

**Minutes**  
**York County School Division**  
**Gifted Education Advisory Committee**  
Tuesday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022  
YCSD School Board Office  
6:30 p.m.

**Welcome and call to order**

**Vanna Upchurch**

The in-person meeting began with a call to order: 6:31pm by Vanna Upchurch.

**Committee and Consulting Members in Attendance:**

Simna John, Bethel Manor Elementary  
Aubrie Caskey, Dare Elementary  
Dr. Francis Erebholo, Grafton Bethel Elementary  
Nikki Koszewski, Magruder Elementary  
Vanna Upchurch, Mt. Vernon Elementary  
Peter Spaeth, Tabb Elementary  
Christina Parrott, Waller Mill Elementary  
Laine Briddell, Yorktown Elementary  
Monica Hyjek, Queens Lake Middle  
Colleen Petrie, Yorktown Middle  
Janine Felsman, Bruton High  
Liz Hass, Grafton High  
Deanne Thorson, Tabb High  
Marti Caldwell, York High  
Louise Casini Hollis, Community Member  
Lin Chen, Community Member  
Kristin Spires, Gifted Resource Teacher  
Sarah Haywood, Coordinator of Gifted Education  
Christina Head, Associate Director of K-12 Academic Services  
Brett Higginbotham, YCSD School Board Liaison  
Lindsey Cook and Dr. Chrysoula Malogianni requested to attend virtually.

Vanna Upchurch: I would like to make you aware that Lindsey Cook and Chrysoula Malogianni have requested to be allowed to participate in the committee meeting tonight from individual remote locations.

Lindsey Cook: “In accordance with School Board Policy BDD, I am unable to attend the committee meeting due to a medical condition, specifically I am currently quarantined due to a COVID-19 exposure. I ask that the Committee approve my participation through electronic communication from a remote location, specifically from my home address.”

Vanna Upchurch: Could I have a motion and a second to approve Lindsey Cook’s participation in the January 18, 2022 GEAC Meeting electronically from the remote location of her residence due to a medical condition, specifically exposure and quarantine due the COVID-19 virus.

Name	Yes	No
Marti Caldwell	Made the motion	
Nikki Koszewski	Seconded the motion	
Simna John	X	
Aubrie Caskey	X	
Dr. Francis Erebholo	X	
Vanna Upchurch	X	
Peter Spaeth	X	
Christina Parrott	X	
Laine Briddell	X	
Monica Hyjek	X	
Janine Felsman	X	
Colleen Petrie	X	
Liz Hass	X	
Deanna Thorson	X	
Louise Casini Hollis	X	
Lin Chen	X	
Sarah Haywood	X	
Christina Head	X	

Louise Casini Hollis: A motion was made by Marti Caldwell and seconded by Nikki Koszewski to allow Lindsey Cook to participate electronically from her remote location of: her residence due to a medical condition, specifically exposure and quarantine due the COVID-19 virus. The motion passed 17 for, 0 against.

Chrysoula Malogianni’s request: “In accordance with School Board Policy BDD, I am unable to attend the committee meeting due to a medical condition, specifically I am currently quarantined due to a COVID-19 exposure. I ask that the Committee approve my participation through electronic communication from a remote location, specifically from my residence.”

Vanna Upchurch: Could I have a motion and a second to approve Chrysoula Malogianni’s participation in the January 18, 2022 GEAC Meeting electronically from the remote location of her residence due to a medical condition, specifically exposure and quarantine due the COVID-19 virus.

Name	Yes	No
Liz Hass	Made the Motion	
Dr. Francis Erebholo	Seconded the motion	
Marti Caldwell	X	
Nikki Koszewski	X	
Simna John	X	
Aubrie Caskey	X	
Nikki Koszewski	X	
Vanna Upchurch	X	
Peter Spaeth	X	

Christina Parrott	X	
Laine Briddell	X	
Monica Hyjek	X	
Janine Felsman	X	
Colleen Petrie	X	
Deanne Thorson	X	
Marti Caldwell	X	
Louise Casini Hollis	X	
Lin Chen	X	
Sarah Haywood	X	
Christina Head	X	

Louise Casini Hollis: A motion was made by Liz Hass and seconded by Dr. Francis Erebholo to allow Chrysoula Malogianni to participate electronically from his remote location of the residence due to a medical condition, specifically exposure and quarantine due the COVID-19 virus. The motion passed 17 for 0 against.

**Secretary’s Report**

**Louise Casini Hollis**

Minutes distributed on November 11th.

**Gifted Education Update**

**Sarah Haywood**

A virtual evening presentation with Dr. Ellen Fithian was held for families in October to address planning for college with the academically gifted student in mind. There were around 50 families in attendance, and positive feedback was received regarding the session.

The whole-grade screening test for first graders was conducted during the month of November. This was conducted by the gifted resource staff, and was a major undertaking because it is more comprehensive than the screening test previously used. Students whose scores match our local criteria (strengths around the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile and higher) will then be referred for eligibility. Results will also be used as part of the criteria for identification in the talent development pilot at two elementary schools. This program is designed to provide services for students who show aptitude above their peers and who may come from a traditionally underserved group (i.e. English language-learner, low socio-economic status, twice exceptional, etc.). Results of this test will be provided to families with the upcoming report card.

There were 32 students who were identified in November, they began participating in EXTEND classes in December. Another cycle of referrals is in progress, and approx. 100 students have been referred.

A parent/student information session for New Horizons Governor’s School for Science and Technology was held last week. This was led by its director, Vikki Wismer, and Kristin Spires, our secondary gifted resource teacher. Applications for the academic year New Horizons Governor’s School are due at the end of February. If you know a 10<sup>th</sup> grade gifted student who

would be a good candidate for Governor's School, please encourage him/her to contact his/her school counselor immediately and to visit <http://nhrec.org/gsst/admissions/how-to-apply/>! The PAS (Pre-Admissions Series) for 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders is also accepting applications during this same time frame.

The selection committee for Governor's school summer residential programs will soon meet to review applications and select nominees for these summer opportunities. Kristin Spires, our secondary gifted resource teacher, worked with high school counselors to identify around 15 high school students from 3 schools who wanted assistance with their applications for these summer programs. World language staff also proctored world language testing for students applying to the Language Academies and gifted staff will provide testing for any applicants who needed updated standardized test scores.

The deadline for kindergarten referrals is quickly approaching; it's in February. Identified students will participate in seminars throughout the fourth quarter. A parent orientation for parents of new kindergarten students will be provided.

The W&M Center for Gifted Ed. is sponsoring a Twice Exceptional Conference on February 25 and 26. There is a separate parent registration and fee. More information is available here: <https://education.wm.edu/centers/cfge/profdev/conferences/2e/index.php>

The gifted resource staff continues to have a teacher vacancy, but it is currently being filled by 2 long-term substitutes. Both are experienced former teachers, and one works with students on Mondays-Wednesdays while the other works Thursdays and Fridays. The gifted resource team is working hard to support these substitutes to help ensure that students continue to receive quality instruction.

Update from the OM Coordinator, Keith Wright:

Currently there are teams from MVES, GMS, QLMS, TMS, THS, and YHS. Teams will be submitting their recorded long-term problem solutions between February 13 through March 4 for VA Tournament scoring. The VA Tournament Award Ceremony will be held on April 1, 2022 and teams placing 1st or 2nd place or those receiving Ranatra Fusca awards for demonstrating outstanding creativity will be permitted to advance to World Finals, scheduled for May 25-28 at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa.

### **Local Plan Update**

**Christina Head and Sarah Haywood**

Christina Head explained that this is the last year of our current local 5 year plan. The revision process involves teachers, administrators, and parents. The steering committee will begin looking at the 5 year plan draft and provide feedback. The Chief Academic Officer and Directors will give feedback, then principals, and GEAC in March. The School Board will then approve the final plan.

Sarah Haywood explained that the Department of Education provides the template for the gifted plan, and in the past, YCSD has attached a chart that shows the goals with objectives and activities we're working toward. YCSD's current plan is currently under a technical review by

the state, and that feedback will be incorporated into the draft. We are ahead of the typical schedule for drafting a plan because of the steering committee's meetings last year.

Christina Head emphasized that the local plan is a living document, and we can amend it as needed.

Vanna Upchurch asked for some highlights from the document. Christina Head shared that some areas kept objectives and activities the same to continue work in those areas. One item being considered is the identification of students in subject specific aptitude (such as math-only) is being looked at for the future. Assessment tools are also being reviewed. A performance-based task is being looked at to aid referrals and we continue to cultivate talent development tools. Professional development for teachers continues. Finally, testing and norming procedures are being evaluated.

Sarah Haywood shared that one proposed change to state regulations is that K-2 talent development may soon be required. If so, YCSD is working toward that requirement because we are currently piloting this work at two schools.

## **Old Business**

## **Vanna Upchurch**

### **GEAC Bylaws update**

Mrs. Upchurch took the committee through the revisions to the document since the last meeting. Mrs. Berry has made her final revisions which are summarized below:

1. A point of clarification: it was asked why the substitute provision was removed from the bylaws, requiring a member to have a substitute to fill in for the meeting when they are unable to attend. Ms. Berry responded that as the members are appointed by the School Board it would be inappropriate for a member to choose a substitute to fill in for them if they had to miss a meeting as that usurps the Board's authority. As members of the committee, it is incumbent upon each person to make it a priority to attend meetings as required.
2. In Section V, A, 2: The specific month of "June" was removed to reflect that the final meeting is conducted prior to the end of the school year.
3. Section V, B, 5: The wording was changed to reflect a change from draft minutes distributed to parent lists, to draft minutes posted via the Extend website and links provided for distribution to parent lists.
4. Section VI: The second sentence was edited for clarity to read, "This subcommittee will elect a subcommittee chair who will preside over the subcommittee meetings."
5. Section VII, A: A sentence was removed specifying the month the organizational meeting will be held.
6. Section VII, E: Specifications about seating for guests was removed, as it did not apply to the committee's set up where all attendees are intermingled.
7. Section VII, F: To improve clarity, the sentence beginning, "A copy of the proposed agenda..." was moved behind the sentence beginning, "Such requests should be made..."

8. It was noted that Section VII, L was added at the request of the committee, detailing the bylaws amendment process and allowing for a bylaws review in the year following the 5 year review.

Marti Caldwell asked for clarification on the distribution of minutes. It is important to note that the minutes will be posted as a draft on the division website, and they will be approved at the next meeting, in this case March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

Mrs. Liz Haas thanked Mrs. Upchurch and the committee for their hard work.

Mrs. Cook asked about where the bylaws stand. Bylaws may be approved as soon as Jan 24<sup>th</sup> or in February by the school board.

### **New Business**

**Vanna Upchurch**

#### **Volunteers for annual review letter**

Vanna Upchurch, Aubrie Caskey, Laine Bridell, Pater Spaeth, Simna John, Janine Felsman, and Louise Casini Hollis (Professional Development) volunteered to assist with the letter.

Mrs. Upchurch asked Mrs. Cook to speak on the process of writing the annual letter. Mrs. Cook noted she had used the 5 year plan as a guide.

#### **Parent Comments**

Aubrie Caskey asked about how much parent feedback other representatives got via email and the committee members said they generally do not hear much from the parents on their email lists.

Laine Briddell asked if they would get an updated list of parents for newly-identified students which was affirmed yes.

Monica Hyjek asked if she should be sending meeting minutes to the parents on her email list, to which the answer was yes.

- **Adjourn:** Meeting was adjourned at 7:25

#### **Next GEAC Meetings:**

March 15, 2022, 6:30 pm

May 17, 2022, 6:30 pm