

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
REPORT WITH RECOMMENDATIONS

TO: Arlington School Board
FROM: English Language Arts Advisory Committee
DATE: January 11, 2018
SUBJECT: Recommending Year Report with Staff Response

ACTIVITIES DURING 2016-17

The English Language Arts Advisory Committee (ELAAC) studies all parts of the English Language Arts Program (ELA): reading, writing, speaking and listening. The Arlington Public Schools English Language Arts (ELA) program seeks to develop students who are strategic readers, effective writers, engaging speakers, and critical thinkers. Without reading and writing skills, a student's ability to enjoy success in post-secondary school and in the workplace is diminished.

The committee focuses on how these components are taught in all grade levels, kindergarten through high school. The committee meets monthly. Over the last year, our activities included:

- Review of reading achievement data (see Attachments A and B for SOL data);
- Joint meeting with the Gifted and Special Education committees on the 6th grade reading class;
- Joint meeting with the ESOL committee on ESOL instruction and assessment;
- Meeting presentations and discussions on the ELA Evaluation, ELA Resource Adoption, the Arlington Tiered System of Supports (ATSS); the various forms of reading achievement testing, reading interventions professional development, personalized learning, and various approaches to teaching writing, including writers workshop, Step Up to Writing, and writing across the curriculum;
- Committee Co-Chairs participated in the School Board work session on Literacy in February 2017;
- Committee Co-Chairs participated in the planning process for the ELA Evaluation; and
- Committee members participated in the resource adoption fairs for elementary and secondary ELA and individualized instruction materials.

PRIORITIES

This year, the School Board's published 2018 Priorities do not include literacy or the achievement gap. However, the priorities of the Department of Teaching and Learning include literacy, opportunity gaps, inclusion, and whole child – we believe that our recommendations support all of those stated goals. This committee's recommendations continue to focus on the needs of struggling

students. However, our recommendations address the needs of students across the learning spectrum – consistent with APS’s goal of ensuring that every student is challenged and engaged.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation #1: Building on ATSS progress at the elementary level, effective ATSS literacy interventions must be available to all students in the secondary grades as well, including the high schools, with a focus on fidelity, targeting student needs, intensive training, and progress monitoring.

Rationale:

Now that elementary ATSS reading interventions are well under way, we urge the Board and Department of Teaching and Learning to attend to the needs of secondary students, particularly high school students, who still do not have access to appropriate reading and writing interventions. We don’t even see the high schools making meaningful efforts -- most of our high schools cannot point to a single student who is receiving an evidence-based reading or writing intervention, even in special education. This discussion of high schools includes all secondary programs, including the comprehensive high schools, the Career Center, Langston, Arlington Community High School, HB Woodlawn, New Directions, and Stratford.

This issue is particularly compelling because passing the 11th Grade End-of-Course (EOC) Reading and Writing SOLs is required under Virginia law to earn a Standard or Advanced Diploma. These SOL scores have changed little in recent years: in 2017, 89% of test-takers passed EOC Reading, and 86% passed EOC Writing.¹ In other words, 172 students failed the 11th grade Reading SOL and 229 failed the 11th grade Writing SOL. (The reported data include all retakes during the year.) In recent years, as many as 50 special education students earned a Modified Standard Diploma because they were unable to pass the required End-of-Course SOL tests. That diploma was no longer available for last year’s graduating class. APS dropouts soared last year to 101 students, from 81 dropouts in the 2016 cohort and 61 dropouts in the 2015 cohort.²

High Schools Need Multiple Interventions: Identifying secondary interventions may require research to identify appropriate interventions for older students. It cannot be assumed that intervention methods and materials that are effective for elementary students are effective for older students. Expanding access to interventions for secondary students requires a commitment on the part of school

¹ VDOE Customized Student Achievement Report, 2017 EOC Reading and Writing, All Students, <http://bi.virginia.gov/BuildATab/rdPage.aspx>.

² VDOE School Quality Profile, Arlington Public Schools (2017), <http://schoolquality.virginia.gov/divisions/arlington-county-public-schools>.

management to ensure that each school offers the full range of available interventions to all students.

We hope it should go without saying that effective interventions involve highly trained teacher providing direct instruction. Computer programs might be useful for practice, but are no substitute for teachers.

Currently, the only secondary reading interventions being used in secondary schools (Read 180, Leveled Literacy intervention (LLI)) are available only to special education students in a classroom setting, and are not provided with fidelity.³ Worse, neither has been demonstrated to be effective for such students.⁴ Although many parents have requested Tier 2 or 3 reading interventions, which would require small group or one-on-one instruction, few if any students are receiving that level of intensity. Although the Department of Teaching and Learning reports that the high schools have from one to six Orton-Gillingham trained teacher, it does not appear that any students actually receive Orton-Gillingham instruction with fidelity. Students are told that there are no other available interventions, or they are offered a computerized program (My Reading Coach) to be used without a teacher or at home, or non-interventions are proposed (such as independent reading). Most special education students who have IEP goals for reading and writing are in general education English classes, and receive no specialized instruction, much less intervention, aimed at those IEP goals.

Secondary interventions also need to be focused on the reading and writing skills needed for college and career readiness, rather than test-taking. The two-week SOL “boot camps” that secondary students are offered in summer school are not be a substitute for actual evidence-based intensive reading instruction.

None of the high schools provide intensive writing interventions, although we understand that Step Up to Writing materials have been provided to all schools and some teachers have taken the elective training.⁵ This fall, at least a dozen parents have reported that they requested Step Up to Writing or any other writing intervention and were told none were available, or that no teacher was available to provide an intervention, or the student could use a computer grammar program

³ High school block scheduling makes it difficult to schedule daily intervention. Effective research-based reading interventions require daily intervention. Read 180 program guidelines required 90 minutes daily, which is not offered at any school. LLI specifies 45 minute lessons 5 days a week.

⁴ What Works Clearinghouse Intervention Report: Read 180, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Dept of Education (June 2010), <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/EvidenceSnapshot/406>. There is no research supporting the efficacy of LLI in closing reading gaps for high school students. According to Fountas and Pinnell, “LLI was not specifically designed to meet the needs of students who have been tested and determined to have learning disabilities...”

⁵ Step Up to Writing is being incorporated into the middle school curriculum which is being developed and disseminated this year, although we are still hearing reports of schools or teachers who either won’t use it or are unfamiliar with it. The Department of Teaching and Learning is aware of these reports and addressing it as they roll out the curriculum. However, the program still is not being provided as an intensive intervention or for special education instruction, although it has been approved for that use.

(No Red Ink) at home, or interventions could not be provided during the 30-35 minute daily Patriots/Generals/Warriors period or during Instructional Studies. The only successful family was offered a Step Up to Writing session once a quarter, which does not qualify as an intensive intervention.

Teacher Training and Staffing: Providing secondary interventions where they do not currently exist requires professional development for secondary ELA teachers, many of whom have never been trained to teach the basic reading or writing skills needed by significant groups of students. Parents report that a major barrier to even discussing interventions in high school is the inability to determine who is to provide the intervention. No teacher considers it their responsibility. Even students with IEPs who are not in self-contained special education classes are unable to obtain the “specialized instruction” required to meet their IEP goals because no one is assigned to provide it.

Given this challenge and the lack of high school reading specialists, we recommend that one or more teachers at each school should be highly trained to provide training, supervision, and direct services as Intervention Specialists. It is critical that each school have teachers who are skilled at instruction in basic reading skills, diagnostics, highly trained with a range of interventions, and capable of teaching reading classes and writing skills for different levels of ability below grade level. The specialists can provide intervention-related coaching support to other teachers.

Because nearly all secondary special education and ESOL teachers are working with students who have below-grade level reading and writing skills, intensive training in reading, assessment, and intervention should be required of all special education teachers who are not dually certified for another subject, and for all ESOL teachers of English or reading.

Teachers tell us that the most effective and impactful training model is onsite professional development with onsite coaching. When teachers work together to master new skills, they benefit from peer support. Onsite training also signals strong support from the school administrators. To ensure highly trained teachers, APS could partner with a university to offer graduate credit earning classes in summer with pay and coaching sessions after the class (by the university teacher) for each participating teacher.

Time for Interventions: Some high schools continue to balk at using the Patriots/Generals/Warrior periods or Instructional Studies classes for interventions. This is simply inexplicable, since these periods are intended to be used to meet individualized student needs. At least Instructional Studies should be re-envisioned to include academic interventions when needed.

The Program of Studies should include elective courses that provide a framework for interventions. Currently, only one elective course which might provide a

setting and framework for intervention, (9th grade Reading Strategies) but several of the high schools have chosen not to offer it, and teachers report that it has no curriculum and does not offer any interventions. There are no elective reading or writing intervention or remediation courses for 10th, 11th, or 12th grades, other than an 11th grade SOL preparation course limited to students who have exited HILT. We recommend that elective intensive reading and writing intervention courses be added to the Program of Studies for 2018-19, to be taught by highly trained teachers. These courses could also be augmented by electives that focus on college and career-ready reading and writing skills. For example, elective courses could be offered in Reading Intervention (targeted at specific student needs), Reading Strategies for Nonfiction Reading, Reading Strategies for Technical Reading (to be offered at the Career Center and meet the needs of CTE students who struggle to read technical manuals and other materials essential to their training), Writing Skills and Strategies, and Research and Writing.

Screening and Progress Monitoring: We recommend that APS follow the model now established in the elementary schools and adopt screening and progress monitoring tools and best practices for reading and writing in the high schools.

Currently the high schools do not provide screening or progress monitoring assessments for reading and writing skills. The Reading Inventory (RI) has been made available to all high schools for use, but the principals have been allowed to leave it to the discretion of teachers whether to use it or not. Most do not, and the few who do are 9th grade teachers. There are state standards of learning for reading and writing for all high school grades, but unlike the elementary schools, the high schools do not use any progress monitoring tools to ensure that the standards are being taught or learned. We do not yet see progress in developing the practice of using either screening or additional assessments to identify the intervention needs of each student and provide targeted interventions.

Other Core Improvements: Most of the students who are reading and writing below grade level are in grade level English classes. A co-teaching model that combines a reading certified teacher with a special education teacher, and provides cross training to both teachers, might more effectively meet their needs than the current model of ELA instruction.

Alignment:

This recommendation directly fulfills the Department of Teaching and Learning's priority focus on literacy and closing the achievement gap.

Budget Implications:

ATSS Funding and Staffing: Continued adequate annual funding is needed to ensure that ATSS is a robust system that is universally implemented in the secondary schools as well as the elementary schools. We understand that some of the ATSS staff funded in the past budget have been moved to other positions in

Teaching and Learning and have not been replaced. ATSS now has a smaller staff than it did two years ago when we last made recommendations. This undermines the ability of the staff to support ATSS in the schools. We think those positions need to be restored so that ATSS can continue to provide intervention training, progress monitoring, and oversight. The estimated cost of a staff person was previously estimated to be \$75,000, plus benefits.

Researching secondary interventions: There is no cost associated with researching secondary interventions, but once identified, APS may want to pilot them to evaluate their efficacy. Full implementation costs would not occur until the following budget year (2019-20).

Professional development in reading and writing interventions: We don't know what interventions will be found to be most effective for high school students. Orton-Gillingham is an example of an intervention APS has already adopted for elementary and middle schools; reportedly some high school teachers have been trained. Orton-Gillingham is an intensive instructional approach to reading for students who need a more language-based, structured method. It is estimated that it would cost \$47,500 to train 50 secondary teachers, including special education and ESOL teachers. Training in Step Up to Writing for 30 teachers would be \$4800.

Intervention Specialists: Given the difficulty the high schools seem to have in identifying teachers to provide requested interventions, each school should identify and train several intervention specialists to develop expertise in screening and assessment, deliver intensive intervention to students reading many years below grade level, and train and coach other teachers providing interventions. We don't think this would require additional hiring, but would require extensive training, which would be included in the above training costs.

Professional Development: Professional development and materials for other interventions: \$60,000.

STAFF RESPONSE:

Staff supports this recommendation and acknowledges that the Department of Teaching and Learning and ELA Office will need to continue to provide access to varied intervention approaches based on student needs, particularly at the secondary level. This includes access to intervention resources, professional learning, and strengthening structures to provide support. Through close collaboration with Special Education, ESOL/HILT, and ATSS, we have established a tiered system of support for core and intervention services in literacy for all schools. The ELA Office, with support and guidance from ATSS, has created an English Language Arts Intervention Protocol for grades 6-12. Furthermore, Step Up to Writing materials are incorporated into our curriculum documents to be used for any students who may need additional support in writing.

Additionally, we have continued to train teachers in Orton-Gillingham as well as Leveled Literacy Intervention at the middle and high school levels. As of August 2017, we have 45 middle school teachers and 27 high school teachers trained in Orton-Gillingham as well as 55 middle school and 4 high school teachers trained in Leveled Literacy

Intervention. While we have been providing on-going training for intervention strategies and programs for teachers during the last two years, we plan to continue to do so in subsequent years. Building the capacity of staff in their knowledge and expertise of literacy interventions and progress monitoring requires a multi-year plan.

Recommendation #2: APS should adopt a rigorous secondary writing curriculum incorporating instructional best practices for grades 9-12 that is continuous from year to year, ensures that all students have mastered fundamental writing skills, and includes writing experience over the four years that reflect sufficient quantity, quality, and diversity to ensure that all students make at least a year of growth during each school year, and are college- and career-ready by graduation.

Rationale:

The importance of developing strong writing skills is indisputable. Employers spend billions remediating writing skills. Colleges report that entering students arrive poorly equipped for the increased writing demands. Our graduates need to be excellent communicators and be able to organize and articulate their thoughts accurately and with clarity. Being able to communicate clearly in writing is absolute necessary in an age when so much depends upon electronic interaction. As the influence of social-media influence grows beyond casual social interaction to professional communication, so does the importance of skilled writing. A graduate who cannot write well has a diminished voice. Mastery of good writing skills equips students to communicate more effectively, and elevates their critical thinking skills. This is true for all fields, including science and technology.

After reading interventions, the issue that generates the most parent comments to the ELAAC is inadequate middle and high school writing instruction. Given that APS has just adopted a middle school writing program and is in the process of writing curriculum, we won't address middle school concerns here. But we do want to urge the Board to support the development of a high school writing curriculum that is sufficiently rigorous to prepare students for college and careers⁶. We are hearing from too many parents that APS is failing to do that.

Parents report that their students are unprepared for the writing demands of college, in terms of quantity, quality, sophistication, and genre. This appears to be true for APS graduates at a wide range of colleges, from the Ivy League to community college. Students report never writing anything longer than two pages in high school, much less a research paper. APS graduates say they are expected to write from 4 to 20 page papers in their first semester at college and

⁶ The ELA Resource Adoption process did not result in a selection of high school core reading or writing materials other than a few apps, such as No Red Ink, a grammar practice app. However, the Department of Teaching and Learning is in the process of developing a K-12 ELA curriculum that includes both reading and writing units. The curriculum has been launched for grades K-8 in all schools and is available for grades 9-10.

are poorly prepared to plan and execute written work of that volume. Last year, the Northern Virginia Community College assigned 20% to 45% of APS high school graduates to a Developmental English class as remediation for poor writing skills.⁷

For struggling learners, which represent about half of our population, writing even a paragraph is an elusive skill that they are still working on in high school. Currently, it appears that there are no countywide writing assessments for high school. It does not appear that anyone monitors whether students in each grade are actually being taught or meeting the SOL standards. And there are no assessment being used to determine which students have below-grade level writing skills and need intensive writing interventions, and so none are provided.

Currently, there is no common writing curriculum or assessment for high school writing. Teachers are on their own to develop writing expectations for their classes. Although we have no doubt that many teachers are providing significant and even rigorous writing instruction, the reports we receive indicate that such rigor is not universal. Students across all high schools report extreme variations from class to class in the quantity of writing expected, the type of writing, the amount of teacher instruction, the amount of teacher feedback, or whether any significant writing beyond a paragraph is expected at all. At present, APS has no minimum writing requirements for students across schools/programs either in terms of time spent writing or amount of writing produced. This creates significant inequity.

Some examples of this variance: This year, one 9th grade English teacher will assign 16 essays during the year, while the teacher in the classroom next door will assign only one. We found that many 11th grade classes engage in little writing instruction or practice even though these students are expected to pass the Writing SOL. In one 11th grade class, the only writing assignments were one poem and three written essay exams with a self-selected topic based on reading outside class. The essays were not returned to the students so there was no feedback. In another 11th grade class, the only writing was a daily journal, and a PowerPoint presentation. This year, a senior class has been told they will prepare a research paper that must be only 2 pages long. Parents of another 12th grader were told at back-to-school night that writing would not be a significant expectation this year because the students had already passed the writing SOL. Parents of AP students report that their students receive much experience writing 1- 2 page responses to DBQ's (data-based questions to prepare for the AP exam) for which the source texts are provided, but have no experience with actual original research, much less other genres of writing.

⁷ College Readiness Data, Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment, Northern Virginia Community College (2017). The percentage of APS graduates assigned to Developmental English: 27% of Washington-Lee graduates, 30% Wakefield, 20% Yorktown, and 45% Arlington Mill. Of those in Developmental English, only 50 to 80% pass the class (80% of Washington-Lee graduates, 56% Wakefield; 57% Yorktown; 50% Arlington Mill).

Parents are very critical of the lack of variety and content in student writing. They report that recent years have seen an increase in journaling and blogging as over-used “self-expression” forms of writing activity which involve no instruction and little exposure to diverse genres of writing or writing as an integral tool for active learning to shape the writer’s understanding of the content. In many classes, PowerPoint slides have replaced research papers, and undermined the complexity of thought that goes into crafting them. Teachers in the most challenging courses report that students have very weak skills in forming a defensible argument that can be supported by research.

Some teachers have told parents that it is acceptable to have low expectations as to writing quantity or rigor in the 9th, 10th, or 12th grades because the SOL is given only in the 11th grade. Parents have been told that it is acceptable that their students cannot write more than a 5-paragraph essay because that is all the SOL requires.

Many parents also express concern about the lack of direct instruction in basic writing skills, including basic grammar, syntax, punctuation, capitalization, sentence structure, word usage, and paragraph structure. Over the last three years, from 14% to 18% of APS 8th graders failed the Writing SOL, which suggests that they are arriving at high school with very poor basic writing skills that are never remediated.

Students also express frustration with the lack of meaningful teacher feedback on their writing, if they receive any comments at all. Without feedback, there is little learning. Peer review alone is inadequate; too often, when peers have weak writing skills and are not trained in careful review, their feedback is limited to whether they “like” the writing or not.

We are not sure whether the high school writing Standards of Learning are adequate, or whether APS needs to develop a curriculum and best practices that exceed the Standards in order to produce truly college and career-ready graduates. In either case, our high schools cannot continue to treat the 11th grade Writing SOL test as the end goal or standard for writing instruction. That test represents a very minimal writing expectation of a formulaic 5-paragraph essay (although it does not even require 5 paragraphs). High school writing instruction needs to move beyond the 5-paragraph essay to teach students to use writing to interact with text, content, and ideas, and to develop their critical thinking skills.

Our recommendation is that APS develop standards for writing at each grade, and a rigorous high school writing program of “best practices” and curriculum that ensures that by graduation, all students have mastered not only fundamental writing skills, but also have mastered many genres of writing, and challenged

themselves as writers. The goal is common expectations and standards that students will experience in all classrooms, regardless of teacher or school.

We don't wish to be unduly prescriptive, but our many discussions with parents and staff have produced the following characteristics to be expected of a strong writing curriculum that achieves quality, quantity, and diversity, with an eye to creating clear expectations without hobbling teachers:

- Frequent, if not daily, writing;
- Study of mentor texts in different genres, to teach structure, the use of effective language, and critical thinking;
- Strong fundamental writing mechanics (grammar, syntax, punctuation, creating strong complex sentences and coherent paragraphs, etc.) taught in the context of good writing, and not simply as computer exercises or worksheets;
- Direct instruction in writing strategies, such as planning, organizing information, outlining, structuring, word choices, authenticity, revising for clarity and detail;
- Instruction in self-regulation, self-reflection, editing and revision skills to enhance clarity and coherence. Instruction should emphasize the iterative process -- multiple drafts, constant revision, feedback from both peers and teachers during the writing process, and being able to look at your own work objectively – which should occur during instructional time, and not simply as homework;
- Mastery of diverse genres of writing, for many audiences and purposes, such as summaries, paragraphs, analytic/expository essays, opinion essays, persuasive essays, research papers, creative fiction/drama, poetry, personal narrative, letters, and speeches;
- Increasing stamina and increasing expectations of quantity and quality from year to year, with a “capstone” project for each year;⁸
- Develop sophisticated writing skills beyond the 5-paragraph essay, to move beyond formulaic writing and discourage superficial thinking;
- Develop keen critical thinking skills through writing, by using the writing process to understand increasingly challenging content and source materials, and to organize and express that understanding;
- Regular meaningful teacher, peer, and audience feedback. Training students to be good peer editors should be an essential part of any class that uses peer review;

⁸ We think it is important that the standards reflect some measure of quantity of writing that is expected for each grade. For example, each grade will write at least x types of papers, in these genres, of y length, building up to some sort of capstone writing achievement each year. The capstone should involve significant revision and rewriting, and teacher feedback throughout the process. The capstone would be an increasing challenge each year. For example, 9th graders might write a 3-5 page paper, 10th graders a 5-8 page paper, 11th graders an 8-10 page paper, and 12th graders a 10-15 page paper. One of the longer papers should involve original research (not sources pre-selected by the teacher, although that is useful to teach the use of original documents and research sources) and citations. We leave it to teachers writing curriculum to know what will challenge students without breaking them.

- Feedback through regular formative assessment to ensure that writing instruction meets or exceeds the SOL standards and curriculum expectations;⁹
- Common evaluative criteria for writing; and
- Professional development to support best practices in writing instruction.

Alignment:

This recommendation directly fulfills several of the Department of Teaching and Learning’s priorities on literacy, closing opportunity gaps, and meeting the needs of the whole child to be supported and challenged.

Budget Implications:

Developing a curriculum will require paying teachers during the summer months, and paying for substitutes for teachers who attend curriculum development meetings during the school year. The estimated cost is about \$10,000. To the extent that the developers determine that additional teacher training is required, that may be a budget item for the following year (2019-20).

STAFF RESPONSE:

Staff supports this recommendation and will continue to strengthen our practices in secondary writing learning experiences. Beginning in June 2017 and revisited throughout the 2017-18 school year, APS teachers have been working with the Department of Teaching and Learning and ELA Office to develop yearlong curriculum maps and units in kindergarten through 10th grade in order to create a rigorous APS ELA curriculum based upon the 2017 Standards of Learning. This opportunity has provided the ELA office and division with opportunities to consider units, materials, and resources to best supplement the writing SOL, while formulating the pacing of instructional strategies across grade levels to meet the needs of students; supporting them in their development as highly proficient writers. This work will continue with all other ELA courses in the summer of 2018.

PAST RECOMMENDATIONS

Past Recommendation #1: Ensure that the Arlington Tiered System of Support (ATSS) is integrated into a coherent education framework for all students at all grade levels in all schools. Under this framework, ATSS and professional learning communities together provide the means by which APS achieves the goal of all students meeting college and career ready standards, through both remediation and extension. Adoption of an APS Policy by the Board is an important step.

⁹ Some teams of Fairfax secondary teachers use a writing diagnostic assessment at the beginning of the year; students write for an hour based on a common prompt. The teachers compare student writing against a rubric and use the results to determine instructional needs for the year. The assessment is repeated mid-year and at the end of the year to check for learning.

Status: We understand that the ongoing revision of School Board Policies will not include this recommendation.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

- Goal 1: Ensure that Every Student is Challenged and Engaged.
- Goal 2: Eliminate Achievement Gaps.
- Goal 3: Recruit, Retain, and Develop High Quality Staff.
- Goal 4: Provide Optimal Learning Environments.
- Goal 5: Meet the Needs of the Whole Child.

ACI Vote:

Budget Implications: Zero.

Past Recommendation #2: Within the ATSS framework, effective interventions must be available to all students at all grade levels, with a focus on fidelity, targeting student needs, intensive training, and progress monitoring.

Status: Progress has been made at the elementary school level with training and availability of interventions. Staffing for ATSS appears to have been reduced. A data-gathering system for monitoring interventions is just being launched this fall.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

- Goal 1: Ensure that Every Student is Challenged and Engaged.
- Goal 2: Eliminate Achievement Gaps.
- Goal 3: Recruit, Retain, and Develop High Quality Staff.
- Goal 4: Provide Optimal Learning Environments.

ACI Vote:

Budget Implications: The estimate was approximately \$300,000 for teacher training, materials, additional ATSS staff, development of data monitoring system. We don't know what the actual cost has been.

Past Recommendation #3: Develop and support a summer reading intervention program that provides targeted Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions to students at all grade levels.

Status: We understand that this was partially initiated this past summer. Students in the regular summer school program were identified for reading and math interventions, and received them during part of each day. We understand that Orton Gillingham and Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) were provided in small group instruction to students based on their specific needs. We understand that targeting children for summer school is still an issue; the catalog does not sufficiently convey that summer school is focused on students who need interventions, and consequently there were many children in the classes who did

not need them. We understand that the changes did not include the special education summer reading camp; it appears those students may have received less intervention time than those in the regular summer school program. We think improvements can be made to parent and teacher communication regarding the changes to summer school, and to identify and target students in need of intervention.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

Goal One: Ensure That Every Student is Challenged and Engaged.

ACI Vote:

Budget Implications: The estimate was under \$200,000 to hire additional teachers to reduce ratios for interventions. We don't know the actual cost of the changes made this summer.

Future Work

In the coming year, the committee hopes to explore some of the following topics:

- Better use of the summer for intensive interventions for all grade levels;
- How to make the best use of 6th grade reading to meet the needs of all students;
- Writing instruction in high school, including curricula and programs used in other school systems;
- Word study and how the structure of the English language is taught at all grade levels (e.g., letter sound relationships, decoding, orthography, morphology, grammar, syntax);
- Learning devices and how they can support personalized learning in reading, writing and English language instruction;
- Meeting the needs of gifted students in ELA classrooms, particularly at the middle school level;
- Reading and writing interventions and how APS is addressing identification of appropriate intervention, fidelity, adequate training, progress monitoring, and use of data; whether data supports the use of existing interventions, and alternatives;
- Opportunities to leverage time students spend in extended day/check-in programs for additional literacy support;
- Review of achievement data;
- Meet with the ESOL/HILT, and Gifted Services Advisory Committees to discuss common concerns;
- Investigate the needs of secondary students in technical and career programs for targeted reading instruction relating to technical reading and training manuals;

- Hold a parent forum to gather parent feedback regarding English Language Arts instruction and interventions;
- ELA Evaluation.

Co-Chairs:

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Members:

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Kristina DeVesty
Martha Kopca
Lauren Johnson
Yvonne McIntire
Mike Miller
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ATTACHMENT A
ARLINGTON COUNTY READING SOL PASS RATE, 2011-2017 (%)

		2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
3rd grade:								
	All Students	87	87	78	83	87	89	85
	Black	81	74	63	65	74	79	77
	Hispanic	75	79	60	66	74	79	69
	White	95	94	90	92	95	94	91
	Asian	86	93	77	89	91	92	92
	Students with Disabilities	71	64	56	61	66	70	59
	Econ. Disadvantaged	74	76	55	65	72	78	68
	Limited English Proficient	76	78	60	70	73	80	70
5th grade:								
	All Students	91	90	81	81	87	89	89
	Black	85	77	60	65	80	77	83
	Hispanic	84	78	63	63	70	77	76
	White	97	97	94	93	96	95	96
	Asian	94	91	83	91	91	93	94
	Students with Disabilities	74	68	56	52	59	63	60
	Econ. Disadvantaged	83	75	60	60	68	74	75
	Limited English Proficient	84	79	57	58	65	73	76
8th grade:								
	All Students	91	90	77	77	83	83	85
	Black	78	80	62	63	69	66	73
	Hispanic	82	79	57	56	61	68	73
	White	98	98	93	93	96	95	93
	Asian	96	93	72	83	87	86	86
	Students with Disabilities	67	67	48	45	48	52	44
	Econ. Disadvantaged	79	78	56	54	60	64	65
	Limited English Proficient	79	77	46	39	43	44	55
High School								
	All Students	96	95	89	89	92	89	89
	Black	93	88	76	75	83	74	79
	Hispanic	91	91	82	83	86	81	82
	White	99	99	98	97	98	96	95
	Asian	97	94	90	86	93	87	89
	Students with Disabilities	88	82	70	70	77	58	63
	Econ. Disadvantaged	92	88	79	78	83	74	72
	Limited English Proficient	86	86	67	66	74	60	65

Source: VDOE Report Cards, Arlington Public Schools, 2016-17, 2014-15 and 2012-13.

*VDOE estimates that 4 percentage points of the gains in 2014-15 and subsequent years for grades 3 through 8 are attributable to expedited retakes.

http://doe.virginia.gov/news/news_releases/2015/08_aug11.shtml.

ATTACHMENT B

ARLINGTON COUNTY WRITING SOL PASSING RATES, 2011-2017 (%)

		2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
5 th grade:								
	All Students	91	93	84	85	*	*	*
	Black	82	79	59	71	*	*	*
	Hispanic	84	87	66	70	*	*	*
	White	95	98	95	94	*	*	*
	Asian	94	93	85	87	*	*	*
	Students with Disabilities	64	70	57	51	*	*	*
	Economically Disadvantaged	81	81	60	67	*	*	*
	Limited English Proficient	79	86	60	66	*	*	*
8 th grade:								
	All Students	93	91	81	78	82	83	86
	Black	87	82	66	58	67	66	68
	Hispanic	86	80	64	60	60	66	75
	White	98	98	94	93	95	94	95
	Asian	96	95	81	83	84	89	90
	Students with Disabilities	71	67	48	45	41	43	47
	Economically Disadvantaged	83	79	62	55	57	63	68
	Limited English Proficient	81	79	54	42	35	46	63
High School								
	All Students	96	95	91	88	88	87	86
	Black	94	89	82	76	76	76	76
	Hispanic	91	92	85	80	80	76	77
	White	99	99	97	97	96	96	95
	Asian	96	95	96	88	93	87	89
	Students with Disabilities	85	87	68	67	66	58	63
	Economically Disadvantaged	92	89	84	77	71	74	72
	Limited English Proficient	86	86	82	68	68	60	65

*The 5th grade writing SOL test was eliminated.