



# Loudoun County Public Schools

## Department of Instruction

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## Ad Hoc Committee Meeting -- Academies of Loudoun

### MINUTES

Monday, February 8, 2016

**Committee Members Present:** Jeff Morse, Debbie Rose, Eric Hornberger

**Attendees:** Cynthia Ambrose, Odette Scovel, Shirley Bazdar, Beth Doyle, Neil Slevin, Ryan Tyler, Justin Donovan, Ray Singletary, George Wolfe, Lhe Smith

**I. Call to Order**

Meeting called to order at 5:40pm by Chairman Hornberger

**II. Approve Minutes from May and November 2015 Committee Meetings**

A motion was made to approve the minutes. Minutes approved.

**III. Chairman's Remarks**

Chairman Hornberger noted his excitement to see a plan for the implementation of AET for 2016 included in the Superintendent's Proposed Budget.

**IV. Public Comment**

No public comment was made.

**V. Status Update by Staff**

- Department of Instruction Academies Steering Committee holds weekly meetings to plan for the opening of the programs. The Steering Committee consists of members from the Department of Instruction and Pupil Services and includes representatives, as needed, from other departments.
- The curriculum development process is set to begin with consideration for the accreditation process and student graduation requirements.
- A question was raised regarding integration of AET and AOS in order to avoid "siloing". Staff responded that crossover will occur through research and engineering projects. It was also noted that while 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade programs at

the Academy of Science are spiraled around science, AET will be spiraled around mathematics (i.e. Mathematical Modeling Course integrating Geometry and Alg 2/Trig).

- Two Academies of Loudoun Business Advisory Committee meetings have taken place in order to identify resources, expertise and partnerships that can support the Academies. DOI staff will identify and communicate needs to the committee (i.e. case studies for entrepreneurship.)
- A follow up questions was asked regarding the ground break ceremony. Chairman Hornberger noted that the Board of Supervisors and the Business Advisory Committee should be invited.
- Ms. Ambrose shared the following information from Assistant Superintendent Kevin Lewis:  
*Site plan has received conditional approval*  
*Clearing permit is pending wetland permit approval*  
*Clear and grading scheduled to begin prior to March 1, 2016*  
*Groundbreaking ceremony in planning. Targeting May or June 2016*  
*Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment under development with DOI*  
*Contract negotiations nearing completion with Construction Manager*  
*Contract amount expected to be in compliance with the budget*
- Chairman Hornberger asked if staff envisioned the hiring of any staff for Academies of Loudoun prior to appropriated budget. Ms. Ambrose responded that the plan was to access contingency for one principal and wait for budget approval for second position.
- Chairman Hornberger asked about funds to equip first cohort and location. Staff shared that funds are included in the proposed budgets and that Tuscarora High School is the identified school but specific rooms have not been finalized.
- Mr. Morse asked about a master schedule of tasks that need to be completed. Staff shared that there was a schedule with a sliding time frame, similar to when AOS opened. Additionally, summer would be a key time to finalize plans; a cohort of teachers is currently developing curriculum and the process will be ongoing.

## **VI. School Board Vision for Academy of Engineering and Technology (AET)**

### **a. Desired Student Outcomes**

Questions were raised by staff regarding the articulation of the “niche” to be filled by AET as well as intended student learning outcomes. What does the Ad Hoc Committee view as the vision for the Academy of Engineering & Technology?

- Chairman Hornberger responded that there is a missing piece in our offerings for students with an interest in engineering and computer science as opposed to an interest in hard science. AET is alternative to AOS but Mr. Hornberger would like to see more advanced offerings, similar to opportunities offered at TJHSST, in Loudoun County. Also, expressed the need to increase the number of students who participate in the programs.
- Ms. Rose responded that it should not be just about four year programs but should also include opportunities for electives or 2-year programs. As well as programs for students with a high level of interest in STEM. Also, expressed the need for more transparency in the admissions process. What is the standard for entrance? What are the “silent requirements?”
- Mr. Morse responded that he sees the program as a 4-year program for gifted students based on test scores and teachers and counselor recommendations. Programs for students who perform and work at a higher level. Once the programs starts expand offerings to include programs such as Cybersecurity.
- As a clarification Chairman Hornberger defined gifted/accelerated learner as within the top 10% of students. Eventually 2-year, 4-year and a la carte offerings should be available. This is not to replicate AOS or Monroe.
- Concerns regarding a test prep mentality for AOS and diversity goals were raised. Ms. Rose referred to proactive steps in how to better prepare a diverse group of students for success. Mr. Morse discussed bringing programs down to the middle school level.
- Staff acknowledged that a future conversation on gifted would be coming.
- Staff acknowledged that more options will open up when the building is open.
- Staff indicated that due to integrated coursework and certification issues there was a potential need for multiple teachers in a classroom. There would also be consideration for getting the teachers the certification needed.

**b. Other**

Board members asked about selecting and recruiting first cohort. Would the cohort be chosen from a county-wide pool or a pool from each school?

- Staff acknowledged that a large number of students are working above grade level. This will produce a strong pool of qualified students by cluster. A need to identify who is above, below, or at grade level was discussed.

- Mr. Morse asked about an entrance exam. Staff responded that there are multiple plans and that LCPS had many students on accelerated paths. Team is looking at best practices in STEM schools nationally.

**VII. Next Meeting**

Next meeting will be scheduled in April/May. Chairman Hornberger will communicate with staff and Board members on the date. Members of the Board requested more can visuals and presentation materials.

Ms. Ambrose will remain the primary contact for the committee.

**VIII. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 6:47pm