-Schools Task Force Capital Project Recommendations:
In January 2018, a Joint City-Schools Task Force recommended that in order to avoid conflict and solve the capital improvement needs of the entire city:

- City and schools must define an aligned vision for the future that celebrates Alexandria’s history and its unique ‘DNA,’ and embraces opportunities for innovation and growth.
- Leadership must proactively challenge traditional methods for delivering capital projects and services.
- Leadership must lead and resist substituting leadership with engagement.
- Alexandria must become an attractive owner, business partner and employer, and gain a competitive edge in the broader resource-constrained development environment.

The Current High School Model:
The current high school model is the result of combining three segregated high schools in the 1960s. Alexandria’s only high school is built on land acquired through eminent domain from the African-American community and is named after former ACPS Superintendent Thomas Chambliss Williams, a segregationist. Although viewed as one large high school with 4,000+ students, in practice it has a mix of co-located and off-campus academies and alternative programs — including a separate ninth-grade campus. High school enrollment is expected to reach 5,000 students by 2021.

The current model sees inequities in secondary talented and gifted, honors and advanced placement classes and in graduation rates. Many low income, English language learners and minority students are not graduating from T.C. Williams with the skills and knowledge they need to either join the workforce or go to college and succeed.

- 94 percent of White students graduate; 87 percent pursue higher education
- 90 percent of African-American students graduate; 71 percent pursue higher education
- 69 percent of Hispanic students graduate; 45 percent pursue higher education
- 74 percent of economically disadvantaged students graduate; 60 percent pursue higher education

Public Opinion:
Research shows the city split almost equally over the highly contentious issue of one or two high schools.

A small influential group of teachers, the Capacity Committee, has repeatedly written to the media and city council petitioning for a second high school. They have the ear of at least two school board members. The Alexandria Times, the voice of the highly-engaged community, has maintained this opinion in editorials and coverage since 2013, and has led a campaign to change the name of the school. Staff focus groups, surveys and letters to the media and school board indicate that staff is adverse to change and would prefer a second high school over the academy model.

Extensive focus groups and surveys indicate that students, business leaders and leaders of higher educational institutions prefer a program-focused solution. They view the future of the high school as possibly virtual, specialized and workforce oriented. Research into the learning and work styles of future generations supports these primary research findings. The 2000 Disney movie Remember the Titans was based on the T.C. Williams Titans 1971 champion football team and is a source of pride for the younger generation, for current students, minority students and English-learner students, and the new superintendent who graduated from T.C. Williams in 1995. Student focus groups and survey results found students view T.C. Williams as large and disconnected but welcome the opportunities such size provides. They prefer the new “academy” structure introduced in 2017 that provides additional student supports and makes the school environment feel smaller. The older generation in the African-American community — reliving the desegregation of Alexandria in its 60th anniversary year — wants to avoid any solution that could result in re-segregating the city and has not forgiven the school division for past wrongs.

Reputation of ACPS:
Data from the ACPS 2020 surveys in 2016 and 2017 showed:

- A decrease in those who rated ACPS schools as excellent/good from 2015-16 (67 percent) to 2016-17 (63 percent).
- A decline in those who believed ACPS takes the necessary steps to continually improve from 80 percent in 2015-16 to 74 percent in 2016-17.
- Research conducted for the Joint City-Schools Long Range Plan in 2014-15 found that between 1980 and 2014, Alexandria had a lower percentage of families who chose to stay in the city and enroll their children in ACPS compared to neighboring divisions. Forty to 45 percent of Alexandria families opt to move away prior to enrolling in kindergarten...
— 10 percent higher than Arlington, 20 percent higher than Fairfax, and 30 percent higher than Prince William County. High school capture rates for recent years have been: 112.1 percent (2015-16), 116.8 percent (2016-17), 128.9 percent (2017-18).

**Reputation of ACPS Facilities:**
The highly engaged community, including city council, has trust issues with the ACPS Department of Facilities after ongoing issues related to transparency and accountability over the past eight years. Data from the ACPS 2020 surveys in 2016 and 2017 showed:

- A nine percentage point decrease in participants who said ACPS had a positive public image between 2016 and 2017, alongside a 300 percent increase in negative media coverage of facilities issues for the same period.
- A decline in those who believed ACPS makes good decisions that support education and student learning from 75 percent in 2015-16 to 66 percent in 2016-17.
- The biggest decrease was in response to efficient, effective and transparent business operations.
- Open-ended response themes included wanting to see school facilities managed better.
- The 2017 TELL (Teaching, Empowering, Leading and Learning) Survey, which records teachers' views of ACPS, indicated that 26 percent of teachers thought that the physical environment in schools did not support teaching and learning needs.

**Budget and Land Availability:**
- Fifteen million dollars has been approved for design and planning work in the [2019-20 budget](#), with $103m for space in 2020-21. Estimates for building a comprehensive high school are in the region of $212m.
- Analysis shows that landlocked Alexandria does not have space for a new 409,000 square ft high school.
- Recent practice has been to buy and retrofit smaller office building instead of building from scratch.

**Future Trends:**
‘Let’s Talk’ survey data shows that the key factors influencing families’ decisions to stay or leave public school at the middle school/high school level were: insufficient student and teacher connectedness, insufficient programing, preference for small settings, concerns related to safety/bullying, and a desire for stronger academic rigor.

The [World Economic Forum](#) suggests that students will learn differently and need different skills in the future. Eighteen [exemplar schools](#) were found, although none corresponded completely with the situation at T.C. Williams.

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**GOAL**
To deliver support for innovative and equitable high school capacity solutions and educational programming in Alexandria that will result in ACPS being viewed as a trusted leader in delivering educational services.

**OBJECTIVES**
To have a deep and lasting impact on the schools and city, objectives needed to be aligned with the goals outlined in the Joint City-Schools Task Force established in January 2018.

**Outcome Objective 1**
To sufficiently shift the community towards alternatives to constructing a second high school as a solution to the high school capacity issues so that by January 2019 the school board feels confident publicly endorsing the superintendent’s recommendation for a more equitable high school model.

This will be measured through the result of the school board vote on the superintendent’s recommendation in January.

**Outcome Objective 2**
Alexandria City Public Schools will be viewed as a trusted leader for delivering innovative programming in line with workforce needs in the Northern Virginia region by February 2019.

This will be measured through the evaluation of the positions of key community leaders, the public endorsement of higher education partners and sentiment of media coverage by March 2019.
PLANNING/ANALYSIS

Audience Identification, Profile and Analysis
The audience is identified by their role in the process, as a decision maker (D), a stakeholder (S) or influencer (I).

The key decision-making audience is the school board (D), of which five of the new board members ran on a platform of a second high school/capacity. The second decision-making audience is the city manager, mayor and city council (D), who need to vote to support the project financially in order for it to move forward.

Both of these groups are influenced by Alexandria business owners (S), local colleges and universities (I, S), local media (I), and T.C. Williams’ immediate neighbors — elderly African-Americans badly treated in the 1960s by superintendent T.C. Williams. In addition, the school board is influenced by ACPS teachers and staff (S/I) and ACPS parents and families (S/I), especially highly-engaged parents (typically white, middle class), many of whom expect to be decision-makers and have actively campaigned for a second high school.

Timeline
The five-month timeline from launch to the decision point (August 2018-February 2019) is restricted by the need for a decision prior to the presentation of the Capital Improvement Program and the city manager’s budget presentation in February 2019.

Output Objectives
To achieve the outcomes, ACPS Office of Communications will need four output objectives.

#1 Deliver fresh content each week devoted to challenging issues of race, equity, diversity and inclusion to be carried across all communications channels throughout the campaign (September-March 2019).

#2 Hold in excess of 60 separate engagement sessions with all audiences during the research, implementation and circle-back/evaluation stages in the five months of the campaign to capture the voice of the entire community without valuing one part above another.

#3 Deliver regular high-profile demonstrations of superintendent ownership between July 2018 and February 2019.

#4 Engage ten percent of all high school students so that the campaign is driven by student voices, while remaining superintendent-led.

IMPLEMENTATION

Strategy 1: Inform
Inform the community about the process, set expectations and keep the community updated, in addition to promoting the benefits of the Connected High School Network

- Video, social media and community meetings through which the student voice is shared with the community
- Positive facts campaign around the Connected High School Network and lack of land options for a second comprehensive high school
- Media appearances at key decision points by the superintendent on a National Public Radio talk show
- Regular background briefings and briefing notes sent directly to reporters on the two local newspapers
- Project website with community meetings and focus group postings, updates, background and a timeline
- Flier about the benefits of the Connected High School Network

Strategy 2: Public Opinion
Support the idea of future change with the concept that ACPS can be trusted: We know what we are doing

- Capitalize on the change of superintendent to create the sense of a fresh start for ACPS in terms of facilities management, and access and opportunity to programming
- Broadcast regular superintendent podcasts to ensure the public is aware of the project’s leadership
- Ensure new superintendent media interviews and op-eds cover The High School Project
- Ensure superintendent leads all major presentations to the school board in person
• Promote stories that support the idea of a fresh start in terms of fiscal responsibility and facilities management
• Promote stories focused on academics to keep the media focused on student success
• Publicize success stories connected to ACPS’ existing academy programs

**Strategy 3: Student Voice/Engagement**

*Use the student voice to lead and drive the conversation*

• Capture student voices on video at the start of the project and continue to use throughout
• Engage students in driving the discussion through student focus groups, classroom sessions, the use of a video booth, graffiti boards and middle school student council sessions
• Enroll student school board representatives in the goal of the project early on so that they enroll other students

**Strategy 4: Key Influencers**

*Use key influencers in the community to help drive discussion and support for the project from the highly engaged group in the community*

• Capture the voices of local business and higher education leaders on video as a way of driving the conversation at community sessions and on social media
• Secure and promote the endorsement of ACPS’ Connected High School Network by the president of Virginia Tech at the high profile media launch of the Virginia Tech Innovation Campus as part of the Amazon deal; the Governor of Virginia, Virginia Department of Education and President of George Washington University at the launch of the Health Sciences Academy; the president of Northern Virginia Community College at the business leaders forum; the head of the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce and Alexandria Economic Consortium (responsible for the Amazon/Virginia Tech deal) through the business leaders forum and Superintendent’s 100-Day Transition Team; the head of Alexandria’s Preschool Directors Network

**Strategy 5: Equitable Community Engagement**

*Deliberate broad community outreach to ensure the outcome is not driven by, nor solely serves, the highly engaged community*

• Community engagement conducted in the style of gathering feedback rather than asking a few members the highly engaged community to be the key decision-makers.
• Town hall sessions using the student/business leaders voices videos, with interpretation (Arabic, Amharic, Spanish), childcare and food, scheduled to increase accessibility for families without English as a first language
• Wide-scale community engagement through previously established community sessions (Family and Community Engagement (FACE) workshops/parents engagement sessions, apartment and civic association meetings, community leadership sessions)
• Survey conducted in four languages based on the community’s vision of the future high school experience, rather than capacity or building space
• Superintendent conducted private meetings with key influencers as an alternative to community meetings

**Strategy 6: Public Equity Discussion**

*Simultaneously spark public debate about the modern day segregation/inequity through an historical lens to ensure there is no blame and that equity is front and center when decisions are made around the project.*

• Position stories, social media and video wholesale in print media owning our story
• Place monthly (and sometimes bi-monthly) superintendent op-eds focused on equity, the high school project and equity, and his goals and objectives around the project in local print media
• Design mural for new school depicting the path to desegregation with help of African-American community
• Promote diverse student success through VOICES series, video, media and social media
• Challenge stereotypes; reverse stereotyping through images
• Connect and tap into the African-American community leadership within Alexandria to enable ACPS to tell the story of modern day segregation through a historical lens
Strategy 7: Staff Engagement

As much as the superintendent needs a flagship project on which to establish his reputation, his staff needs to see him lead this project and thereby lead them. This ensures his place in the division and staff feel that he is an accessible leader who listens.

- Superintendent leads virtually all staff engagement directly to indicate his leadership and support of the project
- Survey staff around the vision for the high school and their fears about what it might mean
- Project team regularly engages staff in staff meetings and lunch time brown bag sessions
- Superintendent invites key influencers in opposition to the project to meet with him in a small group setting
- Staff are repeatedly assured that they will play a key role in program design

Strategy 8: Branding

Brand the campaign so that its purpose is visually represented and easily identifiable.

- Design a logo representing the future, diversity and the potential impact of the campaign on the city
- Design and create t-shirts for T.C. Williams students reflecting the discussion around equity in an historic context so that students market the value of the campaign

EVALUATION

Outcome Objective 1

To sufficiently shift the community towards alternatives to constructing a second high school as a solution to the high school capacity issues so that by January 2019 the school board feels confident publicly endorsing the superintendent’s recommendation for a more equitable high school model.

Due to the project’s compressed timeline, the former board had not sufficiently shifted their mindset away from capacity to ensure approval through a vote in December. A vote against the project would have damaged the public image of the new superintendent. Therefore, the decision was made to extend the timeline for the vote for an additional month so that new board who had run on a campaign for a second comprehensive high school had time to fully understand the implications. On January 24, 2019, the board voted unanimously in favor of the Connected High School Network strategy, but included a request to use the existing ninth-grade campus as part of the plan. Ultimately, this compromise saw the model win public endorsement and shored up the public position of the superintendent. Following the vote, contentious media coverage and emails fell away and even the most outspoken opposition sent emails of support to the superintendent. This included T.C. staff, who largely united around the decision. Closing-the-loop sessions were had with each audience.

- The Capacity Committee, consisting of second high school supporters and T.C. Williams staff, sent letters of support to the superintendent following the vote.
- There was a 72 percent positive change in the sentiment of media coverage of The High School Project and the Connected High School Network between August 2018 and March 2019.

Outcome Objective 2

Alexandria City Public Schools will be viewed as a trusted leader for delivering innovative programming in line with workforce needs in the Northern Virginia region by February 2019.

By February 2019, key stakeholders, including the city council members, the city manager, community leaders, business leaders and, most critically, our new partner, Virginia Tech, were aligned in support of the superintendent’s recommendation for the Connected High School model. The city manager publicly agreed that he needed to increase Capital Improvement Program funding for the high school in the future.

In late February 2019, Virginia Tech and ACPS began to actively explore opportunities to capitalize on Amazon’s arrival through programming at Virginia Tech’s proposed Innovation Campus in Alexandria, while Northern Virginia Community College and ACPS moved to initiate an Early College program.

In February, neighboring school divisions approached ACPS to explore the possibility of expanding the Connected High School Network across the region, potentially giving ACPS students access to college-level programming options currently only open to students in those divisions.
Output Objective 1
Deliver fresh content each week devoted to challenging issues of race, equity, diversity and inclusion to be carried across all communications channels throughout the campaign (September-March 2019).

• Thirty independent stories and two op-eds focused on equity pushed out to the community via all ACPS communication channels and to the media.
• Seven posts specifically highlighting inequalities from a historical perspective using the Brown v. Board anniversary were published in ACPS Express, on social media and in a local newspaper, The Zebra.
• 9,271 active engagements and 115,128 impressions on Facebook and Twitter for historical Brown v. Board posts directly connected to race and equity.
• Media coverage of equity issues increased by 74 percent over the period from July 2018 to February 2019.
• A key local paper offered ACPS the chance to guest-write the February edition, increasing our ability to tell our own story around the issue of race and reach 30,000 homes.
• The issue of race — and particularly a discussion sparked by the critical timing of the Titans race video the week before the vote — directly impacted the way four board members voted.
• The city manager publicly talked about equity and the need to increase funding to increase support equity in schools across the city for the first time ever in his budget presentation on February 21.

Output Objective 2
Hold in excess of 60 separate engagement sessions across the areas of research, implementation and circle-back/evaluation in the five months of the campaign to capture the voice of the entire community without valuing one part over another. Sixty+ different engagement sessions with all audiences were held at three designated stages of research, implementation and evaluation. 480 responses to the survey balanced across all four languages.

Output Objective 3
Deliver regular high-profile demonstrations of superintendent ownership between July 2018 and February 2019. The superintendent remained at the forefront of the project throughout: Ten op-eds in the two local papers over the five month period, three television interviews, two Washington Post interviews, two high-profile appearances on NPR’s The Kojo Nnamdi Show, two personal presentations to the school board, three podcasts, two personal letters to staff, two personal letters to parents and the community, and eight superintendent-led staff meetings and two community meetings.

Output Objective 4
Engage ten percent of all high school students so that the campaign is driven by student voices, while remaining superintendent-led. More than 400 students were engaged in 40 separate classroom sessions; 62 students were further engaged in in-depth focus groups; three student video voice sessions were conducted; graffiti boards were established to collect feedback; five student council sessions discussed the issues; student leadership was enrolled early.

OVERALL GOAL
The campaign resulted in heightened conversation around equity across the city that acted as a platform from which to launch discussions around the delivery of high school programming. The combined voices of current students and ’71 Titans once again challenged the status quo and demonstrated the power of student voice, while allowing the superintendent to retain leadership of the project and establish ACPS as a regional leader for delivering innovative programming in line with workforce needs.

Next Steps and Improvements:
1. Evaluation of public trust in the school division and the superintendent’s image as a result of his leadership of the campaign/project will continue to be assessed via the April 2019 strategic plan survey.
2. The communications plan will now be adjusted to suit the implementation phase of the plan, while keeping the key messaging intact until 2023, when the project is due to be completed.
3. This spring, the Titans Connected campaign will launch in earnest at T.C. Williams High School.
4. The evaluation revealed our own anxiety around this topic. This part of the campaign concerned with race and equity was too subtle at the start and only started to have an impact once tackled head on.
5. The conversation around race and equity will be extended into the 2025 Strategic Plan starting in April 2019.
**Focus Groups with Staff and Students**

Students were asked to take part in focus groups in which they responded to short videos on innovative learning practices, documented personal learning styles, and discussed future learning. Staff members were asked to reflect on their teaching experience within ACPS and provide their greatest hopes and biggest fears for the future of the division.

**Staff Hopes...**
- Individualized student choice
- College career focused
- Alternative programs

**Staff Fears...**
- No action
- Too slow to act
- Gender and racial inequity
- Emphasis on testing over critical thinking
- Re-segregation

**Graffiti Boards**
Community/Business Leader Research

At public town hall meetings and private focus groups, community members and higher education leaders were asked what the future of high school could look like in Alexandria. A community survey also gathered feedback on the future of education and on the project as a whole.
Public Opinion

Research showed the city split almost equally in two over the highly contentious issue of one or two high schools. Further, the older generation in the African-American community was uncomfortable with the concept of re-segregating the city, was averse to the high school being named after a segregationist, and had not forgiven the school division for taking their land by eminent domain to make way for the high school in 1965.
Future Trends in Education

Research suggests students will learn differently and need different skills in the future. Eighteen “exemplar” schools were identified whose models aligned with future trends and desired skills: complex problem solving, critical thinking, and creativity. These were combined with the values identified by our stakeholders.
## Timeline

### Redefining the High School Experience Project Timeline

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Phase I</th>
<th>Phase II</th>
<th>Phase III</th>
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<tr>
<td>Key Phases</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phase I - Launch</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information gathering, research, setting priorities, charting, developing tools, etc.</td>
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<td>Information project scope and timeline</td>
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<td>Phase II - Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Listening, learning, vision, share what you think, range of options/Day decide, competing, analyzing, listening, learning + host round(s) of forums for what we learned, design, adapt, optimize options, collect feedback, finalize</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phase III - Implementation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finalize options, pass for SE agenda, present to S.T</td>
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<td>Presented to School Board</td>
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<td>Voted on by School Board</td>
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### Strategy: Inform the Community

- Develop communications tool(s), parking, etc.
- Communicate social media plan
- Inform the community about the process and expectations continuing the conversation opened.
- Share the AOPS video
- Share the AOPS Express
- Share via School Newsletter
- Develop and implement social media campaign

#### Engagement

- Engage community partners
- Connect to partner jealousy
- Coffee collaborative
- After-school sessions
- Town hall meetings
- Annual AHS nights

### Strategy: Engage Students

#### Student Survey

- Develop and analyze survey
- Compile and analyze survey results

### Strategy: Staff Engagement

- Host 4 focus group at respective levels
- Develop focus group backbone
- Identify focus group participants
- Send out group information
- Conduct 2 sessions with each level

- Current Officer with All Program staff

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*Note: The timeline and strategies are placeholders and should be filled with actual details and timelines.*
IMPLEMENTATION

Branding Strategy

A visual identity was created to make all High School Project communications easily identifiable. A logo was designed to reflect the school district’s existing visual branding.
IMPLEMENTATION

Inform Strategy

Audiences were kept informed through a project website, articles in the district email newsletter, social media, and a podcast.
**IMPLEMENTATION**

**Inform Strategy**

The superintendent’s recommended Connected High School Network was promoted with an FAQ flier and social media. The superintendent and chief operating officer made multiple appearances on a regional NPR radio show to discuss the project and opportunities on the way with the arrival of the new Amazon HQ2.
IMPLEMENTATION

Public Opinion Strategy

Stories were pushed to the media that focused on facilities improvements, academic achievement, fiscal responsibility, and trust.
Student Voice Strategy

Student voices and images were captured on video at the start of the project and were continued to be used throughout. Student school board representatives were brought on board with the goal of the project early on so they would influence others. T-shirts with the phrase “Titans Connected Since 1971” were distributed to students to reinforce the idea of being a community connected by Titan pride, and the unity of the 1971 Titans.

“I’m really excited and optimistic about the opportunity that the Connected High School Network provides to improve and increase our educational programming,” — school board Student Representative Bridget Williams
IMPLEMENTATION

Equitable Community Engagement Strategy

Information, town hall meetings and opportunities for feedback were provided in multiple languages and made accessible to all, to ensure the outcome would not driven by or solely serve only one part of the community.

El Proyecto de la Escuela Secundaria: Descripción de las fases

2018

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<tr>
<th>JULIO</th>
<th>AGOSTO</th>
<th>SEPTIEMBRE</th>
<th>OCTUBRE</th>
<th>NOVIEMBRE</th>
<th>DICIEMBRE</th>
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<td>Grupos focales con alumnos, empresas y la comunidad</td>
<td>Asambleas populares sobre la visión de la comunidad</td>
<td>Presentación de recomendaciones de programas a la Junta Escolar</td>
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2019

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<td>Presentación final a la Junta Escolar</td>
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2.0 Participación

1.0 Descubrimiento

En la fase de Descubrimiento, ACPS y el equipo de planificación identificarán las limitaciones del proyecto, establecerán principios rectores que guiarán la planificación, e investigarán sobre las mejores prácticas y opciones educativas de las escuelas secundarias en el país.

3.0 Definición:

En la fase de Definición, ACPS y el equipo de planificación crean educativas y opciones de nuevas programas de escuela secundaria identificados durante las fases anteriores. Se explorarán varias opciones.

4.0 Evaluación:

En la fase de Evaluación, se evaluarán completamente las diversas opciones y escenarios para decidir sobre la solución ideal de construcción y programa para abordar tanto la matrícula como la futura escuela secundaria. Se buscará conocer otras opiniones de la comunidad antes de hacer una recomendación final a la Junta Escolar para su aprobación.
Equity Discussion Strategy

In an effort to spark discussion about race and equity, we created and publicized a series of four articles to highlight the history of Alexandria’s desegregation.

The Anniversary of Brown v. Board of Education – What Does it Mean for Alexandria?

This is the first in a series of articles that explores the impact of Brown v. Board of Education, highlighting important milestones and key figures who played a role in the desegregation of Alexandria’s schools.

Brown v. Board and Football: Both a Problem and a Solution

Athletics has always been a source of pride and tension in the story of the desegregation of ACPS. This is the second article in a series that explores the impact of Brown v. Board of Education on our schools and community, highlighting important milestones and key figures who played a role in the desegregation of Alexandria’s schools 65 years on.

Brown v. Board: 60 Years On – The Action that Took 14 Years to Complete

On a damp grey morning at 8:15 a.m. on February 10, 1959 — exactly 60 years ago this week — two African-American school children walked across a line of 58 police officers to become the first black students at an all-white elementary school in Alexandria. On the other side of town, three other African-American children walked into the all-white William Ramsay School. Their actions were the start of a long, slow process to desegregate Alexandria City Public Schools — a process that took another 14 years to complete.

Brown vs. Board: It Takes a Community to Make a Difference

In our final article commemorating the 65th anniversary of Brown v. Board of Education and Alexandria’s long journey to desegregation, we turn our attention to the community activism it took to make strides towards equity in Alexandria. Learn about the Secret Seven, a group of men resolved to end the systemic racism in Alexandria in the 1960s.
IMPLEMENTATION

Equity Discussion Strategy

In articles and videos, we interviewed and highlighted the people who experienced the era of desegregation of Alexandria’s schools, including well-known and beloved members of the 1971 Titans football team and two women who were among the first nine students to break the race barrier in all-white Alexandria schools in 1959.

“My overwhelming memory from that time is of isolation, being marginalized and not being fully welcomed or accepted.” — Sandra Turner

“My father being from Chicago had never lived in a segregated environment like Alexandria. For him, it was quite an affront.” — Kathryn Turner
Equity Discussion Strategy

Articles and videos about Alexandria’s history of desegregation were promoted on social media and in our weekly district-wide email newsletter. Upon the death in January of one of the original 1971 Titans and a key character in the Disney movie, we wrote an article promoting his legacy of unity, furthering the discussion about race and equity.
IMPLEMENTATION

Equity Discussion Strategy

We worked with a local newspaper to publish the history of school desegregation in Alexandria. The superintendent’s monthly articles in the local newspapers and a large community event all focused on a vision of equity.

“...we have joined with the Communications Department of the Alexandria City Public Schools to tell the full story of how integrating our schools have allowed them to serve all our city’s youth and to reach their full potential.” — publisher of The Zebra Press, Alexandria
Programmatic Support

The newly sworn-in school board voted unanimously in favor of the superintendent’s recommended Connected High School Network strategy. Neighboring school divisions began to work with ACPS to explore the possibility of expanding the Connected High School Network across the region.

72% positive change in sentiment of media coverage of The High School Project
EVALUATION

Equity Discussion

The campaign resulted in heightened conversation around equity across the city that acted as a platform from which to launch discussions around the delivery of high school programming. For the first time ever, the city manager in his budget presentation publicly talked about equity and the need to increase school funding to support equity in schools.

“\textit{We want to make the city equitable, smarter and greener.}”

\textit{— Alexandria city manager}

| 9,271 | ENGAGEMENTS |
| + 115,128 | IMPRESSIONS |

ON SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS HIGHLIGHTING RACE AND EQUITY

74% increase in media coverage of equity issues over the period from July 2018 to February 2019