

Virginia Advisory Committee for the Education of the Gifted (VACEG)
Committee meeting
April 11, 2014

The Virginia Advisory Committee for the Education of the Gifted (VACEG) met on April 11, 2014 at Maggie L. Walker Governor's School in Richmond, VA

Members present: Donna Poland, Rebecca Akers, Patty Griffin, Lesley Hunley, Janice Robertson, Sarah Gross, Hunter Routt, Elizabeth Schupp, Sandra Cole, Joanne Funk, Carol Horn, Catherine Ingrassia, Chiraag Khemlani, Carol Kennedy-Dickens, Reginald Johns, Bob Hundley.

Members absent: Margee Greenfield, Gena Keller, Beth Andersen.

Visitors: none

Rebecca Akers opened the meeting at 10:10am.

Approval of Agenda - Properly moved and seconded. Agenda was adopted without changes.

Approval of Minutes from February 21, 2014 meeting - Properly moved and seconded. Minutes were approved without changes.

Recognition of Departing Member - Donna Poland thanked members for all their hard work on the committee and encouraged members to stay in touch with issues, ideas, and concerns. Rebecca leaves us after 6 years of service. Joanne Funk and Carol Kennedy Dickens are also leaving, having worked hard on the high school document. Chiraag Khemlani, our business person, is also leaving.

2014-2015 Slate of Officers - The following members agreed to be nominated for the slate:

Catherine Ingrassia, VCU, Secretary
Lesley Hunley, Mathews County, Vice Chair
Carol Horn, Fairfax County, Chair

This slate will be elected at the next meeting after required public notification process.

Department of Education Report - Dr. Donna Poland

- Status of Positions at Department of Education:
Dr. Patricia Wright, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, is retiring effective April 25, 2014. Dr. Steve Staples has been appointed to take over. Dr. Staples is currently the Executive Director of the Virginia Association of School Superintendents and a professor at The College of William and Mary. The position of Assistant Superintendent of Instruction, previously held by Dr. Wallinger, is vacant and has been advertised.
- Budget:
State budgets are still undecided at this point. Currently, the Senate has approved its budget which incorporates some of Governor's budget. The House has not yet approved a budget.

- Changes to teacher licensure:

Recommendations went over to the government and received mark-ups and changes. These changes should be signed off on shortly, if not already. They will then be returned to DOE and be made available for public comment.

- Wallace Research Policy Symposium on Talent Development:

Dr. Poland attended this symposium in Washington, DC. Program highlighted cutting edge research and also policy issues and philosophical changes in gifted education. This only happens every few years but was a fascinating look at the current environment. Dr. Poland learned more about the research that was undertaken by NSF about specialized schools for STEM (which included 5 of our Governor's Schools). The format for much of the Academic Year Governor's School brochure came out of that research.

The national average of students who go on to complete STEM degrees/work in STEM fields from standard schools is 22%. However, the number of students in specialty programs/centers who go on to STEM careers jumps to 49%. Donna will send VACEG the research studies once she receives them.

In addition, there was an interesting lecture by Richard Florida, who studied where successful people come from in terms of geographical location. His research indicated that successful people come from large urban areas or college towns – mainly in part because of the three T's - technology, tolerance and talent. Very thought provoking.

Website says they are considering Washington, DC for next Wallace symposium in 2016.

- Hampton Roads STEAM Academy:

A bill was sponsored seeking \$300,000 to support the start up of the program from the administrative side and also for a summer program. That money was not in the House budget even though the program is already advertising for students to apply. STEAM advertises a second site at Radford University for their summer program.

- Study on Funding for Governor's Schools:

Language to study the funding formula for Academic Year Governor's Schools is still in the budgets. There was a meeting between Governor's School directors to discuss possible options for the funding formula. It may be the next biennium before changes are made to the AYGS funding formula. There is a stop gap measure introduced into the Senate budget that requires the three full day AY Governor's Schools to get more money under a different funding formula but this funding not in House budget.

Work in Subcommittees:

The group broke into subcommittees to begin assembling and editing individual sections of the Middle School document. Subcommittees include:

- Differentiated Opportunities, Beyond the Classroom and Accelerated Content

Subcommittee Reports:

- Differentiated Opportunities Subgroup - this group is finished and has submitted their section for review.
- Beyond the Classroom Subgroup - this group has one section to complete but is nearly ready to submit.
- Accelerated Content Subgroup - this group has updated all their sections but are in final review before submission.

Member Reports:

Dr. Donna Poland: Information on “A Nation Empowered”, a follow-up to “A Nation Deceived”, was distributed at the Wallace Symposium. A Nation Empowered is a two-volume compilation. NAGC website has links to “A Nation Deceived” pdf document. The site also provides a link to a survey that will become part of “A Nation Empowered”. The book will examine what is currently being done in terms of acceleration for the gifted.

Rebecca Akers: Attended “Gifted Gallery” in her elementary schools which featured student projects. Projects were reviewed by other students and they were able to ask questions of the gifted students.

Patty Griffin: Henrico County added 8 slots to Maggie Walker Governor’s School and increased gifted budgets.

Lesley Hunley: Mathews County completed selection for Chesapeake Bay Governor’s Schools - adding 6 students. The division is hiring a new director for the Summer Regional Gov. school. They may need assistance in advertising the position. Superintendent Holleran was able to secure an opportunity for high school gifted students to tour the Department of Consolidated Laboratory Services and meet with the Secretary of Education in celebration of National Laboratory week.

Janice Robertson: pass

Sarah Gross: PTSA units from Maggie Walker and Appomattox Governor’s schools received a national PTA advocacy award for their work on the AYGS funding formula budget amendments.

Bob Hundley: Attended the National School Board conference and heard exciting news about STEM opportunities. Hanover County Public Schools is currently looking to develop a STEM Governor’s School.

Sandra Cole: Southwest Virginia (Region 7) met last month and will hold reception for Summer Governor’s School attendees next week. They are planning a professional development opportunity in June featuring Sarah Armstrong. Sandra will be attending Tazewell county advisory committee meeting.

Joanne Funk: The Office of Academic Rigor of Norfolk Public Schools is working with the Center for Gifted Education at the College of William & Mary on a proposal, Sea Change, to provide professional development on implementing the WM units and pedagogy. The proposal will be submitted to the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation.

Catherine Ingrassia: Hanover County School Board has recommended to Supervisors that gifted budgets be funded in full.

Chiraag Khemlani: Thanked group for the opportunity and enjoyed working together.

Reginald Johns: Hampton City Schools has started an online service training module for professional development in gifted education which is available to all teachers in Hampton City Schools. They are losing funding for IB in middle and elementary schools, as well as funding for gifted visual arts students.

Next steps:

Over the summer, Dr. Poland will merge all sections from the subcommittees into a document and then send it back out to the VACEG members. Carol Horn has offered to review and edit the document once it is assembled together. The intent is to have this document assembled and returned to the committee by the August timeframe and then final edits in the fall. After VACEG has finalized the document, it will need to circulate within the Department of Education for sign-offs and then be submitted to the Board of Education in the winter or early 2015.

VACEG will need to discuss next opportunities for investigation by the group. It may be that the arrival of a new state Superintendent will determine an appropriate course or topic.

Dr. Poland mentioned that it is possible to make site visits if there is a program or topic into which we might want to delve – it is not necessary that we meet at MLWGS. Many learning opportunities are available around the state; however our visit should be in anticipation of producing or contributing to a document.

Next meeting dates:

Friday, October 10, 2014
Friday, December 5, 2014
Friday, February 6, 2015
Friday, April 17, 2015

Meeting adjourned: The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 pm.