

# **Advisory Council on Teaching and Learning End of Year Report**

Dana Milburn, ACI Co-Chair  
Rebecca Hunter, ACI Co-Chair

June 4, 2020



**Arlington Public Schools**



# ACTL 2019-20 Leadership Emphases/Initiatives

- **Five Vice Chairs:** redesigned roles and increased Advisory Committee connections. Vice Chairs were very valuable to Advisory Committees in their work.
- **Continued/increased emphasis on recruiting volunteers:**
  - Designed ACI/ACTL flyer and PTA newsletter ads last spring for broad distribution (DTL will translate for next year)\*
  - Actively worked with staff and PTAs to find ACI/ACTL Representatives for available spots
  - Replacing “graduated” Committee Members
  - Would like broader equity in representatives and committee members; only limited success so far, but work in progress
- **Continued emphasis on PTA/community outreach:**
  - Emphasized school representatives’ role in connecting with PTA and school community
  - Expanded school community and organization feedback to full session
  - ACTL vice chairs and co-chairs designed and provided discussion guide
- **Continued emphasis on connection/coordination with other groups: BAC; FAC; and CCPTA**
- **Initiated Advisory Committee Chairs’ group meetings beginning spring 2019** (3 per year - June, Sept, & Jan):
  - Discussed and revised templates and guidelines
  - Encouraged collaboration.
  - Designed new “Executive Summary” format for Work Session presentation
  - Elicited and responded to feedback



# ACTL 2019-20 Leadership Emphases/Initiatives, Continued

- **Initiated ACTL Advisory Committee Forum for ACTL Members to become acquainted with all Committees, their past and present work, and ask questions**
- **Responsiveness: elicited and acted on ACI- & Committee-member/Chair feedback:**
  - Emphasized member (and School Board/APS) priorities in 2019-20 programming & scheduling decisions
  - Student Mental Health Panel with APS & Partnership (APCYF) Staff and master volunteers
  - Equity and Excellence Committee invited to join ACTL
  - Equity and Excellence Panel with APS Staff
  - Bullying Prevention Policy in-depth review and response
- **Worked to bring Equity and Excellence Committee into ACTL:** current Superintendent's Committee agreed to be cross-listed -- work in progress.
- **Assistant Superintendent (DTL) and Superintendent searches:** collected/contributed thoughts and questions to searches; participated in focus groups.
- **Revised, clarified, and streamlined Advisory Committee application:** made more welcoming/less daunting and updated to reflect current processes.
- **Provided feedback on policies under review; contributed to discussion of process for ACTL and Committee contributions to policy reviews:** including new ACTL policy, as well as others related to instruction.



# ACTL Annual Overview

- **7 ACTL meetings, 1 Work Session, before Covid-19 closure**
- **5 ACTL meetings, 1 Work Session Canceled due to Covid-19 closure**
- **Electronic meetings, 2 for Committee Chairs and 2 for ACTL as a whole**
- **Recommending Reports Presented in Executive Summary Form at Work Session:**
  - Arlington Special Education Advisory Committee (ASEAC)
  - English Language Arts Advisory Committee
  - Mathematics Advisory Committee
  - Science Advisory Committee
  - Social Studies Advisory Committee
  - Student Services Advisory Committee
- **Non-recommending Reports Submitted in Executive Summary Form:**
  - Advisory Committee on English Learners
  - Arts Education Advisory Committee
  - Career, Technical, and Adult Education Advisory Committee
  - Early Childhood Advisory Committee
  - Gifted Services Advisory Committee
  - World Languages Advisory Committee
- **Other Instructional Topics**



# Fall ACI/ACTL Topics

- **ACI 101**

Introduction/overview of ACI function to new and returning members, with welcome and remarks from School Board Chair and Members, Interim Superintendent, and APS staff, as well as ACI leadership. *For representative examples of successful past Advisory Committee recommendations, please see “ACI 101,” Slides 18 and 19, posted on ACI Website under “Work Session Documents.”*

- **Student Mental Health Awareness Panel, including Bullying Policy\***

A primary focus for APS and for parents, breadth of information on issues and resources presented by APS and APCYF staff, as well as community volunteers; introduced by School Board Chair and Member.

- **Advisory Committee Forum\***

Opportunity for ACI members and community to learn more about the important work of the 13 instructional committees, with presentations and break-outs.

- **Equity and Excellence\***

Presentation from staff and Equity and Excellence Advisory Committee on work; engagement and importance of utilizing this lens in all the work of ACTL and APS.

- **Other Committee Reports (non-recommending)**

- Career, Technical, and Adult Education Advisory Committee (CTAE)
- Early Childhood Advisory Committee (ECAC)

*\*Indicates programming chosen as a result of our members’ input/priorities and/or School Board/APS priorities.*

*Our thanks to all of our presenters and panelists!*



# Spring ACTL Topics: Constructive Feedback Forum

- **Three over-arching and interlocking themes:**
  - **Consistency and Accountability**
    - Across all schools, curricula, programs
    - Includes support: provide knowledge/material/other elements needed for success
  - **Equity**
    - At least one year of growth for every child, everywhere.
    - Equity also built through school communities; will require training, education and modeling
  - **Evidence-based Instruction**
    - Data-driven
    - Implemented with fidelity
- **Other feedback topics from ACTL members:**

Teaching reading: no Balanced Literacy/Lucy Calkins	Bullying
Communication with parents	Changes in grading policy
Middle school start time	Use of Technology
Broad praise for APS Staff	Student mental health/stress: thanks for emphasis, please continue
- **From advisory committees:** Strong/unanimous preference for late Spring Work Session (THANK YOU!!); access to data/helpful info; where possible, increased School Board engagement/feedback on recommendations, policy revisions, & other important advisory input.



# Spring ACTL Topics, Continued

- **Instructional Program Pathways (IPP)**
- **Budget Presentation and Discussion\***
- **Reports from Advisory Committees\***
  - Gifted Services Advisory Committee (Non-recommending)
  - Social Studies Advisory Committee (Recommending)
  - Science Advisory Committee (Recommending)

*\* Programming and/or timing chosen as a result of our members' input/priorities and/or School Board/APS priorities.*



# Topics Planned for Meetings Canceled by Covid-19 Closure

- **Superintendent's Proposed Budget: Discussion and Feedback\***
- **School Board Budget Work Session**
- **1 to 1 Study Update\***
- **CIP Report**
- **Reports from Advisory Committees\***
  - Mathematics Advisory Committee (Recommending)
  - English Language Arts Advisory Committee (Recommending)
  - Arts Education Advisory Committee (Non-recommending)
  - Arlington Special Education Advisory Committee (Recommending)
  - Student Services Advisory Committee (Recommending)
  - Advisory Committee on English Learners (Non-recommending)
  - World Languages Advisory Committee (Non-recommending)
- **Discussion of Rubric Rating Results**
- **Year-end Wrap-up, ACTL-member Survey Review, Planning for Next Year**

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# Work Added or Modified Due to Covid-19 Situation

- **Participation in discussions of distance learning:**
  - Appointed members to participate in distance learning discussions by grade level, held by DTL in April and May
  - Solicited, compiled, and reported comments from ACTL members and advisory committees
  - Advisory committees working on answers to 6 questions from DTL on distance learning, in their specific subject areas.
  - Further participation per DTL inclusion of ACTL
- **Stopped all non-essential work while required; resumed when legally permitted.**
- **Will receive final recommending and non-recommending reports, including any modifications based on current budget situation:**
  - Committees – both recommending and non-recommending given this unusual situation -- have been encouraged to add no-cost/low-cost ideas, both for distance learning, if still needed later, and for in-school instruction. (This is in addition to original recommendations from recommending committees.)
- **Two electronic meetings each, held or to be held, with ACTL membership and with advisory committee chairs.**
- **Final ACTL Report Memo to be provided later in June, once above work is finished.**



# Looking Forward for ACTL

- **Focus on supporting DTL for virtual and/or hybrid instruction within the Continuous Learning plan**
- **Support School Board and Superintendent priorities through Committee reports and recommendations**
- **Create flexible and multiple engagement models for ACTL to address how the Fall may look and year may evolve (on-line, in-person)**
- **Continue focus on diversity recruitment and outreach for ACTL and Committees**



# Thanks to ACTL's Membership and Leaders

*Our thanks, as always, to ACTL's members and leaders, from whose wisdom and commitment we all have benefited:*

- **ACTL's representatives**, from Arlington's elementary, middle, and high schools, as well as from important and relevant Arlington organizations, who kindly shared their time, experience, and perspective to benefit Arlington's schools and students, and provide a connection for their communities.
- **ACTL's vice chairs**, who generously shared their time and knowledge, worked with/advised co-chairs and ACTL's Advisory Committees, and took on projects to advance ACTL's mission:  
**Kevin Dezfulian, Natalie Goldring, Laura LoGerfo, Nina Nichols, and Ryoko Reed**
- **ACTL's Advisory Committees and their chairs**, all of whom generously devoted their expertise and time to the continual evolution of instruction in their subject areas:  
English Learners, **Anne Zebra**; Arlington Special Education Advisory Committee, **Nadia Facey**; Arts Education, **Susan Scott**; Career, Technical, and Adult Education, **Alisa Cowen & David Remick**; Early Childhood, **Meredith Jaeckel**; English Language Arts, **Cloe Chin**; Equity and Excellence, **Ipyana Spencer & Terron Sims**; Gifted Services, **Dan Corcoran & Alan Arnold**; Mathematics, **Amy Smith Beaumont & Ron Fecso**; Science, **Jason Papacosma**; Social Studies, **Anne Paris**; Student Services, **Kirstin Pickle & Judy Hadden**; and World Languages, **Rick Jackson & Adrienne McQuillan**.
- **ACTL's immediate past co-chair, Meredith Purple**, for passing the torch with ACTL in great condition, and for her kind availability if needed.



# Thanks to our APS School Board & Staff Liaisons

*We thank all of this year's liaisons and interim liaisons for their dedication, brilliance, and kindness:*

- **Dr. Barbara Kanninen, School Board Member and ACTL Board Liaison**
- **Bridget Loft, Assistant Superintendent for DTL and ACTL Leadership Staff Liaison**
- **Sarah Putnam, Director of Curriculum and Instruction**
- **Tyrone Byrd, Director of Secondary Education**
- **Rosa Ewell, Executive Administrative Specialist**
- **ACTL's Advisory Committee Staff Liaisons:**  
**Sam Klein (ACEL); Kelly Krug and Heather Rothenbuescher (ASEAC); Pam Farrell (AEAC), Kris Martini (CTAE); Elaine Perkins (ECAC); Lori Silver (ELAAC); Carolyn Jackson (EEAC); Cheryl McCullough (GSAC); Shannan Ellis (MAC); Dat Le (SAC); Kerri Hirsch (SSAC); Laura Newton, Wendy Carria, and Pam McClellan (SSAC); and Elisabeth Harrington (WLAC)**



# 2018-19 Recommendations Update

Committee	ACI Recommendation	Status
CTAE	Provide a full-time staff person to continue to develop opportunities with the community and make connections to schools. APS CTE Staff will invite Arlington County Government-supported programs to join the APS Works initiative.	Allocated in FY20 Budget
Early Childhood	APS should develop a Strategic Plan for Equitable Developmental Opportunities to address the opportunity gaps present before kindergarten	Committee has been meeting to consider next steps
Early Childhood	Expand and align the continuum of educational models in early childhood education to meet the needs of all Pre-Kindergarten-2 learners	Committee met and shared and discussed the new pilot Community Peer Program for SY 2019-20
ESOL/HILT	Make student English Language Proficiency (ELP) levels and corresponding coursework and sequencing more clear and accessible to parents. We propose to include the ELP level of each student in ParentVUE. Also, we recommend that the acronym "HILT" be eliminated from all course labeling in favor of using WIDA levels, which are the levels that the state of Virginia uses for ELP.	ESOL/HILT staff is starting the process to complete a change in the names of levels for purpose of clarity
ESOL/HILT	Add a full-time Early Childhood Specialist to the ESOL/HILT Office in the Department of Teaching and Learning. While there is currently a part-time employee in this position, there is a strong need for a full-time employee to coach and educate all early childhood teachers on effective and appropriate instructional strategies for Dual Language Learners (DLLs).	This has not been allocated in the FY20 budget.
Gifted Services	Pilot an intensified English 7 course, open to all students at the middle school level.	Ongoing professional learning, in collaboration with content offices and school based instructional coaching, using the Gifted Services professional learning cycle will continue to challenge and engage gifted learners within cluster groups in addition to infusing critical and creative thinking strategies in all classrooms.



# 2018-19 Recommendations Update

Committee	ACI Recommendation	Status
Gifted Services	Add a Teacher Specialist staff position to the Office of Gifted Services	This has not been allocated in the FY20 budget.
World Languages	As part of the yearly official APS Monitoring and Evaluation of World Language programs, so as to monitor learning success and equity of learning opportunity, the national Standards-Based Measurement of Proficiency (STAMP test) should be administered to all students enrolled in language class in grade 5, in addition to continuing to test in 8 <sup>th</sup> grade immersion and High School levels IV and above.	The current allocation of funds does not support expansion of testing for all students.
World Languages	Enhance and improve the learning of Spanish and English literacy and help close the achievement gap in elementary immersion classes through implementing increased Spanish instructional time in grades K-2 and transitioning subsequently to an evenly balanced 50-50 use of instructional time in grades 3-5. Begin this program at the kindergarten level. Start this year to assess baseline understanding of the concept of literacy in kindergarten and to assess progress in the development of Spanish reading skills in the second or third grade of Spanish-English immersion for comparison with the third grade English Reading SOL.	Elementary Immersion principals and the World Languages supervisor attended La Cosecha conference. Staff will be working over the summer to review review and revise curriculum including options to increase Spanish Language Arts and corresponding assessments.
World Languages	Support the Social Studies Advisory Committee initiative to prepare globally competent APS graduates. World Languages and Social Studies should collaborate to create complementary lesson topics and joint activities for curriculum development that will prepare APS graduates for successful career and community engagement in a diverse world.	The Social Studies and World Languages offices will continue to explore opportunities to collaborate on curriculum writing and creation of interdisciplinary units.



# Our Thanks to You

*ACTL's Leadership, Committees, Chairs, and School/Community Representatives  
would like to thank:*

**School Board Chair, Tannia Talento**

**School Board Member & ACI School Board Liaison Barbara Kanninen**

**School Board Members Reid Goldstein, Monique O'Grady,  
and Nancy Van Doren**

## **APS STAFF**

**Dr. Francisco Duran, Superintendent**

**Cintia Johnson, Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services**

**Bridget Loft, Assistant Superintendent for DTL**

**Sarah Putnam, Director of Curriculum and Instruction**

**Tyrone Byrd, Director of Secondary Education**

**ACI's Committee Staff Liaisons: Sam Klein; Kelly Krug and Heather Rothenbuescher; Pam Farrell, Kris Martini;  
Elaine Perkins; Lori Silver; Carolyn Jackson; Cheryl McCullough; Shannan Ellis; Dat Le; Kerri Hirsch; Laura  
Newton, Wendy Carria, and Pam McClellan; and Elisabeth Harrington**

**Melanie Elliott, Clerk, Arlington School Board; and Rosa Ewell, Executive Administrative Specialist**

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