Gifted Child Committee Report Submitted by: Michelle Gluck

November 2019 gifted@mccpta.org

**Meetings/Calls/Events since last month’s report**

10/23 AEI Feedback Council

10/23 BOD/BOE Meeting

10/31 Meeting with VP Ed and Drs. Navarro and Statham

11/5 Curriculum Committee meeting with OCIP/OSSI

11/13 Superintendent’s Budget Advisory Committee

**Upcoming**

11/14 Board of Directors Meeting

11/21 MSDE GTAC Meeting

12/4 Delegates’ Assembly

12/17 Curriculum Committee meeting with OCIP/OSSI

**Key Activities/Concerns**

1. **Evaluation of “magnet expansion” classes in local schools.**

As part of the “Choice Study Response” revision of the ES and MS magnet application programs, MCPS introduced three classes for local schools to offer students who met magnet admission criteria but were not offered, or did not accept, magnet placements. These classes are the Enriched Literacy Curriculum (ELC) in elementary school, and Humanities and “enhanced” IM in middle school. To date, MCPS has released demographic data on the cohorts offered admission into these programs, but no curriculum, achievement or assessment data to demonstrate what happens to these students once they get in, even though I’ve been asking for some time.

At the October 23 AEI Feedback Council meeting, we were informed that the Enriched Literacy Curriculum will be evaluated this year (its third year of implementation), with a report on its quality due to the BOE in July 2020. MCPS explains that it was necessary to wait until the ELC had run through a complete magnet-equivalent cycle (a single cohort completing both 4th and 5th grade ELC) in order to have a true assessment. While this makes superficial sense, it doesn’t really explain why we can’t get more specific information about curriculum, or why we were explicitly told last year that the BOE would get a qualitative report in July 2019.

1. **Ongoing concerns with the upcounty MS magnet programs.**

Parents and teachers have expressed concerns for several years that the upcounty middle school application magnet programs at Roberto Clemente Middle School have not been offered at the same level of instruction and rigor as the downcounty programs at Eastern and Takoma Park Middle Schools. These concerns have been exacerbated by the relocation of the upcounty Humanities magnet to Martin Luther King MS, which among other things has led to the loss of experienced magnet teachers. Cynthia and I met with Dr. Navarro and Dr. Statham in August to discuss these concerns, and again on October 31 for a status update. MCPS has been open to our concerns that centrally advertised magnet programs are left to local school principals to implement (or not) at their own discretion. However, the habit of principal discretion is deep-seated and I believe it will require continued parent attention to achieve sustained changes in this area.

1. **New GT COMAR**

At the October 31 meeting with Dr. Navarro et al., we discussed the COMAR stipulation that teachers tasked with significant instruction of GT students should have the GATES certification or a meaningful equivalent. AEI undertook an inventory and ascertained that MCPS has a very small number of certified teachers and has lost several certified teachers in recent years. Nevertheless, when AEI inquired about hosting on-site training for a cohort of MCPS teachers, over 50 teachers expressed interest in obtaining the certification, which is very encouraging. At the meeting, we also talked about the reasons MCPS has lost GT-certified teachers in recent years and how that might reflect the devaluation of the certification by some principals.

1. **Rollout of the new curriculum**

As was the case with Curriculum 2.0, the new curriculum MCPS has purchased does not include any Advanced/GT components and MCPS will have to create its own modifications for GT instruction. It is unclear what will happen to the existing Enriched Literacy and alternative Math pathways.

1. **Changes to the High School Application programs**

Information about the evolution of the high school application programs has been haphazard, untimely, and sometimes contradictory. GCC is working with AEI and DCCAPS to improve communications around the process and the programs.