

Minutes

York County School Division

Gifted Education Advisory Committee

Tuesday, October 18, 2016 at YCSD Board Office

Welcome and Call to Order – Stacie Lohr

Committee Members in Attendance

Stacie Lohr – Chairperson and Queens Lake Middle School

Kimberly Beauchan – Bethel Manor Elementary School

Beth Brauner – Dare Elementary School

Nashat Ahmad – Grafton Bethel Elementary School

Danielle Way – Mt. Vernon Elementary School

Angie Jones – Seaford Elementary School

Magan Echols – Tabb Elementary School

Kristin Downey – Waller Mill Elementary School

Jamel Oliver – Yorktown Elementary School

Kristen Falk – Grafton Middle School

Nikiesha Virgil – Tabb Middle School

Kimberly Silver-Perry – Bruton High School

Sang-Hyon Chu – Grafton High School

Jennifer Williams – Tabb High School

Patty Mastracci – York High School

Sandy Hesse – Instructional Specialist, School Board Office

Karen Cagle, K-12 Associate Director, School Board Office

Candi Skinner – Director of Elementary Education, School Board Office

Anthony Vladu – Director of Secondary Instruction, School Board Office

Sarah Haywood – Gifted Education Coordinator, EXTEND

Kristin Spires – EXTEND

Roberta Bockrath - EXTEND

Secretary's Report – Stacie Lohr

A motion was made and seconded to bypass the reading of the minutes. Another motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes from the May 2016 meeting as written.

Treasurer's Report – Sarah Haywood

Reimbursement for gifted education conference was made. No other recent activity.

Gifted Education Update – Sarah Haywood

In August, the EXTEND Center staff processed 42 referrals and tested those students before the start of school. Another cycle for second quarter placement is in progress with more than 100 students referred. Staff will meet for eligibility later this week to determine student placement for the 2nd quarter.

Gifted resource teachers presented two sessions for teachers during the division-wide back-to-school professional development day in August. The presentations were well-received, and classroom teachers were provided with strategies and ideas to help meet the needs of gifted and high ability students, in all grade levels. There was an elementary session and a secondary session.

There was a parent orientation meeting held during the evening of September 26 at the Center, and approximately 150 parents/family members attended. Another will be held in November at the beginning of the second quarter.

During the summer, cluster teachers in grades K-2 and the primary gifted resource teacher participated in an optional "Number Talks" training. This type of math conversation allows for discussion of problem-solving strategies and helps students develop flexibility in their mathematical thinking.

Two days of Jr. Great Books training are taking place this month for a group of 30 cluster teachers (across grades K-5 and from each elementary school.) This is the second group being trained after receiving positive feedback from teachers and administrators involved in last year's sessions.

The first of three Math Exemplars training took place last week for some of the 3rd-5th grade elementary cluster teachers. This is a computer-based problem-solving program that will allow students to not only solve complex problems but explain their thinking and strategies too.

Our current plan will be peer-reviewed tomorrow (October 19, 2016), by gifted coordinators in Region 4E, and we should receive feedback in the early spring. This feedback will be incorporated as we develop our new plan, which will start soon. A group of approximately 35 parents, administrators, gifted contacts, and gifted resource teachers will come together November 1st to review the old plan, compare strengths and weaknesses according to the National Association for Gifted Education standards, and begin to develop goals and objectives for the next plan. This group is comprised of representatives from elementary, middle, and high as well as each of the high school zones. GEAC will be updated on this project and GEAC will provide feedback during the upcoming meetings this year.

Next week, Sarah Haywood, Kristin Spires, and Vee Baggett will participate in a technical review team for school divisions from Region 4E. That experience will be very beneficial in preparing/updating our plan for the upcoming development of our new 5-year local plan because we'll examine the plans of school divisions from northern Va.

As a part of the Va. Advisory Committee for the Education of the Gifted, Sarah Haywood has been to several meetings and site visits with other gifted administrators, where she's learned information about the different criteria localities use to place students in gifted programs, and their efforts to increase under-represented populations in gifted ed. programs. This is Sarah's second year of a 3-year appointment, and this group has a "charge" from the state Board of Education to study placement data from all school divisions, look closely at which divisions are making gains in this area, visit those localities and discuss their initiatives, and finally, the group will develop guidelines to be used statewide.

The director of the New Horizons Governor's School will be holding information presentations at each of the four high schools on November 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 9th. In the past there has been only one session for the whole county. This is geared for 7th-10th grade students and their parents. New Horizons will mail invitations to eligible students based on grades from their math coursework, although it is open to all interested parents and students. Kristin Spires has shared information with families of current 7th graders, and guidance departments/math teachers of potentially eligible students have been notified.

Mrs. Haywood extended a reminder about the Summer Residential programs for 10th and 11th grade students. This is the time of year when students should consider applying for Summer Residential Governor's School or a summer Governor's Foreign Language Academy. Information about these opportunities is available from the school counselors. Information can also be found on the state website.

OM: There are 10 schools and 11 teams participating this year. The tournament will be held on March 4 at Menchville High School. There is always a need for volunteers for both judging and general help during the tournament. The state tournament will be held at John Champe High School in northern Va., on April 1st, and the final competition will be held in Michigan in May. If you want more information about these events, please let us know and Sarah will put you in touch with Leeza Beazlie, our OM coordinator.

- Old Business

Stacie Lohr thanked all of the committee members who diligently worked on the GEAC Annual Letter to the YCSD. The letter was a strong collaboration among members from across the county. Mrs. Lohr also read aloud the response from Superintendent, Dr. Shandor.

Kristin Falk confirmed that the York County Public Library would welcome an ebook donation instead of our traditional hardback gifted education book. Mrs. Falk will bring titles and prices to our next meeting so we can move forward with the decision to purchase an ebook for both the York County and James City County Library systems. We also discussed the possibility of purchasing classroom books for the independent research unit.

A new part-time secretary joined the EXTEND Center staff at the end of the 2015-2016 school year.

- New Business

Beth Brauner agreed to replace Pam Abercrombie as Treasurer for the coming school year.

We will continue to produce our annual parent information letter. The letter highlights our purpose, goals and objectives. We will send the letter to parents of PEP/EXTEND students and also post it on the website. We agreed that no significant changes are needed to the letter.

The GEAC committee would like to update our bylaws to approve our meeting minutes electronically. Nikiesha Virgil, Magan Echols and Kimberly Sliver-Perry agreed to work on this update prior to our next meeting. This change will allow us to approve the minutes more promptly and efficiently.

In response to our past discussions on the role of GEAC members, Mrs. Silver-Perry discussed briefly her activity as a representative for Bruton High School. She provided an overview of her interactions with school administration and counseling offices prior to and after GEAC meetings as well as during special events such as the annual gifted education survey. A brochure that gives specifics on the "Roles of a GEAC" will be distributed via email to the committee. It will also be posted on the EXTEND Center website.

The Focusing on the Future annual event for secondary students and their families will be held on Saturday, February 4, 2017 at William and Mary, for students in grades 6-12 and their parents. If you are interested, let Sarah Haywood know and she'll send you more information.

Mrs. Haywood suggested a new Parent Evening speaker format for this coming February. The evening would provide four different speaker/discussion topics and parents could choose which three to attend. Topics could include helping students develop motivation and a “growth mindset”, learning more about the high school experience, participating in a “mock” eligibility, and identifying curricular activities outside of school. These are topics suggested based on last year’s parent survey.

Mrs. Candi Skinner also had a suggestion for a future speaker, Mary Cay Ricci. She is an author of the book “Mindset for Parents.” Mrs. Haywood will look into her availability for our area. The GEAC will also need to verify we have enough funds for an outside speaker.

We will continue with the Penny War Fundraiser this coming March. In addition, we discussed a student designed T-shirt sale. School of the Arts students have judged the designs in the past.

The next GEAC meeting will be held at 7 pm on Tuesday, January 24, 2017 at the YCSD School Board Office. Meetings will also be held on March 28, 2017 at a location TBD and May 23, 2017 at the YCSD School Board Office. The committee agreed that York Middle or High would be a good location for the March meeting.

Parent Concerns and Comments

None

The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 pm.

Submitted by Danielle Way