

**2007-2008 SCOPE OF WORK**  
**for the**  
**ACPS SCHOOL BOARD**  
**CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION COMMITTEE**

The Alexandria City School Board approved (on November 19, 2007) the following scope of work for the Curriculum and Instructional Committee for the year 2007-08.

The committee will meet the second Thursday of each month at 10 a.m. in the School Board meeting room.

Each month, the committee will:

- receive a brief, verbal staff report on middle school open enrollment honors program and the concept of rigor, relevance and relationships in the classroom. The monthly reports will include, but not be limited to, an update on teacher improvement plans; training; walk-throughs; interventions; number of students enrolled in open enrollment honors and reasons for increases/decreases in enrollment; classroom feedback.
- receive a brief report on progress regarding the Corrective Action Plan at Jefferson-Houston Elementary School.

A primary goal of the Curriculum and Instructional Committee this year is to address issues, and recommend action to the School Board, which will improve student achievement for all students at all levels. Many of the topics to be discussed throughout the year will also be geared toward the goal of closing the minority gap.

**November 2007**

Curriculum-based resource allocations/reallocations, including but not limited to:

- Staffing needs, including coaches, PEP specialists, mentors
- Changing curriculum specialists' contracts from 11 months to 12 months
- Instructional coaching model
- Checking the fidelity of last year's budget initiatives toward literacy;

**December 2007**

The committee will review the current writing curriculum K-12 and recommend revisions as appropriate that encompass a philosophy of writing and frequency, quality and

consistency of assignments, as well as a means to maintain accountability of that curriculum. Specifically, the committee will discuss:

- Types and amounts of writing assignments at each grade level and in each content area;
- Rubrics to be used to assess the quality of student writing.

Secondly, the committee will continue its discussion from last year regarding an International Baccalaureate program for ACPS. The committee will also discuss ACPS grading practices.

### **January 2008**

The committee will discuss and recommend improvements to math instruction, K-9, with the goal of preparing all students for success in higher level math courses. Invited to participate in this meeting will be ACPS administrators, curriculum specialists, and any other professionals with whom the committee would like to dialogue. Specifically, the committee will work toward:

- Adjustments/modifications to existing math scheduling, pacing and instruction;
- Adjustments to allocation of time for math instruction;
- Determining what measure of success in mathematics should be;
- Adjustments to current Algebra I screening process, with the goal of Algebra I being open to all students in 8<sup>th</sup> grade;
- Additional preparation for students who don't demonstrate Algebra readiness;
- Adjustments to the mathematics general education courses to prepare students who may be qualifiers for 8<sup>th</sup> grade Algebra;
- Creating assessments to determine the impact of Everyday Math on Algebra readiness.

### **February 2008**

The committee will consider all amendments to the Talented and Gifted Local Plan brought before the Curriculum Committee and in turn, determine which amendments to recommend to the full School Board for consideration/approval. This meeting will be scheduled at a mutually convenient time to include the Talented and Gifted Advisory Committee and others interested. In January, the committee will issue a notice seeking public input for amendments. The TAG Plan will have already come up before the School Board in November for discussion. Amendments must be approved by June 30 and can be implemented immediately.

Secondly, the committee will also determine whether recommending a service component of social studies or other existing curriculum should be implemented. Dr. Walsh will provide the committee a report on a new program in 11<sup>th</sup> grade social studies, whereby an instructor is encouraging students to voluntarily commit to community service. The committee will discuss next steps and look toward expanding the success of the 11<sup>th</sup> grade program.

### **March 2008**

The committee will discuss student under achievement and look toward implementing strategies and instruction to work toward eliminating under achievement of any student. This includes studying low scores and initiating solutions to eradicate low standardized test scores.

Specifically, the committee will look at data from student report cards to determine who is under achieving; why; what interventions work, which do not, and which need to be added. Further, the committee will consider a counseling program for students to help them understand their opportunities available as a result of good grades and achievement in all classes.

The committee will also look toward readiness of minority preschool-age children, will study the number of students receiving a standard diploma versus an advanced diploma and the reasons for both; and will look into ways in which ACPS could partner with the City of Alexandria to address minority achievement.

To coincide with the committee's discussions, the committee will conduct a community meeting with interested parents and citizens to initiate dialog about under achievement and listen to suggestions for improvement in eliminating under achievement.

### **April 2008**

The committee will address issues of concern in Special Education. This meeting will be held at a mutually convenient time with members of the Special Education Advisory Committee and Michael Romanelli. An agenda will be developed; issues of concern include, but are not limited to, reading achievement and test scores.

### **May 2008**

The committee will discuss literacy initiatives K-12. Staff will provide an update on last year's initiatives and results of the Stanford 9 testing. Further, the committee will check the implementation of last year's budget initiatives toward literacy and what strategies need to be implemented across-the-board to imbed authentic reading and writing activities into daily instructional practices.

Secondly, the committee will discuss the use of existing technologies to increase academic rigor. The committee will review the current Blackboard learning portal and its capabilities with regard to Internet research, how it could help students move toward a higher order of thinking, etc. The committee will study the effectiveness of Blackboard technology as it is presently used and recommend whether Blackboard shall continue to be introduced at other grade levels. Topics for this meeting will be coordinated with the Facilities Committee, so as not to duplicate efforts/discussions.

The committee will also investigate how to provide ongoing access of student grades to parents.

### **June 2008**

The committee will review and study student preparedness for AP classes. This discussion will include all appropriate ACPS administrators.

The committee will review the existing AP classes at TCWilliams and address:

- whether classes are under-enrolled and why;
- how to insure students enrolled in AP classes have necessary support to succeed;
- address strategies to insure middle school open enrollment honors program positively impacts student readiness for advanced high school course work;
- whether the existing pre-requisites are appropriate; what AP support classes are presently offered and the need for change;
- the rigor of science instruction;
- who is taking the AP tests and the results of those tests.