

What Is Advanced Placement All About?

Montgomery County Public Schools is a school district that celebrates its success as one of the highest performing school districts in the nation. According to a recent Newsweek article entitled *America's Top Public High Schools* <http://www.newsweek.com/id/39380>, six of MCPS high schools were ranked in the top 100 and all of our MCPS high schools made the top 3% of the *America's Top Public High Schools* list.

North Chevy Chase Elementary School, which is in the Bethesda-Chevy Chase cluster of schools is part of a community of schools recognized as some of the highest performing schools in our district. NCC has a history of outstanding achievement and is known for engaging students in a rigorous and exciting academic program.

The MCPS culture has evolved to promote advanced performance and acceleration of all students. The question most often heard is: *what does that mean?* And more importantly, *what does that mean for my child?* There are so many responses and arguments that could be used to attend to this question; however I'm choosing just one.

We believe in performance over placement. It is imperative that we look at an individual student's performance and provide him/her with rigor, to develop advanced performance, while concurrently building a solid foundation in the areas of his/her needs. Students either have access to an accelerated part of their on grade level program or are in an advanced placement class/curriculum which is based on the evidence of advanced performance on multiple indicators. That seems like a mouthful. The bottom line is that we address the needs of every child so that all students will have a choice to enter and graduate a four year institute of higher learning.

Students are not a composition of strengths and weaknesses; they are comprised of strengths and Opportunities for Improvement (OFI's). When OFI's exist in a student's academic performance we must take the time to fill the gaps to build a solid foundation. Will every child have an advanced math placement by the 5th grade? No, but every child will have access to rigor while addressing the OFI's for an eventual advanced placement. Our commitment remains and will always be about ***Maximizing Potential One Child at a Time.***

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