

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Arlington School Board  
FROM: Gifted Services Advisory Committee (GSAC)  
DATE: February 5, 2020  
SUBJECT: Non-Recommendation Year Report

### **Evolution of Gifted Services:**

Gifted Services in APS has changed substantially in the past decade, transitioning from Pull-Out Services to the Collaborative Coaching Model. In Pull Out Services, the Resource Teacher for the Gifted provides instruction in math and/or ELA for 45 – 60 mins a week to the identified gifted students. In APS’s current Collaborative Coaching Model, identified students are clustered in groups of 5-8 with a teacher who at minimum has earned 40 gifted continuing education points (G-2.1.4 PIP – 9).<sup>1</sup> Science and social studies are included in services rather than just math and ELA. The idea is that students are gifted all the time, not just during special pull-out sessions. The collaborative model that we have implemented has greater opportunity to reach any advanced student daily. To implement with fidelity, all cluster teachers need to be involved in ongoing training, most likely professional development primarily generated/coordinated through Gifted Services. All RTGs need ongoing training in instructional coaching and research based best practices in gifted education that reaches all students.

### **GSAC Previous Recommendations:**

#### **1. Pilot Intensified English 7, open to all, providing supports specified by IEP’s/504’s**

The target students for Intensified English are those who can benefit from and who want a more challenging English language arts class. This course would help set the foundation instruction to support the rich offering of AP and IB classes at the high school level. GSAC recommended middle school teachers pilot this course at all middle schools in APS. Keeping with APS’ goal of inclusivity, the course would be open to all students and students who require support services must be provided those services in the class.

#### Status: Not Implemented

Highest rubric score for “Academic Growth: The recommendation supports the achievement of at least one year of academic growth for individual students each year.”

GSAC has supported this recommendation for nearly a decade. GSAC agrees with the assessment of “Academic Growth”, we also believe the implementation of this course would address other metrics in the rubric. There is a “Critical Need” for this course. Data collected by

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<sup>1</sup> To date, the model has not been fully implemented, with many teachers teaching gifted students without the requisite training points.

APS for the evaluation indicate that advanced students strongly agree 7-10x more that they are challenged in intensified versus general education classes. Over half the enrolled students in the high school AP/IB/Intensified classes are not identified as gifted, based on APS data, thus GSAC contends these classes would not only be for gifted students. GSAC believes all students, especially advanced middle school students, need opportunities for more rigor.

## **2. Teacher Specialist for the Office of Gifted Services**

A Teacher Specialist would only have positive outcomes for all students, including students identified as gifted. We recommended a Teacher Specialist staff position be added to the Office of Gifted Services. The Specialist would be instrumental to further improving consistency across the school system, training critical and creative thinking skills and developing high-quality curricular resources. This would add further depth, complexity, and engagement to lessons that can be applied not only to gifted students but to all students, meeting them where they are. Consistency is key to all learning. The Specialist would also support consistency of implementation of holistic screening process with the goal of the gifted population matching the overall population of APS.

Teacher Specialist for the Office of Gifted Services

Status: Not Implemented

GSAC continues to support this recommendation. The Office of Gifted Services does not have a Teacher Specialist supporting the Supervisor. With the Collaborative Coaching Model, GSAC contends that the Office of Gifted Services supports the vast majority of students in APS. Looking at just the identified population, in middle school just shy of 37 percent of the population is identified in at least one subject area, and in high school, almost 30 percent of students are identified in at least one subject area. Overall for APS, around 28 percent of the population is identified in at least one area. The Gifted Services Supervisor works with the program offices for Social Studies, Math, Science, English, Arts, English Learners, Equity and Excellence as well as Special Education, helping to improve curriculum and instruction for all students. The recommending report lists 19 specific items that are highlights of the work and responsibility of the Gifted Services office. Providing another resource for the outreach and teacher support provided by the Gifted Services office would multiply the positive impact across APS. Indeed, it could significantly improve the fidelity of implementation of our current model of Collaborative Coaching.

Unfortunately, the Intensified English 7 and the Teacher Specialist recommendations were not implemented. However, GSAC continues support for both recommendations for the success of all APS students.

Ultimately, GSAC is fully committed to **Challenging all students.**

Committee members:

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**Staff Liaison:** Cheryl McCullough

Appendices

Link to 2018-19 Recommendations:

[https://www.apsva.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/GSAC-Report-2018-2019-Final\\_v2-1.pdf](https://www.apsva.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/GSAC-Report-2018-2019-Final_v2-1.pdf)

Link to GSAC Program Evaluation:

<https://www.apsva.us/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/GS-Evaluation-Report-v5.1-links-removed-July-2017.pdf>

Link to PIP for teacher training:

[https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/arlington/Board.nsf/files/AZQ5M410DAB6/\\$file/G-2.14%20PIP-9%20Teacher%20Qualifications%20-%20Education%20of%20Gifted%20Students.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/arlington/Board.nsf/files/AZQ5M410DAB6/$file/G-2.14%20PIP-9%20Teacher%20Qualifications%20-%20Education%20of%20Gifted%20Students.pdf)