

BOARD MEMO

Date: March 24, 2022
For ACTION ___
For INFORMATION x
Board Agenda: Yes x
No ___

FROM: Megan Tempel-Milner, Ph.D., Director of Gifted and Advanced Academic Programs
Gerald R. Mann, Jr., Ed. D., Executive Director of Instructional Support
Terri H. Mazingo, Ed.D., Chief of Teaching, Learning, and Leadership

THROUGH: Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

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

TOPIC: Talented and Gifted (TAG) Delivery Model and Identification Process Update

ACPS 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL:

- Goal 1: Systemic Alignment
- Goal 2: Instructional Excellence
- Goal 3: Student Accessibility and Support
- Goal 4: Strategic Resource Allocation
- Goal 5: Family and Community Engagement

SY 2020–2021 FOCUS AREA:

- Focus Area 3: Strategic Plan Implementation
- Focus Area 5: Talented and Gifted

FY 2022 BUDGET PRIORITY:

- Implementation of the 2025 Strategic Plan
- Reduce Disproportionality in TAG and Advanced Courses

SUMMARY:

During the 2021–2022 school year, the TAG office is updating the five-year Local Plan for the Gifted for final presentation in late spring 2022. The Local Plan utilizes steering committees, which consist of school and central office leaders, teachers, counselors, Talented and Gifted Advisory Committee (TAGAC) members, and outside consultants, to align our program goals with best practices in gifted education and ACPS’s 2025 Strategic Plan. As the foundational piece of the new plan, the committees developed and refined the “*Statement of Philosophy*” and “*Local Operational Definition of Giftedness*,” which were presented at the March 10, 2022, School Board meeting. We will also work on the continuum of services and identification procedures over March and April.

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BACKGROUND:

School divisions are required to identify gifted K–12 students and provide instructional services to meet their needs, and division School Boards are required to approve a comprehensive Local Plan. ACPS's last Local Plan for TAG students was approved in 2011 and covered the time frame between 2012–2017. The school system has been operating under the approved plan for the previous 10 years, but it needs to be continually reviewed and updated to comply with state law [8VAC20-40-60](#) and ACPS's 2025 Strategic Plan.

The Local Plan for the Gifted consists of the following sections:

- Statement of Philosophy and Local Operational Definition of Giftedness
- Program Goals and Objective
- Screening, Referral, Identification, and Service Procedures
- Notification Procedures
- Change in Instructional Services
- Service Options Are Continuous and Sequential
- Evidence of Appropriate Service Options
- Program for Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction
- Policies and Procedures for Access to Programs and Advanced Courses
- Personal and Professional Development
- Procedures for Annual Review of Effectiveness
- Guidelines for the Establishment of the Local Advisory Committee
- Assurances

The TAG office collaborates with school-based leaders, central office employees, teachers, counselors, researchers in the gifted field, and parent advisory groups to update ACPS's Local Plan for the Gifted. The Local Plan's steering committees have drafted the "*Statement of Philosophy*" and "*Local Operational Definition of Giftedness*," which focus on shifting the school system culture from labeling students to identifying various levels of need for all students in ACPS. The shift will move us to an office that provides Advanced Academic Services for students, with an emphasis on the service rather than a student label.

In addition, the committees have spent the last four sessions drafting the "*Service Options Are Continuous and Sequential*" and "*Change in Instructional Services*" sections. ACPS will continue to focus and refine different levels or tiers of Advanced Academic Services that students require within our school system, starting with ensuring all students have access to high-quality and rigorous Tier 1 instruction in the general education setting, employing a talented developer, and developing a system of Advanced Academics based on frequency and levels of access to higher levels of instruction. ACPS is drafting the Local Plan aligning with the Advanced Academic Programs Development Model presented by Drs. Peters, Matthews, McBee, and McCoach, where the focus is on services that students need first and identification next. Additionally, the committees will establish identification models that focus on eliminating access and opportunity gaps to develop a timeline for implementation.

Throughout the work, we will continue to ground it in research and data, garner feedback from stakeholders, and consult with experts in the field of Advanced Academics and equity.

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RECOMMENDATION:

The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review the information in this memo.

IMPACT:

With the revision of ACPS's Local Plan for the Gifted, students will have access to the educational resources needed to enhance their learning. It will eliminate opportunity and achievement gaps to ensure that all students graduate ready for college, careers, and life.

ATTACHMENT:

220324_Board_Presentation_ACPS_TAG_Delivery_of_Services_and_Identification

REFERENCE:

Talented and Gifted (TAG) Identification Process, March 10, 2022, [ACPS ESB Agenda](#)

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