

TAGAC Meeting Minutes

March 8, 2016

13 present, 7 TAGAC Members (quorum).

Attending (members names bolded): **Deborah F., Megan Robertson**, Natalie Hval, **Johanna Colgrove**, J. Grab, Margaret DeLacy, **Meghan Whitaker, Nicole Iroz-Elardo, Mark Feldman**, Jessica Colby, Jane Chaddick, **Scholle McFarland**, Andrew Johnson (PPS staff)

I. Call to Order and Preliminaries

Announcements: The OATAG (<http://www.oatag.org>) conference will be 10/15 this year in the Portland area.

OATAG is concerned about getting the conference brochure to schools because of the cost of using PPS' new Peachjar system. Andrew Johnson (PPS TAG) and Margaret DeLacy (OATAG) will talk about getting information to schools through the TAG facilitators.

Question about whether it would be possible for TAG department to pay for a teacher from each school to participate in the conference. Continuing education professional development units (PDUs) given to teachers for attending.

II. Old Business and Unfinished Action Items (AI)

(AI: Andrew Johnson, TAG Department) Update on Single Subject Acceleration for Math

Andrew is very excited about progress with SSA and thinks this year will be the 1st year of really implementing a working policy.

The TAG Department has developed a parents' guide (online as of 3/18:
<http://www.pps.net/cms/lib8/OR01913224/Centricity/Domain/196/SSA%20Parent%20Guide%202016.pdf>).

TAG facilitators gave feedback that the process was too cumbersome. They needed a simple and legitimate process that would have buy in from teachers, parents, the department of Instruction and Curriculum. The process needed to make sense in the system. If too cumbersome, schools won't do it.

Lots of discussion around compacted math. Math department working to make compacted math process better. Make it less of a "gate" process and more holistic and flexible.

As of new policy:

- SSA doesn't require a TAG designation.
- Process will take place end of school year (Deadline this year will be May 6; testing will early June).
- Child must meet characteristics to go on. Some evidence from somewhere.
- School team convenes to discuss if child meets basic characteristics listed in guide.

Part 1: School Team meets to see if student meets basic characteristics

TAGAC members had concerns about the checklist of characteristics in the draft ("Prefers discussing mathematics with adults," "Intensity of commitment to the work," "Asks lots of questions, always needs to know why," "Keen or unusual interest in mathematics," "Solves problems in unique and novel ways," "Abstract & Conceptual understanding in addition to fluency.")

They asked:

- What if a kid is checked out and not performing?
- What about gender and race assumptions about who is good at math?
- What about twice exceptional kids who might be atypical?
- What about ELL students? Will they be tested in their native language?

TAGAC members also requested deadlines for educators and a timeline so parents can know what needs to be done when.

Andrew says he met with Mary Pearson in Special Education and they have talked about adding a TAG testing/check to the Response to Intervention form. They want to add a TAG lens to the process.

Meeting attendants then asked about technical details:

Can a kid walk to accelerated class on his or her own? Some problems at one person's school with this. How will SSA actually work?

Andrew says he will meet in April with TAG facilitators to introduce SSA

Part 2: If school team gives the go ahead, student takes assessment

The passing score has been lowered to 90% on the grade bypass test from old passing score of 97/99%. Child must demonstrate proficiency for grade s/he's skipping.

TAG TOSAs will proctor test. Testing will be done in a central location. Math team grades assessment and then writes a summary for the teachers so child can benefit from testing whether or not s/he does end up accelerating.

Appeal process: Parents can appeal to school, up to TAG department. Attendants suggest that teachers also be able to appeal if student needs another advocate.

What happens when kids need to go up to middle or high school math? Andrew says these details will be left to the schools. Says the TAG Department has not asked for money for bussing or other support. Andrew says it is "too big of a system" to make matching schedules work.

Attendants were very concerned about this. One parent: "The step to middle school is killing SSA." Says principals say dealing with that is impossible and therefore dismiss the whole process. Andrew says this is the first step.

Attendants suggest the TAG department asks for:

- Money for transportation to testing
- Money for transportation to cluster middle and high schools for students at the transition points

Suggestion that schools share best practices to help solve transportation problem. Andrew says he will brainstorm with TAG facilitators about these issues.

When will parents be informed whether their children qualify? Must be settled before summer break. TOSA contract ends 6/15. Will be streamlined by move to digital paperwork. Lots of time wasted entering data now.

Andrew says he plans to release on 3/18. [This did happen. See final documentation here:

<http://www.pps.net/Page/2886>]

(AI: Andrew Johnson, TAG Department) Update on pilot programs: Move to table the discussion of pilot programs until next meeting.

III. New Business

Update (Andrew Johnson, TAG Department): Progress getting parent information (FAQ, identification timeline) on new Web site.

Andrew needs help figuring out what's missing from the web site.

ACTION ITEM: TAGAC will create a Google doc and collect a list of missing info for parents.

Note that many parents are wondering when the TAG decisions are coming back. Andrew says that there are issues with Riverside. They send all the test info as they get it, but Riverside holds it and waits to process everything as a batch. Delays. Schools have already sent work samples for the non-2nd graders. Decisions will be 2 weeks after scores come back.

- Suggestion to put a box on the TAG department web page that says there is a delay.
- Suggestion to put a feedback link on the TAG web site that lets people say what they're looking for and can't find.

Question about whether SBAC scores will be able to serve for math and reading achievement in the future. The test isn't nationally normed yet; it takes 3 years. But this will eventually be possible. At 3rd grade this would provide universal testing for math and reading achievement without the need for nomination. This would make testing much more efficient.

Update (Andrew Johnson, TAG Department): Progress with TAG Department Budget

Submitted budget already. Asked for \$50,000 for professional development, 1 additional FTE for office, and 1 additional TAG TOSA. Goal is to provide PD for 50-75 teachers next year.

Attendants very concerned about this. If you don't ask for money you don't have a chance of getting it. Want to see a 3-5 year plan for reaching all the teachers. At 75 teacher per year, it will take more than 26 years to reach the ~2,000 K-8 teachers.

There are 8 clusters, what about goal of 1 per cluster?

ACTION ITEM: Develop and submit TAGAC recommendations for TAG department budget in the next couple of weeks.

Andrew has brought handouts about professional development through Scholars' Program. Want to explain briefly. He says he is working with groups of teachers and they are talking about taping the trainings so others can see.

Discussion: High School Forecasting forms

Parent brought up question about high school forecasting forms on Facebook. Madison form says "I also understand that this forecasting sheet serves as my plan for specialized services (ELL, Special Ed, TAG)." Parent very concerned about whether this was legal. Later, parent reported back that Madison principal said this was a mistake and would remove language from the form. Other parents checked forecasting forms at Franklin, Grant, Wilson,

Lincoln and didn't see similar language. Still don't know about Jefferson, Benson, and Roosevelt, but Madison appears to be an anomaly.