

Date: February 20, 2014

For ACTION _____

For INFORMATION X

Board Agenda: Yes X
No _____

FROM: Ad Hoc School Facilities Naming Committee members William Campbell, Patricia Ann Hennig, and Christopher Lewis

THROUGH: Alvin L. Crawley, Ed.D, Interim Superintendent of Schools

TO: The Honorable Karen Graf, Chair, and Members of the Alexandria City School Board

TOPIC: Naming of George Washington Middle School Gymnasium Floor and Athletic Hall of Fame

BACKGROUND: The Alexandria City School Board received a request to name the George Washington Middle School gymnasium floor in honor of former Alexandria City resident Harley “Skeeter” Swift. Consistent with School Board policy FF, the Board named an ad-hoc School Facilities Naming Committee to consider, discuss, and review the merits of the request. This ad-hoc committee reviewed the requests, conducted research, and discussed options. A formal meeting was held on February 5, 2014, to discuss details and to develop a draft recommendation.

Over the years Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) has produced many standout student-athletes, some of whom have moved on to attain a variety of successes in their sports and lives, including competing in professional sports leagues and the Olympic Games. For example, at least three Alexandria students have advanced to play professionally in the sport of basketball including Swift (5 years in the ABA), Earl Lloyd (10 years in the NBA), and Tierra Ruffin-Pratt (currently playing in the WNBA).

In the past, ACPS has named facilities in honor of former student-athletes primarily for special circumstances or accomplishments. The gymnasium of the original T.C. Williams High School was named in honor of Gerry Bertier, a member of the 1971 Titans State Championship Team, who was paralyzed in a car crash and passed away at a relatively young age. The floor of the current T.C. Williams High School gymnasium is named in honor of Earl Lloyd, a 1946 Parker-Gray High School graduate and the first African-American to play in an NBA game.

With each generation, friends and supporters from the Alexandria community look for ways to honor the successes of athletes, memorialize their achievements, and inspire the current students of ACPS to strive for excellence. ACPS could consider a few of these requests by naming facilities after athletes, but that would be limited, or ACPS could choose another way to honor more of these great athletes, past, present, and future.

RECOMMENDATION: The committee recommends that ACPS create an Athletic Hall of Fame in order to honor Swift and other ACPS students who move on to achieve excellence in athletics. While the initial request was to name a gymnasium floor after Swift, this alternate proposal will allow for a system of honoring achievement and excellence in athletics that has room to accommodate all requests for honoring past and future students. A draft outline for an Alexandria City Public Schools Hall of Fame is attached. It is further suggested that plaques be displayed at the campuses of Alexandria's T.C. Williams High School and former high schools (current middle schools) Francis C. Hammond and George Washington.

IMPACT:

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Attachment 1

Outline: Alexandria City Public Schools Athletic Hall of Fame

Objective: To create a system of honoring excellence in athletic achievement by former Alexandria City Public Schools students.

Structure

Beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, ACPS will honor no more than three former Alexandria City Public Schools students with induction into the Alexandria City Public Schools Athletic Hall of Fame. ACPS will create locations to display the Hall of Fame Plaques on the campus of T.C. Williams High School as well as on the F.C. Hammond and George Washington Middle School campuses.

Nominations will be submitted by the public to a Selection Committee. Nominations will be accepted quarterly and reviewed by the Selection Committee. The Selection Committee will submit recommendations to the School Board at the end of each school year to be inducted in the Fall. The School Board will appoint a seven member Selection Committee to choose recipients from among the nominees. The Selection Committee membership will include:

- 3 Alexandria City Public Schools alumni
- 1 current ACPS student
- 3 at large community members

Except for the alumni seats on the Committee, members of the Selection Committee will be residents of Alexandria City which may include an ACPS employee and a current ACPS student. The initial Selection Committee will recommend a selection criteria to be approved and institutionalized by the School Board. Any future changes to the selection criteria must be approved by the School Board. Once the inductee(s) selection process is complete, ACPS staff will organize an induction ceremony. The induction ceremony scheduling and planning should balance the inclusion of both ACPS students and the friends and supporters of the inductees in the induction ceremony audience. ACPS will explore working with community partners who are willing to sponsor, promote and support the induction ceremonies.