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

July 25, 2011

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Joshua P. Starr, Superintendent of Schools

Subject: Strategic Plan—*Our Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence*

Executive Summary

The 2011 revisions of *Our Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence,* the strategic plan for Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), reflect our constancy of purpose—to raise the bar for student achievement and close the gap in student performance by race and ethnicity. We remain committed to maintaining the systems, structures, and processes that have contributed to making MCPS the 2010 recipient of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, the highest presidential honor given to American organizations for performance excellence. Only six schools districts have received the honor, and MCPS is the largest school system ever to be recognized. At the same time, the Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation named MCPS as one of the five finalists for the 2010 Broad Prize for Urban Education, which honors school districts that have raised student performance while narrowing the achievement gap. As a finalist, MCPS was awarded $250,000 in college scholarships for graduates in the Class of 2011.

As Montgomery County finds itself in the midst of the greatest economic challenge of the past decade, we must be strategic in planning for our students so that they are prepared for postsecondary education and the world of work. Revisions to the 2011 *Our Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence* include several additional cost-neutral strategies aimed at improving existing systems, structures, and processes that have contributed to the district's success over the past 12 years. Significant changes, however, have been made to Goal 3—Strengthen Productive Partnerships for Education, directly aligning language for the milestones with the six National Standards for Family-School Partnerships articulated in Board of Education Policy ABC, *Parent and Family Involvement*, and MCPS Regulation ABC-RA, *Parent and Family Involvement.* (Attachment).

The Board of Education's 2009 revisions to the core values and the addition of the Framework for Equity and Excellence further strengthened our mission to provide a high-quality, world-class education that ensures success for every student through excellence in teaching and learning. The

plan's Guiding Tenets include the Board of Education's goals and academic priorities; the vision, mission, and core values of the school system; and the critical questions that guide our work. The plan reinforces the reform initiatives that have been implemented since the Board of Education adopted *Our Call to Action* in November 1999. The Seven Keys to College Readiness, a trajectory of high standards identified by MCPS, guides school staff and parents to ensure that all students achieve at high levels and are ready for success in college.

The revisions of *Our Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence* reflect ongoing stakeholder involvement and feedback during Fiscal Year (FY) 2011, as prescribed by Board of Education Policy AEB, *Strategic Planning for Continuous Improvement*. Final Board of Education action on the FY 2012 Operating Budget also is incorporated into the revised plan. The Board of Education Strategic Planning Committee met on April 27 and May 25, 2011, to review the suggested revisions to *Our Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence* and recommended approval of the revised plan by the full Board of Education.

Background

Our Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence describes the strategic course for the school system's overall operation, including the operating budget. It reflects a sophisticated planning and accountability process that resulted in MCPS receiving the 2010 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award. Additionally, through the Process Improvement and Innovation in Education project, administered by the Houston-based American Productivity and Quality Center (APQC), MCPS has been cited as a benchmark district for data-driven decision making, English for Speakers of Other Languages programs and services, professional development, mathematics and science education, and support of professional learning communities. Beginning in 2009, MCPS became one of nine hub districts for APQC's *North Star,* a pilot project that focuses on the use of process and performance management to transform the kindergarten through Grade 12 public education system.

The strategic plan lays the foundation to improve the instructional program and operational effectiveness in each school and office. Annually, schools develop and implement school improvement plans based on the district's strategic plan, using the Baldrige-guided school improvement planning process. Office and department strategic plans also are aligned with *Our Call to Action*: *Pursuit of Excellence*. This strategic planning process guides staff throughout the school system in their work with schools, parents, and the community. The strategic plan also addresses the requirements of the Maryland *Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act* and the achievement goals of the federal *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB).

Our Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence serves as the basis for the district's accountability to the community, including the Annual Report presented to the Board of Education each December. Under each of the five goals—ensure success for every student, provide an effective instructional program, strengthen productive partnerships for education, create a positive work environment in a self-renewing organization, and provide high-quality business services that are essential to the educational success of students—there are related milestones and data points.

Reports provided throughout the year to the Board of Education and the public address these data points and the progress that has been made. Individual schools monitor progress on achieving their targets with their community superintendent and director of school performance.

Establishing Targets

In 2006, MCPS established academic targets through 2010, by considering where MCPS wanted to be in five years with regard to student achievement. The strategic targets define expectation for student attainment of critical data points that lead to college and career readiness. The challenge was to establish realistic targets that raise our expectations and standards for student achievement and reinforce our commitment to closing the gap in student performance by race and ethnicity, as well as other student demographic groups. A comprehensive target-setting process was implemented during the 2009–2010 year to align the targets with the Seven Keys to College Readiness and extend the district's targets from 2011 through 2015.

Alignment of the Budget and Strategic Planning Process

The Board of Education aligned the budget and strategic planning processes in February 2004 by adopting a set of recommendations from the Board of Education's Research and Evaluation Committee to change the process for public involvement in the development of the MCPS strategic plan and operating budget. The Board's goals included encouraging greater public involvement in long-range strategic issues and emphasizing public involvement in the development phase of the strategic plan and the operating budget, instead of primarily in the critique phase, following the superintendent of school's presentation of the operating budget. The most recent revision to Policy AEB, *Strategic Planning for Continuous Improvement,* adopted on May 12, 2009, further reinforces the Board's commitment to ensuring that the budget process and strategic planning process are aligned and that a broad range of stakeholders actively participate in these processes. In addition, the policy identifies how the Board will regularly review at its business meetings, "progress on the implementation of priorities, initiatives, and strategies to determine progress toward milestones, discuss whether any new efforts are needed, and to review major issues, including those that may have a budgetary impact for the next year."

Stakeholder Involvement in the Strategic Planning Process

The Board of Education sponsored community roundtable discussions on the strategic planning process on October 13 and October 28, 2010, at the Carver Educational Services Center in Rockville, and Wheaton High School in Wheaton, respectively, with approximately 235 parents and community members participating. Efforts were made to assure broad-based participation as the Board of Education collaborated with local schools to identify and personally invite community members and leaders. Sign language and foreign language interpretation services were made available in Chinese, French, Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese, and materials were provided in these five languages in addition to English.

The format of the roundtable discussion was adapted from the Maryland Association of Boards of Education's *What Counts in Education* approach. By using the new format, community members were able to engage in deeper conversations around three key questions:

- What do you value about Montgomery County Public Schools?
- We cannot do it all. So, what should our top priorities be, and what are the things that MCPS cannot do without?
- What do we need to do to continue improving education over the next 5 to 10 years, and beyond, in Montgomery County?

The data collected at both roundtables were transcribed, analyzed, and made available for participants and the public to review. Broad themes were organized including curriculum/programs, staff, communication and engagement, technology, leadership, college/career, business services, instruction, class size, students, and safety and security. These themes were categorized and aligned with strategic plan goals. Board of Education members were able to drill down into data to gain valuable insight while developing both the strategic plan and the budget for the future.

In addition to letters, e-mails, and phone calls, MCPS continues to receive feedback online and through TIP (*Tell It Please*) postage-paid feedback cards, prepared in six languages. The postage-paid cards and the MCPS website allow individuals to continually provide feedback throughout the year in multiple languages.

Revisions to the 2011–2016 Strategic Plan

We have been very thoughtful in maintaining the systems, structures, and processes that have contributed to the outstanding teaching and learning the district has experienced over the past 12 years. As we face the challenging economic climate prevalent in Montgomery County and the nation, we need to become even more strategic in planning for our students so they are prepared for postsecondary education and the world of work. We continue to strengthen the instructional program for every student, providing staff members with the tools and work systems that are most conducive to teaching and learning, engaging all stakeholders as true partners, and supporting the entire organization with outstanding business processes.

The 2011–2016 *Our Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence* reflects a restructuring of Goal 3—Strengthen Productive Partnerships for Education, minor tweaks to strategies and initiatives in Goals 1, 2, 4, and 5, and several cost-neutral strategies aimed at improving systems, structures, and processes that have contributed to the district's success over the past 12 years.

Restructuring of Goal 3—Strengthen Productive Partnerships for Education

More than 40 years of research confirm that family engagement promotes a range of benefits for students, including improved school readiness, higher academic achievement, development of appropriate social skills and behavior, and increased likelihood of graduation from high school

and college. One of the first steps in this process is to develop purposeful relationships between families and school staff members. The increasing diversity of our community—culturally, economically, and linguistically—has created a greater need for more innovative practices in family outreach practices. To this end, Goal 3—Strengthen Productive Partnerships for Education, was revised to align the data points and milestones with the six National Standards for Family-School Partnerships that are articulated in Board Policy ABC, *Parent and Family Involvement*, and MCPS Regulation ABC-RA, *Parent and Family Involvement.* Meetings were held with the MCPS Parent Advisory Council and members of the Deputy Superintendent of Schools' Principals' Advisory Group. Principals from elementary, middle, and high schools were included in identifying the data points associated with each milestone. To help guide schools and offices toward continuous improvement in achieving the milestones of Goal 3, a list of best practices contained in the Parent Involvement Toolkit was developed by the Department of Family and Community Partnerships.

System, Structure, and Process Improvement

The following cost-neutral strategies aim to improve systems, structures, and processes in place that have contributed to the district's success over the past 12 years:

Goal 1
- Deputy Superintendent of Schools' Innovation Team
- Developing Mathematics Proficiency for All Students
- Assisting First-Generation, College-Bound Students to Chart Their Course

Goal 4
- Supervising and Evaluating Performance
- Continuous Improvement for Systemwide Training and Professional Development
- School Climate Compact
- Employee Recognition

Goal 5
- Facility Availability System
- Systemwide Safety Programs

Strategic Targets

The 2011–2016 strategic plan contains 19 targets, seven of which are state targets. Three are national targets, and nine are local targets. Nested within these targets are multiple data points that are used to monitor progress along the trajectory of the Seven Keys to College Readiness. A target review process was established in July 2009, involving more than 150 school-based and central office staff members, including principals and teachers. In light of the June 2010 adoption of the Common Cores State Standards by the Maryland State Board of Education and the Montgomery County Board of Education, and the pending recommendations of the K–12 Mathematics Work

Group Report, three of the math targets were to be determined. The 2011–2016 plan includes targets for Algebra 1 by Grade 8 and Algebra 2 by Grade 11, with the caveat that data on these targets would be reviewed in 2013, in light of the curriculum revisions made to align with the Common Core State Standards and the new state assessments. The third math target, Advanced Math in Grade 5, remains to be determined, as changes in the sequence of concepts and processes are more significant in K–8 than in high school courses.

Strategic Plans of Schools and Offices

MCPS adopted the Malcolm Baldrige Education Criteria for Performance Excellence as its model for continuous improvement. The criteria are designed to help organizations use an integrated approach that results in delivery of ever-increasing value to students and stakeholders, improvement of overall organizational effectiveness, and enhanced organizational and personal learning.

All schools use the Baldrige-guided School Improvement Plan process and Baldrige criteria to identify priority school improvement goals and performance measures aligned with *Our Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence.* Community superintendents and directors of school performance are actively involved in supporting the schools throughout the process by consulting with school teams and monitoring the plans quarterly. Office and department strategic plans are reviewed by the chief operating officer or the deputy superintendent of schools to ensure alignment with the district's strategic plan.

Monitoring the Strategic Plan

Executive Leadership Team

Guided by the strategic plan, the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) meets biweekly to review outcome data, monitor performance, make recommendations, and implement changes to processes and structures that promote continuous improvement throughout the organization. ELT plans for and organizes the implementation of the Board of Education's goals, academic priorities, and *Our Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence* strategies and initiatives. This ongoing review and monitoring strengthens our ability to improve teaching and learning, raise student achievement for all students, and close the achievement gap.

M-Stat

MCPS also has created the M-Stat process, which provides a framework for the systemic monitoring of critical student performance data that enables MCPS schools and central office leadership staff to drill down to root causes, focus on areas of need, develop action plans for improvement, and document best practices for recognition and dissemination throughout the system. Through the Baldrige practice of "plan, do, study, act," key data points and processes are examined throughout the school improvement planning cycle. The M-Stat process provides a focused, intensive review of student performance data disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender,

socioeconomic status, language proficiency, or disability. This year, several M-Stat meetings were conducted via webinars, which allowed principals to contribute, yet remain in their buildings, yielding a greater number of active participants.

Public Reporting

MCPS has a system for publicly reporting student performance and other organizational data. A schedule is maintained for the release of key data reports throughout the year that are posted on the MCPS website. The website exists to inform the community about, and to engage them in, our joint mission to provide a high-quality education to all children. The 2010 Annual Report and all other data reports produced by the Office of Shared Accountability are posted on the MCPS website.

Next Steps

The next step in the strategic planning process is to continue to strengthen and monitor the evaluation of the data points and targets that have been established for the system and all schools and to use time and resources productively to achieve those targets. Community superintendents, directors of school performance, and other central office staff work with principals to develop and implement action plans that meet the unique needs of each school. At the system level, ELT monitors the implementation of the data points and targets and determines progress toward target attainment.

Our Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence—The Strategic Plan for Montgomery County Public Schools is a "living" document. It continues to provide the basis for the leadership of our school system to improve the work being done in MCPS on a daily basis. The plan guides staff throughout the school system in their work with schools, parents, and the community. By approving the revisions to *Our Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence,* the Board of Education continues our efforts to improve the instructional program in every school.

The following resolution is recommended for your consideration.

WHEREAS, The Board of Education aligned the budget and strategic planning process by adopting a set of recommendations to increase public involvement in the development of the Montgomery County Public Schools strategic plan and operating budget; and

WHEREAS, The revisions to *Our Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence* reflect input from the public and continue our efforts to improve the instructional program in every school by focusing on systemwide strategic goals, milestones, data points, and key performance targets for Goals 1 and 2 that reflect the priorities of the Board of Education; and

WHEREAS, *Our Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence* reflects a significant effort to identify and establish realistic targets for Montgomery County Public Schools and each school that raise

expectations and standards for student achievement and reinforce the commitment to close the gap in student performance by race and ethnicity, as well as other student groups; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Education remains committed to ensure that every child regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, limited English proficiency, socioeconomic status, or disability succeeds at high levels; and

WHEREAS, The Framework for Equity and Excellence describes expectations, cultural competence, and positive relationships as critical conditions that support student success; now therefore be it

Resolved, That the revisions to *Our Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence* be approved and the updated strategic plan reflect the goals and academic priorities of the Board of Education and a shared commitment to raise the bar for student achievement and close the gap in student performance by race and ethnicity and among students impacted by disabilities, limited English proficiency, and poverty.

Present at the table this evening for the discussion are Mr. Larry A. Bowers, chief operating officer, Office of the Chief Operating Officer; Dr. Frieda K. Lacey, deputy superintendent of schools, Office of the Deputy Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Frank H. Stetson, chief school performance officer, Office of School Performance; Mr. Erick Lang, associate superintendent for curriculum and instructional programs, Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs; and Mr. Eric A. Davis, director, Department of Family and Community Partnerships, Office of the Deputy Superintendent of Schools. Additional executive staff members are present in the audience.

JPS:sjl

Attachment

Our Call to Action:
Pursuit of Excellence
2011–2016

**The Strategic Plan for
Montgomery County Public Schools**

Malcolm Baldrige
National Quality Award

2010 Award Recipient

MCPS MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Rockville, Maryland

Our Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence

The Strategic Plan for the Montgomery County Public Schools

~~2010–2015~~

2011- 2016

Contents

Our Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence

Dear Staff, Parents, Students, and Members of the Community:

We are pleased to present to you this latest update of the Montgomery County Public Schools' (MCPS) strategic plan, *Our Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence*. Since establishing this strategic plan in 1999, our school district has undergone dramatic changes in its size and in the demographic profile of our student population. Yet, over that time, we have continued to see strong improvement in student achievement and high levels of engagement among our staff.

These outcomes are a direct result of the ongoing, steadfast commitment that the Board of Education, the MCPS staff and the Montgomery County community have made to *Our Call to Action.* In a time when "school reform" has become a political buzzword, Montgomery County is demonstrating that real improvement happens in education when there is a collaborative commitment to a well-crafted, strategic vision that clearly focuses on what is best for the students.

Today, that commitment is more important than ever.

The economic downturn has required us to make many difficult reductions in our budget, but we have done so through the lens of our strategic plan, which allows us to focus our resources and our human capital more effectively. With limited resources, we cannot do everything we would like, so it is important that we do what we know will achieve the best results.

We also are at a time of transition in the leadership of Montgomery County Public Schools with the retirement of of Dr. Jerry D. Weast after 12 exceptional years leading our system. Many of the initiatives that are critical to our success were initiated or expanded during Dr. Weast's tenure and we are sincerely grateful for his work on behalf of all MCPS students. Continuing to focus on the work outlined in the strategic plan will be vitally important for a smooth transition of leadership that will benefit our students and staff.

That is not to say that *Our Call to Action* is a static document. Each year, we review the initiatives, goals and data points contained in the strategic plan to ensure we are providing our students with a high-quality, world-class education. We are dedicated to continuous improvement. We regularly, methodically analyze all available data to identify our strengths and challenges in order to make strategic adjustments that will produce the best outcome for our students.

Our long-term commitment to our strategic plan and our commitment to continuous improvement are among the reasons that Montgomery County Public Schools received the 2010 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award for Performance Excellence. MCPS is just the sixth school district to ever win the award and is the largest, by far, demonstrating that the sound business and operational practices in the Baldrige criteria are capable of being implemented to scale in a large education organization.

Of course, none of the successes enjoyed by MCPS would be possible without the exceptional staff and the unwavering support that the citizens of Montgomery County give to our schools. It is this partnership that has made Montgomery County Public Schools one of the premier school districts in the nation and will allow us to continue to serve our students at the highest level for generations to come.

Respectfully,

Christopher S. Barclay   Joshua P. Starr, Ed.D.
President, Board of Education   Superintendent of Schools

Montgomery County Public Schools
GUIDING TENETS

CORE VALUES

- MCPS is committed to doing whatever it takes to ensure that every child, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, language proficiency, or disability, learns and succeeds.
- Student outcomes shall not be predictable by race or ethnicity.
- MCPS has high expectations for all students, believing that all children can learn at high levels.
- Every student is a unique learner and MCPS will tailor instruction to meet the learning needs of each student.
- A comprehensive early years' program is critical for students to acquire the knowledge and skills to be successful in reading, writing, and mathematics.
- The pursuit of excellence for all students requires providing our neediest students with the extra support necessary to attain rigorous targets.
- MCPS demonstrates commitment to continuous improvement by reviewing, evaluating and improving our work and monitoring student performance data.
- MCPS is committed to a culture of respect that includes fair treatment, honesty, openness, and integrity.

Revised June 2009

MISSION

To provide a high-quality, world-class education that ensures success for every student through excellence in teaching and learning.

VISION

A high-quality education is the fundamental right of every child. All children will receive the respect, encouragement, and opportunities they need to build the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be successful, contributing members of a global society.

SYSTEM GOALS

- Ensure success for every student
- Provide an effective instructional program
- Strengthen productive partnerships for education
- Create a positive work environment in a self-renewing organization
- Provide high-quality business services that are essential to the educational success of students

BOARD OF EDUCATION ACADEMIC PRIORITIES*

- Organize and optimize resources for improved academic results
- Align rigorous curriculum, delivery of instruction, and assessment for continuous improvement of student achievement
- Develop, expand, and deliver literacy-based initiatives from prekindergarten through Grade 12
- Develop, pilot, and expand improvements in secondary content, instruction, and programs that support students' active engagement in learning
- Use student, staff, school, and system performance data to monitor and improve student achievement
- Foster and sustain systems that support and improve employee effectiveness, in partnership with MCPS employee organizations
- Strengthen family-school relationships and continue to expand civic, business, and community partnerships that support improved student achievement

*Revised July 17, 2007

CRITICAL QUESTIONS
- What do students need to know and be able to do?
- How will we know they have learned it?
- What will we do when they haven't?
- What will we do when they already know it?

Framework for Equity and Excellence

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) is committed to equity and excellence for all students. Equity in our schools is defined as high expectations and access to meaningful and relevant learning for all students so that outcomes are not predictable by race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, language proficiency, or disability. Excellence is achieved through high standards that ensure that all students grow to reach their highest levels year after year and are college or career ready as high school graduates. In order to accomplish this, measurements are needed to monitor system progress in promoting equity and excellence.

The Seven Keys to College Readiness establishes the trajectory that will ensure a clear path for student success and a guide for staff and parents to ensure all students achieve at these high levels. The goal of the Seven Keys is to set advanced rather than proficient standards and to ensure that results are not predictable for any group. This raises the bar to high levels, with the expectation that many of our students are going to far exceed this high bar – the intent is not to limit any student's level of achievement.

MCPS has made great strides to provide rigorous and high-quality education for every student through *Our Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence.* More students are learning to read at an earlier age, more students are taking rigorous and challenging courses, and more students are being provided with opportunities to succeed at higher levels than ever before. This is accomplished through the implementation of strategies and initiatives in this strategic plan that promote equity and excellence by creating the organizational culture, the conditions, and the support systems to ensure our students' success. Many of these initiatives are intended to strengthen students' abilities to problem solve, think critically, and express their thoughts and inquiries. Other strategies have been implemented to create collaborative learning communities where each child's individual learning needs are met. This strategic plan recognizes that there is more work to be done to eliminate the achievement gap and raise the academic achievement for all.

Fostering an organizational culture of high expectations for all students that is pervasive throughout MCPS requires the commitment of staff, parents, and community to equitable practices in classrooms and workplaces. Creating this culture also requires three critical conditions to encourage, support, and nurture equity and excellence—high expectations, positive relationships, and cultural competence. To create and sustain these positive conditions, we need to establish comprehensive support systems to help all students, staff, and parents learn and grow at the personal, professional, and institutional levels.

These efforts are supported by ongoing professional development and a system of monitoring and accountability. Growth and transformation at the personal, professional, and institutional levels will not take place without ongoing, deliberate efforts to build the capacity of staff, students, and parents through targeted professional development. In order to maintain focus and momentum in this important work, measurements must be identified and employed to monitor system progress in promoting equity and excellence.

These support systems and conditions must be contained within, and supported by, all schools and classrooms, all MCPS workplaces, and the communities that contain our schools and offices. This organizational culture also will serve to protect the ongoing work to promote equity and excellence from external factors that could possibly disrupt the work or distract staff from their focus

The next phase of our work in leading systemic change is the redoubling of our efforts to ensure equity and excellence for all students so that academic success is not predictable by race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, language proficiency, or disability. These efforts will address the challenging issues that limit students from excelling at the highest academic levels. We are committed to the fundamental belief that this is possible.

Performance Targets—2011–2016

Key performance targets for data points in Goals 1 and 2 raise expectations and standards for student and school performance and reinforce a commitment to eliminating the gap in student performance by race and ethnicity and other student groups. Targets reflect the requirements of national, state, and local accountability mandates and consider expectations about where Montgomery County Public Schools wants to be in five years.

Performance Targets	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Grade 2 Reading—Percentage of students meeting or exceeding benchmark	81	85	89	93	97
Grade 5 Math 6 or Higher—Percentage of students successfully completing	TBD[1]				
ES MSA Reading— Percentage of students at or above proficient	85.9	90.6	95.3	100	100
ES MSA Mathematics— Percentage of students at or above proficient	84.5	89.7	94.8	100	100
Elementary School Suspension Rate— Percentage of students suspended at or below	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3
MS MSA Reading— Percentage of students at or above proficient	85.6	90.4	95.2	100	100
MS MSA Mathematics— Percentage of students at or above proficient	78.6	85.7	92.9	100	100
Grade 8 Algebra—Percentage of students successfully completing with C or higher	67	69	71 [2]	TBD	
Middle School Suspension Rate— Percentage of students suspended at or below	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5
Middle School Ineligibility— Percentage of students ineligible at or below	10.8	8.9	7	5	5
Grade 11 Algebra 2— Percentages of students successfully completing with C or higher	55	57	59[2]	TBD	
High School MSA Reading— Percentage of students at or above proficient	79.5	86.3	93.2	100	100
High School MSA Math—Percentage of students at or above proficient	73.7	82.4	91.2	100	100
SAT/ACT Participation—Percentage of students participating	77	78	79	80	80
SAT/ACT Performance — Percentage of test takers scoring 1650 or above on SAT combined score or 24 or above on ACT composite score	62	68	74	80	80
AP/IB Exam Performance—Percentage of graduating seniors earning 3 or higher on AP exam or 4 or higher on IB exam	69	73	77	80	80
Graduation Rate—Percentage of students graduating	TBD [3]				
High School Suspension Rate—Percentage of students suspended at or below	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5
High School Ineligibility—Percentage of students ineligible at or below	19.4	16.8	14.2	11.7	11.7

State Target

[1] This target will be revisited as the impact of the implementation of the Common Core State Standards in the elementary grades is assessed.

[2] Review Algebra 1 and Algebra 2 targets for 2013 in light of changes to the Common Core State Standards.

[3] The graduation rate targets will be set to reflect the cohort rate standards to be implemented by the Maryland State Department of Education in the summer of 2011.

Supplemental Plans

The systemwide strategic plan is supplemented by the plans and resources described in the—

- Fiscal Year 2011–12 Operating Budget

- Fiscal Year 2011–12 Educational Facilities Master Plan and the Fiscal Year 2011–2016 Capital Improvements Program

The systemwide strategic plan is further supplemented by the strategic plans for the—

- Office of the Deputy Superintendent of Schools
  - Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs
  - Office of School Performance
  - Office of Shared Accountability
  - Office of Special Education and Student Services

- Office of the Chief Operating Officer
  - Office of Human Resources and Development
  - Office of the Chief Technology Officer

Deployment of Guiding Tenets

The Board of Education and senior leaders developed the MCPS guiding tenets—core values, vision, mission, goals, academic priorities, and critical questions— collaboratively with stakeholders. These guiding tenets were adopted by the Board and included in *Our Call to Action*.

Beginning in August 1999, Board members and senior leaders engaged in an extensive outreach with parent and community groups, business partners, advisory groups, local governing entities, and the faith communities to solicit shared concerns and expectations. The input received through these conversations was codified in the strategic plan. In addition to the guiding tenets, the plan includes the key performance measures for the system.

The process used to develop the MCPS strategic plan and the methods used by Board members and senior leaders to deploy the vision and values have provided a clear picture to the staff, community, and other stakeholders of student expectations, the accountability system being used to monitor results and drive performance, and the strategies employed to achieve the goals.

Our Call to Action is the blueprint for improving the achievement of students at all levels of ability and performance, while eliminating the achievement gap among racial/ethnic and special population groups. In addition, the Board approves a master plan that is submitted to the Maryland State Board of Education to meet the requirements of the *No Child Left Behind Act* and the state's Bridge to Excellence law. *Our Call to Action* is the foundation of this master plan.

The Board has adopted a framework that aligns its policies with the vision and goals articulated in *Our Call to Action*. This framework structures the relationship between Board policies and the strategic plan, linking vision and action. There are eight core governance policies that express the vision, values, and goals of the Board and provide the philosophical foundation for the work directed by the strategic plan. These core governance policies are supported directly by other Board policies, and all of these policies are deployed through a series of regulations that are approved by the superintendent of schools and implemented by senior leaders who ensure compliance.

The superintendent's bimonthly meetings with more than 500 leaders of the school system focus on the vision, core values, and expectations for performance and results through the lens of leading for equity so that student performance is not predictable by race. The superintendent's continuous focus on the vision and expectations in meetings with staff, parents, and community members has been critical in the alignment of all the work of the school system. For the past three years, the Board has conducted forums, attended by both community stakeholders and MCPS employees, to gather feedback on the strategic plan. This feedback has been used to make improvements in the plan and thelp align the operating budget with the plan.

The deployment process begins under the leadership of the community superintendents, as each school annually develops and implements a school improvement plan that is aligned with the Board's strategic plan. Community superintendents meet monthly with their 30–35 principals to deploy strategies to accomplish the system's goals. Other senior leaders guide the development and implementation of office and department strategic plans that also are aligned with *Our Call to Action*. This strategic planning process guides the staff throughout the school system in their work with students, schools, parents, and the community.

The school-improvement process has been designed to reflect the components of the Baldrige Education Criteria for Performance Excellence. Schools are expected to implement the school-improvement planning model using the "look-fors" from the Framework for Improving Teaching and Learning and Baldrige categories. The progress on school improvement plan goals is evaluated regularly with all stakeholders.

How Board of Education Members and Senior Leaders Communicate and Deploy Organizational Vision and Values

• *Our Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence*	• Superintendent's A&S Meetings	• Communicate beliefs and expectations
• *Bridge to Excellence* Master Plan	• Baldrige-guided School Improvement Plans	• Model organization's values
• Board Academic Priorities	• Office/Department Strategic Plans	• Engage in organizational and personal learning
• Board/Superintendent meetings with employee associations	• Implementation of strategies/initiatives	• Empower staff to lead
• Board policies	• Framework for Improving Teaching and Learning	• Model collaboration and shared decision making
• MCPS regulations	• Baldrige Quality Academy	• Frequently monitor progress and share best practices
• Organizational Culture of Respect	• My Job, Your Job, Our Job handbook	
• Professional Growth Systems	• Baldrige Principal's Handbook	
	• Professional Learning Communities	
	• OSP Monitoring Calendar	
	• M-Stat	

OVERVIEW

Our Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence

Designing and Implementing the Strategic Plan

The continued improvement of teaching and learning in MCPS is the focus of the school system's strategic plan, *Our Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence*. This requires great coordination, collaboration, and alignment of activities among the community and thousands of employees affecting tens of thousands of students. A coherent strategic plan that is implemented with fidelity will help to ensure that the bar is raised for every child and that the achievement gap by race and ethnicity is closed. The current national movement stressing the importance of higher education in a global economy is reflected in the Seven Keys to College Readiness. This pathway will give all of our students more options when they graduate from MCPS and a strong foundation for college and career success. The update—addressing school years 2010 through 2015 —reflects a process that has evolved over the past several years. Following the Board of Education's revision of Policy AEB: *Strategic Planning and Continuous Improvement* in November 2004, the process has benefited from greater community involvement. Policy AEB was revised in May 2009, once again articulating the Board's commitment to aligning the budget process with the strategic plan and including a broad range of stakeholders in the strategic planning process. The primary strategies focus on instructional planning, curriculum development, differentiated instruction, and evidence of student learning. There also is a focus on monitoring and accountability using milestones and data points that identify clear targets for continuous improvement. The milestones and data points provide identifiable ways to measure the progress of the school system in such areas as minority student achievement, middle school reform, high school reform, and special education.

The strategic plan highlights programs and initiatives that remain the foundation of the school system's ongoing improvement efforts since 1999. All initiatives are aligned with ongoing efforts, helping the school system maintain ~~substantial~~ consistency over time. Such continuity has enabled teachers, principals, support staff, parents, employee associations, and community members to work on common goals. The strength of the plan is the continued alignment of school system operations. The entire school system revolves around this core focus, requiring greater coordination among everyone involved—working together on the appropriate phases of implementation.

Among the most obvious outcomes of this improved planning are the significant gains in student achievement. There are other examples as well, such as the successful development and funding of highly detailed and meticulous annual operating and capital budgets, and the use of zero-based budgeting practices in the operating budgets for all departments. Improved planning also is evident in the successful ongoing development of curricula, assessments, professional development components, and technology.

The inherent value of the plan is its focus on excellence. This reflects the responsibility of the entire school system and all of its stakeholders to ensure the success of ~~each and~~ every student. Deliberate planning, leadership, and supervision are necessary to achieve this consistently across 200 schools and with the continuity necessary for seamless integration of instruction, programs, and services. Success depends on continuous monitoring, assessment, feedback, and improvement.

The school system's strategic plan is aligned with the Maryland *Bridge to Excellence Act* and addresses all of the requirements for a school district "master plan," under the specifications of the Maryland State Department of Education. These requirements, in turn, are responsive to and aligned with the achievement goals of the federal *No Child Left Behind Act*. In MCPS, attention to these requirements is enhanced by the school system's planning process that employs the "Plan, Do, Study, Act" cycle of continuous improvement, based on the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence.

The multilayered process of strategic planning in MCPS integrates built-in cycles of evaluation and

refinement. The strategic planning components include the Board of Education's goals and academic priorities and the alignment of these goals with milestones, data points, and targets. For deployment of initiatives across the system, the planning process involves office- and department-level strategic plans, school improvement plans, and individual staff professional development plans (PDPs).

The school system is involved in several national initiatives to improve strategic planning of school districts. One initiative is the Public Education Leadership Project, a joint program of the Harvard Business School and the Harvard Graduate School of Education. This initiative prompted the research and publication of four Harvard case studies about the school system.~~—~~*Differentiated Treatment in Montgomery County Public Schools* (2006) and two companion studies, *Race, Accountability, and the Achievement Gap (A) and (B)* (2006)~~, all three~~ focused exclusively on school system reform initiatives. ~~; and~~ *Wireless Generation* (2006), ~~which detailed~~ details the system's corporate partnership in hand-held technology to improve data collection and analysis by teachers. ~~In addition, MCPS was featured in a November 2006 article in the *Harvard Business Review*, How to Manage Urban Schools.~~

Another national initiative is the Process Improvement and Innovation in Education project, administered by the Houston-based American Productivity and Quality Center (APQC). This initiative's first three projects enabled school systems to compare how they assess student achievement, recruit and select teachers, and manage their information technology systems. MCPS is cited as a benchmark district for ESOL, professional development, the execution and support of professional learning communities, data-driven decision making, and mathematics and science.

Priorities of the Board of Education

The strength of the strategic plan is rooted in the academic priorities of the Board of Education, which have remained consistent over the past eight years. Working closely with the superintendent of schools and senior staff, the Board has achieved widespread community agreement in the direction of the school system and, consequently, its strategic plan. The academic priorities establish the basis for a congruent, multiyear planning strategy that focuses on doing what is best for students, parents, and their schools. The Board of Education modified its priorities on July 17, 2007. These priorities are as follows:

- Organize and optimize resources for improved academic results.
- Align rigorous curriculum, delivery of instruction, and assessment for continuous improvement of student achievement.
- Expand and deliver literacy-based initiatives from prekindergarten through Grade 12.
- Develop, pilot, and expand improvements in secondary content, instruction, and programs that support students' active engagement in learning.
- Use student, staff, school, and system performance data to monitor and improve student achievement.
- Foster and sustain systems that support and improve employee effectiveness, in partnership with MCPS employee associations.
- Strengthen family-school relationships and continue to expand civic, business, and community partnerships that support improved student achievement.

The Board of Education has pursued these priorities with a high level of public involvement in the school system's strategic planning. Beginning in September 2004, the school system expanded the strategic planning processes through a series of community forums that invited public input on the goals of the strategic plan. Citizens offered valuable insights about the operations and goals of the school system. Since then, stakeholder involvement has continued to help improve the development of the operating budget recommendations submitted by the superintendent of schools and approved by the Board of Education. Each year the Board has encouraged public input into what is and isn't working in our schools and has considered this input in setting budget priorities.

Building on a Record of Progress Since 1999

In the years since the original *Our Call to Action* in November 1999, MCPS has made excellent progress in its efforts to deliver a rigorous, high-quality education to every student. Successful planning and implementation have helped pave the way. This progress ~~recently~~ received external affirmation from two distinguished, national organizations in 2010. In November, MCPS became just

the sixth school district in the United States to receive the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award for performance excellence. MCPS is the largest district to ever receive the award and was honored for its sound business practices, dedication to continuous improvement, and outstanding results. Also in 2010, ~~when~~ a notable panel of education experts and leaders named Montgomery County a finalist for the distinguished 2010 Broad Prize for Urban Education, an honor that ~~provides~~ provided ~~at least~~ $250,000 in college scholarships to 13 graduates from our high schools. MCPS is the first district in Maryland and the Washington, D.C. area to be named a finalist and is just one of 22 districts to ever be named a finalist for the honor.

Gains in Student Performance

- The MCPS graduation rate of ~~83~~85.7 ~~1 ranks~~percent ~~ranks # 1 # 1~~ among the nation's 50 largest school~~s~~ districts~~, according to *Education Week*.~~,~~ Diploma Counts 2010~~

- MCPS ~~i~~was a finalist for the 2010 Broad Prize for Urban Education, the largest education prize in the country, for its success in raising student achievement and closing the achievement gap. At least $250,000 in scholarships will be awarded to graduates from the Class of 2011.

- ~~Seven~~ Five MCPS high schools are among the ~~were listed in the~~ top 100 on the *National High School Challenge* ranking~~of *Newsweek*,~~'s list of America's Best High Schools,~~ the most of any district in the nation. All ~~25~~ MCPS high schools are among the top 1,000 on the *National High School Challenge*~~ranked in the top 3 percent of the nation~~.

- The average combined SAT score for the Class of 20~~10~~09 was a record-setting16~~53~~45, 151~~18~~ and 14~~40~~06 points above national and state averages, respectively, with a participation rate of 7~~1.4~~8.0 percent.

- More students now taking the SAT and/or ACT. In 20~~10~~09, 77.3~~81.2~~ percent of the Class of 2009 took the SAT and/or ACT.

- MCPS students took a record number of AP exams in 2010, totaling 29,854, an increase over 2009's all-time high of 28,575.

- In 2010, 50 percent~~48.7 percent of the Class of 2009~~ of MCPS graduates scored a 3 or higher on at least one Advanced Placement (AP) exam, ~~more than~~ triple the national average and almost double the Maryland average.

- In 2010, 66.1~~64.4~~ percent of MCPS graduates~~the Class of 2009~~ took at least one AP exam during high school, more than double the national average of 2~~8.3~~6.5 percent.

- 22.6~~20.9~~ percent of African American students and 35.6~~1~~ percent of Hispanic students in the Class of 20~~10~~09 scored a 3 or higher on at least one AP exam, topping the national average of 16~~5~~.9 percent for all students.

- 44.2 percent of African American students in the MCPS Class of 2010 took at least one AP exam, compared with 16.5 percent of African Americans nationally. More than half of those test takers earned a score of 3 or higher on at least one exam, compared with 26.9 percent natinoally.~~earned 1,369 scores of 3 or higher on AP exams in 2009, accounting for 37.9 percent and 3.1 percent, respectively, of all AP exam scores of 3 or higher earned by African American public school students in Maryland and the nation.~~

- 52.3 percent of Hispanic students in the MCPS Class of 2010 took at least one AP exam, compared to 27 percent of Hispanics nationally. Sixty eight percent of the test-takers earned a score of 3 or higher on at least one exam, compared to 54.5 percent nationally. ~~earned 1,542 scores of 3 or higher on AP exams in 2009, accounting for 56.8 percent and 1.1 percent, respectively, of all AP exam scores of 3 or higher earned by Hispanic public school students in Maryland and the nation.~~

- A ~~R~~record number of students, 442~~377~~, were named National AP Scholars by The College Board in 20~~10~~09.

- 91.7~~91.1~~ percent of students in kindergarten in 20~~10~~09 reading at or above benchmark by the end of the school year.

~~while the benchmark was increased from Level 3 to Level 4 in 2009.~~

- • 54.4 percent of A record 5,441 fiffifth grade students took advanced math in 201009, compared with 37.6 percent five years ago.with 196 students eight years ago.

- 67.865.5 percent of Grade 8 students in 201009 successfully completed Algebra 1, compared with 65.559.6 percent in 20098.

- 88.788.1 percent of elementary school students and 79.378.2 percent of middle school students scored at proficient or above on mathematics in the 201009 Maryland School Assessment.

- 89.692.3 percent of middle school students who took the Algebra High School Assessment (HSA) in 201009 passed.

- 87103 elementary and secondary schools won Maryland School Performance Recognition Program awards in 201009, based on MSA and HSA performance.

- There were 6271 National Merit Scholars in the Class of 2009.

- A record amount of scholarships—$2364.62 million—were awarded to students in the Class of 201110.

- There were 15 MCPS semifinalists in the 201110 Intel Science Talent Search, the most semifinalists of any school district in the nation.tied with New York City for the district with the most finalists. Since 1999, Montgomery Blair High School has produced more semifinalists than any other high school in the United States.

- MCPS has received 34 National Blue Ribbon School awards.

- Highland Elementary School received the National Excellence in Urban Education Award from the National Center for Urban School Transformation and also was named a National Blue Ribbon School in 2009.

- MCPS leads the state with 634528 educators certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

- MCPS was a 2010 recipient of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, the highest presidential honor given to U.S. organizations for performance excellence. Only six school districts have received the honor and MCPS is the largest school system to ever be recognized.

Response to Changing Demographics

The significant academic progress of the school system coincides with the deployment of more focused and better developed strategic plans. Student achievement continues to increase through the implementation of challenging instructional programs for students of all levels of ability and performance. However, differences in achievement persist when disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, language proficiency, or disability. This disparity formed the basis of the original reforms in 1999 and remains the significant foundation of the strategic plan now under way.

MCPS is the largest, most diverse school district in Maryland and one of the most racially and ethnically diverse school systems in the country—with students from 1645 countries speaking 1834 languages. We remain the nation's 16th largest school system this year, with more than 1442,000 students, and we anticipate our district will continue to grow in the coming years. Recent enrollment gains overall have been mainly among Hispanic, Asian American, and African American students. Almost half of all English language learners in Maryland are enrolled in MCPS. Nearly 30 percent of MCPS students now receive federal meal assistance—,the highest number ever, and nearly 40 percent of students have received federal meal assistance at some point in their education in MCPS.

The greatest concentration of racial and ethnic diversity and poverty is located in schools within the county's most urbanized areas—a combination of communities from Takoma Park to Germantown that includes nearly half of all elementary schools. The communities are home to the majority of African American and Hispanic students enrolled in the system and the vast majority of students receiving federal meal assistance and English language support.

Focus on High-quality Curriculum

At the core of the strategic plan is the provision of a high-quality curriculum. A key initiative is the alignment of the entire curriculum, from prekindergarten through Grade 12, in order to ensure that all

students in every school receive the proper foundation and sequence of essential skills and knowledge. All students are expected to be college and career ready, a process that begins in prekindergarten and elementary school by preparing students to achieve reading fluency by Grade 3; advancing through Math 6 or higher by Grade 5; completing algebra or higher-level mathematics courses by Grade 8; completing Algebra 2 by Grade 11; and enrolling in Honors, Advanced Placement, IB, and college-level courses throughout high school.

These strategic plan initiatives have resulted in the alignment of the curriculum to meet or exceed the expectations of the Maryland Core Learning Goals, the Maryland High School Assessments, and the Maryland School Assessments. Our curriculum sets students on a path to succeed in Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate programs and prepares them to demonstrate their college readiness on the SAT and ACT. These efforts are based on the need to address persistent disparities in student achievement, which have decreased in recent years, but still exist in all areas. Differences in student performance and course enrollment by race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, language proficiency, or disability, along with high levels of remediation for students enrolling in community college, are key indicators that continued improvement is necessary.

An important component of these efforts is the involvement and collaboration of teachers, principals, and other staff in the strategic planning process, especially in developing new program and budget initiatives, providing timely feedback during implementation, engaging in ongoing problem solving, and involving staff in program implementation. This collaboration is formalized through high-level teams involving the presidents and other leaders of employee associations working closely with the superintendent and executive staff members throughout the year.

We are also continuing the rollout of the Elementary Integrated Curriculum (EIC), which is built on the existing MCPS curriculum, but is designed to better engage students and teachers, and dedicate more learning time to subjects such as the arts, science, social studies, and physical education. By blending these subjects with the core content areas of reading, writing, and mathematics, students will receive robust instruction across all subjects in the early grades. The new curriculum is built around developing students' critical and creative thinking skills, as well as essential academic success skills. The EIC has been implemented on a voluntary basis in Kindergarten and Grade 1 over the past two years, in more than 100 schools. Starting in 2011–2012, the EIC will be required in those two grades for all schools and will be voluntarily implemented in Grade 2. Full rollout of the EIC is expected in the next three years. The Elementary Integrated Curriculum is fully aligned with the Common Core State Standards, which were adopted by the Maryland State Board of Education.

Improving Employee Quality

Developing and implementing a strategic plan is entirely dependent on the leadership, experience, and skills of the school system's workforce. Targeted staff development and training, evaluation, leadership, and technology initiatives focus on ensuring that employees have the knowledge, skills, strategies, and beliefs necessary to respond to the needs of a rapidly growing and highly diverse school system. This includes the ongoing implementation of standards-based professional development systems that are focused on making sure that all staff members understand the essential role of employee performance, attitudes, and expectations in the success of the school system.

Professional development is aligned closely with other improvements in unifying school system support and leadership, curriculum and instruction, assessment, and technology. This helps to create an organizational culture of respect that values what individual staff members believe, know, and can do, and values the contributions of all employees in the support of improved teaching and learning throughout the school system. Important components of these efforts include the following:
- Improving attitudes and beliefs about race and removing institutional barriers.
- Establishing common expectations for student success and organizational reform.
- Strengthening teachers' skills in differentiating instruction based on students' needs.
- Strengthening the professional growth system for all employees.
- Providing clear standards of evaluation.
- Encouraging peer assistance and review.
- Providing consulting teachers, principals, and support staff for novice and underperforming

employees.
- Providing mentors for new teachers.
- Strengthening on-site staff development for all teachers.

These efforts reflect research-based understanding of how to improve teaching and learning by encouraging professional learning communities, improving expectations, and monitoring data for specific evidence of student progress.

Aligning the Budget with the Strategic Plan

The relationship of the five-year strategic plan with the annual operating budget for MCPS was strengthened in 2004 with the expansion of public involvement in the development of long-range planning issues.

Previously, public involvement occurred only after the budget was presented. The Board of Education changed the process by instituting community forums to encourage greater participation by a broader range of stakeholders in identifying important strategic planning issues. The Board revised the policy on long-range strategic planning for continuous improvement in May 2009. The revised policy encourages greater stakeholder involvement and the use of assessment criteria to evaluate key elements of the strategic plan. In 2010, these input sessions were held as roundtable discussions with small groups of parents, staff, and Board members. The feedback was integral in helping the Board set budget priorities for the coming year.

The improved alignment of budget development with the school system's strategic planning process also strengthens the alignment of the budget with the state-mandated master plan for student achievement.

Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act

T he *Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act* is based on a standards-based approach to public school financing that is consistent with the federal *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*. The Act requires the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to set academic content and student achievement standards, ensure that schools and students have sufficient resources to meet those standards, and hold schools and school systems accountable for student performance.

1. The plan must be aimed at helping all children meet state and local performance standards; improve student achievement; and close academic gaps among students of different racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds; students with disabilities; and students who are learning English.
2. The plan must be comprehensive and systemic. It must reach throughout the school system to all schools and address factors central to improved teaching and learning such as teacher and principal recruitment and retention, professional development, use of best practices, and scientific, research-based strategies.
3. The plan must address services to prekindergarten students, kindergarten students, gifted and talented students, and career technology education students.
4. The plan must include specific benchmarks and timelines for improved student achievement and progress in implementing the plan.

Focus Areas
   a. Teacher and principal recruitment and retention
   b. Educator readiness and professional development
   c. Parent and community involvement
   d. Integration of technology
   e. Assistance to low-performing schools (local reconstitution eligible, Title I, Challenge, and locally identified alert or watch schools)
   f. Use of best practices and proven methods, based on scientifically based research

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Performance Goal 1
By 2013–2014, all students will reach high standards, at a minimum attaining proficiency or better in reading/language arts and mathematics.

1. The percentage of students, in the aggregate and for each subgroup, who are at or above the proficient level in reading/language arts on the state's assessment. (*Note*: these subgroups are those for which the ESEA requires state reporting, as identified in section 1111(h)(l)(C)(i).)
2. The percentage of students, in the aggregate and in each subgroup, who are at or above the proficient level in mathematics on the state's assessment. (*Note*: These subgroups are those for which the ESEA requires state reporting, as identified in section 1111(h)(l)(C)(i).)

Performance Goal 2
All limited English proficient students will become proficient in English and reach high academic standards, at a minimum attaining proficiency or better in reading/language arts and mathematics.

1. The percentage of limited English proficient students, determined by cohort, who have attained English proficiency by the end of the school year.
2. The percentage of limited English proficient students who are at or above the proficient level in reading/language arts on the state's assessment, as reported for performance indicator 1.1.
3. The percentage of limited English proficient students who are at or above the proficient level in

mathematics on the state's assessment, as reported for performance indicator 1.2.

Performance Goal 3

By 2005–2006, all students will be taught by highly qualified teachers.

1. The percentage of classes being taught by "highly qualified" teachers (as the term is defined in section 9101(23) of the ESEA) in the aggregate and in "high-poverty" schools (as the term is defined in section 1111(h)(l)(C)(viii) of the ESEA).
2. The percentage of teachers receiving "high-quality professional development" (as the term "professional development" is defined in section 9101(34)).
3. The percentage of paraprofessionals (excluding those with sole duties as translators and parental involvement assistants) who are qualified. (See criteria in section 1119(c) and (d).)

Performance Goal 4

All students will be educated in learning environments that are safe, drug-free, and conducive to learning.

1. The number of persistently dangerous schools, as defined by the state.

Performance Goal 5

All students will graduate from high school.

1. The percentage of students who graduate from high school each year with a regular diploma—
   a. disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, disability status, migrant status, English proficiency, and status as economically disadvantaged; and
   b. calculated in the same manner as used in National Center for Education Statistics reports on Common Core of Data.
2. Performance indicator: The percentage of students who drop out of school—
   a. disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, language proficiency, or disability; and
   b. calculated in the same manner as used in National Center for Education Statistics reports on Common Core of Data.

GOAL 1: Ensure Success for Every Student

Board of Education Priorities:

- Organize and optimize resources for improved academic results
- Align rigorous curriculum, delivery of instruction, and assessment for continuous improvement of student achievement
- Use student, staff, school, and system performance data to monitor and improve student achievement

The following milestones and data points are aligned with the strategies and initiatives in *Our Call to Action* to provide rigorous instruction and promote increased achievement for all students, while eliminating the achievement gap. To that end, MCPS is committed to engaging all students in a rigorous academic program and, in particular, to ensuring that student achievement is not predictable by race. The district will implement the guidelines established in the *Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act.* Data will be disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, language proficiency, or disability. Although *Our Call to Action* states that all students are expected to attain certain milestones, some students, due to their disabilities, will not achieve those milestones and will follow alternative curricula.

Milestones:	**Data Points:**
• All students will achieve or exceed proficiency standards in mathematics, reading, writing, science, and government, and English language on local and state assessments.	○ Maryland School Assessments (MSA) ○ Measure of Academic Progress-Reading (MAP-R) ○ High school final exams ○ High School Assessments (HSAs) ○ English proficiency assessments for ESOL students (Language Assessment System-Links)
• All students will successfully complete algebra by the end of Grade 9 and geometry by the end of Grade 10.	○ Algebra successful course completion with a "C" or higher by the end of Grade 8 ○ Algebra successful course completion with a "C" or higher by the end of Grade 9 ○ Geometry successful course completion with a "C" or higher by the end of Grade 10
• All students will successfully complete Algebra 2 by the end of Grade 11.	○ Algebra 2 successful course completion with a "C" or higher by the end of Grade 11
• All schools will increase participation and performance of all students taking the SAT/ACT.	○ SAT/ACT participation and performance ○ PSAT participation

• All schools will eliminate the disproportionate suspension **and ineligibility rates** of African American and Hispanic students, and students receiving special education services.	o Suspension data o **Eligibility for extracurricular activities**
• All students will be educated in learning environments that are safe, drug-free, and conducive to learning.	o Students, parents, staff, survey results
• All schools will meet or exceed the state's graduation requirements.	o Graduation rates by school o High School Assessments o Dropout rate o ~~Eligibility for extracurricular activities~~
• All graduates will be prepared for postsecondary education and employment.	o University System of Maryland requirements o Completion of Career and Technology Education program

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Ensure Success for Every Student

Monitoring Student Performance

The mission of Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) is to provide a high-quality, world-class education that ensures success for every student through excellence in teaching and learning. Critical to achieving the mission is the systematic and systemic monitoring of student performance of every student in every school so that student achievement is not predictable by race. Classroom teachers, principals, and senior leaders monitor student performance by disaggregating data by race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, language proficiency, or disability.

Disaggregating the data ensures that every student's needs are considered when making instructional decisions. Schools and classroom teachers use a variety of tools and strategies to monitor student performance. At the system level, cross-functional teams study student performance by drilling down to root causes and then developing action plans and making recommendations for improvement. M-Stat and Achievement Steering Committees are strategies used by senior leaders and school staff working in collaboration to ensure success for every student.

Achievement Steering Committees

Achievement Steering Committees (ASCs) provide focused support to identified schools to address performance concerns revealed as a result of the with the Maryland School Assessments (MSAs) and High School Assessments (HSAs). ASCs are collaborative efforts between various MCPS offices and selected school-based staff members. Utilizing in-depth examination of student data, ASCs work to improve instructional practices to increase student performance and exit Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) "school improvement" status. Strategies recommended by an ASC may include structured school walk-throughs, instructional look-fors, and/or instructional program reviews to determine root causes for performance issues. The ASC works with the school leadership to address identified areas of need.

M-Stat

The M-Stat process provides a framework for the systematic and systemic monitoring of critical student achievement and performance data that enables the district and school leadership teams to drill down to root causes, focus on areas of need, develop action plans for improvement, and document best practices for recognition and dissemination throughout the system. Through the Baldrige practice of "plan, do, study, act," key data points and processes are examined throughout the school improvement planning cycle. The Multi-stakeholder M-Stat teams analyze process provides a focused, intensive review by school and central office leaders and executive staff members of school-level student performance data disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, language proficiency, or disability status. The M-Stat process has led to the identification of exemplary teachers as well as successful school and classroom practices that are featured on the MCPS website and in the Bulletin, using video clips and other resources related to the data points. evolved to encompass "Teacher-Stat" bringing together content area experts to focus on pedagogy and curriculum Implementation. M-Stat materials are archived on *my*MCPS for systemwide use.

Deputy Superintendent of Schools' Innovation Team

The Innovation Team provides a forum for creative thinking and problem solving in an open and candid environment. This group was formed on the premise that some planning/issues can best be approached through a dynamic discourse from multiple perspectives, divorced from job title or sphere of responsibility. Additionally, this group offers a fresh perspective on issues or problems that are complex and enduring. This team is designed to capture and channel the innovative thinking of staff in a setting that values inspired thinking and collective problem solving.

Developing Mathematical Proficiency for All Students

In response to the K–12 Mathematics Work Group Report (Fall 2010) and the adoption of the Common Core State Standards, MCPS convened two project teams to develop action plans in response to the report's recommendations in the five research areas. One project team will address recommendations dealing with the Implemented Curriculum and Professional Development and will focus on teachers' skills and knowledge and classroom instruction that promotes deep mathematical thinking. The other team will address the Written Curriculum, Assessed Curriculum, and Acceleration and Targets and will focus on the what is taught, how it is assessed, and how we challenge and support students who demonstrate mathematical proficiency in all categories at their grade level. Each project team includes principals, teachers, and central services staff members, as well as representatives of the K–12 Mathematics Work Group. To coordinate and monitor the work of the project teams, a multi-stakeholder Math Implementation Team (MIT) Steering Committee also was established. The steering committee comprises of representatives from the three employee associations, Montgomery County Education Association (MCEA), Montgomery County Association of Administrators and Principals (MCAAP), and Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 500, central services staff members, and members of parent organizations who served on the original work group. The project teams update the MIT Steering Committee each month. The MIT Steering Committee members will report out to their respective constituents on the work of the project teams. Upon completion, the MIT Steering Committee will monitor the implementation of the action plans.

K–12 Mathematics Work Group Move to back.

The K–12 Mathematics Work Group was convened in January 2009 to explore the complex issues surrounding mathematics teaching and learning and develop recommendations to improve student achievement in mathematics. A diverse group of more than 40 stakeholders are participating in this initiative.

The work group is employing a research-based approach to their task and has formed the following research groups: Written Curriculum, Implemented Curriculum, Assessment, Teacher Preparation and Development, and Mathematics Targets and Accelerations. During the course of this work, the federal government released the Common Core Standards. Subsequently, the Maryland State Department of Education reviewed the alignment between the Common Core Standards and the Maryland State Curriculum. Members of the K-12 Mathematics Work Group and other central office and school-based staff conducted an alignment between the Common Core Standards and the MCPS mathematics curriculum. This alignment is critical to the final recommendations of the work group.

Aligned Efforts to Support Success in Higher-level Mathematics (Moved to back)

Preparing students for success in higher-level mathematics begins with a high-quality curriculum that reaches beyond the Maryland State Curriculum, and continues with the elementary school Accelerated Pathways in Mathematics. Through the pathways, school staff and parents see how acceleration, beginning in kindergarten, can prepare students for advanced mathematics in elementary, middle, and high school. Several supports are in place to ensure that teachers and administrators have the knowledge of content and effective instructional practices necessary to ensure student success in higher-level mathematics.

- Mathematics content coaches in many Title I and other focus elementary schools
- Mathematics content specialists in middle schools involved in middle school reform

- ~~Professional development and , including course-specific classes as well as credit-bearing courses~~
- ~~Lenses on Learning 1 and 2 courses for elementary principals~~

~~Algebra 2 by Grade 11~~ **(Deleted)**

~~Students who complete Algebra 2 by the end of Grade 11 with a "C" or higher are more than twice as likely to graduate from college than are students with less mathematical preparation and are generally less likely to have to take remedial mathematics courses in college. In an effort to ensure that all graduates are college ready, MCPS initiated a multiyear research study on the preparation for students to take and be successful in Algebra 2 by Grade 11 and convened an Algebra 2 M-Stat project team. The research is designed to examine mathematics course-taking patterns, success in these courses, and the demographic characteristics of students enrolled in Algebra 2 in 2008–2009, as well as previous cohorts of students. Based on this information, the M-Stat team will identify schools that are having success with students of all racial/ethnic groups in Algebra 2 performance, determine the most effective course sequencing for Algebra 2 success, develop standard articulation pathways for students who need support in order to be successful in Algebra 2, identify exemplary Algebra 2 teachers, and disseminate effective instructional practices.~~

Middle School Reform

The Middle School Reform initiative provides a rigorous instructional program that is focused on the skills needed to be successful in the 21st century and prepares students for high school, college, and the world of work. Such an instructional program includes access to technology and support with developing skills that enable students to work in teams, solve complex problems, interpret information, communicate effectively, connect learning across disciplines, think critically, and apply knowledge to real-life situations. These innovative student-centered classroom environments use interactive technology to deliver curriculum and instruction and assess understanding. The interactive technology tools engage students in their own learning and activate problem-solving and critical-thinking skills that better prepare students for success in the Information Age.

Components of Middle School Reform include building leadership capacity that promotes shared ownership for student and staff success through providing professional development on instructional strategies to meet the unique and diverse needs of the adolescent learner and to ensure that all students have access to a rigorous instructional program; participating in the Professional Learning Communities Institute; developing staff content knowledge and teaching expertise with instructional leaders such as content specialists in the core academic areas, team leaders, and a literacy coach; providing a rigorous and accelerated curriculum by offering new and rigorous electives and core courses; engaging adolescent learners in effective and differentiated instruction using individual student data, innovative technology, and motivational strategies; improving organizational structures that promote effective schedules for students and time for teachers to work collaboratively; and establishing strong parent and community engagement through effective communication, involvement in the school improvement process, parent workshops, and study circles.

All middle schools have received resources as a part of the Middle School Reform initiative that include 21st Century Classroom technology, revised formative and unit assessments, funding for after-school and summer programs, workshops for parents, staffing to support inclusion of students with disabilities in the general education classroom, professional development on the adolescent learner and rigorous instruction, and other supports to enhance the communication between the schools and parents.

Building on the success of the Middle School Magnet Consortium (MSMC), and guided by the Middle School Reform Report recommendations, rigorous instructional offerings in science, world studies, and English are offered in all middle schools. Course offerings incorporate rigorous course work, including high school credit courses, engaging content, and innovative units of instruction. These courses support the MCPS commitment to provide all students with access to enriched, accelerated, and compacted courses at the middle school level in order to create opportunities for students to realize their full potential as learners.

The expansion of subsequent phases of the Middle School Reform initiative to all middle schools was originally scheduled for completion in FY 2010. Due to current budgetary constraints, the full implementation has been delayed.

Middle School Accelerated and Enriched Instruction (AEI) Math Content Specialist

As a part of Middle School Reform, the AEI math content specialist position was created to coach, model effective instructional practices, and build the content knowledge and skills of mathematics teachers. As the leader of the local school mathematics department, the AEI math content specialist monitors and interprets assessment data to promote individual student achievement. In addition, the AEI math content specialist serves as an advocate for student access to and successful completion in advanced mathematics courses and develops a process to nurture and mentor underachieving or traditionally underserved students. The AEI math content specialist collaborates with school staff to increase student participation (particularly African American and Hispanic students), in accelerated and enriched courses, and provides instructional, professional, and parental support for improvement of student achievement in these courses. The specialists also monitors and reports quarterly on student access and progress in accelerated courses.

Middle School Accelerated and Enriched Instruction (AEI) Literacy Coach

The AEI literacy coach creates a process for nurturing/mentoring underachieving and/or traditionally underserved students enrolled in accelerated courses. The AEI literacy coach supports critical thinking, reading, writing, and viewing across the content areas by working directly with teachers, serving as a member of the school leadership team, and communicating with parents. As an instructional leader, the AEI literacy coach develops the school's literacy plan, including benchmarks and a reporting schedule. The AEI literacy coach also collaborates with school staff to increase student participation (particularly African American and Hispanic students) in accelerated and enriched courses and provides instructional, professional, and parental support for student achievement in these courses. The literacy coach also monitors and reports quarterly on student access and progress in accelerated courses.

Middle School Magnet Consortium (MSMC)

MSMC comprises three schools—Argyle Magnet Middle School for Information Technology, A. Mario Loiederman Magnet Middle School for Creative and Performing Arts, and Parkland Magnet Middle School for Aerospace Technology. Benefiting from improvement efforts originally developed under a three-year federal grant, all MSMC students have access to the whole-school magnet programs, featuring an accelerated core curriculum, specialized courses, extended learning opportunities, a highly effective instructional program, and collaborative school partnerships with parents and the community. Each school has a unique, thematic, instructional focus. The specific magnet themes identified for this initiative offer highly unique academic choices of special interest to young adolescents.

Extended-day and Extended-year Programs (Middle School)

The middle school extended learning opportunities (ELO) include both extended-day and extended-year offerings in all 38 middle schools. Traditionally, the program provides additional reading and mathematics instruction to students in Grades 6, 7, and 8 who need support to achieve MCPS curriculum objectives and meet the proficiency standards on the Maryland School Assessment (MSA). In addition, the extended-year program offers courses to assist students with the successful completion of advanced-level mathematics courses by previewing or reviewing course content to nurture and support student enrollment and successful completion of advanced-level mathematics courses. Schools also are able to create other course offerings to meet the diverse needs of their students.

High School Plus

The High School Plus (HS+) program helps to prepare students for the High School Assessments and provides them with the opportunity to regain lost course credit. HS+ provides three options: repeater sections in the day school's master schedule, full-semester courses, and credit-recovery classes offered by extending the school day. For FY 2012, HS+ is offered to all high school students In Grades 9–12. Through flexible scheduling and targeted offerings, students are able to receive the additional academic support they need at their home schools.

eLearning—Online Courses for High School Students

High-quality online courses provide MCPS students with the opportunity to enhance their education. Online course offerings include MCPS-developed courses and MCPS-approved online courses made available through the Maryland State Department of Education's (MSDE) Maryland Virtual School (MVS). Currently, students may take the MCPS-developed Comprehensive Health online course (0.5 credit) or the Foundations of Technology online course (1.0 credit). These courses satisfy graduation requirements for health and technology education, respectively; and they are available as summer options. Students also may take an online Personal Finance elective course (0.5 credit). All MCPS online courses require a limited number of face-to-face sessions. MCPS students may enroll in any of the ~~18~~ 21 MSDE-approved Advanced Placement online courses offered in cooperation with the Maryland Virtual School.

Signature Programs

Twenty-three high schools have developed and implemented signature programs and/or academy programs. Some high schools have implemented whole-school programs, while other schools have implemented smaller learning communities. The implementation of signature programs supports the process of raising achievement by empowering individual school communities to examine the academic needs of their students, with the goal of developing high interest and rigorous programs that enhance the learning process for all.

SAT/ACT ~~Intervention~~ Plan

The district provides a variety of SAT/ACT preparation programs during ~~and beyond~~ the school day, including ~~the College Test Prep~~ materials ~~Guide~~ for the revised College Test Prep course, designed to prepare students for success on the SAT/ACT. MCPS offers the Triumph Program, an online study guide for PSAT/SAT/ACT, for use by all ~~College Admissions Program for use by all~~ MCPS high school students free of charge. MCPS held a PSAT-SAT-ACT-*ACCUPLACER* Summit in July 2009, and presented an SAT/ACT Action Plan ~~that can~~ to be customized to meet the needs of individual schools. High schools use the guidelines and suggestions provided in the SAT/ACT Action Plan to design and implement ~~interventions that are most likely~~ strategies to improve the SAT/ACT ~~preparation for~~ success of students in their schools, and to develop ~~their~~ outreach efforts ~~to~~ for parents, ~~staff members, and students. As more MCPS students opt to take the ACT, some schools are using Explorer as a preassessment for Grade 9 students~~. MCPS has developed systemwide protocols and Web-based tools to monitor SAT/ACT participation and performance. These tools allow school staff to quickly identify which students have completed the coursework needed to prepare them for success on these various exams, individual students' levels of performance in those courses, and students' prior PSAT/SAT/ACT performance levels.

ACCUPLACER

The *ACCUPLACER* is a ~~national,~~ computer-adaptive college placement test, developed produced by the College Board. The *ACCUPLACER* measures academic skills in the areas of mathematics (arithmetic, elementary algebra, and college-level math) and English (sentence skills, reading comprehension, and writing). The *ACCUPLACER* is used by some community colleges, four-year universities, technical schools, and high schools to assist in course placement and~~/or~~ in assessing the college readiness of students. In partnership with Montgomery College, this assessment will be be available in all MCPS high schools during the 2011– 2012 school year. The partnership provides training of MCPS staff to increase awareness about the test and to administer the ACCUPLACER on high school campuses.

~~During the 2009–2010 school year, in partnership with Montgomery College, a High School *ACCUPLACER* Pilot (HSAP) project was conducted in six schools. The pilot involved training MCPS staff to administer the *ACCUPLACER* on the high school campus. Additional high schools will be added to the HSAP project during the 2010–2011 school year.~~

Minority Student Achievement Initiatives

- Education That Is Multicultural—This is a continuous, integrated, multidisciplinary process for educating all students about diversity and commonality. Factors of diversity include race, ethnicity, region, religion, gender, language, socioeconomic status, age, and individuals with disabilities. Supported by curriculum, instructional resources, and professional development, Education That Is Multicultural enables students to demonstrate knowledge, understanding, appreciation, and respect for individuals who represent the many groups in our community. Research and best practices are used to design diversity training and the systematic infusion of equitable practices and content into curriculum, instruction, instructional resources, and professional development. These practices promote high expectations for students as a foundation to excellence in teaching and learning. Multicultural education also communicates the belief that every student must have equal opportunities to achieve his or her full potential.

- Kennedy Cluster Project—The goal of the Kennedy Cluster Project is to create an educational service model for African American students to break down institutional discrimination, reduce educational and social disparities, and identify the types of county services that can be mobilized to address issues associated with poverty and its impact on school performance. As a component of this project, MCPS conducts research to identify the factors and activities within the school system that may have an impact on the achievement of individual students and the overall achievement gap. This project builds on research from other jurisdictions and academic institutions to close the persistent achievement gap. These findings will identify key elements for further reforms and improvements and appropriate interventions to reduce the achievement gap and improve student outcomes. The progress of this project will be documented through formal reports so that its outcomes can be replicated districtwide and shared with other jurisdictions facing similar issues.

- Minority Achievement Recognition Initiative—This initiative is a systematic process of collecting and disseminating information regarding targeted community awards and scholarships to maximize postsecondary options. In particular, MCPS has formed partnerships with several historically black colleges. These colleges provide unique admissions and scholarship events for MCPS students.

- ~~The Deputy Superintendent of School's Minority Achievement Advisory Council (DMAAC)—This advisory council provides a forum for ongoing two-way communication between MCPS leadership and a broad spectrum of community leaders who are committed to increasing minority achievement in MCPS. Stakeholders serve as liaisons to their communities on issues of critical relevance to minority achievement, and provide advice and counsel to the deputy superintendent of schools, resulting in a DMAAC Report and presentation to the Board of Education on recommendations regarding family engagement, clarity of communication, and promoting fairness. A steering committee developed an action plan to comprehensively respond to the DMAAC findings and recommendations.~~

Services for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Students

- Curriculum and Instruction—To meet federally mandated Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives and accelerate the development of academic English, MCPS continues to refine and move online the locally developed pre-K–12 ESOL curriculum to ensure that ESOL students at all levels receive structured, systematic English language development instruction, in accordance with the Maryland English language proficiency state curriculum. Additionally, ESOL Benchmarking Criteria have been developed at the secondary level to ensure that ESOL students are placed at the ESOL instructional level that provides the optimal condition for continued and accelerated development of academic English. ~~pre-K–12 MCPS ESOL curricula have been written to align with the content standards in the newly adopted Maryland English language proficiency state curriculum. ESOL curriculum resources have been implemented for beginning, intermediate, and advanced ESOL students in Grades pre-K–5, as well as intermediate and advanced ESOL students in Grades 6–12. For beginning level ESOL students at the secondary level, MCPS has implemented the Milestones program to accelerate the development of academic English. Additionally, MCPS has written and implemented a newcomer English language development curriculum for ESOL students who are newly arrived to the United States~~

- Professional Development—*The ESOL for Leaders Webinar Series continues to provide* ~~course provides~~ professional development for school leaders to build their capacity to support and monitor effective school-based ESOL instructional programs. ~~that comply with local, state, and federal mandates.~~ Ongoing professional development for ESOL teachers on implementing the ESOL curriculum, analyzing ESOL data, and delivering English Language development instruction through the content areas is provided on a regular basis in face-to-face, school-based, and online formats. To build the capacity of secondary content teachers to meet the language and content needs of ESOL students, MCPS will continue the partnership with the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC) and extend the high school pilot of Secondary Teachers Education and Professional Training (STEP T) for English language learners (ELL) to middle schools. STEP T will equip teachers with the critical knowledge and skills to effectively engage ESOL students in the content areas of mathematics, science, and social studies. Plans also are underway to build the capacity of elementary and high school content teachersss to meet the language and content needs of ESOL students by extending the middle school pilot of the research-based Sheltered Instruction Observations Protocol (SIOP) professional development model to include elementary and high schools. ~~and program implementation continues to be provided on a regular basis. To build the capacity of high school content teachers to meet the language and content needs of ESOL students, MCPS has partnered with the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC) to offer a new professional development program, Secondary Teacher Education and Professional Training (STEP T) for English language learners (ELL). STEP T for ELL is a research-based, federally- funded professional development program that will provide high school teachers with critical knowledge and skills to effectively engage ESOL students in the content areas of mathematics, science, and social studies~~.

- Students Engaged in Pathways to Achievement (SEPA)— SEPA is a career-readiness program focused on building entry-level job skills for Spanish-speaking high school ESOL students ages 18–21, who have experienced interrupted or limited formal education and are unable to complete MCPS graduation requirements before they turn age 21. An innovative curriculum includes career-based English language development instruction, literacy and mathematics instruction, as well as support for acculturation and family reunification. A family involvement and counseling component is in place to support ~~ocuses on the unique issues facing these~~ students and their families. Outreach efforts include collaboration and partnerships with community agencies and organizations to provide ~~build~~ a safety net ~~around~~ for families of ~~with~~ students enrolled in ~~the~~ SEPA ~~program~~ to remove barriers to successful completion of the program.

- Test of English for Speakers of Foreign Languages (TOEFL)—The TOEFL assessment is a college entrance requirement for students whose native language is not English. In Montgomery County, there are approximately 475 advanced ESOL ~~300 ESOL~~ students who are qualified to take the TOEFL. MCPS will continue to serve as a test center for the TOEFL and will offer this assessment routinely to all qualified MCPS students at select high schools. The school system will assume the registration fee for any student meeting income criteria.

Removing Barriers to Learning—Student Services and Mental Health

- School-based problem-solving teams, including Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS) teams and Educational Management Teams (EMT), are implemented in every school. These teams focus on early intervention by providing instructional, social, and behavioral interventions to better meet the needs of students in the regular classroom setting and ~~to~~ ensure school success. In addition, many schools are implementing Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). School staff use office discipline referral and suspension data to monitor implementation, identify areas of concern, and develop prevention and intervention strategies to address each identified area of need.

- The truancy and dropout prevention initiative includes the Interagency Truancy Review Board. This interagency board provides students, their families, and school staff with focused strategies to reduce individual cases of habitual truancy. The board develops an action plan for the student, family, and school that the pupil personnel worker and other school staff monitor for compliance or refer the case to the State's Attorney's Office for possible court action. Beginning in FY 2010, the Department of Student Services is partnering with the University of Baltimore School of Law to bring the Truancy Court Program to two middle schools. Truancy Court is a voluntary 10-week intervention for students who have high numbers of unexcused absences.

- The Department of Student Services is collaborating with the Montgomery County Collaboration Council to provide access for students with intense needs to available community services through the wraparound process~~es~~. Students can be referred for these services through school- and system-level problem-solving teams and the Truancy Review Board.

Elementary School Leadership

The elementary school assistant principal is an essential leadership position in today's high-stakes testing environment. Successful schools have strong principals at the helm who are able to focus on their role as instructional leaders. Assistant principals afford principals the ability to concentrate on instructional leadership and play a vital part in maintaining school safety and continuity when the principal is away from the building. ~~All but 20 elementary schools will have assistant principals.~~ In FY 2012, 111 elementary schools will have assistant principals.

Safe and Secure Schools

MCPS continues to ~~ensure~~ promote a safe and secure educational environment through ongoing security initiatives. These include the following:

- Closed-circuit television in high schools and middle schools enhance the monitoring capability of school staff and help to ~~ensure~~ promote the safety of all students.

- An Incident Reporting System provides for consistent and timely reporting of serious incidents in schools.

- A Memorandum of Understanding among MCPS, the Montgomery County Police Department, and the Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office ~~ensures~~ promotes consistent reporting of serious incidents to the police.

- School Safety and Security at a Glance is a school safety report published annually. This report provides systemwide and individual school data on serious incidents and suspensions. It provides greater transparency and accountability for incidents that have an impact on school safety and result~~s~~ in greater improvement in identifying and remedying issues related to school safety.

- Individual school and systemwide crisis plans have been updated to conform to the guidelines established in the National Incident Management System (NIMS). Changes include replacing the use of codes with plain language to signal an emergency. The use of plain language facilitates clear communication between school staff, students, visitors, and public safety agencies during an emergency. Training for students, staff, and parents and a multi-faceted communication program for the community are ongoing.

In addition, MCPS has developed a comprehensive crisis response manual for staff use when responding to emergencies. The manual addresses the safety and emotional well-being of students. A Safe Schools Action Plan has been developed to ~~ensure~~ promote safe and welcoming learning environments that are free of harassment and bullying. Training materials for reporting child abuse and neglect and suicide-risk guidelines have been developed and disseminated to school-based staff.

The Montgomery County Police Department and MCPS have collaboratively developed and implemented a~~n~~ ~~Educational Facilities Officer (EFO)~~ School Resource Officer (SRO) program. The ~~purpose of the~~ program serves to maintain and enhance a safe and secure learning environment for students, staff, and the school community. ~~EFOs~~ SROs are responsible for improving coordination and communication in an emergency, disaster, crisis, or dangerous situation, with the overall goal of maintaining and enhancing a safe and secure learning environment. As a result of budget constraints, the number of SROs has been reduced to 6 officers.

Graduation Rate ~~Project Teams~~

The United States Department of Education issued new regulations in November 2008, regarding the consistent calculation of graduation rates, under the *No Child Left Behind Act*. The intent of the regulations is to allow for accurate comparisons of graduation rate data. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) must revise the graduation rate formula in order to comply with these new federal regulations. The graduation rate is used as an indicator to determine Adequate Yearly Progress at the high school level. ~~Two project teams have brought stakeholders together to proactively respond to the regulatory changes through the development of consistent communication plans, data gathering and reporting systems, analysis of existing local and national dropout prevention programs, and programmatic recommendations for all schools to ensure that the established targets are achieved.~~ MSDE will establish new graduation rates beginning June 2011.

Ineligibility

During the 2007–2008 school year, a project team was created to review the issue of disproportionate ineligibility, particularly for African American and Hispanic students and create targets to measure school and system performance. During the 2008–2009 school year, an M-Stat team, with representatives from middle and high schools, developed the process for the application of the targets. This group determined that the targets would be applied using data on the percentage of students who are chronically ineligible (ineligible for three or four marking periods in one academic year). Since 2009-2010, ~~During 2009–2010~~, school and system data ~~will be reported was~~ have been collected, analyzed, and reported on these targets. The M-Stat group has identified best practices to lower ineligibility rates and has invited school administrators to share their practices with their colleagues.

GOAL 2: Provide an Effective Instructional Program

Board of Education Academic Priorities:

- Align rigorous curriculum, delivery of instruction, and assessment for continuous improvement of student achievement
- Expand and deliver literacy-based initiatives from prekindergarten through Grade 12 to support student achievement
- Develop, pilot, and expand improvements in secondary content, instruction, and programs that support students' active engagement in learning
- Use student, staff, school, and system performance data to monitor and improve student achievement

The following milestones and data points are aligned with the strategies and initiatives in *Our Call to Action* to provide rigorous instruction and promote increased achievement for all students while eliminating the achievement gap. To that end, MCPS is committed to engaging all students in a rigorous academic program and, in particular, to ensuring that student achievement is not predictable by race. The district will implement the guidelines established in the *Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act*. Data will be disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, language proficiency, or disability. Although *Our Call to Action* states that all students are expected to attain certain milestones, some students, due to their disabilities, will not achieve these milestones and will follow alternative curricula.

Milestones: Data Points:

Milestones	Data Points
• All students will acquire the essential skills and knowledge to meet or exceed standards in reading and mathematics by the end of Grade 2.	o Enrollment in pre-K o TerraNova 2 in Grade 2 o Montgomery County Public Schools Assessment Program–Primary Reading (MCPSAP PR) K–2 o ~~Math Unit Assessments (Grade 2)~~
• All schools will increase enrollment and performance of all students in gifted, Honors, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and other college-level courses, with a focus on improving enrollment and performance of African American and Hispanic students.	o Gifted and Talented screening (Grade 2) o Advanced Math in Grade 5 proficiency o Honors/Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and other college-level courses enrollment o AP/IB Tests—Participation and performance
• ~~MCPS~~ All schools will eliminate the disproportionate representation of African American and Hispanic students in special education.	o Students receiving special education services
• All schools will provide students with disabilities access to the general education environment, to the maximum extent appropriate.	o Special education students receiving services in general education

• All schools will achieve or exceed local and state standards for attendance.	o Attendance by school

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Provide an Effective Instructional Program

Monitoring the Instructional Program

Montgomery County Public Schools utilizes a range of assessments to measure and monitor student achievement, including all facets of the assessment program mandated by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), to comply with the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB). These mandated assessments include the Maryland School Assessment; Alternate Maryland School Assessment; and Language Assessment Scales-Links, an English-language proficiency test. Additionally, MSDE requires students to take the High School Assessment (HSA) in order to fulfill graduation requirements. MCPS requires students to take a standardized test, *TerraNova* 2nd Edition, in Grade 2 and the MCPS Assessment Program–Primary Reading (MCPSAP–PR), a pre-K through Grade 2 locally developed test. MCPS also supports the administration of national assessments such as the PSAT (given to all Grade 10 MCPS students) and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (administered to a sample of students as part of the NCLB mandate).

The Office of Shared Accountability (OSA) conducts research to understand factors that influence student outcomes and perceptions of school quality. Extensive research reports on standardized tests are produced, which support data-driven decision making, school improvement, and academic achievement. Additionally, OSA designs and conducts comprehensive evaluations of selected MCPS programs, policies, and initiatives to provide evaluative information on processes and outcomes through implementation and outcome studies.

Online Curriculum

~~In spring 2001, MCPS embarked on a monumental effort to revise the curriculum in reading, English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Development continues in foreign language, and physical education.~~

~~Currently, instructional guides have been completed in mathematics, pre-K through precalculus; reading/language arts, pre-K–5; English/reading, Grades 6–10; science, Grades 4–8 and five high school courses; social studies, Grades 1–8 and two high school courses; health education, Grades 6–8 and one high school course; art, Grades 1–3, Grade 6, and one high school course; choral and general music, Grades 1 and 2, and one high school course; instrumental music, Grades 4–5; ESOL, five levels at elementary, middle, and high school; and Fundamental Life Skills.~~

~~In the 2008–2009 school year, all current MCPS curriculum resources were archived centrally in the Online Curriculum Archive. The archive allows immediate, searchable access through the Internet to new or revised MCPS curriculum documents previously available only on paper.~~

An ~~new~~ online learning community was introduced in 2009–2010 to develop and provide curriculum, instructional resources, and professional development in a collaborative environment. The online learning community facilitates collaboration among staff by providing a structure for staff to share resources, lessons, ideas, and best practices. Additionally, the online learning community provides user-collaboration features, which include the ability to participate in community forums for questions and answers, post and provide feedback on instructional resources, ~~create self-selected planning groups~~, and receive curriculum and professional development announcements. The online learning community provides teachers with the resources to implement equitable practices and apply the principles of Universal Design for Learning. The resources allow teachers to embed flexible materials, techniques, and strategies into instruction and assessment, so that all students can access content and demonstrate learning. Providing curricular and instructional resources electronically promotes multiple methods for engaging students, presenting content, and assessing learning.

Secondary courses in five content areas were added to the online learning community for 2011–2012. When complete, all existing secondary instructional guides will be added to the online

community and resources for additional courses will be developed. It is anticipated that 66 secondary courses will be available in the online learning community by the end of the 2012–2013 school year.

The Elementary Integrated Curriculum (EIC) was introduced and made available electronically through the online learning community on *myMCPS during the 2010–2011 school year. This 21st century curriculum makes connections among all content areas and is integrated using the Thinking and Academic Success Skills that promote a strong academic identity in children.   The EIC is aligned with the Common Core State Standards, adopted by the Maryland State Department of Education and the Montgomery County Board of Education in June 2010.* Univeral Design for Learning is reflected in the design of the EIC to ensure flexibility scaffolded instruction and integrated planning for diverse learners. *The implementation of the EIC is being phased in over the next four years, beginning with voluntary implementation in Kindergarten and Grade 1 in 2010–2011, and moving to Grade 2 in 2011 - 2012*

The online learning community will be examined continually for possible areas of enhanced functionality. Stakeholder input is solicited and products and services are evaluated on an ongoing basis to identify and prioritize future improvements.

Standards-based Grading and Reporting

Implementation of Board of Education Policy IKA: *Grading and Reporting*, is being phased in over a multiyear period. During the 2007–2008 school year, implementation of the policy in elementary and secondary schools brought greater consistency to evaluating and communicating students' academic performance across schools and classrooms. Procedures were developed to bring more consistency in secondary schools to the application of the Online Achievement and Reporting System (OARS). During the 2008–2009 school year, an electronic standards-based grade book was implemented as the elementary version of OARS in a limited number of schools for Grades 1–3. The use of the electronic standards-based grade book was expanded to Grades 4–5 in these schools in 2009-2010. Feedback from implementation schools continues to be used to refine procedures and practices.

Changing the grading and reporting philosophy, procedures, and practices is highly complex and requires systematic collaboration and communication across offices, schools, and parent/community groups. Implementation of this policy aligns with the system's reform efforts to improve teaching and learning in all schools for all students.

Online Achievement and Reporting System

The Online Achievement and Reporting System (OARS) comprises an electronic grade book and an integrated classroom-to-home communication system. OARS enhances communication with parents and students about student progress and is aligned with the implementation of the grading and reporting policy. For teachers and administrators, OARS saves time by seamlessly producing student progress reports, interim reports, and report cards.

In Grades 1–5, OARS comprises an electronic standards-based grade book linked to a standards-based report card. OARS will continue implementation in Grades 1–5 in 25 elementary schools during ~~2010-2011~~ 2011–2012 and will be phased into additional schools and grade levels in subsequent years. In 2011–2012, OARS for Grades 1–2 will be modified to align with the Elementary Integrated Curriculum (EIC).

In Grades 6–12, OARS comprises an electronic grade book and integrated classroom-to-home communication system. These systems are fully operational in all secondary schools.

Delivery of Services for Special Education Students

Implementation of Services—OSESS has implemented a staffing plan and management system for special education services.

- Hours-based Staffing—This model provides special education staffing based on the cumulative hours of special education instructional services recommended in all students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for each school rather than on an individual child count. The hours-based staffing model allows students with disabilities access to a continuum of services, including

consultation, resource, cotaught classes, and self-contained classes.

- The Home School Model (HSM)— This model, established to provide services to students with disabilities in their neighborhood elementary school, is the foundation for inclusive educational practices. The service delivery model for HSM schools ensures access to consultation, resources, and small-group instruction to address the needs of students with disabilities. Similar to hours-based staffing, HSM staffing allocations are based on the cumulative hours of special education instructional services recommended in all students' IEPs for each school rather than on an individual student count. As a result of the HSM, more students with disabilities attend school with their neighborhood peers and participate in academic and extracurricular activities that a school provides for its community.

- Learning and Academic Disabilities (LAD)—Services for LAD students are available in selected elementary schools and all middle and high schools countywide. At the elementary level, these schools provide services to students requiring access to a self-contained setting, when appropriate. Increasingly, elementary schools responsible for providing LAD services ensure that students with disabilities obtain access to the general education environment, to the maximum extent appropriate. At the secondary level, these services include access to consultation, resource, co-taught, or self-contained classes.

- Online IEP System—MCPS developed the online Administrative Student Information System/Special Services (O/SS) Individualized Education Program (IEP) application, which allows for the integration of a Web-based special education management system and addresses the systemic goal of using technology to support the learning process. O/SS facilitates the management of special education by enabling administrators to monitor the special education process in their buildings and ensuring that timely action is taken at critical points in each student's program. The system also is designed to streamline special education paperwork by giving staff members remote, flexible, and secure access to required documents.

- Disporportionality— ~~Several work groups are examining the disproportionate identification, placement, and disciplinary removal of African American and Hispanic students with disabilities in MCPS. One work group,~~ The Disporportionality Steering Committee, is charged with implementing the action plan outlined in the June *2001 Report on Disporportionality in Montgomery County Public Schools*. These action items are intended to address the disproportionate identification, placement, and disciplinary removal of minority studens with disabilities in MCPS. ~~has completed a report of their findings and recommendations~~. This report offered compelling data and suggested definite action steps for MCPS in its efforts to address the issue of disproportionality. In addition, the M-Stat Suspension Team continually monitors ~~has been examining~~ the disproportionate suspension of students with disabilities as well as the overall suspension rates.

- Reporting on Disproportionate Identification—In order to eliminate the disproportionate identification of students for special education based uon race and ethnicity, two reports are issued. These reports supply information to community superintendents and administrators to aid in adjusting practices, policies, and procedures. The *Students Newly Identified for Special Education Services Report* is distributed to all principals and community superintendents each semester. The *Special Education Identification Report*, distributed annually, shows the ~~overall percentage~~ weighted risk-ratio of newly identified students within each racial/ethnic group by school level and individual school, and whether or not ~~these percentages are disproportionate for that school year.~~ African American and/or Hispanic ~~students~~ are more likely to be identified for special education services.

- ~~Early Intervention Services—MCPS is taking a multifaceted approach to the challenge of educating a diverse population and addressing the disproportionate identification of students for special education programming, based on race and ethnicity. The following comprehensive, coordinated, early-intervention services are being provided to those students at risk for special education identification and in need of additional academic and behavioral support to succeed in general education: Middle School Extended-Year day Programs, 15 Reading Recovery teachers for Grade 1, and an early intervention behavioral specialist to ensure that students with behavioral needs have resources and services.~~ (ELT 2/17/11 JS)

- Suspension—~~As a result of state-mandated Corrective Action due to the disproportionate~~

~~suspension rate and the failure to meet procedural requirements for students with disabilities, the Office of Special Education and Student Services (OSESS) coordinated systemwide professional development, conducted extensive record reviews, and engaged in ongoing, intensive monitoring to ensure that proper procedures were being followed. The OSESS development and implementation of a systemwide monitoring tool assisted in achieving the compliance required to be released from Corrective Action. A suspension work group led by the Office of School Performance culminated in two systemwide M-STAT meetings where overall suspensions were reviewed and alternative practices to suspensions were generated. Following the M-STAT meetings, rates of suspensions decreased significantly, including the suspension of students with disabilities.~~

Data monitoring reveals that a disproportionate number of students receiving special education services are being suspended from schools. MCPS continues to address these disparities through the M-Stat process, with consistent data monitoring and accountability efforts. A recent Maryland State Department of Education audit revealed that MCPS follows proper procedures when suspending students receiving special education services; however, the rate of suspension for these students compared with general education students continues to be disproportionate.

- Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)—Strategies are being implemented to ensure that students with disabilities, as a subgroup, make academic progress to enable all schools to achieve AYP. The expansion, implementation, and monitoring of reading and mathematics interventions in schools have contributed to the improved performance outcomes of students with disabilities. The increase in the percentage of students with disabilities receiving access to the curriculum in the general education environment also has contributed to the improved performance outcomes of students with disabilities.

- Middle School Reading and Mathematics Initiatives—Research-based reading and evidence-based mathematics interventions have been implemented in schools at risk of failing to meet AYP due to the special education subgroup. (ELT 2/17/11 JS)

- Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)—A multi-stakeholder project team was established to make recommendations for increasing inclusive opportunities for students, ages 3 through 5, in a general early childhood setting. More inclusive opportunities are being supported through the expansion of preschool collaboration classes, the provision of job-embedded professional development, staffing for LRE at the secondary level, and the use of countywide itinerant resource teachers who provide job-embedded professional development to school-based staff to support students with disabilities in the general education environment. (ELT 2/17/11 JS)

- Professional Development—Professional development activities are being implemented that focus on co-teaching, differentiation, Universal Design for Learning, accessibility training, positive behavior interventions, test-taking strategies, and providing accommodations.

- Educational and Assistive Technology—Educational and assistive technology play an important role in helping students with disabilities access a rigorous instructional program. Licenses for Kurzweil advanced screen reader software were purchased for elementary, middle, and high schools. The High Incidence Assistive Technology (HIAT) team provides technology training, online materials, guides, resource links, and examples of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) instruction that allow the MCPS curriculum to be accessible to all students. UDL Is the practice of embedding flexible strategies into curriculum during the planning process so that all students can access a variety of learning solutions. Using *American Reinvestment Recovery /Act* (ARRA) funds, approximately $1 million will be used to support elementary schools by purchasing mathematics manipulatives, Web-based accessible books and resources, cutting-edge computer hardware, and audio books for Grades 4 and 5.

Continuum of Accelerated and Enriched Instruction

MCPS is committed to promoting rigorous performance standards and providing instructional programs that encourage all students to achieve at their highest level. A continuum of programs and services begins at pre-K and continues through Grade 12, with an emphasis on talent development. At all levels, students may accelerate learning and participate in advanced-level course work at their local schools. Instruction is differentiated to provide all students, including students in traditionally underserved groups, with appropriate pacing and levels of support necessary for advanced-level

learning. Students also may attend special programs such as centers for the highly gifted, magnet programs, or specialized programs, based on student interest and talent.

Elimination of the long-standing disproportionate identification of African American and Hispanic students through the global screening process is a strategic initiative of MCPS. Development of enhanced technology will streamline the global screening process, course placement decision making, and the articulation process. The result will be a student instructional program planning and implementation (SIPPI) process that will comprise the following steps:

- **Gathering data that best inform school staff members about the whole child**—Performance data, verbal and nonverbal cognitive assessment results, and parent and staff survey responses will be gathered for review.

- **Reviewing the data and making instructional decisions**—School committees will meet, review the data, and make and record data-based instructional recommendations, including appropriate acceleration and enrichment or intervention; and they will identify GT students.

- **Making articulation decisions**—School administrators will better tailor instructional schedules, ensuring that every child is appropriately placed.

- **Communicating decisions**—Decisions about placement and articulation will be communicated through family reports and reports to next grade-level teachers, prior to the beginning of the school year. This communication will allow parents to become more engaged in student instructional programming and will allow the receiving grade-level team to plan with committee recommendations in mind.

- **Monitoring implementation**—Use of technological resources to gather data and record decisions about instructional placement and school schedules will allow for monitoring of implementation of recommended services and verification that students are receiving the appropriate level of instruction.

Honors/Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate and Advanced-level Courses

Success in rigorous coursework throughout all grade levels remains the best preparation for continued individual success in the postsecondary world of college and the workplace. MCPS remains committed to providing each student with the most rigorous educational experience necessary to fulfill his or her academic interest and potential.

A major system initiative, incorporating the work of many MCPS offices and stakeholders, established the expectation that students will participate in a rigorous curriculum at all grade levels, in preparation for participation in Honors, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and other college-level course work in high school. A cross-functional M-Stat team is working to ensure students' access to and successful in rigorous courses. Immediate and long-range targets and goals have been set for systemwide student participation and performance in rigorous coursework. systemwide.

Business Partnerships and Training

MCPS business partners serve on advisory boards for each of the 11 MCPS career clusters, provide student internships and scholarships, and interact with students during field experiences. Working with local industry or government professionals, students gain first-hand experience in a careers of interest to them. This combination of classroom and work site learning provides a dynamic orientation to the business world, career and postsecondary educational planning, and career preparation.

Saturday School Program

The George B. Thomas, Sr. Learning Academy, Inc. Saturday School provides additional support for struggling students and acceleration for students seeking greater challenges, using lessons aligned with the MCPS curriculum. Volunteers and part-time staff members hold Saturday classes at 12 sites throughout the county and offer mentoring and instruction in reading, language arts, and mathematics for students in Grades 1–12. A pilot program, "Young Scholars," for accelerated Grades 3 and 4 students in the Kennedy cluster provides enrichment in math and science to nurture

interests and build skills and knowledge.

Higher Education Partnerships for Students

Higher education partnerships increase college awareness, access and readiness, and ensure that MCPS graduates have the knowledge and skills necessary for postsecondary success. MCPS has formed a ~~pre-K through 20 Council in~~ partnership with Montgomery College (MC) and the University System of Maryland to implement ~~The Council is comprised of representatives from each of the three institutions. The focus of the partnership involves developing~~ seamless and systemic processes to ensure that all students—prekindergarten through graduate school—are prepared for college, careers, and beyond. A memorandum of understanding affirms a shared commitment to increasing access to college, including undergraduate coursework for MCPS students through dual enrollment programs.

~~Targeted partnerships with MC offer college programs to all MCPS high school students. Through~~ In the College Institute program (CI), high-achieving high school students earn college credits on a high school campus during the school day. ~~Through the CI program~~ MC professors teach college courses to qualified juniors and~~/or~~ seniors at Gaithersburg, John F. Kennedy, Seneca Valley, and Thomas S. Wootton high schools. ~~participate in the CI program. Through a~~ In ~~a~~ partnership ~~between~~ with the Universities at Shady Grove (USG), MC, and MCPS, MC professors instruct College Institute students from Thomas S. Wootton High School and Gaithersburg high schools in the new state-of-the-art facility at USG.

~~Early Placement~~ Dual enrollment programs extend the existing high school curriculum, offering opportunities for ~~college-ready high school seniors~~ MCPS students to earn transferable college credits. All ~~qualified~~ MCPS juniors and seniors who meet admission requirements ~~students~~ have the opportunity to participate in ~~MC's early placement~~ a dual enrollment program during the school day. Dual enrollment courses are taught by college professors at a high school or college campus or online. ~~by taking college courses offered on the high school campus or at one of the three MC campuses. The MC partnership also provided Quince Orchard High School students with a "virtual" Early Placement program experience by allowing participating student to earn college credit by accessing MC's online course curriculum~~. The majority of dual enrollment students within MCPS take advantage of the program offered by MC. A dual enrollment partnerships ~~with~~ ~~MC and~~ the University of Maryland College Park (UMCP) also offers college courses to students at Walter Johnson, Walt Whitman, and Northwood high schools.

The MCPS/MC Gateway to College program is a unique dual enrollment program that offers an alternative to the traditional high school program for youth at risk of dropping out of high school. Qualified students ~~in this program, who are at risk of dropping out of high school,~~ are able to earn a high school diploma ~~and credits towards an Associate's degree.~~ while taking college courses on the MC campus.

Technology

The MCPS strategic technology plan, Educational Technology for 21st Century Learning, describes the ways in which MCPS will address the challenges inherent in the rapidly changing field of technology and how our school system will meet the technology-related needs of its students, educators, and stakeholders. This plan contains four goals that guide the school system's technology-related decisions, priorities, and resource allocations.

   Goal 1: Students will use technology to become actively engaged in learning.

   Goal 2: School staff will address the digital divide through equitable access to technology.

   Goal 3: Staff will improve technology skills through professional development.

   Goal 4: Staff will use technology to improve productivity and results.

An essential component in transforming teaching and learning, the integration of content, pedagogy, and innovative technology in pre-K to Grade 12 classrooms provides equitable access, opportunity, and support to engage a diverse range of learners. In MCPS, technology facilitates interactive

classrooms that nurture critically explorative adult and student learners, support inquiry-based practices and the use of formative assessment as learning, and improve access to learning for all students. Innovative technology solutions, such as 21st century interactive classrooms and *myMCPS,* integrate Web 2.0 capabilities to save time for teachers and other staff and provide data to target and differentiate professional development.

The implementation of strategies outlined in the original *Our Call to Action* began shortly after the Board of Education adopted the strategic plan in November 1999. At that time, the superintendent of schools made a strategic decision to focus the reform initiatives in elementary schools more specifically at the kindergarten level. Over the past nine years, the reforms have been expanded to other grades in the elementary schools as well as to middle and high schools. Targeted initiatives were implemented to improve student achievement at all levels and to close the achievement gap between African American and Hispanic students and their White and Asian American peers. These initiatives also are designed to improve the achievement of ESOL students, students with disabilities, and students impacted by poverty.

This section of the strategic plan highlights some of the critical strategies and initiatives that have been implemented over the past 10 years as part of these reform efforts.

GOAL 3: Strengthen Productive Partnerships for Education

Board of Education Academic Priority:

- Strengthen family-school relationships and continue to expand civic, business, and community partnerships that support improved student achievement

The Board of Education is responsible for enhancing two-way communication between the Board and diverse segments of the community and promoting greater public engagement between the Board and its stakeholders. Montgomery County Public Schools will implement the guidelines established in the *Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act* and relevant policies and regulations on parent, student, and community involvement: Policy ABC and Regulation ABC-RA, *Parental Involvement*, Policy ABA, and Regulation ABA-RA, *Community Involvement*, Policy BMA, *Board of Education Advisory Committees*, Regulation CEA-RA, *Establishing Systemwide Committees*, Regulation CEB-RA, *Role and Membership of the Council on Instruction*, Policy JFA and Regulation JFA-RA, *Student Rights and Responsibilities*, and Policy AEB, *Strategic Planning for Continuous Improvement*.

Milestones:	Data Points:
• The district and local schools communicate with parents regularly about MCPS' educational program and students' academic progress.	o Parent Satisfaction Survey biannual results o Attendance at and Evaluation of Systemwide Parent Workshops and Meetings o Results from feedback cards and online surveys o Edline activation
• The district has processes in place for stakeholder input in systemwide policy development, strategic planning, budget development, and implementation of district initiatives.	o Participation in Board of Education and systemwide meetings, hearings, and community forums o Representation on Board of Education and Systemwide Work Groups and Advisory Committees o Results from feedback cards and online surveys
• All schools are welcoming to our diverse student and parent communities and provide varied opportunities for engaging parents as partners.	o Parent and Student Satisfaction Survey biannual results o Parent Participation on School Improvement Teams o Volunteer data
• The district and local schools collaborate with county agencies and parent, student, civic, business, and community organizations to support student success.	o District and local school partnership data

Welcoming all families The district and local schools welcome all families as active partners in the school community.	o Parent Satisfaction Survey results o Participation at systemwide Ask MCPS events o Participant satisfaction at Ask MCPS events o Systemwide workshops offered in languages other than English
Communicating Effectively The district and local schools engage in regular, two-way communication with families about the district's educational programs and student learning.	o Evaluation (feedback) of systemwide parent workshops and meetings o Subscribers to systemwide communication systems that keep parents informed o User feedback on systemwide communication systems that keep parents informed o Parent participation
Supporting student success The district and local schools collaborate with all families to support student academic success and healthy development by providing regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.	o Participation in systemwide parent workshops to support student success o Participation in local school parent workshops to support student success o Participant satisfaction
Speaking up for children The district and local schools encourage all families to advocate for their children to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.	o Participation in school-based Study Circles o Participation in systemwide parent advocacy workshops o Participation in school-based parent advocacy workshops o Participant satisfaction
Sharing power The district and local schools will seek and utilize stakeholder input to inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs, including full engagement in the school improvement process.	o Participation on Board of Education and systemwide work groups and advisory committees that reflects the diversity of the school system o Participation on School Improvement Teams that reflects the diversity of the school o Feedback from participants on School Improvement Teams
Collaborating with the community The district and local schools will collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation, and to provide meaningful opportunities for a broad array of MCPS stakeholders	o District business and higher education partnership data o School partnerships with business and postsecondary institutions o Partnership satisfaction data o Districtwide parent and community volunteer hours o Local school meetings held in community locations

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Strengthen Productive Partnerships for Education

MCPS is committed to supporting a strong and active parent community and ensuring that family engagement efforts reflect the diversity of local school communities. The school system strives to foster broad-based community involvement by constituents with a vested interest in the education of children. The Board of Education meets regularly with parent, student, community, business, and civic groups. In order to strengthen productive partnerships for education, the school system must employ effective two-way communication in a variety of languages using multiple forms of media and person-to-person interaction at all levels. The district and local schools strive to create environments of equity and excellence, where students, parents, and community members feel welcome and respected and where their ideas and perspectives are valued in decision-making processes.

Building School Capacity

To build the capacity of schools in the area of family engagement, parent outreach staff from the Department of Family and Community Partnerships (DFCP), the Division of Title I Programs, and the Division of ESOL/Bilingual Programs model strategies and techniques that reflect the framework for equity and excellence that enhances school-based family outreach efforts. Strategies include home visits, school improvement focus groups, and creative multilingual family outreach practices. School-based staff learn best practices in family engagement through the Professional Learning Communities Institute (PLCI) and workshops led by DFCP. In addition to PLCI, administrators receive information and training through ongoing professional development provided by the Office of Organizational Development, M-STAT, Administrative and Supervisory meetings, as well as the MCPS Principal's Toolkit, a compilation of best practices from MCPS schools, practical strategies for making schools welcoming to all parents, and tips for effectively involving parents on School Improvement Teams. The toolkit also includes presentation plans for parent workshops, materials and resources on a variety of topics, a bibliography, and links to family engagement resources on the Web.

Parent Academy

The purpose of the Parent Academy is to empower parents as advocates and effective partners in their children's education. Parents have the opportunity to attend free workshops in different languages during the school year in locations throughout the county. The sessions have been developed after extensive parental input and are designed to help parents understand the school system and how to access system and community resources. Evaluation and feedback results are used to refine presentations and materials. Workshops also provide strategies for parents in advocating for their children and becoming involved in their local schools and at the district level. The Parent Academy is a collaboration among parent organizations, county agencies, and business and community organizations.

Parent Outreach Staff Training Program

Central office and school-based parent outreach staff work with parents on a daily basis and provide them with key information about the school system and strategies for helping their children succeed. It is important that these parent outreach staff members are culturally competent and have the most current and accurate information about academic programs, graduation requirements, and school and community resources. A comprehensive training program for parent outreach staff is underway and still expanding. The Department of Family and Community Partnerships organizes and facilitates a systemwide parent involvement cross-functional team consisting of representatives from several MCPS offices/departments that provide parent outreach support. This team collaborates at the district level on parent outreach programs, training, and services so that they are aligned with system goals. A systemwide collaboration website that is designed to share training plans, community contacts, and best practices has been created. In addition, all MCPS parent outreach

staff members have access to the Principals' Parent Involvement Toolkit.

Parent Guide to Montgomery County Public Schools

An online Parent Guide to Montgomery County Public Schools ~~and a companion DVD in six languages~~ was developed based on feedback from parents throughout the school system. The parent section of the MCPS website has been updated to ~~complement the publication and to~~ make it easier for parents to find information on the Web. Workshops on topics covered in the Parent Guide also are offered as part of the Parent Academy and are conducted in multiple languages.

Current systemwide news and information are shared regularly with parents using a variety of media and in multiple languages. These include print and online newsletters in six languages; Parent Connection and QuickNotes; the MCPS website that includes five foreign language mini sites; and television programs and videos in multiple languages, including Our Schools Today, Education Matters, Take 10, and Diez Minutos.

Ask MCPS

Several *Ask MCPS* events for families are held in locations throughout the county to share information and resources with parents about the school system and to support learning at home. These events are provided in the mornings, evenings, and on the weekends at malls, public libraries, schools, and other community locations. Drop-In Coffees are held throughout the year to provide parents the opportunity to stop by and have their questions answered and connect with school and community resources. Parents and community members also can have their questions in English and Spanish answered by calling the *Ask MCPS* Call Center weekdays from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. or by sending an e-mail to ASKMCPS@mcpsmd.org

The annual Back-to-School Fair, held on the Saturday before the first day of school, is open to all students and their families. This large-scale *Ask MCPS* event provides families with a one-stop opportunity to learn about the school system, get questions answered, pick up free school supplies, and enjoy live entertainment and family fun activities. The fair is a systemwide event with collaborative support from county government agencies and nonprofit organizations and donations from businesses.

Parent Advisory Council

A Parent Advisory Council to the Office of ~~Communications and Family Outreach~~ the Deputy Superintendent of Schools advises the school system on ways to improve two-way communication and parent engagement efforts and also provides feedback on materials developed by MCPS to ensure that they are "parent-friendly" and written clearly. Parent organizations are represented on the advisory council, which also consists of ~~as well as~~ parents serving in an individual capacity who reflect the diversity of our student population. The Parent Advisory Council developed and conducted training on parent advocacy through the Parent Academy and will continue to create resources and materials for the development of a parent advocacy curriculum.

Communication about Grades

All secondary schools use Edline, which allows parents and students to review grades regularly on a password-protected website. Student grades are published to Edline automatically on a nightly basis, Sunday through Thursday. Teachers have the option to post class materials, assignments, due dates, course expectations, and Web links for their classes. Central services staff support schools in their efforts to ensure that all parents activate their Edline accounts and use them regularly.

Parents of high school students receive a report that lets them monitor their children's progress toward fulfilling graduation requirements. The Student Grades and Graduation Credit Report accompanies the first and third marking period report cards and includes course grades, the number of credits earned and the number needed to graduate, the status of High School Assessments, and the number of service-learning hours earned and needed to graduate.

Creating an Inviting School Environment

The Department of Family and Community Partnerships is working closely with the Office of Human Resources and Development to train principals and principal interns ~~about~~ on the importance of creating a welcoming environment for parents and families, ~~where~~ one in which equity and excellence are promoted. A major focus is building trusting relationships through visionary leadership, high expectations, positive relationships, and cultural competence. Each year, ~~OCFO~~ DFCP staff meet with all of the elementary and secondary assistant principals during their professional development training seminars. During the spring principal intern seminar, ~~OCFO~~ DFCP assembles a panel of Parent Advisory Council members to answer questions and share perspectives about the importance of a welcoming environment. In addition, ~~OCFO~~ DFCP staff meet with school leadership teams and staff to share customer service tips, best practices, and strategies.

Language Assistance Services

The district and local schools have dramatically increased the number of translated materials made available to parents and interpretation services for individual and group meetings. During the 2009–2010 school year, the school system moved to a Web-based system to more effectively and efficiently provide translation and interpretation services for schools and families.

Student Emerging Leaders Program

In collaboration with the Montgomery County Business Roundtable for Education, MCPS provides an opportunity for more than 100 MCPS juniors to participate in the Congressional Black Caucus and Congressional Hispanic Caucus Annual Legislative Conference. Students also complete and present a project on a topic discussed by legislators and meet with their local congressional representatives.

Ruth Rales Comcast Kids Reading Network

The Ruth Rales Comcast Kids Reading Network is a partnership with the RFI Foundation, Comcast Cable Inc., and the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services. It was developed six years ago to improve the reading skills of at-risk students. More than 700 community volunteers tutor more than 800 Grade 2 students in reading for 30 weeks. This reading initiative will continue to be implemented in 68 elementary schools that have the highest levels of student poverty and English language learners.

Study Circles

Study Circles is a dialogue program that engages small groups of diverse parents, staff, and students to develop personal and group actions that address racial and ethnic barriers to student achievement and parent involvement. The ~~Office of Communications and Family Outreach~~ Department of Family and Community Partnerships and trained facilitators support the Study Circles and ~~the~~ implementation of the action steps.

Conquista Tus Sueños (Realize Your Dreams)

This program (conducted in Spanish) is designed to empower Latino parents by teaching them strategies to improve communication, strengthen family relationships, understand the school system, and advocate for their children's school success. The Department of Family and Community Partnerships conducts the program in collaboration with the local school.

Partners for Success

The Department of Family and Community Partnerships collaborates with the Office of Special Education and Student Services to coordinate family support services for students with disabilities, as part of an IDEA State Discretionary Outreach grant. Parent outreach staff work with parents and school staff to promote and encourage parents as full partners in the special education process by providing resources and information; facilitating workshops for parents to support learning at home and parent advocacy; providing parents support at EMT, IEP and other school meetings; and connecting families to community resources.

Individual Family Support

Parent outreach staff offer parents support in advocating for their child and working with school staff to resolve issues that affect student achievement. Parents are provided with support from the Department of Family and Community Partnerships, Division of ESOL/Bilingual Programs, Department of Student Services, Department of Special Education Services, and ~~the~~ Division of Early Childhood Programs and Services. Parents receive help with understanding the instructional program and the special education process. ~~and~~ They receive support at ~~a~~ 2 conference or school meeting to discuss issues affecting their child.

The Board of Education ombudsman also is available to assist parents, residents, and students who have issues, complaints, information or suggestions. The ombudsman is considered an independent or neutral party who seeks to resolve school-related problems as quickly and efficiently as possible, especially for those with no ~~for which a~~ formal resolution process ~~does not exist~~. Although the ombudsman is available to answer questions regarding formal appeals, the ombudsman does not ~~generally~~ intervene in such cases.

GOAL 4: Create a Positive Work Environment in a Self-renewing Organization

- Organize and optimize resources for improved academic results
- Use student, staff, school, and system performance data to monitor and improve student achievement
- Foster and sustain systems that support and improve employee effectiveness, in partnership with MCPS employee associations

Milestones:	Data Points:
• All employees will be provided with high-quality professional development opportunities to promote individual and organizational effectiveness.	o Teacher Professional Growth System data o Administrative and Supervisory Professional Growth System data o Supporting Services Professional Growth System data o Staff who receive high-quality professional development
• Systems are in place to recruit, support, and retain highly qualified and diverse professional and support personnel.	o Diversity in workforce o Highly qualified teachers o Highly qualified paraeducators
• All offices and departments have strategic plans that are aligned with Our Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence	o Office and department strategic plans
• All schools develop school improvement plans that address the needs of all *No Child Left Behind* subgroups using the Baldrige-guided School Improvement Planning Process.	o School improvement plans
• The work environment promotes employee well-being, satisfaction, and positive morale.	o Staff survey data on school environment o Staff survey data on office environment
• MCPS recognizes staff efforts and achievement in pursuit of system goals and related priorities.	o Employee recognition data

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES
Creating a Positive Work Environment in a Self-renewing Organization

Leading for Equity

Montgomery County Public Schools is committed to improving academic achievement for all students while simultaneously eliminating racial disparities in student achievement. MCPS aspires to be a school system where student achievement is no longer predictable by race. In order to achieve this mission, MCPS is committed to building the capacity of all staff to provide an equitable and excellent education for all students.

MCPS works to build the capacity of school and office leaders by providing ongoing professional development for principals and central office directors. Since 2005, bimonthly Superintendent's Administrative and Supervisory (A&S) meetings have been focused on issues surrounding race and ~~it's~~ the impact of race on teaching and learning and on the work environment. ~~In addition, the former Office of Organizational Development (OOD) has devoted monthly staff meetings to equity training over the past five years. As a result, all training staff, including consulting teachers, staff development specialists, consulting principals, professional growth consultants, staff development content specialists, technology consultants, Studying Skillful Teaching staff, instructional specialists, secretaries, and fiscal assistants in courageous conversations about race and examined the impact of critical race theory in education.~~ All MCPS ~~leaders~~ leaders, ~~efforts,~~ in turn, support schools and offices as they build their capacity to address issues of race, equity, and school/office improvement.

Professional Growth Systems for Teachers, Administrators, and Support Professionals

Professional Growth System for Teachers

Montgomery County Public Schools collaborated with employee associations to transform schools into professional learning communities through the implementation of a professional growth system (PGS) for teachers. Through the Teacher PGS, MCPS provides an environment in which teachers are afforded time, support, and opportunities for continuous growth and improvement.

The central components of the PGS for teachers are as follows:

- A common language and framework for teaching gained through the courses Studying Skillful Teaching and Observing and Analyzing Teaching.

- A standards-based evaluation plan for teachers that provides feedback, holistic rating, and an analysis of student results. This plan is based on the six performance standards based on the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

- A focus on continuous improvement of professional skills through job-embedded professional development supported by a staff development teacher in each school.

- A continuous examination of and reflection on personal professional growth through individual professional development plans.

- A Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) program, including a PAR panel and consulting teacher support for teachers new to teaching and for experienced teachers performing below standard.

- ~~Staff development time provided by substitute teachers to support job-embedded professional development.~~

- An onboarding course ~~is being~~ developed and implemented for all new teachers and teacher-level employees to educate those who are joining the organization about the school system's history, culture, and expectations for all employees related to achieving excellence and equity.

The PAR program provides job-embedded support and guidance to teachers to ensure that they meet standards of performance. Intensive, individualized instructional assistance is provided for all novice teachers and those experienced teachers who are rated as "below standard" through their evaluation and a formal review process. The support is provided by a cadre of consulting teachers, selected for their teaching skill and their ability to work well as change agents with other teachers. The PAR panel—composed of eight teachers and eight principals—governs the PAR program. The PAR panel selects the consulting teachers, oversees the support provided to client teachers, and makes the recommendations regarding employment status for those served by the program.

In addition to the PAR program, teachers new to MCPS are part of the New Teacher Induction (NTI) program. The NTI program is a nationally recognized induction progam that includes the New Educator Orientation, mentor support, Maryland State Department of Education courses for new teachers and mentors, and quarterly workshops on topics ranging from differentiating instruction to preparing for parent conferences. The primary goal of the NTI Program is to support and retain novice and experienced new-to-MCPS educators through a comprehensive induction system that improves instructional practice.*Professional Growth System for Administrators and Supervisors (OHRD)*

Staff development teachers (SDTs) in schools provide job-embedded training and development to teachers in each building, Broadly, this training and development is intended to ensure that teachers have the knowledge and skills to deliver a high-quality instructional program with the MCPS curriculum and the common language and framework for effective teaching gained through the Studying Skillful Teaching course, at Its core. Specifically, the SDT in each school helps to ensure that each teacher knows what the students in his/her school need (based on the local school improvement plan (SIP)) and that any missing knowledge and/or skill necessary to achieve each goal within the SIP are provided to that teacher or teachers in a variety of ways and to the teachers who need them. Job-embedded professional development for teachers then, needs to be aligned with the SIP and should be monitored to ensure it is having a positive effect on making a difference to the quality of teaching and learning. This nonevaluative support includes, but is not limited to, training, coaching, modeling, peer visits with reflection, providing timely and specific feedback, and providing resources.

Professional Growth System for Administrators and Supervisors

The Administrative and Supervisory Professional Growth System (A&S PGS) establishes the framework that describes the skills and knowledge that administrators and supervisors need to build learning communities that produce higher student achievement. In 2008-2009, employees from the Montgomery County Business and Operations Administrators were included in the A&S PGS. The A&S PGS includes a standards-based evaluation system similar to the Teacher PGS. It also includes a comprehensive system for attracting, recruiting, mentoring, developing, evaluating, and recognizing administrators.

An important objective for MCPS is to have highly effective administrators in every position. To this end, we have a comprehensive leadership development program to develop school leaders and consulting principals who provide intensive support to novice principals, principals new to MCPS, principals who change levels, principal interns, as well as and underperforming principals and other administrators.

The focus of the work of the consulting principals is to ensure that their clients meet the six leadership standards that are aligned with national standards for principals. The Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) panel of community superintendents and principals oversees this peer assistance. If, after intensive support, a client is not meeting the leadership standards, the PAR panel makes a recommendation to the superintendent of schools regarding possible reassignment or dismissal. PAR panels for assistant principals, assistant school administrators, and school-based coordinators and a PAR panel for central services and business and operations administrators and supervisors also have been implemented.

MCPS has taken a proactive approach in developing school leaders. MCPS The school system has adopted a structured and sequential Leadership Development Program (LDP) that culminates with the preparation of highly skilled leaders who possess the necessary attitude, knowledge, and skills

to meet the ever-changing demands of the principalship. The program begins with the recruitment effort at the teacher level via a series of Future Administrators workshops. These seminars qualify candidates to enter the assistant principal (AP) eligibility pool. Once promoted to a school-based AP position, the APs enter a more structured program designed to ensure the administrator's effectiveness and to reduce the variability in the training and development of school-based administrators.

The LDP is anchored in four interactive components: 1) a Professional Development Team (PDT) consisting of the AP, the principal, a central services mentor, an AP coach, and the director of school performance or the community superintendent; 2) leadership seminars at OHRD; 3) mentor and/or coaching support; and 4) a multiyear learning community/cohort program. These four components interface and form a support structure that assists the new administrators in reflecting on their own practices and supplements the guidance of the school-based principal.

While the principal who supervises the new assistant principal is the primary trainer, monthly full-day leadership development seminars serve to support the principal in these efforts by providing training for the new administrator on system initiatives, leadership strategies, procedures, and best practices. These seminars align the program with system priorities, including equity, root cause analysis and data-driven decision making, Baldrige, and the Seven Keys to College Readiness. Administrators from every office in the system collaborate with the program in providing the latest training available to emerging leaders. Many members of the executive staff participate in the program as guest speakers and/or as members of the professional development teams. The LDP ensures an effective succession planning strategy to fill vacancies as principals are promoted or opt for retirement.

The Office of Human Resources and Development (OHRD) has implemented a mentoring program for administrators to help build their capacity to meet the six standards. Enhanced professional development for central services administrators and veteran assistant principals, with a focus on the skills of leadership, supervision, and management is currently underway along with a Web-based tool to assist administrators with improved effectiveness and efficiency for writing observations and evaluations.

An onboarding course has been is being developed and implemented for all new employees, including administrative and supervisory staff, to educate those who are joining the organization about the school system's history, culture, and expectations for all employees related to achieving excellence and equity.

Professional Growth System for Supporting Services

The Supporting Services Professional Growth System (SSPGS) is based on the premise that an effective learning community for students and adults requires highly skilled supporting services staff working to support the achievement of all students. The Supporting Services Professional Growth System is a collaborative process that promotes workforce excellence by applying a core competency model in order to encourage personal and systemic growth in performance through continuous improvement. The central components of the system include the following:

- A competency-based evaluation plan for all supporting services staff.

- A focus on training and development programs aligned with the competencies.

- A Peer Assistance and Review program for supporting services staff not meeting competency.

- A mentoring program that prepares supporting services staff for new career opportunities or advancement.

- Career pathways opportunities.

- An onboarding course is being has been developed and implemented for all new employees, including supporting services employees, to educate those who are joining the organization about the school system's history, culture, and expectations for all employees related to achieving excellence and equity

These components are built on seven core competencies—commitment to students, knowledge of the job, professionalism, interpersonal skills, communication, organization, and problem solving.

The Supporting Services Training and Development program provides professional development experiences for supporting services staff, based on the seven core competencies. The Supporting

~~Services Training and Development~~ program contributes to the success of all children by providing high-quality training and development opportunities to ensure that all supporting services staff are able to achieve excellence in their roles within the system. ~~The Supporting Services Training and Development program offers courses in organizational development, supervisory training, career planning, and diversity studies. New training has been developed in the area of school finances and has been made available to all school financial agents, as well as all school administrators. School Finance training is being converted to online modules in order to deliver just-in-time training to school financial agents and activities sponsors. On-line training modules for MCPS timekeepers are being developed to ensure the submission of accurate and timely payroll information systemwide.~~

~~The Supporting Services Mentoring Program provides additional professional development resources for supporting services staff. The program provides highly skilled, trained mentors to both new employees and existing staff to help them excel in their role, direct them to training and on-the-job work experiences, and prepare them for career development opportunities. This program began July 1, 2008, with an initial cadre of 35 mentors comprising both support professionals and administrators and supervisors.~~

The Career Lattice for Teachers

The Career Lattice has been developed to expand professional opportunities for teachers' career planning. A multi-stakeholder team designed a process that recognizes outstanding teaching and compensates teachers for taking on more responsibility to increase student achievement and eliminate the achievement gap. The Career Lattice framework includes definitions of leadership responsibilities; processes for application, identification, and evaluation of teacher leaders; and a compensation structure that is aligned with leadership responsibilities.

During the 2007–2008 school year, the Career Lattice joint panel worked on developing the lead teacher application and selection process, including planning for the transition of teachers currently in identified roles. In addition, the panel is continuing to identify the process for applying for project-based leadership opportunities. ~~The school system will be applying for the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant to support the implementation of the Career Lattice.~~

Supervising and Evaluating Performance

Supervising and Evaluating Performance (SEP) is a new course for staff who are business managers or central services administrators. This course examines leadership in the non-instructional context that supports the quality-learning environment through products and services. Leaders examine their leadership styles in relation to their staff. The overall emphasis focuses on expert leadership, supervision, and evaluation of highly trained professionals, and creation of a professional learning community.

Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Career Pathways Program

~~The Career Pathways Program supports SEIU members to identify career goals and provide training and direction to attain those goals. The Career Pathways program was designed in collaboration with SEIU Local 500 and will create opportunities for staff from the Office of Human Resources to take the lead in working with employees to improve their knowledge and skills in content areas that will support employees to reach their career goals. The Office of Human Resources (OHR) and the Office of Organizational Development (OOD) will collaborate with SEIU Local 500 to implement the Career Pathways Program. Staff from OHR will meet with employees, assess their career goals and provide guidance about how to attain those goals. OOD will expand current training and develop new training that provide employees the knowledge and skills to be successful and attain their career goals. The design of this program was completed in 2010, and implementation will begin in 2010–2011.~~

The Career Pathways Program is designed to provide SEIU members with assistance in attaining career goals that will benefit employees as well as well as the school system. Staff in the Office of Human Resources and Development (OHRD) will meet with employees and assist them in identifying career goals and the steps necessary to attain them. The Department of Professional Growth will plan and deliver professional development offerings that facilitate identified career pathways. The Career Pathways Implementation Team will work with the Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) to devise online resources to support employees in their efforts to further their careers, including descriptions of system positions, resume and interview advice, and

links to educational resources

Continuous Improvement for Systemwide Training and Professional Development

As central ~~Office~~ services organizational changes have occurred in response to recent budget constraints, two work groups have been established to draft a system vision for professional development and training and develop a long-range professional development strategic plan for MCPS. This plan will ensure that there are structures and processes in place to examine professional development needs systemwide; coordinate and align professional development and training activities; and set priorities, both short- and long-term, for training and development. ~~In MCPS,~~ There are numerous ways to deliver content to MCPS staff, including professional learning communities, meetings, training, coaching, webinars, online courses, as well as web-based just-in-time professional development events, available through myMCPS. To meet the ever-increasing demands on teachers, administrators, and other school-based staff members, MCPS must ensure that professional development is provided in a timely, appropriate, and effective manner, facilitated by ~~the use of~~ 21st century technology tools.

Equity Training and Development

Significant changes in the school system's demographics and persistent disparities in student achievement based on race/ethnicity, require changes in educational beliefs and practices. The Equity Initiatives Unit ~~Equity Training and Development Team~~ works with the staff of school**s** and office**s** ~~staff~~ to build the capacity of leaders to eliminate racial disparities in student achievement. To build the capacity of staff effectively and to address inequities in schools ~~requires that~~ all staff must:~~.~~

- develop an enhanced self-awareness of their own racial and cultural beliefs, values, attitudes, and behaviors as they impact teaching and learning;

- acquire knowledge of the histories, cultures, and perspectives of racial/ethnic, cultural, and language groups in their schools; and

- establish learning environments that are conscious of race and culture to ensure implementation of culturally responsive instruction.

Professional Learning Communities Institute

The Professional Learning Communities Institute (PLCI) is an innovative MCPS initiative designed to build the capacity of school leadership teams in selected ~~elementary and middle~~ schools by providing them with two years of professional development and support. The mission of the PLCI is to help leadership teams improve student achievement and eliminate achievement gaps in schools by establishing a professional learning community (PLC). Schools work to develop a PLC characterized by a focus on student learning, high-performing collaborative teams, effective use of student data, targeted interventions, effective parent outreach, and a commitment to continuous improvement.

PLCI professional development sessions are based on case studies, including MCPS schools and business case studies from Harvard and Stanford universities.

~~In PLCI-structured professional development sessions, case studies of effective organizations, include three MCPS elementary schools (Broad Acres, Ronald McNair, and Viers Mill).~~ These case studies are discussed as a springboard to engage school teams in reflection and self-assessment. Teams study the beliefs, practices, strategies, processes, and tools that these effective organizations used to increase and sustain student achievement, while simultaneously eliminating the achievement gaps between groups of students. Teams use the knowledge gained from the case study reviews and discussions to refine and align their own school improvement plans. ~~In 2010—2011, a total of 20 schools will participate in PLCI, including elementary, middle, and potentially high schools.~~

School Leadership Teams Institute

The School Leadership Teams Institute offers school leadership teams the opportunity to participate in high-quality professional development on effective team collaboration and empowerment. Each workshop is designed so that leadership teams have time to apply the new strategies, skills, and processes to their specific, real-time needs and interests. Institute workshops build the capacity of the leadership team and thereby contribute to improved school performance and student achievement. In each workshop, teams are encouraged to examine their current practice in relationship to the research and literature on effective school leadership teams and to identify goals and action plans to increase their knowledge, skill, and practice in the identified areas. Staff development specialists provide schools with ongoing follow-up support, as requested by the school, following its leadership team's participation in the workshop.

These workshops include the following:

- Shared Leadership: A Team Examination of Collaboration and Empowerment

- Effective School Leadership Teams

- Facilitation of Effective Meetings

- Skillful Team Collaboration

National Board Certification

The ~~Office of Organizational Development (OOD) created the~~ National Board Certification and Development Program was developed as a way to recruit more teachers for this rigorous professional growth endeavor and to provide ongoing support and development for teachers as they work, to show that they meet the high, rigorous standards of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). This program enhances the professional analysis, reflection, and professional development of the candidate, as well as increases the likelihood that candidates achieve certification during a three-year cycle. The Office of Human Resources and Development ~~The National Board instructional specialist also~~ coordinates recruitment and information sessions throughout the year as well as professional growth through other activities. ~~support such as~~ These opportunities include peer coaching and **the** ~~using the~~ NBPTS Take One! product ~~as professional development training~~ to improve teaching and learning. ~~and recruitment/information sessions.~~

Professional Development Online

Professional Development Online (PDO) is a Web-based system for maintaining, tracking, monitoring, and reporting professional development information for all MCPS staff. All MCPS staff have ~~have~~ ~~has~~ access to PDO through a secure login password. PDO empowers staff with information and tools to manage their own professional growth. Through the use of PDO, principals, teachers, support professionals, and central services staff can review professional development opportunities, register for workshops and classes, and keep track of the training they have received. MCPS will continue the development of PDO to meet the needs of staff and support system goals.

Employee Association Partnerships

MCPS has been working with employee associations—the Montgomery County Education Association, SEIU Local 500, and the Montgomery County Association of ~~Administrative Personnel~~ Administrators and Principals—to create new organizational structures and processes that strengthen their relationships. These employee associations have been working together to solve problems, address common issues, and identify opportunities for improvement, using interest-based strategies. Each employee association has created a joint committee with MCPS to promote collaboration in developing, implementing, and evaluating solutions, utilizing the core principles of continuous improvement. These committees ~~are~~ have become ~~developing~~ effective alternatives to traditional labor-management ~~processes of~~ grievance and negotiation processes. Interest-based bargaining has been used during negotiations with all three employee associations, and the parties have used these interest-based problem-solving strategies to develop collaborative solutions to problems or issues ~~outside of~~ to augment the negotiation process.

Higher Education Partnerships

The Higher Education Partnership Program is a learning community that fosters collaboration between institutions of higher education and MCPS to develop staff in critical need areas. MCPS works with local colleges and universities to expand the teacher and administrator candidate pools to include applicants representing critical fields and diversity. The Higher Education Partnership Program provides partnerships in teacher preparation, career enhancement, teacher and leadership development, and instruction. The teacher preparation programs are designed for candidates who are interested in pursuing a teaching degree and/or teacher certification. The career enhancement programs are for MCPS professional staff members who are interested in pursuing a master's degree in reading, middle school mathematics, library media science, or instructional technology. The leadership development programs are designed for MCPS staff members who are interested in pursuing a master's degree or certification in administration and supervision or a doctoral degree in educational leadership and policy. Many of these programs provide financial incentives to attain certification. Extensive MCPS field experiences, supplemental training, and increased supervisory support by universities and MCPS coaches are characteristic of all programs. There is ongoing assessment of the needs of the school system so new partnerships can be developed to meet our staffing needs. For example, there is a critical need for special education teachers to have an expertise in working with students who demonstrate autism. A partnership is being developed so current MCPS special education teachers can participate in additional coursework to obtain this expertise. The Higher Education Partnership Program has had a positive impact on the recruitment and hiring of staff in critical need areas and increased the diversity of the candidate pool. Providing partnership programs and professional development opportunities for staff increases retention and builds the capacity of MCPS staff.

Recruiting and Retaining Highly Qualified Staff

MCPS has implemented a plan to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers and paraeducators to meet the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) highly qualified (HQ) requirements. The Office of Human Resources and Development (OHRD) has developed strategies to increase support increasing the percentage of core academic subject (CAS) classes taught by highly qualified teachers. OHRD staff members continue to review records of teachers who are teaching core academic subject(s), as well as any new employees, in relation to the CAS courses they are teaching and the credentials they hold. MCPS aggressively recruits paraeducators who meet federal NCLB guidelines. MCPS continues to ensure that all paraeducators in Title I schools are HQ; however, all MCPS paraeducators are encouraged to meet HQ standards. As the highly qualified status of teachers and paraeducators is determined, OHRD staff is maintaining this information in the Human Resources Information System. Principals use this information (provided via Data Warehouse) to ensure that a highly qualified teacher is teaching core academic subjects. OHRD staff also provide this information to individual teachers through the Professional Development Online (PDO) system, where teachers can access details on their certification with validity dates, certification areas, and HQ status. OHR's reports for principals are updated weekly with the certification and highly qualified status of each teacher and paraeducator.

Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Workforce

MCPS is committed to a diverse workforce and actively recruits minority candidates. OHRD staff recruits at job fairs and job expos that target minority populations, including Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Advertising efforts focus on attracting Asian, Hispanic, and African American candidates though publications that market a diverse workforce. In collaboration with schools and MCPS offices, OHRD staff encourages minority MCPS students to consider teaching as a career. The Office of Human Resources and Development Subcommittee of the Latino Education Coalition's Gaithersburg High School Cluster "Grow Your Own" Teacher Project for K–12 specifically encourages recruitment of Latino students. "Grow Your Own" recruitment efforts include working to attract diverse candidates into the teaching profession and providing pathways for "career changers" and current supporting services employees to earn teacher certification though OHRD university partnerships with Johns Hopkins University, The George Washington University, Montgomery College, and the University of Maryland. The Asian American Education Association encourages Asian American MCPS students to pursue a degree in education, providing multiple annual scholarships toward this objective. Recruitment and retention efforts by the supporting services team include outreach to the Asian, Hispanic, and African American employees and candidates through

leadership roles on employee organizations, Asian and Hispanic Leadership Committee, participating on work groups and committees for retention and career development, and through active participation in the English Workplace initiative. Since With the implementation of the new employment website, *MCPS Careers*, special efforts have been made for staff to visit and assist minority support services employees with use of the new applicant system as well as to create resumes in preparation for promotional opportunities.

Technology Enhancements in the Office of Human Resources and Development

In November 2009, the Office of Human Resources and Development (OHRD) and the Office of **the** Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) implemented *MCPS Careers*, a new web-based applicant-tracking system (ATS), designed **to** improve the quality and efficiency of the hiring process for all applicants and hiring managers. The implementation of a centralized Web-based system has significantly increased the number of applicants for positions and allows OHR**D** staff and hiring managers to have immediate online access to candidate information. By combining best practices, technology, and content, the *MCPS Careers* empowers OHRD human resources staff and hiring managers to attract talented applicants and employees, and to assign the right people to the right position to enhance organizational performance. The wW web-based system increases collaboration among all stakeholders in the hiring process by including hiring managers, staffers, recruiters, management, employees, and candidates. The new system streamlines and simplifies the hiring process, provides visibility and equitable access to position vacancies to outside applicants and current employees who are seeking new positions, and increases communication to applicants who can monitor their application status online.

OCTO developed a custom application that works with the applicant tracking system and the Fortis Document Management System, Internal Applicant Records (IAR). IAR is the electronic system hiring managers use to view human resources records for candidates who are current employees. Giving hiring managers this tool eliminates the need for them to travel to OHRD to see relevant information in the internal candidate's personnel file.

OHR**D** and OCTO, in collaboration with the Employee and Retiree Service Center (ERSC), have also implemented also are working to provide a new system—Human Resources Online (HRO)— system that will integrate**s** with the *MCPS Careers* system to automate and streamline the processing of employee transactions, decreasing and decrease the time needed to complete the hiring of new employees and the transfer of current employee data into the Human Resources Information System (HRIS). HRO also is used to develop online forms to facilitate for the collection of flexible spending accounts elections during Open Enrollment and the required update of staff race and ethnicity information, due to changes in the federal guidelines. Future phases of the HRO initiative also will allow for automated notification and monitoring of employee evaluations for all employee groups and will empower current employees through the development of additional "employee self-service." features.

The Department of Recruitment and Staffing in OHRD provides MCPS applicants with the opportunity to interview via SKYPE webcam. This resource is a convenient way for applicants who live a significant distance from MCPS to interview for positions and provides a cost saving to MCPS by reducing as the need for recruitment trips. has been reduced.

OCTO and OHRD collaborated with stakeholders to capture requirements for the upgrade of the Substitute Call Management System (SCMS). The purpose intent of this project is to migrate to new hardware and upgrade the software to take advantage of new features and technology advancements. The upgraded system will better integrate with the HRIS to allow for updates of employee data to and from the human resources system, continued and enhanced data reporting to schools, and the automation of posting time and attendance for both substitutes and teachers. New hire and transfer information will be populated automatically to eliminate manual data entry into the HRIS and reduce errors associated with the task. School administrators will be able to monitor staff absences closely and identify substitutes who have been or will be in their buildings. The system will allow teachers to accurately designate the type of leave used and hours absent and automatically will load into the time and attendance system; timekeepers will not need to enter leave for staff. The SCMS will be accessible to all MCPS administrators, teachers, and substitute teachers via phone

and the web. The upgraded SCMS will be operational for the 2011–2012 school year.

Asian and Hispanic Leadership Development
The Asian and Hispanic Leadership Development Project team, one of the Office of the Deputy Superintendent of Schools' strategic initiatives cross-functional project teams, developed a system of support for ~~Montgomery County Public Schools~~ MCPS Asian and Hispanic staff members.

For the past three years, ~~In spring 2009 and 2010,~~ representatives from several MCPS offices and the employee associations have shared information with attendees on job qualifications, career opportunities, and best practices for career advancement at the annual Career Advancement Information and Networking Opportunity Session. Participant response has been overwhelmingly positive.

Baldrige Education Criteria for Performance Excellence
MCPS has adopted the Baldrige Education Criteria for Performance Excellence as the model for continuous improvement for all offices and schools. Leadership teams from all schools have been trained in the Baldrige-guided School Improvement process.

Baldrige-guided School Improvement Process
The school improvement process has been designed to reflect the components of the Baldrige Education Criteria for Performance Excellence. The goal of this initiative is to identify the elements of school improvement and organizational development that must be supported in every school in order to promote high levels of student achievement. Schools are expected to implement the school improvement planning model using the performance targets and the Baldrige categories. In order for this school improvement process to be successful, the entire staff and representatives from all stakeholder groups must be engaged in the process. The progress on school improvement plan goals will be evaluated regularly with all stakeholders.

Organizational Culture of Respect
The Board of Education and senior leadership, including the three employee associations, chief operating officer, the deputy superintendent of schools, and the chief school performance officer, met on a regular basis and adopted an agreement that is aimed at creating an organizational culture of respect in MCPS to ensure success for every student. This compact represents a description of the culture the parties believe should exist throughout MCPS. The parties are committed to making this culture a reality by building strong relationships and working together collaboratively. It requires the partners to act with self-control and to show concern for others at all times. Staff will model how they expect all members of the community to interact. The compact reflects the values and the behaviors that are expected of all individuals in interactions with students, fellow staff, parents, and others who are involved in the school system. The culture of respect is built ~~upon~~ the premise that all employees contribute to a successful learning environment. The tenets of this document are utilized throughout the system.

School Climate Compact
In August 2010, the Collaborative School Climate Compact was agreed upon and implemented, effective January 2011. It is grounded in the Organizational Culture of Respect Compact. It reflects the commitment by all parties to creating and maintaining a respectful and productive MCPS workplace at all work sites. The School Climate Compact identifies the expected behaviors for all employees as we interact in the workplace.

Employee Recognition
MCPS places a high value on recognizing employees throughout the organization. The system's recognition efforts celebrate job performance, leadership, innovation, and instructional capacity. While there are many recognition opportunities at the school and office level, an opportunity for improvement in the area of workforce engagement that was identified as part of the Baldrige Assessment is that "the district has limited measures of recognition" for its workforce. Consequently, during the next year, the Office of Human Resources and Development will assemble a work group of representative stakeholders whose charge will be to develop reward and recognition systems for all employee groups. These systems will encourage MCPS to celebrate the efforts and achievement of its employees in their pursuit of system goals and priorities.

GOAL 5: Provide High-quality Business Services that Are Essential to the Educational
Success of Students

Board of Education Academic Priorities:

- Organize and optimize resources for improved academic results
- Foster and sustain systems that support and improve employee effectiveness in partnership with MCPS employee organizations.

MCPS will provide the highest quality products, resources, and business services that are essential to the educational success of students through staff committed to excellence and continuous improvement.

Milestones: **Data Points:**

Milestones	Data Points
• All business services will meet or exceed customers' needs, requirements, and reasonable expectations.	o Customer Results
• Systems are in place to recruit, support, and retain highly effective business services personnel.	o Human Resources Results
• All business functions plan, develop, secure, and effectively manage fiscal resources in compliance with internal and external accountability requirements to support the education of students.	o Financial Results
• All business functions effectively and efficiently deliver the highest quality products, resources, and business services essential to the educational success of students.	o Organizational Results

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Provide High-quality Business Services that Are Essential to the Educational Success of Students

Process Design/Improvements Process Chart

Successfully managing and operating a school system of 200 schools, over 144,000 ~~140,000~~ students, and more than 21,000 employees requires a comprehensive infrastructure of supporting business services. All departments have developed process maps for key processes. These services are provided by employees who work behind the scenes to ensure that teachers, students, and principals have the resources, materials, services, and facilities they need for successful instruction.

Family of Measures

The business and financial operations of the school system are utilizing the Baldrige National Quality Program criteria to focus on business results to effectively measure and manage organizational performance. A family of measures currently encompasses four major categories of business results—Customer Results, Financial Results, Human Resource Results, and Organizational Results. Taken together, these diverse performance measurements help to drive business decisions, process improvements, and other organizational initiatives that make MCPS business and financial operations more productive, efficient, and effective in meeting customer needs and expectations. With an emphasis on equitable practices, staff in the business operations side of MCPS review the family of measures through an equity lens.

Customer Results

The Baldrige criteria suggest that the quality of products or services provided by an organization should be driven or dictated by the customer. The business and financial operations are focused on satisfying their customers—students, teachers, administrators, parents, and staff—and have developed surveys and feedback systems designed to measure and gather data on customer satisfaction, and to develop strategies to satisfy customer needs. Managers utilize the continuous feedback in order to adjust and implement process improvements.

Department of Transportation Customer Delight

Customer Delight is the motto of the Department of Transportation (DOT). The Customer Delight program has focused for several years on improving service and interacting with a broad customer base by raising expectations and improving interactions with internal and external customers. In 2007–2008, the department initiated a new element of Customer Delight. In an effort to anticipate customer needs, be proactive in their work habits, and manage with future outcomes in mind, DOT staff have adopted a Delight thru Foresight approach to various aspects of business operations. This includes anticipating outcomes of actions by staff, anticipating customer needs, and being proactive in approaching issues and solving problems. In 2008–2009, DOT initiated an Expedite for Delight element of the plan. This element focuses on the customers' need for timely service and responses to inquiries. Because complaints about staff interactions and service delivery have decreased, how the buses are actually driven is now a leading complaint category. To address this customer-identified area of need, Drive Right to Delight was added as a focus area for the 2009–2010 school year.

Use of Focus Groups to Determine Customer Requirements

The Department of Materials Management and the Division of Food and Nutrition Services have established the Customer Feedback Focus Group program to provide a forum for school staff and parents to give opinions on products, services, and best practices. Customer focus groups are

designed to continually listen and learn, with the aim of offering relevant products and services, understanding emerging customer requirements and expectations, and keeping pace with educational changes and ways of doing business. Causes of complaints are determined by using root cause analysis to effectively improve products and service processes, with the help of focus groups.

Use of Web-based Satisfaction Survey

Through the use of a Web-based survey system, the Department of Facilities Management (DFM) requests that all principals rate DFM services and provide feedback on facility issues. As school principals are the primary representative of the school, they are well positioned to rate DFM services and provide valuable customer feedback. Survey responses and statistical results are compiled and analyzed by directors and supervisors within a week of the completion of the survey. This survey process has provided each principal with a means to regularly communicate with DFM managers, who review the feedback for patterns, trends, and follow-up issues.

Instructional Technology System Specialist (ITSS) Job Banding

Job banding was first developed for ITSS by the Office of the Chief Technology Officer in collaboration with SEIU Local 500 through a joint labor management work group. Job banding is an approach to career advancement that combined several related positions into one "job band" and created established criteria for how ITSS can move from one level to the next within this job band. The result is a job classification that provides MCPS employees with improved career pathways and provides ITSS with opportunities for self-directed career advancement. Management viewed job banding as a way to improve staff retention by providing more staff with the opportunity to advance into jobs that were hard to fill due to job market competition. It also is an excellent strategy for employee recruitment because candidates can see a clear plan for career growth.

The Department of Management, Budget, and Planning

The Department of Management, Budget, and Planning (DMBP) has worked to improve customer service by enhancing the understandability and transparency of budget documents. Initially for the FY 2010 Recommended Operating Budget, DMBP issued a Budget in Brief document that combined previous documents on budget changes into a concise, user-friendly publication. This document has met with approval from parents and other stakeholders. DMBP increased the availability of budget documents on the MCPS website, including the ability to answer citizen questions through the website.

DMBP staff also worked to increase community outreach and participation to advance the ~~Board of Education members to change the approach to Board budget work sessions to focus on the Board's academic priorities. This increased public interest and understanding of the Board's budget decisions by demonstrating the~~ alignment of the operating budget with Board and public priorities. The development of the FY 2012 Operating Budget included innovative community roundtables that enabled a diverse group of stakeholders to work together to identify key priorities for the school system and areas for funding. Parent Academy workshops on the budget process introduced basic budget issues to many parents who traditionally do not participate extensively in community involvement opportunities, especially parents who do not speak English.

Focus on School Meals

School meals must meet the nutritional requirements established by the United States Department of Agriculture. There are nutrition standards in place for all foods and beverages sold to students during the instructional day. The Division of Food and Nutrition Services (DFNS) is continually revising the student menu to meet student needs and expectations and ~~to~~ provide them with a well-balanced, nutritious meal at an affordable price. The elementary school menu has been redesigned to provide general information about the school meal program as well as nutrition and food safety to parents and students. The menu is published in English and Spanish every two months and goes home with every elementary school student. A "Customer Service Comment Card" is provided on the menu, and a member of the DFNS supervisory staff personally contacts the individual that returns the card for direct feedback. DFNS staff conducts sessions on ~~nutiriton~~ nutrition and wellness for students, employees, the MCPS Parent Academy, and many PTA groups.

Long-range Planning

The Division of Long-range Planning (DLRP) promotes feedback on school enrollment projections from principals and builds in a midyear forecast revision and later adjustments, as needed. These processes help to refine the forecast and ensure adequate staffing. In addition, DLRP coordinates the timing of school forecasting with the placement of relocatable classrooms to ensure schools have adequate classrooms at the start of each school year. The DLRP staff conducts numerous community involvement processes to ensure stakeholder input to facility planning decisions. Staff also collect feedback from parent organization members, and the general public, at all community planning meetings. DLRP continuously updates planning materials through postings on the division website, including the provision of school assignment information and school boundary maps available online. DLRP also has successfully migrated most of its planning data to a new database application that provides more security and easier access to planning information and reports.

Financial Results

Purchasing Card Program

The MCPS Purchasing Card Program was established to streamline the process for making ~~low~~ small-dollar purchases that are necessary for MCPS operations. It was designed to save MCPS time and money in processing orders while providing a method to track these expenditures. It helps schools and offices obtain ~~small~~ low-dollar items in a more efficient and cost-effective manner, while giving management a method to limit items purchased. Switching from a paper purchase order process to a purchasing card transaction reduces the per-transaction cost by ~~80 percent~~ $82 per transaction. In addition to streamlining procurement, it also provides an avenue ~~to~~ for schools to make emergency purchases in case the county experiences a pandemic or national emergency and an immediate need must be met.

Cooperative Purchasing

The cooperative purchasing program was established to provide an avenue for reducing costs through economies of scale created by volume buying. The program ~~also~~ fosters better value since it reduces the administrative costs of purchasing. MCPS is currently working with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, the Baltimore Regional Cooperative Purchasing Committee, and the Interagency Procurement Coordinating Committee in Montgomery County to promote efficient and effective practices across agencies and departments. This collaboration has reduced costs in the purchasing of health care benefits, life insurance, unleaded gasoline, office paper, electricity, and natural gas. In addition, these relationships provide MCPS staff with ~~training opportunities~~ additional expertise in the areas of contracting, negotiations, insurance, and other specialized procurement functions. Working with our purchasing committees, we continue to reach out to minority, female, veteran, and disabled vendors to ensure that procurement opportunities are ~~equitably distributed~~ available to them.

Partnerships with Parent Teacher Association PTA and Employee Associations

MCPS implemented partnerships with each of the employee associations and the Montgomery County Council of PTAs to develop the Recommended Operating Budget. The employee association and PTA leaders are involved in every stage of the development of the budget. Their participation has resulted in improved understanding of how to make needed budget reductions while minimizing the harmful impact on the classroom.

Human Resource Results

MCPS is committed to ~~ensure~~ ensuring that a high-quality employee is in every position in the organization. Structures and processes are in place to attract, recruit, hire, mentor, develop, evaluate, recognize, and retain high-performing employees. The quality of an organization's products and services hinges significantly on the quality, attitude, performance, and job satisfaction

of its workforce. A cross-functional selection work group is working to identify those characteristics through a revamping of the selection process protocol. The goal is to modify the interview processes for all employees to ensure that the people MCPS hires have a strong commitment to doing whatever it takes to ensure that so all students will learn at high levels. Performance measures are being developed and implemented to monitor employee attendance, training, development, and satisfaction. The professional growth systems of all employee groups are Supporting Services Professional Growth System (SSPGS) is a key tools in developing an ever-improving and more effective workforce.

Human Capital Management

In partnership with the Office of Human Resources and Development and the Employee and Retiree Services Center, the Office of the Chief Technology Officer is leading the development and deployment of state-of-the-art technologies to strengthen the district's human capital and talent management programs. The fall 2009 implementation of the e-Recruitment application, *MCPS Careers,* has provided managers with greater access to applicant information. The web-based system increases collaboration among all stakeholders in the hiring process by including hiring managers, staffers, recruiters, management, employees, and candidates. The new system streamlines and simplifies the hiring process, provides visibility and equitable access to position vacancies to outside applicants and current employees who are seeking new positions, and increases communication to applicants who can monitor their application status online. The custom-designed Human Resources Online systems has begun to streamline and accelerate the hiring and retention processes in its early phases of implementation.

MCPS Apprenticeship Program

MCPS, in partnership with SEIU Local 500, has engaged in an apprenticeship program to develop mechanical systems technicians with skills to support the work of the Division of Maintenance. The MCPS Apprenticeship Program will provide the opportunity to develop employees in certain skilled trades so they can be ready to fill vacancies as they become available.

Department of Transportation Supervisory Model

The Department of Transportation (DOT) worked in consultation with stakeholders (including employee organization leadership) to establish a new supervisory position which, when fully implemented, will improve the ratio of supervisors to employees from 1:80 to 1:20. Extensive training, modeled after that provided to the professional growth consultants, is being provided to all new managers. A The multiyear phase-in plan, which was initiated in 2005–2006, and is two thirds completed has been completed. These improvements support SSPGS goals and DOT's Customer Delight program by increasing communication with schools and providing employees with better access to supervisors. Extremely positive feedback has been expressed by employees and customers where the plan has been implemented.   However, to complete implementation during the fiscally challenging 2009–2010 school year, the ratio of supervisor to employee was temporarily changed from 1:20 to 1:25. In order to meet budgetary restrictions, this ratio will remain the same in FY 2010–2011 and FY 2011–2012. A change back to 1:20 is anticipated when fiscal conditions improve.

Team Building and Effective Communication

 An ongoing priority of the Division of Food and Nurtrition Nutrition Services is fostering team building, effective communications, and improving interpersonal skills among a very diverse workforce. Data points include human resource results (retention, turnover, satisfaction, advancement, and absenteeism) and organizational results (productivity). The division provides daily communications to the school-based managers, professional development for supporting services staff, and diversity training and development.

Leadership Development

In FY 2003, the Division of Maintenance developed and implemented a 12-hour leadership training program for incumbent supervisors and managers. The basic course, taught annually, provides entry-level instruction in leadership principles, team building, organizational management, and career development for new supervisors and other interested employees. An advanced course was

added for 2007 and 2008, providing expanded training for supervisors and managers. In 2009, an intermediate leadership course was added that provides expanded training for employees who have completed the basic course, but who are not yet supervisors. The advanced course is currently a series of discussions that focus on enhancing leaders' thinking, planning, and management skills.

Organizational Results

This category of business results is the most diverse of all because it requires each business unit to measure and evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of business operations unique to its part of the organization. Measures may examine such things as responsiveness to customer requests for support, efficiencies with which customer orders are processed or delivered, or the effective use of available time by employees.

The Division of School Plant Operations maintains systems to regularly monitor the performance of key processes and identify opportunities to initiate improvement projects. To improve reporting, training, and reconciliation of costs associated with community use of school facilities, a process management and improvement project is in progress. Implementation of recommendations from this team is expected to has resulted in reduced costs for MCPS.

Benchmarking for Continuous Improvement

MCPS continues to work with the American Productivity and Quality Center (APQC) in Houston, Texas, in a nationwide initiative to develop benchmarks for educational organizations. APQC is a 31-year-old nonprofit organization that has done extensive work with leading businesses throughout the world to help improve procedures by comparing the efficiency and effectiveness of their processes with those of other organizations. Their interest is in helping educational organizations do the same by demonstrating how a comparative database can be developed; thereby enabling districts to compare the efficiency and effectiveness of their processes with other districts and identify gaps for improvement. APQC has recognized MCPS as a best practices partner in professional development, mathematics and science, English language learners, professional learning communities, and data-driven decision making.

Process Management for Continuous Improvement

APQC has identified nine school districts from across the United States to lead a nationwide initiative titled *North Star*, which focuses on process management and improvement (PMI). This initiative will assist school systems in becoming more process centered, which means having school districts focus on the design, implementation, evaluation, and refinement of their key work processes. As one of the nine districts, MCPS will be working with other school districts to implement process management in their school systems. All offices, departments, and divisions in MCPS have identified their key processes and have developed process maps that indicate each process step. In addition, a process organization tool, Inputs, Guides, Outputs, and Enablers (IGOE), is being used for all key processes to identify the interrelationships and interdependencies of all key processes across MCPS. In-process measures and outcome measures also have been identified for each process to determine their effectiveness and efficiency.

Environmental Stewardship—Energy Efficiency, Conservation, and Sustainability Programs

The Department of Facilities Management (DFM) promotes environmental stewardship and manages various energy and environmental programs. The Energy and Utilities Unit (EUU) develops the annual Resource Conservation Plan that documents the energy conservation strategies, efforts, and progress. The conservation plan includes three major strategic initiatives—behavioral energy savings and recycling programs for all schools (SERT), energy efficiency retrofit projects for existing facilities, and new construction green building initiatives.

School Energy and Recycling Team (SERT)—MCPS recognizes that significant energy savings can be achieved when school-based staff and students engage in responsible energy behavior. The SERT program educates and supports the efforts of school-based teams in all schools to reduce energy consumption and increase recycling. Following industry best practices, energy facilitators and support staff visit each school multiple times over the school year to identify energy wasted and facilitate changes in behavior to promote a culture of conservation. SERT provides resources to

educate staff and students on the efforts of their behavior and its impact on energy use. Activities and contests are provided to encourage energy conservation behavior. School-based teams also are involved in the installation of energy-efficient technologies that promote resource conservation. Finally, energy performance is tracked and data are provided to schools so that improvements in energy efficiency can be recognized and rewarded.

SERT members also promote and assist schools with their recycling programs. Similar to the school-based energy program, the SERT program provides support to school-based teams in the form of training, educational materials, and recycling performance reports.

United States Green Building Council (USGBC)/Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)—MCPS has long pursued high-energy efficiency and sensitive environmental design practices in new construction, as a strategic goal. Over the past ~~seven~~ eight years, MCPS has played a leading role in promoting LEED at both county and state levels. Great Seneca Creek Elementary School, which opened in the fall of 2006, was the first LEED-certified public school in Maryland, and the first such public building in Montgomery County. The facility received a Gold-level certification in LEED rating through United States Green Building Council (USGBC). The Francis Scott Key Middle School modernization project, completed in August 2009, also received Gold-level certification and was the first LEED-certified Gold middle school in the state. Cashell and William B. Gibbs elementary schools each received their Gold-level certifications in 2010. ~~Since then, Francis Scott Key Middle School modernization project, completed in August of 2009, also received Gold-level certification and was the first LEED -certified Gold middle school in the state. Cashell and William B. Gibbs elementary schools are anticipated to receive Gold-level certifications.~~ In addition, ~~18~~ 23 other major capital projects are currently registered for LEED certification with USGBC. In collaboration with USGBC, MCPS contributed to the development of the "LEED for Schools" criteria, a LEED system designed for rating schools. MCPS continues to incorporate best practices for high performance, sustainability, and innovations. To ensure successful implementation, MCPS provides necessary training and resources to the facility design team and tests new technologies through various green pilot projects to ensure applicability in the school environment.

In compliance with the Montgomery County Green Building Bill 17-06, MCPS is committed to achieving a minimum of Silver-level certification in the LEED rating system for all new and modernization projects. Compliance with these regulations will promote environmental stewardship while providing green learning environments for students and staff.

Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Program

MCPS established the Environmental Services ~~Safety~~ and Indoor Air Quality (ES/IAQ) program in FY 2000, to ensure safe and healthful learning environments in schools. The primary goal of the program is to ensure that ~~h~~Heating, ~~v~~Ventilation, and ~~a~~Air ~~c~~Conditioning equipment operate properly and to develop building preventive maintenance programs to ensure the equipment continues to operate at peak performance until it reaches obsolescence and is replaced. The ES/IAQ program has continued to receive nationwide attention through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. In 2005 and 2006, the agency conducted live press conferences from MCPS school sites to publicize its "Tools for Schools" program in action. Since 2006, the ES/IAQ Program has been recognized nationally for its leadership in establishing a proactive IAQ assessment program for relocatable classrooms. Additionally, in support of Green Building/LEED initiatives, the ES/IAQ staff assists in evaluating and selecting environmentally friendly products for use in the school system.

Facility Availability System (FAS)

During emergency situations that affect multiple buildings, rapid communication and response is required so that critical decisions can be made regarding the availability of facilities for ~~continuation~~ continuing ~~of~~ educational programs. Parents and other community members also need to be informed as soon as possible. The Facility Availability System (FAS) is a technology tool developed in collaboration with OCTO that is used simultaneously by staff in multiple offices in the Department of Facilities Management to capture and report the status of MCPS facilities during a weather emergency. As tasks required to restore facilities to full operation are completed, FAS is updated by staff working in the field. Systemwide information is compiled and reported in various formats, allowing leadership staff to view and make decisions based on real-time data.

Systemwide Safety Programs

In 2009, the Systemwide Safety Programs Unit (SWSP) in the Department of Facilities Management implemented in 2009 an online safety training program for MCPS employees to take Web-based online safety courses to perform their jobs safely. This online safety training program was established and is being maintained to enhance the well-being of all MCPS employees in order to provide a safe working and learning environment; to comply with state and federal safety training mandates; and to reduce occupational injuries and illnesses, thus reducing workers' compensation costs.

Security

MCPS currently is in the third fourth year of a six-year program to include state-of-the-art digital closed-circuit television surveillance systems at all middle and high schools, and visitor management /access control systems at all schools, and access control systems at all elementary schools. The surveillance systems are network-based multi-pixel, digital cameras whose recordings can be viewed and reviewed at multiple locations within the individual school and at remote locations by authorized staff. When necessary, the recordings can be shared with local public safety agencies. The visitor management system is a software program that facilitates screening of visitors before they are admitted to the school. Visitor names are compared to databases that have been downloaded from student information files and the Maryland sex offender registry. Visitors' names are cross-referenced against the Maryland State Sex Offenders registry. The access control systems, consisting of an exterior camera, intercom, and remote strike/release locking system on the door, will allow elementary schools to lock exterior doors during the instructional day and admit visitors after they have been identified.

STRATEGIES IMPLEMENTED SINCE 1999

The implementation of strategies outlined in the original *Our Call to Action* began shortly after the Board of Education adopted the strategic plan in November 1999. At that time, the superintendent of schools made a strategic decision to focus the reform initiatives in elementary schools, more specifically at the kindergarten level. Over the past nine years, the reforms have been expanded to other grades in the elementary schools as well as to middle and high schools. Targeted initiatives were implemented to improve student achievement at all levels and ~~to~~ close the achievement gap between African American and Hispanic students and their White and Asian American peers. These initiatives also are designed to improve achievement of ESOL students, students with disabilities, and students impacted by poverty.

This section of the strategic plan highlights some of the critical strategies and initiatives that have been implemented over the past 10 years, as part of these reform efforts.

Goal 1: Ensure Success for Every Student

Early Success Performance Plan

The Early Success Performance Plan is a pre-K–Grade 2, fully aligned system of comprehensive supports for children in the early grades, designed to "raise the bar" for all students and provide them with the necessary skills and knowledge to be successful in speaking, reading, writing, and mathematics by Grade 3. The plan provides a four-year sequence or pathway for all children and focuses on addressing the opportunity gap facing our most highly impacted children. The plan is built around the following five guiding principles of comprehensive school reform:

- Focused and challenging curriculum for reading, writing, and mathematics
- Ongoing assessment of student progress
- Expanded instructional time
- Intensive, targeted, and sustained professional development for teachers
- Meaningful family involvement and community collaboration

Prekindergarten Programs

The MCPS prekindergarten programs provide a high-quality, literacy-based instructional program, including art, music, and physical education, to an increasing number of income-eligible and at-risk 4-year-old children. Programs also offer health, dental, and access to other support resources services in order to help meet families' needs. In FY 2009, full-day Head Start programs were funded in 13 classes in 10 Title I schools for children living at or below the federal poverty level. In 2009–2010, a total of 21 full-day Head Start classes were provided in ~~18~~ 19Title I schools. The Office of Shared Accountability has published preliminary research citing greater achievement benefits for students in the full-day classes, as well as the cost-effectiveness of the additional investment in extending these classes to full-day programs.

Full-Day Kindergarten

The Early Success Performance Plan includes comprehensive supports for young children in the early grades, including full-day kindergarten classes at all elementary schools. The *Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act of 2002* requirement of providing full-day kindergarten in all elementary schools was met in FY 2007, one full school year prior to the mandate. Beginning in the 2011–2012 school year, the rigorous, revised Elementary Integrated Curriculum, ~~that~~ which weaves together all content areas along with thinking and academic success skills, will be implemented in all kindergarten classrooms.

Reading Interventions in Elementary and Middle Schools

Reading interventions are provided to students who need extra reading instruction in order to achieve at or above grade-level proficiency in reading. Interventions are in addition to and aligned with the student's core reading instruction. Research-based interventions are carefully selected and matched with the student's identified area of need. Teachers receive professional development ~~on~~ in the use of intervention materials, instructional strategies, and monitoring of student progress.

Support for the Most Highly Impacted Schools

A comprehensive model for funding, staffing, and programming was implemented in the most highly impacted elementary schools in the county. These schools include federally funded Title I schools and locally funded high-need schools. A continuous review of the model is in place to maximize the use of resources, as well as to develop and implement plans to meet the requirements for schools in need of improvement, corrective action, or restructuring.

Elementary Schools Extended Time

Title I schools offer extended-day supports for students, based on achievement data. Using research-based activities, each Title I school designs before-school and/or after-school programs.

Extended Learning Opportunities Summer Adventures in Learning (ELO SAIL) is a four-hour academic program for Kindergarten through Grade 5 students, offered daily for four weeks in July in Title I schools. Students receive free transportation to and from school, breakfast, and lunch. The academic program goals are to accelerate learning through lessons in reading, writing, and mathematics that preview concepts and skills to be taught in the grade students will enter in the fall, strengthen basic skills, alleviate the loss of academic skills that many students experience over the summer break, and provide continuing English language instruction for ESOL students.

Class-size Reduction

Elementary Schools

In FY 2001, the Board of Education began an initiative to reduce class size in elementary schools that includes the following:

- Full-day kindergarten with an average class size of 18 in the most highly impacted schools.

- First and second grade classes in these schools with an average class size of 18.

- Reduced maximum class guidelines in all elementary schools from 28 to 27 students in Grades 1–3 and from 30 to 29 students in Grades 4 and 5.

Middle and High Schools

To address oversized classes in middle and high schools, the Board of Education took the following steps:

- Funded 38 positions in middle schools to support mathematics instruction and increase enrollment in Grade 8 Algebra.

- Approved positions for the five high schools in the Downcounty Consortium to provide an average class size of 23 for academic classes in Grade 9.

- Provided 25 teachers for the high school level to support special education students who are included in general education classrooms.

Support for Special Education Students

Expansion of Reading and Mathematics Interventions—Evidence-based reading and mathematics interventions have been expanded to selected elementary, middle, and high schools. The Office of Special Education and Student Services (OSESS) supports reading interventions for schools at the secondary level and purchased additional reading interventions for schools that serve students with intellectual disabilities. In addition, OSESS purchased additional mathematics interventions for highly impacted elementary schools receiving Title I fund and those with elementary learning centers, schools at the elementary, middle, and high school levels that serve students with intellectual disabilities; OSESS purchased additional mathematics interventions for all middle schools, as well as high schools serving large numbers of students with disabilities, including former learning center students. The Department of Special Education Services (DSES) continues to collaborate with the Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs to provide initial and follow-up professional development to teachers implementing the interventions. DSES staff also provide ongoing job-embedded coaching to teachers as needed, to ensure fidelity of implementation.

Moved to front.

Educational and Assistive Technology—Educational and assistive technology play an important role in helping students with disabilities access a rigorous instructional program. Licenses for Kurzweil advanced screen reader software were purchased for elementary, middle, and high schools. The High Incidence Assistive Technology (HIAT) team provides technology training, online materials, guides, resource links, and examples of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) instruction that allow the MCPS curriculum to be accessible to all students. UDL is the practice of embedding flexible strategies into curriculum during the planning process so that all students can access a variety of learning solutions. Using *American Reinvestment Recovery /Act* (ARRA) funds, approximately one million dollars will be used to support elementary schools by purchasing mathematics manipulatives, Web-based accessible books and resources, cutting -edge computer hardware, and audio books for Grades 4 and 5. UDL is reflected in the language within the EIC to ensure flexibility scaffolded instruction, and integrated planning for diverse learners.

Interdisciplinary Augmentative Communication Technology Team—The Interdisciplinary Augmentative Communication Technology (InterACT) team provides consultative assistive technology support to teams working with students who have severe communication and/or physical disabilities. This team has expertise in special education, speech-language pathology, and occupational and physical therapy. InterACT assesses students who may require assistive technology equipment and provides consultation to the teachers of identified students

Prekindergarten Services—Young children   Students with disabilities, ages 3 through 5, who receive special education services are part of the systemwide Early Success Performance Plan. Special educators are included in all staff development activities to ensure implementation of the prekindergarten curriculum. To the extent possible, services for prekindergarten students with disabilities are co-located in elementary schools with MCPS prekindergarten or Head Start classes. This provides inclusive opportunities and allows students with disabilities to access a general early child educational setting. A multi-stakeholder project team was formed to make recommendations for increasing opportunities through community partnerships.

Itinerant Resource Teachers (IRT)—Demonstrating the MCPS commitment to Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), the budget supports funds eight IRTs . The IRTs provide professional development for school-based staff to support students with disabilities in Kindergarten through Grade 12 in the general education environment. IRTs have a wide range of expertise in autism spectrum disorders, behavioral and emotional support strategies, elementary and secondary instruction, and mathematics and reading instruction. The team provide professional development and job-embedded coaching to school staff to improve students' success in the LRE and to improve students' overall outcomes.

Support for ESOL Students

To ensure that ESOL students continue to acquire the academic language and skills needed to achieve at the highest levels, the following essential program components are provided to ESOL students and their families.

- ESOL Transition Program—The ESOL Transition Program is a three-pronged approach to supporting recently exited ESOL students who no longer receive ESOL services. The goals of the program are to support these students by monitoring them in their non-ESOL classes, providing professional development to content teachers and administrators on effective engagement of English language learners, and collaborating with ESOL teachers to accelerate academic English language development. Presently this program is available at the two high schools with the largest population of ESOL students—Montgomery Blair and Gaithersburg.

- Honors and Advanced Placement—ESOL students at the highest level English language proficiency and those who have exited the ESOL program within the past two years are encouraged to enroll in highly able, Honors, and Advanced Placement classes. The ESOL transition teachers at two high schools provide direct support to recently exited ESOL students to bolster their success in these courses.

- Bilingual Support Programs for ESOL Students and Families—The ESOL Parent Outreach and Counseling teams provide bilingual multicultural parent support and counseling services to ESOL

students and their families to facilitate their adjustment to a new academic, social, and cultural environment. These services help to minimize linguistic and cultural barriers to academic achievement.

- Language Assistance Services Unit—Translation and interpretation services are provided in multiple languages, using various media to address the need to communicate essential information to our rapidly growing, linguistically diverse community. Information is communicated to parents and community members about curriculum, educational programs and services, assessment, and instruction with the same level of quality that is afforded to members of the English-speaking community. An online ~~Web-based~~ request system has been implemented to manage translation requests. Workflows have been integrated with those of ~~the Office of Communications and Family Outreach~~ Public Information and Web Services to ensure smooth, systemwide communications of important information, including emergency messages. Work has started on a ~~Web-based system for~~ an online system to facilitate interpretation requests, to improve transparency and responsiveness to the needs of schools communicating with individual parents about their children.

High School Consortia

Three high schools—James Hubert Blake, Paint Branch, and Springbrook—are affiliated in a consortium to serve the interests of all students living in the northeast area of the county. Students and their parents participate in the student assignment process, known as the *Choice* Process, in which each student ranks his/her preference for a high school from among the three choices. Each campus offers a comprehensive high school curriculum as well as a distinctive signature program. Signature programs focus on fields of high interest to students of diverse abilities and achievement levels and incorporate these signature themes throughout the instructional program.

The Downcounty Consortium (DCC) consists of five high schools—Montgomery Blair, Albert Einstein, John F. Kennedy, Northwood, and Wheaton—and students participate in the student assignment process, known as the *Choice* Process, by ranking their preferences among the five schools. DCC high schools have focused their efforts on building smaller learning communities within the high schools that serve a very diverse student population residing in the Wheaton/Silver Spring area. Unique ninth grade programs are designed to meet the academic needs of entering freshman, while simultaneously exploring their interests and talents, and connecting these students with the adults in their school. Following the ninth grade program, students in the DCC move into another form of a smaller learning community called an academy. Academy programs are a series of courses focused on topics of high interest to students. Students choose one of the themed academies and focus on the application of school-based learning to higher education and the workforce.

Smaller Learning Communities

The Board of Education approved a six-year Career and Technology Education strategic plan for systematically ensuring the availability of smaller learning communities for all students in MCPS. Many high schools have developed and implemented smaller learning communities to provide students with rigorous and relevant programs and to create a more personalized learning environment for students. MCPS high schools are implementing smaller learning communities through innovative theme-based signature programs, career academies, and career pathway programs. These programs provide students with authentic internship experiences, college credit, and scholarship opportunities.

High School Pilot Course Development

School-based staff ~~has~~ have the opportunity to propose, plan, and implement noncore courses to strengthen local course offerings and provide support for smaller learning communities, signature programs, and academies. After a rigorous review by the Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs, and approval by the Board of Education, new courses are piloted by the school that develops the course materials. The pilot process requires submission of materials, including a course outline, syllabus, sample lessons, assessment measures, and course evaluation. At the end of the pilot period, the course may be submitted to the Board of Education for final approval.

Safe and Secure Schools

MCPS continues to ensure a safe and secure educational environment through ongoing security initiatives. These include the following:

- A systemwide emergency/crisis response plan.

- Individualized emergency/crisis plans at all schools and facilities, to include parent/child reunification procedures.

- Security personnel in all middle and high schools.

- Emergency preparedness and fire evacuation drills.

- Established emergency communication procedures at all schools.

- Specialized training for school administrators and on-site emergency teams to manage an emergency or crisis situation.

- Security assessments of schools.

- Development of School Safety and Security at a Glance, an annual report on the status of safety and security in our schools.

K–12 Mathematics Work Group (Moved to back from Goal 1)

The K–12 Mathematics Work Group was convened in January 2009 to explore the complex issues surrounding mathematics teaching and learning and develop recommendations to improve student achievement in mathematics. A diverse group of more than 40 stakeholders ~~are~~ is participating in this initiative.

The work group is employing a research-based approach to ~~their~~ its task and has formed the following research groups: Written Curriculum, Implemented Curriculum, Assessment, Teacher Preparation and Development, and Mathematics Targets and Accelerations. During the course of this work, the federal government released the Common Core Standards. Subsequently, the Maryland State Department of Education reviewed the alignment between the Common Core Standards and the Maryland State Curriculum. Members of the K–12 Mathematics Work Group and other central ~~office~~ services and school-based staff conducted an alignment between the Common Core Standards and the MCPS mathematics curriculum. This alignment is critical to the final recommendations of the work group.

Aligned Efforts to Support Success in Higher-level Mathematics (Moved from Goal 1)

Preparing students for success in higher-level mathematics begins with a high-quality curriculum that reaches beyond the Maryland State Curriculum and continues with the elementary school Accelerated Pathways in Mathematics. Through the pathways, school staff and parents see how acceleration, beginning in kindergarten, can prepare students for advanced mathematics in elementary, middle, and high school. Several supports are in place to ensure that teachers and administrators have the knowledge of content and effective instructional practices necessary to ensure student success in higher-level mathematics.

- Mathematics content coaches in many Title I and other special focus elementary schools
- Mathematics content specialists in middle schools involved in middle school reform
- Professional development, including course-specific classes as well as credit-bearing courses
- Lenses on Learning 1 and 2 courses for elementary principals

Goal 2: Provide an Effective Instructional Program

Councils on Teaching and Learning

Councils on Teaching and Learning were designed to provide regular, two-way communication between teachers and central ~~office~~ services on curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development. This unique partnership with the Montgomery County Education Association (MCEA) provides for teacher-level representatives at elementary and secondary levels.

These councils have provided important feedback from teachers on the implementation of initiatives, and they have served a key role in ensuring that accurate and timely information is provided to teachers.

Reading Specialists/AEI Literacy Coach/Literacy Coaches

Every elementary school has a reading specialist whose role is to increase teachers' content knowledge and instructional strategies for reading and language arts. Reading specialists provide leadership and expertise related to all aspects of teaching reading and writing and deliver job-embedded staff development on reading, writing, and assessments. Reading specialists are vital to the success of students' reading proficiency. Reading specialists diagnose students' reading needs and coach teachers to provide targeted Instruction. Reading specialists also provide intervention instruction for selected students.

The middle school reading specialist provides leadership for schoolwide reading programs and reading instruction in all content areas and grade levels in non-Phase I, and II, schools. . They also provide staff development on reading instruction and assessments. In addition, the middle school reading specialist is involved in developing a school improvement plan for reading. In Phase I and II schools, the AEI literacy coach facilitates development of the schoolwide literacy plan and supports critical thinking, reading, writing, and viewing across the content areas by providing job-embedded professional development to all staff. The AEI literacy coach creates a process for nurturing/mentoring underachieving and/or traditionally underserved students enrolled in accelerated courses.

Elementary Mathematics Content Coach. and AEI Mathematics Content Specialist

Elementary mathematics content coaches work are in ~~many~~ some Title I schools and in high-need elementary schools to increase the content knowledge and instructional strategies of teachers of mathematics. As part of middle school reform, AEI mathematics content specialists have been allocated to selected middle schools. The elementary mathematics content coach and AEI mathematics content specialist provide direct classroom support to teachers and paraprofessionals to effectively implement the mathematics curriculum and assessments; builds the content knowledge and teaching expertise of teachers of mathematics; and as an instructional leader, facilitates the analysis of mathematics assessment data to ensure that all students are appropriately challenged and school improvement goals are achieved.

Gifted and Talented Services

MCPS is committed to promoting rigorous performance standards and providing instructional programs that encourage all students to achieve at their highest level. A continuum of accelerated and enriched programs and services begins at pre-K and continues through Grade 12. At all levels, students may accelerate learning and participate in advanced-level coursework at their local schools. Instruction is differentiated to provide all students, including students in traditionally underserved groups, with appropriate pacing and support necessary for advanced-level learning. Students also may attend special programs such as centers for the highly gifted, magnet programs, or specialized programs, based on student interest and talent.

MCPS instructional guides and curriculum resources in reading/language arts and mathematics provide preassessments and programming recommendations that give students access to accelerated and enriched instruction, including above-grade-level instruction, as needed. The William and Mary Reading Language Arts program (Grades 2–8) and the Junior Great Books program (K–Grade 8) are required components of the reading/language arts program for highly able students and students with potential or motivation to accept more challenging instruction.

Magnet Programs and Centers for the Highly Gifted—For students working at the very highest levels of attainment, full-time programming such as the Primary Gifted and Talented Magnet Program is available for Grades 1 and 2. Seven Center Programs for the Highly Gifted serve students in Grades 4 and 5, and both middle and high school magnet programs are available in mathematics, science, computer science, and humanities. Students identified as gifted and talented and learning disabled (GT/LD) are supported through several GT/LD center programs in Grades 2–8.

The Program of Assessment, Diagnosis, and Instruction (PADI), offered in 16 elementary schools

beginning in kindergarten, focuses on identifying potential giftedness in students whose strengths may be masked by language, experience, or culture. Professional development for classroom staff focuses on developing and refining students' critical and creative thinking skills and supporting their achievement in challenging instruction.

Gifted and Talented Support Positions — Each Title I school has the opportunity to designate a .5 Title I GT teacher. If allocated, staff in this position work to ensure that students, including students in traditionally underserved groups, receive differentiated instruction to support their emerging strengths. They also provide training to parents and staff focused on building knowledge, skills, and expectations that enable all students to reach their maximum potential. For those schools that do not choose to allocate this position, the services provided by the .5 GT teacher are incorporated into other positions. In all middle schools not identified as middle school reform schools, a .4 acceleration and enrichment support teacher (AEIST) is allocated to perform many of the same functions as the Title I .5 GT teacher in an effort to encourage all students to achieve at their highest level.

K–12 Articulation for International Baccalaureate (IB) Program— MCPS currently has eight authorized IB diploma programs (Grades 11–12), eight Middle Years programs (Grades 6–10), and one Primary Years program (pre-K–Grade 5). The results of this effort will yield insights into how to build capacity in students over time to improve their achievement.

Fine Arts Education

The MCPS fine arts curriculum affords students the opportunity to grow aesthetically, culturally, and intellectually. ~~The~~ Fine arts instruction develops skills ~~that prepare students for college and career, such as~~ in the areas of collaboration, creative problem solving, and critical and creative thinking. These skills prepare students for both college and careers, making the arts an integral part of every child's learning and cognitive development. The fine arts require a highly qualified teacher for each core area (visual arts, music, dance, and theatre). The MCPS Fine Arts Curriculum Frameworks (approved by the Board of Education in 2006) align with the Maryland State Curriculum content standards in the following areas:

- Perceiving and Responding: Aesthetics
- Historical, Cultural, and Social Contexts
- Creative Expression and Production
- Aesthetics and Criticism

Career and Technology Education Programs

MCPS schools implement rigorous and relevant career and technology education programs. Opportunities are provided for all students to select ~~career pathways~~ programs of interest and to engage in the academic and workplace experiences that will prepare them for college and career. State-established measures of student achievement include performance on the high school assessments as well as industry certifications.

Middle School Career and Technology Programs provide inquiry-based courses in computer science, family and consumer sciences, and technology education.

Project Lead The Way, Inc., (PLTW) partners with public schools, organizations in the private sector, and higher education institutions to introduce high school students to engineering. This program allows high school students to explore biomedical sciences or engineering. The complete PLTW pathway is available at seven high schools. Introductory courses are offered at 15 additional high schools and ~~two~~ five middle schools.

The National Academy Foundation (NAF) academies prepare students for careers in finance, hospitality and tourism, and information technology. Required college coursework is combined with authentic paid workplace experiences to help students develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills required in postsecondary education and careers. Fifteen NAF pathway programs are available in 14 high schools.

Goal 3: Strengthen Productive Partnerships for Education

Montgomery County Business Roundtable for Education

The Montgomery County Business Roundtable for Education provides support to the school system through a variety of programs and initiatives that are targeted to students, staff, and improving the business operations of the school system. Examples of programs for students include Achievement Counts, ~~that~~ which links hundreds of business people with Grade 9 students, student conferences centered on cutting-edge technologies, and emerging leaders programs that give students opportunities to participate in the Congressional Black and Hispanic Legislative caucuses.

Volunteer and Mentoring Programs

MCPS works collaboratively with businesses, government agencies, and other organizations to coordinate the recruitment, placement, and training of volunteers who work in schools. Schools identify volunteer coordinators who participate in systemwide training to support volunteer programs and data collection.

Mentoring programs in 80 schools provide direct support to students. Volunteer mentors are recruited to work with students in Kindergarten through Grade 12 and provide guidance, literacy, mathematics, science, and other support focused on improving student achievement.

The Connection Resource Bank matches volunteers with schools who are looking for speakers to share their expertise with students in classrooms. These specialized volunteers participate in career and science fairs and provide opportunities for shadow experiences and teacher training.

Goal 4: Create a Positive Work Environment in a Self-renewing Organization

Framework for Improving Teaching and Learning

The Framework for Improving Teaching and Learning is a major initiative to develop a research-based tool for continuous improvement of the teaching and learning process. The Framework is used by schools to deepen their understanding of the following six elements of improving teaching and learning: curriculum, instruction, evidence of student learning, planning, expectations, and building a professional learning community. This framework is the structure for the development of all staff development activities. The framework provides a set of key "look-fors" that guide continuous improvement of the teaching and learning process in all schools.

Curriculum Training and Development

Professional development and support is provided to staff at all levels in the system to support implementation of curriculum and new initiatives to improve teaching and learning. As a new ~~or revised~~ curriculum~~, assessment, and grading and reporting tools are~~ is implemented, professional development and support is provided to improve teaching and learning. ~~The focus of the~~ The training and ~~development is~~ support focus on increasing ~~instructional staff's~~ knowledge of the content and/or effective practices related to curriculum, instruction, and assessment. ~~and standards-based teaching and learning.~~ Emphasis is placed on providing strategies to work with English language learners, students with disabilities, (particularly in the area of co-teaching), and highly able ~~and/~~or motivated students.

Professional development to support implementation of the curriculum ~~and standards-based teaching and learning~~ occurs in the following formats:

- ~~Required~~ Training ~~for teachers~~ that is centrally delivered
- Ongoing follow-up professional development and support at the local school
- School-based ~~professional development~~ training and support
- Voluntary seminars, webinars, and workshops ~~for all instructional staff including support professionals~~

The centrally delivered training is designed to provide the essential skills, resources, and practices necessary to implement the curriculum~~,~~ and assess students. ~~and evaluate students using~~

~~standards-based grading and reporting tools.~~ Follow-up support and training is provided by teacher leaders, including staff development teachers at the local school. School-based ~~professional development~~ training and support is provided by central services staff and is targeted to support the ~~specific~~ needs of ~~the~~ staff in ~~with respect to planning for and~~ implementing specific initiatives. The seminars provide an in-depth study of key ~~curriculum~~ elements~~,~~ of ~~assessments, and standards-based~~ teaching and learning.

Studying Skillful Teaching and Observing and Analyzing Teaching

The Skillful Teaching and Leading coursework is a central component of the Professional Growth System (PGS) for Teachers. It provides participants with a common language and framework to study expert instruction and student achievement. Studying Skillful Teaching 1 examines the knowledge base of teaching and the belief that intelligence is not fixed but that ~~through effective~~ effort, intelligence can develop through effective effort. Successful completion of Studying Skillful Teaching 1 includes mastery lesson planning, an expectation case study, and personal investigation. Studying Skillful Teaching 2 is action research reflecting on the obstacles to student learning and matching instructional strategies to student needs. Successful completion of Studying Skillful Teaching 2 includes data collection, analysis of results, and adaptation of instruction to improve student learning. Studying Skillful Teacher for Paraeducators facilitates the paraeducator's contribution to the school's professional learning community and maximizes student learning.

Principals, assistant principals, assistant school administrators, resource teachers, interdisciplinary resource teachers, and other staff involved in teacher observations and/or evaluations take Observing and Analyzing Teaching courses. Observing and Analyzing Teaching 1 examines the knowledge base of teaching, analysis of teaching, and quality feedback as a means to strengthen expert instruction and student achievement. Observing and Analyzing Teaching 2 has a strong leadership component with three strands: expert instruction, professional learning communities, and instructional leadership. Participants learn how to provide quality feedback to teachers to improve teaching and student achievement. Successful completion of both courses includes the skill of writing observations, evaluations, and improvement plans.

Staff Development Teacher

A staff development teacher (SDT) allocation is provided to schools to ~~is allocated to each school in order~~ provide high-quality job-embedded professional development to instructional staff in each building. It is the job of the staff development teacher, in collaboration with the administration, instructional leadership team, and/or school improvement team, to align the professional development needed by instructional staff with the goals and actions within the school's School Improvement Plan (SIP). That professional development includes, but is not limited to, providing/facilitating: (1) training; (2) focused and guided planning sessions related to curriculum, instruction, and assessment based on the MCPS curriculum; (3) focused and guided reflection on school and student data; (4) peer visits with reflection; (4) school walk-throughs; (5) the analysis of teacher learning data from professional development opportunities, etc. The staff development teacher is a nonevaluative teacher leader whose ~~purpose~~ job is to support the development of each and every teacher as they strive for excellence in the performance standards of the PGS, and to support the goals, objectives, and initiatives of MCPS. SDTs participate in training and development to build their knowledge and skills related to facilitation as well as topics related to the MCPS strategic plan.

New Teacher Induction to Support Novice and New-to-MCPS Teachers

The New Teacher Induction Program is a comprehensive program designed to provide support and professional development for novice and new-to-MCPS teachers in order to increase their skill levels and retention rates. The induction and mentoring program includes the following:

- A four-to-five day summer orientation.

- A midyear one-day orientation for educators hired after the summer orientation.

- One-on-one mentoring at the local school for experienced teachers who are new to MCPS, novice teachers hired from MCPS partnership programs, and novice teachers hired to teach in the same school where they student taught.

- Ongoing training and development modules that focus on the development of teachers in the areas of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and monitoring student achievement.
- Intensive research-based training to ensure high-quality local school mentoring.
- Sharing best practices in induction and networking at local, state, and national forums.

Goal 5: Provide High-quality Business Services that are Essential to the Educational Success of Students

Customer Delight in the Department of Transportation

The Department of Transportation (DOT) infuses their Customer Delight theme and program into all areas of the department for both internal and external customers. This continuous improvement strategy is designed to make DOT increasingly customer focused.

Zero-based Budgeting

Zero-based budgeting is a process used annually to systematically review the base budget. The goal is to align all operating budget expenditures with the academic priorities and strategic initiatives of the strategic plan.

Public Outreach in Budget Process

The development and review of the budget increasingly involves a diversity of stakeholders. Employee organizations play an intimate role in the development of the operating budget, working closely with the superintendent of schools to develop the recommended operating budget. Extensive community outreach involves many community stakeholders, including those for whom English is a second language. Through the use of television, the MCPS website, and feedback cards provided to all schools and in MCPS publications, more members of the community can offer their ideas for system priorities, better understand the strategic plan, and contribute to system improvements. All major budget publications are posted on the MCPS website. The budget publications include improved information on how to understand the budget, and the website allows for an interactive two-way communication process.

Grants

To enrich services to students and launch innovative programs and ideas and reduce the financial burden on local taxpayers, MCPS seeks grants from a wide range of public and private donors. MCPS grants staff collaborate with other public agencies, businesses, and nonprofit and community-based organizations to develop and implement grant-funded programs. MCPS identifies eligible partners to deliver services that align with the district's strategic plan. To respond to current trends in grant making, MCPS has developed procedures that more closely align with the increasing number of automated grant submission systems. MCPS also ~~will~~ improve**d** the management and oversight of grants awarded directly to schools. Finally, to position schools for greater success at securing outside support in an increasingly competitive environment, MCPS ~~will~~ offer**s** more advanced levels of training in grant seeking and fundraising to schools.

Entrepreneurial Activities

The Entrepreneurial Activities Fund provides a venue for MCPS activities to market goods or services produced by MCPS to generate revenue. Activities included in this fund include the Taylor Science Materials Center, Supply Warehouse, ~~Printing and Graphics~~ Editorial Graphics and Publishing Services, Student Online Learning, and entrepreneurial activity development.

Real Estate Management Fund

The Real Estate Management Team leases unused classroom and other space in school buildings to private child care programs that support the educational success of students. The team also leases unused school facilities to approved educational service providers to generate revenue to support leasing expenditures for administrative or support space that is not available in MCPS-owned facilities. The Real Estate Management Team also manages the leasing of cellular telecommunication towers on school property. Revenues from the leased towers are shared among

the host school, neighboring schools, and the enterprise fund.

Systematic Team Cleaning

Systematic Team Cleaning (STC) is a value-added approach to cleaning that maximizes the quality, quantity, and consistency of building services. STC also minimizes wasted time, motion, and steps and reduces errors as well as equipment and energy costs. This approach systematizes the application of personnel, tasks, frequency, time, and space to get the most out of the cleaning process. STC supports the commitment to create a positive facility environment that is conducive to learning because it is a holistic rather than component approach to cleaning that results in high-quality services for all customers.

Healthy, High Performance Cleaning (HHPC)

Green cleaning is ~~cleaning~~ process that focuses on occupant health and environmental impact in addition to appearance. Green cleaning minimizes the impact of the cleaning process on occupant health and the indoor and outdoor environments. This is accomplished by using low ~~VOC (volatile organic compounds)~~ (VOC) cleaning products and environmentally conscientious cleaning and grounds care methods that prevent harmful contaminants from being released into the atmosphere and/or grounds. The Division of School Plant Operations, Systemwide Safety Programs, and Environmental Services units work collaboratively to evaluate and test products and equipment and train employees to ensure a healthy and safe environment for students and staff. However, it is not just about cleaning chemicals, but includes concerns about paper, product packaging, waste reduction, equipment performance, and energy conservation.

Copy-Plus

Copy-Plus is a document preparation and delivery service for teachers. Its purpose is to reduce the time required by school staff to prepare instructional documents. A systematic process has been developed that ensures daily pick-up of work orders from the schools and return delivery of finished documents within one week. Work orders also are submitted ~~electronically~~ via e-mail and online. ~~the MCPS Website~~ The Department of Materials Management ~~and the Department of Multimedia Services have~~ has studied the data trends and determined that, for every 2,500 pages produced by Copy-Plus ~~program~~, one hour of school-based staff time is saved. This year this service will provide 120 million pages of instructional support materials, returning 48,000 hours to teachers. Annual data collected since the launch of the Copy-Plus initiative shows a significant decrease in the number copies produced by copiers in the schools.

TeamWorks School Copier Service Program

TeamWorks— school copier repair program—was launched to provide more responsive repair service and effective maintenance of school-based copy machines while reducing the overall cost of document preparation. By providing quicker response and increased preventative maintenance, TeamWorks provides schools with high-quality copies, thereby reducing the copier service impact on instruction. ~~In the first half-year of program implementation~~ Repair technicians completed an average of 2.1 service calls per copier each month, with the majority of these service calls completed within 24 hours. Copiers are on a three-year replacement schedule. ~~with~~ One-third replaced each year. ~~By initiating~~ This new program has produced direct savings of more than $800,000 ~~have been identified~~ for the first year of operations, with additional savings forecasted in the years to come.

Playground Equipment Replacement/Enhancement Program

The ~~Safety Management Services Unit~~, **Systemwide Safety Programs unit in the** Department of Facilities Management~~,~~ has implemented a program to accelerate the replacement of outdated and aging playground equipment at elementary schools, using noncounty funding sources. This program uses standard criteria to assess existing playground equipment at all elementary schools in order to prioritize systemwide needs. ~~In addition, partnerships with school community groups are then developed to qualify the replacement of playground equipment under the federal Qualified Zone Academy Bond (QZAB) program.~~

Business Partnerships to Improve Processes

MCPS has initiated process improvement strategies through the Montgomery County Business Roundtable for Education (MCBRE). Staff from United HealthCare trained 25 staff members (representing all offices) in the methodologies of Six Sigma. These methodologies will enable MCPS to establish a systematic evaluation and refinement of key processes. In addition, a team of facilitators from Lockheed Martin's LM21 program trained the Office of the Chief Operating Officer leadership on the benefits of eliminating waste from MCPS business processes using the Lockheed Martin Value Stream Mapping (VSM) process. The VSM technique is a tool used to identify and eliminate waste in manufacturing and business processes. Lockheed Martin also trained two MCPS staff as part of its Lean/Six Sigma "Greenbelt" training program. The training has enabled the MCPS staff to facilitate VSM process improvement events with several departments and divisions.

Montgomery County Educational Association (MCEA)
Montgomery County Association of Administrative and Supervisory Personnel (MCAASP)
Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 500
Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools

SEPTEMBER 2005

R.E.S.P.E.C.T.
Make it Real

MCEA □ MCAASP □ SEIU □ MCPS

Organizational Culture of Respect

The Board of Education, the superintendent and the executive staff, and the organizations representing employees recognize and value the role of all employees as contributors to a learning community which sets high standards of performance for staff and students. By working together through continuous improvement, effective communication, and meaningful involvement in the decision-making processes, we provide a high quality education to every student. We are committed to shared responsibility and a collaborative partnership integrated into an organizational culture of respect.

The commitment to foster an organizational culture of respect that is embedded throughout the school system is a priority of the employee organizations, the Board of Education, and the superintendent and executive staff. This culture is built on the belief that all employees, both school-based and nonschool-based, are essential to a successful learning environment. Inherent to this belief is the recognition that there is strength in diversity, which is inclusive of all groups and individuals. We are committed to:

- Trust in each other

- Use of collaborative and interest-based processes

- Recognizing the collective bargaining relationships as opportunities to enhance this culture

- Recognition of every employee's contributions

- High expectations for all staff and students that are reasonable, clear, and transparent

- Open, honest contributions without fear of retribution

- Open and effective communication

- Respect for various points of view

- Civility in all of our interactions

- Team building and working together as teams

There is a commitment to fostering and sustaining a culture of respect through supports and structures. In order to be effective, these supports and structures should be embedded throughout the system, visible and accessible to everyone, and seen as fair and equitable. In order to make certain that this culture is promoted throughout the school system, time is needed for collaboration, training, and professional development and resources are needed to accomplish this.

Examples of supports and structures include, but are not limited to:

- Board of Education policies, such as the Creating A Positive Work Environment in A Self-renewing Organization and Human Relations policies.

- Professional growth systems, which include professional development, employee orientation, mentoring, training, recognition, support for new and under-performing employees, and professional development plans

- Collaborative processes, such as labor/management collaboration committees, Councils on Teaching and Learning, principal leadership groups, cross functional teams, advisory committees, and Study Circles

- Diversity training and development initiatives

- Continuous improvement processes, including the Baldrige-guided school improvement process

- Communication processes, including satisfaction and climate surveys, focus groups, budget forums, and various feedback reports

- Dispute resolution activities

In an organizational culture of respect, individuals are aware and understand the impact of their behavior and decisions on others. We expect that the actions and behaviors of all individuals and groups are consistent with and reflect this organizational culture. The actions listed below represent expected behaviors:

- Model civility in daily interactions

- Use collaborative and interest-based strategies rather than positional or adversarial approaches

- Be clear about the level of involvement in the decision-making process

- Seek to solve the problem, not apply blame

- Utilize active listening skills

- Encourage creativity and risk-taking

- Seek and respect the opinion of others

- Respect the time and the time commitments of others

- Seek to resolve issues at the level where they occur

- Seek to understand before making judgments

- Acknowledge the professional judgment of individuals in their roles

- Be aware of nonverbal communication

- Use power and authority appropriately and positively

- Be an active and responsible member of the team

- Be responsible for accepting and giving feedback

- Provide and receive feedback constructively and respectfully

- Communicate openly and respectfully

In order to sustain an organizational culture of respect, it is critical that all employees have an awareness, understanding, and tolerance of others' interests, viewpoints, culture, and background. This culture promotes a positive work environment that ensures the success of each employee, high student achievement, and continuous improvement in a self-renewing organization.
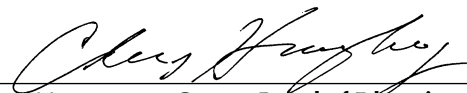
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Montgomery County Educational Association

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Montgomery County Association of Administrative and Supervisory Personnel

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Service Employees International Union Local 500

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Montgomery County Board of Education

_____
Superintendent of Schools

Resolving differences

Enhancing collaboration

Supporting our coworkers

Promoting civility

Encouraging creativity

Communicating openly

Team building through trust

www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/info/respect

MONTGOMERY
COUNTY PUBLIC
SCHOOLS

Terms and Definitions

Term	Definition	Source
ACT®	The ACT® test assesses high school students' general educational development and their ability to complete college-level work. The multiple-choice tests cover four skill areas— English, mathematics, reading, and science— that results in a composite score with a range of 1 to 36. The Writing Test, which is optional, measures skill in planning and writing a short essay.	ACT® Website
Adequate Yearly Progress/System Improvement Status	Adequate yearly progress (AYP) is the gain that schools, school systems, and states must make each year, in accordance with the federal *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)*. To make AYP, schools and school systems in Maryland must meet the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO), or target, for all students and all student subgroups for each of the following measures: Maryland School Assessment (MSA) mathematics participation, MSA mathematics proficiency, MSA reading participation, MSA reading proficiency, graduation rate (high school only), and attendance (elementary and middle school only). MSAs administered in Grades 3–8 and high school (Algebra and English High School Assessment exams) are used for AYP. AYP subgroups include each racial/ethnic group, students receiving special education services, students receiving Free and Reduced-price Meals System services, and students receiving English for Speakers of Other Language services.	*MSDE Maryland Report Card* at http://www.mdreportcard.org/
Advanced Placement Exams (AP Tests)	Advanced Placement (AP) exams are part of a College Board program available to high school students. Scores on these exams can be used by students to earn credit or advanced standing in college. Usually, a minimum score of 3 is needed to achieve this goal.	MCPS Office of Shared Accountability
Algebra Completion Rate	The algebra completion rate is the percentage of students successfully completing Algebra 1 or a higher level mathematics course by the end of Grade 8 for middle schools and by the end of Grade 9 for high schools.	MCPS Office of Shared Accountability
Alternate Maryland School Assessment (ALT-MSA)	The Alternate Maryland School Assessment (ALT-MSA) is the Maryland assessment in which students with disabilities participate if, through the IEP process, it is determined they cannot participate in the Maryland School Assessment (MSA), even with accommodations. The ALT-MSA assesses and reports student mastery of individually selected indicators and objectives from the reading, mathematics, and science content standards or appropriate access skills.	*MSDE Maryland Report Card* at http://www.mdreportcard.org/
Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAO)	AMAOs are set annually by the Maryland State Department of Education that specify the percentage of ESOL students yearly who are expected to progress toward English language proficiency (AMAO I), attain English language proficiency (AMAO II), and demonstrate adequate yearly progress in reading and math at the county level (AMAO III).	MCPS Division of ESOL/Bilingual Programs / Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs
Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO)	State-established performance targets that assess the progress of student subgroups, schools, school districts, and the state annually. These targets, or annual measurable objectives, are set for reading, mathematics, attendance, and graduation rate.	*MSDE Maryland Report Card* at http://www.mdreportcard.org/
Attendance Rate	The attendance rate is calculated by dividing the aggregate number of students in attendance by the aggregate number of students in membership from the first day of school to March 15. The attendance rate is reported for the previous school year.	*MSDE Maryland Report Card* at http://www.mdreportcard.org/
Dropout Rate	The dropout rate is the number of dropouts divided by the total number of students in Grades 9–12 served by the school. A dropout is any student who leaves school for any reason, except death, before graduation or completion of a Maryland-approved educational program and is not known to have enrolled in another school-or Maryland-approved educational program.	*MSDE Maryland Report Card* at http://www.mdreportcard.org/
ESOL	The percentage of students participating in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes, as of October 31, 2009, compared with the official enrollment as of September 30, 2009. This percentage may differ from the ESOL percentage reported in the requested FY 2011 Capital Budget, due to different "as of" reporting dates.	MCPS Division of ESOL/Bilingual Programs / Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs
Equity	High expectations and access to meaningful and relevant learning for all students so that outcomes are not predictable by race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, language proficiency, or disability.	MCPS Strategic Plan, *Our Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence*

Terms and Definitions

Term	Definition	Source
Excellence	Excellence is achieved through high standards that ensure that all students are college or career ready as high school graduates.	MCPS Strategic Plan, *Our Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence*
FARMS	The percentage of students receiving Free and Reduced-priced Meals System (FARMS) services, as of October 31, 2009, compared with the official enrollment as of September 30, 2009. This percentage may differ from the FARMS percentage reported in the requested FY 2011 Capital Budget, due to "as of" reporting dates.	Division of Food & Nutrition Services
Highly Qualified Teachers	"Highly qualified" is a specific term defined by the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB). The law outlines a list of minimum requirements (both in content knowledge and teaching skills) to meet the "highly qualified" status. The law requires teachers to have a bachelor's degree and full state certification and to demonstrate content knowledge in the subjects they teach. Under NCLB, states decide what is necessary for certification and for determining subject-matter competency. Rules surrounding the requirements for highly qualified teachers continue to be developed and refined.	MCPS Office of Shared Accountability
Honors/AP/IB/ College-Level Enrollment	Honors/Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and college-level courses provide rigorous and challenging studies for students who are capable of or motivated to pursue rigorous and challenging instruction. These courses are detailed in the MCPS High School Course Bulletin. The Honors/AP/IB, and college-level enrollment rate is the number of students enrolled in at least one Honors/AP/IB, or college-level course, divided by the total number of students.	MCPS Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs
Ineligibility	Secondary students must maintain a marking period average of 2.0 or higher and fail no more than one course per marking period in order to be eligible to participate in specific extracurricular activities, including interscholastic athletics, school student government offices, class offices, and designated activities listed as nonathletic and athletic stipends. The ineligibility rate is the percentage of middle or high school students who are who are not eligible for designated extracurricular activities three or four marking periods in a school year.	IQD-RA, *Academic Eligibility for High School Students Who Participate in Extracurricular Activities*
Language Assessment System-Links (LAS-Links)	LAS Links Placement Test is the state-mandated test of English language proficiency administered to Grade K–12 English language learners (ELLs) entering MCPS. Assessment results are used by ELL teams to help make decisions as to each student's participation in the ESOL program.	MCPS Division of ESOL/Bilingual Programs / Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs
Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)	Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) refers to the mandate in the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA 2004), which states that children with disabilities are to be educated to the maximum extent appropriate with nondisabled peers. MCPS reports LRE settings based on the percentage of time a student is educated inside the general education setting. LRE A = Inside General Education Settings 80% or More. LRE C = Inside General Education Settings Less Than 40%.	MCPS Office of Special Education and Student Services
Limited English Proficient (LEP)	Limited English Proficient (LEP), as defined by AYP percent proficiency, includes both Redesignated English Language Learners (RELL) who exited ESOL within the previous two years and current ESOL students. LEP participation rate only includes ESOL students. 2009 RELL students include those who exited ESOL after June 1, 2007.	*MSDE Maryland Report Card* at http://www.mdreportcard.org/Division of ESOL/Bilingual Programs
Maryland High School Assessment	The Maryland High School Assessments are end-of-course tests that students take as they complete the appropriate high-school-level course. All students, including middle school students taking high-school-level courses, must take the High School Assessment after they complete the appropriate course. These courses currently include Algebra/Data Analysis, Biology, English, and Government.	*MSDE Maryland Report Card* at http://www.mdreportcard.org/
Maryland School Assessment	The Maryland School Assessment (MSA) measures student achievement in reading, mathematics, and science. Schools at a Glance reports Grades 3–8 reading and mathematics performance and High School Assessment results in English 10 and Algebra for high school students. Percentage proficient includes students at or above the proficient level (proficient + advanced).	*MSDE Maryland Report Card* at http://www.mdreportcard.org/
SAT	The SAT is a college entrance exam accepted by several hundred colleges across the United States as part of the admissions process. The	MCPS Office of Shared Accountability

Terms and Definitions

Term	Definition	Source
	possible scores on the Critical Reading, Mathematics, and Writing sections range from 200–800, with a total possible score of 2400.	
SPED	Special education (SPED) means specially designed instruction and related services, at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability, including (1) instruction conducted in the classroom, in the home, in hospitals and institutions, and in other settings; and (2) instruction in physical education.	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004 Regulations
Suspension Rate	The unduplicated count of the number of students suspended divided by the June 30 total enrollment.	MCPS Office of Shared Accountability
TerraNova Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills Second Edition	The *TerraNova* Second Edition (TN/2) is a nationally normed assessment administered to MCPS Grade 2 students in the spring. The TN/2 assesses skills in reading, language, mathematics, language mechanics, and mathematics computation.	MCPS Office of Shared Accountability
University System of Maryland Entrance Requirements	MSDE calculates the percentage of students meeting the University System of Maryland entrance requirements. Requirements for admission to the University System of Maryland are set by the Board of Regents of the University System of Maryland and, at a minimum, include a cumulative grade point equivalent to a C or better, accumulated course credits in English (4 credits), social studies (3 credits), biological and physical sciences (3 credits), mathematics (3 credits), language or advanced technology (2 credits), and a high school diploma.	*MSDE Maryland Report Card* at http://www.mdreportcard.org/University System of Maryland at http://www.usmd.edu

MCPS At a Glance

Our school system
- 144,064 students for 2010–2011
- Largest school system in Maryland
- 16th largest school system in the United States
- Students from 164 countries speaking 184 languages
- 200 schools
  - 131 elementary schools
  - 38 middle schools
  - 25 high schools
  - 1 career and technology center
  - 5 special schools
  - 34 National Blue Ribbon Schools

Our students
- Demographics (2010–2011)
  - 37.2 percent White
  - 21.3 percent African American
  - 25.1 percent Hispanic
  - 14.3 percent Asian American
  - 4.2 percent two or more races
- Services
  - 30.7 percent participate in Free and Reduced-price Meals System (FARMS)
  - 11.9 percent receive special education services
  - 13.0 percent participate in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)
- Performance
  - 85.7 percent graduation rate—#1 among the nation's 50 largest school districts
  - 5 high schools among the top 100 on the *National High School Challenge*
  - All MCPS high schools are among the top 1,000 on the *National High School Challenge*
  - 1653 average combined SAT score, Class of 2010
  - 62 National Merit Scholars
  - $264.6 million in scholarships, Class of 2011

System resources
- $2.1 billion FY 2011 Operating Budget
- $1.386 billion six-year Capital Improvements Program (FY 2011–2016)
- 22,229 employees
- 11,673 teachers
- 85.4 percent of teachers have a master's degree or equivalent

MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Rockville, Maryland