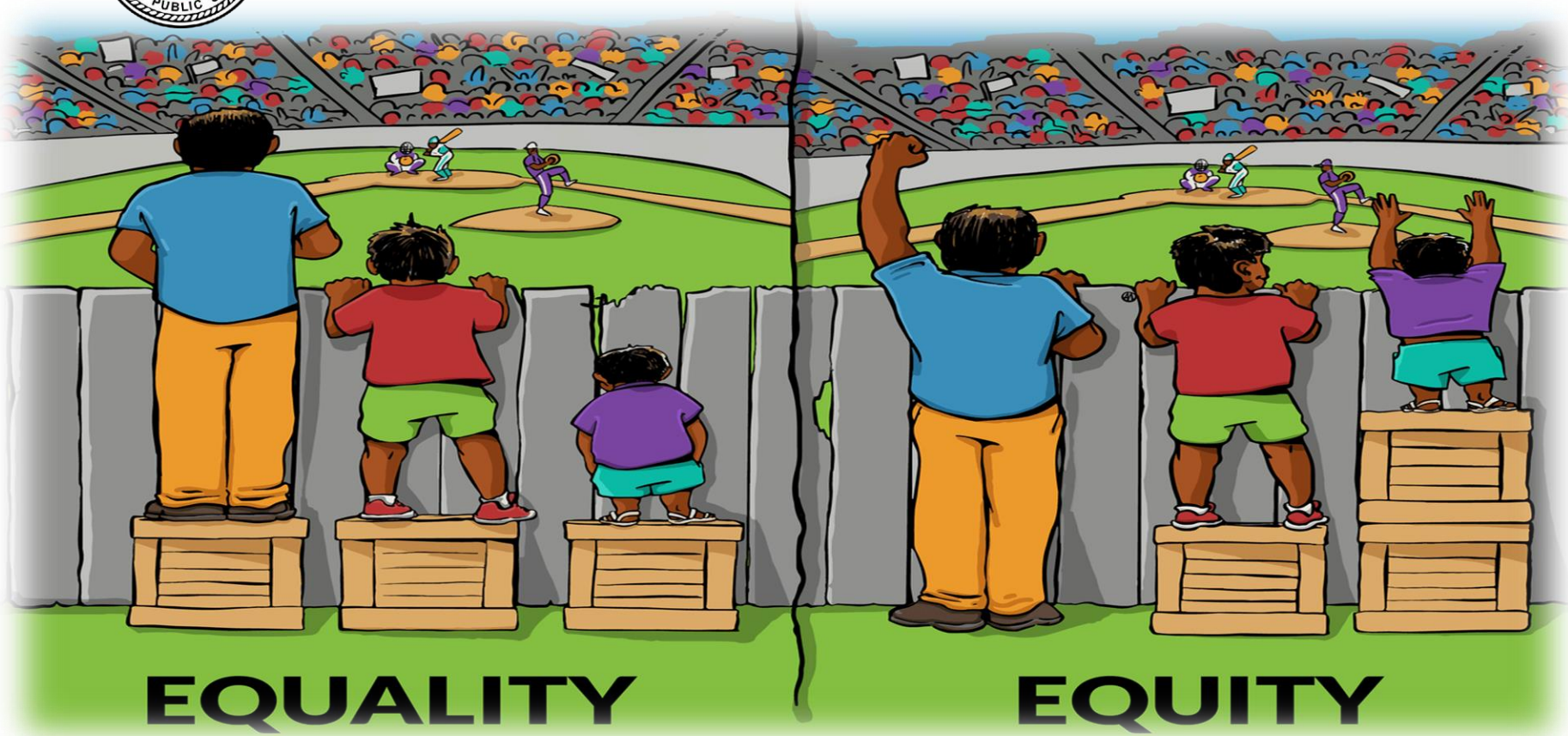




EQUITY & EXCELLENCE AT APS



EQUALITY

EQUITY



EQUITY & EXCELLENCE AT APS

EQUITY TASKFORCE MEMBERS

Cynthia Briscoe Brown
Leslie Grant
Erika Mitchell

Equity Advisory Taskforce
Equity Advisory Taskforce
Equity Advisory Taskforce
Equity Advisory Taskforce
Equity Advisory Taskforce
Equity Advisory Taskforce
Equity Advisory Taskforce
Equity Advisory Taskforce
Equity Advisory Taskforce
Equity Advisory Taskforce

District 1
District 2
District 3
District 4
District 5
District 6
At-Large Seat 7
At-Large Seat 8
At-Large Seat 9

Trinity Lewis
Semira Ajani
Morna Francis
Lisa Dwyer
Shamkia M. Yizar
Jessica Johnson
Greg Clay
Tom Dunn
Miriam Archibong



EQUITY & EXCELLENCE AT APS

GUIDING PRINCIPLE ON EQUITY?

Equity is strategic decision-making, with the goal of remedying opportunity and learning gaps, and creating a barrier free environment, which enables all students to graduate ready for college and career.

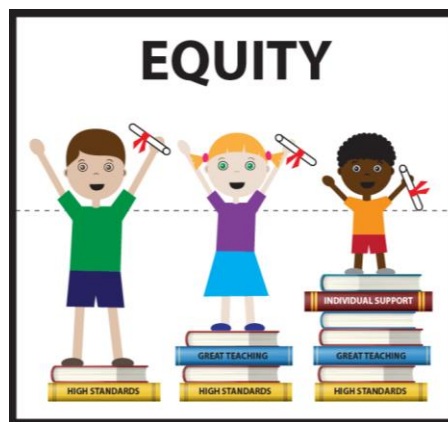


EQUITY & EXCELLENCE AT APS

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

PHASE I

Members of the committee were asked to conduct **“Empathize” Interviews**. These are brief conversations that connected members to the authentic experiences of the Atlanta Public Schools community and staff, related to equity and inequity. Although we want to hear about people’s experiences of inequity, their positive experiences are equally valuable, as we consider what we want to foster and build.



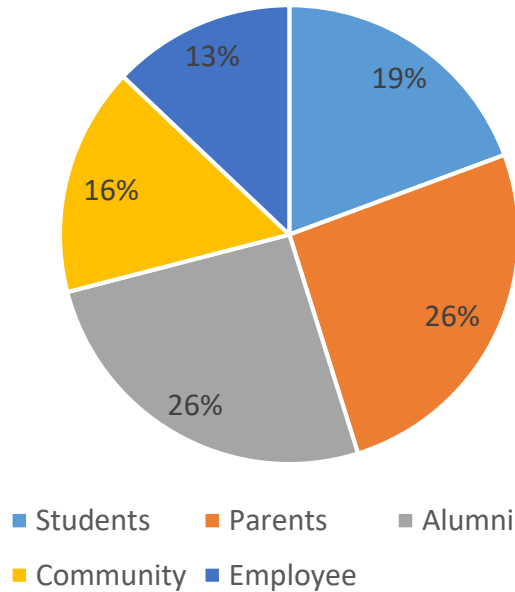
PHASE II

The Board conducted engagement sessions with community stakeholders to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the drafted Equity Policy. The Equity policy was drafted by the Equity Taskforce and vetted by the Advisory Committee prior to sharing it with community.



PHASE I - COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

INPUT



**CONDUCTED
62
INTERVIEWS**



EQUITY & EXCELLENCE AT APS

Reviewed Sample Equity Policies

- ❖ **Roanoke, VA School District**
- ❖ **Norfolk, VA School District**
- ❖ **Portland, OR School District**
- ❖ **Oakland, CA Unified School District**



EQUITY & EXCELLENCE AT APS

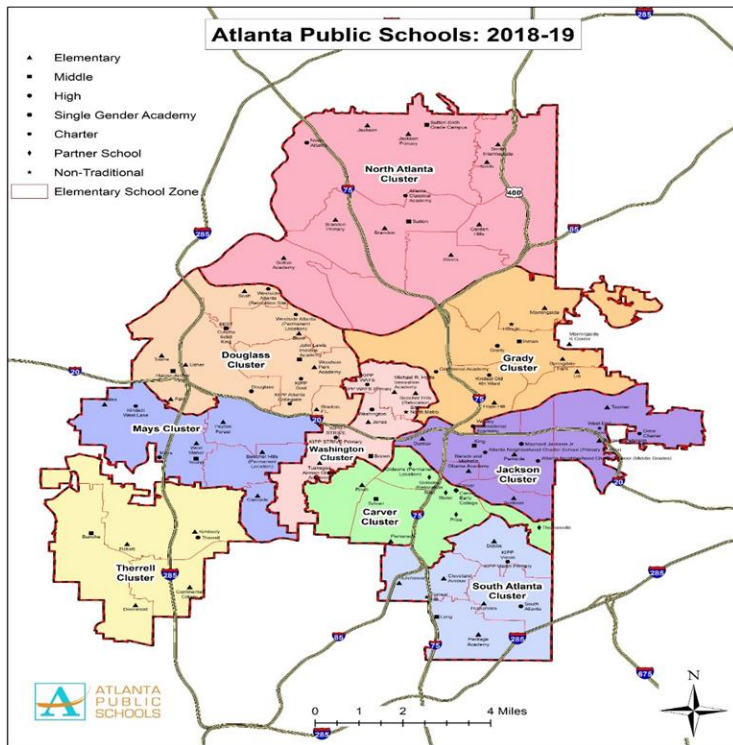
Process for drafting an Equity Policy





EQUITY & EXCELLENCE AT APS

PHASE II - COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



**HOSTED 4
ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS
RESULTING IN FEEDBACK FROM
OVER 120 STAKEHOLDERS**

*** Community Engagement Sessions were held in all quadrants of the District: Sutton Middle School, King Middle School, Long Middle School and Mays High School.



EQUITY & EXCELLENCE AT APS

STRENGTHS

Community Stakeholders stated that the policy:

- **Presented** a well-written Purpose/Call to Action
- **Developed** strong goals
- **Acknowledged** historic & systemic inequity
- **Called** out race as a focus
- **Addressed** the results of systemic oppression and multigenerational poverty
- **Identified** key areas of focus for evaluation





EQUITY & EXCELLENCE AT APS

WEAKNESSES

Community Stakeholders stated that the policy does *not*:

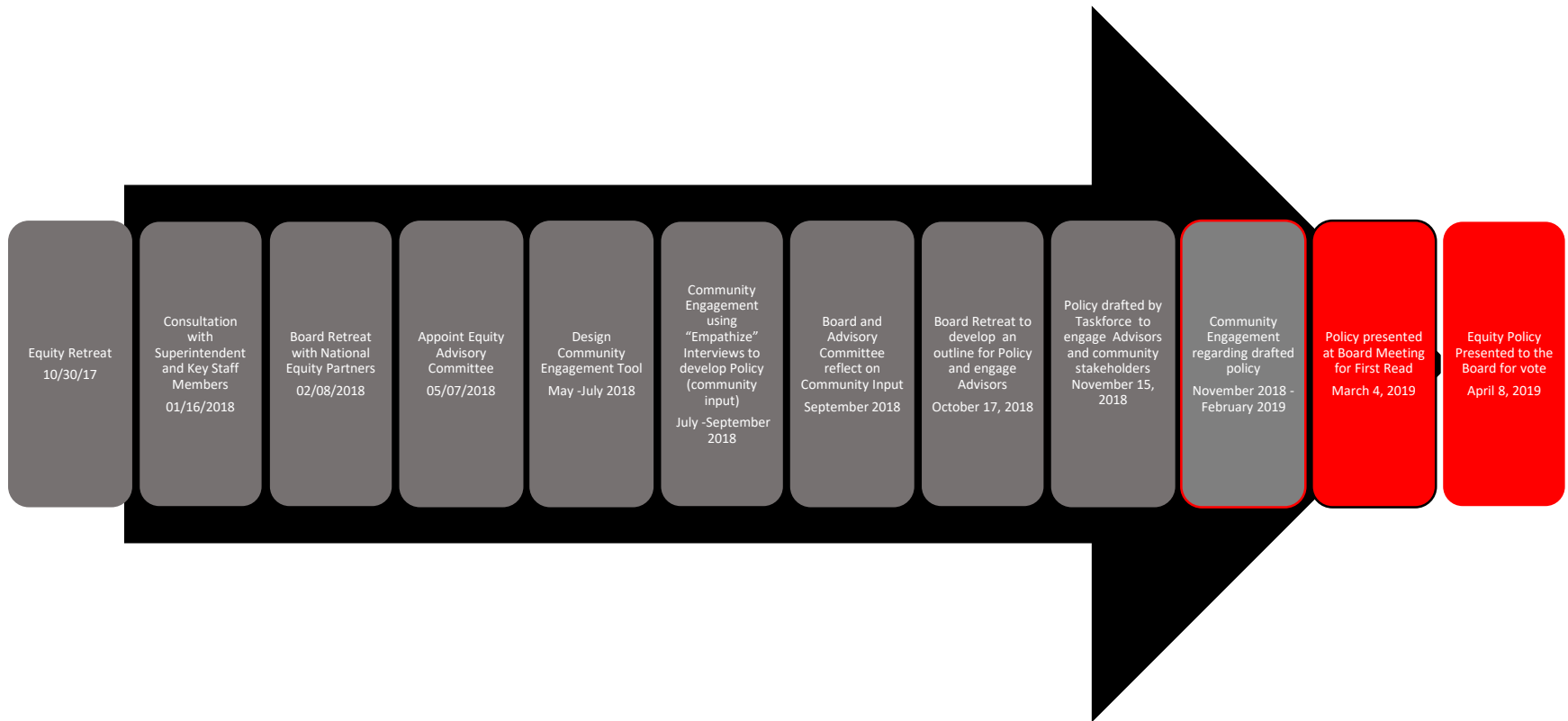
- **Mention** a parent element
- **Speak** to the true equity of schools
- **Establish** SMART Goals
- **Address** Teacher Quality
- **Reference** the data received from audit
- **Include** a level of engagement for stakeholders
- **Focus** on students with special needs
- **Produce** a clear level of accountability for the district
- **Account** for a needs assessment





EQUITY & EXCELLENCE AT APS

Equity Policy Timeline



Creating a System of Excellent Schools

25 February 2019

Agenda

Topic

▶ **Goal and Project History**

Project Deliverables

Community Engagement to Date

Project Deliverables Detail

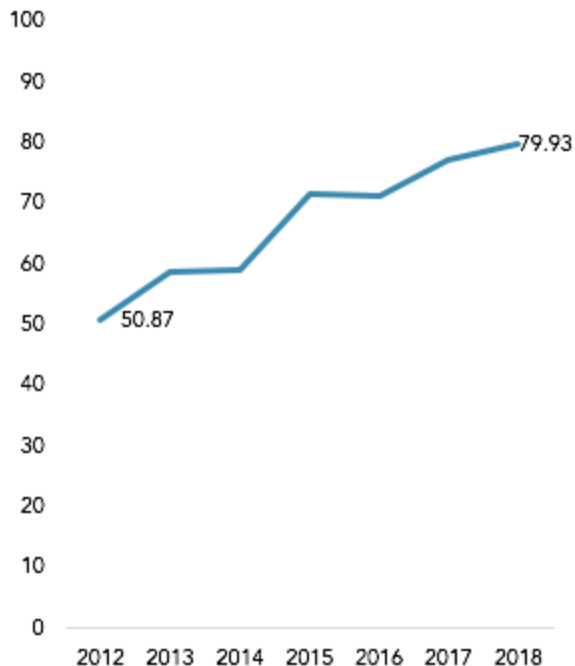
Next Steps

While APS has made much progress, persistent achievement gaps remain and not every student has access to an excellent school

APS' on-time graduation rate is at an all-time high of 79.9%, up a remarkable 29% points since 2012. Yet, Black and Hispanic students remain nearly 20% points behind White students and achievement gaps have closed less than 3% points over the past six years.

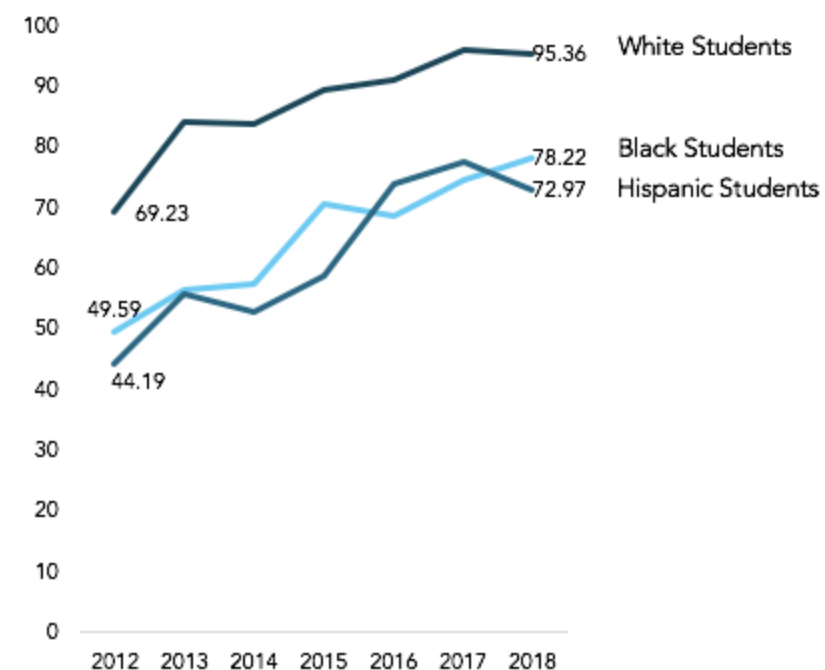
Graduation Rate, All Students

% of students graduating in 4 years, 2012-2018



Graduation Rate, By Race/Ethnicity

% of students graduating in 4 years, 2012-2018



Agenda

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The “north star” for this effort was to define and enact a vision of excellence for APS and our system of schools



We must create a system of excellent schools that serves the needs and aspirations of ***Every Student*** through a clear vision of excellence and a plan to operationalize that vision.

Therefore, through the project, we have sought to:

- ▶ Align on a **definition of school excellence** that integrates with existing definitions of teaching and leadership excellence and includes a profile of an APS graduate;
- ▶ Determine how to best measure schools’ **progress toward excellence** and determine **how to respond** when schools do or don’t fulfill the vision; and
- ▶ Determine how to best advance the vision **through a system of excellent schools** that includes neighborhood, charter and partner schools, but may also include other school models.

Illustrative timeline of events going forward

WINTER 2019	SUMMER 2019	SY19-20	SY20-21	SY21-22	SY22-23	SY23-24	
<p><u>March 4</u> Consider and vote on relevant actions from the SES project</p>	<p>Build ESF</p> <p>Develop a comprehensive set of measures, floors, goals and weights to complete the design of the Excellent Schools Framework</p> <p>Set up necessary data creation processes</p>		<p>First year of ESF</p> <p>Implement the System of Excellent Schools work</p>			<p>First year of actions</p> <p>Utilize actions framework based on multiple years of ESF results</p>	
	<p>Adopt plan</p> <p>Adopt and begin implementation of a multi-year plan for all System of Excellent Schools work</p>	<p>Pilot ESF</p> <p>Pilot the Excellent Schools Framework in order to gain data to inform its refinement and finalization</p>					
	<p>Study and refine Support and Action Framework</p> <p>Determine implementation criteria for the Excellent Schools Support and Action Framework</p>						
	<p>Develop and improve framework to measure excellence of services and supports for schools</p>	<p>Provide, evaluate and improve school supports</p>					
	<p>Continue to design and facilitate opportunities for broad stakeholder engagement</p>						
	<p>Assess progress, risks, benefits*</p>	<p>Assess progress, risks, benefits</p>	<p>Assess progress, risks, benefits</p>				

*Annual assessment should include financial implications and new stakeholder input

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Stakeholders have invested approximately 100 hours in envisioning, shaping, and improving the deliverables of this project

Stakeholder Group	Stakeholders Reached	Engagement Summary
Working Group	6 district leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17 weekly meetings totaling >20 hours of engagement • <i>Weekly meetings planned through March</i>
SELT	~30 district senior executives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 full-day retreats and 4 working sessions totaling >30 hours of engagement
Advisory Committee	>40 teachers, principals, GO team members, community members, central office leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 design and feedback sessions totaling 12 hours of engagement, often with homework in between • <i>1 more possible engagement</i>
Expanded Cabinet and Principals Meetings	~66 principals ~134 district leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 meetings totaling >12 hours of engagement
Assistant Principals	~140 Assistant Principals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 meeting, 2 sessions, totaling 1.5 hours of engagement
Community Survey	~650 respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community-wide survey generating approximately 645 unique responses
Community Meetings	~250 community members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 community meetings between November and January • 9 Cluster Advisory Team meetings scheduled through February
Board	9 elected leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 full-day retreats and 2 learning trips • Multiple additional preparation meetings • 2 upcoming business meetings

Stakeholder feedback was generally supportive of APS focusing on a System of Excellent Schools, but opinions vary on the details

1 Stakeholders support adopting a Vision of Excellence, are generally aligned around the draft presented, and desire clear integration between the Vision and other major bodies of work in the district.

- Stakeholders expressed general alignment about the idea of adopting a Vision of Excellence and Portrait of a Graduate
- Many similar descriptors of excellent schools surfaced across stakeholders and focus on a holistic set of both leading indicators and student academic and social-emotional learning outcomes
- The three domains and 12 indicators have largely resonated with stakeholders
- Stakeholders have a strong desire to explicitly integrate the Vision of Excellence with the district Strategic Plan, the Board's equity work, Signature Programs, and the district's Definitions of Teaching and Leadership Excellence

Stakeholder feedback was generally supportive of APS focusing on a System of Excellent Schools, but opinions vary on the details

2 District leaders generally support the idea of adopting an Atlanta-specific Excellent Schools Framework (ESF); community members are interested in an ESF that takes a holistic approach, but also feel it may place undue pressure on schools.

- Stakeholders expressed general alignment that APS would benefit from a local Framework that builds upon CCRPI and includes a more holistic set of measures
- While many stakeholders supported the idea of investing in new and necessary data sources aligned to the Vision of Excellence, there were mixed opinions on how pervasively survey-based measures should be used
- There was a wide range of opinions on specific measures, weights and approaches to standard-setting, all of which must be explored in the next phase of this work and resolved prior to full implementation
- The Board and APS leadership have expressed a desire to improve accountability for the quality of central office supports and services

Stakeholder feedback was generally supportive of APS focusing on a System of Excellent Schools, but opinions vary on the details

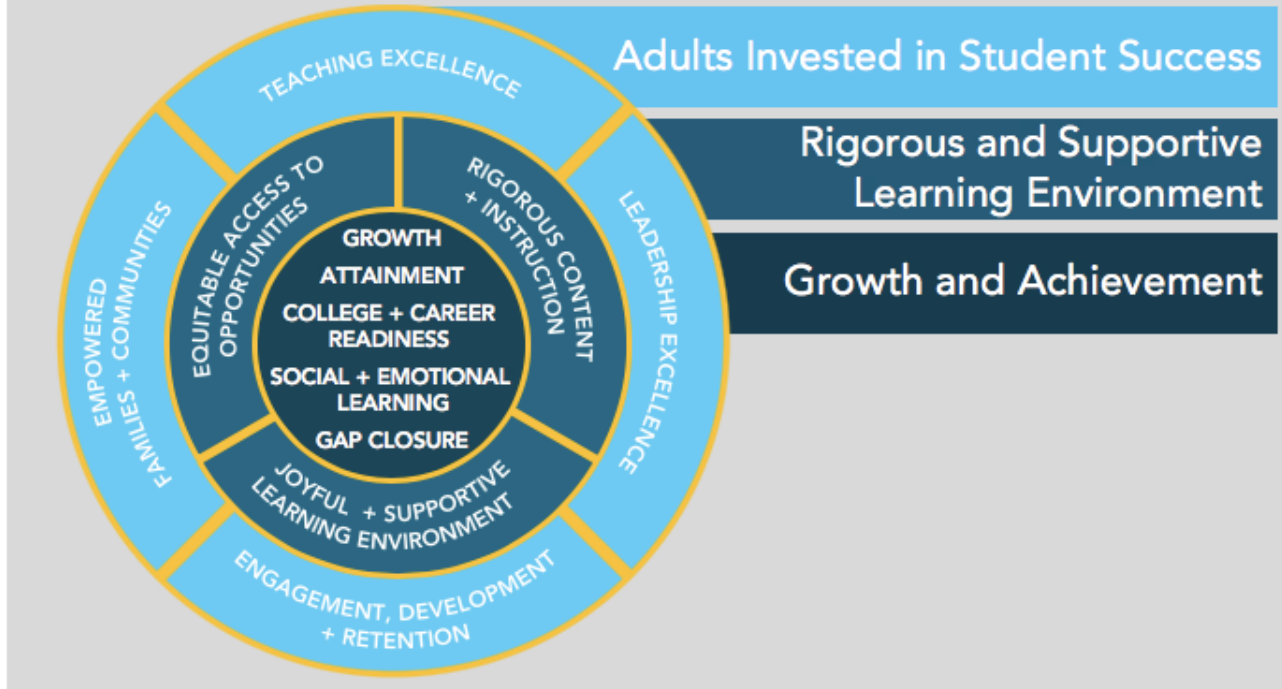
- 3 Stakeholders agree that an Excellent Schools Support and Action Framework could benefit the district, but only if it is rolled out in conjunction with a continued focus on improving district supports and can be applied with flexibility; there is no clear pattern of opinions on which specific actions are most helpful.**
- All constituents believed that the district must invest in expanding and improving its school supports and services
 - Many stakeholder groups expressed cautious optimism that the Framework could be impactful for APS by driving transparency and predictability
 - Stakeholders generally wanted to avoid creating a Framework that is so prescriptive there's limited room for discretion and response to schools' unique contexts
 - Most stakeholder groups identified both benefits and risks of adopting a codified Framework; while some felt risks could be mitigated, others were more skeptical
 - There was a wide range of opinions on which specific actions are best suited to drive increased access to excellent schools and seats across the system; this must be explored in the next phase of this work

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Draft Vision of Excellence

Excellent schools exist within a broader System of Excellence, anchored in APS' Strategic Plan, that ensures supports and services are efficient, effective and equitable.*



Our Commitment to Equity

... is woven throughout the Vision of Excellence with the goal of remedying opportunity and learning gaps and creating a barrier-free environment which enables all students to graduate ready for college and career.**

*APS Board and leadership are committed to creating a service-oriented ecosystem in support of school excellence. Measuring central office excellence and the impact of specific supports--and engaging in needed continuous improvement--should be a priority of the district's next strategic plan.

**To be updated upon completion of the Board's equity task force efforts.

Draft Vision of Excellence

Domain 1

ADULTS INVESTED IN STUDENT SUCCESS

The school strategically leverages and supports teachers, school leaders, families and community partners in serving as equal and effective stewards of student success.

INDICATORS

1A. Teaching Excellence: Teachers are advancing achievement for all students; adults hold high expectations of students

1B. Leadership Excellence: School leadership is effective; allocates people, time and money toward priorities; holds high expectations for adults and students

1C. Engagement, Development and Retention: Staff feel supported, are developing their skills, deepening their connections with each other, growing their social and emotional competencies, and are retained at the school over time

1D. Empowered Families and Communities: Families are equipped with the information and resources they need to advocate for their students, the community trusts the school, and partners are invested in its mission

Draft Vision of Excellence

Domain 2

RIGOROUS AND SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The school has a safe, trusting, and collaborative environment conducive to learning, where all students are exposed to rigor and needed interventions, are challenged to achieve, take ownership of their academic journey, and are deeply and joyfully engaged in learning.

INDICATORS

2A. Rigorous Content and Instruction: All students are exposed to rigorous and relevant content; instruction is standards-based, culturally responsive and challenging

2B. Equitable Opportunities: All students have equitable support services and opportunities for enrichment and holistic development

2C. Joyful and Supportive Learning Environment: The school environment is clean and safe; students, families and staff have strong, trusting interpersonal relationships; students are supported with needed interventions; students feel supported to take risks and take ownership of their academic journey; students' learning experiences are joyful and challenging

Draft Vision of Excellence

Domain 3

GROWTH AND ACHIEVEMENT

The school ensures that all students, regardless of background, attain the skills, knowledge bases, mindsets and dispositions they need to succeed in college, career and community. Students of all backgrounds make needed annual growth to ensure they graduate with the social, emotional and academic skills needed for success and this growth results in the closure or elimination of gaps between student subgroups.

INDICATORS

3A. Growth: Students of all achievement levels are making annual growth

3B. Attainment: Students are performing at or above grade level expectations

3C. College and Career Readiness: Both before and during high school, students are increasing their readiness for college and career so they can enter postsecondary education without remediation and are competitive in the job market

3D. Social and Emotional and Whole Child Learning: Students are actively developing social-emotional competencies and mindsets needed for lifelong citizenship and a social justice orientation

3E. Gap Closure: Inequitable learning gaps between student subgroups are closing

A list of draft measures was developed to illustrate how the Framework could assess the various indicators of the Vision of Excellence

Generated initial list of measures through multiple sources

- Cross-walk of 2017 and 2018 CCRPI measures
- Inventory of school-level data on APS Insights and Governor's Office of Student Achievement data portal
- Cross-walk of domains and items on Georgia statewide student, parent, staff surveys, as well as APS Gallup survey
- Ideas from other systems nationally and the research literature

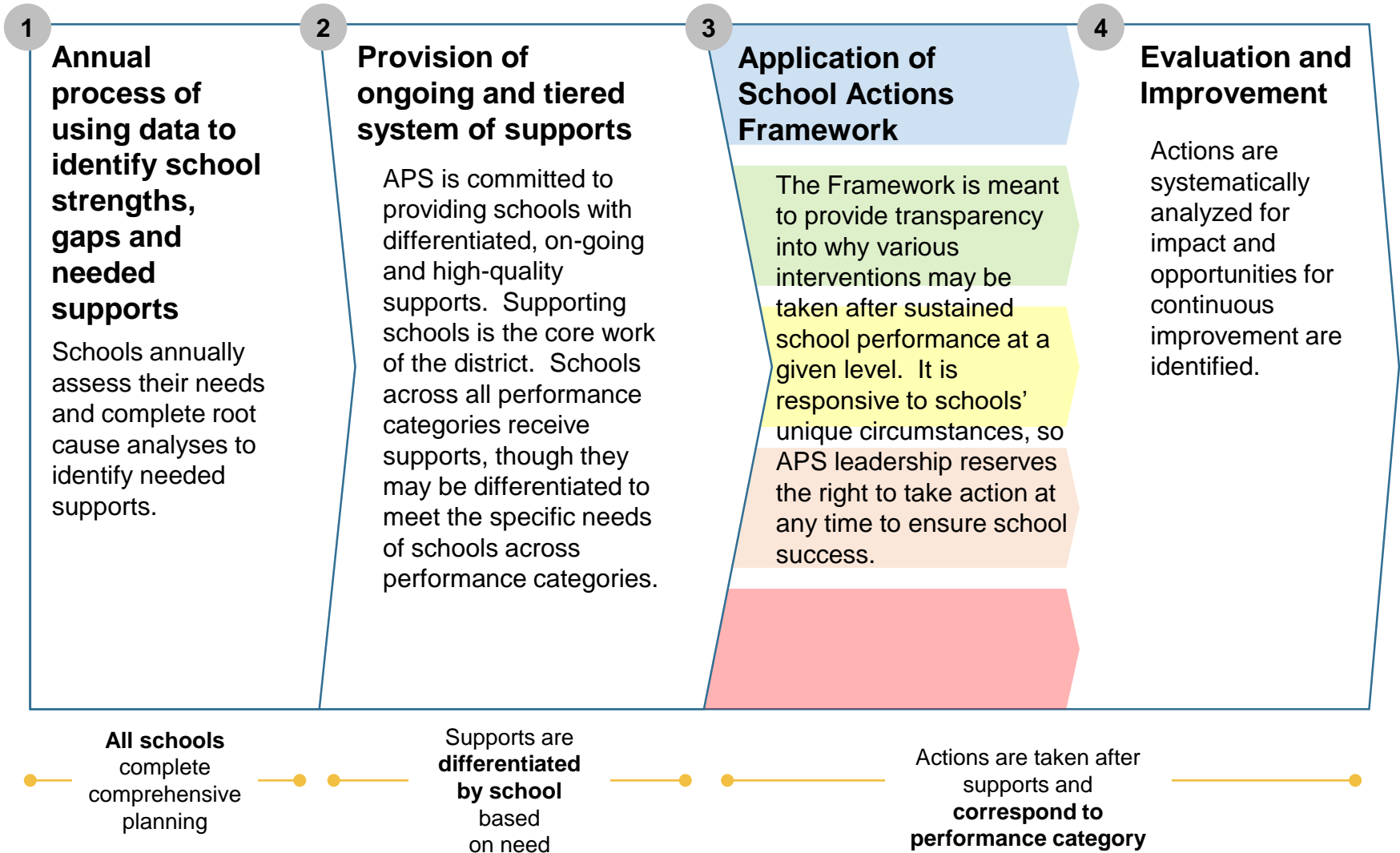
Filtered measures based on their fitness for use according to 6 design principles

- Build from the state's CCRPI when appropriate and possible;
- Contain multiple measures that expand beyond test scores to create a holistic view of school performance;
- Place social-emotional and whole child learning alongside academic outcomes at the core of the model;
- Organize logically, connecting inputs required for student success to expected outcomes;
- Prioritize areas that are in schools' locus of control; and
- Include common measures that apply to all school types, with the exception of alternative education campuses

Resulted in a possible list of approximately 70 measures that must be further analyzed and refined for their measurement validity

- **29%** come from a readily available data source and likely do not require additional development before use
- **55%** come from data sources that require some evaluation and improvement before use
- **16%** do not have an extant data source and require data creation and measure development

Draft Excellent Schools Support and Action Framework



Draft Excellent Schools Support and Action Framework



APS is committed to providing schools with differentiated, on-going and high-quality supports. Supporting schools is the core work of the district. Schools across all performance categories receive supports, though they may be differentiated to meet the specific needs of schools across performance categories.

Menu of Possible Supports

- Provide autonomies to all schools
- Codify, celebrate, and share best practices
- Systematically assess school strengths and gaps; support leader in developing a plan and implementing a set of strategies appropriate to their school's needs
- Provide universal or intensive supports, possibly tiered to meet unique needs across performance categories
- Create intentional collaboration structures to share with and learn across schools
- When possible, Incentivize high performing teachers and leaders to support lower performing schools
- When needed, increase focus on teacher development and retention
- When needed, increase focus on leadership development and retention
- When needed, intensify whole-school supports and oversight
- When needed, increase non-academic support personnel
- Increase personnel to provide targeted academic support to students (i.e., reading and math specialists)

Draft Excellent Schools Support and Action Framework



The Framework is meant to provide transparency into why various interventions may be taken after sustained school performance at a given level. It is responsive to schools' unique circumstances, so APS leadership reserves the right to take action at any time to ensure school success.

Exceeds Expectations*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replicate school or program elements • Extend empowerment status with increased autonomy and accountability, possibly to include community governance
Meets Expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form an empowerment zone with multiple empowerment schools, possibly to include community governance • Expand enrollment
Approaching Expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In partnership with the community, create a school improvement or re-design plan that includes Board-monitored performance goals • Implement a strategic staffing initiative to incentivize proven teachers to support school improvement • Extend empowerment status with increased autonomy and accountability, possibly to include community governance • Form an empowerment zone with multiple empowerment schools, possibly to include community governance
Needs Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In partnership with the community, create a comprehensive redesign plan including Board-monitored performance goals • Enable student transfer to higher performing schools • Secure a partner to collaborate with the district to operate the school • Extend empowerment status with increased autonomy and accountability, possibly to include community governance
Beginning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form an empowerment zone with multiple empowerment schools, possibly to include community governance • Merge with a higher performing school • Reconstitute staff and leadership • Close, possibly with a re-launch and/or a solicitation for new school petitions

*Performance category colors, labels and icons are purely illustrative.

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Illustrative timeline of events going forward

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*Annual assessment should include financial implications and new stakeholder input

At its March 4th Board meeting, the Board will consider recommendations on the following

1 The adoption of a district-wide Vision of Excellence for schools and a corresponding Portrait of a Graduate

- These tools will serve as guiding documents to support increased alignment and coherence across the district
- An implementation process will be developed

2 The development of an Excellent Schools Framework with authorization for the Superintendent to continue to refine the implementation details such as measures, weights and floors

- Implementation details will be developed in alignment with the adopted Vision of Excellence and the design principles identified as important during this process
- The ESF will only be piloted if the Superintendent is confident in the validity and reliability of available measures
- As part of its due diligence prior to implementation, the Superintendent will research and share cost and staffing implications

3 The development of an Excellent Schools Support and Action Framework with authorization for the Superintendent to continue to develop and refine implementation details

- While additional design and implementation details will be developed for the set of actions currently drafted as illustrative, the Board will not determine in March 2019 which actions it will ultimately use and under what circumstances
- While not formally part of the Board actions under consideration in March 2019, the Board envisions developing a system to measure and continuously improve the quality of central office supports and services within the same timeframe and as part of its next strategic plan
- As part of its due diligence prior to implementation, the Superintendent will research and share cost and staffing implications