

## March 2017 CURRICULUM COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair: Tammy Clark [clark\\_9301@verizon.net](mailto:clark_9301@verizon.net)  
Subcommittee Chairs: Amanda Graver – Elementary  
Jamahl Johnson – Middle School  
Cynthia Simonson – High School

### Events:

February 27<sup>th</sup> - Tammy, Amanda & Cynthia, along with Jen McDonald met with Erick Lang, MCPS Associate Superintendent OCIP, Scott Murphy, MCPS Director of Secondary Curriculum, Niki Hazel, MCPS Director of Elementary Curriculum, and Ben OuYang, MCPS Director of Career Readiness and Innovative Programs. The Curriculum Committee meets with OCIP staff several times throughout the year in order to share issues being raised by parents and students concerning curriculum and instruction, and to learn of MCPS curriculum changes, updates and events.

The following issues were discussed:

*Regular Quarterly Assessments (RQAs):* Our committee continues to hear concerns from parents that the RQAs are not being sent home, or in some case, not allowed to be seen by parents. Mr. Murphy is continuing efforts to clearly communicate to administrators and teachers the message that RQAs are to be sent home once all are graded.

Dr. Lang clarified that centrally created RQAs are expected to go home, but there are many high school courses that do not have centrally created RQAs, such as IB, AP and upper level language courses. The teachers for these courses may create their own quarterly assessments and call them "RQAs", but these tests are not the RQAs which replaced final exams as a means to assess student learning. We pointed out that county-developed RQAs vs. teacher developed "RQAs" can lead to confusion and misunderstanding.

We also discussed the elimination of half day schedules at the high schools due to the elimination of final exams. Parents have noted that students attending the magnet programs experienced very heavy workloads at the end of the semester. There was much overlap of RQAs, end of semester projects, cumulative assessments, etc.

We will continue to follow up with staff to make sure that the same message is delivered and understood by students, parents and teachers.

*Science Curriculum News:* The shift to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) is leading to changes in the high school science course sequence and the replacement of the Maryland School Assessment in science with the Maryland Integrated Science Assessment (MISA). MCPS and MCCPTA are co-sponsoring a county-wide Science Curriculum Parent Information Night on

Monday, March 20<sup>th</sup> at 7PM at Richard Montgomery High School. Curriculum staff and teachers will present information on the shift that is occurring with the adaptation of NGSS. The evening will include break-out sessions for science curriculum at the elementary, middle and high school levels. The link for Science Night information is:  
[http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/science\\_night/](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/science_night/)

The PDF of the printed postcard is here:

[http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/science-night/ScienceFair\\_POSTCARD%208%205x11.pdf](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/science-night/ScienceFair_POSTCARD%208%205x11.pdf)

The curriculum committee will actively promote this event and continue to share information with our community.

*Mathematics:* We discussed the concerns about the variances among elementary schools in implementing the change in identification criteria for Compact Math. In particular, parents are concerned about the experience of the 5<sup>th</sup> graders included in this year's 2<sup>nd</sup> year of CM, without having had the first year of the program. For example, last year an ES had identified a total of 9 4<sup>th</sup> graders to start CM (math 4/5). This school identified 18 additional students at the end of last year to participate in the second year of CM (math 5/6). Students and families need to know what supports are in place to help students who have limited or missing instruction on certain concepts which were not part of the on grade level math for 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Dr. Lang and Dr. Hazel explained that data markers, including report card grades, PARCC scores and MAP scores are all considered when determining if CM is appropriate for a student. These same indicators are used to determine placement for starting middle school. We raised the issue that for some students, there are middle schools which will no longer be offering Math 7 and Math 8. This means that CM students will be placed in Math 6 or Investigations in Mathematics for 7<sup>th</sup> grade.