

Alexandria City Public Schools
Talented and Gifted Advisory Committee

Meeting Agenda

March Minutes

Meeting: March 28, 2016

TAGAC Members Present: Zion Bezu, Suad Al Halabi, Donna Brearley, Stacy Hayden, Amanda Eisenhour, Alex Griffin, Christopher Lewis, Steve Gordon, Pam Jones, Steve Lally, Alexis Stackhouse, Nicholas Miller, Ashley Chappell

Guests: Terri Mozingo

Old Business:

-February minutes approved

New Business:

-None

Chair Update:

TAGAC Annual Memorandum/Annual Report

Similar to last year, we won't have data to put in the Annual Report. Mrs. Griffin made a rough draft of a memo for TAGAC to discuss. TAGAC has been very focused on data this past year, so we want to ensure that our memo reflects our focus on obtaining data and what this data means.

Mrs. Brearley has also been pulling Annual Reports from surrounding districts to help TAGAC determine what we could have on our Annual Report. She and Mr. Page will be analyzing this and presenting this at the May Meeting. Mrs. Griffin will be sending out all of these annual reports to all TAGAC members for review.

TAGAC also discussed adding high school recommendations to the Memorandum in order to start the conversation around ACPS services at the high school level. Mrs. Brearley shared that there is a VDOE report on best practices in gifted education for middle school and high school. She will share these reports with TAGAC as well. TAGAC discussed that there are some classes that are required that do not have an AP or DE equivalent. The question then becomes how does ACPS ensure these classes are rigorous for a TAG student. TAGAC discussed that a potential recommendation could be putting out DEPs at the High School level in these classes.

TAGAC would also like to see some follow up on the middle school recommendations from last year.

TAG Evaluation

Mrs. Griffin has met with Dr. Mazingo to discuss the TAG Evaluation. TAGAC is in a good spot to collaborate with ACPS to help determine what should be a part of the TAG Evaluation. By using our work from this year and previous years, we have a good idea of things to ask for in the evaluation. Currently, they have requested \$100,000 for the evaluation for this upcoming fiscal year. If this moves forward in the budget, central office staff (Mrs. Brearley, Dr. Mazingo, and Mr. Page) would be happy to come in and do a presentation at the next TAGAC meeting. They would like feedback from TAGAC to determine things that should be looked at in this evaluation.

This evaluation will provide ACPS with feedback including areas for improvement, strengths, and weaknesses. Please see the Excel sheet that Mrs. Griffin put together with many of the questions combined from our past few years of work. TAGAC discussed the need for a balance between qualitative and quantitative data captured during this evaluation.

Mrs. Griffin discussed the timeline for this process:

- March: Mrs. Brearley is researching practices from other localities/ districts (what they are doing to evaluate their TAG programs).

- April: ACPS will begin to develop the scope of the evaluation. In parallel, TAGAC can review the local plan, recent TAGAC local report, and other documents to develop a framework of topics for evaluation that ACPS could potentially use for its TAG evaluation. Mrs. Griffin will work with Mrs. Brearley to provide further detail on what this framework might look like. Additionally, Mrs. Brearley, Dr. Mazingo, and Mr. Page will be coming to our April meeting to discuss this with us.

- June: ACPS will work with TAGAC to incorporate input into evaluation criteria

- July: ACPS will finalize and issues the RFP.

- September: Work begins with the evaluation.

ACPS Updates:

Mrs. Brearley shared that we had a very successful Odyssey of the Mind season with 24 teams this year (3 years ago we had 8). Four of the teams are going onto the state competition as well.

STEM Academy

With the current 9th grade students, 26% of them are TAG identified. The STEM Academy Principal had a discussion with a TAGAC member around the purpose of the STEM Academy. They shared that it is based on student interest. They also shared that interviews are based on student interest as opposed to performance.

TAGAC discussed that the program is very student driven. The bigger concern is that from a TAG parents view, we need clarification of the purpose of the program. Mr. Lewis shared that the Board has been asking for an update/review of the STEM Academy. TAGAC can then review this publically available document for more information as well (if it becomes available). The board has been questioning the way it is being promoted, qualifications/selection process, use of cohort model vs. general classes offered, demographics within the academy, and other areas.

Dr. Mozingo shared that there was a written report on the program, however there was never a formal report prepared for the board.

Based on the conversation TAGAC had revolving around the STEM Academy, TAGAC discussed adding some recommendations to the Annual Report about the STEM Academy. Mr. Lewis mentioned that he would send the old report about the STEM Academy out to Mrs. Griffin to then send out to TAGAC.

TAG Identification

TAGAC also discussed the elementary identification process with TAG parent information meetings, automatic referrals, and other methods for sharing this information with parents. Although ACPS is doing things to be able to reach out to parents, we still need to do more to share this information with parents.

TAGAC also discussed the importance of ensuring that schools are following all of the procedures outlined in the Local Plan when it comes to identification and other areas. This should be something that is reviewed through the TAG Evaluation that would be very helpful.

Wrap-Up:

Other Activities for Students

TAGAC discussed that although there are 90 different clubs at the high school level, there are not enough enrichment opportunities at the middle school level. Additionally, it varies greatly at the elementary level.

Mrs. Brearley mentioned that she does have an email list that links to all TAG identified parents that can be used to share information as a potential way of getting enrichment opportunities out to parents.

We will consider putting this in the Annual Report as well.

Future Meetings

-April 18th

-Will be discussing annual reports from different locations in the district.

-Mr. Page, Dr. Mozingo, and Mrs. Brearley will be sharing the scope of topics for the evaluation.

-May 16th