

**City of Alexandria, Virginia**  
**FY 2026 Proposed Operating Budget & CIP**  
**Budget Questions & Answers**

**April 1, 2025**

**Question:**

How does ACPS objectively evaluate the effectiveness of ongoing programs when deciding whether to continue funding or not?

**Response:**

According to the Alexandria City Public Schools budget staff, the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Leadership (TLL) evaluates the effectiveness of instructional programs through a combination of quantitative data analysis, stakeholder feedback, and alignment with the ACPS Strategic Plan. When determining whether to continue funding a program, Teaching, Learning and Leadership also examines student achievement data, including standardized assessments such as Standards of Learning (SOL) scores including subgroup data, World-class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) for English learners, Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Growth, professional learning, and other school-level benchmark assessments. Additionally, graduation rates and post-secondary success indicators, provide insight into student progress and readiness. The department analyzes disaggregated data to assess performance across various student subgroups and evaluates access to opportunities in programs like Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), dual enrollment, Dual Enrollment, and Advanced Placement.

Beyond student outcomes, the department assesses program implementation fidelity through classroom observations with leaders and coaches, instructional coaching, and professional development participation. The department also works with schools to conduct a cost-benefit analysis, examining per-pupil expenditures and comparing program effectiveness when examining intervention programs. Ultimately, the department ensures that all funded programs align with district priorities and the strategic plan, focusing on equitable access, rigorous instruction, and student well-being. Programs are assessed for scalability and long-term sustainability within budget constraints. The decision-making process involves cross-departmental collaboration, including input from the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Leadership, school administrators, teachers, and the budget office. This comprehensive approach allows the department to allocate resources effectively and ensure that instructional programs deliver meaningful outcomes for students.

Schools staff also points out that ACPS conducts independent evaluations of programs on an ongoing basis. The outcome of these independent evaluations provides a valuable opportunity for staff to review feedback from stakeholders across the division to make strategic budgetary decisions.

The Department of Student Services and Equity also uses evidence-based programs such as Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Restorative Practices (RP) and Recognize Understanding Labeling Expressing Regulating (RULER) that are grounded in research and known to have a positive impact on staff and students when implemented with fidelity. These programs are designed to build a positive school culture and climate as well as support students building skills and competencies that support their academic and life success. Outcome data collected via the Equity Climate Survey provides

feedback from students, staff and families on school culture and climate annually. These data are reviewed and shape the strategic and collaborative actions around implementation of these programs.

In addition, specific school staff are designated in the schools and can include the Student Support Team members to lead and be the primary implementers of these programs to support the fidelity of implementation. These staff are provided monthly professional meetings and opportunities to learn from one another to assist them with staying informed with the most up-to-date information to encourage innovation and continuous learning. Through quantitative feedback of staff who are on the ground, in the schools to share the strengths and challenges, division-level staff have opportunities to hear about how these learning opportunities support staff practice with students in the schools.