



Local Program of Study and Regional Programs (Revised)

Montgomery County Board of Education
October 8, 2026

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Ms. Jeannie Franklin, *Director, Consortia and Application Program Services*

Program of Study

Our Goal: Excellent experiences at every school and expanded opportunities for every student.

Strengthening the Local Experience

Consistent, rigorous course offerings and clear pathways so every student has access to strong academic, advanced, career, and elective opportunities at their home school.

Expanding Access to Specialized Opportunities

Center Programs that provide broader access to distinctive, high-quality pathways in each region, with intentional curriculum, admissions, and implementation.

Creating a More Coherent System

Clear course progressions, streamlined processes, common expectations, and ongoing monitoring so students and families can more easily understand and navigate their options.

The superintendent recommends the Board receive this report for information.

What is the Program of Study?



Definition

A **program of study** in middle and high school is a structured, multi-year sequence of academic, elective, and career and technical education (CTE) courses that guides a student toward a specific graduation track, career goal, or post-secondary major



Primary Purpose

To provide a clear path through coursework for students to earn their high school diploma, additional certificates, and/or Industry Recognized Credentials (IRC). Course offerings for students to be prepared for college and/or career.



Key System Elements

Things have to be in place to have the best offerings:

- Schedule and course streamlining
- Defining course types
- Grade weighting
- Registration tools and processing

Middle School Program of Study

Increased instructional time to support deeper learning and improved student achievement in core content areas.

RECOMMENDATION 1

60-Minute Classes for Core Content Areas

Math, English, Social Studies, & Science

IMPACT

- Decrease in time for Health/PE and Electives
- Opportunity for Exploratory Wheel
- More instructional time in core subjects

RECOMMENDATION 2

Core Elective Offerings in Middle School

IMPACT

- Elimination of special elective offerings at individual schools
- Consistent opportunity and access across middle schools

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High School Program of Study

Problem to Solve: Coherence and Consistency



Consistent Course Progressions and Streamlined Offerings



Honors and Advanced Courses and Capstone



Clear Definitions



Year-long Teacher Continuity



Common Registration Tool



Course Offerings Based on Student Enrollment



Honors and Advanced Course Weighting

High School Courses

On-level Courses

On-grade-level courses provide standards-aligned instruction that builds essential knowledge and skills through critical thinking, problem-solving, and application of learning. They provide a strong foundation for success in future coursework, including Advanced Level.

Honors Courses

Honors courses provide enriched, rigorous study of grade-level standards through deeper thinking, complex problem-solving, and open-ended inquiry, often preparing students for AP, IB, and college-level coursework.

Advanced Courses

Provide greater rigor, depth, and challenge through critical thinking and independent learning. They include AP, IB, Dual Enrollment, advanced subject and CTE courses that prepare students for college, careers, and continued study. Types of Advanced courses that may result in college credit include:

Advanced Placement

AP courses provide college-level rigor through a College Board-approved framework and prepare students for a standardized AP exam. Qualifying exam scores may earn college credit or advanced standing, depending on the college or university.

International Baccalaureate (IB)

IB courses provide rigorous, globally focused learning that emphasizes critical thinking, inquiry, and deeper understanding. Students may take individual IB courses or pursue the full IB Diploma or Career-related Program, combining advanced academics with college, career, and real-world learning.

Dual Enrollment

Dual Enrollment allows students to earn high school and college credit simultaneously through college-level coursework. Courses may be offered at the high school, college campus, or online, giving students a head start on college coursework at reduced or no cost.

High School Program of Study Timeline

September 2026

September 16

Shared update with Middle and High School Principals for Feedback

September 24

Full Day Retreat (Small groups of Principals)

September 25–30

Drafted Full Plan

September 30–October 7

Shared for Feedback (Principals, ADC, MCEA Labor Management Committee)

October 2026

October 8

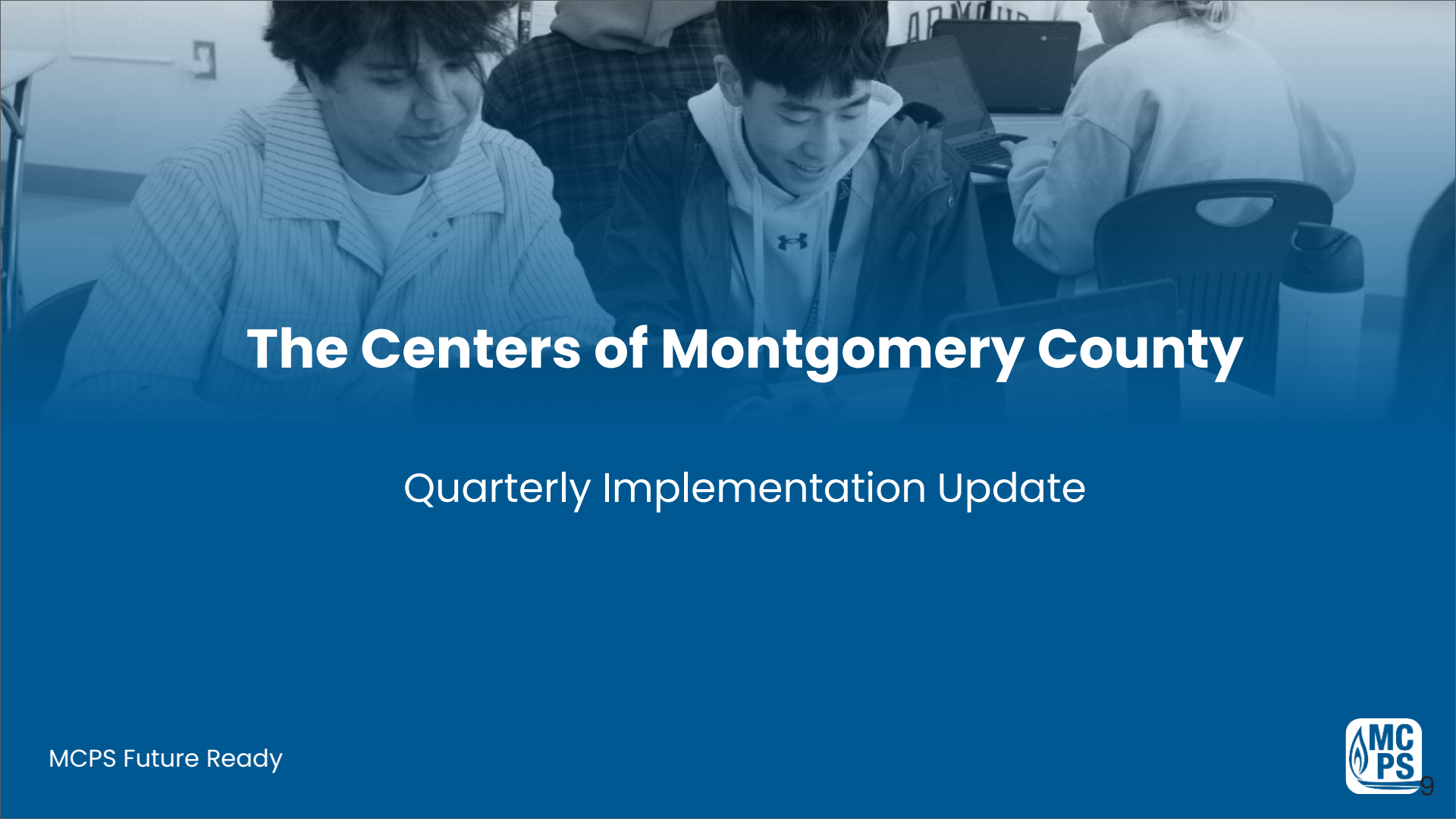
Board of Education Update

October 9–16

Share for Feedback (Curriculum Advisory Assembly, JCC, ADC, Cabinet)

October 22

Board of Education Approval of Program of Study



The Centers of Montgomery County

Quarterly Implementation Update

Why Change is Needed Now

01 An ad hoc, inconsistent system for placing high school programs throughout the county.

03 Uneven distribution of regional and countywide programs across high schools.

05 Inconsistent and varied transportation services for program access.

07 Low invitation rates (approximately 33%).

02 A limited consortia model restricted to only two areas.

04 Barriers to student access due to distance and proximity to host sites.

06 Significant backlogs of students on waitlists or in waitpools.

08 Lack of data verifying that all Grade 8 families were aware of available high school opportunities

We Are Operating in Six Regions | Instructionally & Operationally

Southern Region

Bethesda-Chevy Chase,
Montgomery Blair,
Albert Einstein, Northwood,
Walt Whitman

Eastern Region

James Hubert Blake,
Paint Branch, Sherwood,
Springbrook

Central South Region

John F. Kennedy,
Walter Johnson, Wheaton,
Charles W. Woodward

Central Region

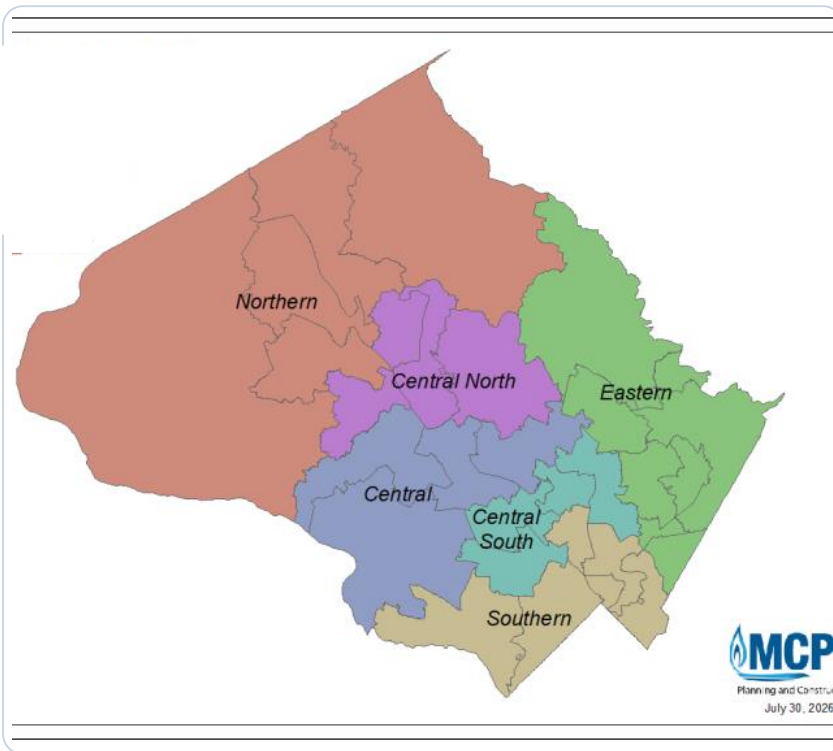
Winston Churchill,
Richard Montgomery,
Rockville, Thomas S. Wootton

Central North Region

Gaithersburg,
Col. Zadok Magruder,
Quince Orchard, Watkins Mill

Northern Region

Clarksburg, Damascus,
Northwest, Poolesville,
Seneca Valley



Center Programs



**Center for Medical
Exploration
and Discovery**



**Center for Leadership,
Empowerment, Action,
and Development**



**Center for Science,
Technology, Engineering,
and Mathematics**



**Center for Aesthetics,
Repertoire, Technique,
and Self-Expression**



**Center for Global Learning,
Opportunity, Biliteracy
and Engagement**



Center for Middle College
Middle College is dependent on a
partnership with Montgomery College

Getting Ready | Next 90 Days

SUMMER 2026

Professional Learning and Partnerships

- Career Advising Coaches
- Middle School Counselors
- High School Counselors
- High School Principals by Region

Community Partners:

- Identity, inc.
- Black and Brown Coalition
- MoCo Pan
- NAACP
- Design Team
- Business Partners

Curriculum Development

SEPTEMBER 1–30

Engagement and Outreach

MS Counselors:

Present the High School Possibility process Canvas course.

High School Collaboration:

Planning events with school staff for program development and fall showcases.

Staff Engagement Groups:

- Middle and High School Counselors
- Career Advising Coaches and PPWs
- Family Engagement Specialists
- Student Groups, MCEA, MCAAP

SEPTEMBER–NOVEMBER

October 1–28

- 26 High School Fall Showcases
- Targeted Outreach with MS staff
- Zoom Room Drop-Ins

October 2–6

HSP Process Opens: Student possibility report, form, and Center Application in ParentVUE.

Nov 4–6

Nov 4–6: MS counselors assist Grade 8 families to complete forms.

Community Engagement

OVERVIEW OF THE OUTREACH

SESSIONS and DROP-INS

Zoom Webinars

September 14 and 23

- English: 2.2K+ participants, 550+ YouTube views
- Spanish: 171 participants
- 74% of participants have a middle school student
- 47 students joined
- Attendance areas by zip code: Clarksburg, Damascus, Gaithersburg, Germantown, Kensington, Montgomery Village, Potomac, Rockville, Silver Spring, Spencerville, Takoma Park, Wheaton

Zoom Room Drop-Ins

September 29, October 6, and November 4, 5, 6

EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS and SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT

- NAACP
- MCCPTA Regional Programs Committee
- Identity, Inc.
- Middle School Engagement Events
- Fall High School Showcases

High School Possibility Process: It's All Here in ParentVue

ParentVUE Portal Access



1. Possibility Report

View report.



2. Possibility Form

Complete High School Possibility (HSP) forms and annual verifications.



3. Center Application (optional)

Explore Center Programs and submit applications seamlessly.

ParentVUE Account Access and Login Portal

High School Possibility Form and Center Application (optional)

💡 Access your student's report, form, and center applications directly via Synergy ParentVUE

How Center Program Admissions Work

Three steps for families



Applying is optional. An invitation is not guaranteed.

Source: MCPS Program of Study and Regional Programs, Admissions Overview.

Admissions: What You Need to Know

General Process Overview

- **Program Placement Goal:**
Aiming to place as many students as possible into programs
- **Optional Application:**
Applying to Center programs is optional
- **Lottery System:**
All placements into programs is through a ranked-choice lottery
- **Admission Rounds:**
There are two rounds in the admission process

By the Numbers & Ranking Rules

- **Program Choices:**
Students may rank up to 8 programs
- **Invitation Limit:**
Students may be invited to up to one program in the ranked-choice lottery
- **Highest Preference:**
Every effort is made to place students in their highest ranked choice
- **Criteria-Based Eligibility:**
Criteria-based student applicants identified as eligible/qualified for the program will enter the ranked-choice lottery just like the interest-based student applicants.

💡 All program placements are processed through a central, ranked-choice lottery system

Factors for Criteria-based Programs

STEM and MED Centers

Science, Math, CS; Medical Science

Admission Factors:

- Application Essays and Ranking
- School Performance (Math/Science)
- Assessment Scores (PSAT/MAP-M/MCAP^)
- Services and Demographics**

GLOBE Centers

International Baccalaureate

Admission Factors:

- Application Essays and Ranking
- School Performance (English/SS/Math/Science)
- Assessment Scores (PSAT/MAP/MCAP/WIDA^)
- Services and Demographics**

GLOBE and ARTS Centers

Humanities; Comm. Arts

Admission Factors:

- Application Essays and Ranking
- School Performance (English/SS Grades)
- Assessment Scores (PSAT/MAP-R/MCAP/WIDA^)
- Services and Demographics**

ARTS Centers

Dance, Music & Visual Art

Admission Factors:

- Ranking
- Artist Statement
- Pre-Audition
- Live Task

- The higher scaled score between the PSAT and MAP-M or MAP-R | Using both national and local normed scores for PSAT and MAP
- ^Where applicable
- **Services: Special Education, English Language Development, 504 Plan; Demographics: Free and Reduced Meal Services

WIDA (World Class Instructional Design and Assessment); MCAP (Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program); PSAT (Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test); MAP-M or MAP-R (Measurements of Academic Progress Math or Reading)

Central Review Placement: MCPS initiated

Process Overview

01 MCPS Review: MCPS will review Grade 8 students' academic profiles for both their region's International Baccalaureate (IB) and Science, Math and Computer Science programs.

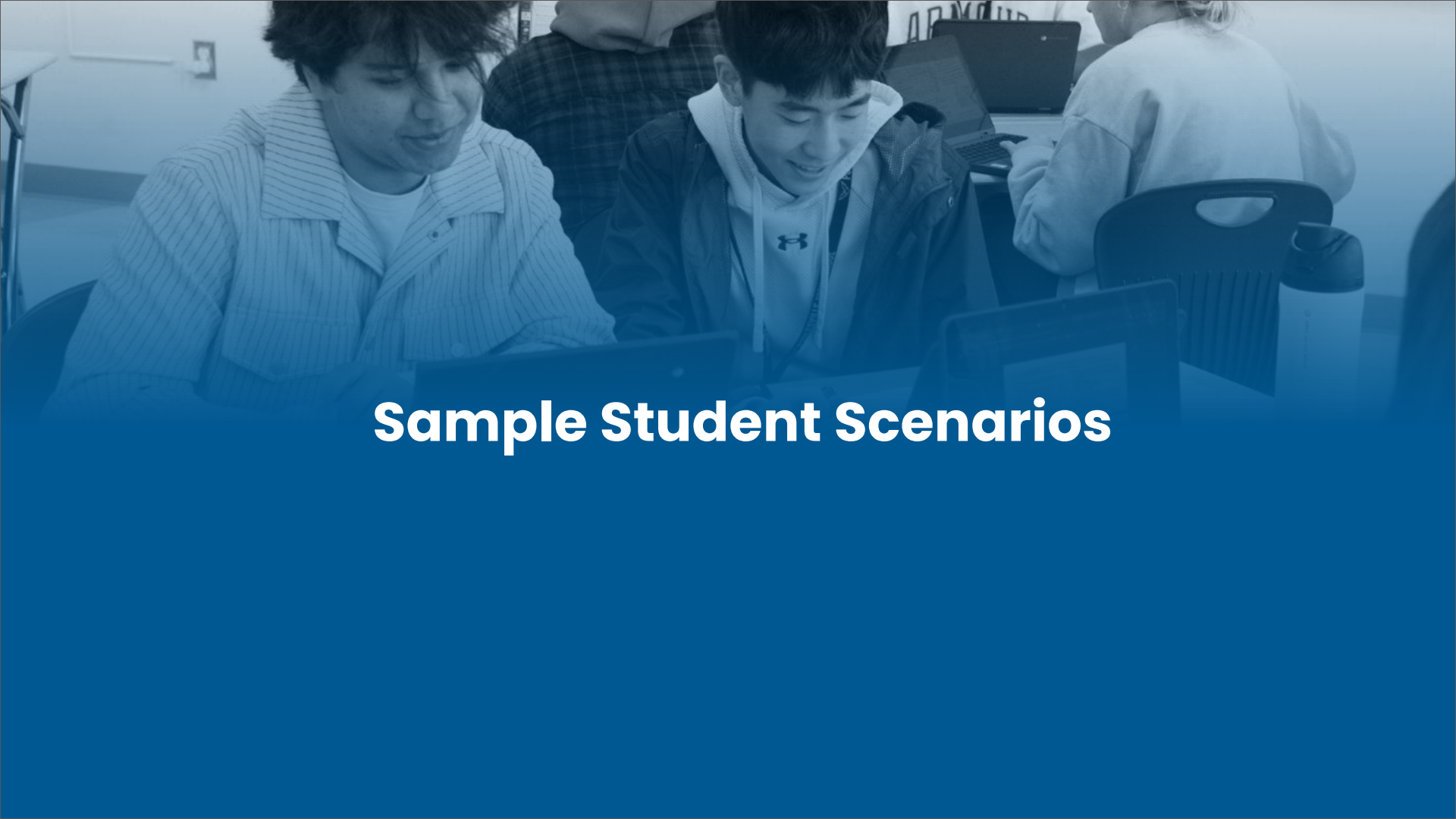
02 Invitations: Students who demonstrate a distinguished need and academic match for the program may be invited to either or both of these programs.

03 No Obligation: Students are not obligated to accept a placement from this process.

Placement Guidelines

- **Automatic Review**
MCPS reviews Grade 8 academic profiles by region for potential placement in IB or Science, Math, and Computer Science programs.
- **Invitations**
Pre-qualified students may receive invitations to one or both programs, independent of any other applications.
- **Selection**
Students may accept only one program if invited.
- **Ranking Not Considered**
This process considers a student's academic profile only.

This is separate from the admissions process.
No action from the family is necessary.

A blue-tinted photograph of students in a classroom. In the foreground, two young men are sitting at a desk, looking at a laptop. The student on the left is wearing a light-colored, vertically striped button-down shirt over a white t-shirt. The student on the right is wearing a dark jacket over a white hoodie with an Under Armour logo. In the background, another student is visible, working on a laptop. A black chair and a white water bottle are also visible on the desk. The text "Sample Student Scenarios" is overlaid in white on a dark blue rectangular background at the bottom of the image.

Sample Student Scenarios

Marcus' Program Choice

A fictional student story from the Central South region



- 1 Rank two programs**
Marcus is highly interested in theatre and medical science. He ranks theatre #1 and medical science #2. His home high school remains available.
- 2 Enter both lottery pools**
MCPS confirms that Marcus qualifies for the medical science lottery pool. His theatre choice also enters its lottery pool.
- 3 Receive his second choice**
The ranked-choice lottery offers Marcus a place in medical science, his second choice.
- 4 Accept the placement**
After the invitation meeting, Marcus decides the program is right for him and accepts. He does not request Round 2 for theatre.

Round 2 is optional. Marcus is satisfied with his placement and accepts.

Aprils' High School Choice

A fictional student story about family choice and Central Review



1

Explore the options

April enjoys writing and volleyball. She likes some Center programs, but she is unsure about a prescribed four-year sequence.

2

Choose the home high school

April and her family select her home high school in the High School Possibility process. Their part of the process is complete.

3

Receive an unexpected invitation

In January, MCPS reviews her academic profile and invites her to the IB program in her region. April learns the invitation came through Central Review.

4

Make the family's decision

After talking together, April and her parent/caregiver decline. She feels happy and ready to attend her home high school

Central Review may offer another option. Families remain free to accept or decline.

Timeline: for Current Students and Parents

Grade 8 High School Possibility (HSP) Process 2026–2027

September 14 and 23, 2026

High School Preview Webinar

Hosted live on Zoom.

English: 7 PM | Español: 8 PM

September 29

Zoom Drop-In

6:30–7:30 PM

October 2026

Showcases and Open Portals

- [Fall showcases](#) and Zoom Drop-in.
- HSP portals open officially on ParentVUE (October 9 or earlier).

October 6

Zoom Drop-In

6:30–7:30 PM

November 4, 5 and 6, 2026

Zoom Drop-Ins

6:30–7:30 PM

November 6, 2026

Round 1 Deadline

HSP form and Center Application must be completed.

Late January 2027

Round 1 Results

- Results sent to families and schools
- Center invite meetings and course registration.
- Round 1 appeals due for criteria programs.
- Round 2 officially opens.

February 2027

Round 2 Deadlines

- Round 2 HSP form & Center deadline (Mid-February).
- Accept Round 1 invitations and appeal deadline.

March 2027

Round 2 Results

- Round 2 results sent to schools and families.
- Round 2 appeals due for criteria-based programs.

⚠ Aiming for 100% completion of the HSP form

Community Engagement and Support

Zoom Webinars

Come learn about High School Options for Grade 9 students in 2027-2028

September 14 and 23, 2026

English: <https://mcpstv-org.zoom.us/j/86446324364>

Spanish: <https://mcpstv-org.zoom.us/j/84221942981>

- 7pm English, ASL & Translations in Amharic, Chinese, French
- 8pm Spanish

Zoom Room Drop-Ins

Drop in to get answers to questions about the High School Possibility Process and Program Options

September 29; October 6; November 4, 5 and 6

English, Spanish | Zoom is open from 6:30-7:30 pm

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://mcpsmd.zoom.us/j/82991521061?pwd=XXcc1uzz5YbacQtiyYEmKaaA8eW9mA.1>

Meeting ID: 829 9152 1061 | Passcode: 595869



High School Fall Showcases

Live and In Person

Visit each high school in your region to learn about both the Cornerstone offerings (local) and Center Programs

Dates [here](#)

Program Development On Track

High School Regional Model Program Status

UPDATES

Previous LEAD Centers (JROTC)

- Central South @ Kennedy - **Navy**
- Central North @ Col. Zadok Magruder - **Army**
- Eastern @ Paint Branch - **Navy**

Expanding Center LEAD Programs

- Central North @ Gaithersburg - **Navy**
- Northern @ Seneca Valley - **Navy**

Medical Science Pathway Names

- Medical Science with Biomedical
➡ **Medical Science**
- Medical Science with Biotechnology
➡ **Biotechnology Studies**

⚠ **Important Notice:** Regions absent a LEAD Center (JROTC) may apply for an academic COSA (Change of School Assignment academic transfer).

Curriculum Update and Quality

Curriculum Update: Courses in Development

Curriculum Quality: Review and Approval Process

Professional Learning

School Year: Center Leads
Studying Skillful Teaching Cohort

Summer: Curriculum Training
2027-2028: Cross regional PLCs

Recruitment

Branding and Marketing: Logos, outreach materials

School Support: Showcase development, outreach, program swag

Cybersecurity 4-Year Center Program

Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
English 9	English 10 AP Seminar (Cybersecurity Focus)	English 11 or AP Language and Composition	English 12 or AP Literature and Composition
Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics	Upper Level Mathematics
US History	NSL Government or AP Government	Modern World or AP World History	Physical Education, Fine Arts, or Health
Science	Science	Science	Physical Education, Fine Arts, or Health
World Language	World Language	World Language or Elective	World Language or Elective
AP Computer Science Principles with Python	Cybersecurity 1	Cybersecurity 2*	Cybersecurity 3**, Work-based Learning, or Dual Enrollment
Cybersecurity Center Essentials	Physical Education, Fine Arts, or Health	AP Computer Science Java	Ethical Hacking + 0.5 Computer Science Elective
Industry Recognized Credentials: *Comp TIA Network+ or Comp TIA Security+ **Comp TIA CySA+ (Cybersecurity Analyst)			

CTE Local Program of Study

Program of Study

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