

FY 2007 QUESTION NUMBER: 7

QUESTION:

What is the approach to literacy in secondary schools?

BUDGET PAGE REFERENCE: 3-6 and 7; 1-16 and 17

ANSWER:

Literacy in secondary schools is addressed directly in middle schools through reading courses—Reading 6 for all students and Reading 7 and 8 for students reading below grade level. MCPS curriculum and assessments have been developed recently for these courses. Students are taught the skills needed for critical reading of expository text and skills needed to write persuasively. Additionally, literacy is addressed across contents in grades 6-12, particularly in English, science, social studies, and foreign languages. Resource teachers have received on-going professional development using the book, Do I Really Have to Teach Reading, by Chris Tovani to support the integration of reading strategies across the content areas.

Two reading assessments, Measures of Academic Progress in Reading (MAP-R) and The Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test – Fourth Edition (SDRT-4) are administered in all middle schools to students in grades 6, 7, and 8. The MAP-R provides data on students' progress in reading over time and is administered to all students. The SDRT-4 is a diagnostic assessment that is given to selected students. Data from these assessments are used to guide instructional and program decisions and to monitor students' progress.

Currently, reading intervention programs also are offered in selected secondary schools to improve proficiency of students reading well below grade level. Specifically, READ 180 and Corrective Reading are interventions provided to targeted students at the secondary level. The Intensive Reading Needs Program is designed to address the reading needs of students with special needs. It combines several reading interventions including Wilson Reading, Corrective Reading, and others to meet the diverse needs of students with Individualized Educational Plans. Effective intervention programs will be expanded into other middle and high schools after data is gathered and analyzed.

Other resources to support literacy in middle school are the Extended Day and Extended Year programs. Both programs provide additional reading instruction to students who have demonstrated difficulty reading on-grade level instructional material and/or meeting the proficiency level of performance on curriculum-based and MSA assessments.

Reading specialists are allocated to each middle school and literacy lead teachers are assigned to seven high schools to work with literacy teams, support literacy across the contents, assess students, and provide reading instruction.