

# Minutes of ACTL Meeting

## September 10, 2025

### Introductions and Opening

- Jill Abbott opened the first ACTL meeting of the year, highlighting a full agenda.
- Kathleen Clark (Board liaison) introduced herself via video, noting five strategic focus areas: partnerships, operations, workforce, student well-being, and student success.
- Key initiatives include strengthening Pre-K, launching school AI, device use in classrooms, high school schedule review, non-traditional secondary program evaluation, and alternatives to exclusionary discipline.

### Committee and Board Updates

- Dr. Mann (Chief Academic Officer) emphasized ongoing partnerships and encouraged applications for the device work group (starting Sept. 30).
- The committee's four main charges:
  1. Review policies and provide recommendations.
  2. Offer input on new programs/practices.
  3. Assist with community information dissemination.
  4. Review and discuss APS teaching/learning topics.
- A vote was taken to hold 50% of the ACTL meetings virtual. Ginnie Gordon made the motion and XX seconded the motion. Decision: Unanimous and 50% of meetings will be virtual under Virginia law.

### Curriculum Spotlight: Social Studies

- Christine Joy (Social Studies Supervisor) explained the 2023 standards adoption:
  - Last year was a “crosswalk year” with outdated textbooks.
  - 2023–24: full implementation begins.
  - Major shift from rote memorization → critical thinking, analysis, multiple perspectives, inclusive history, and civil discourse.
  - Teachers now receive more developed resources (slide decks, activities, assessments).
  - State will update instructional guides continually; new assessments aligned to standards will start in 2026.
  - Fifth grade curriculum will shift to U.S. History I next year; 6th grade will remain U.S. History I & II.
  - Geography remains embedded and taught in 8th grade.

### Planned APS Spotlights & Focus Topics

- Spotlights (short updates): Literacy (Nov), Writing instruction (Mar), Mathematics (May).
- Deep Dives (focus topics): Artificial Intelligence (Nov & Apr), Executive Functioning (Mar).

## **Advisory Committees Reorganization**

- Jonathan and Jenny presented work of a 22-member group redesigning advisory councils:
  - Proposal: replace multiple committees with five councils:
    - Academic
    - Student Health & Well-Being
    - Personnel
    - Operations
    - ASAC (state-mandated, unchanged)
  - Councils will align directly to strategic plan priorities.
  - Each will have budget representatives to help assess feasibility.
  - Membership mix: parents, students, community members, and staff (with at least 4:1 ratio of parents to staff).
  - Applications required annually; term limits reset under new structure.
  - Recruitment aims for broad diversity and equity in representation.
  - Subcommittees may either be ad hoc only (Option 1) or include some standing subcommittees (Option 2).
  - Community feedback is being gathered via focus groups, surveys, and forums through October.

## **Community Engagement**

- Representatives encouraged to brainstorm ways to engage their school communities, collect input, and promote upcoming surveys.
- Engagement methods include school meetings, PTA collaboration, newsletters, and community focus groups.