

BOARD BRIEF

Date: March 8, 2019

For ACTION _____

For INFORMATION X_____

Board Agenda: Yes ___

No X_____

FROM: Betty Hobbs, Ed.D., Acting Chief Human Resources Officer

THROUGH: Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools
Jim Loomis, Director of Employment Services

TO: The Honorable Cindy Anderson, Chair, and
Members of the Alexandria City School Board

TOPIC: Teach for America (TFA)

BACKGROUND:

In 2015, the Virginia Department of Education approved new licensure regulations which included the creation of a Teach for America license. The Teach for America License is a two-year provisional license. This provisional license is available to any participant in Teach for America, a nationwide nonprofit organization focused on closing the achievement gaps between students in high-income and low-income areas, who submits an application and meets the following requirements:

- Holds, at minimum, a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education;
- Has met the requirements prescribed by the Virginia Board of Education for all endorsements sought or has met the qualifying scores on the content area assessment prescribed by the board for the endorsements sought;
- Has been offered and has accepted placement in Teach for America; and
- Has successfully completed pre-service training and is participating in the professional development requirements of Teach for America, including teaching frameworks, curricula, lesson planning, instructional delivery, classroom management, assessment and evaluation of student progress, classroom diversity, and literacy development.

SUMMARY:

In December 2018, ACPS and TFA executed an agreement, consistent with the VDOE, to launch a pilot, beginning with the 2019-2020 school year, to partner in order to meet the need for highly-qualified teachers. TFA's model is to recruit nationally for high-potential teachers for vacant teaching positions in high-need schools and train them for excellence in the classroom. From the ACPS perspective, this agreement will expand the pool of quality teacher candidates at a time when traditional teacher preparation programs at colleges and universities are producing fewer graduates.

Features of the agreement:

- In order to be considered an appropriate school for placement of a teacher, the school's

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student population must be considered high poverty relative to the student population elsewhere in the district or that 50 percent or more of the school's student population receives Free and Reduced Meals.

- TFA will provide the required pre-service training to teachers presented to ACPS for the purpose of ensuring that such teachers meet the "highly qualified" teacher requirements set forth in the federal Every Student Succeeds Act and applicable state regulations.
- TFA will refer candidates to be considered for interviews along with all other candidates.

IMPACT:

During the initial year of implementation (2019-2020) the cost of TFA placement will be assumed by the VDOE with no additional cost to ACPS above the standard salary and benefits associated with any new hire. The VDOE will pay TFA the \$5000 per teacher for all expenses incurred in recruiting, selecting, providing pre-service training and continuing professional development services for teachers in the first year who are hired by ACPS. If TFA candidates are selected to serve in one of our schools; then ACPS will evaluate the academic progress of students during that year and teacher effectiveness to determine whether ACPS will continue with this partnership.

RECOMMENDATION: The Superintendent recommends School Board review.

ATTACHMENTS: Teach for America Informational Brochure

CONTACT: Betty Hobbs, Ed.D., Acting Chief Human Resources Officer