

Alexandria City Public Schools
Talented and Gifted Advisory Committee
December 5, 2022 Minutes

Meeting: December 5, 2022, ACPS School Board Room; 1340 Braddock Place, Alexandria, VA 22314

Current TAGAC Members Present: D. Ohlandt (Chair), Megan Tempel-Milner, Michael Dukes, Katie Baker, Andy Corso, Evan Smith, EttaSue “Shauna” Harris, Guests: Willow Darcy, Lillian Pace

Old Business:

The minutes from the June and August meetings were approved. The minutes from the September meeting was also approved with a motion accepted to make a small clarification to the bullet at the bottom of the first page to ensure it emphasizes equitable access and that the reference to “group” refers to the student applicants.

New Business:

Chair’s Remarks:

- Big turnover in membership of TAGAC because of term limits. So far this year we have not had enough people to run any business. Today we need to elect a Vice Chair and Secretary
 - Floor was made open for nominations
 - Evan Smith nominated himself for Vice Chair
 - EttaSue “Shauna” Harris nominated herself for Secretary
 - Motion was approved to appoint Evan Smith as Vice Chair and Shauna Harris as Secretary.
- Latest school board work session focused on TAG: Members were frustrated with the pace of achieving equity within the TAG program but were very encouraged about the changes being made. Members had lots of questions about rigorous Tier 1 instruction, eligibility, and more timely access to data.

Staff Remarks (Dr. Tempel-Milner):

- Fall window for 4th through 8th grade TAG eligibility screening has closed, and eligibility notifications were sent out by November 22nd. Some schools did need additional time. There were more than 400 students screened in that window.
- The automatic referral process for Young Scholars in 4th and 5th grades yielded more than 200 additional students that would not have otherwise been referred. Data is not yet available on the outcomes of this process, but technology services is helping make the data collection as efficient and accurate as possible to support data analysis.

- Screening forms are being converted to electronic records to minimize paperwork burden and duplicate data collection. Screening leads (typically one staff member per school) receive a stipend of \$1200 for each screening window. Each file takes about three hours. Screeners may handle up to 70 student cases.
- Working to streamline the process with a new database that will make it faster for parents to receive notification.
- ACPS is currently going through the appeals process for grades 4-8.
- K-3 GIA screening window was extended by a couple days because the Naglieri reports were not yet available for parents. The goal is to get notifications out to parents by mid-February.
- ACPS concluded interviews for the specialist position but was unable to offer the position to someone. The position remains open. Dr. Tempel-Milner is using those resources to hire people on stipends to help fill this capacity gap.
- Dr. Tempel-Milner is working to present the local TAG plan to the school board and have it adopted by May.
- Dr. Tempel-Milner shared that she reached out to Dr. Gonzalez and Dr. Page to follow up on the recommendation to get feedback from students. Formally acquiring and documenting student feedback has particular legal requirements. Dr. Tempel-Milner has been traveling to multiple schools this fall to gather feedback.
- Dr. Tempel-Milner completed PD with ACPS TAG teachers in math and the DBQ (Document-Based Questions) curriculum.
- Dr. Tempel-Milner went to the warehouse and sent over 11 pallets of supplies off to gifted and talented teachers.
- Liza Burrell, one of our TAG members, defended her doctorate today and now has the title “Doctor”!
- Dr. Tempel-Milner secured permission from Dr. Gonzalez to start doing professional mentoring with TAG teachers. She would like to start with Mentoring Mathematical Minds.

Public Comment and Committee Discussion

- The group discussed identification and past interest in norming the Naglieri to local norms. Dr. Tempel-Milner shared that when they ran the data based on local norms it did not make much of a difference for identification.
- One community member raised that COGAT results did not go to parents before the referral deadline for 3rd graders. Dr. Tempel-Milner explained that it never does because it is not a universal screening for GIA but expressed appreciation for the sentiment. The member expressed that she felt it was important in future years that parents have this information prior to the November 20th window for GIA screening referral.
- The same community member raised that large class size is an issue that impacts TAG identification and services. She shared that with 28 kids in a 3rd grade class a teacher can't know each student well. She encouraged we build the evidence-base about how class size impacts identification for TAG services. Chair D. Ohlandt built on this point to

say we need to look at student teacher ratio instead of class size number because that is what matters the most – how many relationships students have to adults in the building.

- Chair D. Ohlandt reminded the group of the authority of TAGAC as an advisory committee to the school board. The school board writes policy and sets the budget. The board can make recommendations about how to enact the policy but cannot make decisions about how to enact those policies. The school district decides how to enact those policies. We tell the school board what we are going to study and make recommendations back to the board based on what we studied.

TAGAC Scope of Work for 2022-23

- The committee reviewed the appendix Summary of TAGAC Recommendations 2017-2022 as a refresher on all recommendations made over the past six years.
- The committee reviewed the three components of the scope of work including 1) “Local Plan” development, approval, and implementation, 2) Middle School TAG curriculum and delivery of TAG services, and 3) Differentiated Instruction K-12 and delivery of TAG services
- One area discussed by the group is an interest in exploring how TAG eligibility and honors course enrollment intersect in the middle school.
- Chair D. Ohlandt expressed interest in feedback on how to use our remaining five meetings in order to write and prepare recommendations by May. She shared that several meetings were already set.
 - January – Data dive on demographics of TAG students in ACPS
 - February – Presentation by the TAG math team
- The group expressed interest in potentially advocating for creation of an ACPS secondary TAG specialist position.
- Newly elected Vice Chair Evan Smith requested the committee look at the TAG resources by school.
- The committee approved a motion to accept the 2022-2023 scope of work.

Next meeting is January 9th at Hammond Middle School, Media Center. 6:30-8:30pm.