

## **MCCPTA Vice President for Education report 2020-21 (December 9 Board of Directors)**

By Rodney Peele

### **Activities (since November 11)**

MCCPTA Board of Directors (November 12)  
MCPS Ad Hoc Grading and Reporting Workgroup (November 16)  
MCPS Instructional Recovery (November 17)  
MCCPTA Delegates Assembly (November 18) [partial]  
Wootton HS Cluster PTSAs Meeting (November 30)  
MCCPTA AVP prep (December 1)  
MCPS OCIP meeting (December 2)  
MCCPTA ExComm meeting with Superintendent Smith (December 2)  
MCPS Instructional Recovery (December 2)  
RMHS IB course registration (December 2)  
MCPS Board of Education (December 3)  
MCCPTA ExComm touch base with MCPS on COVID-19 metrics (December 7)  
MCPS Instructional Recovery (December 8)  
MCCPTA AVPs and MCPS (December 9)

### **Updates:**

#### **SAT/ACT/PSAT:**

- Testing capacity for scheduled tests Dec. 5 (SAT) and Dec. 12 (ACT) were reduced following new restrictions in Montgomery County. PSAT remains planned for 11<sup>th</sup> graders in January.

#### **Choice (magnet) program updates:**

- Information sessions on MS magnet programs will be Dec. 21 and 22. 5<sup>th</sup> grade parents should get the letter. No CogAT application test this year. MCPS will do universal review of all Grade 5 students in February and recommend placement in magnet programs or home school magnet courses (primarily math and humanities, to date) based on lottery rather than home school cohorts.
- For HS magnet programs, the CogAT will not be held, either. Furthermore, teacher recommendations will not be part of the process. Families will be notified via ParentVue in February of student selection.
- See letters attached.

#### **Grading and Reporting (MP1):**

- Missing student engagement (no log ins) down to 307 by mid November, with many of the remainder in Blair, Gaithersburg, Einstein, Kennedy, Watkins Mill, Clarksburg clusters, and zip codes 20902, 20906, 20877. Majority are Hispanic; often affected by health and economic issues.
- MCPS released partial data from MP1.
- Grade 6 English has more As and more Es, while Grade 6 math has fewer As and many more Es.

- Grade 9 English has fewer As and many more Es while Grade 9 math has fewer As and many more more Es, including nearly half of Hispanic FARMS students.
- Grade 12 English has more As and more Es, and Grade 12 math has more As and more Es.
- Fairfax County reported similar impact in MP1, and far more data. MCCPTA has requested additional data from MCPS.
- MCPS planning to provide more tutors, adjust courses for MP3 to have more reteaching, offer summer school, and reconsider long range curriculum planning.
- National study of MAP scores found students lost more ground in math than reading because math is learned more in school, parents are less help in math, engaging math teachers on line might be harder, and higher student/family stress leads to math anxiety.
- MCPS principals sounded alarm bells about HS math, leading to grading and workload changes (next)

### **Grading and Reporting (MP2):**

- After seeing the grades in MP1, MCPS set about reducing student work loads in MP2. Effective immediately are several key changes.
- MCPS staff commented that some students had 20, 30, even more assignments in a single class in MP1.
- Progress checks may continue as diagnostic tools but not as 10% of grades. This suggests all courses will be graded on a 90-10 ratio rather than some having an 80-10-10 ratio (including 10% for the district progress check). MCCPTA requested but has not received data on progress check performance in MP1 compared to recent years,
- Reduction in graded work (90% category) to a minimum of 7-9, while making sure no one assignment is too large a portion of the quarter grade. There should be an average of one graded assignment/task per week.
- Reduction in homework practice (10% category) to a minimum of 4.
- Teachers must be clear about which asynchronous (not live) work is being graded. Multiple reassessment opportunities may be necessary.
- More leniency in due dates/deadlines. Interim reports and the end of the quarter deadline benchmarks. Teachers will have extended time to submit MP grades.
- Intervention and 2-way required parent/student communication before assigning a zero (0). Teachers should err on the side of a 50 grade instead of a 0.

### **Return to school MP3:**

- MCPS received surveys for 127,112 students (apparently +30K since Dec. 2, after extending deadline to this week), or 79% of the student population. 49.8% selected in person instruction (hybrid model TBD school by school). Those who didn't respond (and 50.2% of those who did) will stay in the virtual only, meaning overall 60% of students will remain virtual. Now, each school must come up with a plan for how it would deliver some content in person for its students who opted for it, within the 3 models described by MCPS (direct instruction, support, and simultaneous). Direct is teacher delivering content in person to classroom of students; simultaneous is teacher delivering content in person to classroom of students with other students watching/participating online; support model means students still attend classes virtually but get additional instruction in person.
- MCPS plans to allow families to review in person instruction plans during week of Jan. 11-15 and confirm acceptance of in person instruction; this is when parents can reconsider sending kids to school buildings after learning how it will work in your particular school(s). No changes in last two weeks of January to allow schools to finalize for spring semester.

**Course Load:**

- MCCPTA continues to advocate on more attention and information for families to reduce course loads in 2020-21. Rather than water down 7-8 classes, MCCPTA is asking MCPS to make it easier for students to take 4-6 classes and not have to take courses not required for graduation. Fewer classes would provide more time to learn more content, particularly for courses that end in an a state, national, or international standards examination. Another way to provide relief for students and families is to allow audit or no-homework options for courses.
- Year-to-year advancement need not be automatic nor stigmatizing (considering past experiences in pandemics and wartime). CEO of the Northwest Evaluation Association: “I would also just say when those students do come back ... what’s going to be the arc of their education? We’re used to being able to put the kids in the next grade. Are we going to be able to do that, or is this a moment to think differently about what a previous grade level’s skills look like? ... Obviously, parents care deeply about moving their kids along on the grade level that matches their age, but is this a moment to think differently about how do we catch kids up, and how do we think about unfinished learning? I think those are two big policy areas where the recognition that we’re just missing some students will be really important as we end the pandemic.”

**Career Readiness:**

- 20,200 enrolled in 2019-20 (up 50% since 2015-16) in 48 programs (up almost 50% since 2015-16) in 11 “career clusters” and earning 5,000 credentials and certifications in 2020.
- Includes JROTC, early college associates degrees in 15 majors and career fields.
- Wheaton/Edison and Seneca Valley campuses, and regional programs at eight HS and three MC campuses.
- More STEM, including IT, environmental science and biotech coming, some culminating with bachelor’s degree a t the Universities at Shady Grove.
- See fact sheet attached.

**Attachments:**

December 4, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians of Grade 5 Students:

Montgomery County Public Schools offers various opportunities for rising Grade 6 students who demonstrate the potential to be successful in enriched and accelerated programming. These opportunities are in both the local middle schools and regional middle school magnet (criteria-based) programs. Local enriched opportunities include two enriched courses in humanities and math along with additional high school credit courses offered in middle school. The regional magnet programs include the Humanities and Communication program at Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (upcounty) and Eastern (downcounty); and Math, Science and Computer Science at Roberto Clemente (upcounty) and Takoma Park (downcounty). A student's home address determines which regional program (upcounty) or (downcounty) they would be assigned.

As you know, the pandemic has reshaped how Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) delivers services to students and families in a virtual setting, and it has impacted established annual admission processes for the criteria-based middle school magnet programs for 2021–2022. Every effort is being made to ensure access and opportunity for students who demonstrate a need for accelerated and enriched instruction, to maintain continuity of programs and processes, and to mitigate interruptions associated with the pandemic.

This year's pandemic plan will continue the universal review of all Grade 5 students by utilizing student performance information about how your student learns. Students whose data indicate that their overall academic profile may demonstrate the potential to succeed in enriched and accelerated instruction will be considered for a seat in either the Humanities and Communication or Math, Science, Computer Science programs and/or local enriched programming without having to submit an application.

Multiple criteria will continue to be used to identify students for the program and include pre-COVID and 2020 data such as report card grades, reading level, external assessments Measures of Academic Progress-Reading (MAP-R) and Measures of Academic Progress-Math (MAP-M) and student services (students who receive services in ESOL- English for Speakers of Other Languages, FARMS- Free and Reduced Meals System, IEP- Individualized Education Plan or a 504 plan). Due to limitations with in-person instruction and test security, the Cognitive Abilities Assessment (CogAT) will not be administered.

The universal review process will occur in February 2021 by identifying the students who demonstrate the potential for success in enriched and accelerated instruction. These students will be placed into a lottery pool. All students in the lottery pool are guaranteed enriched instruction either in the regional magnet or local enriched courses. Students with missing data, such as students new to MCPS for the 2020-2021 school year, private/home schooled students may be considered for placement into the candidate pool by an expert review panel pending all required data is submitted. See below for more information. Once the lottery pool has been identified, a lottery will be conducted for placement into a regional magnet program. All other students will be guaranteed placement in one or both of the humanities and math enrichment courses. Students attending the Middle School Magnet Consortium Schools—Argyle, Loiederman and Parkland will have access to the enriched courses at those middle schools.

For more information, parents/guardians are invited to attend a parent/guardian information presentation regarding the program and admission process.

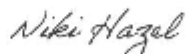
This presentation will available on the MCPS website:

- Eastern and Takoma Park MS Presentation (Virtual), December 21, 2020, at 6 p.m. (English), 7 p.m. (Spanish)
- Roberto Clemente and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Presentation (Virtual), December 22, 2020, at 6 p.m. (English), 7 p.m. (Spanish)

For additional information:

- Visit the following website for more information about the programs and admission process:  
<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/specialprograms/middle/>
- Contact a team member at the Division of Consortia Choice and Application Program Services at [DCCAPS@mcpsmd.org](mailto:DCCAPS@mcpsmd.org) or 240-740-2540. Please allow 24 hours for a response.
- Information for students with missing data such as students new to MCPS, private/home schooled students is [here](#).

Sincerely,



Associate Superintendent, Curriculum  
and Instructional Programs

Maryland's Largest School District

## MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*Expanding Opportunity and Unleashing Potential*

OFFICE OF TEACHING, LEARNING, AND SCHOOLS

November 30, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians of Grade 8 Magnet (Criteria-based) Applicants:

Thank you for your application to one or more high school magnet (criteria-based) programs for the 2021–2022 school year. This letter provides an update about next steps in the admission process and adjustments that are being made as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As you know, the pandemic has reshaped how Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) delivers services to students and families in a virtual setting, and it has impacted established annual admission processes for the high school magnet (criteria-based) programs for 2021–2022. Every effort is being made to ensure access and opportunity for all students to accelerated and enriched instruction, to maintain continuity of programs and processes, and to mitigate interruptions associated with the pandemic.

This year's Pandemic Plan for the high school magnet admission process will continue using multiple measures and professional review committees. Multiple criteria will include pre-COVID and 2020 data such as report card grades, reading level, external assessments (Measures of Academic Progress-Reading and Measures of Academic Progress-Mathematics) and student services (students who receive services in ESOL—English for Speakers of Other Languages, FARMS—Free and Reduced-price Meals System, IEP—Individualized Education Plan and or 504 plan. Due to limitations with in-person instruction and test security, the Cognitive Abilities Assessment (CogAT) and scored essay will not be administered. In addition, as a result of conditions associated with virtual-only instruction, teacher recommendations will not be part of the process this year. Students with incomplete data and private/home schooled students will be considered in the review.

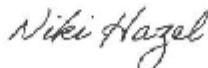
The next steps will include the central review of the performance measures noted above for your student, along with the application submissions collected in ParentVUE. In January 2021, review committees will assemble and evaluate each student's academic record for each program they have applied. Parents and Grade 8 applicants will receive results in ParentVUE in early February 2021.

We appreciate your patience and understanding during this unprecedented time and are committed to ensuring that our students continue to receive high quality instruction and services.

For more information:

- Most of your questions can be answered by visiting these [Frequently Asked Questions](#).
- For additional program and admission information, visit the resources [here](#).
- For specific programs questions, contact the high school program coordinator at the school. For specific admission questions, contact a team member at the Division of Consortia Choice and Application Program Services at [DCCAPS@mcpsmd.org](mailto:DCCAPS@mcpsmd.org) or 240-740-2540.

Sincerely,



Niki Hazel, Associate Superintendent  
Curriculum and Instructional Programs



*Maryland's Largest School District*  
**MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
*Expanding Opportunity and Unleashing Potential*

## CAREER READINESS PROGRAMS in Montgomery County Public Schools

In the rapidly changing economy, MCPS Career Readiness programs combine strong academics with technical skills and real-world professional experiences that give students a competitive advantage for lifelong career success. Today's industries are depending on a talented workforce that has the background knowledge, technical skills, and career-related experiences to fill the high-demand, high wage jobs of the future. Now more than ever, MCPS Career Readiness Programs are responding to the changing economy and ensuring that all students have the access and opportunity to gain an early edge on their future.



**COLLEGE CREDIT**



**INDUSTRY CERTIFICATIONS**



**TWO-YEAR ASSOCIATE'S DEGREES**



**INTERNSHIPS & APPRENTICESHIPS**

48

PROGRAMS OF STUDY  
(34 IN 2015-2016)

20,200

STUDENTS ENROLLED

during 2019-2020 school year  
(13,323 IN 2015-2016)

SINCE 2016

- 57% increase in students who are Concentrators
- 42% increase in graduates who are Program Completers

11

CAREER CLUSTERS

- Arts, Media, and Communications
- Business Management and Finance
- Career Research and Development
- Construction and Development
- Consumer Services, Hospitality and Tourism
- Environmental, Agriculture and Natural Resources
- Health and Biosciences
- Public Service and Leadership, Education
- Information Technology
- Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology
- Transportation Technologies

Earning over 5,000 industry recognized credentials and certifications in 2020

## New, Innovative Programs Aligned to the Changing Economy

### Since 2017, New Programs added in:

- Healthcare Professions
- Biomedical Sciences
- IT, Cybersecurity, Network Operations
- Pathways in Technology Early College High (P-Tech)
- Aviation
- Fire Science and Rescue
- Law Enforcement and Homeland Security
- Hospitality and Tourism Management
- Construction Management
- Army and Navy JROTC
- Apprenticeship Maryland
- Early College Associate Degrees in 15 majors and career fields

---

## Expanding Access and Opportunity

### Expanded access for all students through new regional programs, reducing barriers of transportation, travel time, and distance.

- New pathways available to all MCPS students at the Wheaton/Edison campus and new Seneca Valley High School, so that programs are available closer to where students live
- Regional programs available at Gaithersburg HS, Wheaton HS, Magruder HS, Clarksburg HS, Springbrook HS, Rockville HS, Kennedy HS, Watkins Mill HS
- Early College Programs on all three campuses of Montgomery College (Germantown, Rockville, Takoma Park)
- Dual enrollment opportunities in all MCPS high schools

---

## Coming Soon in 2021-22 and Beyond!

- New IT pathways in mobile app development (Swift), networking, cloud computing, software development, and data management
- New environmental science and agriculture programs that prepare students for emerging careers in sustainability, renewable energy, and agriculture
- New biotechnology programs that prepare students for careers in biomedical research, genetics, vaccine research, molecular biology, and biochemistry
- New STEM pathways that begin in high school, continue at Montgomery College, and culminate with a bachelors degree at the Universities at Shady Grove