

**Talented and Gifted Advisory Committee Agenda**  
**Online Webinar**  
**June 21, 2021**  
**7:00–7:15 p.m.**

7:00–7:10 p.m.

TAGAC Business Items

Approve June 7 Meeting Minutes

Approve *Subcommittee K12 Communications Report*

Approve *Subcommittee Identification and Testing Report*

Approve *Subcommittee Virtual Learning Report*

Approve *TAGAC 2020–2021 Annual Report*

7:10–7:15 p.m.

Staff Update

*Dr. Tempel-Milner*

*Director of Gifted & Advanced Academic Programs*

7:15 p.m.

Adjourn

**Alexandria City Public Schools**  
**Talented and Gifted Advisory Committee**  
**June 7, 2021 Minutes**

**Meeting:** Via Zoom Webinar

**Current TAGAC Members Present:**

Zion Bezu, Daphne Denerville-Davis, Leigh Dugan, Reese du Pont, Mark Lacy, D. Ohlandt, Laura Rose, Kathleen Sheehy, Julia Egy, Asha Mede, Dr. Gerald R. Mann, Jr., Dr. Megan Tempel-Milner, Mary Beth Walker, Melissa Kuhn, Chris Suarez, Nicholas Miller, Emily Garrahan, Mike Dukes, and Amna Shamseldin

**Old Business:**

The committee approved the May 10 Meeting Minutes.

**New Business:**

Chair Laura Rose thanked committee members for their service on the Talented and Gifted Advisory Committee (TAGAC) this year.

Dr. Tempel-Milner provided the staff update:

- The Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) is still awaiting guidance from the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) regarding the implementation of the Virginia Mathematics Pathway Initiative (VMPI).
- Dr. Tempel-Milner met in recent weeks with Dr. Jack Naglieri to learn about his revised assessment, which now includes both Quantitative and Verbal sections while still maintaining the nonverbal format. National norming is still being done on this test. Next year, TAGAC may choose to discuss using the revised Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT) to screen third graders for Subject-Specific Identification (math and language arts [LA]).
- Screening for new eligibility has continued this spring with some rising fourth grade students taking the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT). Dr. Tempel-Milner expressed concerns that there are some gaps in the portfolio work samples that were submitted by all first and third grade students. In the interest of equity, she is recommending that ACPS pause the current evaluations of portfolios and implement a true universal screening when students return to school in the fall. This would include the following:
  - In the fall of 2021, all entering first and second graders will take the NNAT, and all entering third and fourth graders will take the CogAT test.
  - Dr. Tempel-Milner is working with Accountability to develop a system where multiple data points (including Measure of Academic Progress [MAP] test scores,

previous NNAT scores, progress reports, and Standards of Learning [SOL] scores) come together to give a fuller picture of all students and their potential needs for advanced academics.

- For the time being, National Norms will be used for qualification, but local and/or school norms can be a topic of discussion and recommendation for next year’s TAGAC.
- Dr. Tempel-Milner hopes to have all parents notified (in multiple languages) by mid-July of student placement for Subject-Specific Identification (math and LA), primarily for rising fourth graders.

The committee voted to approve the Student Voices subcommittee report as well as have the *TAG PTAC Presentation* included with the *TAGAC 2020–2021 Annual Report*.

**Committee Business:**

None

**Thinking Ahead:**

- There is a tentative meeting on June 21, 2021, to vote to approve remaining subcommittee reports for the *TAGAC 2020–2021 Annual Report*.

**Attachment A: TAGAC K–12 Communications Subcommittee Report**

Date: June 21, 2021

**FROM:** Nicholas Miller, TAGAC Representative, Mt. Vernon and George Washington  
Emily Garrahan, TAGAC Representative, Douglas MacArthur  
Asmerom Yakob, TAGAC Representative, William Ramsay  
Kathleen Sheehy, TAGAC Representative, Jefferson Houston

**TO:** Laura Rose, Chair, Talented and Gifted Advisory Committee

**SUMMARY:**

The Talented and Gifted Advisory Committee (TAGAC) recommends that Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) adopt an expanded communication strategy to share information regarding the school system’s K–12 Talented and Gifted (TAG) program with students and families. We believe that the communication strategy should mirror that of the full breadth of the K–12 TAG program. ACPS should start communication about the TAG program at the point of first contact whenever, wherever, and however the student enters the school system.

TAGAC is also aware that there are potential changes under consideration by the state of Virginia that would significantly impact the TAG curriculum in the near future. Therefore, a comprehensive approach to communication will be especially critical to ensure equity so that all families—not just the families who know how to find the necessary information and advocate for their own children—understand the TAG curriculum and can benefit from the TAG program. We have included several recommendations for realizing this communications vision; several components were gleaned through conversations with Ms. Krishna Levya, ACPS Family and Community Engagement Center (FACE).

**BACKGROUND:**

TAGAC recommends that ACPS expand its communication strategy regarding what information it shares with ACPS students and families about the K–12 TAG program and offerings. The K–12 TAG program includes the following components:

- General Intellectual Aptitude (GIA) program (Available to students K–5)
- Subject Academic Aptitude (SSA) program: math, language arts (LA), science, and social studies (available to grades 4 and 5 students)
- Young Scholars (YS) program (available to grades K–5 students)
- Advanced Placement (AP) and Dual Enrollment (DE) courses (available to grades 9–12 students)
- Governor’s School programs (grade 10 for the Summer Program)

There are other relevant components not formally included in the TAG program that should be included in the communication strategy:

- Whole-Grade Acceleration
- Single-Subject Acceleration
- Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program (available to grades 6–12 students)

Information regarding referrals and the identification process for each of these components should be communicated to all students and families as early as Kindergarten registration, with special emphasis during the universal screening years of first and third grade. All families should have a strong understanding of the resources available to them through the program. This is the most equitable approach.

Second, ACPS established many new channels for communication as a result of Virtual+. TAGAC strongly recommends using this foundation and these methods to communicate information about the K–12 TAG program. All communication and videos must be translated into all four languages used in official ACPS communication. Specific examples of new communication opportunities include the following:

- Provide families with information about the K–12 TAG program and the ACPS program of studies during the Kindergarten and school registration process.
- Create a “How to Create a Self- Referral” video for families in multiple languages detailing the identification, referral, and review process.
- Create “A Day in the Life” videos to highlight the 16 career clusters available as a part of the High School Project and map them to specific courses.
- Host webinars about the K–12 TAG program that mirror the current process of the TAG informational meeting often presented during Back to School Night.
- Create informational videos about the characteristics of gifted children, how to identify these characteristics, and how to support the social and emotional needs of gifted children and ensure these videos use language and frameworks consistent with the recommendations from the Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted (SENG) organization.
- Create informational videos about the value proposition of participating in the different TAG offerings (GIA, SSA, Young Scholars, Governor’s School, AP, and DE classes). According to Dr. Jonathan Plucker during a presentation at the December 8, 2020, TAGAC meeting, we must communicate both the opportunities and the value proposition to have an equitable advanced program. The AVID program does an excellent job of communicating the value proposition for its program participants, and the TAG program should have similar videos and presentations to communicate this to all families.
- Incorporate advice from Ms. Leyva, including her assertion that both the form and accessibility of the communication is critical. For example, her experience indicates that mobile-friendly outreach often improves communication effectiveness with multilingual families. Text messaging and simple messages detailing the benefits of the program, followed up by contact with a trusted staff member, were more effective than newsletters. TAG website materials (including the Parent Referral forms) should be available in mobile-friendly formats.

While the message can be tailored to fit the audience, TAGAC would like to emphasize that ACPS consider shifting all messaging to include information about the overall K–12 TAG program. This would increase the exposure for families to the benefits of the comprehensive TAG experience. For example, a presentation for an elementary school Back to School Night should emphasize the components of the TAG program for grades K–5 and should also mention how those experiences will translate to middle and high school. Upper-grade presentations, such as those at the middle school level should emphasize how the career tracks support TAG differentiation. Communication should always have a forward-looking focus. For example, the communication at the middle and high school levels no longer needs to include elementary school resources and offerings.

Third, focus on specific topics of interest that have been highlighted during TAGAC’s monthly meetings:

- For families that previously attended Mount Vernon Elementary School, middle school students must choose between continuing their Dual Language (DL) studies and grouping for social studies.
- Students who remain in the GIA program but are not identified for the Specific Academic Aptitude (SAA) program should receive additional communication about how the GIA program and the SAA program differ in fourth and fifth grade.

Fourth, if the changes to the TAG curriculum currently under consideration by the state of Virginia are implemented, TAGAC recommends the following channels to communicate those changes to families:

- Hold community meetings for the overall program changes, with a specific subtopic on impacts to groups that receive push-in or separate services.
- Create a video to walk through the specific changes to the curriculum to the entire community and the impact of the subtopics to groups that receive push-in or separate services. Additional separate videos on the impact to these groups may also be suggested. All of these outreach curriculum presentations should be presented in multiple languages.
- Address the impact heterogeneous grouping in the math program may have on clustering and how ACPS will support the social and emotional needs of gifted students.
- Share the link to the video on all of ACPS’s social media accounts.
- Include changes to the program, as well as the link to the video, in the weekly ACPS Express email and weekly email updates from individual school principals.

Lastly, content posted to the ACPS TAG website must be kept current. As the program changes, outreach efforts must be kept up-to-date, and old and outdated information should be removed in a timely manner.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review the *TAGAC K–12 Communications Subcommittee Report*.

**IMPACT:**

TAGAC feels that ACPS must implement a comprehensive communications strategy to ensure an equitable gifted and advanced academic program.

**Attachment B: TAGAC Student Voices Subcommittee Report**

Date: June 7, 2021

**FROM:** Leigh Dugan, TAGAC Teacher Representative  
Reese DuPont, TAGAC Student Representative

**TO:** Laura Rose, Chair, Talented and Gifted Advisory Committee

**SUMMARY:**

The Talented and Gifted Advisory Committee (TAGAC) focused on the importance of asking and receiving input from all parties affected by changes to the Talented and Gifted (TAG) programming, including students.

TAGAC’s Student Voices Subcommittee recommends that the Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) deliberately and purposefully seek the voices of students at all levels—elementary, middle, and high school—as they are the ones most affected by changes in service models.

**BACKGROUND:**

TAGAC’s Student Voices Subcommittee comprised TAGAC’s Teacher Representative and Student Representative. Throughout the year, these individuals provided invaluable feedback on the subcommittee’s focus areas: virtual learning impacts (academic and social-emotional) and examining equity issues through identification practices and the delivery of services.

As a result, TAGAC will pursue the following in the 2021–2022 academic school year:

1. Examine the committee’s bylaws to include consideration for additional student representation either in the form of an additional student representative (middle school student) or the creation of a student subcommittee comprised of students who reflect the diversity of the school district.
2. Work with the ACPS Accountability Office on an Annual Student Survey for students participating in the TAG program.

**Sample Survey:**

Answer the questions that are applicable to you and that you feel comfortable answering. Please respond to at least three questions.

1. How has participating in X program (General Intellectual Aptitude [GIA], Young Scholars, Specific Academic Aptitude [SAA], etc.) changed your school course and direction?
2. Where do you feel that you and your peers could benefit from more guidance in your school career?
3. Given the grade you were when you entered the TAG program, what successes and challenges have you had?

4. What did you expect from the coursework in the TAG program when you joined, and did you get what you expected?
5. How would you describe your experiences (positive or negative) as a student in the TAG program? Please be as specific as possible.
6. Do you have any experiences you would like to share (positive or negative)?

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review the *TAGAC Student Voices Subcommittee Report*.

**IMPACT:**

TAGAC feels that ACPS must implement practices that enable students to provide input on their academic experience.

**Attachment C: TAGAC Identification and Testing Subcommittee Report**

Date: June 21, 2021

**FROM:** Mark Lacy, Community Member  
Zio Bezu, Francis C. Hammond  
Daphney Denerville-Davis, Mt. Vernon  
Asha Mede, Mt. Vernon  
Julia Egy, Lyles Crouch, George Washington  
Mary Beth Walker, George Mason

**TO:** Laura Rose, Chair, Talented and Gifted Advisory Committee

**SUMMARY:**

The Talented and Gifted Advisory Committee (TAGAC) hosted four guest speakers during the 2019–2020 and 2020–2021 school years to share their knowledge and experience in providing special services to Talented and Gifted (TAG) students. The guest speakers all offered insights that would facilitate efforts to build a more inclusive and equitable TAG program in Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS). With the benefit of the speakers’ presentations, the subcommittee recommends ACPS do the following:

1. Continue to engage in the universal screening of all students in specific grade levels (first and third).
2. Explore test administration strategies to ensure the best possible testing environment and outcomes for all students, the creation of an assessment matrix that more heavily favors ability than achievement, and the use of local school-based norms.
3. Consider implementing equitable, flexible ability grouping in ACPS elementary and middle schools. Students should be grouped—and periodically regrouped—based on potential in addition to performance, using local norms to identify students more comprehensively.
4. Implement a high-level curriculum across ACPS classrooms that will challenge students at all levels, both within and outside of the TAG program.

**BACKGROUND:**

TAGAC hosted the following speakers during the 2019–2020 and 2020–2021 school years:

- Dr. Jack Naglieri, Ph.D. – Developer of the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT)
- Dr. Jonathan Plucker – President of the National Association of Gifted Children (NAGC)
- Ms. Angela Greene – ACPS Department of Accountability

The TAGAC Identification and Testing Subcommittee reviewed TAGAC minutes, committee

member notes, and TAGAC meeting videos to produce relevant lessons and recommendations for improving TAG services in ACPS.

TAGAC summarized the speaker’s comments along a theme of “Equity and Access to Services.” TAGAC also assessed the speakers’ stressed importance of effective communications and outreach; flexible grouping, identification, and local norms; improving TAG services through improved curriculum; flexibility; and socialization. Below are cited comments from several specific speakers:

**Identification**

**Dr. Jack Naglieri, Ph.D.**, is currently a Research Professor at the University of Virginia, Senior Research Scientist at the Devereux Center for Resilient Children, Emeritus Professor of Psychology at George Mason University, and the developer of the NNAT. The NNAT can be used irrespective of a students’ native language. Furthermore, it requires no specific prior knowledge. The test seeks to evaluate how a student has to think in order to complete a task rather than what the student needs to know to complete the task. Thus, the NNAT provides an equitable approach to assessment, and we believe its continued use will enable ACPS to acknowledge students who come from low-income families, culturally and linguistically diverse environments, and English Language Learners (ELLs).

**The goal of identification for TAG services is to find those students with the potential for learning at an advanced level.** To achieve that desired result, TAGAC recommends that ACPS focus on identification methods that assess students' potential rather than their current performance. In view of the foregoing, TAGAC supports ACPS’s continued use of universal screeners as a means of identifying students with the need for advanced academic services.

We recommend that ACPS continue to engage in the universal screening of all students in specific grade levels (first and third). Moreover, TAGAC supports ACPS’s decision to expand the universal screening of students during the 2021–2022 school year to all children in grades first through fourth due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We encourage ACPS to consider providing expanded screening opportunities on an ongoing basis at the elementary school level as well as providing such opportunities at the middle school level.

TAGAC supports ACPS’s continued use of the NNAT as a means of assessing a student’s general ability. The NNAT can be used irrespective of a student’s native language. Furthermore, it requires no specific prior knowledge. The test seeks to evaluate how a student has to think in order to complete a task rather than what the student needs to know to complete the task. Thus, the NNAT provides an equitable approach to assessment, and we believe its continued use will enable ACPS to acknowledge students who come from low-income families, culturally and linguistically diverse environments, and English Language Learners (ELLs).

For purposes of assessing a student’s skills in specific areas, we recommend ACPS consider the use of the new Naglieri Ability Test-Verbal (NAT-Verbal) and Naglieri Ability Test-Quantitative (NAT-Quantitative) tests as possible alternatives to the current Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT),

which is currently used as a universal screener for third graders. The NAT-Verbal looks at associative relationships between pictures, while the NAT-Quantitative examines relationships and patterns between numbers. These tests were designed to help educators equitably identify underserved populations because the tests do not require knowledge of English. Findings based on pilot testing of general ability tests closely matched the U.S. population on key demographics such as race, gender, and education.

### **Further Consideration**

TAGAC was impressed by the testing oversight provided to all third graders in the administration of the CogAT to ensure the best possible results for all children. It is unclear whether this same level of oversight is available to first graders currently being administered the NNAT. We strongly recommend that testing oversight for any test used to assess a child’s eligibility to receive TAG services be rigorously administered to ensure equity.

We further recommend ACPS consider creating an assessment matrix that favors scores on tests like the NNAT. We recommend testing and obtaining scores from all students with less reliance on referrals. To do otherwise risks creating, or at least perpetuating, inequities in the evaluative process because of flaws inherent in other assessment tools. For instance, traditional ability tests focus on achievement rather than potential, and teacher referrals can sometimes present bias toward a student or group of students.

We also recommend that ACPS explore “local norms” as a strategy to improve the identification of students from all racial, cultural, and income groups. To do so, ACPS would need to compare a student’s performance to grade-level peers in each individual school rather than the district as a whole. This would enable ACPS to better ensure that students are not being unfairly penalized for not having learned certain content because it would assess whether those students have academic needs that cannot be met in the regular classroom at their current school.

In closing, to measure the effectiveness of the general ability tests, ACPS must decide on how to obtain and evaluate data for each student. The type of information collected must be relevant and reliable. The data collection methods must be consistent, secure, and centralized, and aggregated data need to be continually analyzed to identify opportunities for improvement.

### **Equity and Access to Services**

**Dr. Jonathan Plucker** is the Julian C. Stanley Endowed Professor of Talent Development at Johns Hopkins University and the current President of the National Association of Gifted Children (NAGC). His research focuses on education policy and talent development. Dr. Plucker’s presentation to the committee focused on the successful outcomes that have been observed with ability grouping when implemented flexibly and equitably as one means to promote advanced achievement. He noted recent studies have considered the benefits of ability grouping when incorporating flexibility. Flexible grouping, where students are frequently evaluated and often reassigned during the school year, provides the benefits of ability grouping (e.g., easier teaching, focused learning) without the negative social impacts or inability to break

out of a group once assigned. Flexible ability grouping could be determined in a variety of ways such as course subject, reading, or cognitive skills or, most importantly, by potential versus performance. Training for teachers and staff would assist in grouping for potential disposing of stereotypes of gifted students. Teachers could use flexible ability groups to assist in providing “personalized” (not individualized) teaching to their students as well as regrouping when a student’s needs evolve.

Dr. Plucker also stressed that any ability grouping must be equitable. He acknowledged the concerns with equity that have been expressed with ability grouping. But in his view, flexible grouping with universal and frequent assessment has the potential for the most equitable outcomes. He also stressed that it is critical to assess equity holistically, looking not just at the public school system, but also at private educational opportunities. Citing San Francisco schools as a cautionary example, Dr. Plucker strongly advised against discontinuing advanced programs such as TAG.

He elaborated that selection for flexible grouping must be universal (e.g., testing in second and fourth grades) and that we must also look for student potential, not only performance or achievement. While gifted students in early elementary are often not necessarily “high achieving,” they do demonstrate “strong potential” through their classroom behavior and personality (e.g., asking questions, being curious, having the ability to concentrate). Moreover, he stressed that due to differences between schools or neighborhoods, he advocated adopting local norms for identifying students since central criteria might not apply to all situations.

Dr. Plucker’s local norms observation directly applies to ACPS. ACPS has four major language groups. While translation services are present, this may not be sufficient to capture the diversity, school culture, or atmosphere and to identify more effective ways to engage local communities and connect with parents. TAGAC feels that ACPS could benefit from including parent support groups and parent resources for every school in developing local norms. Once established, dedicated training for parent liaisons and Front Office personnel (the first people to see and connect with the parents) on differences between Specific Academic Aptitude (SAA) in language arts (LA), math, science or social studies, General Intellectual Aptitude (GIA), and Young Scholars services using local norms.

Critical to a successful educational program that serves all ability levels, in Dr. Plucker’s view, is a high-level curriculum that appropriately challenges all students. When coupled with flexible grouping, a high-level curriculum serves to engage all students by meeting them at their level.

TAGAC believes there is merit in considering equitable flexible ability grouping in ACPS for the elementary and middle school levels. This model provides useful tools to provide personalized instruction to the widely diversified student bodies in the ACPS elementary and middle schools. TAGAC feels that due to the vast array of courses offered at the high school level, the benefits of flexible grouping would be less effective. Flexible ability grouping could permit teachers and administrators to tailor services to the specific needs of their classrooms and neighborhood schools. Then, with regrouping, there are additional opportunities for students to move to new groups that suit individual needs, avoiding labels or stereotypes. However, selection must be

equitable by looking for potential in addition to performance using local norms. Looking for potential and using local norms in student selection should be especially considered at the middle school level, where the ability diversity within classrooms tends to be greater than elementary schools.

**Angela Greene** is a testing analyst with the ACPS Department of Accountability. Ms. Greene presented information about the CogAT test and how it is used as a universal screener to identify students for TAG services in third grade. The CogAT is given to all ACPS third graders in the fall over the course of three days. Student illness and testing form completion errors can contribute to testing irregularities. One benefit of the CogAT is that it can identify students who have a high level of academic ability that may not be reflected in observed levels of achievement. A student who scores in the 95th percentile (nationally normed by age reference) will create an automatic TAG referral as follows: Verbal—referral for LA, science, and social studies; Quantitative alone—referral for math; Nonverbal combined with Quantitative—referral for math; and Nonverbal alone—referral for math.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review the *TAGAC Identification and Testing Subcommittee Report*.

**IMPACT:**

TAGAC believes that pathways to equity within the TAG program starts with a revised testing strategy, implementation of a high-level curriculum for all students, and consideration of ability grouping and local norms.

**Attachment D: TAGAC Virtual Learning Subcommittee Report**

Date: June 21, 2021

**FROM:** D. Ohlandt, TAGAC Representative, Cora Kelly  
Lindsay Clarke, TAGAC Representative, Douglas MacArthur

**TO:** Laura Rose, Chair, Talented and Gifted Advisory Committee

**SUMMARY:**

The Talented and Gifted Advisory Committee (TAGAC) focused on the importance of documenting the delivery of Talented and Gifted (TAG) services during the 2020–2021 academic school year due to challenges and changes related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**BACKGROUND:**

**Delivery of TAG services in Virtual and Hybrid Learning in the 2020–2021 School Year**

The delivery of TAG services in virtual and hybrid learning environments through the 2020–2021 school year took a range of forms depending on the schools, grade levels, and subjects. It is worth noting that the diverse formats and uneven delivery of TAG services during virtual/hybrid learning was not significantly different from the diversity and unevenness of TAG services during full-time in-person learning.

**General Intellectual Aptitude (GIA) and Grades K–3**

Based on informal reports from parents, teachers, and students, the delivery of services to GIA students, especially in elementary grades and particularly in grades K–3, was inconsistent. In some schools, GIA students seemed to receive only minimal differentiation where teachers adapted to the demands of a virtual classroom. In other schools, the virtual environment allowed GIA students to pursue complex, sustained projects one-on-one or in small groups with teachers other than the homeroom teacher. Schools that were able to use resource or encore teachers to assist homeroom teachers with the teaching of core subjects were best able to differentiate for students of multiple ability levels and learning differences.

**Subject-Based Classes (Grades 4–8)**

In fourth and fifth grades, the TAG language arts (LA) and math classes were taught virtually as “pull-out” classes, much as they are taught in person. TAG-level middle school courses and Advanced Placement (AP)/advanced courses in high school were also taught virtually as self-contained cohorts—just as they are taught during in-person instruction.

**Social-Emotional Needs of TAG Students**

Virtual and hybrid learning created both challenges and opportunities for the delivery of social-emotional services to TAG students during 2020–2021. Without face-to-face instruction or casual opportunities to observe students in face-to-face interactions, teachers and counseling

staff had to find other ways to do preliminary identification of social and emotional issues. When concerns were identified, students’ “screen fatigue” or household situations sometimes obstructed counseling staff’s attempts to meet with students individually or in groups outside of instructional time.

On the other hand, a critical opportunity created within the Virtual+ Learning plan was the delivery of Social, Emotional, and Academic Learning (SEAL) lessons on a daily basis for all students, with an emphasis on building relationships.

### **Young Scholars Program in 2020–2021**

Through the TAG Virtual Identification Plan and the GIA/Young Scholars (YS) curriculum, the office of Gifted and Advanced Academics continued to service YS students within the Virtual+ and Phased Reentry Plans.

#### **Identification**

The YS Virtual Identification Plan retains the most important aspects of the original identification plan while also incorporating some of the portfolio features of the TAG Virtual Identification Plan. The most equitable features of the YS process remain the same, including the “3 As” (Access, Affirmation, and Advocates), portfolio considerations, and holistic evaluation. GIA teachers, YS teachers, and YS contact leads were heavily involved in the YS identification process at their schools.

#### **The GIA/YS Curriculum**

During virtual and hybrid instruction, the YS model continued with its implementation of the GIA/YS curriculum. YS students received enrichment via differentiated instruction by their classroom teacher. Teachers could access the GIA/YS curriculum resource options housed in *Canvas*, supporting differentiation within a hybrid learning framework. Students also had access to gifted resources to explore independent study, passion projects, and problem-/project-based learning projects. The flipped classroom model (one that encourages students to prepare outside of class by reading content beforehand and then utilizing valuable classroom time for live engagement opportunities) was another way that students could access rigorous learning opportunities that nurture academic potential. Throughout virtual and hybrid learning, the continuation of the YS model has provided students with more personalized opportunities to learn. It has helped them develop their self-regulation, deductive reasoning, and time management skills.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review the *TAGAC Virtual Learning Subcommittee Report*.

#### **IMPACT:**

TAGAC believes documenting the experience of TAG students during this unique school year will allow the Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) to address weaknesses in the program and

capitalize on program strengths, with the sole goal being to build an equitable program that meets the needs of students.

**Attachment E: TAG PTAC Presentation**

See File: TAG PTAC Presentation

**Attachment F: Talented and Gifted Program Indicators November 2020**

See File: TAG Indicators 2019–2020