

Alexandria City Public Schools

Talented and Gifted Advisory Committee

April 12, 2021 Minutes

Meeting: April 12, 2021, @ Zoom Webinar

Current TAGAC Members Present: Zion Bezu, Daphney Denerville-Davis, Leigh Dugan, Reese du Pont, Mark Lacy, D Ohlandt, Laura Rose, Kathleen Sheehy, Lindsay Clarke, Julia Egy, Asha Mede, Dr. Gerald Mann, Dr. Megan Tempel-Milner, Mary Beth Walker, Melissa Kuhn, Chris Suarez, Nicholas Miller, Emily Garrahan, Rene Paschal, Asmerom Yakob

Old Business:

The committee approved the March 8th Meeting Minutes.

New Business:

Dr. Tempel-Milner has joined ACPS as the Director of Gifted Programs and Advanced Academics. She presented the 2019-2020 TAG Program Indicators as produced by the ACPS Department of Accountability.

- Members received e-copies of the Indicators and can review the indicators for further discussion at the next TAGAC meeting.
- Committee discussion included questions into any possible impact from the Covid-19 pandemic that might affect the data? Wondering if there is a way to flag the students that qualify using the portfolio process to see if they are identified at the same rates based on ethnicity/gender/etc...
- Reminder from Dr. Mann that ACPS is still planning to test all rising 3rd and 4th graders using the CogAT in the fall of 2021 as a universal screener. (Usually this would only be 3rd graders, but 4th is being included because those kids were not tested in the fall of 2020).

Dr. Mann presented the VDoE's plan for the Virginia Mathematics Pathway Initiative.

- The plan would go into effect with 8th graders in 2025 (current 3rd graders).
- VDoE's roadmap involves heterogeneous grouping for all students K-7 with every student in those grades taking the same math course.
- One goal of the Virginia Mathematics Pathway Initiative is to improve equity in learning opportunities for all students while encouraging deeper understanding through enrichment.
- It is not clear whether the VDoE plan allows for grade level acceleration that is currently done in ACPS at the 4th grade level.
- Committee discussion focused on the impact to ACPS Math instruction for gifted students. There was concern over how enrichment (or possible acceleration) would be accomplished

across the district for elementary and middle school. There was also concern on what will be the effect on students in HS when this change hits.

- Dr. Mann indicated that the initiative will have all high schoolers completing 4 years of math, and will add 11 courses to the High School program of studies.
- Dr. Mann mentioned that the state has asked school districts to consider not doing full-grade level acceleration due to effects of virtual learning from the pandemic.
- Dr. Tempel-Milner mentioned that acceleration can be done by strand instead of by grade through enrichment and gifted resources using programs like UConn's M² and M³ units which enrich and go deeper with real-life problem-solving projects. ACPS is still evaluating the proposed changes and discussing how to effect changes in TAG programming.

Laura Rose asked subcommittee members to provide updates on their reports, with the goal of having draft reports available for review by the whole committee by the May 10th meeting.

- Nick Miller – The K-12 Roadmap Committee draft report will be ready for review
- Reese duPont/Leigh Dugan – The Student Voices Committee will make recommendations for what we would like to do in the coming year, but that is part of larger conversations that will continue.
- D Ohlandt – Is looking for additional information on the Young Scholars implementation for the committee on Virtual Learning
- Mark Lacy – will have the Speakers summary and recommendations applicable to ACPS ready for the next meeting.
- Julia Ege – the Testing subcommittee is in good shape to have a draft report by next meeting.

Laura Rose announced she is stepping down as TAGAC Chair after her 2-year term and that Nicholas Miller is on the slate for Chair next year. The committee still seeks members to serve as vice chair and secretary, as D Ohlandt and Leigh Dugan are stepping down from those roles.

Chris Suarez, the School Board's representative to the TAGAC, welcomed Dr. Tempel-Milner. He also reiterated the desire to see additional data on progress toward equity in the TAG program and welcomed hearing additional student voices. He was supportive of having a second student representative to the TAGAC.

Thinking Ahead:

- The Next Meeting is May 10, 2021, where we may discuss the Annual Indicators and possibly vote on the slate of officers. We may also discuss an update to the local plan as well as have a guest speaker.