

Welcome to ACI!

We are delighted you have agreed to serve as a member of the School Board's Advisory Council on Instruction (ACI) during the 2009-2010 school year, and we look forward to our first meeting on Wednesday, September 16. You will find in this letter, and attached to it, useful information which will provide an overview of ACI and its work, and will be the start of practical guidelines through the year's activities.

Background

- The purpose of ACI is to provide the School Board community input and feedback for instructional planning of the school system. We assist in the continuous systematic review of various aspects of the instructional program and in the development of recommendations for instructional improvement, including recommendations for the introduction of new programs. We also conduct studies of instructional topics from time to time as determined by the School Board.
- The ACI itself is an umbrella committee made up of one representative (and an alternate) from each elementary school, two representatives from each secondary school, and representatives from several community organizations. Each school selects its ACI member through its PTA. The School Board appoints the members representing schools and community organizations for a two-year period, trying to ensure there is good representation from across the county.
- The Advisory Council on Instruction is in turn advised by 14 curricular/program advisory committees, listed on page 2. Each of these committees participates in the School Board's reporting process every year, either by presenting recommendations for instructional improvements in its subject area (one year), or by presenting a status report of its activities (the following year). As shown on the attached Reporting Schedule, each advisory committee first presents its report to the ACI and later to the School Board.
- In late springtime, after ACI has had a chance to consider, deliberate, and prioritize all the year's recommendations and APS staff has had an opportunity to formulate responses to them, the School Board holds a work session on ACI, where chairs of ACI's committees making recommendations make a brief presentation to the Board followed by a discussion among Board members, staff, and committee chairs.

Schedules

- Our first meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, September 16, 2009**, at the Education Center Annex / Syphax Building, 1439 North Quincy. At 6:30 p.m., the School Board will host a reception in the lobby preceding the meeting; then the meeting itself will begin promptly at 7:00 p.m. The agenda and directions to the meeting place are attached. (Please note that the earlier starting time for this meeting only.)
- Also attached is a list of the meeting dates for the year. In order to respect everyone's time, the meetings (after September 16) begin promptly at 7:30 p.m.; our goal is to finish no later than 9:30 p.m. During these monthly meetings (twice monthly during February and March), we learn how the school system works and how ACI fits into that process;

we hear status reports from the seven committees which are not presenting recommendations this year, and we consider and vote on the specific recommendations of the other seven advisory committees.

Staying Up-to-date

- In lieu of hard copy notebooks, this year the same materials are posted on the ACI website: www.apsva.us/ACI. The presentation of the materials is identical to that found in the notebooks used in previous years. On the website beneath the heading "Electronic Notebook 2009-2010," you will find:
 - Information About ACI (Meeting dates, the Committee Reporting Schedule, and a list of Staff Liaisons and Advisory Committee Chairs)
 - APS Policies on Advisory Committees (in general) and ACI (specifically)
 - Information About APS (Telephone Directory, school calendar, Board meeting dates, an organizational chart for the Department of Instruction, the APS Strategic Plan for 2005-2011, and a Glossary of APS Educational Terms).
- Under "Committee Reports," you will find the required guidelines and a formatting template for preparing the advisory committee reports. The 14 advisory committees are: **Arts Education**; Career, Technical & Adult Education; Early Childhood; **English Language Arts**; ESOL/HILT; Family and Consumer Sciences; Foreign Language; Gifted Services; Health & Physical Education; **Mathematics**; **Science**; **Social Studies**; **Special Education**; and **Student Services**. Those listed in **bold** will be presenting recommendations in 2009-2010; those in regular typeface will present status reports.

Agendas and other items related to the upcoming meeting will be sent to you via e-mail and posted on the website the Friday before each scheduled ACI meeting.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions, concerns or suggestions that may arise at any time.

Thank you for serving with us.

Sincerely,

David Hunn, ACI co-chair (703.795.0684) <david.hunn1@verizon.net>

Donna Felipe, ACI co-chair (703.345.5647) <mdtat@verizon.net>

Attachments (also found on the ACI website)

1. Agenda for September 16, 2009
2. Directions to the ACI meeting site
3. ACI meeting dates for 2009-10
4. ACI Reporting Schedule 2009-10