

Magruder Cluster – September 2018

2018-19 Cluster Coordinators: Deirdre Appel and Cynthia Simonson

CLUSTER NIGHT!

September 14th – Each year, the Magruder Cluster PT(S)As work together to sponsor “Cluster Night.” This is one of our biggest “community building” events that includes:

- Elementary and Middle School students compete in a football toss (and a trophy is placed in the winning school until next year’s competition)
- Poms and Cheerleaders facepaint and create “noisemakers” with students as part of the pre-game activities.
- All students wearing cluster-related spirit wear are admitted for free to the game.
- At halftime, students “parade” down the track, by school!

If you haven’t done something like this in your cluster, we highly recommend. This is so successful, this winter, we will be having “cluster night” basketball events and will engage our poms and cheerleaders in working with elementary kids to participate during halftime shows.

MAGRUDER Cluster Coordinators/OSSI Meeting

September 13th – This was our first face-to-face meeting with our OSSI Director.

- We asked OSSI to help our cluster schools in using MyMCPS Portal more effectively. We know from our own experiences (and talking to other parents) some schools aren’t using the portal to communicate school-wide messages. While other methods may be used, we requested the portal be used for all messages to begin driving more and more families to that source. Parents are finding it difficult to remember what school is using email/phone/portal/other methods.
- We planted the seeds for a future discussion regarding the math trajectory our students are on and specifically what guidance schools are following in determining the next year’s math course selection – especially as it pertains to transition between middle and high school. How does PARCC scores influence that choice?
- Our aim this year is to build a stronger PTA/Principal Partnership and we discussed OSSI’s expectation that cluster coordinators be invited to at least one “Principals” meeting. We also asked OSSI’s assistance in helping us gather the CIP needs of our schools. Some of our principals have been reluctant to pass along the needs of the building to the cluster coordinators/PTA presidents.
- We expressed concerns we are hearing from our elementary schools about the Elem Reading Levels/Lexile Communications – the information has been confusing and difficult for parent that are trying to understand.
- In our meeting, we asked that OSSI emphasize the importance of calendar coordination among the schools. Our parents often complain that big schoolwide events for a middle and elementary school are too often being held on the same evening – forcing parents to choose between one child/school and another. The PTAs are trying to coordinate and PTAs are asking for support in ensuring the Principals will do the same.
- We discussed the Safety/Security Strategic Plan and the timeline for completion of current projects and timeline for the remaining schools to have vestibules.

Next OSSI Meeting: October 19th