

Since the Start of School -- Meetings/Calls/Events:

- 10/1 Meeting with Curriculum Committee/OCIP & OSSI
- 10/3 Conference Call with GCC committee chair/vice chair
- 10/4 Communications Meeting – MCPS/MCCPTA
- 10/10 BOD Meeting – (called in)
- 10/15 Early College – MC, Takoma Park campus
- 10/19 Arrive Alive – Safe Routes Forum
- 10/21 County Council, Education and Culture Committee Meeting
- 10/22 Delegates Assembly, Carver
- 10/23 MCCPTA/BOE Meeting, Carver
- 10/24 Curriculum Advisory Assembly -- CANCELLED
- 10/28 BOE Meeting, Public Comment on Dashboards
- 10/29 Visit Kids Museum
- 10/30 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), Gude
- 10/31 Navarro/Statham, Meeting on Magnets and Teacher selection/credentials
- 11/4 AVP Meeting with OSSI Assoc Sups and Directors
- 11/5 Meeting with Curriculum Committee/OCIP & OSSI
- 11/5 CIP Public Hearing

Key Activities/Concerns:

- 1) **Graduation requirements** – See September report for long, exhaustive list of issues I’m tracking. October’s “skinny” updates –
 - a. In a meeting this month with OCIP, we learned MSDE/BOE will not return the “pass” level to a 725/”3”. The new “pass rate” remains a 750/”4” in Algebra 1 and ELA10 to earn a HS diploma. Advocates should look very closely at the individual HS (and MS school, for Algebra 1) pass rates and think about the additional staffing needed to support bridge projects when building testimony for Operating Budget season.
 - b. September 24, 2019, the State BOE had a presentation from the Graduation Task Force that included a slide presentation with the following being proposed (that would require regulation changes). MCCPTA – PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO THESE PROPOSED CHANGES!!
<http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/stateboard/Documents/09242019/TabE-HSTaskForceGraduationPathwaysDualEnrollment.pdf>
 - i. Mathematics: Increase credit requirements from 3 to 4 credits; allow Computer Science as math credit
 - ii. Health Education: Increase credit requirement from .5 to 1.0
 - iii. Technology Education: Reduce credit requirement from 1.0 to .5
 - iv. Graduation Pathway: Require two pathways - Successful completion of a State-approved Career and Technology Education (CTE) program and/or completion of University System of Maryland (USM) requirements (two years of the same language, Algebra II, and two of three sciences as lab sciences)
 - v. Dual Enrollment: Dual Enrolled students who successfully complete a college course that is aligned with MD standards should receive high school (HS) credit.
- 2) **MCAP Assessments** – We have been saying for a year “PARCC is going away” but until now, little was known about MCAP assessments, the assessment that is replacing it. The aim is for the assessment to be just as rigorous as the PARCC but with shorter sections, taking less time to administer. The following was delivered to the State BOE that gives some insight into where we are headed!

<http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/stateboard/Documents/10222019/TabF-MdComprehensiveAssessmentProgram.pdf> Key changes include:

- a. Many of the assessments are in 4 parts (and will remain that way) but 240 minute assessments are proposed to be 160 minutes; 360 minute assessments will now be 280. For specific grade level assessments, see page 9 in the link above.
 - b. The other big change – the MCAP will move to Computer Adaptive vs. Fixed Form
 - i. In 2019-2020, the mathematics and ELA/L assessments will be fixed form due to a limited item pool this first year.
 - ii. In subsequent years, all grades in ELA/L and mathematics 3-7 and algebra I will be computer adaptive.
- 3) **MS/HS Course Selection – What to Expect in January:** This month the MCCPTA AVPs met with the OSSI Chief, Associate Superintendents and Directors. In that meeting, OSSI explained that going forward, Principals must report to OSSI and justify when eliminating any course selections (e.g., only offering honors level programming, removing Math 7 or Math 8 from middle school offerings). To remove a “level” the Principal must provide the data to OSSI *BEFORE* publishing a course schedule that eliminates leveled class options. Likewise, if a school has eliminated a “level” in the past, the Principal must justify the decision to continue that practice, using data to support the decision.
- a. OSSI is very concerned about barriers to higher level, more rigorous coursework. Historically, on-level courses were primarily accessed by “impacted” students and students with disciplinary concerns. Removal of on-level courses has resulted in more students accessing higher level coursework and strengthening the position that all students, regardless of race and/or socio-economic background, can succeed in these courses.
 - b. OSSI did not respond to concerns raised about students that may not want to be in an “all honors/all AP” schedule. In some schools, the sweeping elimination of courses forces students to pursue higher level coursework in areas that are not areas of strength (and therefore leaving little time to pursue outside/extracurricular interests because of the heavy academic load that is “required” because there isn’t an option of “chemistry” or “English”). Concerns about mental health/stress impacts on the student was not addressed.
- 4) **Data Sets:** Laura Stewart (VP Advocacy) and I both provided testimony during the 10/28/19 BOE meeting addressing concerns about the move to “dashboards” that are not printable, downloadable, and/or easily accessed, if interested in more than one school (so, in other words, very difficult for advocates to use).
- 5) **Centrally-Designed Programs --- The Obvious and Not-So-Obvious Oversight Challenges** – Michelle Gluck (GCC Chair) and I continue to advocate for central oversight of the magnet programs so that the “brochure” and the “actual” align. MCPS has been responsive to our request and has begun to make inroads in the coordination between centers. We’ve engaged in extensive conversations regarding staff having/obtaining the GATES credential that is now part of the COMAR requirements related to gifted education. Over 50 secondary teachers have requested to be part of a cohort to pursue the credential.
- 6) **Communications:** Last month, I wrote about a lengthy description about the PSAT – what it is, what it is not, and how it is characterized (which is completely dependent on where you live/who’s your principal)! At the MCCPTA/BOE meeting and again at the AVP/OSSI meeting, we were able to share the “range” of messaging that occurred with the PSAT administration. We asked MCPS to view the PSAT communiques as an example of a bigger issue – the communication skill of the principal (and his/her personal beliefs) will dictate the level of detail available to students/parents for what is supposed to be county-wide opportunity. We requested MCPS look at the Early College and/or High School Choice communications (that went out centrally to all families) as a better practice to ensure consistent messaging and then allow the principals to provide follow up/additional details, as they see fit for their community. OSSI will be taking this issue to the upcoming HS Principal Professional Learning Community (PLC) meeting.