

Virginia Advisory Committee for the Education of the Gifted

December 9, 2016

Members Present: Donna Poland, Patty Griffin, George Fohl, Beth Andersen, Sandra Cole, Melanie Daniel, William Ellis, Teresa Ellison, Dara Hall, Sarah Haywood, Robert Hundley, Rebecca Johnson, Laura Kelly, Kevin Kendall, Shawanna Poarch, Melissa Powers, Valerie Tuck, Cheryl McCullough, Dorn Wilkins-McCorey, Kim Waite

Welcome and Introductions

- Patty Griffin called the meeting to order
- Members introduced themselves, providing name, location, and role
- Members approved agenda – approval was unanimous
- Members unanimously elected the proposed slate of officers
 - Patty Griffin – chair
 - Cheryl McCullough – vice chair
 - George Fohl – secretary

Department of Education Report from Donna Poland

- Gifted Educators Consortium
 - Chance for people to come together and collaborate
 - Will be in Charlottesville, VA next year
- AYGS Funding
 - Still being worked on
 - General Assembly did not adopt governor's proposed budget for FY2017
 - New report was developed by the department and submitted to finance committees in the House and Senate on November 4, 2016
 - Directors will not meet until January
 - Still up to the GA on how to fund these programs in FY2018
- NAGC
 - Opportunity to connect with other organizations and other DOE reps from other states
 - NAGC is kind of repurposing itself to include three areas – changing mindsets of people (not one type of gifted student), policies, and practice
- Hanover Regional Governor's School for Career and Technical Advancement
 - Strong, successful instructional program this past summer
 - Teachers did a fantastic job in facilitating the experience for the students
 - For Region I and III
 - Students from all different backgrounds (culinary arts, computer, welders, etc.)
 - Residents at UR for three weeks
 - Community business leaders became involved, feedback received was positive
- Planning Grant for Career and Technical Governor's School Program in the Roanoke area
 - Explore a variety of options, including STEM-related career and technical school
 - Grant is administered by Career and Technical Department of DOE
- Teacher Licensure and Endorsement Requirements – not sure where these regulations are in the approval process
- Gifted Regulations are due to be formally opened this coming year (2017) for public review

Charge from the Board of Education: Identification Practices

- Patty Griffin provided a description of the charge for the benefit of new members
- New members were placed in subcommittees
- Subcommittee reports from calls and site visits
 - Referral Process
 - Collaboration between the GRT and classroom teacher consists of the GRT conducting the lesson and the classroom teacher taking anecdotal notes in regards to student performance/participation
 - Areas that have a high population of low SES students where historically students don't do well on tests, should spend time reviewing student records and getting to know child
 - Sarah Haywood - Star TOPS folders – screening tool, behaviors and characteristics (+ and – behaviors) in combination with staff training
 - Talent Development
 - Young Scholars Program
 - Thinking skills and enriching experiences, three week summer enrichment program; designed for students who did not score high enough to qualify for gifted; found that it brought diversity to the gifted education classroom
 - Students not found eligible are allowed to be in cluster groups for two years, then reevaluated – opportunities to grow and be nurtured
 - Students staying in home school receiving center-based curriculum – successful in getting students identified
 - ESI/Young Scholars – school-based teachers use more instructional scaffolds than center-based programs
 - NAGC – new take on talent development – help students
 - Discussed terms used during discussions for new members
 - Various cluster grouping methods described, interventions, and professional development
 - Project SOAR – lessons designed to provide opportunities to learn critical thinking and other skills
 - Identification
 - Looking at the whole child
 - Safety net – interview and observation of child if evidence needed; talk with prior-year teacher, even art or music teacher
 - Not requiring all assessments... but either/or instead of AND.
 - Build on strengths and support weaknesses
 - Using aptitude assessments rather than achievement measures at a certain grade level
 - Professional Development
 - Overall theme – PD does not look like it did 20 years ago
 - Various ways to offer PD at all levels
 - Gifted education department organizes and plans to provide the best possible development that could prove useful to all students
 - Makes a difference when it comes from the top down
 - GRT is not just a position in the school, GRT's are part of curriculum development

- Parent Education
 - FACE – family and community engagement; part of the structure of the school division, Title I
 - Translated brochures into four different languages (the major languages in their division)
 - Find the community liaison so that they can connect parts of community life to make your meeting work . . . schedule on bus line, etc.
- Subcommittees worked on report documents – committee reports due to Donna before 12/16/16.

Reports from Members/Representative Groups

- This time serves as opportunity to share concerns and accomplishments from parents, teachers, and community
- Donna Poland – National Defense Industry Association publication had an article on ‘the talent gap’ about how defense industry companies need to provide a more conducive work environment for talented students. Numbers of special education students (students with IEP’s only, 504 students not included) in state gifted programs, percentage of twice exceptional (2e) students in gifted programs: 2.6% in 2014-2015, 2.7% last year, 2.9% this year; 96% of 2e students graduate with standard or advanced diplomas. Pass rates on SOL tests in 90th percentiles. 2-5% of gifted kids are 2e nationally (these numbers usually include 504 students).
- Sandra Cole – southwestern VA consortium planning session, annual program, inviting surrounding divisions Region 7, Region 6, to Abingdon, VA
- Patty Griffin – pass
- Laura Kelly - Region VI has a great group of coordinators; Dr. Almarode coming to speak to teachers and administrators regarding a unique gifted topic
- Melanie Daniel – 1.) Want to create a selection process with the Commonwealth GS to see the students in action during the selection process, toying with idea of problem-based component of some sort. 2.) GRTs use modules on differentiation – gifted characteristics online to learn about gifted education issues in the division; teacher participation went from 10 to 40 to 60. HR may want to include this training with new hires. 3.) PSAT started with 8th grade last year, this year is the second year. This is part of the digital pilot for SATs. Looking at longitudinal data now ... up 58 points on average for each grade level.
- Kevin Kendall –third and fourth grade center is working on next generation science standards curriculum; supporting cluster-based program, elementary cohort just finished two classes, upper-elementary and secondary cohort coming next semester.
- Beth Andersen – pass
- George Fohl – currently reviewing gifted plan in CCPS, analyzing data on underrepresented populations, possible GRTs next school year
- Sarah Haywood – progress on gifted plan, utilizing NAGC standards, socio-emotional needs of the gifted was the topic of last regional coordinators meeting, working on the topic and possible solutions as a regional group
- DornWilkins-McCorey – application process has gone online and is going well in VBCPS; instant notification sent to classroom teacher and principal; in November, the gifted department was noted in Hanover Research for GT program benchmarking

- Becky Johnson – Accomack participating in grant with UVA and VT using the language arts curriculum that they provide... third grade is using it this year to help with underrepresented pops in rural communities; poetry unit this semester and folklore next semester, with everything based in our community; goes up to fourth and fifth grade; can be used in cluster classrooms. Monthly observations with teachers. Can be used with all students. A teacher cohort, along with teachers from another division, is working on getting their gifted endorsement.
- William Ellis – pass
- Cheryl McCullough – VAG report: 1.) Judy Newhouse is new director (she is the Learning Forward Virginia director as well). Part of VAG strategic plan is to expand gifted education across the state, and she has lots of ideas. 2.) Monday April 3: save the date sent for a one-day PD event. Project-based learning for a full day – Buck Institute trained person coming to speak. Details coming! 3.) Meeting with Donna Poland and Dr. Constantino as the first step in having conversations with people across the state to create an awareness of gifted education. 4.) Executive board discussing the possibility of a fall conference. 5.) Looking for regional representatives for Executive Board for VAG
- Valerie Tuck – Very excited to start CogAT testing online with first graders in February with desktops, laptops, and iPads. Two week window to accomplish the testing. Lack of clustering of gifted learners, “will make teachers mad if they were clustered.” Many schools have adopted the Kagan model of cooperative groups, but disconnected it from gifted education.
- Dara Hall – asked if there was PD open to admin; talk of gifted program online at JMU + field experience. Mentioned concern with the concept of STEM, misperception that people think you have to be gifted
- Shawana Poarch – expressed need for parent education regarding the gifted program

Public Comment

- There were no public comments.

Final Thoughts

- The idea of proper cluster grouping integrated into the document?
- Rough draft by February, make any changes, final version out by April
- Also in April, ready to recommend topics and be thinking about the charge to BOE.

Adjournment

- Meeting adjourned at 2:45 PM