

December 6, 2019

Dear Gifted Education Parents,

On behalf of the Gifted Education Advisory Committee (GEAC)—(Committee), please find this letter that contains important information that we hope you will find helpful particularly for those of you receiving this letter because you have a student who is new to the gifted education program in York County. Thank you in advance for taking your valuable time to read this letter, and we look forward to working with you throughout the remainder of what has already proven to be a busy academic year!

GEAC has two purposes. First, the committee is required, by Virginia statute, to perform an annual *Review of the Local Plan for the Education of Gifted Students* which we submit to the school board and the division superintendent. Second, we are responsible for evaluating implementation over the academic year across six key areas: identification (i.e. student screening); delivery of services; curriculum and instruction; professional development; equitable representation of students; and parent and community involvement. As stated in GEAC's 2018 – 2019 letter, one priority over the 2019 – 2020 academic year is to ensure that the delivery of services currently provided is maintained—and strengthened—by moving toward full-time Center-based instruction. Another priority involves increasing synergy between Center-based and general education instruction through enhancing the role of cluster teachers and bolstering the quantity of gifted resource teachers at the home schools given the over 500 annual referrals in grades K through 7—on-track to be matched this year.

On an administrative note, GEAC members are appointed by the school division. More specifically, one parent from each school is responsible to represent gifted students and their families at each school. At a minimum, you should be hearing from each GEAC representative with the minutes from the quarterly GEAC meeting, and also at times where there are key developments and the need arises to disseminate important information in a timely manner. At the end of this letter, you will find the email contact information for the parent representatives of each school. This information is also listed at <https://yorkcountyschools.org/parents/specialtyPrograms/giftedEducation.aspx>. Please do not hesitate to reach out to your GEAC representatives, if you have any questions or concerns.

One of the goals of the 2018-2022 Local Plan for Gifted Education is to make GEAC play a more active role in the gifted education program. To that end, I would like to invite all of you to attend the committee meetings so that we can collaborate on ways to make gifted education in York County a strong and vibrant program. Meetings in 2020 are scheduled for: January 28th at York High School's Learning Commons; March 24th and May 26th at the York County School Board Office. All meetings start at 6:30 pm. If you are unable to attend a meeting, the minutes will be posted on the EXTEND website at <https://ycsd.yorkcountyschools.org/EXTENDCenter>. If you are not receiving e-mails from your GEAC representative, please contact the EXTEND office at (757)-898-0389 or your school's representative to be added to the email list.

As you are likely aware, the York County School Division—at the direction of YCSD leaders, has convened a *Gifted Service Delivery Model Committee* consisting of administrators, teachers, and parent representatives. As of the writing of this letter, this committee has met twice and will meet, in 2020, on January 14th, February 4th; and March 10th at the School Board Office starting at 3:00 PM. Both of us have volunteered to be part of this committee; we are attending the meetings; and we will be sending out periodic updates to you. As you read these messages, please let us hear your thoughts to enable us to best represent your views. GEAC is committed to contributing to open and good faith discussions regarding the provision of gifted education for the benefit of our students. While we believe transparency is necessary for accountability, we know it is no replacement for sound judgement and responsible decision-making—to achieve that end, we will continue to work with everyone receiving this letter to ensure this process results in the best outcomes for our gifted children.

GEAC's Chair is Ms. Lindsey Cook. She received her B.A. in English and her teaching certification from Siena College and her Master's Degree in English Literature from Old Dominion University. Lindsey taught English in the York County School Division for eight years, and has recently completed her endorsement to teach gifted students K-12 from Shenandoah University. She is currently a stay-at-home mom with two children attending Coventry Elementary School. Lindsey is grateful for the opportunity to represent gifted students and their parents as GEAC's Chairperson and is hopeful that the school division and GEAC will collaborate in order to continue to provide quality gifted education programming for all identified gifted students in the division. Mr. Andrew Duggan is your Vice-Chair, and he has two children attending Yorktown Elementary School. He received his B.S. from Hampden-Sydney College and his M.S. from Virginia Commonwealth University where he is currently a PhD candidate concentrating in public policy and administration. He is eager to be serving in the position of Vice-Chair and looks forward to contributing in an impactful way as an advocate of GEAC on behalf of our student population.

It has been said that responsibility is the ability to respond, and when we work together proactively, will we have the ability to collectively be responsive to the myriad challenges, and opportunities, that lay before us during this next academic year. With that in mind, please consider what you can do for GEAC to help us achieve the objectives of the committee; build upon the valuable work of our gifted program educators; home school educators; school board members; and school division administrators. Together, we will continue to meet—and go well beyond—our mission to ensure the very best for our students in the York County School Division!

Sincerely,

Lindsey Cook
GEAC Chair

Andrew Duggan
GEAC Vice-Chair

2019-2020 Gifted Education Advisory Committee Representatives

School	Representative	Email
Bethel Manor Elementary	Likavec, Malika	mlika11@yahoo.com
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Magruder Elementary	Miki Fett	mikifett@gmail.com
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