

Advisory Committee on Teaching and Learning (ACTL)

Minutes

Syphax Building, rooms 254/256/258

Wednesday, March 6, 2024

Present: Michael Cieslak, Kelli Bergin, Katie McNabb Cochran, Jess Mueller, Ginnie Gordon, Jimisha Relerford, Melissa Hyatt, Sam Klein, Heather Toronjo, Kati Costar, Kerri Hirsch, Anne Paris, Emily Chua, Tia Alfred, Jocelyn Gould, Janet Sater, Jill Abbott, Jane Kim (for Todd Truitt), Amy Graham, Jenny Roahen Rizzo

Attending via Zoom: Kate McKenney, Jennifer Goen, Sara Winter, Katherine Garcia-Larner

7:00 pm, Welcome, approve minutes from February meeting, review meeting norms (Jenny Roahen Rizzo)

The February minutes were approved with no questions or objections.

7:10, Perspectives on secondary literacy instruction from APS teachers (Kerri Hirsch, Jennifer Goen, Sara Winter, Katherine Garcia-Larner)

Kerri Hirsch led a discussion with three APS teachers about literacy instruction. Jennifer Goen teaches at H-B Woodlawn, Sara Winter teaches social studies at WMS, and Katherine Garcia-Larner teaches EL students at ACHS.

7:30, Student perspectives on literacy instruction (Jenny Roahen Rizzo)

Jenny Roahen Rizzo shared a summary of discussions she had with members of the Student Advisory Board as well as English learners at Wakefield HS.

Perspectives that were common to both groups of students:

- We enjoy reading and writing best when we can choose our books (or our writing topics).
- We need to write a lot more frequently.
- We need clear and detailed instruction – and instructions – on how to structure essays and papers.
- Reading assigned books together in class, and discussing their meaning along the way, is often helpful.

7:35, Report from Advisory Committee on English Learners (Amy Graham, Sam Klein, Kati Costar)

Amy Graham led a presentation on the current focus of the ACEL, whose goals include improving the instruction of English learners, helping to bridge the communication gap between school and family, and promoting greater understanding and respect for cultural and linguistic diversity.

8:00, Update on literacy from the Office of Academics (Kerri Hirsch)

Kerri Hirsch gave an overview of the literacy focus of the Office of Academics.

- The Virginia standards are getting updated to reflect the Science of Reading approach; APS is ahead of the curve with its adoption of the CKLA program
- Work is being done on creating vertical alignment of the writing curriculum for grades Pre-K through 12

8:10, Small group discussion of additional community feedback on literacy

Meeting attendees broke into two groups, elementary and secondary, to discuss community feedback on literacy instruction in their communities. Each group suggested additions and refinements to the planned memo about literacy to the School Board and APS leadership.

8:45, Meeting ends