

Alexandria City Public Schools
Advanced Academic Services Advisory Committee
November 28, 2023
ACHS 3330 King St, Room A-114

Minutes

Meeting: November 28, 2023 @6:30 pm - 8:30 pm (Alexandria City High School, 3330 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22302)

Current AASAC Members Present: D. Ohlandt (Chair), Evan Smith (Vice Chair), Ettasue Harris (Shawna)- (Secretary), Lillian Pace, Catherine Baker (Katie), Matt Henry (Teacher Rep)

Guests: Mashari Whitfield (ACPS Staff), Ashley Simpson Baird (School Board Member), Jeremy Miller, Arin Keyser, Kelly Organek, Tammy Hettinger, Willow Darsie, Natalie Dubois, Rene Paschal (ACPS Staff)

Chair's Update:

Dr. D. Ohlandt: Tonight's meeting will focus on one of our three prongs of our scope of work – AAS services at the middle and high school level.

- Chair will look into ordering the book for committee members titled: Educating Gifted Students in Middle School, Third Edition.

- Chair also shared an update on a process underway by an ACPS school board subcommittee to examine the five current advisory committees to better understand their legal boundaries and what ACPS wants the advisory committees to do, among other things. What the subcommittee is finding is that all six advisory committees operate very differently from each other. What we need to explore is where we are aligned with the other advisory committees and where we should not be aligned. Chair encouraged members to review our bylaws which are available on ACPS website.

Ashley Simpson Baird, School Board Member:

We have liaison roles on the school board. She has been serving on the Governance Advisory Committee to examine our structures. One of the recommendations we will make in the near future is a more structured process for the board to accept recommendations from the advisory committee, so committee members know their time is appreciated and valued.

Budget process will begin in early January. The Superintendent will present her budget on January 4th and then the board will begin work sessions. A public hearing will be January 18th. This will be the first budget cycle where we can consider funding implications for the new AAS local plan.

Since Willie Bailey has resigned from the board and was the liaison to AASAC, Board Member Baird offered to be a point of contact for the committee until a new liaison is selected.

Approval of Minutes:

Dr. D. Ohlandt: Proposes that the approval of October minutes be tabled to focus on how to include written public comments. The proposal to table approval of October minutes was approved by AASAC Committee Members.

Staff update:

Mashari Whitfield, ACPS presents and gives updates from the office of Dr. Tempel-Milner.

- Ms Whitfield and Dr. Tempel-Milner recently attended the NAGC conference and found especially useful the presentation on the Innovator's Mindset from George Couros, because of its relevance to gifted education.

High School Gifted Services curriculum presentation:

Dr. Matt Henry, ACPS (ACHS teacher) presents Overview of 9-12 Honors, Advanced Placement, & Dual Enrollment/Other Options

- (33 total courses)

-Advanced Placement vs. Dual Enrollment

- open enrollment
- Instructors
- Choice
- Noticed from 2017 External Review of TAG a big difference

-Lots of room for growth for Advanced Academics

- Lack of Choice
- Staff Development
- Course Selection

D. Ohlandt asked: "What's the differentiation of the levels of core content from grade to grade?"

Public Remarks:

There was a lot of discussion on recent local plan. There were concerns shared by guest parents about recent changes of local plan, guest parents are also concerned about how AAS information is shared and feels that accessibility of information is not always the best. Written comments submitted by Jeremy Miller and Julie Anne Watko. Please see attached statements.

Chair and committee noted areas for future work:

- How are we planning to evaluate and track the success of the local plan
- Communications piece as it relates to students and parents
- Possibility for another public presentation on new math curriculum
- Possibility for another public presentation on the Local Plan update, especially K-3 changes

Dr. D. Ohlandt motioned to adjourn. All in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Next TAGAC Meeting:

Alexandria City High School, 3330 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22302
Tuesday, January 16, 2024; 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm