

Advisory Committee on Teaching and Learning (ACTL)

Minutes

Syphax Building, rooms 254/256/258

Wednesday, February 1, 2023

Present: Jenny Roahen Rizzo, Anne Paris, Heidi Gibson, Jackie Winkelvoss, Dana Downey, Maggie Slye, Gretchen Hickey, Krista Ratwani, Lindsay Duch, Michael Cieslak, Emily Chua, Jess Mueller, Jocelyn Gould, Jimisha Relerford, Virginia Gordon, Sarah Evans, Octavia Johnson, Janet Sater, Kathy Pericak, Paula Cordero, Melody Mobley, Dat Le, Kate Merrill, Mike Miller, Cristina Diaz-Torres, Sarah Putnam

Attending via Teams: Sheila Leonard, Heather Rothenbuescher, Kelly Krug, Lori Silver, Kate McKenney, Katie Cochran, Wendy Pizer

7:00 pm, Welcome/approve minutes from Jan meeting (Jenny Roahen Rizzo)

7:05, Presentation from Science Advisory Committee and discussion (Melody Mobley, Dat Le)

SAC Chair Melody Mobley and staff liaison Dat Le, Science Supervisor, presented and discussed the following recommendations:

1. Increased emphasis and support for elementary science instruction
2. Ensure that all students and staff have sufficient instructional resources to support a high-quality science program.

7:25, Presentation from Arlington Special Education Advisory Committee (ASEAC) and discussion

(Kathy Pericak, Heather Rothenbuescher, Kelly Krug)

ASEAC Chair Kathy Pericak and staff liaisons Heather Rothenbuescher (Director of Special Education, Secondary) and Kelly Krug (Director of Special Education, Elementary) discussed the following recommendation:

Implement ASEAC's January 2022 recommendation to staff for inclusion by reforming budget planning factors, launch a leadership-driven systems change initiative to implement inclusive education throughout APS, and hire and retain staff to support all students.

ASEAC also discussed the following topic under consideration for future recommendations: Interpretation and translation of special education meetings and documents, and providing information to families who speak languages other than English.

7:45, Presentation from English Language Arts Advisory Committee (ELAAC) and discussion (Kate Merrill, Mike Miller, Lori Silver)

ELAAC Chair Kate Merrill, Vice Chair Mike Miller, and staff liaison Lori Silver, Secondary ELA Supervisor, presented and discussed the following recommendations:

1. APS should create and implement a long-term plan for writing instruction that spans K-12 and guarantees that secondary students produce longer, multi-draft, research-driven writing supported by substantive teacher feedback. This must include focused instruction on writing mechanics in the lower grades.
2. APS should hire four additional district level literacy coaches (two for elementary and two for secondary) in order to provide teachers with job-embedded professional learning.

8:10, Review of APS's legislative positions for the 2023 Virginia General Assembly (Cristina Diaz-Torres)

APS School Board Member Cristina Diaz-Torres shared the Board's legislative positions on matters of funding and education-related issues for the current General Assembly session.

8:20, Community engagement discussion (Jenny Roahen Rizzo)

ACTL members discussed ideas for fostering more community engagement. Ideas shared included:

- PTA meetings, other parent meetings (eg, Padres Latinos)
- ad hoc discussions
- Google form distributed via PTA newsletter, parent listserv, parent WhatsApp, Facebook groups
- Creating a shared Google Form that all reps can distribute
- Creating parent focus groups (either one-off or year-long; could be virtual or in person)
- Translating materials into other languages
- Work to include diverse voices and backgrounds

8:30 Presentation about Paper tutoring for secondary school reps

Lis Bluford from Paper tutoring company gave a virtual presentation on the opportunities for academic assistance currently available to APS middle and high school students.