

Overview:

End of year, and even though we have barely started quarter two, it is really time to start thinking about NEXT YEAR! Read on!

November/Early December Meetings:

- 11/07 – Safe Tech Strategy Call
- 11/07 – Area VP meeting with OSSI Associate Superintendents
- 11/07 – MCCPTA Executive Committee Meeting; MCCPTA BOD Meeting
- 11/08 – District Assessment Committee
- 11/09 – Meeting with Chief Academic Officer and Director of Secondary Curriculum – Safe Tech Concerns
- 11/19 – Curriculum – Math Review
- 11/21 – Executive Committee Meeting with Dr. Smith
- 11/28 – Curriculum – English Language Arts Review
- 12/05 – Career Readiness Stakeholders Meeting
- 12/10 – MCPS/MCCPTA Meeting with Damascus Parent Leadership

Activity Summary:

- **Curriculum RFP** – MCCPTA representatives participated in the curriculum vendor reviews on November 19 (math) and 28 (ELA, rescheduled from Nov 15 snow date). The website had the presentations posted until December 9th and the public was allowed to submit comments. Sadly, the presentations have been taken down from the link Dr. Navarro sent out on December 3rd. My general thoughts – I sat in on two sessions (along with several other MCCPTA board members) and I saw some options I was very excited about and some options that did not “curl my toes.” Key items I am still unsure about:
 - While we know Compacted Math will continue through next year, it is unclear how we will deal with math going forward. None of the options have the compact aspects of 4/5 and 5/6 plus the compacting of Math 7/8 (into what we call IM) as none of those accelerations are part of a “regular” curriculum that is aligned to MCCR.
 - The RFP had a request for Algebra 1 products. Dr. Navarro’s message on 11/13 listed the high schools that would roll out the new Algebra 1 but in our review we did not see any Algebra 1 products.
 - The English Language Arts (ELA) is worth discussing further particularly since many of our elementary schools recently started participating in the Elementary Literacy Curriculum/ELC (Jr. Great Books, William & Mary, and Lucy Caulkins Writing). It is unclear how the ELC integrates with ELA offerings.
- **District Assessment Committee** – This work is linked to Evidence of Learning and the 2.2% testing limit put on schools through *More Learning, Less Testing of 2017*. As a diverse group of stakeholders, we are reviewing each of the current assessments being collected at the Central Level (k-12) to provide recommendations this spring to the BOE. The work of this committee includes looking at each assessment, identifying the purpose and time limit, and recommending what should stay/go! Folks can follow the work here -- <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/boe/community/assessments.aspx>
- **Safe Tech** – Last month, I worked with the Safe Tech subcommittee to ensure this group had opportunity to share their research/concerns surrounding the access to screens during the school day with the Chief Academic Officer and the Director of Secondary Curriculum. It seemed in light of the new curriculum being reviewed, it was prudent to have this meeting prior to the final selections being made.
 - RELATED – In a meeting with Dr. Smith, the Executive Committee asked some specific questions about Naviance and how the data is used that students input into this system. We also asked for clarification surrounding some counselor input with regard to the importance being placed on this particular tool. I’m including the letter and FAQs and encourage our parents to ask questions.



Enclosure - Naviance FrequentlyConcerns Shared.pdf



Response to

- MS Report Cards** – I contacted the Director of Secondary Curriculum and the Chief Technology Officer to request they review the coding of middle school report cards. I can see how it may be confusing to the “new to middle school” parent to see courses (like Advanced English 6) coded as a Gifted and Talented (G) course – when clearly it’s not. Equally confusing is when magnet courses aren’t coded as “G.” IM is “G” no matter if the course is taken in 6th or 7th grade. The new “expansion courses” designed for high achieving middle schoolers (that rolled out to 20 of our middle schools last year) are NOT coded “G.” On top of that, there are several other upgrades needed for the report cards to be accurate (e.g., removal of “student exempt from final exam”). Sadly, the response was -- “hopefully by next year.” (Can you see my head tilt and my brow furrow?) I hope during testimony season, we can advocate for staff time so basic materials (like report cards) can be updated in a timely manner so we aren’t reliant on another document or oral tradition to explain inconsistencies.
- Transitions/Course Selections** – If you know me, you probably know, this is my “personal passion project!” Next month, middle and high schools will begin talking to students about what courses they should take next year and I continue to challenge MCPS to elevate these decisions with students/families. Last year, we still had “gatekeeping” occurring where students were not permitted to take courses because they weren’t in a certain grade. We still had counselors putting kids into courses they aren’t interested in taking because “there is room.” We heard from several parents this year about the concerns they had when their student was placed in honors courses having barely passed the prerequisite and by the time they yell “mercy” they were told “too late to move out of the course.” I know we can do this better! Who’s with me?
- Bridge Projects – REPEATED TOPIC FROM LAST MONTH!** I’m repeating this piece from last month because I’m not sure how well folks are connecting to this point and **I think this may be worth discussing as we go into the Operating Budget season.**

The chart below (in red) represents the number of students that didn’t pass PARCC 10 ELA last May (passing this test with a 3 or better is a graduation requirement currently). In just a few conversations with parents of students that are currently on Bridge Projects (and looking on the MCPS site), there are two concerns – 1) what is the actual “process” schools follow when a student doesn’t pass PARCC 10 ELA and 2) do we have adequate staffing to support more than a quarter of our students that will likely have to complete these Bridge Projects to be eligible for graduation.

I’ve had this conversation with several MCPS staff in the last month and this is a growing concern. What I am challenging us to all think about is the timing of these bridge projects. The process is a local one (each school does it differently) – so highly organized schools may be following one proactive pathway while another school may find themselves scrambling to meet these students’ needs.

2018 Results for English Language Arts Grade 10 All Students										
Show # Descriptions »	Exceeded (5)		Met (4)		Approached (3)		Partially Met (2)		Not Met (1)	
	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
2018										
TOTAL Students	23.6	<u>3148</u> 13325	32.6	<u>4341</u> 13325	16.5	<u>2205</u> 13325	11.7	<u>1558</u> 13325	15.6	<u>2073</u> 13325