**GIFTED & TALENTED EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL**

MEETING MINUTES  
THURSDAY, April 25, 2024 | 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM  
LOCATION: VIRTUAL/ONLINE ONLY

### **members**

**Council Members**

Dr. Katharina Elbert, Isha Hassan, Dr. Albert Johnson-Mussad (Vice Chair), Kari Morse, Tyrone Mowatt, Courtney Perdios, Magalie Pinney, Donna Potter Astion (Chair), Juan Rodriguez, Dr. MaryGrace Stewart, Dr. Heny Taraz, Darnell Williams

**DESE Liaison**

Thomas Zorich

### **agenda**

1. 4:00- 4:05 |Call to Order and Roll Call

Present at roll call: Donna Astion, Katharina Elbert, Albert Johnson-Mussad, Courtney Perdios, Heny Taraz, Juan Rodriguez, Kari Morse, Tyrone Mowatt

Arrived after roll call: Isha Hassan, Maggie Pinney, MaryGrace Stewart

Withdrawn: Kenya Guerra

**ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS**

II. 4:05 – 4:10 PM | Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes 3/21/24

The minutes were unanimously approved. 8 “yes” /8 members present at the roll call

III. 4:10-4:20 PM | DESE Updates

Liaison Thomas Zorich provided two updates.

1. This year's final whole-group Continuum of Services workshop will be next week. To provide more direct support to districts, district teams will have the option to meet one-on-one with CTD so CTD can provide direct feedback and support to individual districts.
2. The hiring process for the Manager of Advanced and Accelerated Learning has wrapped up. A candidate has been recommended for hire.

A Council member asked if the current hiring freeze would impact the hiring, and Liaison Zorich indicated he would keep us posted with any updates on filling the position.

IV. 4:20-4:50 DESE representatives Erica Gonzalez, Associate Commissioner of Data & Accountability; and Corinne Thomas and Robert Havdala, from the District and School Accountability Team, joined the Council for a summary of the review process regarding District Standards and Indicators.

Council members were given a summary of the work in progress, and feedback was solicited from Council members in the context of alignment with the needs of gifted talented, and academically advanced students. A key guiding question was shared for the Council’s consideration:

Key question: To what extent does this draft address the systems, policies, and practices districts should have to create rigorous and inclusive learning environments for all students, including advanced learners?

Feedback included the request for more explicit and frequently-occurring language focused on advanced learners, data from districts regarding advanced learning opportunities, appropriately- leveled and adaptive assessments, trained school personnel, SEL, acceleration policies currently available, a clear understanding of what it means to be an advanced learner, the concern of over-assessment and under-implementation of advanced learner opportunities, the need for comprehensive and inclusive K-12 programs, emotional support for GT and advanced learners, parent and community involvement, inequitable access to enrichment and advanced learning opportunities, the need for clarification of language within the documents such as “historically marginalized”, and checking if districts comply with legally required reporting to DESE regarding gifted programming.

A publicly available survey link was provided to Council members to complete a questionnaire for further feedback if desired.

V. 4:50-5:59 PM | Phase 1, Draft definition discussion.

The revised draft definition was offered for discussion by Vice Chair Johnson-Mussad and Chair Astion.

Revisions were made for foundational needs rather than word-smithing.

Council Member Mowatt made a motion to adopt the definition presented by the Chair, which was seconded by Member Rodriguez. Deliberation and consideration of amendments to the definition were discussed. However, as the deliberations require a completed version before the Council's final vote can be taken, work on the definition will continue in the May GTAC meeting.

The intent is to vote at that meeting on the definition with amendments if any are made.

Although the motion was seconded, a vote was not taken. Deliberations continued and

will be resumed by the Council at the upcoming meeting in May.

The motion to adopt the definition was still in discussion at the meeting’s end. Deliberations were tabled by unanimous vote (10 yes/10 members present) until the next meeting, when deliberations on the motion would continue.

V. 6:00 PM | Adjournment unanimously approved, 10 “yes”/ 10 members present at adjournment.

**Documents Referenced During Meeting**

* April 25th GTAC Meeting Agenda
* Draft Council Minutes: March 21, 2024
* Revised draft definition of giftedness and advanced talent
* Summary of Revision of District Standards and Indicators
* Draft Revision of District Standards and Indicators
* A draft version of Giftedness and Advanced Talent
* Revised Draft of Definition of Giftedness and Advanced Talent
* District and School Accountability PowerPoint presentation on draft *District Standards and Indicators*.