# Public Education Leadership Project
## at Harvard University

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# Race, Accountability, and the Achievement Gap (B)

Several weeks after Maryland's Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) leadership team renewed their focus on race and the achievement gap, African-American Deputy Superintendent Frieda Lacey arrived at work early on September 29, 2005, to prepare for the morning executive leadership team meeting. In the meeting, her work would take center stage as she led discussions on PSAT participation and a new accountability system in development, called M-Stat. While organizing her remarks, she reflected on the leadership team's efforts to address the achievement gap since the team's return from the July retreat.

## A Fresh Look at Enrollment Data

In early August 2005, the MCPS executive leadership team participated in a condensed simulation of the July retreat in which they continued discussions on race, access, and equity in the school district. Since MCPS's mathematics program had traditionally been viewed as having institutional barriers that impeded African-Americans and Hispanics, MCPS leadership decided to place a new emphasis on accelerating math instruction in elementary and middle schools with the ultimate goal of all students completing Algebra 1 by eighth grade.  Subsequently, white Superintendent Jerry Weast directed his administration to collect all advanced math enrollment figures disaggregated by race, starting with elementary schools.  Since central office did not have much of this data on record, community superintendents had to go directly to schools for the information.

Already under pressure to implement school reforms, elementary school principals scrambled to submit the data, which revealed that at the beginning of the year just 23% of fifth-grade students enrolled in Math A (sixth-grade-level math) or above were African-American or Hispanic, even though they together made up 43% of the fifth-grade student population.  Overall, 37% of MCPS fifth graders were enrolled in Math A or higher, ranging from 0% to 68% of the enrollment across elementary schools. Nevertheless, administrators were encouraged to see that the total number of all students enrolled in Math A or higher had increased substantially from 196 students in 2001 to 3,840 fifth graders in 2005. Also, a few red-zone schools stood above the average, like Piney Branch Elementary, which had 48% of its fifth graders enrolled in Math A or higher, 33% of whom were

African-American and Hispanic students.  By the end of the school year, the percentage of students enrolled in Math A who were African-American or Hispanic had risen to 39%.

At the middle school level, administrators took note of schools like Newport Mill Middle School, at which the math department had been successful in preparing 54% of the school's African-American and Hispanic eighth graders for enrollment in Algebra 1.  Eager to learn their method and determine if it could be shared with other schools, Weast visited with the math department to get a better understanding of the school's strategy.  Since staff at Newport Mill had heard rumors from central office that they had been accused of "teaching to the test" because of their relatively high achievement results, the math team was initially concerned when they learned that Weast planned to visit to understand how they achieved their results.  Weast came away from his visit greatly impressed by what he saw and heard. "They get it," he said.

At the high school level, administrators began searching for underrepresented minority students who possessed the aptitude to excel in advanced courses but had not enrolled.  Acting on the research suggesting that PSAT scores are good indicators for honors and AP course potential, the Department of Shared Accountability cross-referenced 11th-grade students' PSAT scores with AP and honors course enrollment lists.[1]  The process identified any students with PSAT scores equal to or above 44 or 45 on the verbal and math sections, respectively, who were not enrolled in any honors or AP courses.  High school principals received a list of all students flagged in addition to a separate list of just the African-American and Hispanic students identified, comprising 39% of the total number of students flagged. Each report listed the student's name, PSAT scores, grade point average, recent course grades, and whether or not they had ever enrolled in any AP or honors courses.

Noticing from the data that African-American and Hispanic students enrolled in higher-level courses scored significantly higher on the SAT, Weast believed that helping more minority students succeed in advanced courses was a critical component of closing the achievement gap.  Subsequently, Weast's administration shifted its focus to communicating the district's new emphasis on helping more African-American and Hispanic students achieve in rigorous courses.

## Framing the Discussion

In the early weeks following the retreat, senior administrators debated the appropriate language to use when discussing race issues within the district. While some preferred the description "removing institutional barriers," others favored the terms "institutionalized racism" because they believed that it most accurately described the real issue. A few administrators expressed concerns that using the word "racism" could potentially spark fear in some administrators and teachers who would misinterpret it to mean that they were racist. Weast distinguished between the two phrases, explaining that "institutionalized racism is the failure to act on removing institutional barriers that hold students of a particular race behind." MCPS administrators defined institutional barriers as those policies, procedures, and practices that do not serve all children equitably.

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[1] Clare Von Secker, "Using PSAT Scores to Identify Honors/AP Potential," Research Brief, Montgomery County Public Schools.  She wrote, "Research conducted for the College Board shows that, in many AP courses, about one third of students with PSAT scores below the national averages have Honors/AP potential and are able to attain AP exam scores of 3 or higher (Camara, 1997, Camara & Millsap, 1998).  The percentages of MCPS students with Honors/AP potential who score 3 or higher on AP exams exceed the percentages reported for national samples.  As many as two thirds of MCPS AP test takers with PSAT verbal scores of 42 to 46 or math scores of 43 to 47 attain AP exam scores of 3 or higher on AP English, mathematics, science, and social studies examinations."

On September 14, 2005, Weast delivered an emotional speech to all MCPS administrators, including principals and senior leadership staff, to set the strategic focus for SY06. To frame his presentation on institutional racism, Weast referenced the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina to explain the connections between race, poverty, and access. Holding aloft a copy of a magazine that featured the face of a crying child from New Orleans, Weast remarked that what happened to a largely African-American population during and after the hurricane was a metaphor for public education:

> That hurricane did something to me . . . you and I have talked about raise the bar and close the gap, and I've talked about who gets left behind if we don't have education. And I've actually been overemotional on this many times. But you know, the one thing that struck me was how people were sorted. It just really got to me. I know it got to you and other people. And I know that. . . . I can close my eyes and see the beautiful mountains when I feel troubled. Now when I close my eyes, I see those folks huddled in the Superdome with the roof coming off or in that facility in Houston. It's hard to say it's not about race, isn't it?

> . . . Now I am going to get right down into the race issue, and I am going to talk about Hispanics and African-Americans. And if it hurts, I'm sorry. I apologize respectfully, but I am going to talk about it. You need to talk about it. You need to have that [conversation] because we are going to [work] together to destroy institutional barriers that have sorted kids for way too long.

Closing out his reference to the aftermath of the hurricane, Weast made the connection one more time to the isolation of African-American and Hispanic students who are not given an opportunity to succeed academically. He stated, "We're not going to wake up one morning and find that our kids can't get out of town because they don't have enough money or any access [to public services]."

Weast said that a key component to overcoming the achievement gap included giving more African-American and Hispanic students access to high-level quality and equitable instruction. Referencing the advanced math enrollment data, he recognized the African-American principal of Piney Branch Elementary because of the school's relatively high Math A enrollment figures. He then challenged the group to build the capacity to allow more minority students to participate in rigorous coursework, thereby creating a "continuous supply chain" of prepared students. Finally, he compared the merits of a "can-do belief system of courage, commitment, and productivity" to a "can't-do attitude of complacency, compliance, and inactivity."

Concerned about how principals might respond to Weast's observations of racism, senior administrators were later reassured by the overwhelmingly positive feedback he received. Lacey remarked: "The devastation of Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath really showed how issues of race, poverty, and access play out in our society. To have seen the images of Katrina on TV and then to have Jerry, a white man, stand up and show the parallels of Katrina with the school system was powerful and magnificent."

## M-Stat

Impressed during the July retreat by a case discussion on the New York Police Department's Comstat data-driven accountability system, MCPS leadership sought to systemize a similar collaborative process that could be used by executive leadership staff, particularly the community superintendents. Spearheading the development of what the team called M-Stat, Lacey created an M-Stat framework by aligning elements from Comstat to a model already in use within MCPS, called

Plan/Do/Study/Act (see **Exhibit 1** for M-Stat framework). With M-Stat, leadership saw an opportunity to enable community superintendents to collectively look at data across schools and work together on crafting solutions to high-priority issues based on best practices and research.

Tailoring the focus of M-Stat to removing institutional barriers for African-Americans and Hispanics, Lacey and her colleagues brainstormed all possible barriers that the district had in place that potentially hindered the success of minority students. The team agreed that the first few sessions of M-Stat should focus on PSAT participation and advanced course enrollment.

During the September 29th executive leadership team meeting, Lacey planned to further refine and test the M-Stat process beginning with a discussion on the upcoming fall 2005 PSAT that would be administered on October 12.

## Executive Leadership Team Meeting—September 29, 2005

Lacey set aside two hours of the meeting to review M-Stat and the upcoming PSAT (see **Exhibit 2** for regular meeting attendees). Starting with M-Stat, the team collaborated on changes to the framework before breaking into small groups to identify priority topics for M-Stat and discuss how to deal with issues of institutional racism as part of the process. Finally, each small group was asked to continue discussions beyond the meeting and submit summaries of their feedback to Lacey's team.

Moving on to PSAT participation, the room fell silent when Lacey asked community superintendents to explain the low participation numbers for African-American and Hispanic 10th graders on the fall 2004 PSAT. After what some described as a tense, uncomfortable pause, a few attendees questioned whether the 100% participation goal was realistic given the number of students enrolled in programs such as Fundamental Life Skills or levels one and two ESOL classes.[2] Lacey gave them one week to report back with specific plans from each high school to raise their minority PSAT participation numbers. At the same time, the participation target was recalibrated to exclude the aforementioned groups.

Noting the awkwardness in the room following the moment she broached the PSAT participation data, Lacey thought carefully about how to foster a productive environment whereby everyone felt comfortable to be honest and open to new ideas while the district addressed tough issues relating to race. She wanted the community superintendents and others to feel both accountable for results and willing to openly discuss areas in which their schools were weak. With hopes of dissipating some of the embarrassment and tension from the first meeting, Lacey arranged to follow up on the PSAT participation work in the weekly meetings of the Office of School Performance, which included her, white Chief School Performance Officer Don Kress, and the community superintendents.

## Fall 2005 PSAT and M-Stat Follow-Up

One week following the executive leadership team meeting, Lacey and Kress met with community superintendents to continue the M-Stat discussion with new information from principals regarding the strategies they would employ at each high school to improve PSAT participation. Lacey recalled:

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[2] ESOL is an acronym for English for speakers of other languages. Students enrolled in ESOL are assigned a level according to their English proficiency. Levels one and two are the beginning levels. Fundamental Life Skills is a curriculum designed for students enrolled in special education programs who are non-diploma bound.

Our first efforts were not focused. There was a smorgasbord of strategies being put in place that addressed the total school population even though we had distributed the participation numbers by race and ethnicity. So I asked, "What are you doing specifically for African-American and Hispanic students at schools where the students are mostly white?" They were unable to provide me with specific answers, and I told them to bring the information back at the next meeting.

To boost participation numbers, schools used a combination of communication, incentive, and procedural tactics, including pancake breakfasts, threats to administer old PSAT exams to absent students, and sending letters home to parents in multiple languages. Specific strategies targeting African-American and Hispanic students included meeting with those students individually, meeting with related clubs or groups, and phoning minority-student parents. Ultimately, the community superintendents worked with their principals and one another to improve overall participation numbers of African-American and Hispanic students by two and eight percentage points, respectively (see **Exhibit 3** for fall 2005 PSAT participation results). Thirteen out of the 24 high schools showed participation improvements from both minority groups. Some schools made substantial gains (5% or more) in the participation of African-American and Hispanic students.

As follow-up, Lacey's team compiled a list of best practices recommended by successful principals and planned to share them in a memo to all principals before SY07 began. Lacey's group also planned to recognize schools that increased overall, African-American, or Hispanic participation by five percentage points or more in the form of recognition requested by the principal. Schools with 95% participation or higher would also be recognized. The gains impressed Lacey, surpassing her expectations. "The community superintendents and principals responded to the challenge," she said.

## Discovering and Removing Institutional Barriers

*Honors/AP Potential Identification Tool (HAPIT)*

Soon after Lacey's team completed the PSAT M-Stat exercise, the community superintendents went through another round of M-Stat to address the disproportionately low enrollment figures of African-American and Hispanic students in AP and honors courses. Lacey recalled:

Again, we received pushback and lots of excuses like "the student didn't make a high enough grade in this course, or they didn't want to move to a higher class," and so on. So we said to the community superintendents, "Have we provided them with the research showing that these students have the aptitude for more rigorous classes? And what have we done to let them know we're serious about this?" We then pulled together a work group of staff, principals, and guidance counselors to address the issue, and they came up with the tool HAPIT.

Building on the earlier work done to review PSAT scores and flag high-potential students who had not enrolled in any honors or AP courses, HAPIT allowed principals to easily compile a list of students who met certain criteria. The first version of HAPIT was a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet that allowed the user to filter down to a list of students based on a variety of factors, including ethnicity, PSAT scores, grades, course enrollments, and past performance on select MSA exams.

Hoping to get a better understanding of why some African-American and Hispanic students were on the flagged students list and had not enrolled in any AP or honors courses, Lacey decided in the

fall of SY06 to meet with several minority students to learn their personal stories. Lacey described her conversations with students:

> First I met with a student who had a 4.0 GPA and PSAT scores higher than 44. She said, "I advocated for myself to be in an AP/honors course, but they told me that classes were full and that I should come back next year."

> Another student said, "Well, I'm a little ADD [attention deficit disordered] and a little lazy and I really don't want to do this," and I said, "But you made one of the highest PSAT math scores." Then I asked him, "What advanced math course would you be most interested in taking?" And he said, "Statistics." So I asked if he would go to the guidance counselor's office that day to enroll in that course during the fall, and he said, "Yes." When the principal offered to take him, the student hesitated, so I offered to walk with him to the office. This is why it is so important that principals and teachers have relationships with the students. If there's already a relationship it can take as little as five minutes to encourage a student to challenge themselves to take more advanced courses. And I told *that* student I would be checking on his progress in the fall.

After scheduling the initial minority-student meetings at one high school, Lacey learned that many of the schools had begun moving the flagged students into higher-level courses. She commented:

> The good news was that by the time I showed up to the school, all but one of the students on the list had already been enrolled in an AP or honors course. Word had spread fast that we were developing the tool and visiting with students. By early spring, when I made plans to meet with more students, we only found four students who still met the initial criteria, all of whom had recently immigrated to the United States and were unfamiliar with how U.S. public school systems worked. I learned from them that the guidance counselors in their schools had automatically enrolled them in on-grade level courses even though the students had the capacity for higher-level courses. One student said to me, "I wish the counselor could have explained to me the different course levels or given me a test before putting me in those courses. I feel like I've wasted so much time." I knew we could fix that easily, so I'm determined to make it right.

By May 2006, all principals, guidance counselors, and resource teachers had been trained to use HAPIT, and the work group that developed the tool was investigating other potential applications. Since the initial identification of students in August 2005, 60 out of 80 minority students had been moved to enroll in at least one AP or honors course by spring 2006. This included 92% of identified African-American students and 63% of identified Hispanic students. Lacey was pleased. "The community superintendents acted quickly in demanding more from schools," she said.

Since the PSAT would be administered to both ninth and 10th graders in subsequent years, MCPS leadership planned to use HAPIT to identify students qualified for AP and honors enrollment even earlier. Plans also were underway to link the tool to MCPS's data warehouse so that the information could be updated in real time and be available online. The tool's progress was shared with the board of education on May 9, 2006. While pleased with the initial outcome, board members emphasized the importance of determining how the tool could be used to inform administrators and teachers about the other students who did not score above the PSAT threshold or meet other benchmarks.

## Mathematics Pathways

Beyond asking schools to build capacity for more students to take higher-level math courses, administrators were developing a "Mathematics Pathways" document to enable parents to see what math level their child would complete upon graduation if they continued on a given path of math instruction. Designed to make parents and students more aware of the academic path they were headed down, administrators were collaborating with union and parent leaders to design the document (see **Exhibit 4** for draft Mathematics Pathways guide). Although board members and district administrators overwhelmingly supported Weast's push for more students to take algebra by the eighth grade and Math A by fifth grade, some teachers questioned whether or not most students were ready for Algebra 1 by eighth grade, while others did not understand the reasoning behind pushing so many students into advanced courses.

## Shaping Expectations

**Diversity Training and Development**   Just as senior administrators returned from the July retreat, the Diversity Training and Development (DTD) department was finishing new online modules on *Courageous Conversations about Race* and *Communicating High Expectations to Students*.[3] The online multimedia, interactive modules were designed for staff development teachers and administrators to use in small or large groups of staff. Since DTD did not have the capacity to respond to all school requests for diversity training, the team planned to roll the modules out to all schools beginning in SY07 to facilitate diversity training at the school level.

Acknowledging the diversity training's value, a few community superintendents had taken the initiative to utilize DTD's offerings during their scheduled time with principals. For example, African-American Community Superintendent LaVerne Kimball, whose schools primarily served students residing in the green zone, had DTD specialists train her principals on the impact of "color-blindness" on teaching and learning (see **Exhibit 5** for Kimball's follow-up e-mail and training study assignment).[4] White Community Superintendent Steve Bedford, who oversaw the geographic region with the highest degree of poverty and highest concentration of minority students, allocated a significant portion of time each month for diversity training specialists to work with his principals.

In some schools, there was evidence that the knowledge from the training had penetrated down to the teacher level by the terminology teachers used, such as "courageous conversations" and "color-blindness." However, administrators acknowledged that the majority of teachers had yet to experience any of the diversity training, particularly at the high school level. Additionally, specialists noted that participants sometimes did not understand the point of the training. Nevertheless, the mostly positive feedback from many participants suggested that the training increased awareness of the role race played in education, compelled some to reconsider their position that they should be color-blind, and helped some to become more willing to introduce race into instructional conversations.

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[3] Based on the work of Glenn Singleton, MCPS defined "courageous conversations" as discussions to identify and break down racial/ethnic tensions, foster equality, and diminish conflict, including overt acts, misunderstandings, and miscommunications that lead to unequal treatment of individuals by race and ethnicity.

[4] MCPS defined "color-blindness" as any policy, practice, or behavior that ignores race/ethnicity and skin color and treats these physical characteristics as inconsequential, deemphasizing their importance and focusing, instead, on providing all individuals with an equal chance to succeed in school, work, and life.

By the end of SY06, the department had set up a host of old and new diversity training sessions that would be offered on a first-come, first-served basis to school-based teams during the summer and the upcoming school year (see **Exhibit 6** for a sample of summer diversity training offerings). Despite the department's efforts to address low expectations of African-American and Hispanic students, some MCPS employees still worried that the district was not doing enough. Since the professional development offerings related to race and the achievement gap were still voluntary, the decision for teachers and other school staff to take part in the training was usually made by a school's principal or staff development teacher.

**Showcasing minority success stories**   In an attempt to address community expectations of African-American and Hispanic students, MCPS administration took the advice of African-American MCPS Board member Valerie Ervin, who wanted the district to showcase more high-achieving African-American and Hispanic students in the community. Worried about the constant negative associations of African-American and Hispanics resulting from discourse on the achievement gap, Ervin hoped that success stories would reinforce high expectations and positive images of African-Americans and Hispanics. Initially, the focus was on showcasing successful students and programs at board of education meetings.

**Communicating progress**   While communicating race and achievement gap challenges, the administration also made a concerted effort to publicize minority student performance progress through the district's traditional channels: press conferences, newspapers, the MCPS website, and the MCPS cable television channel. In spring 2006, MCPS released news that African-American and Hispanic students had improved for the fourth consecutive year on the MCPS reading assessments and were steadily improving on the national CTBS test. Despite the growth in numbers of African-Americans and Hispanics taking AP exams, the February 2006 data showed that five times more African-American students in MCPS scored a 3 or higher when compared with African-American students nationwide. Also, two times as many MCPS Hispanic students scored a 3 or better on AP exams compared with Hispanic students nationwide. Furthermore, 20% of African-American and 22% of Hispanic seniors in the class of 2005 scored above 1100 on the SAT, compared with the national averages of 11% and 18%, respectively. Still, Asian-American and white students participated in AP courses and the SAT at much higher rates, and they significantly outperformed their African-American and Hispanic counterparts on SAT and AP exams.

## Minority Leadership Recruitment

A year before the retreat, Weast directed administrators to meet with leaders of African-American, Asian-American, and Hispanic community groups and expand minority recruitment efforts for teachers and administrators. Recognizing the lack of minorities in the district's administration and teaching staff, Weast wanted administrators to recruit more minority candidates to the district and groom existing stellar candidates for leadership positions in central office and schools.

In November 2005, the newly formed Minority Leadership Recruitment Committee, comprising district administrators and minority community leaders, asked principals and community members to nominate outstanding minorities for potential school leadership opportunities. The request brought their attention to 108 African-American, 18 Asian, 20 Hispanic, and 20 other ethnic candidates the district invited to participate in a Future Administrators Workshop. The committee hoped their efforts would ultimately lead to a racial composition of administrators that better reflected the student population. However, MCPS administrators expressed concerns that the district

needed to expand its outreach much more than it had to really make an impact on administrative staff diversity.

## *Collaborative Action Process (CAP)*

In response to the disproportionate number of minority students, particularly African-American males, MCPS leadership decided in early SY06 to make the Collaborative Action Process (CAP) mandatory for all schools. Piloted in several schools beginning in SY04, the CAP program allowed school-based teams to work with a CAP consultant to become trained in problem-solving approaches for students' learning or behavioral issues. The program helped schools to determine the appropriate academic or behavioral interventions to test or administer with individual students, student subsets, or grade levels. Preliminary results from the first wave of implementation in 30 schools showed a decrease in the number of student referrals to special education and in the number of students sent to the principal's office. The program was in various stages of implementation in 60 schools by the end of SY06.

# Designing Accountability

## *School-Monitoring Calendars*

In response to Weast's frustration that there was not enough consistency across the work of community superintendents, Lacey directed the community superintendents to create a school-monitoring calendar that would allow the community superintendents and principals to regularly work together on similar issues each month. The resultant calendar drafted in November 2005 focused on a specific set of data each month across all schools within a sublevel, elementary, middle, or high (see **Exhibit 7** for an example of monthly data points and questions).

To determine the data indicators to be examined each month, community superintendents back-mapped from the desired performance results each school should expect to reach by the end of the school year. Therefore, each month the principals would ideally review data that could help them adjust, if needed, to meet end-of-year targets. The document went through several iterations to accommodate feedback from principals and other stakeholders. Beginning in July 2006, community superintendents planned to integrate the calendars into their monthly discussions with principals. Kress commented on principals' responses to the new monitoring system: "Most principals were happy because they could use the document to easily explain to their school staff what central office expected of them with regards to school performance. A few principals complained that the new system bordered on micromanaging." In addition to helping the district more carefully monitor school performance, administrators hoped the new system would enable them to better recognize strengths and weaknesses in individual schools and provide struggling principals with a framework to guide their own work.

## *Setting Improvement Targets*

Another significant change related to district leadership's deliberate attempts to address the performance of minority subgroups was the development of specific school improvement targets broken down by race. Previous improvement targets communicated to principals were set system-wide and not tailored specifically to the past results of a school. Under the new system, schools had

set targets for each ethnic subgroup to meet each year until 2010 (see **Exhibit 8** for an improvement target spreadsheet example). On each improvement target spreadsheet, the schools were disaggregated by community superintendent, making it clear which central office administrator would monitor and help principals reach the improvement goals. By the end of SY06, high school principals had received their targets, while middle school and elementary school principals were scheduled to receive targets in fall of SY07.

## Forging Ahead

During subsequent administrative gatherings and MCPS Board of Education meetings, Weast continued the dialogue on institutional barriers and racism and defined what he called "The Path to Achievement," which concisely communicated his vision of what every student should achieve before graduating from MCPS (see **Exhibit 9** for "The Path to Achievement" slide). When conveying his related strategy for closing the achievement gap in simplest terms, he used the formula "Access + Equity + Rigor = Achievement." Adding to Weast's equation, one community superintendent expanded on what needed to be done to improve minority-student achievement:

We need to do three things to help our African-American and Hispanic students: (1) Give them access to the most rigorous and most comprehensive classes. (2) Provide them with an opportunity to be successful in those classes by offering adequate support systems. (3) And most important, we've got to invite the students to be in those classes. Many students or parents don't know the maneuverability of the system, and oftentimes they're counting on the system to do it for them.

Looking ahead, Lacey was pleased with the progress made thus far, but she was realistic about the challenges facing MCPS as leadership endeavored to close the achievement gap:

We still have a tremendous amount of work to do. We have to do a better job at monitoring school data and reinforcing successful strategies for students who are struggling. When we get positive outcomes, we need to share that information. We need a formalized, systemic process that identifies and recognizes schools that are doing a great job. We need to package best practices to be shared with other schools. This means we must continue to disaggregate the data. And we need to strengthen the message that it's OK to have specific strategies in place for underperforming minority students.

The biggest challenge is making sure that people have high expectations for all students. The one thing that I really think makes a difference in changing expectations is data. We have to keep showing performance results from successful schools to those individuals who just don't get it!

**Exhibit 1**    M-Stat Framework
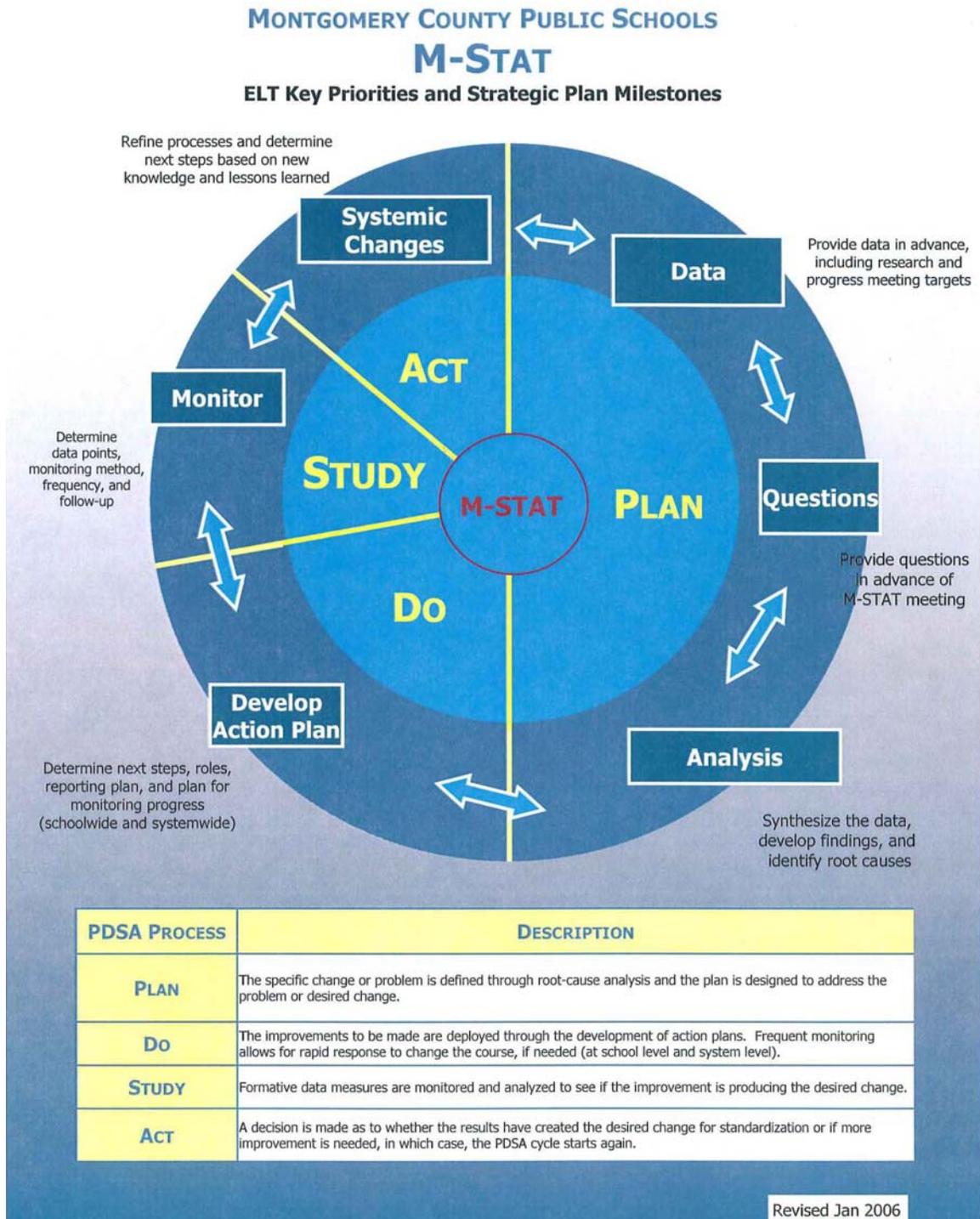


Source:    Montgomery County Public Schools.

**Exhibit 2**    MCPS Executive Leadership Team, May 2006

| Name | Title | Ethnicity |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Aggie Alvez | Communications Director | Asian American |
| Brian Porter | Chief of Staff | White |
| Carey Wright | Associate Supt. for Special Education and Student Services | White |
| Cathy Pevey | Executive Assistant, Chief School Performance Officer | White |
| Darlene Merry | Associate Supt. for Organizational Development | White |
| David Hedges | Executive Assistant, Office of the Chief Operating Officer | White |
| Diane Mohr | Special Assistant, Office of the Deputy Supt. for Information and Organizational Systems | White |
| Don Kress | Chief School Performance Officer | White |
| Donna Hollingshead | Executive Director, Office of the Deputy Supt. of Schools | Asian American |
| Frank Stetson | Community Superintendent | White |
| Frieda Lacey | Deputy Superintendent of Schools | African American |
| Jody Leleck | Associate Supt. for Curriculum and Instructional Programs | White |
| John Q. Porter | Deputy Supt. for Information and Organizational Systems | African American |
| Kevin Maxwell | Community Superintendent | White |
| Larry Bowers | Chief Operating Officer | White |
| LaVerne Kimball | Community Superintendent | African American |
| Lori-Christina Webb | Executive Assistant, Office of the Deputy Supt. of Schools | African American |
| Mark Kelsch | Community Superintendent | White |
| Matt Tronzano | Associate Superintendent for Human Resources | White |
| Mike Perich | Coordinator, System-Wide Continuous Improvement | White |
| Robin Confino | Executive Assistant, Office of the Chief Operating Officer | White |
| Sherwin Collette | Executive Director, Office of the Deputy Supt. for Information and Organizational Systems | African American |
| Steve Bedford | Community Superintendent | White |
| Susan Marks | Community Superintendent | White |

Source:    Montgomery County Public Schools.

**Exhibit 3**    Fall 2005 PSAT Participation Results

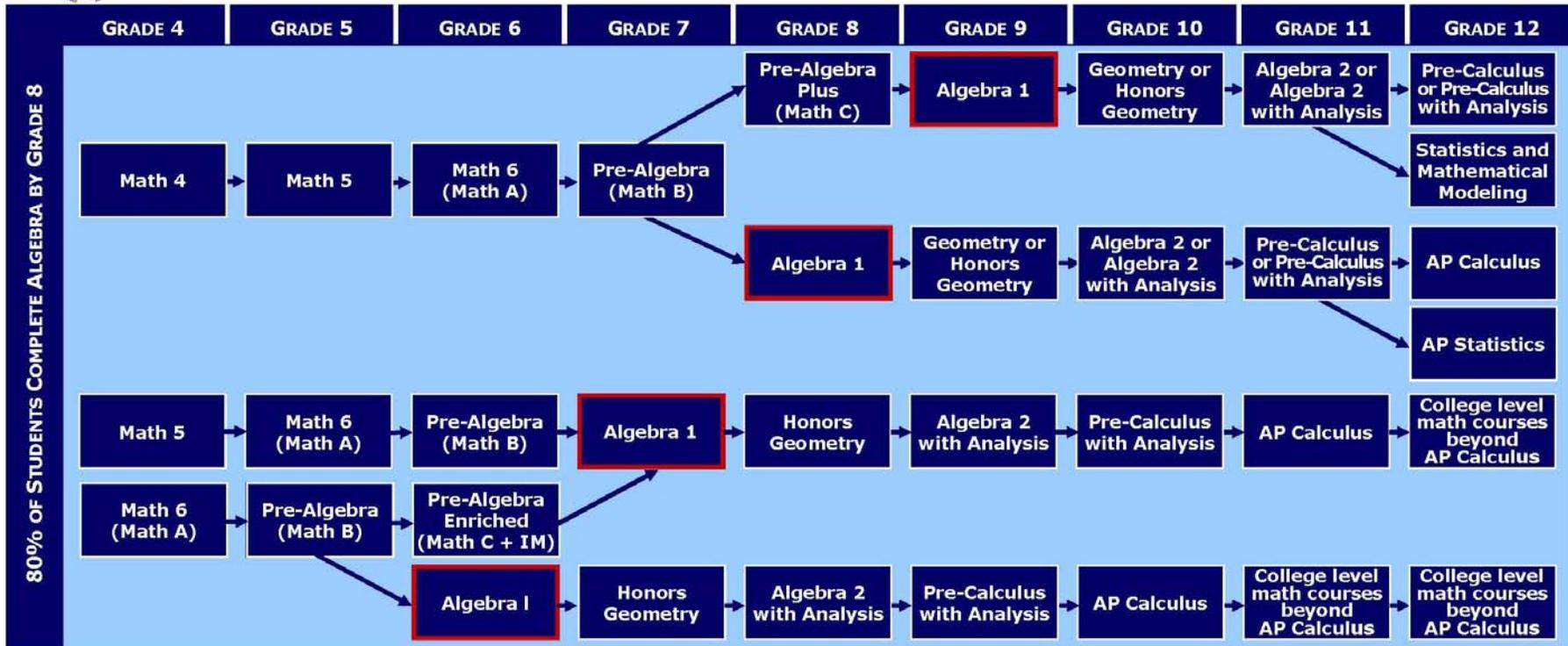### MCPS Grade 10 PSAT Participation Rates in Fall 2004 Compared with Fall 2005

| School | Total | | Af-Am | | Asian | | Hispanic | | White | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2004 | 2005 | 2004 | 2005 | 2004 | 2005 | 2004 | 2005 | 2004 | 2005 |
| MCPS | 88 | 91 | 84 | 86 | 95 | 97 | 78 | 86 | 92 | 95 |
| B-CC | 94 | 95 | 88 | 92 | 92 | 100 | 92 | 95 | 96 | 94 |
| Blair | 90 | 90 | 87 | 88 | 91 | 98 | 89 | 82 | 93 | 98 |
| Blake | 94 | 91 | 94 | 85 | 96 | 92 | 88 | 88 | 95 | 96 |
| Churchill | 98 | 95 | 93 | 87 | 99 | 98 | 100 | 96 | 98 | 95 |
| Damascus | 85 | 92 | 75 | 90 | 100 | 92 | 71 | 84 | 86 | 94 |
| Einstein | 90 | 89 | 88 | 87 | 98 | 96 | 85 | 83 | 95 | 93 |
| Gaithersburg | 86 | 87 | 90 | 78 | 94 | 98 | 75 | 82 | 89 | 93 |
| Kennedy | 87 | 89 | 89 | 87 | 96 | 95 | 73 | 85 | 94 | 98 |
| Magruder | 83 | 90 | 69 | 85 | 92 | 99 | 68 | 84 | 89 | 92 |
| Northwest | 85 | 86 | 82 | 77 | 93 | 92 | 72 | 82 | 88 | 90 |
| Northwood | | 95 | | 96 | | 94 | | 94 | | 95 |
| Paint Branch | 83 | 85 | 81 | 77 | 95 | 94 | 68 | 85 | 85 | 93 |
| Poolesville | 94 | 93 | 80 | 100 | 88 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 95 | 92 |
| Quince Orchard | 83 | 89 | 74 | 77 | 93 | 97 | 56 | 76 | 90 | 94 |
| R. Montgomery | 89 | 91 | 76 | 85 | 96 | 97 | 76 | 83 | 93 | 94 |
| Rockville | 82 | 91 | 70 | 92 | 92 | 100 | 73 | 88 | 89 | 90 |
| Seneca Valley | 88 | 95 | 82 | 94 | 98 | 100 | 81 | 94 | 92 | 94 |
| Sherwood | 90 | 94 | 79 | 80 | 89 | 100 | 89 | 93 | 93 | 96 |
| Springbrook | 88 | 87 | 91 | 85 | 93 | 95 | 71 | 79 | 92 | 95 |
| W. Johnson | 89 | 96 | 71 | 85 | 93 | 97 | 76 | 95 | 94 | 98 |
| Watkins Mill | 86 | 90 | 83 | 88 | 96 | 100 | 78 | 84 | 92 | 94 |
| Wheaton | 75 | 86 | 82 | 92 | 92 | 97 | 69 | 81 | 70 | 87 |
| Whitman | 94 | 98 | 80 | 100 | 92 | 97 | 93 | 92 | 96 | 98 |
| Wootton | 96 | 99 | 97 | 87 | 98 | 100 | 84 | 100 | 96 | 99 |

Source:    Montgomery County Public Schools.

**Exhibit 4**    Draft Mathematics Pathways



Source:    Montgomery County Public Schools.

**Exhibit 5a**   E-mail Correspondence to Principals about Diversity Study Assignment

| | |
|---|---|
| **From:** | Kimball, LaVerne |
| **Sent:** | Wednesday, October 12, 2005 5:40 PM |
| **To:** | Bishop, Richard ; Levine, Deena ; McEleney, Darlyne ; Poole, William ; Brubaker, Judy ; Bryant, Amy ; Edmundson, Gregory ; Evans Macfarlane, Eileen ; Joseph, Shawn ; Lange, Carol ; LeVine, Carol K; Morrison, Sylvia ; Queen, Dennis G; Sacco, Joseph M; Silverstein, Roni ; Chep, Lawrence ; Dardarian, Anne ; Riley, Jan ; Sample, Carole A; Schiavone Rupp, Kathryn; Shea, Daniel ; Vilkinofsky, Joan ; Wilson, Mary J; Carroll, Wanda ; Favret, Loretta; Gregory, William M; Johnson, Teri ; Kinsey-Barker, Pamela; Maxey, Suzanne ; Samm, AnnMarie |
| **Cc:** | Carroll, Joan; Shinn, Cathrine; Sagona, Donna M.; Nasser, Nora; Jones-Ewing, Kathryn |
| **Subject:** | Diversity Study Assignment |

Dear Principals,

As you know, as a system, we have wholeheartedly embraced improving student achievement for underachieving subgroups. Glenn Singleton's point of view and research indicates that RACE really matters. To that end, we all recognize the importance of having courageous conversations around this issue. It is our hope that our quad cluster study of diversity will increase our comfort, knowledge, and skills in facilitating these discussions.

The assignment on "Colorblindness" may have been difficult for some, given the timeframe. For others, you may have already been engaging in discussions related to race, making the assignment, a continuation of your journey. While we realize the conversations you have been asked to engage staff in regarding "color blindness" may be challenging, we know you agree that they are important. As our professional learning community continues to study race and its impact on teaching and learning throughout the year, we are certain you will feel increasingly confident in your ability to facilitate these conversations.

A few people have reported that they have completed the assignment, and others have requested clarification. Attached is the original assignment with some minor clarifications in red, as well as questions that will guide our sharing at the October 19 meeting. If you have questions, do not hesitate to call Joan, Cathy, Donna, or myself.

LaVerne

Colorblindness9-28
    assignmentv...

••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••

LaVerne Gray Kimball, Ed.D.
Office of School Performance
Community Superintendent for the
Northwest, Poolesville, Quince Orchard, Seneca Valley Quadcluster
301-315-7362

Source:    Montgomery County Public Schools.

**Exhibit 5b**    Diversity Study Assignment—Color-Blindness

## Northwest/Quince Orchard/Seneca Valley/Poolesville Quad-Cluster

## Follow-up Assignment from the 9-28-05 diversity session

As an instructional leadership team, we need to take a closer look at how to begin addressing the issue of diversity, particularly with race and the achievement gap, to ensure that a culture of equitable practices, beliefs, behaviors, and attitudes, permeate within each school's environment, teaching and learning practices, leadership, etc.

Start thinking about:
- What does this mean to you and your work as a leader in your school?
- How you will take the understanding and information from the sessions back to your staff?
- Are there other key points addressed in the September 28, 2005 session on diversity, particularly race, and the achievement gap, that you will strive to incorporate within your school's culture?

*Please select a group of staff members to engage in the following conversations. It is not necessary to engage all staff in the conversation at this time. You might wish to start with an administrative, leadership, departmental, or grade level team.*

- Select a leadership group within your school to share Glenn Singleton's definition of colorblindness. Reflect on the implications of this definition for teaching and learning. How can teachers/leaders expand their lenses to ensure equitable teaching and learning practices?
- Throughout MCPS, disproportionate numbers of African American and Hispanic students are suspended? How does being "colorblind" exacerbate suspensions? Why is developing relationships with students a key strategy in establishing culturally sensitive learning environments that help students feel valued and connected?

*Questions that will guide our sharing at the October 19 meeting:*

*In what ways was it difficult to discuss the concept of "color blindness" with your staff?*

*What would increase your level of comfort or ability to have these conversations with additional staff?*

Source:    Montgomery County Public Schools.

**Exhibit 6**   Sample of 2006 MCPS Diversity Training Summer Offerings

| Title/Description | Audience | Capacity |
|---|---|---|
| **Improving Latino Student Achievement -** *Learn to capitalize on the cultural capital of Latino students to improve achievement. Discuss strategies for communicating effectively with Latino parents.* | Teachers, SDTs, Administrators | 150 |
| **Equity, Race, and Achievement -** *Engage in discussion and reflection that will support courageous conversations about race as you explore individual and institutional racism and their effects on student achievement.* | Teachers, SDTs, Administrators | 100 |
| **Masks of Giftedness -** *Analyze barriers that prevent recognition of giftedness in students. Examine curriculum and explore strategies that provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their gifts.* | Teachers, SDTs, Administrators | 40 |
| **Understanding Islam -** *Learn about Islamic culture and gain new understanding about Muslim students.* | Teachers, SDTs, Administrators | 35 |
| **Developing Culturally Competent Schools -** *In Day One, explore your cultural personal identity and learn about fundamental differences between mainstream culture and other cultures that impact teaching and learning. In Day Two, examine the patterns in traditional African American and Latino cultures that influence student achievement.* | Teachers, SDTs, Administrators | 35 |
| **Communicating High Expectations to Students -** *Learn to use the interactive online modules on teacher expectations to do small or large group training in your school. Engage your staff in a variety of interesting and innovative learning activities to reinforce mastery of new information through the use of interactive software.* | Teachers, SDTs, Administrators | 30 |
| **Literacy Instruction for African American Adolescent Males -** *Learn how the research on traditional African American culture intersects with the research on effective reading and writing instruction. Explore specific strategies for improving teaching and learning for African American adolescent males.* | Secondary Teachers, SDTs, Administrators | 40 |
| **The Color of Disproportionality -** *Examine policies, practices, and procedures that may result in the over-identification of African American students in special education programs and services. Explore culturally responsive practices to support the academic achievement of African American students.* | Teachers, SDTs, Administrators | 35 |

Source:    Montgomery County Public Schools.

**Exhibit 7**    December SY07—Example of Monitoring Calendar Items (High School) at MCPS

| Performance Results/Data Points[1] | Questions to be Considered |
|---|---|
| *Aligned with the MCPS Strategic Plan and Bridges to Excellence* | |
| **PSAT Results** – Grades 10 and 11<br>    # and % of students taking the test; student performance<br>**Attendance**<br>    # of students with high absenteeism<br>**Suspensions**<br>    # and % of students suspended; # of students with multiple suspensions<br>**Completion of Geometry**<br>    # and % of students not on target to complete geometry by the end of Gr. 10<br>**Results of the Nov. SAT**<br>    # and % of students participating; student performance (>1100 combined verbal & math score)<br>**Enrollment in Rigorous Courses**<br>    # and % of students enrolled; identify student who can be moved to more rigorous instruction | 1. How are the results of the PSAT used to support students in their preparation for the SAT, increase enrollment in Honors/AP/IB/Cambridge courses, and inform students and parents of the interpretation of the results, and for staff to inform instruction?<br>2. What strategies are being used to increase the enrollment and success of Af-Am and Hisp. students in the H/AP/IB/Cambridge/College level classes?<br>3. What analysis is being done in examining the interim grade reports? Subject, grade level, race groups, ESOL, and special education students?<br>4. How is the performance measured and monitored for students enrolled in grade 9 math classes including Algebra 1, Geometry, Honors Geometry, Algebra II and higher level mathematics?  How does this compare to earlier results in the semester?<br>5. How is the performance of students taking the SAT monitored in order to advise students as to supports, addit. attempts on the SAT, and next steps?<br>6. What strategies are being used to support students to be successful in rigorous and above grade level instruction?<br>7. What procedures are in place to move students to higher level classes for the second semester?<br>8. What interventions are used to reduce absenteeism/suspensions and what evidence do you have that they are effective?<br>9. What analysis is occurring related to reducing suspensions: type, demographics, and interventions? |
| **Other Areas Monitored** | |
| **Quality Instructional Program** | 1.   Have sufficient observations been completed to meet PGS requirements? |

[1] All data points must be analyzed for all of the No Child Left Behind student groups.

| Items Due to Office of School Performance – December | Date Due |
|---|---|
| • **Winter break plans** | 12/8/06 |
| • Any local field trips - submit **MCPS form 210-4** for overnight and extended trips out of the Washington metropolitan area | |

| Monthly Reminders – December |
|---|

**General Management/Procedures/Events**

- **Interim Progress Reports** – Send home interim progress reports.
- Prepare 2007-08 **school course bulletin**.

**Student-Related**

- Begin to evaluate student for **placement in higher level courses** as early as second semester.
- **SAT registration** for January testing is due – check about the students who are and are not registered.
- **New enrollment without immunization records:** 1. Accept the student only if he/she is homeless. 2. Parent/guardian must provide documentation of an appointment within 20 days of registering; if not provided within the time frame, a health related exclusion should occur.
- Complete **MCPS form 335-77C** – MSDE Education of Homeless Children and Youth, if there are homeless students enrolled.
- **Section 504 plans** - As students become eligible for Section 504 plans, enter data into OASIS.
- Submit the **SEDS monthly report corrections** (for students receiving more than 15 hours of special education).

**Safety and Security**

- **Fire Drills and Code Red/Blue Drill** – Complete the # of fire drills and Code Red/Blue drill due by the end of the month; **maintain a log of drills completed.**  Remember to have at least 10 fire drills throughout the school year.  Also review all school safety procedures with staff.
- **Telephone bomb threat card checklist** – Place by phones and review the instructions for use with staff.
- **Harassment and Intimidation (Bullying) Reporting Form –** Maintain binder with completed MCPS form 230-55.
- Inform OSP of any **sexual harassment** and **hate/violence** incidents.

**Staff-Related**

- **Log of Occupational Injuries/Illnesses** – Prepare MOSHA preprinted form.

Source:    Montgomery County Public Schools.

**Exhibit 8**   Strategic Plan Improvement Targets for Graduating Cohort AP Participation and Performance*

| | | AP Cohort Participation | | | | | | AP Cohort Performance: Percent of Cohort receiving a 3 or better on at least one AP test. | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | Most Recent (Actual) | % Participation (Expected) | | | | | Most Recent (Actual) | % Cohort Receiving at least one 3 (Expected) | | | | |
| | | 2004 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2004 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
| | District Average | 49.1 | 56.1 | 59.6 | 63 | 66.5 | 70 | 39.9 | 48.2 | 52.4 | 56.6 | 60.8 | 65 |
| | % of Schools Achieving Expected | 8.7 | 50 | 62.5 | 75 | 87.5 | 100 | 8.7 | 50 | 62.5 | 75 | 87.5 | 100 |
| **HISPANIC** | | **29.8** | | | | | | **23.6** | | | | | |
| Bedford | Blair | 16.1 | | | | | 70.0 | 15.4 | | | | | 65.0 |
| | Einstein | 25.7 | | | | | 70.0 | 18.6 | | | | | 65.0 |
| | Kennedy | 36.7 | | | | | 70.0 | 20.3 | | | | | 65.0 |
| | Northwood | n/a | | | | | 70.0 | n/a | | | | | 65.0 |
| Kelsch | Churchill | 76.9 | | | | | 70.0 | 73.1 | | | | | 65.0 |
| | R. Montgomery | 39.1 | | | | | 70.0 | 34.4 | | | | | 65.0 |
| | Rockville | 22.0 | | | | | 70.0 | 18.0 | | | | | 65.0 |
| | Wootton | 77.3 | | | | | 70.0 | 50.0 | | | | | 65.0 |
| Kimball | Northwest | 31.0 | | | | | 70.0 | 13.8 | | | | | 65.0 |
| | Poolesville | 0.0 | | | | | 70.0 | 0.0 | | | | | 65.0 |
| | Quince Orchard | 13.6 | | | | | 70.0 | 6.8 | | | | | 65.0 |
| | Seneca Valley | 35.3 | | | | | 70.0 | 31.4 | | | | | 65.0 |
| Marks | Blake | 40.6 | | | | | 70.0 | 25.0 | | | | | 65.0 |
| | Paint Branch | 25.0 | | | | | 70.0 | 17.9 | | | | | 65.0 |
| | Sherwood | 42.5 | | | | | 70.0 | 37.5 | | | | | 65.0 |
| | Springbrook | 29.6 | | | | | 70.0 | 26.4 | | | | | 65.0 |
| Maxwell | Damascus | 37.5 | | | | | 70.0 | 37.5 | | | | | 65.0 |
| | Gaithersburg | 31.1 | | | | | 70.0 | 26.4 | | | | | 65.0 |
| | Magruder | 22.2 | | | | | 70.0 | 20.8 | | | | | 65.0 |
| | Watkins Mill | 18.8 | | | | | 70.0 | 15.0 | | | | | 65.0 |
| Stetson | B-CC | 25.0 | | | | | 70.0 | 15.9 | | | | | 65.0 |
| | W. Johnson | 30.0 | | | | | 70.0 | 30.0 | | | | | 65.0 |
| | Wheaton | 34.3 | | | | | 70.0 | 28.6 | | | | | 65.0 |
| | Whitman | 38.5 | | | | | 70.0 | 30.8 | | | | | 65.0 |

Source: Montgomery County Public Schools.  * Does not include IB participation or performance.

**Exhibit 9**   The Path to Achievement—Presented by Superintendent Jerry Weast on January 8, 2006