



Saint Paul
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Envision SPPS: Talent, Development and Acceleration Service Pathway Workgroup (TDAS)

Report on findings | September 2021

I. WORKGROUP MEMBER NAMES, ROLES AND/OR TITLES, ORGANIZATIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Capitol Hill Gifted & Talented Magnet School

- Andrew Hodges, Principal
- Dr. Kristin Morris, Parent

Highland Park Senior High School

- Dr. Winston Tucker, Principal
- Vineeta Sawkar, Parent

EXPO Elementary School

- Elzbieta (Ela) Murphy, Assistant Principal

Talent Development and Acceleration Services

- Ben Lacina, Supervisor
- Tara Dobbelaere, TOSA

II. MEETING DATES AND TIMES

- #1. Thursday, May 6, 2021 — 3:30-4:30 p.m.
- #2. Thursday, May 20, 2021 — 3:00-4:30 p.m.
- #3. Thursday, June 3, 2021 — 3:00-4:30 p.m.
- #4. Thursday, June 17, 2021 — 3:00-4:30 p.m.

III. WORKGROUP PURPOSE STATEMENT

Outline the viability for SPPS to sustain accelerated learning under three distinct scenarios:

- A. Continue accelerated learning programs within one site.

- 
- B. Replace the “one site and pathway” model with one that provides a continuum of accelerated learning programs/services at all schools.
 - C. Maintain both a site that specializes in accelerated learning programs, but also accommodates all/most schools providing a continuum of services.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES (FINDINGS)

1. What are the facility needs and implications with how we currently provide advanced learning services for K-12?

This question was our first to tackle and the first to yield a particularly interesting finding specific to elementary-based services, particularly those found at Capitol Hill: **These facilities and programs are essential for all students, not just those identified for advanced learning services.** What are these programs? Arts, theater, speech/debate, mock trial, math team, Knowledge Bowl, Robotics, and the staffing to support these programs. As for facilities, each dictates the types of facilities required. Ex: Robotics or theater could require different types of spaces than speech and debate or math competitions.

One unique aspect of Capitol Hill’s programming model is the school’s ability to provide instrumental music in 4th and 5th grades — which then extends on into middle school. This is very different from the EDL model provided to the rest of elementary students across SPPS. However, questions emerged: What is the capacity of the district to do this district wide? What level of dosage is “enough” access? What is reasonable? What is possible?

Other cause-effect questions emerged: is this capacity due to Capitol Hill being a K-8 school? Is it because of enrolling all Advanced Learners? Or is this because the school has at least four sections of each grade level across the school?

Math acceleration is a service for academic challenge that appears to be available across the district (to varying degrees). Many schools provide this for students, however many do not implement it as strategically. Capitol Hill provides this by scheduling school-wide math. Other elementary programs have multiple sections of each grade level to facilitate this kind of scheduling, at least partially, within their school (see: Farnsworth Lower).

Regardless, math acceleration is not implemented consistently across the district, and as such it can often be seen as a privilege- or opportunity-based services, as opposed to a responsive intervention to evidence of advanced ability and achievement in mathematics. One consequence of this inconsistency and misunderstanding of acceleration is that many high schools (i.e. Como, Highland) have had to implement a “slow down” math class for accelerated math students who likely didn’t require math acceleration and are now struggling conceptually with math coursework.



*It is important to note that within OTL, TDAS is already collaborating extensively with the Math Team to work on equitable identification and service pathways for mathematics. (See Highland Park Middle School as an example.)

Other elementary service models in SPPS (at least in SY 2020-21) include EXPO's TDAS Specialist, who is built into the prep schedule (Therefore, she works with all students at the school.) And The Heights elementary's part-time specialist who worked with some students who were identified as Advanced Learners. (That teacher also provided reading intervention for struggling students.) The committee was not aware of any other specialist models.

Moreover, without specific dedicated staffing, Horace Mann and St. Anthony Park elementary schools work to provide more of an integrated service model, particularly around acceleration *and* enrichment. Schools like Galtier and Randolph Heights Elementary are also working toward building a more integrated model of services. However, these are more challenging because of the many different initiatives that are ongoing in an elementary school. This is made even more difficult due to small school sizes.

At the secondary level, there is inconsistent implementation of Advanced or Accelerated coursework across middle schools, specifically. This would be a critical point to explore/define at the Middle School Workgroup level. Also, a differentiated model of programming system-wide is sometimes confusing to students and families — and seen as inequitable. High schools are more consistent within and across programs (AP vs. IB vs. CIS), however it is unclear as to why certain programs exist only at certain schools and not at others. As one workgroup member questioned, “Why does Central get to have everything? Why didn't they have to choose between AP and IB back when everyone else had to?”

Ultimately, the TDAS workgroup wanted to think there would be equal resources across schools — especially when enrollment dictates opportunity — and hoped that Envision SPPS would put this matter at the fore: **“How can we meet the needs of our students and what they are interested in, in a way that makes sense for the culture of the school? As we think about equality and equity — giving schools equal resources, may not be equitable.”** Another comment voiced was that “tension arises when one school offers programming that others can't.” (Of particular note was the use of the word “can't” vs. “don't.”)

2. **How many minimum sections are needed to provide a continuum of school-based interventions, in particular advanced learning services, to maintain a viable school program?**

At the elementary level, any viable site will require a minimum of **3 to 4 sections to support and fund a model that provides well-rounded programming** (for example any specialists, etc.). This level of student enrollment supports the additional human resources needed to provide services (specialists, intervention



support, etc.) Additionally, this number of sections also supports teacher- and school-based collaboration or flexibility. If there were to be an Advanced Learning Specialist, this could be provided either as part of the teacher prep rotation or a push-in/pull-out model for interventions and/or enrichment.

- a. What are the costs/resources needed to sustain an accelerated learning program?

(See below.)
- b. What are the facilities needed to sustain such programs?

Question #2 gets to the heart of designing a consistent programming model, where services intersect with facilities. Much like the three options for this workgroup, there are options within those options:

- A. Even with a **specialized school model** at the elementary level, this site will **require a minimum of 3 to 4 sections at each grade level** to support the level of funding to provide well-rounded programming (any specialists, etc.). Again, this will also support flexibility and collaboration. It is important to reiterate that all elementary schools would need this minimum number of sections to provide basic services of a well-rounded education.
- B. A **school-based specialist model** (also providing prep time for classroom teachers) provides services to all students, but due to the schedule limitations doesn't allow for targeted services to specific or small groups of students. (see below)
- C. With a **blended service model** (Specialist+Coordinator roles), a school achieves the greatest flexibility and the most ability to provide site-based enrichment/opportunity for all students while still able to target specific student interests and abilities, either through pull-out or push-in. Funding would then determine dosage for services.
- D. Finally, by having a **district-wide model of services embedded in each school in addition to a stand-alone school**, families have *real choice* when it comes to enrollment and how best they would see their child's needs met. With a district-wide model of services embedded in all schools, there is also the capacity to serve a greater number of students, and to be more instantly responsive to students' needs as they emerge. (They would not be dependent upon the school choice/enrollment calendar, for example.).

Ultimately, to provide the broadest access to a well-rounded education, with enrichment, four sections would be needed:

- 
1. Visual art,
 2. Music (performing arts),
 3. Physical education,
 4. *Enrichment/GT (see Expo Elementary model)

**One caveat is whether or not science/social studies are delivered through a specialized model — this would be informed by the work of the well-rounded workgroup. Should this be the recommendation, a more consultant/coordinator role for any TDAS services could be used, if there weren't then 5 sections per grade level.*

How do well-rounded accelerated programs work in smaller schools?

Advanced or accelerated programming is difficult to realize, particularly in schools with only 1 or 2 sections. These schools especially — but all schools in actuality — find it difficult to be creative and flexible to meet Advanced Learners' needs. There is a reality that “Intervention” doesn't live at both ends of the achievement spectrum and current high-achieving outliers are not given the same degree of focus and service as students with need for greater amounts of remediation. Therefore, advanced learners often don't receive services or instruction that meet their needs or maximize their potential, and often regress in their academic achievement or, at the very least, make the least amount of academic growth over the school year.

Further, with this mindset all students then lack access to the language of advanced learning, depth and complex instruction. Even with extraordinary skills and talents, a classroom generalist is taxed beyond their capacity to meet the wide range of achievement needs in a single classroom. Even a grade level with two sections is still challenged in this way, which is why three or four sections *minimum* provide for innovation, flexibility, creativity, and the capacity to be such.

Math at the same time for all grade levels to facilitate advanced math students

Some of the interventions and opportunities are structural, made more possible by more sections, to offer greater flexibility maximizing use of space and time meeting student needs. This is the model at Capitol Hill. It is worth noting, also, that a different SPPS elementary school (Farnsworth Lower) with four sections of a particular grade level is able to do a modified version of this: two sections at one time, and two sections at another time, since they couldn't put their entire school doing math at once. However, there could also be guidance around this practice that only begins at a certain grade level so that the entire school wasn't needing acceleration at one time, save for an outlier student or two, who may simply need greater accommodations.



3. What supports/site-based services are needed to provide students with advanced learning opportunities in every elementary and middle school?

a. At what grade level should we start to assess students to receive services?

i. What equity issues arise with various assessment timelines/scenarios?

This is a question that brings a nuanced answer: for many students who lack access to opportunities and experience prior to kindergarten, formal school can be a great leveller. Early assessments tend to measure school-readiness and these opportunities for learning that came *prior to student enrollment*. That said, waiting too long to assess students' intervention needs also has been shown to exacerbate growth in achievement as achievement gaps tend to grow over time.

Ultimately, this is about identifying *needs* and not identifying/labeling *students*. Students are not a binary of “special” or “not special.” By focusing on identifying needs instead of students, the focus becomes providing and aligning services to meet these needs.

A 2018 update to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) helped articulate these services as beyond the scope of what all students have access to and receive:

“The term ‘gifted and talented’, when used with respect to students, children, or youth, means students, children, or youth who give evidence of high achievement capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and who need services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop those capabilities. (2018 reauthorization of ESEA)

b. What grade/how early is it possible to provide accelerated services?

As with any intervention, the earlier needs are identified, the sooner students’ needs can be met. On the surface this might seem to be a financial-costs-related question. However, research has shown that not identifying advanced learners’ needs early can exacerbate the human costs because achievement gaps for learners — including advanced learners — also grow and compound over time.

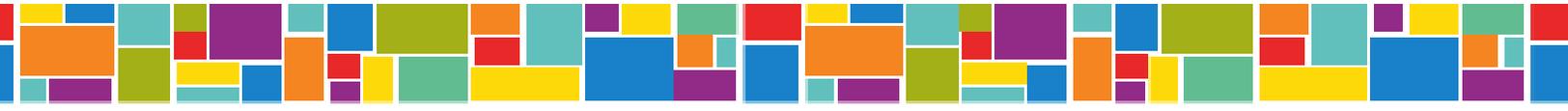


c. **What are the costs/resources needed to sustain an accelerated learning program?**

There are different costs for an **intervention-based program** than for an **open- or all-access program**. However with both models come the human resource costs along with appropriately challenging/differentiated materials to support them and their learners. Many commercially available curriculum resources, while promoting differentiated instruction, do not extend beyond above-average achievement levels. Therefore, additional materials specifically designed to meet the needs of advanced learners and/or above-grade-level curriculum for a specific grade level would be necessary.

Further, the training depends on the service model: if there are limited services, then there is limited training. However, this does not speak to the fact that all students benefit from a classroom teacher training in gifted and talented pedagogy. With an elementary specialist model, there is a greater chance of a train-the-trainer situation if services are designed to be provided district-wide. Regardless, with all that is currently expected from the generalist educator, these students and this learning needs a champion in every space it is expected to be delivered and received.

- A. With a **specialized school model**, at the elementary level, this site will still **require a minimum of 3 to 4 sections** to support a funding model that provides well-rounded programming (any specialists, etc.). This number of sections will also support flexibility and collaboration. It is important to note that all elementary schools would need this minimum number of sections to provide basic services (well-rounded).
- B. A **school-based specialist model** provides services to all students, but doesn't necessarily allow for targeted services to specific students or even small groups of students if they must first provide "prep" time for classroom teachers. (see below)
- C. With a **blended service model** (Specialist+Coordinator roles), a school achieves the greatest flexibility and the most ability to provide site-based enrichment/opportunity for all students while still able to target specific student interests and abilities, either through pull-out or push-in. Funding would then determine dosage for services.
- D. Finally, by having a **district-wide model of services embedded in each school in addition to a stand-alone school**, families have *real choice* when it comes to how best they would like to see their child's needs met. With a district-wide service model, there is also the capacity to serve a greater



number of students.

As the work of Envision SPPS progresses, it would be important to define whether the model was intervention-based and/or opportunity-based programming. This would help define which costs should be considered integral to the core of services offered by SPPS and not additional.

d. What are the facilities needed to sustain an accelerated learning program?

Once a model has been identified by leadership, the structures and facility needs can be outlined more specifically to address those needs. For example, arts-based learning will require different facility needs than science-based classrooms, etc. ultimately, flexible spaces at the site-based level provides the opportunity for schools to be responsive to specific interests, skills, and abilities.

4. What are the components of a high-quality high school advanced learning program?

“The term ‘gifted and talented’, when used with respect to students, children, or youth, means students, children, or youth who give evidence of high achievement capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and who need services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop those capabilities. (2018 reauthorization of ESEA)

a. How many accelerated courses are needed to define a high school as a viable accelerated learning school?

i. What course offerings are unique to the Capitol Hill—Highland Park Senior accelerated learning pathway?

Advanced courses in high schools are more consistent within and across programs (AP vs. IB vs. CIS). When the workgroup looked at the course offerings in advance offerings, comparable courses at Highland are found at other high schools in the city*. However, it is unclear as to why certain programs exist only at certain schools and not at others. Students at Central High School are provided with multiple advanced course options, however, students at the remaining high schools have access to fewer. (See data.) How can we ensure all high schools provide equitable advanced options: AP, IB, CIS, PLTW, and PSEO, etc.?

The generalized services that have occurred at Highland through



counseling and support classes are seen as school-specific decisions. These components are not unique courses dependent on curriculum decisions, but rather are interventions that buildings decide to put in place to provide students—both those who are identified as advanced learners and those who have the potential to become advanced learners—with the support they need to succeed and challenge themselves. With comparable offerings available in other high schools, the pathway to Highland from Capitol Hill students could be changed to only students living in the Highland attendance area.

Students who have not typically chosen accelerated learning would benefit from intentional supports like the AVID elective—and/or school-wide AVID strategies. Again, these are available across all high schools and not unique to Highland.

***Secondary advanced learning opportunities (college credit-earning opportunities)**

- Central: AP, CE, IB (MYP & DP), PSEO
- Como: AP, CE, PSEO
- Creative Arts: AP, PSEO
- Harding: CE, IB (MYP, DP & CP), PSEO
- Highland: CE, IB (MYP & DP), PSEO
- Humboldt: AP, CE, PSEO
- Johnson: AP, CE, PLTW, PSEO
- Open World Learning: AP, PSEO
- Washington: AP, CE, PLTW, PSEO

KEY:

- AP = Advanced Placement
- CE = Concurrent Enrollment
- IB = International Baccalaureate
 - MYP = Middle Years Programme
 - DP = Diploma Programme
 - CP = Career-related Programme
- PSEO = Postsecondary Enrollment Options
- PLTW = Project Lead the Way

b. What are the costs/resources needed to sustain an accelerated learning program?



Ultimately, the TDAS workgroup thought there would be **equal resources across all levels of schools**—especially when enrollment dictates opportunity—and hoped that Envision SPPS would put this matter at the fore: **“How can we meet the needs of our students and their interests in a way that makes sense for the culture of the school?”**

Another comment voiced was that “tension arises when one school offers programming that others can’t.” (Of particular note was the use of the word “can’t” vs. “don’t.”) The TDAS group saw K-8 schools large enough to focus resources on well-rounded education opportunities and a pathway to high schools as a critical component. **Only when feeder schools (elementary/middle) provide well-rounded offerings—electives, the arts (visual, performing, music) science—will high schools align their offerings to provide a continuation of advanced learning opportunities that match student interests.**

Targeted FTEs, professional development, coordination and training, as well as tutoring costs, are associated with the service models to support accelerated learning.

At the secondary level, ongoing training and materials are the greatest costs for meeting students’ accelerated learning needs. Time for cross-district collaboration for educators working with similar students would also ensure fidelity of programming and equitable access to guaranteed learning experiences, regardless of enrollment. Many curriculum resources, even while promoting differentiated instruction, do not extend beyond above-average achievement levels. Therefore, additional materials specifically designed to meet the needs of advanced learners and/or above-grade-level curriculum for a specific grade level would be necessary. Further, SPPS’ ongoing efforts toward systemic equity would allow teacher-created resources designed specifically for the students of Saint Paul to be embedded in the curriculum.

At the secondary level, programs like AP and IB, because they exist outside of the SPPS curriculum, require specialized programmatic training. Also, students who have not typically chosen accelerated learning would benefit from intentional supports like the AVID elective — and/or school-wide AVID strategies. (AVID is Advancement Via Individual Determination.) This would require targeted FTEs, professional development, coordination and training, as well as tutoring costs associated with the service model. The AVID Elective classroom is built on community as much as it is built on academic skill-building.



At both levels, intentional social-emotional support should also be provided. When students are “walking through the world a different kind of way” they often need school-based counseling services. Extending these into the academic services SPPS provides students would address the needs of the whole child throughout their K-12 journey.

c. What are the facilities needed to support this program?

Most advanced academic services can be met within the walls of a typical classroom; however, two specific findings emerged in this workgroup:

- First, the need for **flexible learning environments**.
- Second, advanced learners in SPPS are partly identified through their creative abilities in the areas of visual and performing arts. These areas require **specific learning and presentation spaces**, some large, some small, e.g., galleries and performing spaces.

5. How will equity be ensured in various scenarios as outlined in the purpose statement? (This will inform the workgroup equity impact statement.)

Two observations were made around this essential question. First, it was mentioned that one way to answer is by taking a more systems-theory approach, recognizing that the TDAS workgroup is one component of a larger conversation, a more holistic one, around systemic equity of services and program.

Conversation emerged around “instead of dismantling something, replicate it.” Extending this to the Envision conversation, how might the services that are celebrated in a popular program — school-wide math, project-based learning and creative arts specialists and opportunities — be replicated across the system at other schools? Currently, for many families, there is a perception (or a reality) that one school alone can meet the needs of their child(ren). When families perceive there to be only one option, they often express binary thinking about the other schools in the system. By “expanding the pie,” more resources would be available for a greater number of families and students.

The gifted and talented field of education historically has not done well with representation when it comes to identification, but has often done better with pedagogy and academic services. Therefore, when the work is more focused on identifying needs — instead of identifying students — services can be better aligned to the needs they are trying to address. Often, the ability to meet these needs is conditional upon the environment in which they are provided. Improving those environments improves services for more students. Moreover, a continuum of services offers more flexibility and opportunities for students and families as well.

This shifts the conversation to: Who has demonstrated need? And who has



hidden potential? Experiences that are provided to all students ensure all those students experience foundational learning opportunities. TDAS-related services can then build on that foundation to be responsive if and when talents emerge, to extend and enrich the learning for these students.

6. What are the unintended consequences of each scenario? Do any of the scenarios compromise any legal state requirements; outline those [legal requirements](#)?

Option A: Continue accelerated learning programs within one site. The biggest consequence of Option A is that it compounds a binary: you're either identified, or you're not. And you're either receiving services at that *one* school, or you're not. This would exacerbate the already existing dilemma facing many SPPS families, especially those with multiple children. Logistics are a real thing for families, and many families grapple with the idea of having all their kids attend the same school — the “good” school. This shifts the focus of conversation to enrollment and away from one about meeting student needs and providing services that respond to those needs.

Option B: Replace the “one site and pathway” model with one that provides a continuum of accelerated learning programs/services at all schools. The greatest unintended consequence of this option is that without proper messaging, understanding within the community, and fidelity of implementation of the new service model, the perception will be that “Advanced Learning was cut.” Families may perceive that their “choice” has gone away. In SPPS, perception often becomes reality. There was also a great deal of discussion about which voices or concerns would be the loudest and which voices or concerns would be the unspoken, or the unheard. One comment was, “If you don't have the opportunities *by name* at all of the sites, then families aren't going to see the guarantee. And if [students are] identified, they should get some kind of guarantee for [their] identified student.”

Option C: Maintain both a site that specializes in accelerated learning programs, but also accommodates all/most schools providing a continuum of services. With the best of both worlds, or a “yes, and” or “everything” model, there is the chance that programming overall becomes too diluted across service models — this possible watering down of system-wide, due to inconsistency, misunderstanding, miscommunication, etc. TDAS work would need to be enmeshed both with the work of OTL and the work of Counseling. Integration is always more nuanced than separate silos. Another way to think about it might be: if you're offering more services that meet students' needs, then you may have less of a need for families who are seeking a change. You might see an enrollment drop at the single site, but you might also see greater levels of commitment to programming at individual sites across the system.

Ultimately, with whatever decision is made, a thought emerged toward the end of the workgroup's time together, “To ensure that our kids have the resources



necessary...for far too long, the district has let a select few influence the decisions...the squeaky wheel has gotten the most attention. At some point when are we going to focus on the kids? Enrollment is important, however organizations [are] speaking about social justice. [Yes,] people are going to leave, but what are you focusing on that's right? Black and brown babies are suffering the most."

7. Which scenario might potentially best attract more families to the accelerated learning program?

A statement that came out of our workgroup was, **"We need to do more to attract more."** This grew out of a sentiment, mentioned previously, that families choose Capitol Hill not only because of interventions and services for their identified student's advanced or "outlier" needs, but also because of the perception and/or reality that other schools in SPPS do not (and/or cannot) meet the needs of students across a well-rounded continuum of school-based experiences. This also reminds us of leaning into the promise of a well-rounded education for all students.

Systemically, an observation was that SPPS ensure teacher preparation is equitable and inclusive to student needs and perceptions of those needs in order to "remove unconscious biases about what a student can or "cannot" do."

Regardless of option, additional efforts must be made to build awareness of advanced programs, particularly among multilingual families. Additionally, ensuring classrooms are representative of all student identities, and cultural or racial backgrounds, and that students have the support mechanisms in place at school to ensure long-lasting success within those programs, not simply access to those programs.

Intentional and proven systems of support (like AVID) need to be in place for students who need these services to succeed, particularly at the secondary level. This might encourage more families/parents/guardians to encourage their students and interrupt barriers of mindset and/or improve school-based skills that might make an advanced course seem "too hard."

One note on Option C: research has shown that no system of G/T or Advanced Learner identification is 100% accurate. In fact, with standard of error on common assessments used to identify students, it is likely that as many as 15-25% of advanced students go un- or under-identified. Option C would allow an ongoing "yes, and..." approach to services that can be in place for any/all students should their needs emerge outside assessment windows and timelines, as well as specific academic disciplines. One service-related question emerged, too: are there services in place across SPPS that recognize and celebrate multiple intelligences so that all parts of students' identities are recognized and valued.

8. How might the new realities brought on by COVID impact the accelerated learning



program short- and long- term?

The biggest learning from COVID is that outliers might also receive services outside the typical “bricks and mortar” of a classroom-based learning environment. COVID taught us to think beyond the confines of specific time and space to provide necessary interventions for students who need them.

IV. INTERSECTIONS WITH OTHER WORKGROUPS - consider the following:

a. How does your focus area intersect with other Envision Workgroup focus areas?

WELL-ROUNDED (#11)

TDAS services really come as a response to when the Well-Rounded Education isn't enough for students:

“The term ‘gifted and talented’, when used with respect to students, children, or youth, means students, children, or youth who give evidence of high achievement capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and who need services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop those capabilities. (2018 reauthorization of ESEA)

Without a clear definition of what *is* “ordinarily provided by the school,” it is difficult to define what *isn't*. Again, using this definition, it is also critical to note that these extend beyond achievement in the areas of literacy and numeracy. We must also consider creative/artistic talents, leadership capacity, and other academic fields that often receive less emphasis outside of reading and math (at the elementary level), and also extends into fields more typically considered “electives” at the secondary level.

To the previous ESEA (Elementary and Secondary Education Act) definition, if it is determined that enrichment and academic interventions at the upper end of the achievement spectrum are *not* part of a well-rounded education, that impacts how Capitol Hill would/should be viewed as the mechanism for delivering services to identified students.

COLLEGE & CAREER PATHS (#1)

For most (if not all) students, the pathways to both college and career are built on interests and talents. Much of the learning that happens with students via the work around Personal Learning Plans (PLPs) — and the resulting data that is collected by students and teachers from those experiences — aligns and even overlaps the work of Talent Development and Enrichment. In fact, greater collaboration between TDAS and OCCR could



have an exponential impact on student interests, skills development, and achievement. Schools should be designed both to mitigate and compensate for the opportunity gap *and* we should be working to be responsive to the data we gather from those opportunities, truly listening to *and responding to* the information students learn about themselves and subsequently collect and communicate with us.

ENROLLMENT (#3)

When families choose a school, are they choosing it for that program, or are they choosing to *leave* a different program? We likely can see those choices (and the reasons for those choices) quite readily when families move internally, however what data shows us systemically (what are families showing us systemically) when they choose to leave SPPS altogether?

Do we have a system built on real choice or perceived choice? What have we learned about families who choose to move/enroll outside their attendance area — and have the capacity to make that change vs. what we’ve learned from families who wish to make that choice, but are unable to realize that choice due to their circumstances? Choice for some — or choice for all?

Further, do we believe in strong neighborhood schools, and if so, what are we designing so families choose to lean into their local community/ neighborhood school to receive the education their children need and deserve? Do we have a system of schools and programs that complement one another or simply compete with one another?

MIDDLE SCHOOL MODEL (#7)

As schools grapple with the realities and consequences of institutionalized racism and tracking, many academic disciplines are looking to eliminate advanced or accelerated courses. It will be important to clearly articulate to families, educators, and students what opportunities and/or interventions are available at the middle school level to students who “give evidence of high achievement capability” and” who need services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop those capabilities.” This language from the 2018 update to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) helps clarify direction and definition for anything SPPS designs beyond the rigorous, college-track courses offered to every grade level as a part of core curriculum and instruction (i.e. a well-rounded education).

b. What information will you need from other workgroups to complete your work?

It is helpful to examine school enrollment data — however, it is also important to recognize barriers to enrollment, even when choice is given. Demographic enrollment at Capitol Hill (or many other specialty programs) is

as much a reflection on the students who are enrolled and for the families for whom choice is a reality, as well it is not an option for those for whom “choice” is an option in name only.

c. What information from your workgroup is relevant to share with other workgroups?

See response to letter a.

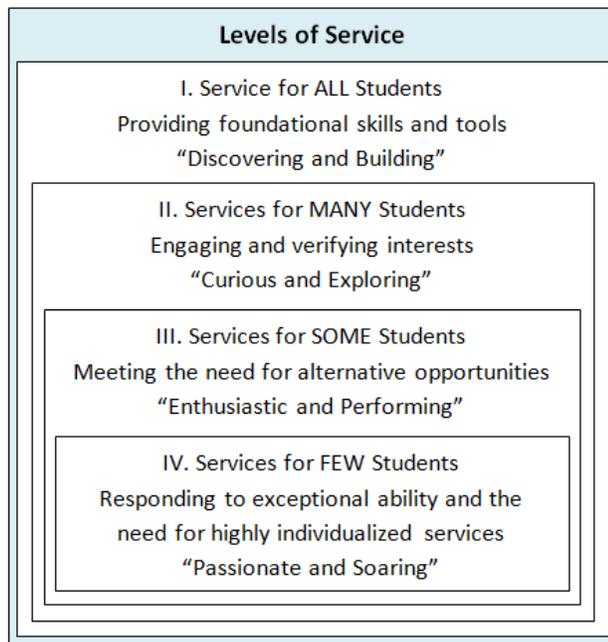
VI. LIST OF DATA SOURCES - [SEE DATA HERE:](#)

- TDAS Capitol Hill Retention/Continuation
- TDAS final report — SPPS Achieves: REA Cohort 1
- Advanced Learner Identification Trends — Demographics, Enrollment
- Secondary Advanced Course Enrollment —
- Capitol Hill Enrollment trends —
 - school enrollment (geography & demographics)
 - post-C.H. 9th grade enrollment trends
- Levels of Service Programming Model
- June 2019 Principals’ well-rounded survey data — TDAS Services & Strategies

VII. OTHER COMMENTS

Talent Development and Acceleration Services promotes Treffinger’s Levels of Service Model, where **level I and II** services are opportunity-based services available for all students, because all students deserve opportunity. (SPPS’s previous model of School-wide Enrichment programming, where there was an enrichment specialist in every elementary school provided a greater guarantee of implementation for these services. They had a champion dedicated to these efforts — for example, facilitation of Enrichment Clusters in a whole school.)

Levels III and IV are intervention-based services designed to respond to students’ unique needs, either due to extraordinary performance and/or interest. (SEM specialists previously provided these kinds of services as well, via pull-out math and reading small groups for identified and/or high achieving students in those disciplines.)



(Treffinger, Young, Nassab, & Witting, 2004)



This programming model allows all students to experience enrichment and discover interests and talents often not provided as part of the regular curriculum. Additionally, it is a model of service delivery that is *responsive* to students needs *and* interests. It is this level of responsive design that makes it easy to build on, integrate with, and accentuate our already robust Personalized Learning Plan efforts as a district.

It is worth noting that the Levels of Service Model aligns perfectly with the goals of the Personal Learning Plan (PLP), and provides a roadmap for not only front-loading expository experiences for students but also being *responsive* to students' interests and talents *in the moment*, should there be the capacity [in each school site to do so](#).