

**Alexandria City Public Schools  
Advanced Academic Services Advisory Committee  
September 5, 2023**

Alexandria City High School, Rm A-114  
3330 King St, Alexandria VA 22302

**Minutes**

**Meeting:** September 5, 2023 @ 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm (Alexandria City High School, 3330 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22302)

**Current TAGAC Members Present:** D. Ohlandt (Chair), Evan Smith (Vice Chair), Ettasue (Shawna) Harris (Secretary), Lillian Pace, Catherine (Katie) Baker, Matt Henry (Teacher Rep), Penny Hairston (Principal Rep)

**Guests:** Dr. Megan Tempel-Milner (ACPS), Pierrette Finney (ACPS), Amanda Shapiro (ACPS Parent)

**Old Business:**

- Shawna Harris was nominated & elected AASAC Secretary

**Chair's Report:**

Dr. D. Ohlandt explained that the updated local plan was passed by the SB in June.

Dr. Ohlandt reviewed the AASAC responsibilities as they relate to advising the School Board. Officially, the committee's job is to make recommendations about policy and budget pertaining to AAS. Unofficially, the committee serves as a sounding board and advocate for AAS. As an appointed committee of the SB, the committee is subject to the same rules about meeting notice, public availability of documents, and public nature of certain communications among committee members. More than two members of the committee meeting together in person or online constitutes an official meeting of the committee. Email chains or real-time collaboration online constitute an official online "meeting" of the committee. (One-way emails to the members of committee as a group are exempt, as are online collaborations not done simultaneously in real time.)

**Business:**

- May minutes were approved
- Proposed amendment to bylaws to change name of committee to "AASAC (Advanced Academic Services Advisory Committee)" to reflect the name change of the ACPS office whose work we deal with most often.

Dr. Tempel-Milner provided some context for the name change which was part of the updated local plan approved by the SB in June: this name puts the focus on services and not the label of talented & gifted. It also reflects plans to develop services for other strengths.

Mr. Henry (Teacher Rep) agreed that the shift in focus will be beneficial.

Dr. Tempel-Milner confirmed in response to a committee member's question that the Naglieri Test will still be given as a screening test, but not to all first graders as a universal screen.

Katie Baker motioned to approve amendment to the bylaws to change name of committee from TAGAC (Talented & Gifted Advisory Committee) to AASAC (Advanced Academic Services Advisory Committee.) Evan Smith seconded the motion. Approved.

### **Staff Report:**

- Dr. Finney introduced herself as the new Chief Academic Officer.
- Dr. Tempel-Milner provided an overview of the current state of AAS.

### **ATTACHMENT: 2023-09-05 mtg AAS staff presentation (overview).ppt**

Mashari Whitfield is new to team since March and is the Instructional Services Specialist.

The AAS team has completed more than 110 projects over the summer.

Preparing for Professional Learning / Professional Development workshops for ACPS staff. Focus will be on services, co-teaching with AAS Teachers. One PD training took place in August already, focused on providing context for the curriculum resources, updates, and guides.

Current efforts directed to making sure that updated curriculum aligns with standards of the local plan. (For example, the shift to enrichment and extension in 4th grade AAS math and away from whole-grade acceleration.)

In process of implementing 4<sup>th</sup> grade AAS Language Arts weekly pacing, and also updating communications across schools and departments.

Dr. Tempel-Milner asked committee for feedback on communicating the screening timeline for this year, which is complex because of transition to new procedures.

### **AAS Advisory Committee Scope of Work:**

The committee has two more meetings in the fall, and five more in the spring. What do we want to spend our time researching and writing recommendations on this year?

Suggestions from the floor for 2023-24 Scope of Work:

1. Social-Emotional Learning and Social-Emotional Challenges of AAS-Eligible students
2. Credibility of AAS
3. Middle School and High School: Honors classes, Pathways
4. Budget – how much do our recommendations about AAS cost and what is the budget impact?

Chair will bring a draft Scope Of Work based on this discussion to October meeting for committee approval, then we will have a work session to plan activities for the remaining meetings.

**Public Comments:**

- Amanda Shapiro (TAG Parent) introduces herself, and asks how TAG/AAS eligibility letters are issued. Reports that some schools are sending them home in sealed envelopes with students, and students open them or know they are about them.

- Dr. Tempel-Milner answers and says that all TAG/AAS eligibility letters are supposed to be sent home by US mail.

-Mr. Matt Henry (Teacher Rep) introduces himself. He is an ACHS teacher and is finishing a doctoral thesis on social-emotional challenges of and engagement in school by gifted teens. He advocates for all students.

- Penny Hairston (Principal Rep) introduces herself. She is the principal at Douglas MacArthur Elementary School and advocates for all children.

- All committee members and staff present at meeting introduced themselves.

Dr. D. Ohlandt motioned to adjourn. Approved.  
The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

**Next TAGAC Meeting:**

Tuesday, October 17, 2023; 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm  
Alexandria City High School, 3330 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22302  
Room A-114