

Magruder Cluster

The Magruder Cluster hosted the Board of Education on Thursday, February 16th. Over 150 people were in attendance. More than 20 individuals spoke at this forum, giving the BOE a strong sense of what is working well in our cluster and where we see opportunity for improvement, both within our cluster and MCPS-wide. The following are the “outstanding questions” from our evening that we forwarded to the Ombudsman (who has since forwarded to 17 other MCPS staff persons for input).

- **2.0 Curriculum Access:** The “portal” that will give parents access to the curriculum has been promised for several years. If the roll out of a parent portal (MyMCPS) does not include access to curriculum, what “work around” will be provided Fall 2017 so parents do not spend another year without access?

- **Elementary Report Cards:** What is the timeline for the revised report card? How will the revised report cards increase the transparency of student achievement and ability? What grades will be used and what are the rubrics for earning each grade?

- **Supporting Our Learners (Differentiation/Accelerated and Enriched Instruction Opportunities):** How is MCPS measuring student learning to ensure every student experiences a year of growth? If we adopt the commonly used MCPS metaphor of 'all boats rising', are all boats rising at similar rates regardless of where they started or is MCPS only concerned that all boats rise to an arbitrary threshold- once they get to the sand bar level, that's enough?

- **Advanced Placement Scores:** How is MCPS intervening and what strategies are being employed to better support our teachers and give the future Magruder students a better chance at success on AP exams?

- **Equal Opportunities – PSAT practice:** Will MCPS be providing specific direction regarding the PSAT practice opportunities, ensuring that choices are system-wide, not predicated on zip code?

- **RQAs vs. Semester Exams:** RQAs have no study guides and a Board member stated the RQAs can help make sure all the content is being covered. How is the grading being adjusted so students aren't penalized because of teacher preparedness? Can honors classes institute semester exams as a differentiated instruction product?

- **MyMCPS Portal:** The January 2017 memo referenced by the Board does not specifically address Elementary School access to this “upgraded Edline” system. Will student assessment data (e.g., MAP scores) also be accessible?

- **Student Safety/Security:** There has been a reported increase in violent behaviors. We have heard reports of drug/gang activity. If a Principal is not able to resolve with immediacy, how is the Board intervening?

- **Special Education (ED):** What additional support will be provided to schools that are severely understaffed to meet the needs of the current ED population? Will security and administrative staff be allocated to meet the increased demands (compared to non-ED students) on a per student basis that ED students require?

- **Next Generation Science Standards:** Will MCPS be using the “acceleration model” built into NGSS curriculum (as we do with 4/5 math or 7IM) to allow 6 years of content to be taught in 4 or 5? If so, where will this roll out first? If not, why not?

- **Foreign Language:** Can you provide an explanation for why the only foreign language taught in middle school is high school level? Would a possible solution be to provide appropriate foreign language level teaching to middle schoolers, like private schools and the rest of the world?

- **ACES** – The 2017-18 Operating Budget calls for expanding this to five more high schools. Will Magruder high school be included in this roll out?

- **2014-16 Strategic Tech Plan** – Does this plan include addressing concerns about long-term health and extensive exposure to wireless technology? If not, what plan is addressing this concern?

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