

Memorandum

TO: Arlington School Board

FROM: English Advisory Committee (EAC)

DATE: March 18, 2013

SUBJECT: Non-Recommendation Year Report, 2012-2013

Background

The English Advisory Committee studies all parts of the English Language Arts (ELA) Program: reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing. The committee focuses on how these components are taught throughout all grade levels, kindergarten through high school. The English Advisory Committee (EAC) meets on the second Monday of each month from September through June. After a successful call for new members in 2012 through APS School Talk, the committee now has a roster of six new members, three returning members (including the two co-chairs), the new ELA Supervisor, and a new ACI liaison.

Because of the high proportion of new members, the committee's goal for 2012-2013 has been to use this as an investigative year, starting with certain focal points, outlined below, with the plan of letting data lead us toward identifying issues and/or gaps so that the 2013-2014 year can be spent on developing evidence-based recommendations. The areas of investigation outlined reflect the interests and concerns of the committee members as parents of children in Arlington Public Schools and as residents of Arlington County. An additional goal is to begin reaching out to other committees so that we may work in concert on recommendations that cross over into mutual areas of concern.

The ELA program is in the process of evaluation and will be reporting to the School Board in June 2013.

Current Year Activities (2012-2013)

- recruitment and orientation of new committee members
- exploration of interests and experiences related to ELA to narrow areas of focus for recommendations
- review of student achievement data
- familiarization with APS and Virginia Department of Education assessment tools and data presentation of ELA Supervisor's observations and areas of focus
- participation of co-chairs in the work session on the ELA program evaluation in progress
- review of portions of the program evaluations of APS Services for Students with Special Needs and of English Language Learners (ELL)

Areas of Investigation

- **Focus on beginning reading in grades 1 and 2 (see Attachment #1 for an example of the data the committee is analyzing)**
 - increasing the availability of all ELA assessment data, including but not limited to **PALS, DSA, and DRP** data to all stakeholders, including but not limited to the ELA and Minority Achievement offices and the **ESOL/HILT, ASEAC**, and Early Childhood committees (see Attachment #2 for Glossary of Assessment Terms and Committee Acronyms)
 - encouraging analysis of ELA assessment data among stakeholders
 - increasing collaboration among the ELA and Minority Achievement offices and the ESOL/HILT, ASEAC, Gifted, and Early Childhood committees
 - encouraging the use of assessment data at the classroom level
- **Focus on ELA achievement in grades 3-6**
 - increasing availability of all ELA assessment data, including but not limited to **SOLs, DRP, DSA, and DRA** data to all stakeholders, including but not limited to the ELA and Minority Achievement offices, and the English, ESOL/HILT, and ASEAC committees
 - encouraging analysis of ELA assessment data among stakeholders
 - increasing collaboration among the ELA and Minority Achievement offices and the ESOL/HILT, ASEAC, and Early Childhood committees
 - investigating middle school pilot initiative that is embedding reading and writing instruction into the core content area classes
 - exploring inconsistency in teaching basic writing mechanics

- encouraging the use of assessment data at the classroom level
- **Focus on ELA achievement in grade 7-12**
 - increasing availability of all ELA assessment data, including but not limited to **SOLs** and **EOC** data, for all stakeholders, including but not limited to the ELA and Minority Achievement offices and the ESOL/HILT and ASEAC committees
 - encouraging analysis and use of ELA assessment data among stakeholders
 - increasing collaboration among the ELA and Minority Achievement offices and the ESOL/HILT, ASEAC, and **CTAE** committees
 - encouraging adoption of a common assessment in ELA areas for grades 9-11
 - encouraging the use of assessment data at the classroom level
 - investigating the effectiveness of peer-to-peer programs, including but not limited to high school writing centers
- **Highlight achievement gap among AYP groups in English Language Arts**
 - exploring further breakdown of Black and Hispanic groups
 - encouraging increased collaboration among the ELA, ESOL/HILT, Special Education, and Minority Achievement offices
- **Investigate types and effectiveness of reading and writing interventions**
 - encouraging evaluation of assessments data to address areas of weakness
 - collaborating with the ASEA and ESOL/HILT committees and the Office of Minority Achievement
 - encouraging evaluation of summer school effectiveness
- **Explore protocols for sharing/communicating intervention options with parents**
- **Family literacy and community engagement**
 - collaborating with the ESOL/HILT and ASEAC committees and the Office of Minority Achievement
- **Promote interdisciplinary practices of 7-12 writing and reading across the content areas to bolster content knowledge and career readiness**

- collaborating with other core content area committees (Social Studies, Science, Math) and with the CTAE committee
- **Capture Northern Virginia Writing Project (NVWP)
Teacher/Consultant knowledge to benefit teachers and students,
ensuring that professional development learning is reflected in the
classroom**

**[note to ACI co-chairs: if time permits, we may be able to append a list of
past recommendations and outcomes]**

Committee members

Sarah Baker, co-chair
Yvonne McIntire, co-chair
Billy Bob Brown, Jr.
Pat Carroll
Lindsay Levy
Karen Mackall
Ruth Mohr
Hirva Raj
Chris Schoen

ACI Liaison

Patty Petroccione, ACI co-chair

Staff Liaison

Dr. Michelle Picard, Supervisor, English Language Arts