

Progress Memo

To: Advisory Council on Teaching and Learning & APS Department on Teaching and Learning

From: Arts Advisory

cc: Pam Farrell

Date: December 4, 2020

Re: Progress memo on Professional Learning and Resources

1. What is working well for teaching and learning?

<p>Topic: Professional learning for arts faculty and additional resources.</p>	<p>Information source: Teacher Survey 165 teachers</p>
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Description:
Teachers were well prepared to teach in the virtual setting due to targeted professional learning provided to staff based on survey results. Tech training was done in Spring 2020 in anticipation of starting the year virtual. Arts teachers continue to strengthen their learning through ongoing professional learning provided through the Arts Education department. Online Arts instruction is going extremely well. All secondary visual arts students were provided at home art kits created by their teachers. Elementary students received art and music kits for virtual instruction. Marching band was successfully done virtually. All music teachers have multiple music subscriptions provided for them and their students in order to successfully teach and record virtually. Mutes have been provided for students and teachers unable to play an instrument in their home. Secondary visual arts teachers have been provided document cameras for instruction. In the performing arts, teachers have been creating virtual concerts and theater productions and have been supported with software training and access to achieve this. Orchestra teachers have set up drive-through tuning for students. The arts in APS are still thriving!

<p>Topic: Collaborative Planning and weekly lead teacher meetings resulting in effective online arts instruction. <i>(Lead teachers in Arlington receive an annually budgeted stipend for this work.)</i></p>	<p>Information source: Teacher surveys and recordings of mini workshops and meetings. 170 teachers</p>
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Description:
Through building teacher leadership opportunities, each lead teacher has worked with 15-25 teachers to collaborate, troubleshoot, share best practices, creating effective cohorts that have resulted in highly effective planning, instructional strategies and effective instructional delivery.

<p>Topic: Hiring, developing and retaining highly effective teachers that results in high quality arts education including classroom instruction, performances, local, state and national recognition.</p>	<p>Information source: Attending concerts, Scholastics, NAMM award, District assessments, All State music ensembles data.</p>
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Description:

Building relationships with universities which have highly effective arts programs that provide highly effective candidates. Ongoing effective recruiting from these universities provides APS with a highly effective teaching staff.

APS has been awarded the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) award 4 years. APS students receive national recognition in the Scholastics arts competition. Performing arts students are recognized through District, All state and National awards.

2. What is not working well for teaching and learning?

<p>Topic: Continued lack of consistency and equity in school-based funding for secondary visual arts programs. There is no set dollar amount given per student and visual art teachers receive their funding at the discretion of the site-based administrators at their schools. Per pupil spending varies widely by secondary school. Additional cost to the budget would be done by taking an average of what is allocated and then add the difference to the budget. Note, this issue has been addressed at the elementary school level. A line item was added at the elementary school level which has created equitable experiences for students and teachers across the county. I.e. - Same per-pupil spending on visual arts supplies across all elementary schools. The same should be done for secondary schools. We cannot meet our strategic goal of retaining highly qualified teachers if we do not provide the resources.</p>	<p>Information source: Teacher surveys 25</p>
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Description:

This was a previously approved ATCL recommendation that was not put into the APS budget. This inequity in funding should not continue and a line item should be created. Other districts such as Loudon and Fairfax have a line item for this.

<p>Topic: Lack of equity in number of classes taught and duties assigned to arts staff at the elementary level.</p>	<p>Information source: Teacher surveys</p>
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Description:

Elementary arts teachers across the county have teaching schedules that greatly vary with number of minutes and other assigned duties such as bus and recess duty. Some schools count part of their weekly 360 minute planning time as part of report time and others do not. This inequity based on interpretation of the APS policy makes it difficult to retain highly effective teachers in all schools.

Topic:

Secondary schedule and other opportunities to provide arts students with multiple electives

Information source:

Student requests and teacher surveys.

Description:

Many students in the arts would like to take multiple arts electives. Creative scheduling needs to occur to provide this. APS should be looking at virtual options for some courses such as how Personal Finance is offered online and in the summer. APS should also look at redundancies in some courses such as Marching band and PE. Again, ACTL previously recommended and had School Board and Superintendent approval to pilot Marching Band for PE credit for one year. However, the pilot project was shelved. Based on PE now being virtual and awarding credit this should be able to happen for 2021.

3. What are implications and/or solutions for teaching & learning for the longer term?

Continue effective Professional Learning.

Continue effective leadership opportunities for teachers and collaborative planning.

Continue to recruit and retain highly effective teachers.

Create a line item for secondary visual arts funding.

Amend the APS PIP on elementary T scale work schedules and planning time to include # of classes or preps per day (Secondary has no more than 5 preps daily) and a limit to additional assigned duties per day and overall per week.

Reinstate the approved pilot for Marching Band as a PE credit.