

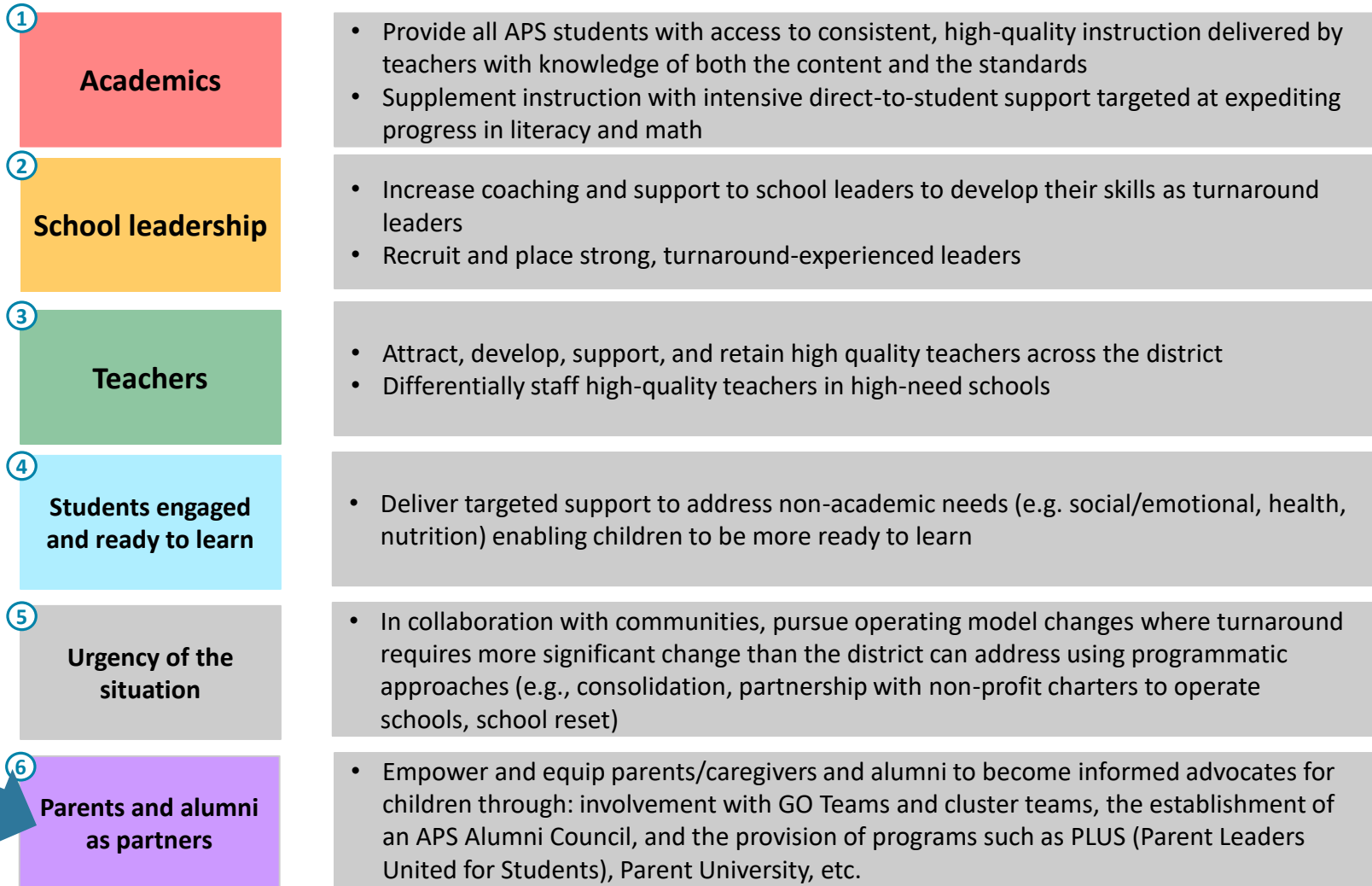


**Family and Alumni
Engagement Strategy Development
(Revised based upon Stakeholder Feedback)**

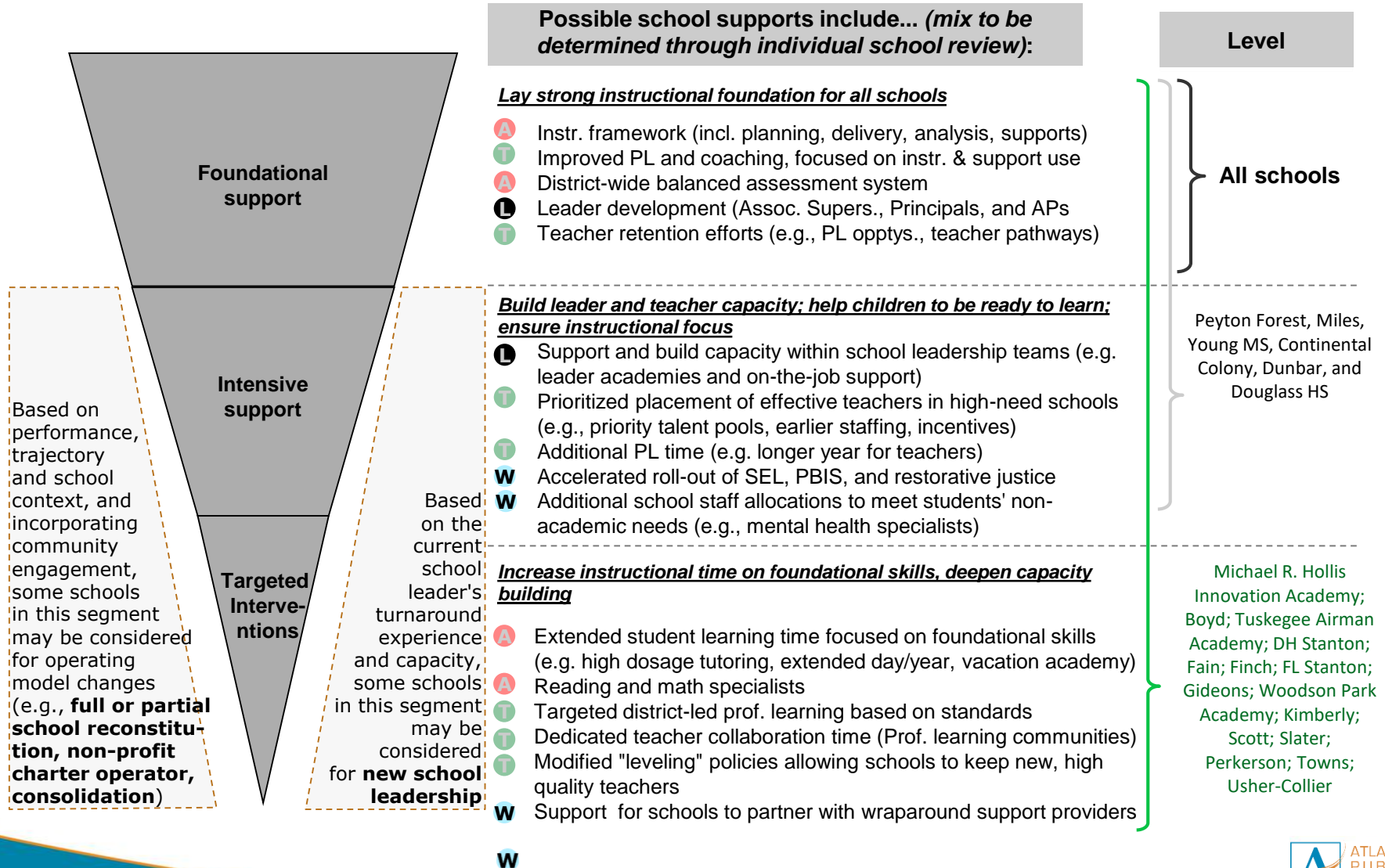
November 2016



Family/alumni engagement was added to the turnaround strategy based upon feedback received during the engagement process



The district's family/alumni engagement strategy will benefit all schools as a "foundational support"



Current engagement efforts are very fragmented and reside in different departments

Sample of Parent Engagement Activities	Reporting Department
Title III ESOL Outreach	ESOL
Translation and Interpretation Services	ESOL
Academic Outreach (mathematics, gifted, wellness)	Teaching & Learning
Title I Family Academic Engagement	Associate Superintendents & Office of Innovation
Special Education Parent Mentors	Special Education
Parents as Partners Academic Center	Intervention & Support
Head Start Family Support	Early Learning
Pre-K Family Support	Early Learning
Communications (Back to School Bash, social medial etc.)	Communications and Public Engagement
GO Teams	Policy and Governance
Community Foundation PLUS Academies	Partnerships and Development
Parent Liaisons	Schools/Principals

Our belief is that if we identify the right drivers for meaningful engagement, our students will ultimately benefit

IF WE...

Identify key
parent/caregiver and
alumni engagement
drivers



Successfully implement the other
components of the district's
strategic plan (including the
turnaround strategy)

THEN...

- Parents/caregivers and families connect to schools and engage in their child's learning
- Students show up prepared to learn
- Families and communities trust the system
- Alumni connect and engage in meaningful ways



- The academic program is implemented with fidelity

SO THAT...

APS students have
choice-filled lives

To identify the right drivers for an engagement strategy, we sought input from internal, external and secondary sources

Guidance from Cross-Functional Internal Steering Committee



Conduct APS Data Gathering Activities

- Convene cross-functional internal steering committee to identify current APS family engagement strategies and initiatives



Gather Input from APS Stakeholders

- Conduct engagement circles in each cluster
- Conduct focus groups with a variety of stakeholders
- Conduct individual interviews with key community partners and funders



Administer Parent Survey

- Create and distribute district-wide electronic and paper-based surveys to parents/caregivers



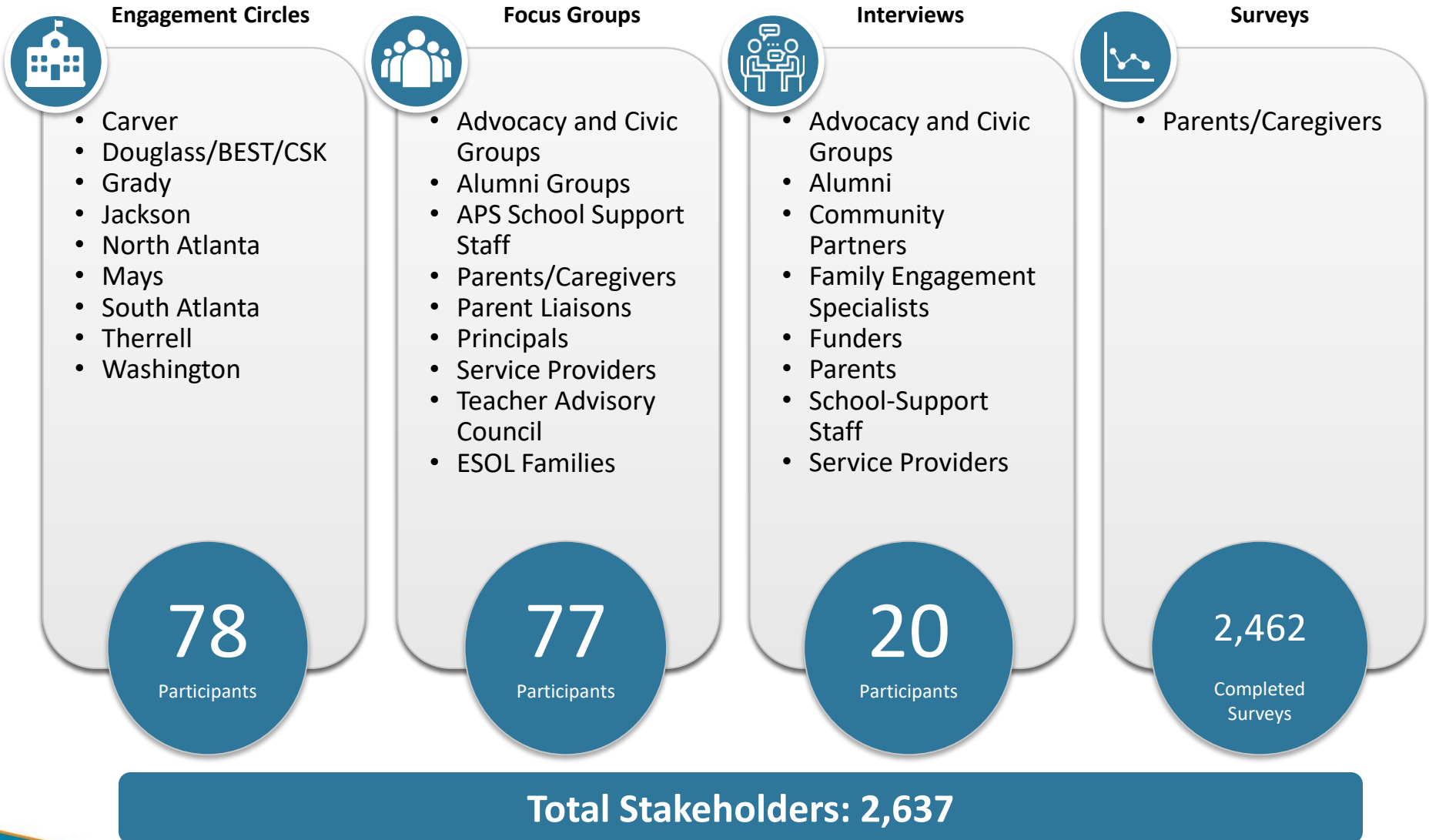
Identify Engagement Best Practices

- Conduct secondary research to identify best practices for family and alumni engagement

May to September

Present findings and preliminary recommendations to stakeholders

We invited stakeholders to provide feedback and perspectives via a variety of engagement opportunities



Since the October update, we have been collecting feedback on the draft recommendations; more discussions are planned.

- 1 Reviewed findings with Board of Education on Oct 10
- 2 Hosted two follow-up meetings with stakeholders who participated in initial engagement circles, focus groups, and interviews on Oct 5 & Oct 13
- 3 Convened Superintendent's Principal Advisory Committee on Oct 17
- 4 Hosted meeting with Office of World Languages for families of ELL students on Oct 24
- 5 Engaged Senior Cabinet on Oct 18 and Oct 25
- 6 Convened Superintendent's Teacher Advisory Committee on Nov 2

Future engagement efforts include:

- Student focus groups
- GO Team representatives from across district – Nov 9 (6:30 p.m. @ Young MS)
- Community meeting open to the general public – Nov 10 (6:30 p.m. @ Brown MS)
- Written feedback is being collected through our Turnaround website @ www.atlantapublicschools.us/schoolturnaround

Stakeholders identified areas of progress and opportunities for improvement

Stakeholders acknowledge progress...

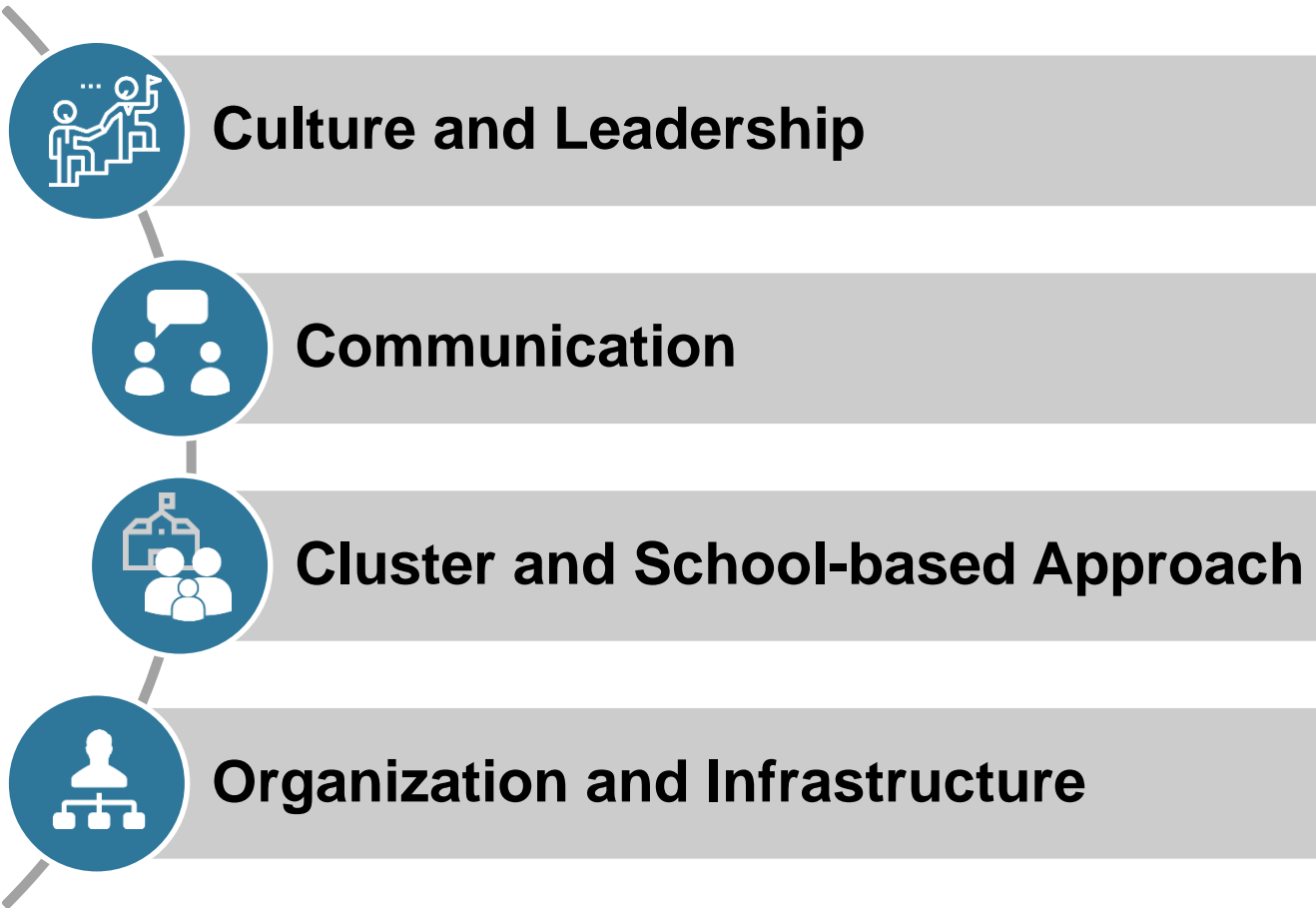
- Back-to-School Bash
- Curriculum nights
- GO Teams
- Participation in this project
- Praise for staff and programs in individual schools
- Preserving school legacy



BUT... continue to feel frustrated by...

- Not consistently feeling welcomed, valued or respected
- Inconsistent, inaccurate communication that is not timely or targeted to the audience
- Challenges with navigating the physical space within schools and CLL
- Lack of clear expectations and boundaries to support effective engagement
- Providing input and feedback that feels like APS is just “checking the box”
- Unrealistic implementation plans and timelines
- The fragmented approach that does not “meet people where they are”
- Lack of resources to support engagement within clusters and schools

Four themes emerged from stakeholder feedback



Leaders must focus on building a culture of engagement and holding people accountable for creating a welcoming environment



Culture and Leadership

- Commit to engagement standards and accountability at all levels of leadership
- Ensure everyone is responsible for creating a welcoming environment
- Rebuild trust through strategic intent and consistency in actions and interactions
- Develop expectations and boundaries to support effective partnerships and collaboration with families and alumni
- Invest in recruitment strategies and professional development to support positive engagement

Authentic, two-way communication builds trust, enhances relationships and is the foundation for increased engagement at all levels



Communication

- Ensure communication is accurate, consistent and relevant to all stakeholders, particularly parents/caregivers and alumni
- Personalize and provide vehicles for interaction when communicating with parents/caregivers, whenever possible
- Embed interpretation and translation services in all communications
- Leverage technology, including social media and digital platforms, to extend reach to parents/caregivers and alumni
- Provide access to and navigation within schools and CLL that align with welcoming environment standards

Effective engagement must align with vision and standards, and should be tailored based on needs of clusters, schools and communities



Cluster and School-based Approach

- Acknowledge that schools and teachers are the engagement “front-line”
- Commit to meet families “where they are”
- Strengthen engagement and relationships through increased interconnections within clusters
- Expand virtual engagement opportunities to broaden participation
- Be intentional about cultivating relationships with alumni and identify specific ways that they can support students

Investment in organization and infrastructure must align strategy and resources to support engagement goals



Organization and Infrastructure

- Ensure infrastructure and resources are aligned at the district, cluster and school level
- Empower parents/caregivers to support their children and be effective partners
- Build capacity of Parent Liaisons to support the school and cluster engagement strategies
- Expand partnerships to better serve family and community needs
- Drive accountability and consistency through performance management, evaluation, and reporting systems
- Invest in staff development to build capacity

Feedback from internal and external stakeholders aligned with best practice research

Family and Community Engagement

- Cultivate a welcoming environment
- Develop channels for two-way communication
- Build staff capacity to facilitate effective engagement
- Educate and engage parents
- Engage the community

Alumni Engagement*

- Connect alumni early and extend engagement throughout life
- Align activities to mission and vision
- Create a continuum of activities
- Create focal point of contact for programming and communication
- Use data to target programming and communication

**EFFECTIVE FAMILY AND
ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT**

Your feedback:

On a scale of 1 – 5*, how well do these 4 themes capture the most critical issues that should be incorporated into the district's parent/alumni strategy?



Culture and Leadership



Communication



Cluster and School-based Approach



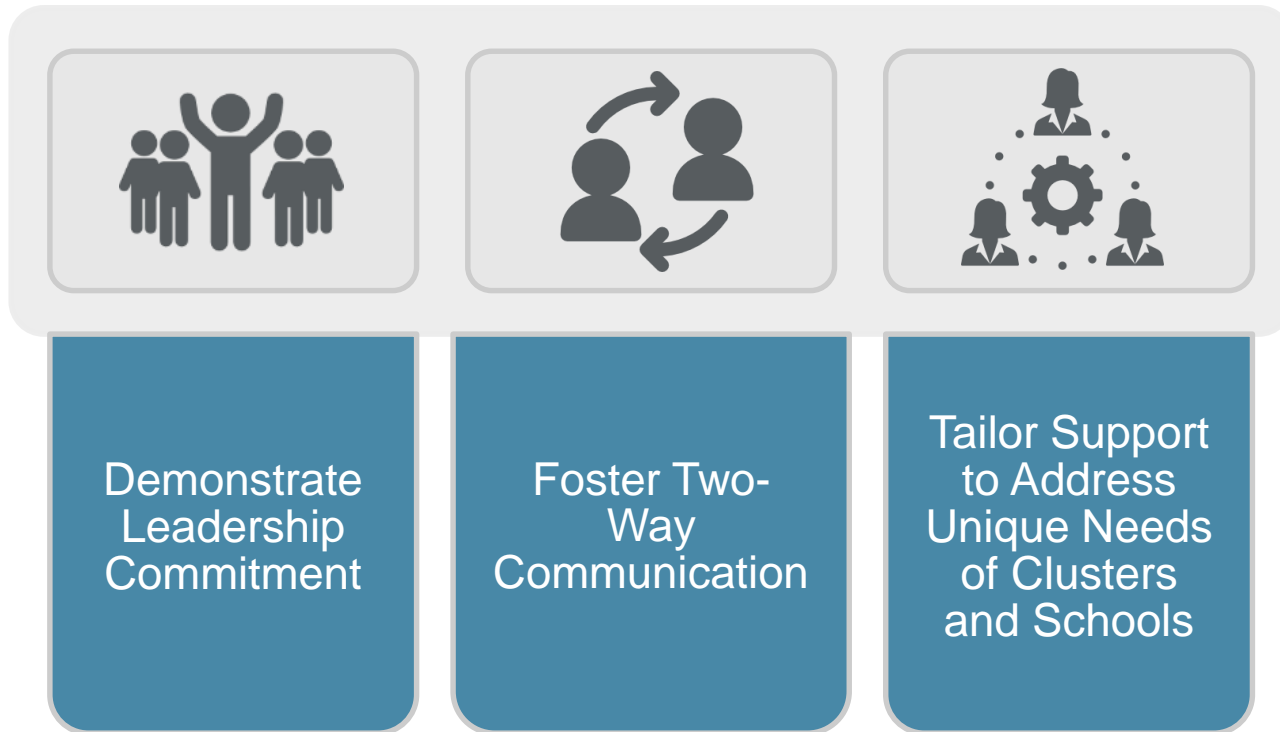
Organization and Infrastructure

*1 being "Not at All" 5 being "Extremely Well"

Based upon the themes that emerged through the engagement process, we are considering 3 high-level recommendations

VISION

A high-performing school district where students love to learn, educators inspire, families engage, and the community trusts the system.



Draft Recommendation 1: Demonstrate Leadership Commitment

1

Adopt board policy

Adopt Board Policy to commit to effective engagement that reflects agreed upon guiding principles, such as:

- Make engagement an integral part of APS culture
- Balance safety and security needs to create a “welcoming place”
- Listen and provide timely responses

2

Define standards and accountability

Define standards and expectations for engagement and integrate into performance management system to support a welcoming environment; align to culture work around core values.

3

Empower GO Teams

Empower and support GO Teams to drive engagement and innovation; ensure GO Teams have tools and support to develop their own school-based engagement plans and promote PLUS small grants program for GO Team engagement initiatives.

Other potential strategies:

- Revisit Parent Center strategy, pilot Community School concept
- Provide resources to support partnerships in their efforts to contribute to schools

Draft Recommendation 2: Foster Two-Way Communication

4

Launch technology-enabled communications

Launch APS app to enhance and support communication with parents/caregivers.

5

Commit to clear, timely and accurate communications

Commit to a leadership approach that values transparency and effective communication for ALL families; implement strategy to ensure communication platforms including calendars are accessible, easy to use and up to date at the district, cluster and school level.

6

Create feedback loop

Create stakeholder feedback loop to assess and evaluate progress.

Other potential strategies:

- Assess and develop recommendations to increase awareness and use of interpretation and translation services available and also explore opportunities to expand service offerings.

Blackboard Parent Link App Demo

Draft Recommendation 3: Tailor-Support to Address the Unique Needs of Clusters and Schools

7

Establish dedicated leader

Establish a dedicated leader responsible for coordinating, integrating and providing parent/caregiver and alumni engagement support to clusters and schools.

8

Provide schools with a choice of tailored engagement initiatives

Provide schools with the opportunity to opt-in to one of three initiatives:

- 1) Academic Parent Teacher Team Program - training around effective academic parent conferences; training and stipends for home visits
- 2) Removing Barriers Program – access to partnerships and funds to provide transportation support, childcare, wrap-around supports, etc. to reduce barriers for engagement and to meet families where they are
- 3) School Designed Engagement Program – access to additional pool of limited funds to launch new engagement ideas that meet funding criteria and have support of GO Teams

9

Provide professional development

Integrate effective engagement strategies into district culture initiative (including teachers and instructional staff), GO Team implementation, and targeted professional development for Parent Liaisons and front office staff with initial focus on creating a warm/welcoming environment.

Other potential strategies:

- Explore partnership opportunities with umbrella APS alumni association
- Evaluate new Title I regulations to maximize resources committed to family engagement

Stakeholder feedback provided the foundation for recommendations that, if implemented with fidelity, will integrate family and alumni engagement into our DNA

IF WE...

1. Adopt board policy
2. Define standards & accountability
3. Empower GO Teams
4. Launch technology-enabled communications
5. Commit to clear, timely and accurate communications
6. Create feedback loop
7. Establish dedicated leader
8. Provide schools with a choice of tailored engagement initiatives
9. Provide professional development



Successfully implement the other components of the district's strategic plan (including the turnaround strategy)

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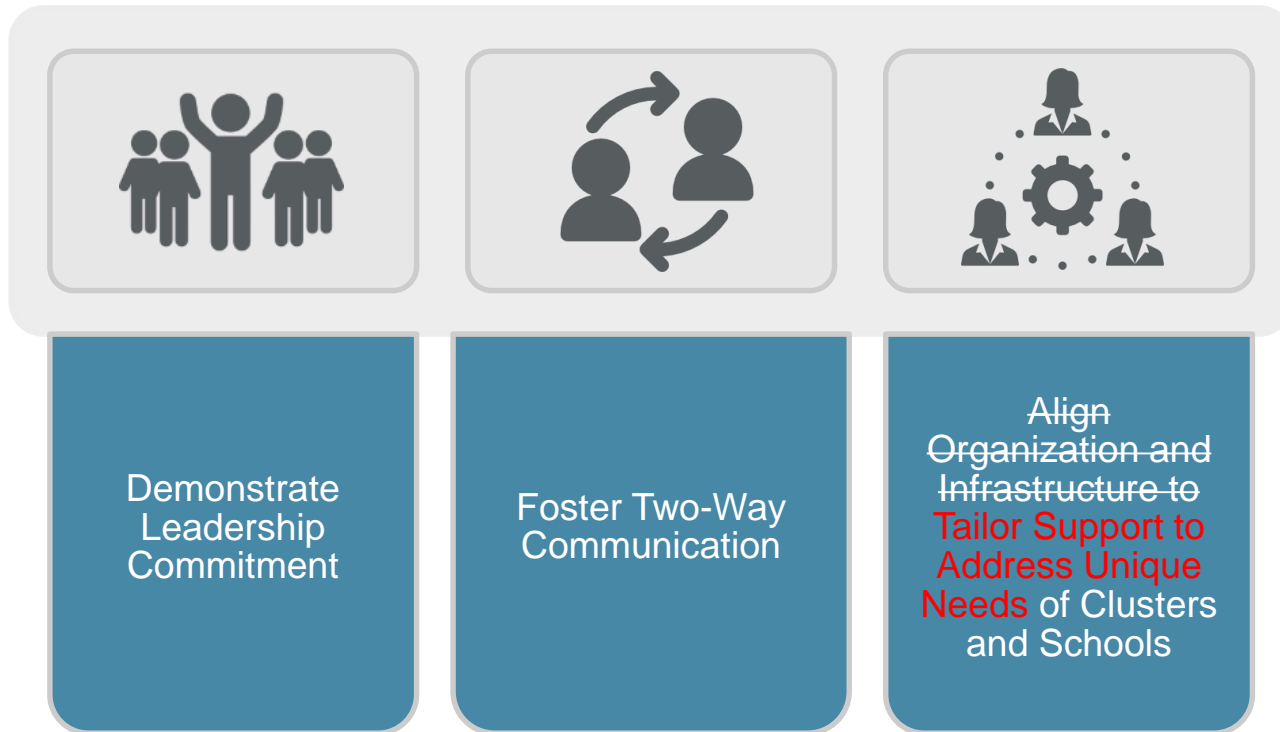
APS students have choice-filled lives

Appendix (previous draft of strategy with markups)

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