

THE ACADEMY OF ALAMEDA

5-YEAR STRATEGIC PLANNING REPORT



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Dear AoA Staff, Families, and Board:

It is with great excitement that I share with you this summary of the hard work and months of input from all of you to shape the vision for the next five years for The Academy of Alameda. I appreciate your honesty and insight as you let us know what we were doing well and areas where we need to improve. This information will now be thoroughly and thoughtfully



reviewed by our board and staff review team to create goals for the next five years that will help move The Academy of Alameda forward given the input suggested by our wonderful community. We want to continue building on our strengths, refining and enhancing our challenging areas, and working together as a diverse, supportive community, striving to do our very best to make sure our students, families, and staff have what they need to feel and achieve that Olympian pride!

In partnership,

Christine Chilcott
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
THE ACADEMY OF ALAMEDA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 3

AoA'S MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

MISSION

The Academy of Alameda equitably develops students into critical thinkers and lifelong learners who navigate the world with integrity and who apply their learning to empower themselves and their communities.

VISION OF STUDENT SUCCESS

The Academy of Alameda envisions a future where all students are successful, and their destinies are not determined by their demographics.

- Students develop a growth mindset that supports them to take on challenges and recognize their academic and social growth over time.
- Students build healthy relationships, feel a sense of belonging, and understand their connection to the community and broader society.
- Students acquire the knowledge, skills and experience they need to navigate in the world, think critically and communicate effectively.
- Students master the fundamentals, develop problem-solving and critical-thinking skills needed to be prepared for high school.
- Students learn to be empathic and are capable of advocating for themselves and others.
- Students graduate with a strong sense of self. They are proud in their identities and feel empowered to navigate the world.

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AoA'S MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

CORE VALUES



CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT

We continually improve our practice individually and as an organization to meet our students' needs.



COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

We are collectively responsible for supporting all of our students' academic success and social-emotional well-being.



RELATIONSHIPS

We build meaningful relationships within and between our staff, students and families.



EQUITY

We promote social justice in all aspects of our work with students, families, and staff so that we achieve equitable student outcomes.



DIVERSITY

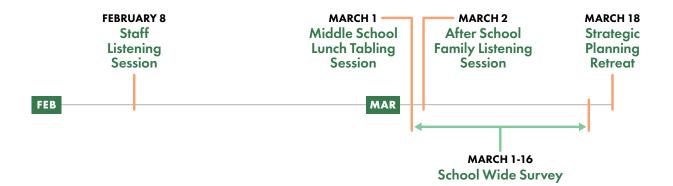
We value student and staff diversity and work to collaborate effectively across similarities and differences.

AoA'S MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES 5

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS OVERVIEW



The Academy of Alameda's 2023-2028 Strategic Plan synthesizes input and feedback from 385 key stakeholders, including AoA's staff, middle school students, families, and board members. Conducted by Be the Change Consulting, the process was designed to meet the needs of AoA's diverse community. Inquiry methods included an electronic survey, in-person listening sessions, and a full day retreat.





STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS OVERVIEW 6

LISTENING SESSIONS

In-person listening sessions were held between February and March 2023 to facilitate collective reflection and gather input from teachers and parents across all grade levels. Each session sought to understand the systems and structures currently in place to support student success, core challenges stakeholders wished to see addressed, and opportunities to strengthen AoA over the next five years.

Listening sessions centered equity as a core value and engaged approximately 77 participants.

Staff Listening Session

42 Kindergarten-8th grade staff engaged in a 90-minute session during a regularly scheduled staff professional development meeting to ensure broad participation.

Family Listening Session

We recognize that more inclusion leads to more involvement. Therefore our family listening session was designed to center families who might lack the time, technology, or language skills to respond to an electronic survey. A drop-in session was facilitated on-site during afterschool program hours and engaged approximately 35 families in 1:1 conversations.



SCHOOL WIDE SURVEY

A school wide survey was fielded between March 1 and March 16, 2023 to engage parent/caregivers, students, teachers, and school support staff on key questions related to their role and experience at AoA. The survey engaged a total of 280 respondents (81 parent/caregivers, 173 Middle School students, 11 teachers, and 15 support staff). See Appendix A for the survey tools.

Outreach methods were specific to each of the stakeholder groups and included:

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- Parent Square
- Staff newsletter
- Staff email
- Middle school lunch tabling event

STRATEGIC PLANNING RETREAT

Be The Change's final touch point was an in-person, strategic planning retreat facilitated on March 18, 2023. During the full-day session, 28 participants (4 organizational leadership team members, 10 staff, 7 parents, and 7 board members) engaged in community building activities, reviewed emerging findings, reflected on AoA's successes and accomplishments, and strategized potential responses to the surfaced challenges.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

The primary data sources for analysis included listening sessions and electronic surveys. Both listening sessions utilized open-ended question formats to collect responses from staff and parents/caregivers. To increase access and participation, staff and parents were administered a multilingual electronic survey (English, Spanish, and Chinese) with close-ended questions. Student participation was supported by an electronic survey that included both open-ended and close-ended questions. The tool was administered during a 6-8th grade lunch period at AoA.

The process for data analysis and synthesis was as follows:

- Data was clustered into themes by the facilitators.
- Data was further analyzed by constituency (parent/caregiver, staff, student)
- Emerging findings were shared during the strategic planning retreat for further engagement

Data from all inputs were synthesized in the following report.



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AoA'S BEDROCKS: ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND SUCCESSES

AoA has many successes to celebrate. The data collected as part of this report clearly indicates a whole student approach to learning that encourages each student to reach their full potential. The findings detailed in this section showcase strengths and attest to why, when given the choice of where to enroll, families select AoA.

CULTURE AND CLIMATE

AoA highly prioritizes community, inclusion, and belonging, and it shows!

- AoA Parent/Caregiver

Kids are encouraged to be who they are.

- AoA Parent/Caregiver

AoA creates spaces for students to build relationships.

- AoA Staff

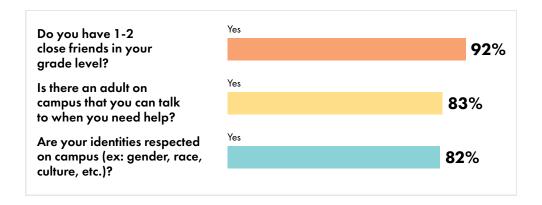
A positive and healthy school culture and climate are the foundations of high quality learning environments and create the conditions for effective teaching and learning to occur. According to the National School Climate Center, "school climate includes major spheres of school life such as safety, relationships, teaching and learning, and the environment as well as larger organizational patterns (e.g. from fragmented to shared; healthy or unhealthy)." These dimensions not only shape how students feel about being in school, but "these larger group trends shape learning and student development" (National School Climate Center, 2013).

AoA's staff understand these critical pillars of student success and work diligently to create a sense of community for students and families. Throughout stakeholder engagements, participants spoke highly of AoA's climate and culture practices. It was clear that these aspects are viewed as strengths and that across roles, there are intentional efforts made to celebrate the diverse community at AoA.

Events and structures that were named as assets included:

- Festival of Cultures
- Bingo Night
- Themed months in middle school (Women's History Month, etc.)
- Spirit week
- Dances
- Friday Coffees
- Advisory
- Morning Meetings

We were especially interested in assessing three dimensions of psychological safety for students at AoA: interpersonal relationships, staff-student relationships, and identity. When surveyed, over 80 percent of student respondents in 6-8th grade responded positively across these items that measured inclusion and belonging.



INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE AND PEDAGOGY

Love
hearing what they're
learning in their equity
studies. Teaching world news.
Talking about issues that
impact the country.

- AoA Parent/ Caregiver Teachers
model respectful
communication, problem
solving, acceptance,
and difference.

- AoA Staff

[AoA] grounds us in our universal purpose to best serve students.

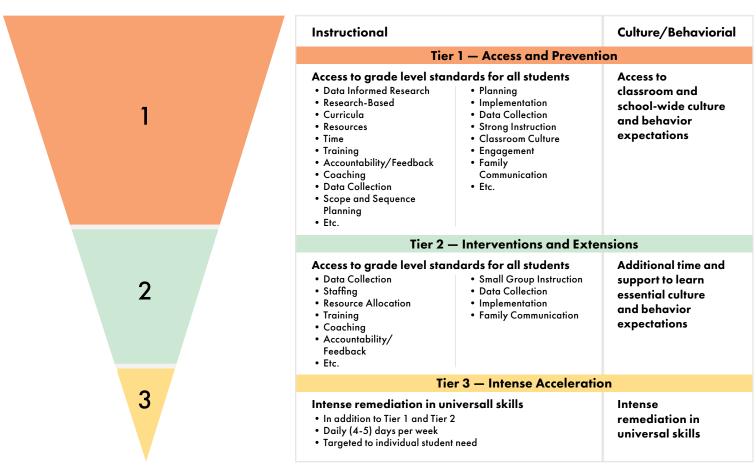
- AoA Staff

Ensuring equity in education is an essential component in narrowing the achievement and opportunity gaps for historically marginalized students. AoA's staff, leadership team, and board members work to center equity by recognizing, respecting, and attending to the diverse strengths of the students they serve. Through dialogue, multi-directional feedback, and collaboration with families, AoA creates conditions that lead to greater cross-cultural awareness and substantially better outcomes for students. This concerted effort ranked in the top 3 factors that contribute to AoA's success (51% of respondents).

Specific instructional methods, curricula, and academic services respondents named as crucial instructional supports included:

- Strong special education supports
- Culturally comprehensive curriculum
- SIPPS literacy curriculum
- Eureka² math curriculum
- Competency based grading
- Collaboration with Building 21
- A culture of continuous assessment, monitoring and student centered intervention and student centered intervention

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION MODEL AT AOA ELEMENTARY



STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

The after school program rocks! It supports working parents.

- AoA Parents/Caregivers

My kids have special needs and this school is doing a great job! Amazing support for kids with an IEP.

- AoA Parents/Caregivers

[We] have daily check-ins for students that need extra support and find ways encourage family involvement.

- AoA Staff

A critical equity practice at AOA is the attention to individualized support and case conferencing to support students who might otherwise be excluded due to their individual needs or learning differences. AoA's inclusion practices include frequent collaboration between general and special education teachers for lesson planning and curricular accommodations and differentiated instruction to support student success across all learning environments. About half of the survey respondents (51%) ranked academic support in the top three areas that contribute most to AoA's success.

Additionally, when asked if AoA is equipped with interventions needed to meet the diverse needs of students, 82 percent of staff respondents agreed or strongly agreed. The following supports and interventions were named as critical family and student support services:

- Mental health and well being supports for students
- Tutorial and advisory structure
- Intervention team and instructional aides
- TORCH After School Program
- Individualized Special Education plans

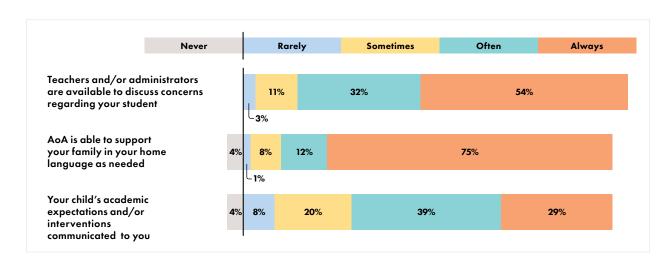
Middle school student responses aligned with staff and parent/caregiver perspectives as noted in the chart below:

When you don't understand a lesson or assignment do you know where to get support?

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT & COLLABORATION



Strong communication between school staff and families is important in any school and has special relevance for schools committed to anti-bias education. Meaningful family engagement in schools means that families and educators work in partnership to support all students in academics, social emotional learning and development and ultimately educational success. As documented in the data below, AoA effectively utilizes a range of techniques to ensure communication processes are clear to families (Ex: Parent Square, Family Representatives) and encourages a mutual exchange of information and perspectives to affirm parent/caregiver input. Families are encouraged and supported to be involved in their children's learning at home and at school. This commitment is present in the school's staffing of a dedicated Parent Liaison (1FTE) who partners with families to ensure they are actively connected and informed.



STAFFING

Teachers care and communicate!
Exceptional support from teachers and staff!

- AoA Parents/Caregivers

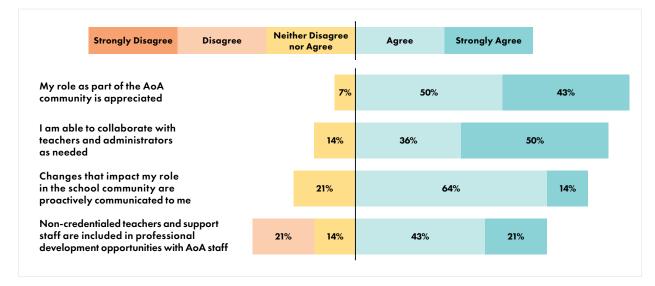
We have amazing IA staff that support teachers in the classroom.

- AoA Staff

Positive teacher-student relationships lead to increased cooperation and engagement in the classroom. Additionally they contribute to a welcoming, inclusive school climate that promotes equity, social and emotional learning and improved student outcomes. This foundational support for academic success was ranked the highest contributor to AoA's success with about two-thirds of the respondents (62%) ranking it in the top 3.

- Dedicated Deans of Students
- Strong office support staff
- Passionate and caring teachers
- Elementary staff charter
- Committed Human Resources personnel
- Staff are trained in SEL
- Grade level specific school counselors
- Strong executive leadership
- Training for new staff

Data highlighted in the table below clearly demonstrates AoA's abilty to foster a culture of collaboration that is felt among staff members. In the survey, when school support staff were asked questions regarding their sense of value, opportunities to collaborate, and their experience of transparency and communication, they responded positively.



OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER REFINEMENT

AoA applies a Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI) model to maintain a safe, positive, and supportive environment where each and every student benefits from multiple tiers of support and differentiated learning experiences. Data collected throughout our process indicates that a lack of alignment among staff impacts the effectiveness of AoA's RTI framework in supporting both the instructional and behavioral needs of students. This lack of clarity also affects aspects of AoA's culture and climate as it relates to academic rigor and behavior guidance.

CULTURE & CLIMATE

The effect on students from the COVID-19 pandemic, violence related to racism, and loss of customary school routines have resulted in a loss of both school connection and a sense of belonging. Reintegrating students to develop healthy peer to peer relationships and the skills to navigate conflict requires AoA to identify a strong foundation of Tier 1 practices that all staff are trained in and confident in implementing. Students who do not respond to this core level of support may need a more targeted approach. Determining needs should occur using data and monitoring progress to determine the effectiveness of the interventions.

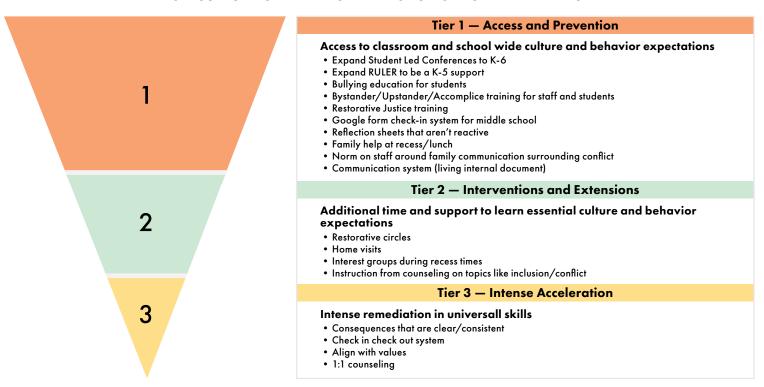


While Culture and Climate ranked among the top 3 reasons for AoA's success, the following recommendations emerged as ways to strengthen safety, belonging, and overall wellness of students and staff.

- Develop an education plan with clear metrics to measure the different ways and frequency of bullying incidents across grade levels. The plan should include clear methods for reporting incidents and communicating with students, families and staff
- Establish a restorative justice protocol specific to bullying that is grade level specific.

- Ensure staff, students, and families are informed, trained on, and have the support needed to engage in the process.
- Conduct annual Accomplice training to skill both staff and students to interrupt harm
- Prioritize Restorative Behavior Guidance in staff development plans to ensure alignment around systems and pedagogy
- Identify conflict resolution and anti-bullying curriculum to be implemented as part of SEL instruction across all grade levels

AoA CULTURE & BEHAVIORAL RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION



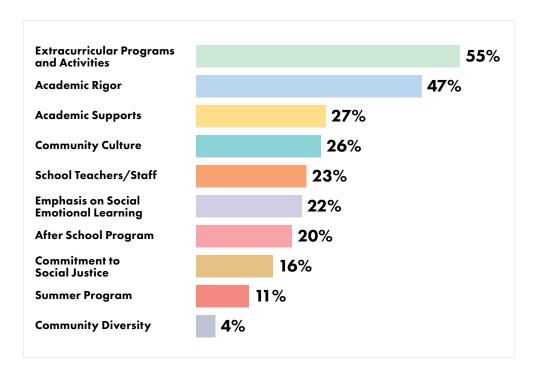
INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE AND PEDAGOGY

By articulating AoA's instructional and behavioral supports as they correlate to the various RTI tiers, staff can reinforce alignment in practice and consistency in implementing strategies. It also provides staff a tool to communicate, strengthen collaboration and accountability for parents and students.

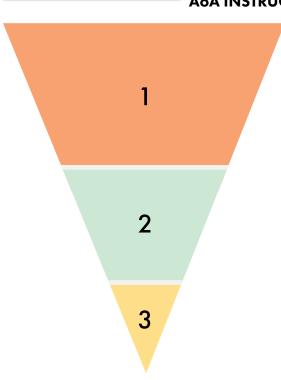
	Strongly Disagree	Disagre	ee		Disagree Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Academic rigor i prioritized acros	s equally s grade levels		9 %	18%	18%	45%	9 %

16

Moreover, when asked, respondents named Extracurricular Programs and Activities (55%) and Academic Rigor (47%) as areas they would like to see strengthened in the next 5 years.



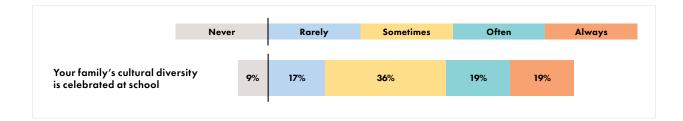
AoA INSTRUCTIONAL RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION



Tier 1 — Access and Prevention Access to grade level standards for all students • Identify universal behavior and academic expectations Clearly communicate the purpose of tutorial/stretch period to families and staff Host annual parent education series to review grade level standards • Middle school conferences Middle school student-led conferences • Strengthen family engagement strategies for 6-8th grade families Social justice activities (grade level): volunteer hours, capstone project Design cross grade level PD to ensure SEL, Classroom management, and behavior response alignment Tier 2 — Interventions and Extensions Additional time and support to learn essential standards • Small group/intervention supports that are regularly evaluated for effectiveness Computer activities and pre-supports via computer programs for newly enrolled students before school starts Priority days in MS Accelerate the use of SIPPS® (Systematic Instruction in Phonological Awareness, Phonics, and Sight Words) Tier 3 — Intense Acceleration Intense remediation in universall skills SPED Accelerate the use of SIPPS® (Systematic Instruction in Phonological Awareness, Phonics, and Sight Words)

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION

Family engagement is a shared responsibility in which schools commit to reaching out to engage parents in meaningful ways, and parents actively support their children's learning and development. Since the composition of students and families changes from year to year, AoA can benefit from regularly assessing the relevance of its family engagement offerings. This would help promote cultural sensitivity and strengthen current inclusion practices.



There are many ways to engage families. In addition to organizing or publicizing formal events, AoA can establish ways for families to share information and resources to support one another in times of need (e.g., the birth of a new baby or a death in the family). The school can foster this type of support by naming it as an explicit priority and creating a user-friendly contact list or online directory. Some other opportunities include:

- Developing a carpool for families
- Offering parent education classes
- Hosting an annual High School fair to help parents navigate application process

STAFFING

California's teacher shortage and high cost of living continues to burden schools across the state. These challenges make it difficult for schools like AoA to attract and retain quality teachers with the skills needed to effectively maintain a productive learning environment. To address these needs, AoA will need to dedicate resources to recruit and retain diverse talent with the capacity to deliver quality education for each and every student. Some systems to implement include the following:

- Align training offerings to instructional and behavioral expectations
- Develop a comprehensive professional development calendar that does not add more days to the school year or reduce teaching time
- Review job descriptions for accuracy to ensure clear roles and responsibilities

- Conduct a needs assessment to identify core skills for staff, managers, and supervisors; develop training calendar based on assessment
- Establish district, city, and county partnerships to explore teacher housing/support
- Strengthen exit interview protocols to assess reasons for attrition
- Establish feedback loops to reinforce two-way communication between team and manager
- Identify career pathways and market advancement opportunities as part of recruitment process

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree		her Disc or Agre		Agree	Strongly Ag	ree
Administrators are staff concerns	responsive to			18%	9 %	36 %		36%
Staff model a welco inclusive environme			279	%	9%	36 %	27 %	6
Staff have a shared student success	vision for		27%		3 %	36%	18%	
There is space for d staff meetings	ivergent voices in	9 %	18%	18	3 %	36%	18%	

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

As the Academy of Alameda sets its course for the next 5 years, we understand now better than ever that events out of our control may alter our immediate and future directions. Education is a profession that demands flexibility and real-time responses if we are to meet the educational needs of the students and families we seek to serve.

This report is the culmination of a data collection effort and planning process involving multiple groups of stakeholders contributing their ideas to a shared vision of the Academy of Alameda. While ambitious, our plan includes three strategic priorities to guide actionable steps in concert with our mission. We are committed to an inclusive environment for all stakeholders, an enhanced educational experience for our students, an improved infrastructure to support our people and operations, and authentic engagement with families. To achieve such gains, we must align our investments and actions with three core priorities:

Culture and Climate

We recognize that "Schools Can't Do It Alone." We believe in nurturing a culture that promotes trusting relationships, open communication, and enduring partnerships among staff, families, and community.

Instructional Practice and Pedagogy

"Teaching and Learning," is the most essential function of AoA. Our pedagogy is aimed at continuous growth for all students through equitable access to effective instruction, supports, and services.

Staffing

AoA understands, "Investing In People," addresses how we will attract, develop, and retain talented teachers, leaders, and staff at all levels. It is about results focused, continuous professional learning.

Our faculty, students, staff, families and board are ready to engage in the work of today to build a better tomorrow. We welcome you to join us as we journey together with courage, humility and perseverance in service and leadership in fulfillment of the recommendations outlined in this report.

CONCLUSION 20

APPENDIX A: SURVEY TOOL

Parent/Caregivers, Teachers, and Support Staff

Academy of Alameda Strategic Planning Survey Welcome Greetings AoA Community! We are gearing up to embark on the process of creating our five-year strategic plan. This is exciting because it is an opportunity to include the voices of staff, students, families, and the board in creating the goals necessary to move the school forward over the next five years. Please take 10 minutes to complete this survey by Friday, March 10, 2023. If you experience any technical challenges while completing the survey, please email shelley@bethechangeconsulting.com. Thank you!

Academy of Alameda Strategic Planning Survey General

The following contains demographic questions that will better help us understand the diverse identities that make up the AoA community. We acknowledge that every staff, teacher, and parent contributes a unique voice that is important to our assessment process and the following data will help deepen our understanding and strengthen our analysis.

* 1. Name
* 2. Role
O Parent/Caregiver
 School Support Staff (afterschool staff, paraprofessionals, custodial, parent liaisons, counselors, social workers, etc.)
* 3. Race (please select all that apply)
Black or African American
☐ Indigenous
Asian
Latino/a/x/e
Middle Eastern or North African
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander
☐ White

☐ Non-Binary	
Trans Woman	
Trans Man	
Woman	
Man	
Prefer not to answer	
Not listed (please specify):	
5 Duefermed Learning	
5. Preferred Language	
○ English	
Spanish	
Mandarin	
Cantonese	
O Not listed (please specify):	

* 6. Please r highest, 10	rank which of the following contributes MOST to AOA's success? (1 = = lowest)
	Academic Rigor
	Academic Supports
	After School Program
	Commitment to Social Justice
	Community Culture
	Community Diversity
	Emphasis on Social Emotional Learning
	Extracurricular Programs and Activities
	School Teachers/ Staff
	Summer Program
* 7. What	needs to be improved at AOA? (please select all that apply)
Acad	emic Rigor
Acad	emic Supports
After	School Program
Comr	mitment to Social Justice
	munity Culture
_	munity Diversity
	nasis on Social Emotional Learning
_	ourricular Programs and Activities
_	mer Program

* 8. How many years have you been par	rt of the	AoA con	nmunity?		
<u> </u>					
<u></u> 4-6					
○ 7+					
* 9. Does your student receive free or r	educed	lunch?			
○ Voc					
○ Yes○ No10. How often do the following happen f	or you a	t AoA? (1	=never, 5=	always))
No	1=Never		=never, 5=		
○ No 10. How often do the following happen f				4=Often	
No 10. How often do the following happen for the following happen for administrators are available to discuss concerns regarding your student for family's cultural diversity is celebrated	1=Never			4=Often	
O No 10. How often do the following happen for Teachers and/or administrators are available to discuss concerns regarding your student Your family's cultural diversity is celebrated at school AoA is able to support your family in your nome language as needed (examples: parent/teacher meetings, school materials,	1=Never			4=Often	5=Always O
O No 10. How often do the following happen of Teachers and/or administrators are available to discuss concerns regarding your student of Your family's cultural diversity is celebrated at school AoA is able to support your family in your name language as needed (examples: parent/teacher meetings, school materials, etc.) Your child's academic expectations and/or	1=Never			4=Often	

* 11. What grade level do you work wit	h? (Select	all that a	pply)		
Kindergarten					
1st					
2nd					
3rd					
4th					
☐ 5th					
3011					
6th					
_					
6th					
	1=Strongly		3=Neither disagree		5=Strongly
☐ 6th ☐ 7th ☐ 8th 12. Please rate your agreement on the	1=Strongly		3=Neither disagree		
☐ 6th ☐ 7th ☐ 8th 12. Please rate your agreement on the estrongly agree): Staff model a welcoming and inclusive	1=Strongly	2=Disagree	3=Neither disagree	4=Agree	5=Strongl
6th 7th 8th 12. Please rate your agreement on the estrongly agree): Staff model a welcoming and inclusive environment Administrators are responsive to staff	1=Strongly	2=Disagree	3=Neither disagree	4=Agree	5=Strongly

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Academy of Alameda Strategic Planning Survey School Support Staff (afterschool staff, paraprofessionals, custodial, parent liaisons, counselors, etc.) * 14. Please rate your agreement on the following statements (1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree): 3=Neither 5=Strongly 1=Strongly disagree disagree 2=Disagree nor agree 4=Agree agree My role as part of the AoA community is appreciated Non-credentialed teachers and support staff are included in professional development opportunities with AoA staff Changes that impact my role in the school community are proactively communicated to I am able to collaborate with teachers and administrators as needed

APPENDIX B: SURVEY TOOL

Students

Academy of Alameda Student Survey
* 1. When you don't understand a lesson or assignment do you know where to get support?
○ Yes
○ No
* 2. Is there an adult on campus that you can talk to when you need help?
○ Yes
○ No
* 3. Are your identities respected on campus (ex: gender, race, culture, etc.)
○ Yes
○ No
* 4. Do you have 1-2 close friends in your grade level?
○ Yes
○ No
* 5. Is bullying and/or name calling a problem at school?
○ Yes
○ No
* 6. If you can design a school community that fosters a sense of belonging and connection, what is ONE thing you would do?

APPENDIX B: SURVEY TOOL – STUDENTS 29