**MCCPTA Vice President for Educational Issues 2020-21 (February 10 Board of Directors report)**

By Rodney Peele

**Activities (since January 12)**

MCCPTA Board of Directors (January 13)

Richard Montgomery HS PTSA meeting (January 19)

MCCPTA Executive Committee meeting with Superintendent Smith (January 20)

Julius West rising 8th graders articulation information night for parents (January 20)

Richard Montgomery HS college application workshop for 11th graders (January 20)

Maryland State Board of Education meeting (January 26)

MCCPTA Delegates Assembly (January 26)

MCCPTA special education touch base (January 27)

MCCPTA leadership training (January 27)

MCPS Board of Education meeting (January 28)

MCCPTA Executive Committee meeting (January 30)

RMHS PTSA board meeting (January 31)

MCPS Board of Education meeting (February 9)

**Updates:**

**Return to school MP3:**

* <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/publicinfo/community/school-year-2020-2021/Community-Update-20210209.html>
* Wednesdays will remain virtual for all students.
* March 1 return to school buildings: Approximately 500 students with most intensive needs may return to school (up to 68 locations). Also, some CTE students (grades 11 and 12 prioritized) may also return for certain programs and locations. 4 days/week. Parents should receive preliminary information from schools this week, and an email next week, with Feb. 25 deadline to decide.
* March 15 return to school buildings: Group 1.1 includes K-3, METS, more special populations and CTE. By April 6: Group 1.2 includes Pre-K, grades 4-6 and12, and more special populations and CTE. By April 19: Group 2.1 includes grades 8-9, 11. By April 26: Grades 7 and 10. Schools should begin informing families this week and next week, with an email to Phase 1 families by Feb. 23 and a deadline to decide by Feb. 26.
* March 1-12 blackout on requesting changes. Students may always switch from in school buildings to virtual, but going from virtual back to school buildings is conditional on space available.
* **Calendar:** The State Board of Education denied MCPS a waiver to turn four days of the week of March 9-12 into teacher/building preparation rather than student instruction days. Instead, the BOE approved Monday March 8 as no school for students, and announced that March 9-10 will be asynchronous learning days. Spring Break and the last day of school (June 16) remain unchanged.
* **Weekly schedules:** Title I ES (31 schools) will have in person 4 days/week. Focus ES (38 schools) will have K-3 in person 4 days/week, and 4-5 will rotate A/B in person alternate weeks. Remaining ES (66 schools) will have K-2 in person 4 days/week and 3-5 rotate A/B in person alternate weeks. MS and HS will be A/B rotations in person alternate weeks.
* **Bell times:** ES schools will return to 9:00-3:25 or 9:25-3:50 schedules. Secondary schools will still have learning begin at 9 a.m. (virtual or in school building) while the school day will be 7:45-2:30 (HS) and 8:15-3:00 (MS) for those in the buildings. Schools are developing support periods in the morning time when students are in buildings before classes begin at 9.

**Grading and Reporting:**

* The guidance is posted publicly here:

<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/info/grading/report-cards-secondary.aspx>

**Course Load:**

* MCCPTA submitted a letter to MCPS on January 19 requesting additional flexibilities, including to allow secondary students to take Certificate of Merit courses as Credit/No Credit in courses not specifically required for graduation, during the 2020–2021 school year. MCPS responded affirmatively by letter to MCCPTA on January 27 confirming:
* Retroactively allowing grades of Credit/No Credit in up to two courses taken during the first semester of 2020–2021.
* Extending the timeline to withdraw from a high school course without notation on the academic record, or declare Credit/No Credit, from the 25th day of the semester to the beginning of the second marking period of the semester.
* Retroactively applying the extension of the timeline for withdrawing from a course, without a notation on the academic record, to include the first semester of the 2020–2021 school year.

**SAT/ACT/PSAT/AP/IB:**

* The College Board confirmed that it will offer three administration periods for AP exams: The originally scheduled dates (May 3–7, 10–12, 14, 17) may only be taken in school. MCPS now has the option to change to a second (May 18–21, 24–28) or third (June 1–4, 7–11) administration period with in person or virtual testing.

<https://apstudents.collegeboard.org/ap-2020-2021/about-2021-ap-exams>

* IB Organization has announced that IB diploma program schools may administer tests at a later date (Nov. 2021, or spring 2022), but for those schools who intend to test at the usual time in May 2021 now have a choice of whether to take the test or to use other measures to determine diploma status.

<https://www.ibo.org/news/news-about-the-ib/update-for-may-2021-diploma-programme-and-career-related-programme-examination-session/>

* College Board announced it will eliminate the optional essay test on the SAT, as well as subject tests.
* MCPS may offer an in-school SAT day for 11th graders (which could be used for merit scholarship competition in lieu of missing the PSAT this year) and an in-school PSAT day for 10th graders. Potential dates are April 13 or 27.

**Magnet selection**

* As previously reported this winter, MCPS decided not to use CogAT testing for students applying this year to MS and HS magnet programs. In addition, MCPS decided to select MS students from a pool of central office-identified qualified candidates by lottery. MCPS apparently intends to retain the lottery as a component of student selection for certain magnet programs.

**Maryland State Graduation requirements:**

* The MCCPTA Curriculum Committee plans to hold a workshop on the new graduation requirements next Wednesday, Feb. 17, from noon to 1 p.m.
* Maryland State Board of Education has approved the following changes, so Maryland State Department of Education will propose regulations to implement these changes beginning in the 2021-22 school year (affecting rising 9th graders).
* We expect MSDE to publish proposed regulations on Friday February 12, with comments due by March 15.
* For incoming 9th graders in 2021-22: Credit requirements: math (+1 credit = 4), health (+ ½ credit = 1), technology (changed to “computer science” = 1), world language (changed to “same language” = 2), advanced technology (no longer 2 credit option = 0), and other electives ( - ½ credit = 3.5)
* Dual enrolled students can get HS credit for college courses aligned with MD standards
* Math explanation for increase from 3 to 4 credits:  16 other states require 4 credits; 15 locals in MD including Montgomery County already require 4 credits.
* Health explanation for increase from 0.5 to 1.0 credits:  more legislatively required content
* Tech credit explanation for change in subject:  new K-12 state computer science standards; high demand field and exposure in K-12 leads to more college majors for women and underrepresented minorities.
* Change Algebra, English, government and science state tests to become 20% of course grade rather than a separate graduation requirement.  For now, MISA would still be required until they decide how to align a state science exam with a particular science course. The change from a standalone graduation requirement to becoming a portion of the course grade would be implemented over 2 transition years (until 2022-23 school year).
* Students who take state assessments for 2020-21 and 2021-22 school year will be required to take, but not required to pass. Students will not be required to complete a bridge project, either.

**Maryland State Department of Education stats for Marking Period 1:**

* Fall enrollment down 3% overall (down 10% for kindergarten)
* Statewide hours/day: 4.2 hours (K-5: 3.9; 6-8: 4.3; 9-12: 4.4)
* MCPS hours/week: 20.3