




TAGAC: Middle School Overview

March 20, 2017
Stacie Andersen & Jess Finnefrock

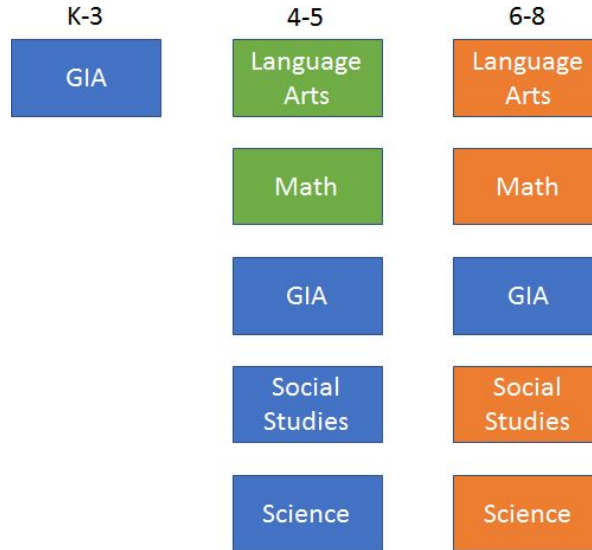


Classroom Approach Today

- TAG identified students are clustered within Honors classes
 - Honors classes are open enrollment (students opt-in)
 - Cluster guideline is 5-7 students per cluster, can be as few as 2-3 in Science/Social Studies and as many as 15 in Language Arts
 - There are no TAG-only Honors sections
- TAG students receive DEPs: in-class enrichment activities
 - Intended as unique, advanced work in parallel to other classroom work
 - Introduced 2 years ago to give Honors teachers a structured approach to their TAG clusters

TAG Program Types in Middle School

- TAG Math
- TAG Language Arts
- TAG Social Studies
- TAG Science
- TAG GIA
- Young Scholars



Blue = DEPs in classroom
Green = pull out TAG classes
Orange = DEPs for TAG students within larger honors classes, subject area specific

Note: there are no TAG electives in middle school

Teacher Training and Staffing

- Honors teachers have professional development opportunities for gifted education
 - Ranges from ACPS-staff led training to certification from the College of William & Mary
 - 96% of middle school teachers have taken advantage of TAG professional development
- Full-time TAG Resource Teachers at GW and FH to help with gifted education differentiation
 - Note: JH will receive a coach if middle school enrollment increases. JH today has 1 K-8 TAG teacher.



How does ACPS compare to other school districts nearby?



Arlington

What's the same?

- TAG clustering

What's different?

- Staff-supported enrichment and extension opportunities such as Math Counts, Knowledge Masters, Concurrent Enrollment (taking HS classes while in MS), Virginia Junior Academy of Science, and Geography Bee, Enrichment offerings at the Career Center
- Full-time Middle Years IB program at 1 school and access to Thomas Jefferson Magnet School for HS

Fairfax

What's the same?

- TAG clustering in “standard” schools

What's different?

- Full-time Level IV services for gifted students--magnet schools for K-6, 7-8 and Thomas Jefferson High School
- Middle Years IB program at 8 middle schools



Opportunities for Further Exploration



Potential Opportunities for Further Exploration

- Very few middle school students are Social Studies or Science TAG identified: 28 total across all 3 schools
 - *We think* this is because there are no pull-out Social Studies or Science TAG classes in grades 4-5
 - Do parents know it's an option to have their children identified in these subject areas as they transition to middle school?
 - Would K-5 principals and teachers support efforts to identify Social Studies and Science TAG students or would this be perceived as a burden on classroom teachers and part-time science teachers?
- Support services for middle (and high) school students
 - Our committee could advocate for services including trained, full-time staff to support the whole student

Potential Opportunities for Further Exploration

- In school and after school activities for TAG students such as Odyssey of the Mind and/or a speaker series
 - Create a sense of community as well as additional academic enrichment
 - Consider asking parents/PTA to organize
- TAG electives
 - Note: recommended by TAGAC 2 years ago