

**Alexandria City Public Schools
Talented and Gifted Advisory Committee**

March minutes

Meeting Date: March 17, 2010

TAGAC Members Present: Sherry Delaney, Diann Gully, Adele Morris, Carol Schaedel, Jacquelyn Kittredge, Emma Grimes, Kimberly Poff, Roslyn Hall, Janice Howard, Anne Marie Ardura

Members Absent: Jennifer Lindauer, Debra Raggio, Mimi Carter, Arthur Johnson, Susan Hyre

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm by Sherry Delaney.

Public Comment: None

Approval of January minutes:

The TAGAC unanimously approved the January minutes on a motion from Emma Grimes, seconded by Jacquelyn Kittredge.

Chair's Report:

Ms. Delaney discussed the TAGAC positions of chair and secretary for the academic year 2010-2011. She asked that members consider nominations for these positions. In addition, she noted that the February 2010 TAGAC meeting was cancelled due to inclement weather.

New Business:

Ms. Gully noted that her position as TAG coordinator will no longer be with the curriculum department and she will be moved under Student Services. The rationale for the move is to house all "exceptionalities", e.g. ESL, TAG, Special Education, etc., in one administrative group because this will allow for better coordination of services. Ms Gully will have a work station in the curriculum department and be included in curriculum discussions regarding TAG services.

Ms. Gully also noted that the state regulations have been reopened for public comment. The reason has not been publically announced, although it is a matter of public record that The Chesterfield Virginia Chapter of the NAACP from Chesterfield has objected to certain language in the regulations concerning underrepresented and minority populations. The additional delay in approval of the new regulations may further push back the due date for a revised ACPS Local Plan for the Education of Gifted.

Ms. Delaney commented that ACPS once allowed "special placement" of disadvantaged students in the past by requiring student with specific exceptionalities to meet 3/5 criteria TAG identification criteria rather than 4/5 criteria. The minority ACPS students who recently advanced in Science Fair were identified under special placement. She noted that ACPS may wish to share this success story with the Governor's working group that is looking a minority representation in gifted programs statewide.

Ms. Gully updated TAGAC on the twice exceptional policy. Ms. Margaret McLeod, director of student services, asked Ms. Gully to consult with ACPS special education coordinators and case workers to formulate 'research-based' operational criteria. The policy will need to integrate the Response to Intervention (RTI) approach.

The Twice Exceptional Working Group (TAGAC/SEAC) formulated a proposed plan for identification and service delivery for twice exceptional students during the 2008-2009 academic year. Following development of the operational criteria, the proposal and criteria will come before TAGAC and SEAC for advisory recommendation to the School Board.

Ms. Poff spoke briefly about the "unrest and insecurity" at TC Williams HS since its designation as a persistently low achieving school. Ms. Poff stressed that the change in designation was not prompted by any changes at the school.

Ms. Kittredge recommended an education documentary called "World Peace and other Fourth Grade Achievements", by filmmaker Chris Farina.

Old Business:

The draft memo from TAGAC regarding parent concerns about open enrollment honors implementation in the five schools was discussed and amended. The memo was approved unanimously as amended.

Ms. Gully reported that a staff work group led by Dr. John Brown. The work group is looking at ways to differentiate instruction and improve the curriculum for ACPS to improve rigor, differentiation and vertical and horizontal alignment. She noted that Dr. Brown has written extensively on "backward design." This is the development of curricula starting with desired end skills and concepts and moving back to elementary principles, which results in curricula that are vertically integrated.

Ms. Morris's work group report was integrated into the above discussion of the new state regulations.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 pm.