

**MEMO**

Date: *December 5, 2022*

For ACTION

For INFORMATION

**FROM:** D. Ohlandt, Ph.D., Chair, Talented and Gifted Advisory Committee (TAGAC)  
Megan Tempel-Milner, Ph.D. Director of Gifted & Advanced Academic Programs

**THROUGH:** Dr. Wendy Gonzalez, Chief of Teaching, Learning and Leadership  
Dr. Melanie Kay-Wyatt, Superintendent of Schools

**TO:** The Honorable Megan L. Alderton, Chair, and  
Members of the Alexandria City School Board

**TOPIC:** **Talented and Gifted Advisory Committee (TAGAC) Scope of Work for 2022-23**

**SUMMARY:** The TAG Advisory Committee activities during the 2022-23 school year will focus on the following areas:

- 1) "Local Plan" development, approval, and implementation
- 2) Middle School TAG curriculum and delivery of TAG services
- 3) Differentiated instruction K-12 and delivery of TAG services

**BACKGROUND:**

The focus areas for 2022-23 have been developed in conversation with Dr. Megan Tempel-Milner and returning members of TAGAC, as well as in consultation with recent and current ACPS and School Board priorities as approved at the September 8, 2022 School Board meeting.

*ACPS's Five-Year "Local" Plan*

TAGAC is committed to monitoring and supporting the progress of the Local Plan development and approval. This is in alignment with the School Board's Area of Focus for SY 22-23 "Talented and Gifted" subtopic "Update Local Plan for the Gifted."

ACPS's last Local Plan for TAG students was approved in 2011 and covered from 2012–2017. The school system has been operating under the approved plan for the previous 11 years, but it needs to be updated to comply with state law. This work has been underway for some time, and there is a Local Plan Steering Committee separate from TAGAC providing most support to the Office of Gifted and Advanced Academic Programs.

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From 2017-2021, TAGAC has made several recommendations to improve equity and quality of TAG identification and delivery of services. Many of these recommendations have been implemented or will be incorporated into the Local Plan going forward. TAGAC intends to track the inclusion or consideration of its past recommendations 2017-2021 in the current Local Plan, and to highlight, when possible, the ways that TAGAC recommendations have already been implemented and what impact they have had.

The past three years (2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22) have seen not only general upheaval across the school division from COVID-19 closures, but also, changes in the leadership and administration of the TAG and Young Scholars programs specifically. These disruptions make it challenging to track the impact of various changes that TAGAC has recommended and the Office of Gifted and Advanced Academic Studies has begun to put into place. TAGAC expects that it may be 2-3 years before we can evaluate from the Accountability Office data whether the ongoing adjustments and improvements to ACPS's TAG eligibility guidelines and identification procedures, as well as communication and advocacy about TAG services generally, are having the positive impact on equity and student experience that we desire. Nevertheless, TAGAC is committed to monitoring what data is available and tracking how recent changes in the identification and eligibility determination processes are included in the Local Plan.

### *Middle School TAG Curriculum and delivery of services*

TAGAC will review and make recommendations about the Honors curriculum at the middle school level and the ways that the academic and social-emotional needs of TAG-eligible students can be met in middle school. This aligns with the School Board's Area of Focus for SY 22-23 "Middle School Educational Experience" as well as the Area of Focus "Talented and Gifted" subtopic "Service Model."

Dr. Megan Tempel-Milner has specifically requested feedback from TAGAC on the delivery of TAG services in middle school and its intersection with the honors curriculum overall. TAGAC has set subcommittees to look at TAG services in middle school several times over the last five years (2017-2021), and this year we will refer to those previous recommendations as well as developing new ones in response to current practices.

### *Differentiated Instruction K-12 and delivery of services*

TAGAC will study and provide feedback about how ACPS can equip, support, and empower teachers K-12 to offer differentiated instruction in every classroom. This aligns with the School Board's Area of Focus for SY 22-23 "Talented and Gifted" subtopic "Service Model."

Currently ACPS provides "pull-out" services for TAG-eligible 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders in Language Arts and Math. As ACPS considers adapting the service model for TAG instruction in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades, the ability of teachers to provide differentiated instruction for TAG-eligible (and other)

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students will be critical to the success or failure of a “push-in” or “inclusion” model. TAGAC intends to identify best practices and resources for differentiated instruction and to advocate for differentiation to be incorporated into all ACPS instruction. Additionally, TAGAC will provide, to the best of its ability and in cooperation with the Office of Gifted and Advanced Academic Programs and the Accountability Office, the budgetary impacts of achieving differentiated instruction in ALL ACPS classes.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Superintendent recommends that the School Board approve the TAGAC Scope of Work for 2022-23.

### **IMPACT:**

By focusing on the topics contained in this scope of work, TAGAC believes ACPS will provide a stronger, better supported, and more equitable TAG program to its students.

**ATTACHMENTS:** TAGAC 2017-2022 summary 2022-12-05.pdf

**CONTACT:** D. Ohlandt, Ph.D., Chair, Talented and Gifted Advisory Committee (TAGAC), [profolandt@gmail.com](mailto:profolandt@gmail.com)  
Megan Tempel-Milner, Ph.D., Director of Gifted and Advanced Academic Programs, [megan.tempel-milner@acps.k12.va.us](mailto:megan.tempel-milner@acps.k12.va.us)

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