

Montgomery County Council of Parent-Teacher Associations

MCCPTA

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Education Hot Topics – Middle School

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Lots of moving parts!



Hot Topics Happening in MS!!

- Middle school Expansion Courses
- New Curriculum ELA and Math (cohort 1)
- Changes in PARCC “pass” scores
- MISA requirements
- Climate/Discipline Concerns
- New High School Selection Process
- And more...

Middle School Expansion Courses

- 18-19 – field test 2 expansion courses in lower half of county (20/25 schools in Eastern and Tacoma Park magnet catchment)
 - OCIP recommended 1130 for Applied IM; schools enrolled 1463*
 - OCIP recommended 928 for Historical Inquiry into Global Humanities; schools enrolled 2297*
 - Now in year 2 with expansion courses in 6th and 7th grade
- 19-20 – roll out in upper county
 - OCIP and OSSI – explicit instruction about placements (principals cannot make “expansion-for-all” decisions)
 - Includes expansion courses available at the magnets (which was not incorporated last year in lower county in 18-19)
 - ELA is only available for current 6th graders; Full roll out of Math 6, 7, 8 in year 1

*MCCPTA MPIA data request, March 13, 2019

New Curriculum – Background

- 2017-18 – Johns Hopkins Curriculum Review
 - Determined MCPS would benefit from ELA and Math curriculum that is better aligned to grade level standards.
- 2018-19 – Curriculum Vendor Presentations
 - Study Sync selected for ELA
 - LearnZillion selected for Math 6, 7, 8
 - Still using 2.0 for IM and Algebra 1
- 2019-20 – Cohort 1 implementation
 - 20/41 middle schools implementing both ELA and Math simultaneously in Cohort 1
 - 1 school Math only; 4 schools ELA only
 - <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/curriculum-implementation.aspx>

PARCC/MCAP – Algebra 1 “Pass” Changes (from 3,4,5 to 4,5)

PARCC uses five performance levels that delineate knowledge, skills and practices students are able to demonstrate:



PARCC/MCAP – Algebra 1 “Pass” Changes (from 3,4,5 to 4,5)

- ~20% of 7th graders that took Algebra 1 last year did not achieve the necessary 4 or 5 (94% met prior year 3,4,5)
- Students/Parents are being advised now of the available options
 - Saturday School
 - After school course
 - Online course
 - Retake Algebra 1 (?)
- Students will retest in ~ December timeframe
- Current Algebra students/parents (7th & 8th grade) are being informed via letter re: assessment/graduation requirement for this course
- Current 9th graders must pass with 3+; PARCC reports come from the student’s current school

Upcoming MISA Requirements

- Current 8th graders will be first class required to pass the Maryland Integrated Science Assessment (MISA) for HS graduation (will take ~11th grade)
- Lots of ambiguity surrounding this test
- Cut scores were established in August; will be communicated by December
- In July meeting, Maryland State BOE questioned having a comprehensive, high stakes test covering 3 years of material
 - Prior to MISA adoption, students were required to pass a Biology HSA

Climate/Discipline Concerns

- Concerns surrounding increased emphasis on Career/College preparation, less about “how to be a friend”
- More schools incorporating PBIS/Restorative Practices in schools – parents don’t really understand
- Climate surveys
 - MCPS 18-19 surveys (staff and parent) available on dashboard in September
 - MSDE 18-19 surveys (staff and student) in MD Report Card in December
 - MSDE 19-20 surveys will include parent component
- Safety & Security Report
 - MCPS 18-19 report available on dashboard in December

MS parents need to pay close attention to High School Choices!!

- 4 high school information nights in September – explaining all the “choices” available going forward
 - Richard Montgomery
 - Watkins Mill
 - Blake (NEC school-specific info included)
 - Blair (DCC school-specific info included)
- Open Houses in October (Edison, Seneca Valley, RM, Poolesville, Blair plus Regional IB schools – WM, Kennedy, Springbrook, in addition to DCC and NEC events)
- Applications will be “pre-populated” in portal making it easy to apply to programs
- All Centrally-managed programs will use same application
 - Local school programs will be on same timeline but will have alternate application

And more...

- MCPS is MASSIVE with lots of layers and it may seem overwhelming, but, we believe -- the more engaged parents/guardians are in a student's academic career, the better they will do.

You've got this!