

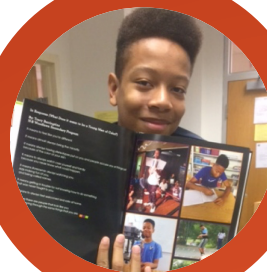


Arlington
Public
Schools

Office of Minority Achievement

BRIEFING REPORT

May 2017





MINORITY ACHIEVEMENT

The Arlington Public Schools Office of Minority Achievement (OMA) advances high expectations, facilitates equitable access, and strives to eliminate opportunity gaps for Black and Latino students as well as those from other historically marginalized communities. The OMA provides leadership and support in developing, creating, coordinating, and implementing services and programs for all students to meet high academic standards and achieve success.

The major services provided by OMA are:

- Develop and implement high-quality academic enrichment activities for students
- Provide career and college readiness opportunities for students
- Advance high and clear expectations
- Provide instructional support to schools
- Design sustained and continuous professional learning opportunities for staff

Bright Spots

The Office of Minority Achievement continues to support first generation minority students through participation in the George Mason Early Identification program. Students participating in the program receive mentoring, academic support, and leadership training in addition to taking part in a three-week summer enrichment program on George Mason's Campus. 291 Arlington Public Schools students have participated in the George Mason Early Identification Program over the last three years.

Additionally, the Office of Minority Achievement staff have been engaged with teachers and students at both Drew and Randolph Elementary Schools this year to support student literacy growth. Staff members have participated in the professional learning communities to plan and implement effective reading instruction so that all students can either meet grade level benchmarks or show substantial growth by the end of the year.

Status of Recommendations Made in 2015-16 Program Evaluation

During the 2016-17 school year, the Office of Minority Achievement moved forward in its efforts to refocus the work based on the recommendations of the recent program evaluation.

RECOMMENDATION	STATUS
Reevaluate the goals and direction for the Minority Achievement Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worked with consultant to define vision, mission, and goals • Clarified roles and responsibilities of staff
Expand efforts to ensure that instruction is culturally responsive across the system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hired three elementary teacher specialists • Provided direct support to teachers and students at elementary schools • Built opportunities for collaboration across departments and offices in defining culturally responsive instructional for Arlington Public Schools
Clarify program offerings and develop portfolio of data tools and reports to support monitoring and implementation of minority achievement and Minority Achievement programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trained Minority Achievement staff to access and manipulate data in Insight • Identified students for services based on multiple factors and implemented Professional Learning Community structure to track progress

Data that provides insight

Each year, the Office of Minority Achievement offers a variety of opportunities for students to promote academic enrichment and socioemotional development:

- Over 100 middle school girls attended the 2016 Girls' Leadership Conference at Yorktown High School where Maribel Duran, former Chief of Staff, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, US Department of Education, delivered the keynote address.
- Over 100 middle school boys and 30 volunteer mentors and presenters participated in the 2017 Boys' Leadership Conference at Kenmore Middle School.
- Between August 2016 and April 2017, 240 students participated in the SAT preparation course provided at a reduced cost and facilitated by Princeton Review.



2017 Girls' and Boys' Leadership Conference participants



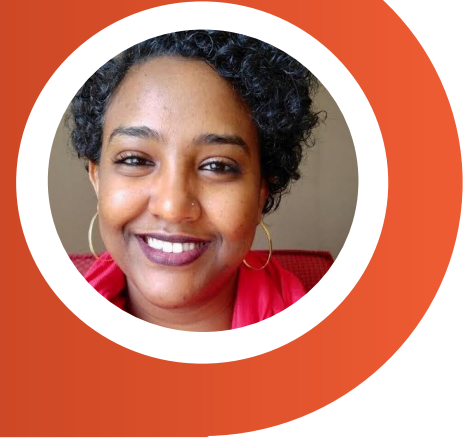
What We Learned

This year, the Office of Minority Achievement is implementing the major recommendations from the 2015-16 program evaluation, which includes defining a vision, mission, and goals, targeting who we serve, and identifying metrics to measure our impact. Throughout this process, we have learned that we will be able to increase opportunities and impact student achievement by using existing data sources to identify students who need our services most. We have also learned the importance of coordinating our efforts with other school staff to ensure we all meet students' needs effectively and efficiently. The Office of Minority Achievement provides a critical component in the development of the whole child by not only offering direct services to children, but also by helping to build capacity among school staff to support and facilitate success among all students, particularly those from historically marginalized communities.

Moving Forward

The Office of Minority Achievement will continue implement the recommendations from the recent program evaluation. Specifically, we will solidify program goals, align existing programs and services with these goals, and initiate accountability measures, such as student check-in, so we can identify whom we serve and how we serve them. We also will clarify how we plan to work with school staff to build capacity to facilitate academic success among all students.





GRADUATE SPOTLIGHT



Photo Credit: Colin Allum

GENET LAKEW

**Digital Communications, The National Urban League
Founder, The Mekonnen Family Scholarship**

Washington-Lee High School, Arlington Public Schools
BA Journalism – Howard University
MA Africana Studies – New York University

As a high school student, Genet Lakew, the daughter of Ethiopian immigrants, knew paying for college would present a financial burden. While her family emphasized education as a “gateway to opportunity and success,” they did not have the financial means to pay for a college education. Thanks to the support of minority achievement coordinator, James Sample, who encouraged Genet to apply for scholarships, she was able to attend Howard University and New York University and graduate debt free from both institutions.

At the age of only 27, after reflecting on her own experiences, Genet decided to create her own scholarship, the Mekonnen Family Scholarship, designed to help immigrant high school students from African and Caribbean communities pay for college. In its first year, this \$10,000 endowment will fund students from Washington-Lee and in subsequent years it will expand across the East Coast with an ultimate goal of reaching the national level. Still very much a support and resource for Genet, James Sample is working with her to set up the scholarship.

Source: www.vibe.com

