

**Alexandria City Public Schools  
Talented and Gifted Advisory Committee  
January 10, 2022**

**Minutes**

**Meeting:** January 10, 2022, via Zoom

**Current TAGAC Members Present:** Nicholas Miller (Chair), Kathleen Sheehy (Vice Chair), Julia Egy (Secretary), Liza Burrell-Aldana, Daphney Denerville-Davis, Michael Dukes, Mark Lacy, D Ohlandt, Laura Rose, Mary Beth Walker, Dr. Gerald Mann, Dr. Megan Tempel-Milner,

**Old Business:**

- The TAGAC's December minutes were not posted in the correct area for committee review, so we will need to take up the December minutes during the February meeting.

**New Business:**

Chair's Opening Remarks

- This our last virtual meeting. We are planning to get an extension to continue meeting virtually, but the current state approval terminates at the end of January.
  - TAGAC's next meeting will be on February 7, 2022. There will be an update regarding location (virtual or in person).

Staff Comments - Dr. Megan Tempel-Milner

- Kindergarten Naglieri testing window will go through next week. It was supposed to be last week, but was delayed due to the weather.
- ACPS schools are currently screening and it will be on a rotational basis meaning that letters will go out by grade level as schools are conducting and completing screening.
  - Parents will get letters between now and the first week of February.
  - Kindergarten parent letters will be delayed waiting for their first grade cards.
- Parents are encouraged to reach out to TAG designees with any questions since they have the most current information (versus Dr. Tempel-Miller and her staff)
- For 3rd graders going through SAA, that appeal deadline will happen in May.
- The TAGAC's Scope of Work is being finalized
- TAG/5-year plan Steering Committee
  - The TAGAC Chair is reaching out to some TAGAC members to seek their participation on that committee. The first meeting will be tomorrow, Tuesday, January 11, 2022.
  - First working on the philosophy and definition of giftedness.
  - We will also have accountability data for February meeting.

Guest Lecturers: Jodie Peters, Stacy Palmer, and Molly Freitag

- Jodie Peters, “Advancement Via Individual Determination” (AVID) District Director/Coordinator for ACPS,
  - AVID is not an official TAG program, but a lot of the tenants of AVID intersect with the Young Scholars program.
  - AVID supports a continuation of services for lots of ACPS students
  - Interdisciplinary program that supports college and career readiness for grades 6-12
    - Mission is to close the opportunity gap
  - AVID Elective and Excel Courses
    - Students must apply to AVID and are interviewed as a part of the process. These interviews begin in 5th grade. Students can apply all the way through 9th grade with the last AVID class taking place in 10th grade.
    - AVID Excel focuses on long-term English language learners.
      - They have the same constructs as other AVID students as well as English acquisition.
  - Criteria for AVID acceptance
    - Desire and determination, personal commitment to AVID expectations, application/interview process
    - Representative of an underserved population in 4-year colleges
    - Show academic potential (2.0-3.5 GPA)
    - Willing to take a rigorous course of study (at least one or more H, AP, DE courses, depending on entry/grade level).
    - In addition, students must meet one or more of the following:
      - First person in their family to attend college or university
      - Recipient of free or reduced lunch and/or come from a low-income household
      - An English language learner but academically ready
      - Have another special circumstance
  - AVID is not an intervention, but instead an academic support for rigor (a Tier 2 support)
  - AVID focuses on the college and career entrance process, as well as opportunities for students to be leaders and more academic. Coaching on agency and self-monitoring.
    - Lots of modeling for organization and time management.
  - AVID supports Continuation of Services for all of the following:
    - Rising 6th graders who are long-term ELL,
    - Young Scholars,
    - Students with disabilities who have a college or post-high school plan,
    - General education students who want more rigor,
    - High school students who want to take Dual Enrollment (DE), Advanced Placement (AP) classes, or who want to participate in one of ACHS’ special pathway programs (examples include the Health Sciences Academy, STEM Academy, etc.).

- There is data to support AVID's success, including that 65% of AVID students go on to attend 4-year colleges and 30% attend 2-year college programs.
  - This success has translated into changes in how ACPS recruits for the AVID program. ACPS used to push kids into AVID, now the students are selling it themselves to others. In many places there is a waitlist.
    - Last year there was a targeted webinar for Young Scholars. Counselors also recommend students. Have a particular recruitment focus on male black and hispanic students.
  - Counselors begin with talking to 5th graders about the program. There is also a website with information.
  - They are pushing for additional teachers. There are now 40 AVID sections, up from the original 9 sections.
- Young Scholars (YS) in AVID - ACPS is collecting that data.
  - Anecdotally, about 50% of Patrick Henry YS applied and are currently in AVID.
  - Additional data will be collected and provided to the committee once it's available.
  - Last year all remaining elementary schools implemented YS, so those students are only now in first grade.
- Stacy Palmer, TAG Teacher and designee at GWMS
  - She is discussing middle school honors and opportunities, including ACPS' middle school honors programs, TAG, YS, Differentiated Education Plans (DEPs), and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
    - Ms. Palmer has been in her current position for 5+ years and prior to that she was a social studies teacher at GWMS.
  - Middle School Honors classes
    - Honor classes are open enrollment (Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies), which means that any student can enroll.
      - Open enrollment started in 2006, with the idea that all students should have the opportunity to push themselves and take rigorous classes if they chose to do so.
    - The middle schools have 2 different types of curriculum, Honors curriculum and general education curriculum.
    - The honors curriculum is intended to ensure that there is more in-depth work than what is provided by the general education curriculum, but students do not necessarily have more work than other students.
  - TAG services
    - TAG services are available in all content areas in which students were identified while enrolled in ACPS.
    - Screening for TAG services
      - Since there are no universal screeners at the middle school level, Ms. Palmer asks teachers to look for outliers in their review of other tests

and/or competitions. Data not limited to this, this information would just be a sampling.

- A Young Scholars (YS) program is still in development at the middle school level. Currently ACPS just ensures that YS students take at least 1-2 honors level classes.
- Ms. Palmer also monitors TAG referrals, ACPS summer program participation (prior to pandemic), and AVID recruitment.
- TAG clustering
  - TAG students are clustered in open enrollment honors classes for Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science - cluster could be from 3-½ of students in the class, depending on number of TAG-identified students in a given class
  - TAG Math is a separate class because 4th graders identified for SAA in Math take both 4th and 5th grade math during a single year.
- Differentiation Services (DEPs)
  - DEPs are intended to provide enrichment, extension, and student choice
  - ACPS has a variety of resources to assist teachers as they create DEPs for their students.
    - DEPs are written by individual teachers, although Ms. Palmer offers assistance where possible and requested.
    - Examples of DEPs include Document Based Questions, National History Day, Science Fair, Civic Trek, etc.
- FAQs
  - TAG identification is not a requirement for AP, DE or enrollment in ACHS academies. Lots of families thought they needed this, but that is incorrect.
  - Math acceleration & sequence
    - Math acceleration is not really necessary for success in math at ACPS because the only class that would not be available without math acceleration is Differential Equations.
- Molly Freitag, ACHS AP Teacher, Discussing Advanced Placement (AP) and Dual Enrollment (DE) Classes available at ACHS
  - AP Classes
    - All AP classes are open enrollment.
      - If students are new to AP, ACPS works with students to ensure preparedness.
      - AP exams are all paid for by ACPS. Taking the test is a requirement of an AP class.
    - AP classes are taught with college-level expectations.
    - ACPS offers a wide variety of AP courses
      - With TAG students often want to sign up for everything and take all AP courses.



- As a reminder, the February TAGAC meeting has ACPS' Accountability staff coming
  - Accountability wanted to note that the data appears very different from that seen in past years and this is due to COVID.

The meeting adjourned at 8:23 pm.