

2016-17 Year End Gifted Child Community Report

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2016-17 was quite eventful and the Choice study response plan is the center item. How to encourage parents to support, to participate, and to shape the plan implementation is an unprecedented challenge in front of us.

Last summer, we voiced up for inclusiveness instead of pursuing any zero-sum struggle in resolving the demands of CPHG/Magnet program [1]. We testified to BOE on supporting the adoption of the Choice Study response plan roadmap [2]. We worked with MCCPTA board on the first gifted education resolution [3] and it passed the MCCPTA delegate assembly floor this March.

Recently, we had made an inquiry into the new elementary school grading scheme [4]. Now we are informed that on a grading card, there will be an explicit statement on how advanced a student's reading level is. Further enrichment related information on grading cards is also under consideration.

With all these, we hope that parents can learn about the changes coming to our schools and hopefully, they can be part of it.

Early this year, besides our official work plan, two initiatives on science curriculum and GT Liaisons have been sketched. It is exciting to see both initiatives led by Kim and Iris are moving.

Different from Math and Literacy, the science curriculum is a big piece in the curriculum with little enrichment/acceleration consideration as far as we know. Kim has gone a great length in collecting information and voiced our concerns at every level. In this and coming year, NGSS implementation is a big challenge. With curriculum committee Tammy/Amanda/Cynthia, we believe that we have a chance to achieve some for students in this county.

The GT Liaison positions is officially in an MCCPTA resolution, which passed the board unanimously and the floor in March. If GT liaisons start to communicate with their local president/delegates about the resolution and various items, they will have a starting point to position themselves as SME on gifted education issues in the community.

In 2017-2018, we will continue engaging with communities and schools through various channels on gifted education issues.

Reference

[1] Lang's opinion on MCCPTA hosted review of the Choice Study. The topic is "How to Define Success in Responding to the Choice Study?"

"Montgomery County is a society embracing the philosophy of "being inclusive". Our school system took ~35% of ESOL students in Maryland. We together carry the weight. It takes tremendous courage and creativity to embrace "inclusion" in public education. It is not an option to pursue zero-sum solutions which are exclusive and alienate people. Tonight, I am very glad to hear the voice for program expansion resonating among the audience.

Diversity may not necessarily mean the same as indicated in the choice study report. To me, diversity in education also means to let students pursue their passions. At this internet age, 8th and 9th graders know much more than what I knew at the same age. Besides imposing schools' and parents' visions on students, we may really need to let students voice up for what they want to be and support them.

We heard strong support on improving tracking mechanism within the school system. Any improvement can be a good "success" in either the short term or the long term."

[2] GCC testimony on supporting the adoption of the Choice Study response plan.

[http://www.boarddocs.com/mabe/mcpsmd/Board.nsf/files/AELG594217A7/\\$file/Lang%20Lin%20Testimony%2020161010.pdf](http://www.boarddocs.com/mabe/mcpsmd/Board.nsf/files/AELG594217A7/$file/Lang%20Lin%20Testimony%2020161010.pdf)

[3] MCCPTA Resolution in Support of the Provisions on Talent Development, Universal Screening, and CPHG/Magnet Program Expansion in the Choice Study Response Plan

<http://nebula.wsimg.com/8e2b97ba96626fe95fd2b86b67bf8b6a?AccessKeyId=AB71C8A62DC88BF7171E&disposition=0&alloworigin=1>

This URL is also available directly on GCC web page. <http://www.mccpta.org/gifted-child.html>

[4] Lang's email to BOE and Churchill cluster OSSI director.

Dear Mr. Durso and Dr. Sirgo,

Hope this message find you well today.

Thank you for responding my questions on the new grading scheme on last week's Churchill cluster meeting.

We are not defenders of either the 'ES' or the current grading mechanism. There are many issues, particularly, the inconsistency side of ES as both of you had pointed out. Indeed, it is a fact that inconsistent grading is a challenge in various education systems including top tier Ivy League universities, where each is with substantially fewer students than MCPS.

Instead, we are hoping to understand whether talent visibility and talent development elements are considered in the new grading scheme. These elements are crucial for many students beyond Churchill cluster boundary and are supported by many communities including under represented minorities.

In this county, while there are only 3% CPHG students, there are ~14% students in the advanced compacted math programs. The disparity in the two numbers manifests a fact that there are potentially a large number of students in need of literacy acceleration and enrichment may not receive the content appropriate at their level everyday in their classroom. They are not quite visible at the moment. Could it be possible for the new grading scheme to let talents be seen?

In Churchill and Wootton cluster, teachers do use 'ES' as an encouragement for students to pursue advanced level learning. Moreover, there are talented students who are motivated by the rare 'ES' grade. In Cold Spring ES, there is a girl named Allison Wong earns ES all the way by writing amazing essays well beyond my level. While she is challenging herself all the way, there are classmates studying her essays and improving.

We do understand that it is very challenging to have a consistent grading scheme to address all concerns. It is also a pity that we learned about the changes quite late and potentially missed the chance to work with schools on this important item. Still, we sincerely hope that our schools could consider the talent visibility and talent development aspects in the final development/deployment of the new grading scheme. In addition, we hope that you could share with us information related to these aspects.

Regards,

Lang Lin

Gifted Child Committee, MCCPTA