

TAGAC Meeting Minutes

January 25, 2017

Attendees: Noel Tamez (TAG TOSA), **Deborah F., J. Grab**, Lisa Stonestreet, Andrew Johnson (TAG), Jane Chaddick, **Eric Houghton, Nicole Iroz-Elardo**, Ben Turner, **Natalie Hval**, Scott Bailey, **Jessica Colby, Scholle McFarland** (TAGAC members in bold)

I. Call to Order

November 2016 Minutes

Motion (Grab), 2nd, approved

Announcements

- OMSI Night, Monday Feb 13, 2017
- Spelling Bee - 27 schools
- Science Fair - May 20th, 15 schools
- Oregon writing Festival, 23 schools
- Chaddick came with list of questions

2. Committee Work

Updated from data committee is tabled until Feb 2017 meeting

3. Old Business

Highlights of Summa (Beaverton) Model

See Handout for Summary

Questions:

- Is there a showcase for Summa? Don't know
- If PPS is willing to go to a continuum model, do we need to try something like this for MS? Also do for elementary students like in Seattle?

- ACCESS Complaint has forced a question of what it would take to serve all 99%tiles using a Summa Model or similar
- Logan, Gray, Brennan, Wood, Johnson are all looking at the ACCESS admissions piece which is currently on Dr. McKean (Super) desk
- TAG department has also started looking at non-ACCESS 99%tile. Trying to be very child centered.
- By March 1st, TAG Program will release workplan/continuum
 - Homework: TAGAC members to read TAG Department's draft plan for a continuum of services and come with questions and ideas
 - Particularly interested in implementation roll-out details, particularly in light of budget constraints. NIE to set up google doc to hold this info.
 - TAG Department will be convening some stakeholders including communities of color
 - Unclear if the product will be presented to the school board or to Teaching & Learning Committee on March 1.

4. New Business

Budget Highlights

2016-17 Budget

- See handout about school TAG budgets (over 96% spent, only a couple of schools have not spent)
- Notes on school TAG budgets
 - The majority (~\$120K) of the school TAG budgets goes to Extended Responsibility as defined by the PAT contract
 - Shifted money this year to bring spending at schools from \$35K to \$86K. This results in the school based allocation moving from ~\$700 (2015-16) to \$1,100 this year.
- Asked this year to have a plan/request in to spend by December to ensure spending happens in *this* school year; threatened to reallocate if not spent by then
- TOSAs are tracking the \$\$ used, have a drop down menu of somewhat constrained choices, small justification
 - If/When the TAG TOSA accepts or rejects a request, the TOSAs discuss better alternatives
 - Emphasizing regular school day (not enrichment)
 - Seems to be spent on the following: materials, technology, enrichment classes during school day, some enrichment classes still during late start.

2017-18 Budget

- Context for overall TAG department budget proposal:

- Board meeting earlier today states PPS is preparing for a \$13-24 Million shortfall for 2017-18.
- 2016/17 - TAGAC (and TAG) asked for a lot and got 1 additional TOSA (~\$100K) to increase TOSAs from 3 to 4.
- Today, TAG includes Andrew+4 TOSAs + 1FTE Admin + 0.5FTE Data = \$1,134,444
- Assessment continues to be a huge lift and the number 1 barrier to getting TOSAs into the classroom.
- This year, TAG budget
 - See Handout
 - Goal of having (a) efficient assessment and (b) get into the schools.
 - Asked for a 1.0 FTE project manager to manage the assessment piece
 - Note that this ask happened BEFORE the program redesign. It is hard to know how to cover the program redesign effort without another couple of TOSAs. Probably need 1 per cluster. So this is the current challenge a challenge.

Handout of DRAFT Program Redesign. See Above.

Summary of visit to Beaverton TAG Dept to Talk about Summa Program

Scholle and Mark had a 2 hour meeting with Heidi Hanson of the Beaverton School District (BSD) TAG Dept on 11/29/2016. We had a list of questions to discuss and tried to ask as many as we could, but did not get to them all. Following is a summary of what we heard. (Please contact ppsmark@feldmark.com and scholle@sawmac.com if you have questions or comments.)

Background¹

Summa entrance criteria for 5th, 6th and 7th graders:²

(99th %tile on CoGAT) OR
(99th %tile on ITBS total math or total reading) AND (97th %tile on CoGAT or ITBS total math/reading)

No outside testing is accepted. There are no exceptions for twice-exceptional students who may not do well in group testing situations, however testing results directly from a BSD school psychologist are OK. Students are screened in 2nd and 4th with CoGAT screener (cut-off is 97% to take the full test). According to Heidi, the requirement was set this high to find kids who “really needed something different from differentiation.” They don’t get too many complaints from parents whose children don’t get in, because the entrance criteria are “tight and transparent.” If a student doesn’t get in in 6th grade, they can test to try again to get into 7th and 8th grade. BSD sends a letter to all TAG students every year at the end of September to tell them if they are already eligible and if not, to invite them to test for eligibility in November, for entry the following year.

Sites and historical enrollment³

ACCESS started in 2003-04 and Summa started in 2004-05. As of 2014, BSD had a total of 15 middle schools, 5 of which have a Summa program. Not all middle schools have a Summa program. This table shows enrollment for all Summa sites and includes two “competing” focus schools that opened in the same time periods and so may explain enrollment drops in 2006 and 2008.

Location	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Cedar Park	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	39	74	125
Highland Park (Mountain View and Highland Park bndries)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	23	51	84
North @Meadow Park (Five Oaks and Meadow Park boundaries)	89	146	166	173	179	184	171	199	170	166	162
South @Whitford (Conestoga and Whitford boundaries)	71	109	83	123	102	118	101	123	132	124	99
Stoller	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	56	142	239	296	325
TOTAL SUMMA	160	255	249	296	281	302	328	464	603	711	795
Non-Summa Option Programs (two of several in BSD):											
Intl School MS	N/A	N/A	245	370	451	481	480	481	478	484	480
Health and Science MS	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	95	227	349	391	368	379	337
TOTAL MS Enrollment	8274	8252	8425	8325	8248	8405	8567	8734	8839	8870	9067
Percent Summa of all MS	1.9%	3.1%	3.0%	3.6%	3.4%	3.6%	3.8%	5.3%	6.8%	8.0%	8.8%

History

Summa was considered part of the growth of BSD’s options program, and the original proposal was for grades 3-8, but staff perceived middle school as the area of greatest need and best fit for system. BSD’s other option programs

¹ Some background information is from sources other than this meeting.

² <https://www.beaverton.k12.or.us/depts/tchlrn/gifted/Pages/Summa-Information.aspx> They used to require two 99% achievement test scores.

³ From <https://www.beaverton.k12.or.us/depts/facilities/SpringvilleStoller%20Overcrowding%20Committee/Meeting%202%2010-15-14/Official%20Enrollment%20by%20year%20by%20school.pdf>

all start at 6th grade and a transportation system was already in place. BSD provides busing for students in all option programs including Summa.

They opened the first two Summa programs in 2004 (one year after ACCESS opened) in under-enrolled parts of the district. At first, they also saw Summa as a way to balance enrollment away from some middle schools that were full. This worked for a while, but one site was always bigger and both sites eventually had 2-3 classrooms at each grade level. They never considered turning away students that met the Summa qualifications and in 2010 opened a 3rd site when applicants increased. Beaverton uses a lottery for other option programs, but never used it to get accepted into the Summa program. It was occasionally used to see if a student could go to their local/closest Summa, but never to restrict enrollment in the program. Summa never considered having a waitlist. You might not get to attend Summa at the school you wanted, but could always attend one of them and the district would provide bussing to get you there. Later, they decided students were having to travel too far so in 2012 opened another 2 sites, expanding Summa to a total of 5 sites.

Currently, BSD does not do any balancing of class sizes. All qualifying students are guaranteed a spot, although they may not get into their nearest neighborhood SUMMA program. Everybody currently seems to be getting in, but one site is very big. Currently all sites, except the one big one, have one section at each grade, which is their future goal. Class size changes based on enrollment and there's no cap on class size.

Curriculum

The Summa program focuses on three core classes that students take as a cohort: Language Arts/Social Studies, Science, and Math. The focus is on increased depth and complexity rather than on acceleration. (Aside from math, there is not much acceleration.) Their goal is to cultivate "deep thinkers" and Heidi noted that education "is not a race." Language Arts/Social Studies and Science are taught at grade level using the same learning targets as other BSD middle schools, but at a higher level of depth and complexity. For example, all Summa students are expected to do a science fair project. (Non-Summa students needing higher level instruction in a single subject occasionally join these classes on a case-by-case basis.) Summa students take all electives like World Languages, PE and Technology in the same classes that non-Summa students take. What is available depends on which middle school they attend.

Usually students have the same three teachers for all their Summa classes for all three years. The Summa teachers themselves may also teach non-Summa classes. The example given was that a teacher's class load might include one Summa class and all the rest non-Summa. No HS credit is routinely given for any of these classes, including Science. (ACCESS gives HS credits in math and one HS credit in science.)

We talked with Heidi about math and were also able to talk with a math specialist, Debbie Hicks. All 5th grade TAG math students (Summa or not) are tested for math level at the end of their 5th grade year in May. The new middle/high school math pathway in BSD is 6th grade math -> 7th grade math -> 8th grade math -> AGS1-> AGS2-> AGS3. (As of 2016, the AGS classes combine Algebra 1, Geometry, and Algebra 2 content.) BSD Systems and Planning reports that 13.4% of Summa students are accelerated one year in math; 59.3% are accelerated 2 years; 26.6 % are accelerated by 3 years; and <1% are accelerated by 4 or more years.⁴ Summa math classes are generally Summa students only, but other students at that MS may take them if they test in during the 5th-grade screening.

When asked about Summa students not getting high school credit for their work, the reply was that it was possible if the family really wanted it on the transcript, but that may impact GPA and these students will all take 4 years of math anyways, so anyone who looks at a HS transcript starting with Pre-Calculus will know that the student got the prerequisite classes. (Side note: The whole district is using open source text for math, the Mathematics Visions Project (<http://www.mathematicsvisionproject.org>) from Utah, which has a low floor and high ceiling that Heidi and Debbie said teachers really like. The company charges for training and some additional materials.)

Program Quality

The basic model is the same at all Summa sites: Dedicated core classes, accelerated math, and shared electives. All teachers teach to the same district standards and learning targets, but the class materials and techniques may vary between sites because all teachers do not teach the same way. Heidi said that coordination between sites is "very limited." But Summa teachers from across the district do meet twice a year for a full day to collaborate and share information.

When sites have started, Heidi thinks teachers came from within the district, usually from the existing staff at the new location and the principal increased overall staff as necessary. Teachers are not exclusive to Summa and generally teach non-Summa

⁴ According to Principal David Wood, in the 2016-2017 school year, 30 percent of ACCESS students are working at grade level in mathematics; 47 percent of ACCESS students are accelerated by one grade level; 16 percent are accelerated two grade levels; 7 percent are accelerated three grade levels, and <1 percent are accelerated four grade levels. All ACCESS students take Compacted Math; that is not counted as acceleration.

students also. Teachers teaching Summa classes are not required to do special TAG professional development or have a TAG certification. [There is only one institution in Oregon that offers TAG certification for teachers - Pacific University.] Principals at each site make staffing decisions. Heidi did not think that any teacher had left one site when another Summa site opened. New sites seem to have a 1 year learning curve for both parents and students to come up to speed and understand how much they can really do.

Heidi knew that there had been some parent complaints when some of the new Summa sites opened. She said they had 3-5 complaints about the math curriculum. It differed a bit at the beginning after they opened one new site (they weren't providing all the levels) but that was fixed quickly. Other complaints were related to students already at one Summa location who had to move to a new Summa location and didn't get to have the "beloved" teacher they were expecting. (Summa students generally have the same core teachers for all three years.) So these seemed to be short lived growing pains that were fixed. Heidi didn't think there were currently any issues that parents were complaining about.

Extra Costs

The only extra costs for a Summa program are for classroom and teacher materials when a new site starts up. Also the extra paid time for the twice yearly professional development (in addition to regular PD) when Summa teachers from all sites gather to work on common issues. Note that transportation is already provided to all option schools and that Summa piggybacks on that, so transportation is not considered an extra cost.

Equity

Heidi thinks there are more "twice exceptional" than ESL students in Summa. Although she did discuss one student from Mexico who recently qualified - they give him a "double dose of ESL" She thinks they are getting more diversity with the CogAT than with the NNAT. But they may need better tests for students at 2-way immersion schools as some students there may not be ready for either test. Summa students, like those at ACCESS, do not tend to mirror the racial and socioeconomic status of the entire district. Heidi suggested that there are basically 3 options to increase diversity: lower the criteria, establish local norms, and base entrance on a collection of criteria rather than just test scores. Each one has pluses and minuses. They haven't settled on any of these yet but have a group examining them.

Socio Emotional Support for Summa Students

Socio-emotional support is not an explicit goal of the program, but they have one person doing some work on this with Pacific University (the place that does TAG Teacher certifications). Currently there is no training, PD, counseling support, or explicit curriculum focus. However, since Summa students take their three core classes as a cohort they have opportunities to work with and develop friendships with other highly gifted peers. Since Summa students also take some classes with non-Summa students, they have opportunities for socializing with others from the school and from their neighborhoods. 2e students receive support from the middle schools' SpEd staff like any other SpEd student.

Beaverton's Elementary and High School TAG Services

Beaverton does not seem to have specific policies for supporting TAG students in elementary schools on issues we discussed. The principals decide on a case by case basis what their school will do. A principal may occasionally accelerate an elementary student in math and accelerated students have both been sent to middle school for 6th grade math and stayed at their school to do online classes. Some elementary schools do Walk To Math but it is not used regularly. Elementary schools may cluster multiple TAG math students in one class or use flexible grouping. For example, teachers at the same grade level may exchange kids to teach certain groups. However, clustering and grouping practices are up to the principal; there is no district policy.

Heidi estimated that 4-5 schools out of 33 elementary schools do walk to read. Teachers focus on providing classroom books at all different levels and they are using a new "Workshop Model" reading curriculum which helps makes differentiation possible. They expect this Workshop Model to decrease the need for W2R. Heidi seemed very happy with and highly recommended the Workshop Model.

In high school students can often get PSU credit for certain math courses. Many HS teachers are dual instructors.

Beaverton holds parent evenings on TAG topics of interest and sometimes has Saturday events.