

Advanced Academics Talent Development Advisory Committee

April 1, 2025

Recommendation 1: Academic growth in School Action Plans (pages 1-2)

Recommendation 2: Middle School Intensified Courses (pages 3-7)

Membership

John Schaus, Co-Chair

Staff Liaison: Cheryl McCullough, AATD Director

Mary Wierzbicki, Co-Chair

Recommendation 1: Ensure that all APS school action plans and principals' evaluations include measurable metrics for at least one year of academic growth each year for all students.

Alignment to [Strategic Plan](#)

Priority: By 2030, at least 90% of elementary, middle school, and Gr. 9 students will annually meet defined growth targets in math and reading.

Carlisle Levine	Sherri Oliver	Brindis Ochoa
Greg Eastman	Sheila Leonard	Elizabeth Corry
Jamey Borell	Bethelehem Tsehai	Colleen Lunsford
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Performance Objective: Growth Targets

Strategies: Student Academic Growth & Success

SUMMARY

Each student in APS deserves at least one year of academic growth each school year. The AATDAC recommends that the school board and Superintendent ensure that all APS school action plans and principals' evaluations across all APS divisions include measurable metrics for at least one year of academic growth each year for all students.

The current strategic plan contains a helpful first step setting a performance objective of, "By 2030, at least 90% of elementary, middle school, and Gr.9 students will annually meet defined growth targets in math and reading," based on 2023-2024 NWEA MAP growth in reading and math. Student results on

NWEA Map provides APS necessary data to measure student academic growth and evaluate progress toward at least one year of growth for each student each year.

AATDAC notes that at least 7 of Arlington's 40 schools and programs include growth-based goals seeking to achieve success for all their students in their 2024-2025 school action plans. [Arlington Traditional School](#), [Jamestown](#), and [Arlington Career Center](#), and [Eunice Kennedy Shriver Program](#)'s action plans include specific growth based targets. [Carlin Springs](#), [Randolph](#), and [Dorothy Hamm](#), include measurable growth based key performance indicators in their plans. This shows that some APS schools are already focused on growth for all students, and they can serve as positive models for the remaining schools and their specific circumstances.

Budgetary Implications

Each school leadership team develops annual school action plans, and APS already collects and analyzes NWEA MAP scores to evaluate student growth so this recommendation should not require additional budgetary or teaching resources to implement.

Committee vote: 8 in favor, 0 opposed Date: January 27, 2025

Staff Response

Staff supports the recommendation that School Action plans and principal evaluations should include measurable metrics which show at least one year of growth for all students to include advanced/gifted learners.

Recommendation 2: Faithful implementation of full complement of middle school intensified courses: 6th Grade Disciplinary Literacy and 8th Grade World Geography

Alignment to [Strategic Plan](#)

Priority: Student Academic Growth and Success

Performance Objective: Growth Targets

Strategies: "Provide intensified and extended learning opportunities that enable students to develop knowledge and skills that align with learning needs, personal interests and cultural relevance."

"Increase co-taught sections of courses and classes taught by two certified teachers to support the inclusion of SWD, ELs, and dually identified students....including advanced [and] intensified course options."

SUMMARY

Complete the roll out by offering 6th grade intensified classes in Disciplinary Literacy and an intensified 8th grade World Geography, at all middle schools. Disciplinary Literacy was previously approved by the school board and is not yet implemented. World Geography currently lacks an intensified option. Both of these courses were left off the program of studies for 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 and this should be rectified for 2026-2027.

The large demand by students for **open enrollment** intensified courses that have been added in the recent years and the positive feedback by students and teachers across course offerings shows that these courses are needed. **We stress the continued importance of increasing the number of co-taught courses so students with disabilities and English learner students have access to open enrollment intensified courses. Open enrollment intensified courses allow any student who meets the criteria for enrolling to enroll in intensified courses in 6th, 7th, or 8th grade.** APS data shows that students are succeeding in these courses, with 93% of the 4,485 enrolled students receiving a grade of A or B.

When an intensified course is not offered, and schools do not cluster students, a classroom teacher must teach to a wide range of student levels, reducing effectiveness of instruction for all students. This is evident in APS clustering data, which shows more deliberate grouping of students in courses with an intensified option, but widely varying implementation across schools of clustering in 8th grade World Geography and 6th grade Disciplinary Literacy, the two subjects without intensified options. Intensified courses with clustering lead to better learning outcomes for all students and enable teachers to tailor instruction more effectively for both intensified and non-intensified versions of courses. Disciplinary literacy, properly differentiated, is an important course for foundations of reading throughout a student's secondary education. Every student deserves at least one year of growth each year, and appropriately offering intensified courses increases APS teachers' effectiveness in meeting the needs of all APS students.

Budgetary Implications

Both courses are already taught to all students, so this recommendation should not require additional budgetary or teaching resources to implement; it may require additional time from counselors to ensure students are appropriately placed in intensified courses.

Committee vote: 14 in favor, 0 opposed **Date:** November 25, 2024

Detail

APS data shows that intensified middle school courses represent 7,359 student enrollments, or 28.7% of middle school enrollments. By race/ethnicity, middle school intensified courses include 31.6% of Asian student enrollments, 19.7% of Black student enrollments, 13.5% of Hispanic student enrollments, 40.2% of Other student enrollments, and 38.2% of White student enrollments. English Learner (EL) student enrollment in Middle School intensified courses is 35.8% of proficient EL enrollments, 16.4% of EL 6 enrollments, and 1.7% of EL1-4 enrollments. 8.6% of enrollments of students with disabilities are in intensified courses. 12.6% of economically disadvantaged student enrollments are in intensified courses. See APS Middle School Cluster data in Appendix.

Staff Response

Staff supports adding an open enrollment intensified section of Disciplinary Literacy and World Geography which would offer a more challenging option of either course for students. Staff would also support grouping by students' strength areas within each of these classes for more targeted instruction for all learners.

Appendices

Middle School Cluster Data

Middle School Intensified Enrollment Data



Middle School Cluster Data – 6th Grade



6th Grade Grouping	Dis Lit (Sem)	Dis Lit	English Intensified	Science Intensified	U.S. History to Present Intensified	Pre-Algebra for 6
Dorothy Hamm	n/a	22%	88%	59%	64%	100%
Gunston	0%	24%	88%	100%	76%	100%
Kenmore	80%	0%	100%	70%	83%	100%
Jefferson	n/a	31%	84%	60%	67%	100%
Swanson	57%	0%	100%	72%	74%	100%
Williamsburg	n/a	63%	100%	92%	72%	100%

Disciplinary Literacy is not currently an intensified option.

Grouping is more deliberate in intensified and/or accelerated options.

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Middle School Cluster/Grouping Data – 8th Grade



	World Geography	English 8 Intensified	Physical Science – Intensified		Geometry
Dorothy Hamm	21%	80%	90%		100%
Gunston	0%	81%	47%		100%
Kenmore	15%	100%	100%		100%
Jefferson	88%	100%	93%		100%
Swanson	51%	92%	91%		100%
Williamsburg	41%	88%	67%		100%

World Geography is not currently an intensified option.

Grouping is more deliberate in intensified and/or accelerated courses.

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Appendix: Middle School Intensified Enrollment Data

Middle School Course Enrollments by Course Type and Race/Ethnicity												
Content Area	Course Type	Asian Students		Black Students		Hispanic Students		Other Students		White Students		Total Enrollment
		Number of Enrollments	Percent of Total	Number of Enrollments	Percent of Total	Number of Enrollments	Percent of Total	Number of Enrollments	Percent of Total	Number of Enrollments	Percent of Total	
ELA	Intensified	223	8.9%	186	7.5%	384	15.4%	290	11.6%	1,409	56.5%	2,492
	Standard	456	8.5%	689	12.8%	1,843	34.3%	374	7.0%	2,014	37.5%	5,376
	ELA Total	679	8.6%	875	11.1%	2,227	28.3%	664	8.4%	3,423	43.5%	7,868
Math	Intensified	106	12.3%	36	4.2%	78	9.1%	114	13.3%	526	61.2%	860
	Standard	422	8.1%	598	11.5%	1,773	34.0%	371	7.1%	2,054	39.4%	5,218
	Math Total	528	8.7%	634	10.4%	1,851	30.5%	485	8.0%	2,580	42.4%	6,078
Science	Intensified	241	9.9%	214	8.8%	334	13.7%	279	11.5%	1,367	56.1%	2,435
	Standard	263	7.7%	407	12.0%	1,303	38.4%	210	6.2%	1,212	35.7%	3,395
	Science Total	504	8.6%	621	10.7%	1,637	28.1%	489	8.4%	2,579	44.2%	5,830
Social Studies	Intensified	131	8.3%	106	6.7%	203	12.9%	174	11.1%	958	60.9%	1,572
	Standard	375	8.7%	516	12.0%	1,457	34.0%	318	7.4%	1,624	37.9%	4,290
	Social Studies Total	506	8.6%	622	10.6%	1,660	28.3%	492	8.4%	2,582	44.0%	5,862
All Content Areas	Intensified	701	9.5%	542	7.4%	999	13.6%	857	11.6%	4,260	57.9%	7,359
	Standard	1,516	8.3%	2,210	12.1%	6,376	34.9%	1,273	7.0%	6,904	37.8%	18,279
All Course Enrollments		2,217	8.6%	2,752	10.7%	7,375	28.8%	2,130	8.3%	11,164	43.5%	25,638

Middle School Course Enrollments by Course Type and EL Status												
Content Area	Course Type	EL 1-4 Students		EL 6 Students		Proficient Students		Non EL Students		Total Enrollment		
		Number of Enrollments	Percent of Total	Number of Enrollments	Percent of Total	Number of Enrollments	Percent of Total	Number of Enrollments	Percent of Total			
ELA	Intensified	8	0.3%	200	8.0%	160	6.4%	2,124	85.2%	2,492		
	Standard	1,153	21.4%	882	16.4%	218	4.1%	3,123	58.1%	5,376		
	ELA Total	1,161	14.8%	1,082	13.8%	378	4.8%	5,247	66.7%	7,868		
Math	Intensified		0.0%	22	2.6%	56	6.5%	782	90.9%	860		
	Standard	1,072	20.5%	780	14.9%	247	4.7%	3,119	59.8%	5,218		
	Math Total	1,072	17.6%	802	13.2%	303	5.0%	3,901	64.2%	6,078		
Science	Intensified	48	2.0%	205	8.4%	151	6.2%	2,031	83.4%	2,435		
	Standard	780	23.0%	574	16.9%	146	4.3%	1,895	55.8%	3,395		
	Science Total	828	14.2%	779	13.4%	297	5.1%	3,926	67.3%	5,830		
Social Studies	Intensified	12	0.8%	137	8.7%	89	5.7%	1,334	84.9%	1,572		
	Standard	852	19.9%	641	14.9%	208	4.8%	2,589	60.3%	4,290		
	Social Studies Total	864	14.7%	778	13.3%	297	5.1%	3,923	66.9%	5,862		
All Content Areas	Intensified	68	0.9%	564	7.7%	456	6.2%	6,271	85.2%	7,359		
	Standard	3,857	21.1%	2,877	15.7%	819	4.5%	10,726	58.7%	18,279		
All Course Enrollments		3,925	15.3%	3,441	13.4%	1,275	5.0%	16,997	66.3%	25,638		

Middle School Course Enrollments by Course Type and SWD Status						
Content Area	Course Type	SWD Students		Non SWD Students		Total Enrollments
		Number of Enrollments	Percent of Total	Number of Enrollments	Percent of Total	
ELA	Intensified	78	3.1%	2,414	96.9%	2,492
	Standard	1,089	20.3%	4,287	79.7%	5,376
	ELA Total	1,167	14.8%	6,701	85.2%	7,868
Math	Intensified	26	3.0%	834	97.0%	860
	Standard	667	12.8%	4,551	87.2%	5,218
	Math Total	693	11.4%	5,385	88.6%	6,078
Science	Intensified	129	5.3%	2,306	94.7%	2,435
	Standard	674	19.9%	2,721	80.1%	3,395
	Science Total	803	13.8%	5,027	86.2%	5,830
Social Studies	Intensified	65	4.1%	1,507	95.9%	1,572
	Standard	738	17.2%	3,552	82.8%	4,290
	Social Studies Total	803	13.7%	5,059	86.3%	5,862
All Content Areas	Intensified	298	4.0%	7,061	96.0%	7,359
	Standard	3,168	17.3%	15,111	82.7%	18,279
All Course Enrollments		3,466	13.5%	22,172	86.5%	25,638

Middle School Course Enrollments by Course Type and Economic Status						
Content Area	Course Type	Economically Disadvantaged Students		Non Economically Disadvantaged Students		Total Enrollments
		Number of Enrollments	Percent of Total	Number of Enrollments	Percent of Total	
ELA	Intensified	312	12.5%	2,180	87.5%	2,492
	Standard	1,907	35.5%	3,469	64.5%	5,376
	ELA Total	2,219	28.2%	5,649	71.8%	7,868
Math	Intensified	57	6.6%	803	93.4%	860
	Standard	1,646	31.5%	3,572	68.5%	5,218
	Math Total	1,703	28.0%	4,375	72.0%	6,078
Science	Intensified	352	14.5%	2,083	85.5%	2,435
	Standard	1,261	37.1%	2,134	62.9%	3,395
	Science Total	1,613	27.7%	4,217	72.3%	5,830
Social Studies	Intensified	182	11.6%	1,390	88.4%	1,572
	Standard	1,440	33.6%	2,850	66.4%	4,290
	Social Studies Total	1,622	27.7%	4,240	72.3%	5,862
All Content Areas	Intensified	903	12.3%	6,456	87.7%	7,359
	Standard	6,254	34.2%	12,025	65.8%	18,279
All Course Enrollments		7,157	27.9%	18,481	72.1%	25,638