

Magruder Cluster – October 2018

2018-19 Cluster Coordinators: Deirdre Appel and Cynthia Simonson

MAGRUDER Cluster Coordinators/OSSI Meeting

October 19th – This was our second face-to-face meeting with our OSSI Director.

- We approached OSSI based on concerns about the Social-Emotional Program (formerly titled Emotional Disabilities) and the high concentration of students in one of our elementary schools. The high number of students means lack of privacy/space and an inability to effectively support these students. Staff must rely on using former closets and/or ushering students to portables to remove students from situations.
- We continue to solicit OSSI support in addressing the misunderstandings among some principals about the role of PTA. We have asked for OSSI to encourage principals to promote membership, participate in activities, and help solicit volunteers.
- We have a growing concern among our cluster as parents have questioned COSAs.
- We brought to OSSI's attention our concerns that some teachers (particularly at the middle school) may not realize students are ineligible (in accordance with federal rules) to open certain social media accounts to posting assignments on Twitter and/or encouraging students to deliver assignments by posting on Instagram may be inappropriate.
- We continue to be concerned about the communications surrounding Reading Levels/Lexile. The information has been confusing and difficult for parents that are trying to understand.
- We've asked OSSI to share with us the % of parents that have enacted their portal sign in. This can help us target communications if there are a large number of parents not even accessing.
- Specific School Issues –
 - Flower Hill -- continues to have concerns with safe drop off points for students arriving by car. We will address this further in CIP testimony.
 - Magruder -- parents have concerns about the availability of counseling staff, especially in the weeks leading up to college early applications. OSSI was able to confirm no planned leave has been granted for any counselors during those weeks.
 - Magruder – we've requested correlation data for 2018 AP scores against the grades achieved to be able to see if the AP students are overwhelmingly receiving high marks in courses but then unable to achieve passing scores on the exams.
 - Magruder – significant concerns surrounding the condition of the building. Unsure if work orders simply haven't been written or if there are so many orders, MCPS simply can't address them all. Will include in CIP testimony.

Upcoming

- Magruder PTSA is planning a screening of "Screenagers" on February 19th and will be inviting the entire Magruder Cluster – specifically targeting 4th-8th grade parents.
- Magruder will be hosting two "cluster nights" where students in spiritwear can come to a basketball game for free in January – building community spirit during basketball season.
- Next OSSI Meeting: TBD
- Cluster Coordinator meeting with Principals: Not yet invited

Of Interest

- Two Magruder students were finalists for Councilmember Rice's "Council Member of the Day" competition. YAY!
- Magruder female football player was featured on front page of Washington Times on Nov 1st.
- Several Magruder AP Spanish students have been asked (and agreed) to support our cluster elementary school teachers during Parent-Teacher Conferences this year, providing translation services.