

Office of the Superintendent of Schools
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Rockville, Maryland

February 25, 2013

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Joshua P. Starr, Superintendent of Schools

Subject: Presentation of Gallup Engagement Surveys

During the past several decades, numerous memoranda have been provided to the Montgomery County Board of Education on the topic of engagement as it relates to both students and staff members. Much discussion on what constitutes engagement and how we may increase and measure it ensued. The underlying assumption of this work is the core belief that engagement on the part of both staff members and students is critical to student success. For years, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) used the satisfaction and climate surveys administered by the Office of Shared Accountability (OSA) as an imperfect measure of engagement. However, engagement is more intricate than simply attempting to measure satisfaction and climate. Being able to gain a scientific snapshot into how people feel, behave, and interact every day increases our ability to influence those behaviors and interactions in a way that may result in increasing successful student outcomes.

To gain this insight, MCPS, in partnership with Gallup, administered the Q12 Engagement Survey for all district employees and the Gallup Student Poll for students in Grades 5–12 in October 2012. Based on more than four decades of research, Gallup has identified definitive employee attitudes that correspond with the most successful workplaces. Additionally, Gallup has identified the questions that measure these attitudes and studied the links between employees' responses and various school outcomes, including employee retention, parent engagement, student retention, and student achievement. The Gallup Student Poll tracks the hope, engagement, and well-being of students. Research supports the idea that hope, engagement, and well-being are actionable targets linked to student achievement, retention, and future employment.

Both of these surveys have yielded a wealth of data that will inform our improvement efforts. MCPS' partnership with Gallup assures access to vital technical assistance to maximize our utilization of the data. Gallup has provided training presentations for executive staff, principals,

and central office managers, and consultation on the analysis of student performance outcomes as they relate to employee engagement. Members of the Gallup team will make individual follow-up calls to each school's triad (principal, elected facility representative, and elected support representative) to help plan how to use the data to improve student success. This process is under way with more than 150 calls completed. MCPS will post the staff and student survey results on the MCPS website in the coming days.

In addition, Gallup has provided and continues to provide technical assistance to OSA as it reevaluates and revises its survey program. A revamped parent engagement survey will be launched in just a few weeks.

The tangible benefits of MCPS' partnership with Gallup are clear; however, equally as exciting are the possibilities surrounding the intersections of our work. Gallup, Inc.'s continued scientific investigation into the significance of hope, engagement, and well-being for students dovetails with our strategic planning work on social emotional learning and 21st century skills. There is every reason to believe that as we continue to work together, opportunities for constructive collaboration will support our work to improve teaching and learning in every school.

This evening, Board members will view a PowerPoint presentation by Dr. Tim Hodges, director of research, Gallup, who joins us to discuss the results of the Gallup Staff and Student Engagement Surveys.

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