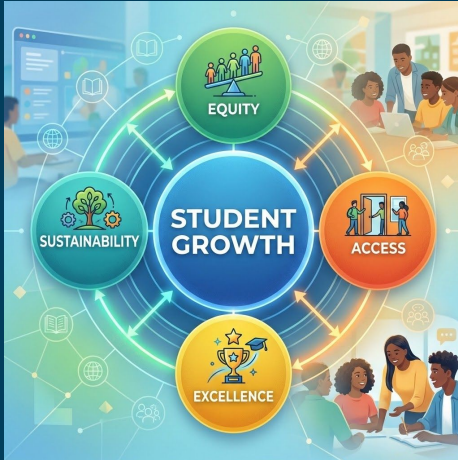


Advanced Academics Steering Committee

Work Completed and Emerging Recommendations

July 14, 2026

Our Goal



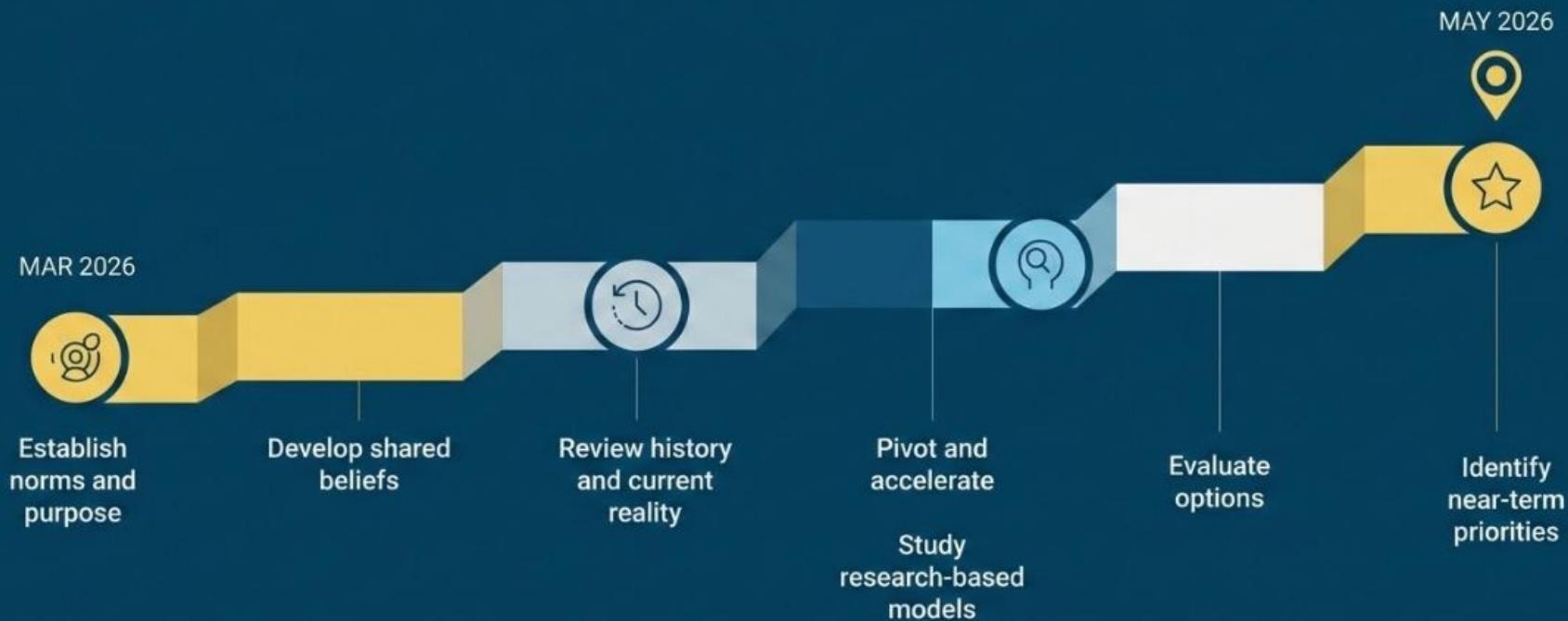
- To design an Advanced Academics system that:
- ❖ Provides appropriate challenge and rigor
 - ❖ Supports social-emotional development
 - ❖ Expands access and opportunity
 - ❖ Creates a clear K-8 pathway
 - ❖ Is sustainable and scalable across District 45

Committee Membership



Stakeholder Group	Representation
Parents	10
Teachers	5
Building Administrators	3
District Leadership	1

Our Process



Shared Beliefs For Decision-Making



STUDENTS

Students receive the rigor they need while being supported socially and emotionally.



SYSTEM

The pathway is clear, flexible, and results in measurable growth.



STAFF

Teachers receive ongoing training, coaching, and resources.



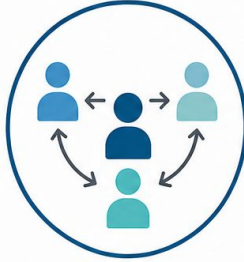
FAMILIES

Families partner with schools to support student success.

Research-Based Approaches Studied



Cluster Grouping



Flexible Grouping



Curriculum Compacting



SEM-R
(Reading Enrichment)



Enrichment Clusters / Inquiry Block



Schoolwide Enrichment Model (SEM)



Multiple Menu Model (MMM)



Tiered Differentiation / Differentiated Classroom Instruction

Decision-Making Criteria

The committee examined:

- Student impact
- Equity and access
- Ease of implementation
- Professional learning needs
- Parent understanding
- Sustainability
- Alignment to district beliefs
- Cost

Model	Relative cost	Complexity of change	Teacher Training Burden	Need for common planning time	Ease of implementation	Risk of uneven implementation	Parent visibility / ease of explanation	Ability to preserve challenge for advanced learners	Ability to support struggling learners	Pairing potential	Pairs especially well with	Best fit	Key committee considerations
Cluster grouping + flexible grouping	Low	Medium	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	High	High	High	High	Curriculum compacting tiered differentiation SEM-R WIN/intervention-enrichment block	Both, with strong value for advanced learners	One of the most practical staffing-neutral shifts because of the grouping structure, not a separate program. The challenge is schedule design, class placement, and students as needs change. NAGC explicitly distinguishes flexible/cluster grouping from other activities.
Curriculum compacting	Low	Medium	Moderate	High	Moderate	High	Moderate	High	Low	High	Cluster grouping tiered differentiation SEM inquiry projects subject acceleration	Advanced learners	Compacting is powerful because it creates time for consistent staff, but it only works if teachers pre-assess consistent replacement work ready. NAGC defines it as the replacement of already-mastered content, enrichment, or other activities.
Multiple Menu Model (MMM)	Low	Medium	Moderate	High	Moderate	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Moderate-High	Low-Moderate	Medium-High	SEM tiered differentiation compacting inquiry units	Mostly advanced learners, though better curriculum can help all	MMM is best understood as a teacher planning framework. Its strength is improving unit design and creating rich learning experiences. Families may not "see" it as easily because it lives behind the scenes.
SEM-R	Low-Moderate	Medium	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	High	High (for reading)	Moderate	Medium-High	Tiered differentiation compacting reading workshop cluster grouping	Advanced readers and some on-level readers, less of a full intervention model for struggling readers	SEM-R is one of the more concrete reading models because of the hooks, supported independent reading, and teacher conferencing. It is easier to explain to parents than SEM overall, but UConn is clear that it enhances rather than replaces other strategies.

Key Learning #1

The strongest future system combines multiple research-based practices rather than relying on a single advanced learner program.

Most Frequently Supported Components:

- ✓ Cluster Grouping
- ✓ Flexible Grouping
- ✓ Differentiated Instruction
- ✓ Curriculum Compacting
- ✓ Enrichment Opportunities

Key Learning #2

Strong classroom instruction is the foundation to successful advanced academics programming.

Successful advanced academics depends on:

- ✓ Teacher expertise
- ✓ Flexible instructional practices
- ✓ Meaningful challenge
- ✓ Student readiness
- ✓ Ongoing progress monitoring

Emerging Recommendation

Near-Term Priorities

Implement and strengthen:

- ❑ Strengthen flexible instructional grouping practices
- ❑ Increase opportunities for appropriate academic challenge
- ❑ Expand instructional practices that respond to demonstrated student readiness
- ❑ Continue building teacher capacity to meet the needs of advanced learners

Future Design Principles

As district capacity and resources allow, continue to:

- ❑ Expand opportunities for advanced learners
- ❑ Increase access to rigorous and engaging learning experiences
- ❑ Strengthen instructional practices that respond to student readiness
- ❑ Build a coherent K–8 advanced learning system
- ❑ Refine pathways based on research, data, and stakeholder feedback

What Hasn't Changed

- ❖ Our commitment to challenging every learner.
- ❖ Our belief that advanced learners deserve rigorous opportunities.
- ❖ Our commitment to identifying students through multiple measures.
- ❖ Our expectation that every student can continue to grow.
- ❖ Our work to build a stronger, more equitable K-8 system.