

Minutes

York County School Division

Gifted Education Advisory Committee

Thursday, June 6, 2019 at YCSD School Board Office

- Welcome and Call to Order
- Committee and Consulting Members in Attendance

Lindsey Cook – Coventry Elementary School
Chy Green – Grafton Bethel Elementary School and Chairperson
Miki Fett – Magruder Elementary School.
Danielle Way – Mt. Vernon Elementary
Lindsey Leach – Seaford Elementary School
Jessica Diebler – Grafton Middle School
Margaret Harned – Queens Lake Middle School
Mrs. Oliver – Tabb Middle School
Beth Brauner – Yorktown Middle School
Jennifer Williams – Tabb High School
Michelle Haskiell – York High School
Stacie Lohr – Past Chairperson and Bruton High School
Christina Head, K-12 Associate Director, School Board Office
Sarah Haywood – Gifted Education Coordinator, EXTEND
Kristin Spires, EXTEND
Dr. Tony Vladu, Director of Secondary Education, School Board Office
Candi Skinner, Director of Elementary Instruction, School Board Office

- Parent Concerns and Comments

Stacie Lohr questioned again about how we can help provide funds to send two Gifted Education teachers to the annual national conference for gifted education. Mrs. Skinner advocated for local and online training that meets three criteria – job embedded, ongoing and sustainable. Mrs. Head stated that most national conferences were funded through grants. Mrs. Harned also shared her view on the importance of professional development training for our gifted education staff with national groups. Mrs. Lohr also shared that we were awaiting the final information on rules and roles of organizations such as booster clubs to raise funds for their groups. Overall, the question was left unanswered about how we can support our gifted students through teacher education and knowledge sharing with like-minded peers from across the country. **Both Mrs. Head and Mrs. Skinner indicated that there are no plans at this time to assist gifted teachers in attending any future national conferences. Dr. Vladu indicated he strongly advocates all teachers attending such professional development opportunities.**

- Secretary's Report – Danielle Way

The committee electronically approved the minutes from the March 26, 2019 meeting on April 24, 2019.

- Secondary Program of Studies Update

Dr. Tony Vladu gave GEAC an overview of a grant program from National Math and Science Institute (NMSI) in conjunction with Langley and the Naval Weapons Station. This grant will provide support for improving STEM Advance Placement (AP) course instruction as well as improve equity and access to the courses. It speaks directly to

YCSD's goal of increasing AP enrollment for underrepresented students. For students, the program uses incentives, resources, access to practice materials and transportation for sessions on Saturdays. For teachers, it provides training and resources, as well as incentives for qualifying scores. For schools, it provides 2 stipends, one for a program coordinator and one for a lead teacher. This year Grafton HS and York HS have qualified for the grant. Next year, it will be available to Bruton HS and Tabb HS. In addition, NMSI provides funds for teachers to attend a week of training in Dallas, TX to learn and work with like-minded teachers.

Dr. Vladu also discussed improvements to the Computer Science (CS) offerings. Specifically, two courses are envisioned, Principles of CS and AP CS (in the school rather than online.) The VDOE requires a Computer Science pathway and to help meet this need, Dr Cagle is working to send K-12 staff to a conference in Texas. There is a steering committee to work on the implementation and it does have implications in our Program of Studies.

Training to help lay the foundation for AP course work will be offered to Middle School staff this summer. This training will be held in Virginia Beach and focus on building skills necessary for AP courses.

Mrs. Haywood recognized Dr. Vladu for his service to our group and noted his move to a new role within YCSD.

- Gifted Program Evaluation

Christina Head, Associate Director of K-12 Academic Services, provided a summary of the major findings and recommendations from the recent evaluation of the gifted program performed by Dr. Callahan in February 2019. This is the same presentation she gave the school board during the June 3, 2019 work session. The presentation can be found within the agenda of the school board meeting online. Dr. Callahan's report is also located within the agenda online.

Ms. Head summarized Dr. Callahan's commendations; problems, issues & concerns; and recommendations for the delivery model, curriculum and instruction, and professional development areas as well as for communication and identification. Her presentation also showed that next steps in identification, service delivery, and VDOE designation need stakeholder involvement and have budgetary implications. Communication, curriculum, professional development and model lesson areas have limited constraints and programs or processes in place. The YCSD needs time to synthesize, clarify and assess recommendations and form a development committee or task force to address the evaluation. The EXTEND Center staff would also like to respond to some factual inaccuracies and obtain clarification from Dr. Callahan regarding some areas of her report.

Mrs. Cook asked about the location of Appendix B referenced in the full report and asked for clarification on what was meant by co-teaching. Co-teaching can take a variety of forms, but it was defined as two teachers planning together to meet the needs of a group of students. Mrs. Greene asked about the interaction between kids from different schools. That point was addressed in the report in the form of external gatherings such as a Saturday program or club meeting.

- Gifted Education Update – Sarah Haywood

A student and parent informational meeting for rising 6th graders was held at YMS on the evening of May 2nd. During this meeting, Kristin Spires shared information about the program as it shifts from elementary to middle school, student-created commercials for the program were viewed, and middle school students formed a panel to answer questions from both parents and fifth graders. There were around 45 students/families in attendance.

A final eligibility cycle was completed at the end of May. Almost 100 students were tested and considered for possible placement during the beginning of the next school year, and 25 were accepted.

The New Horizons Governor's School for Science and Technology students held its annual research symposium May 22. Kristin Spires attended, and our students represented the Division well with strong presentations.

The New Horizons Governor's School recently sent acceptance letters to rising 11th graders. The director reports that this spring provided a well-qualified applicant pool. There were 48 students accepted into the program.

Three YCSD students were accepted for the Summer Residential Governor's School program. It is a very competitive selection process for this 4-week program that is held on a variety of college campuses across the state.

YCSD had several students accepted for Camp Launch, which is a two-week summer camp hosted by The Center for Gifted Education at the College of William and Mary.

We will continue to conduct our annual summer testing sessions at the EXTEND Center in August. This cycle is typically reserved for students of families that have recently moved into the school division. The timing still allows students to be placed in the program at the start of the school year. Like last year, Sarah Haywood will share a "tip sheet" and touch base directly with clerical staff members to help ensure that when they register, families are provided with consistent information that is accurate as it relates to gifted referrals and testing.

Update from the IB Programme: The coordinator, Dr. Valliant, reports that there will be 15 IB graduates this year, and there are currently 34 IB students (juniors and seniors). There are 47 rising freshmen who were recently accepted into the program.

- Old Business

GEAC bylaw changes were approved electronically prior to this meeting. The revised bylaws will be posted online.

- New Business

Sarah Haywood provided a Year in Review Summary on the progress related to the goals and objectives of the 2018-2022 Local Plan for Gifted Education. This included identification, delivery of services, curriculum and instruction, professional development, and equitable representation of students. She also noted that we did not do a separate parent survey as usual this spring since both staff members and parents had been a part of focus groups with Dr. Callahan.

Volunteers were confirmed to help write the annual GEAC letter. The following parents have volunteered: **Lindsey Cook (Coventry Elementary)**, Andrew Duggan (Yorktown Elementary), Beth Brauner (Yorktown MS), Kimberly Silver-Perry (Data Collection/Bruton High), and Stacie Lohr (Editing/Bruton High.) The committee strives to have diverse representation among grade level and location in preparing the annual letter. A brief discussion about incorporating information from the EXTEND program evaluation ensued. **Mrs. Cook asked how GEAC can reach a consensus regarding Dr. Callahan's review, and we discussed the best place/format to consolidate our opinions, including recommendations and concerns.**

GEAC officer positions for the 2019-2020 school year were put on hold as we have some members aging out of their respective schools.

Proposed meeting dates for the 2019-2020 school year are 6:30 pm at the YCSD school board office as follows:

October 22, 2019

January 28, 2020

March 24, 2020

May 26, 2020

- The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 pm.

Submitted by Danielle Way

