

Date: October 12, 2017

For ACTION _____

For INFORMATION X

Board Agenda: Yes X
No _____

FROM: Clinton Page, Ed.S., Chief Accountability Officer
Terri Mazingo, Ed.D., Chief Academic Officer
Donna Brearley, TAG Coordinator

THROUGH: Lois Berlin, Ed.D., Interim Superintendent of Schools

TO: The Honorable Ramee A. Gentry, Chair, and Members of the Alexandria City School Board

TOPIC: Talented and Gifted (TAG) Evaluation Report

BACKGROUND:

Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) has made a commitment to every student, parent, and community member that “*Every Student Succeeds.*” A critical component of ensuring that ACPS is offering the highest quality services to each student is through structured reviews of essential programs. The principal goal in these evaluations is to take a critical look at the current environment and determine what is working well, what requires revision, and what explicit actions are necessary for the division to continue to improve outcomes for every student.

The rationale for the evaluation of the Talented and Gifted program was to evaluate progress in key initiatives laid out in 2012-2016 Local TAG Plan and inform the division and stakeholders in the creation of a new TAG plan. On September 15, 2016 the Board was presented with a timeline of evaluation activities for the 2016-17 school year.

Evaluation

Evaluation work began in fall 2016 in collaboration with a competitively selected external evaluator, Dr. Joyce VanTassel-Baska, and was guided by the following key research questions:

1. To what extent is the gifted program being implemented according to its stated goals and objectives?
2. To what extent is the program progressing in its attempt to identify underrepresented groups for the program?
3. To what extent is the written, taught, and assessed curriculum sufficiently rigorous and differentiated for TAG-identified students?
4. To what extent is the program beneficial to students participating in it?
5. To what extent is the program perceived to be effective by relevant stakeholders?
6. To what extent is the program aligned with best practices in the field of gifted education?

7. What are the strengths and areas for improvement in the program? What are the recommendations for improvement in this area?

These research questions were thoroughly examined over the course of the 2016-17 school year through:

- reviews of the ACPS curriculum materials, texts, and TAG program resources;
- reviews of program reports and data over the past three years;
- surveys of parents, students, and staff;
- focus groups of parents, students, and staff;
- interviews with ACPS and program leadership;
- classroom observations;
- and a review of the National Association of Gifted Children's (NAGC) programming standards.

All data collected were then analyzed, synthesized across sources and research questions, and ultimately incorporated into a comprehensive report. The executive summary, attached to this memorandum, includes study methods employed, commendations as well as findings and recommendations by research question. The comprehensive report, also attached, contains findings presented by individual data source as well as through triangulation. Commendations and Recommendations are also in the comprehensive report, which includes a recommended Plan of Action. Appendices include the instrumentation used in the evaluation. Finally, the TAG Action Plan is attached and contains discrete steps the division will take in the course of the next three years to continue to improve TAG services.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Superintendent recommends the Board review the TAG Evaluation Executive Summary and Report for future discussion regarding possible planning, programmatic, and/or budgetary changes.

IMPACT:

The TAG Evaluation Report provides ACPS with critical insights into areas of the ACPS Talented and Gifted (TAG) program that are functioning at high levels as well as those areas that present opportunities for further improvements. This information will be utilized by the division to revise the current *Local Plan for Gifted Education* required by the Virginia Department of Education. All areas identified within the report will be addressed in the revised plan as ACPS continues to strive towards the mission of every student succeeds.

- ATTACHMENTS:**
- (1) TAG Evaluation PowerPoint
 - (2) TAG Evaluation Executive Summary
 - (3) TAG Evaluation Report
 - (4) TAG Action Plan PowerPoint

CONTACT PERSON:

Clinton Page, Chief Accountability Officer