

BOARD BRIEF

Date: 23_11_10

BOARD INFORMATION: X

MEETING PREPARATION: _____

FROM: Megan Tempel-Milner, Ph.D., Director of Advanced Academic Services (AAS)
Mashari Whitfield, Elementary Instructional Specialist of AAS

THROUGH: Melanie Kay-Wyatt, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools
Pierrette Finney, Ed.D., Chief Academic Officer
Carmen Sanders, Executive Director of Instructional Support

TO: The Honorable Michelle Rief, Chair, and
Members of the Alexandria City School Board

TOPIC: Updates to Advanced Academic Services in Alexandria City Public Schools

ACPS 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL:

- Goal 1: Systemic Alignment
- Goal 2: Instructional Excellence
- Goal 3: Student Accessibility and Support
- Goal 4: Strategic Resource Allocation
- Goal 5: Family and Community Engagement

SY 2023-2024 FOCUS AREA:

N/A

FY 2024 BUDGET PRIORITY:

Increase Support for Social and Emotional Learning

SUMMARY:

This brief provides an overview of the work ACPS has implemented since approving the updated Local Plan for the Gifted in June 2023. It will focus on curriculum and instruction, school and teacher support, staffing, communications, and feedback.

DETAILS:

A significant focus of the Advanced Academic Services (AAS) office work has been on curriculum resource projects, professional learning, and school support. All grades 4-5 Tier III language arts curriculum and resource guides, which also incorporate social-emotional learning (SEL), and grade 4 Tier III math guides have been fully updated and aligned with division pacing and gifted resources with a focus on enrichment, standards-based acceleration, deep problem-solving, and communication. In addition, a K-3 talent development framework, aligned with division pacing and gifted resources, has been created for Advanced Academic Support Teachers (AASs) and homeroom teachers to use in grades K-3 classrooms. Resources include the William and Mary

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language arts units, Document-Based Questions (DBQs), Grammar and Vocabulary development using Michael Clay Thompson, the Bookworm novels using the School-Wide Enrichment Model for Reading instructional practices, The JASON project, Mentoring Mathematical Minds units, Project Clarion science units, Jacob's Ladder reading materials, the William and Mary Base 10 math unit, and Hands-on Equations.

The AAS office supports teachers using the updated curriculum guides, resources, and service delivery models. The AAS office holds monthly meetings focusing on professional learning and collaborative planning. In addition, AAS class visits have occurred with every elementary and middle school, either through AAS or division-led walk-throughs. The office meets with teachers to answer questions, provide support, and assess the fidelity of implementation.

The AAS office has requested additional AAS positions for the 2024-2025 school year, which would ensure that two AAST teachers at each elementary school meet the requirements of the Local Plan. The AAS office is waiting to hear if the request was approved. At the start of November, the secondary instructional AAS specialist position was posted and opened, and the AAS office will conduct interviews in late November/early December.

The AAS office has worked with the Office of Communications to develop a communication plan. Communication has been completed in the form of Board Briefs, a parent newsletter sent via hard copy and/or ParentSquare, staff updates and presentations at the Advanced Academic Services Advisory Committee (AASAC), posted voice-over presentations that provided information on both of the screening windows, an updated website, and a Crosswalk document that was shared with school-system administrators, the School Board, principals, AAS screening leads, and AASTs, as well as posted on the AAS website.

Finally, the AAS office notes feedback from teachers, students, and the community as we move through the first year of this updated Local Plan. Any recommendations for modification to the Local Plan will be communicated to the School Board by the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Leadership at the end of the school year.

BACKGROUND:

On June 1, 2023, the ACPS School Board approved the updated Local Plan for the Gifted. This brief outlines some of the overall changes and work projects ACPS has implemented since the approval of the Local Plan for the Gifted.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review the information and attachments related to this board brief.

IMPACT:

The updates outlined in this brief allow schools to support students across various levels of advanced academic needs.

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REFERENCES:

N/A

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Local Plan Crosswalk
2. Parent/Guardian Services and Screening Overview Presentation
3. Tier I-III Services Overview handout

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