ACPS TAG EVALUATION OVERVIEW AND NEXT STEPS

Why Was the Evaluation Conducted?
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Recognizing the importance of high quality educational programming, the TAG Evaluation was commissioned as a result of the Evaluation Cycle described in the current Local TAG Plan. The external evaluator was selected at the beginning of the 2016-2017 academic year with the formal evaluation process occurring throughout that year. This process included a wide variety of stakeholders who provided valuable feedback to this report. The evaluation findings were presented to the ACPS School Board on October 12, 2017. Subsequently, this report will serve to inform the next revision of the Local TAG Plan scheduled to be completed in the Spring of 2018. This evaluation provides a roadmap for continuous progress to ensure high achievement for all students.

TAG Evaluation Quick Facts
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- 60% of elementary schools were visited as part of this study; 100% of secondary schools were visited. 5-14 classrooms were visited at each site.
- Evaluators examined levels of curriculum planning and delivery, differentiated teaching behaviors, and accommodations for individual differences.
- A major focus of classroom observations was critical thinking, creativity, and inquiry strategies.
- On-line surveys were sent to building administrators, teachers, and parents. Additionally, one-on-one interviews as well as focus groups with parents and students were held.
- 39 courses of study within the written curriculum were reviewed as well as 24 text materials.
- 74 Differentiated Education Plans (DEPs) were also analyzed and evaluated.

Key Findings from the TAG Evaluation Report
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1. **To what extent is the gifted program being implemented according to its stated goals and objectives?**

   Elementary:
   - Develop a comprehensive K-3 Program
   - Extend the Young Scholars Program
   - Assess TAG student growth annually
   - Appoint coordinators for K-3
   - Target professional development on key differentiation strategies, including flexible grouping

   Middle School:
   - Revamp the middle school TAG program, including development of a Humanities and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) course sequence
   - Assess TAG student growth annually
   - Target professional development on key differentiation strategies, including flexible grouping

High School:
- Continue to offer a high-quality Advanced Placement Program in a range of content areas
- Assess TAG student growth annually
- Appoint coordinators for the high school
- Target professional development on key differentiation strategies, including flexible grouping

2. **To what extent is the program progressing in its attempt to identify underrepresented groups for the program?**

Elementary:
- Improve strategies and modify processes for the identification of students from underrepresented groups
- Incorporate research-based checklist items that focus on learning characteristics of students from underrepresented groups
- Train teachers and building administrators annually on the general and specific aptitude characteristics of gifted learners
- Develop tailored program emphases for identified students from underrepresented groups

Middle School:
- Improve strategies and modify processes for the identification of students from underrepresented groups
- Incorporate research-based checklist items that focus on learning characteristics of students from underrepresented groups
- Train teachers and building administrators annually on the general and specific aptitude characteristics of gifted learners
- Develop tailored program emphases for identified students from underrepresented groups

High School:
- Improve strategies and modify processes for the identification of students from underrepresented groups
- Incorporate research-based checklist items that focus on learning characteristics of students from underrepresented groups
- Train teachers and building administrators annually on the general and specific aptitude characteristics of gifted learners
- Develop tailored program emphases for identified students from underrepresented groups

3. **To what extent is the written, taught, and assessed curriculum sufficiently rigorous and differentiated for TAG-identified students?**

Elementary School:
- Design revised DEP format at grades K-3 for General Intellectual Aptitude (GIA) students and guidelines for use in 4th and 5th grade Science and Studies
- Revise TAG curricula in the 4th and 5th grades to ensure that high-level texts and differentiation strategies occur within the TAG classroom
- Ensure that teachers of gifted learners possess a skill set of best practices in differentiation

Middle School:
- Revise the Honors course curricula to ensure higher-level text and differentiation for TAG students within open-enrollment courses
- Revise the DEP to provide more significant evidence of appropriate differentiation
- Ensure that teachers have appropriate training in strategies for TAG students

High School:
- Revise the Honors course curricula to ensure higher-level text and differentiation for TAG students within open-enrollment courses
- Ensure that teachers have appropriate training in strategies for TAG students

4. **To what extent is the program beneficial to students participating in it?**

   K-12:
   - Continue to monitor the performance of TAG students
   - Collect off-level performance data on TAG student performance at all levels prior to AP.
   - Develop/revise curriculum guides in all grades and content areas for TAG learners.
   - Provide professional development on strategies and learning assessments for the gifted
   - Design K-12 scope and sequence guides for program articulations

5. **To what extent is the program perceived to be effective by relevant stakeholders?**

   Elementary:
   - A majority of parents across levels found TAG Program challenging; teachers/administrators perceived it as less challenging.
   - Elementary parents were positive about the TAG 4-5 program.
   - Students had strong positive reactions to program benefits, citing critical thinking and challenging work as strongest benefits.

   Middle School:
   - A majority of parents across levels found TAG Program challenging; teachers/administrators perceived it as less challenging.
   - Students had strong positive reactions to program benefits, citing critical thinking and challenging work as strongest benefits.
   - Changing the identification process to include more students from underrepresented groups and improving the middle school program were universal perceptions.

   High School:
   - A majority of parents across levels found TAG Program challenging; teachers/administrators perceived it as less challenging.
   - Secondary parents perceived limited opportunities in counseling.
   - Students had strong positive reactions to program benefits, citing critical thinking and challenging work as strongest benefits.

6. **To the extent is the program aligned with best practices in the field of gifted education?**

   Elementary:
   - Ongoing professional development for building administrators
   - Tailored professional development for central program leadership and curriculum specialists
   - Personalize TAG student services through improved DEP implementation

   Middle School:
   - Ongoing professional development for building administrators
   - Tailored professional development for central program leadership and curriculum specialists
   - Strengthen communication regarding existing counseling program for TAG students at secondary levels
   - Personalize TAG student services through improved DEP implementation

   High School:
   - Ongoing professional development for building administrators
   - Tailored professional development for central program leadership and curriculum specialists
   - Strengthen communication regarding existing counseling program for TAG students at secondary levels
   - Personalize TAG student services through improved DEP implementation

7. **Are there other recommendations?**

   K-12:
   - Design strategies to gain building administrative support
   - Institute community outreach procedures
   - Develop parent education programs.
   - Design a curriculum scope and sequence framework K-12
   - Expand the website