

## Advisory Council on Instruction (ACI)

### Minutes

May 2, 2018

**Members Present:**

**Co-Chairs:** Tina Kuklenski-Miller, Meredith Purple

**Staff Liaison:** Assistant Superintendent, Teaching and Learning, Dr. Tara Natrass

Staff Present: Tyrone Byrd, Director of Secondary Education; Sarah Putnam, Director of Curriculum and Instruction

**School Board Liaison:** Nancy Van Doren

School Board Members Present: Tannia Talento, Monique O'Grady, Reid Goldstein, Barbara Kanninen

**Vice Chairs:** Donna Owens, Michael Shea, Tauna Szymanski, Gabriella Uro

**Committee Chairs:**

Committee	Chair		Co-Chair		Staff Liaison	
Arts	Susan Scott	x	Karen Lewis		Pam Farrell	
Career, Technical	Alisa Cowen		Michael Shea		Kris Martini	
Early Childhood	Kate Graham		Julie Launcher		Elaine Perkins	x
English	Linda Arnsbarger	x	Judith Rudman	x	Lori Silver	x
ESOL/HILT	Anne Zebra					
Gifted Services	Dan Corcoran	x	Elaien Maey	x	Cheryl McCullough	x
Health/PE	Jana Meltzer				Debbie DeFranco	
Math	Mike Miller				Shannan Ellis	x
Science					Nina Nichols	x
Social Studies	Heidi Gibson	x	Royce Sherlock	x	Cathy Hix	
Special Education						
Student Services	Jill Flack		Judy Hadden		Laura Newton	
					Pam McClellan	
World Languages	Sara Aramendia				Elisabeth Harrington	

**Community Representatives:**

Association	Member	
Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council	David Remick	
American Association of University Women (AAUW)		
Chamber of Commerce		
Civic Federation		
County Council of PTAs	Mahender Dudani	
League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)		
League of Women Voters	Natalie Goldring	
Special Education PTA	Nick Walkosak	x
Teachers Council on Instruction	Shannel Hoyer	x

**Also present:**

- Janna Dressel: Special Education PTA
- Yun Kang: Gifted Services
- Laura LoGerfo: Gifted Services
- Wendy Pizer: ASEAC, GSAC

- Lori Cohen: Parent

**School Representatives:**

Schools - Elementary	Representative		Alternates		Non-Member Reps	
Abingdon	Nate Hardy					
Arlington Science Focus	Mary Schmergel		Sylvia Caddiato	x		
Arlington Traditional	Geva Lester					
Ashlawn						
Barcroft	Lahn Nguyen					
Barrett						
Campbell	Nathan Zee					
Carlin Springs						
Claremont	Adrienne McQuillan	x				
Discovery	Susan Spence		Kristin Grigorescu			
Drew	Brian Haynes	x	Evan Thomas			
Glebe	Laura LoGerfo	x				
Hoffman-Boston						
Jamestown						
Key	Stephanie Westerlund					
Long Branch	Caroline Rogus		Lisa DeMarchi	x		
McKinley	Valerie O'Such		Susan Marcantoni			
Nottingham	Gary Steel		Kevin Dezuflian	x		
Oakridge						
Patrick Henry	Mansi Kothagi					
Randolph						
Taylor	Dana Milburn	x				
Tuckahoe	Kelly Alexis					
Middle Schools						
Gunston	Eduina Martins-Roy					
HB Woodlawn MS	Brian Haynes					
Jefferson	Lanh Nguyen		Lisa DeMarchi Sleigh	x		
Kenmore	Anne Oliveira		Lora Strine			
Swanson	Maureen La Piana	x	Ellen Greer			
Williamsburg	Dan Corcoran	x				
High Schools						
HB Woodlawn HS	Celia Boddington	x				
Arlington Career Center	Alisa Cowen					
Langston						
Stratford						
Wakefield	Katherine McGwen		Shinmei Garrison		Arminda Valles Hall	x
					Sonia Rosen	x
Washington-Lee	Kyra Buchko					
Yorktown	Martha Chow		Christine Van Kirk			

**7:08 p.m. Call to Order – Co-Chair, Tina Kuklenski-Miller**

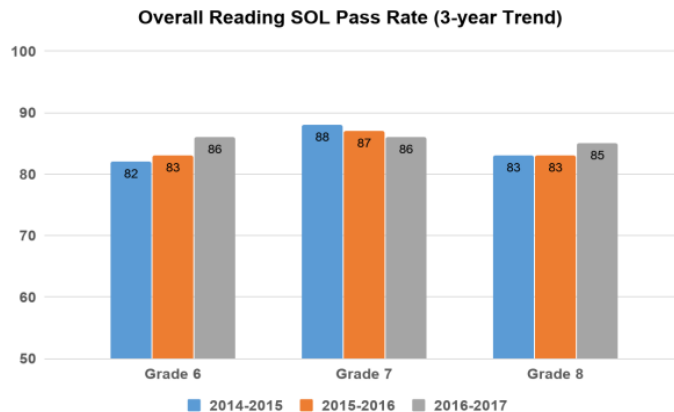
Tina welcomed members and School Board members to the meeting, she directed all to sit at tables in the room according to the table tents to the greatest extent possible

**Approval of Minutes – Tina Kuklenski-Miller - Minutes for March and April will be reviewed and approved in June.**

**7:11 p.m.** Tina introduced Barbara Kanninan, Chair of the School Board. Dr. Kaninnen introduced all the School Board members and the Superintendent, Dr. Patrick Murphy. Dr. Kanninen explained that the reason all board members and Superintendent were in the meeting was to try something new. They want to hear all the different perspectives and experiences straight from this group regarding students at APS. They want to hear about issues and what is working and what is not. They are excited about trying this new format and will hopefully gain the valuable information.

**7:15 p.m. Overview of Middle School Practices - Sarah Putnam, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Teaching and Learning**  
Sarah gave a quick overview about what was going to be discussed. Sarah then introduced Lori Silver, Acting Supervisor of English Language Arts.

Ms. Silver shared the Reading Inventory (RI) 3-Year Trend report. Attached below is the complete PowerPoint with this and additional data. This particular data was generated to show overall student Reading scores from 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade.



**Question:** Is this data broken down in groups including ELL students?

**Answer:** Lori Silver said that this data was not as specific. Dr. Natrass stated this data is an overall look at reading scores across the board for grades 6-8 in APS. There are other reports handed out at this meeting that have specific data.

**Question:** Is this assessment the Interactive Achievement - PowerSchool?

**Answer:** No, this is the Reading Inventory, previously known as the Scholastic Reading Inventory.

**Question:** Do all students take this in the fall?

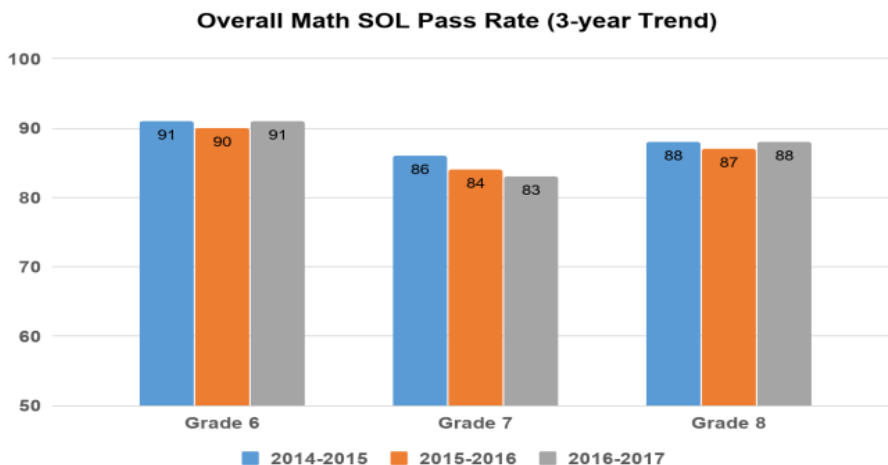
**Answer:** All students who take the SOL exams take the Reading Inventory in the fall. There is an extremely small percentage that don't; these students must qualify for an SOL exemption.

**Question:** What is the percentage of students excluded in this assessment?

**Answer:** Between 1 and 3 percent.

**Comment:** Lori Silver commented that those students that are taking the alternative assessment are screened by PALS. But we have not done trend data on those numbers yet.

Then, **Shannan Ellis, Supervisor of Mathematics** spoke about the overall Math SOL scores for students in 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. A PowerPoint of the complete data is attached below.



**Question:** Do the colors in the graph indicate the grade?

**Answer:** The colors indicate the year in each grade.

Then, **Cheryl McCullough, Supervisor of Gifted Services** spoke about the Gifted Services Program Evaluation. The complete PowerPoint of the data is attached below.

**Question:** What does a collaborative cluster model look like in the classroom?

**Answer:** It will look different in each class, depending on what they are doing that day. It is really about the teacher using data to drive instruction appropriately.

**Question:** Is this Cluster data showing the cluster of students assigned to the same classroom but not getting any different instruction than the general education instruction?

**Answer:** The Collaborative Cluster model is a group of students identified as gifted that will be in a group with their intellectual peers and will have a teacher assigned to that cluster providing appropriate instruction.

**Comment:** An ACI member objected to using "intellectual peers" when referring to gifted students, saying that one student is more intellectual than others, where really there are a whole bunch of kids that are just as intellectual but they can't access the curriculum in the same way.

**Response to the comment:** Our vision at APS is to expose all children so they have equal access to instruction.

**Tara Natrass, Assistant Superintendent, Teaching and Learning.** Dr. Natrass thanked all staff and others in attendance at the meeting. She gave a quick review about *Current Practices* that APS is implementing. Below are key points that APS is focusing on.

#### **Professional learning framework**

- Five-hour Professional Learning Cycle
- School coaching and support

#### **Curriculum Review**

- Resources listed within unit plans
- Review of middle school ELA and Social Studies courses
- Focus on performance-based assessment, project-based learning, and problem-based learning

#### **Master scheduling considerations**

- Cluster grouping

More information on Professional Learning Framework: <https://www.apsva.us/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/06-APS-Framework-NRS-1.pdf>

Complete PowerPoint presented **Middle School Practices** attached below.



Middle School May  
2.pdf

**7:55 p.m.**

#### **Gifted Services Advisory Committees Middle School Recommendations**

Dan Corcoran and Elaine Maey, Co-Chair's Gifted Services Advisory Committee, presented a PowerPoint on recommendations for Gifted services.



20160531 GSAC  
briefing for minutes

**Question:** What courses are not intensified courses?

**Answer:** All general core classes other than math.

**Comment:** Along with differentiation, gifted students are also supposed to be grouped with like-skilled learners, it seems that the gifted department is trying to do that with clusters?

**8:45 p.m.**

#### **Small Group Discussions - Asst. Superintendent, Teaching and Learning, Tara Natrass**

Dr. Natrass explained to the group how seating charts on each table were deliberate in order to have each table represent a mix of ideas and experiences. She asked staff to sit at different tables as well. In these discussions, Dr. Natrass reminded everyone that the main focus should be challenging and engaging all students.

**The two key questions for discussion were:**

1. What is working well and what are the strengths?
2. What are the things you would like to see improve? What are the specific recommendations?

**8:55 p.m.**

#### **Large Group Discussions - Co-Chair, Tina Kuklenski-Miller**

Tina gave ten minutes for discussion then directed one person from each table to talk about what their table had come up with. Below are examples from the group comments:

Group 1

**Weakness -** Gifted eligible students should not have to advocate for the work they need. It should be required and in the grade book. General lack of challenges. Teachers spending more time bringing up

the bottom. Not assigning homework. Inconsistency among untrained who don't know how to teach gifted students. Too many levels of learners for the teacher to be effective to any level.

**Strengths** - Differentiations in Social Studies, World Geography is great even though a school level class, kids are seeing challenges there. HB parents' like choice and flexibility. Elective courses like band, French class etc. are awesome the kids love them. ATSS, the Yellow Jackets period. Gifted students feel like they are getting a lot of that time period.

#### Group 2

**Weakness** – We should not confuse rigor with labor, having an advanced course does not require more labor but should be an appropriate level of work with and the same amount as all other students are getting. When there are two options for a class, some students feel pressure to take the more advanced class and feel a sense of stigma if they don't.

#### Group 3

**Weakness** – Flex scheduling a good thing, but not when instruction is not being delivered in an engaging way. Instructional Assistants need more training. The role of twice exceptional students, where many of students feel they need to choose between receiving supports or taking the intensified courses. How do we make sure schools held accountable to deliver programs as stated?

#### Group 4

**Weakness** – Difference in content areas, students feeling bored. Create inclusivity within classroom. All kids need to be part of an engaging conversations. Teachers play a huge role in inclusivity and equity.  
**Strengths** - Project based learning is working.

Dr. Natrass reiterated that while having these conversations, it is really important to remember that whether students are gifted, or have certain identifications, they all have strengths and areas of growth, and this is why we talk about challenging and engaging all students. The goal is to help students grow and build their strengths across the board

Dr. Natrass recommended watching Ted Talk by Todd Rose the *Myth of Average*:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4eBmyttcfU4>

**Career Center Updates** – Co-Chair - Michael Shea (this was provided in writing at the meeting because of time)

The CCWG has met ten times since January, including a joint work session with the School and County Boards. The charge of the CCWG is to offer the Boards a plan so that an additional 800 or more high school seats will be on site by 2022, as well as principles for a vision of long term site optimization by phased development. In addition to reviewing options for the current campus site, which hosts Patrick Henry ES, the Arlington Community HS, Columbia Pike Library, and the Career Center, the CCWG is considering what benefits there could be if the County or APS acquired parts of what is known as the South Block, meaning the area between Columbia Pike and 9th Street South. A final report from the CCWG will be delivered to the Boards during the summer.

There is very strong support among the CCWG to encourage the Boards to acquire property in that South Block area. The draft principles from the CCWG support efforts to relocate the Columbia Pike Library and the Arlington Community High School to that area. This would be part of the site optimization vision for after 2022. The draft principles also support, in the same longer term, finding a new location and new facilities for the Montessori program, which is moving into the Patrick Henry building when the current student body at Patrick Henry move to the new Fleet School. There is strong support on the CCWG for making field space available at the site for students and community, as well as a pool. There is strong support for underground parking. There is strong support for new building

heights that fit well with the existing neighborhood: taller buildings at one corner of the lot, much lower on the other sides.

Additional discussion among the CCWG will look for consensus on issues including: (1) the walk zone for attendance for the new high school seats, as well as the balance between a choice and neighborhood school; (2) the optimal number of high school seats that will fit well on the site; (3) the balance between fields on site and fields/facilities for students on the site that are shared with the TJ Community Center; and (4) in the longer term, whether the school on the site represents an "urban high school" and the implications of that.

**8:55 p.m. Updates, Co-Chair - Tina Kuklenski-Miller**

Tina thanked all of the staff members that came out to attend this meeting as well as the School Board who were all present. Tina spoke about this meeting being her last, and that she was grateful for Meredith acting as co-chair with her this year. She thanked all ACI members for their commitment to this work. She said she knows that all have had many challenges this year, but advised all to keep up the good work. Tina said that we are not here just for our own students but for all students. Though sometimes we may feel like this work is not worth it, it definitely is. We are making a big difference. Barbara Kanninen, School Board Chair, let Tina know that on behalf of the School Board and Superintendent, along with all of the community, they were all very thankful for her work to ACI and APS.

**9:01 p.m. Meeting adjourned**

**The next ACI meeting will be held  
Wednesday, June 6<sup>th</sup>  
@ 7:00pm**