

TAG and Communication



Zion Bezu and Stacy Hayden

Three Main Focuses

- What is currently in the ACPS Local Plan?
- What can we take away from this?
- Questions/ recommendations/ commendations in this area

Communication with Teachers

From the Local Plan

- “To provide professional development to all teachers within the Division emphasizing cultural competency, the characteristics and special needs of gifted students” (page 9)
- “Note: Training on the identification of students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged, and/or underrepresented populations including ELL and Special Education students for TAG services is provided at the beginning of each school year” (page 10)
- “To provide a comprehensive professional development program that supports teachers in the development and implementation of differentiated instruction in students identified for gifted services, including specialized training for honors teacher in gifted education strategies” (page 9)

From the Local Plan

- “Professional development focused on teaching gifted students is provided throughout the year and required of all new teachers and teachers who provide direct services to gifted students. Teachers, who are considered teachers of the gifted, whether in full- or part-time positions, are designated in these sections”

Questions and Recommendations

Questions

- Do all schools do the training for their teachers at the beginning of the year inservice?
- Although the presentation is created, could it be revised to cover additional topics of importance/ increase effectiveness?
- How many middle school honors teachers currently hold gifted training in some manner?

Recommendations/ Commendations

- If not already created, make a Middle/High School specific presentation for beginning of the year inservice.
- ACPS TAG has provided many different opportunities for teachers to receive professional development in regards to gifted/ high-ability students
- The William and Mary Cohort is an excellent opportunity for ACPS teachers

Communication with ACPS Families

From the Local Plan

- “Involve and communicate with families of underrepresented populations in their communities and native language materials.” (page 9)
- “To promote an understanding of the need for gifted education and differentiation by involving parents and the community with TAG program communications, opportunities, and support, with a special focus on special populations” (page 9)
- “Solicit referrals through Parent and Community Announcements- newsletters, Parent Information Nights, memos- October, November” (page 14)
- “Every two years, a comprehensive survey [in regards to effectiveness] of stakeholders will be conducted and results reported” (page 43)

Questions and Recommendations

Questions

- Have there been TAG Information nights at the middle schools in the past?
- What other ways could we communicate important information with families?

Recommendations/ Commendations

- A Middle School TAG Information night would be a good addition. Especially to help parents understand the DEPs.
- Many schools hold their TAG information night at PTA meetings, however this isn't always the best choice.
- ACPS could partner with the FACE Center to support this event at some of the schools.
- ACPS could partner with parents to support TAG informational Social meeting
- ACPS does an excellent job of translating materials into multiple languages.

Communication with Families throughout the Referral Process

With Families: Individual Students

- “Within 10 school days of receiving a referral form, the TAG Designee notifies parents with the Parent Notification Letter and the Written Permission for Talented and Gifted Services Evaluation” (page 12)
- “Within 10 school days following the Identification/ Placement Committee meeting, parents are notified of the decision of the Identification/ Placement Committee using Not Eligible for TAG Services letter or Eligible for TAG Services letter ” (page 13)
 - “Parents/guardians who are in attendance are told of the committee’s placement decision at the meeting. All parents/ guardians are officially notified of the decision by letter.” (page 19)

Questions and Recommendations

Questions

- Are the TAG Referral/ Identification forms translated into multiple languages?

Recommendations/ Commendations

- All schools should follow the same procedures for notifying families or should have options.
- Ideally, student folders are not a method that should be used for transporting documents.
- If not already, ACPS should translate all TAG forms into multiple languages.
- ACPS has made the notification consistent through the same letters being used at each school.