

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Advisory Council on Instruction

August 2015

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 2015-2016 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 that will provide an overview of ACI and its work and will be the start of practical guidelines through the year's activities.

Background

- ACI's mission is to provide the School Board with community input and feedback for instructional planning in 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 and studies of instructional topics as determined by the School Board.
- The ACI 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, aiming to ensure good representation from across the county.
- The ACI is in turn advised by 13 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 (the reporting year), or by presenting a status report of its activities (the non-reporting year). As the attached Reporting Schedule shows, each advisory committee first presents its report to the ACI and later to the School Board.
- In late January 2016, after ACI has had a chance to consider, deliberate, and prioritize the recommendations and APS staff has responded to them, the School Board holds a work session on ACI, where the chairs of the ACI's committees making recommendations will make a brief presentation to the Board followed by a discussion amongst Board members, staff, and committee chairs. These recommendations and interactions then inform the School Board's budget deliberations that start in February 2016.

Schedule

- Our first meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, September 16, 2015**, at the Syphax Education Center, 2110 Washington Blvd. 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 the earlier starting time for the reception. The other ACI meetings will begin at the regular 7:00 p.m. starting time.**

- Also attached is a list of the meeting dates for the year. Except for the first meeting on September 16th, the meetings begin promptly at 7:00 p.m. with the goal of finishing no later than 9:00 p.m. During these meetings, we learn how the school system works and how ACI fits into that process; we consider and vote on the specific recommendations of the seven advisory committees scheduled to report with recommendations this year, and we hear status updates from the other six committees which report without recommendations this year.

Staying Up-to-date

- ACI materials are posted on the ACI website: www.apsva.us/ACI. On the website beneath the heading “Electronic Notebook 2015-2016,” 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, 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 13 advisory committees are:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Arts Education ○ Career, Technical & Adult Education * ○ Early Childhood ○ English Language Arts ○ ESOL/HILT ○ Gifted Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Health & Physical Education ○ Mathematics ○ Science ○ Student Services ○ Social Studies ○ Special Education ○ World Languages
---	--

Those listed in **bold** will be presenting recommendations in 2015-2016; those in regular typeface will present status reports.

*Family & Consumer Sciences has been integrated into the Career, technical & Adult Education Advisory Committee.

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,

Ted Black, ACI co-chair – dstblack@msn.com

Louisa Marinaccio, ACI co-chair – louisam@yahoo.com

Attachments (also found on the ACI website)

1. Agenda for September 16, 2015
2. Directions to the ACI meeting site
3. ACI meeting dates for 2015-2016
4. ACI Reporting Schedule 2015-2016