

Recommendation #2: APS should hire two additional district level literacy coaches (one for elementary and one for secondary) to provide teachers with job-embedded professional learning.

Background: One of APS's priorities this year is secondary literacy.

Need: In addition to pandemic-related learning loss, middle and high-school students' lack of exposure to the science of reading in early elementary levels has resulted in a significant number of students who need additional reading support to be successful in secondary school and beyond. Our committee continues to be concerned about supporting struggling readers at the secondary level. Additionally, APS is in the second year of using the Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) curriculum as part of the shift towards the Science of Reading approach in elementary school. As with the implementation of any new curriculum, teachers require professional development and support.

There is simply not enough time on the calendar for professional learning to take place. Even if there were enough time for professional learning, teachers tend to be skeptical or dismissive of one-day, in-service style professional development; this alone does not necessarily have a positive impact on student achievement (Garet et al., 2016). Teachers continue to request more differentiated support.

As stated in our first recommendation, the research on job-embedded, consistent professional learning and its impact on instruction is clear.

Solution: APS has proven success with the current grant-funded one elementary literacy coach and one secondary literacy coach. Our recommendation is that APS add an additional literacy coach per level to enhance the ability of the ELA office to provide job-embedded professional learning for teachers. The professional learning that the coaches will provide includes data analysis, diagnostics and intervention planning, explicit/systematic phonics instruction, and curriculum implementation. Literacy coaches will also be able to model instructional strategies, providing support and training in appropriate and research-based interventions to secondary-level teachers.

Provide growth opportunities by implementing a competency-based professional learning and evaluation framework inclusive of all staff members. (S-EW-2)

Grow and develop current and future high-quality leader/managers. (S-EW-3)

Committee vote: 6 in favor, 0 opposed

Staff response:

We are in agreement with ELAAC regarding the hiring of additional district-level literacy coaches to provide teachers with job-embedded professional learning. The two literacy coaches that we currently have are making an impact with supporting new teachers to APS and providing classroom specific support in curriculum, instruction, analyzing assessment data and interventions.

This year, we proposed a single budget request to the ELA budget for a literacy coach to support

Appendix A
Committee Members

Chair: Mike Miller

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