



ACTL Subcommittees

Overview

2025-26

[Zoom](#)

Reminder: record the meeting!

September 18, 2025



Introductions

1. Name & committee
2. Students in APS, if any
3. Your professional field

ACTL Chair: Jill Abbott

ACTL Vice Chair - Council: Ginnie Gordon

ACTL Vice Chair - Subcommittees: Michael Cieslak, Ed.D.

ACTL Co-Secretary: Sasha McNickle

ACTL Co-Secretary: Heather Toronjo

ACTL Subcommittees

Advanced Academics & Talent Development (formerly Gifted Services)

Arts

Arlington Special Education Advisory Committee (ASEAC)

Career, Technical, and Adult Education (CTAE)

Early Childhood

Educational Technology

English Language Arts

English Learners

Immersion

Math

Science

School Health Advisory Board (SHAB)

Social Studies

Student Services

World Languages



Housekeeping

- Attendance: In the chat, please put your name, role, and subcommittee
- 2025-26 Subcommittee Membership [Roster](#)





Common goals and guidelines

ACTL subcommittees are governed by

[Policy B-3.6.30 School Board Advisory Committees](#)

and

[Policy Implementation Procedure B-3.6.30 PIP-1 ACTL Council](#)

[Policy Implementation Procedure B-3.6.30 PIP-2 ACTL Subcommittees](#)

**REFER TO THE PIP
FIRST WITH
QUESTIONS**

also

[B-3.6.30 PIP-4 School Health Advisory Board](#)

[B-3.6.30 PIP-5 Arlington Special Education Advisory Committee](#)



Charge

Established by the POLICY and PIPs:

Advocate for the content and/or program area

Review instructional components and materials

Review content/program area-specific student performance data as needed

Make recommendations in support of improvements to the instructional program that positively impact student achievement and staffs' development

Each committee also looks at industry trends, career pathways in relation to APS course offerings, teacher professional development, and teacher retention.



Membership

Appointed by the School Board

2-year terms

Total of 3 terms = 6 years total

Each subcommittee should have at least 5 and at most 25 members



Roles

- **Chair (or Vice Chair, as needed)**
 - Schedule meetings*
 - *in coordination with staff liaison
 - Build meeting agendas*
 - Run meetings, lead discussion, conduct membership votes
 - Connect with other subcommittee chairs on ways to collaborate
 - Draft and finalize recommendations
 - Present recommendations to the ACTL Council
 - Present recommendations to the School Board at work sessions
- **Secretary**
 - Create meeting minutes
 - Track member attendance
 - Record vote tallies
- **Staff liaison**
 - Serve as primary conduit of information exchange between the committee and APS
 - Obtain meeting locations; post meeting info on apsva.us
 - Provide departmental updates at committee meetings
 - Participate in recruitment of members and in recommending the appointment of members
 - Invite other staff members to committee meetings as requested by the chair
 - Request non-publicly available information required by the committee



“How to”

1. Connect regularly with your staff liaison to develop meeting topics and agendas

- Generally, the staff liaison will provide a departmental update at each meeting. You can additionally ask the staff liaison to present on specific topics in more depth.
- If your committee wants to hear from other APS staff members, work with your staff liaison to make those requests.

2. Record minutes of the meetings, including attendance and any votes. Approve minutes at subsequent meeting. Provide approved minutes to Rosa Ewell (rosa.ewell@apsva.us) to post on the APS website.

3. Each committee may develop 1-2 recommendations per year.

- You will present and discuss your draft recommendation with the ACTL Council at one of their meetings. This is an opportunity to field test the recommendation with a wider group of school representatives and hone your rationale.
- You will also present your recommendation to the School Board at a work session.
- By the end of the school year, submit a written recommendation that lays out your rationale, supported by references.
 - The timeline for recommending changes to the Program of Studies or making budget requests is November/December.

Jan 27, Feb



Recommendations

1. Develop recommendations that align with the [2024-2030 Strategic Plan](#).
2. Provide only **budget neutral and/or potential savings** recommendations.
 1. Are there things that we should think about cutting or reducing?
 2. Cutting technology is not cost neutral. It would in fact have a budget impact because of the current contracts we have, and we'd have to replace them with books/materials that all cost \$\$\$.
3. Think through both **short-term and long-term** recommendations.
 1. Many of the folks serving on committees are experts in their respective fields - tap into that expertise! If we could have 1-2 recommendations for the present (within the next 1-2 years) and 1 recommendation longer-term (5+ years out), this could be helpful for both the board and staff as we perform long-term planning.



Recommendations Con't

Some options include:

- Changes to the **Program of Studies**
- New/different **materials**, other new/different **resources**
- **Professional development** changes
- Changes in **teaching practices** (e.g., from Structured Literacy to the Science of Reading)
- **Policy** or **policy implementation** changes

Subcommittees are encouraged to collaborate with each other to make joint recommendations.

Aim for collaboration with your staff liaison. Your staff liaison will write an official “staff response” to your committee’s recommendation. If you agree on the recommendation, great. If not, that’s fine too, and it will help your committee hone the rationale for your recommendation if you understand why your staff liaison has a different view.



Collaboration: Canvas



ACTL > Pages > Subcommittees

Immersive Reader

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Home

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Subcommittees

- [Advanced Academics](#)
- [Arlington Special Education Committee \(ASEAC\)](#)
- [Career, Technical, and Adult Education](#)
- [Dual Language Immersion](#)
- [Early Childhood](#)
- [Educational Technology](#)
- [English Language Arts](#)
- [English Learners \(ACEL\)](#)
- [Mathematics](#)
- [Science](#)
- [School Health Advisory Board \(SHAB\)](#)
- [Social Studies](#)
- [Student Services](#)
- [World Languages](#)

ACTL Subcommittees

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Account



Dashboard



Courses



Calendar



Inbox



History



Mastery



Studio



Collaboration: Recommendation Tracker





Meetings (per the PIP)

- Hold at least 4 meetings; no more than 12. Meetings should be held between the first and last days of the regular school year.
- Conduct meetings according to Robert's Rules of Order.
- **Quorum:** a majority of the appointment members being physically present at the meeting or in accordance with Policy B-3-6-37 Electronic Participation in School Board Advisory Committee Meetings.
- **Voting only at meetings where the subcommittee has a quorum.** Vote tallies must be included in the meeting minutes.
- All meetings should be conducted in compliance with public meeting requirements under the Code of Virginia and are **subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)**.
- **Open to the public.** Conducting the business of the subcommittee via email or other non-public means is prohibited.
- **Meeting date, time, and location** must be posted on a public bulletin board, in the staff liaison's office, and on the subcommittee web page **at least 3 working days before the meeting.** (The staff liaison does the posting.)
- **Agenda and all materials** must be available for inspection by the public at the time of the meeting.
- **Minutes** shall be publicly published on the committee's web page.



Conduct of members (per the PIP)

APS encourages the free flow of ideas and opinions within advisory committees.

Members should:

- Be community **role models**, upholding and exemplifying the core values of APS
- **Attend** all meetings (members may be removed for not attending 50% of meetings)
- **Conduct** themselves according to APS policies and procedures
- In communicating with the media, the public, or other organizations, exercise caution to ensure that, unless authorized by the committee, they specifically indicate that any expressed opinions or views are their own.
- As **liaisons** to and from the community, represent the views of the subcommittee to the community and the community to the subcommittee.



Subcommittee research (per the [PIP](#))

Guidelines

- Subcommittee may do **independent study and research**. It should be **coordinated with staff** and not duplicate or overlap staff work.
- Subcommittee will be provided access to and are encouraged to exhaust **existing public data and information sources** (such as by APS and VDOE) before making data requests.
- **If the subcommittee feels APS should conduct original research**, that recommendation should be made through the subcommittee recommendation process.



Freedom of Information Act

All email, notes, written communication, or other documents concerning subcommittee business are subject to FOIA.

This includes messages sent from personal email accounts, text sent on personal phones, etc.

Chairs should collaborate with the staff liaison to ensure all subcommittee members understand how FOIA applies to them.

****Remind subcommittee members of this throughout the year.****



How to handle meetings that are open to the public

All advisory committee meetings are open to the public. It behooves your leadership team to consider in advance how members of the public can engage.

Some options include:

- Having a “public comment” period near the beginning of the agenda
- Asking members of the public to share their view either at the opening of an agenda topic or after committee members have been able to speak
- Asking members of the public to observe silently through most of the meeting, with a period toward the end of the meeting reserved for public input
- Another option that works for your topics

You may use different methods for different meetings.



School Board Subcommittee Working Group

- Charge: Work with school board and staff to evaluate the current School Board advisory committee structure, effectiveness, and alignment with strategic priorities.
- The community engagement period is Sept. 10 - Oct 17
- The SURVEY will be open from Sept. 23- Oct. 15
- If they'd like us to spend 15-20 min virtually with Jenny Roahan Rizzo at your Sept or Oct meeting to answer any questions, please email her at jroahan@yahoo.com
- [APS Web Information](#)



School Board Subcommittee Working Group Con't

. The proposed ideas:

- Five Advisory Groups:
 - 1) Special Education, 2) Academics, 3) Student Health and WellBeing, 4) Personnel, and 5) Operations
- Each advisory group has a budget and Title I representatives.
- ACTL Subcommittees
 - ACTL currently has 13 standing subcommittees that discuss and develop recommendations for topics that may not be aligned with the larger Council and to deliver recommendations directly to the School Board. Two options are being proposed:
 - Subcommittees are formed on an as needed basis and the work is aligned and supports the work of the Council OR
 - Subcommittees are formed on an as needed basis AND there are some standing subcommittees, and the work is aligned and supports the work of the Council.



2025-26 ACTL Council leadership

ACTL Chair: Jill Abbott

ACTL Vice Chair - Council: Ginnie Gordon

ACTL Vice Chair - Subcommittees: Michael Cieslak, Ed.D.

ACTL Co-Secretary: Sasha McNickle

ACTL Co-Secretary: Heater Toronjo

School Board liaison to ACTL: Kathleen Clark

Deputy Clerk of the School Board & Communications Liaison: Carmen Mejia

Council staff Dr. Gerald Mann, Chief Academic Officer

liaisons: Sarah Putnam, Executive Director of Curriculum & Instruction
Kerri Hirsch, Director of Curriculum & Instruction
Rosa Ewell, Executive Assistant