

Alexandria City Public Schools

Talented and Gifted Advisory Committee

September 21, 2020 Minutes

Meeting: September 21, 2020, @ Zoom Webinar

Current and Incoming TAGAC Members Present: Zion Besu, Donna Brearley, Daphney Denerville-Davis, Leigh Dugan, Reese du Pont, Emily Garrahan, Mark Lacy, Dr. Gerald Mann, D Ohlandt, Laura Rose, Kathleen Sheehy, Christopher Suarez, Mary Beth Walker

Old Business:

The committee approved the July Meeting Minutes.

New Business:

Housekeeping

- A few dates to keep in mind:
 - o The VA Association for Gifted Children's Fall Seminar will be Sat, Oct 10
 - o The October TAGAC meeting will be rescheduled for Wednesday, October 14th and will feature Jonathan Plucker, current NAGC President, who will speak with us about equity in TAG programming
 - o The November TAGAC meeting will be rescheduled for Tuesday, November 17th and will feature VA Association for Gifted Children's President-Elect Dornswalo Wilkins-McCorey speaking about SENG (Supporting Emotional Needs of Gifted)
 - o The December TAGAC meeting will be December 14th and will feature Angie Green from the Dept of Accountability discussing the CogAt and how it works within ACPS

Update from Donna Brearley:

- There were 3 teachers who wrote curriculum this summer focusing on multicultural ELA texts
- TAG Evaluations that were in the pipeline during the spring school closure but might have needed a standardized test for placement are continuing with in-person testing at JH
- New referrals are still being accepted, and the deadline for submitting a referral is the end of 2nd Quarter
- There will be no universal testing (NNAT/CogAT) this academic year. In lieu of testing, students in grades 1 and 3 will complete portfolios which will be evaluated by a team; portfolios rated Superior will be referred for TAG evaluation and scheduled for in-person testing. Every 1st and 3rd grader will have a portfolio available for evaluation
- Last year's Annual Report will be presented to the School Board at the October 1st meeting

Committee Discussion:

- The Committee heard some anecdotal feedback on the start of the school year from committee members
- The Committee discussed the Scope of Work for the 2020-2021 school year and hopes to finalize it at the October meeting. The Committee discussed the draft Scope of Work and made some suggestions to wording
- Mr. Suarez shared some of the School Board budget priorities which include addressing the disproportionality in TAG at all grade levels. There is a hope that some of the challenges brought about due to the Covid pandemic can be viewed as opportunities to address equity and come out of this in a stronger position. The Board is looking for our input on innovative ways teachers are trying to reach ALL students. He also mentioned that Push-in/Pull-out model for ELA will come up before the board this year with a view through the lens of Racial Equity.
- Members of the Committee raised the question of looking for data supporting the service model we select for ELA. Donna mentioned that our program was rated against National Best Practices in the TAG Program Evaluation 3 years ago and that data is always used in our decisions; it was also suggested that we already have a mini-model of what both separate curriculum/separate teachers (4/5th LA/Math) and heterogeneous grouping with differentiation (GIA/Middle School) currently looks like because both models are currently implemented in the City.
- The Committee discussed SEAL with a question about what might be done to arrange programming to help connect TAG students with each other (field trips or other after-school programming)
- There was a concern that teachers are creating and collecting teaching materials from many different sources and wondering about how textbooks and consumable workbooks or other materials could increase equity during this pandemic.

Chair Report:

Annual Report Summary: