

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

August 11, 2021

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Monifa B. McKnight, Interim Superintendent of Schools

Subject: Unaccompanied Minors (06-10-2021-02-B)

During the *Final Adoption of the Fiscal Year 2022 Operating Budget* discussion, Board members requested the following information:

Question B

Ms. Silvestre requested additional information regarding how the system will handle the expected influx of unaccompanied minors.

Response

Led by the Office of Student and Family Support and Engagement (OSFSE) staff, various workgroups—Unaccompanied Minors Steering Committee, Unaccompanied Minors Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Workgroup, Children Fleeing Violence Workgroup—have been meeting regularly since April 2021 to coordinate the reception of unaccompanied minors. These workgroups have identified and collaborated with key offices and personnel within MCPS, the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and community organizations to coordinate the support that is being provided to arriving newcomers. Coordinated efforts in outreach, enrollment, professional learning, and collaboration with community partners have been under way since May.

In our outreach efforts, the MCPS communications office, in collaboration with OSFSE staff, Montgomery County communications, and community partners, is leading the outreach campaign through a variety of methods including interviews, radio/TV announcements, texts, videos, etc. in the top represented languages. We are collaborating with the executive director of the International Mayan League, so incoming Mayan families also are supported.

In our enrollment efforts, the International Admissions and Enrollment (IAE) unit at Rocking Horse Road Center has launched a welcome center staffed by Parent Community Coordinators (PCCs), English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Transition Counselors (ETCs), and additional trained temporary part-time (TPT) staff to welcome families who stop in requesting

enrollment information. The welcome center offers immediate consultation and enrollment support in various languages. IAE has hired nearly 20 TPT staff members for additional support answering phones, reviewing enrollment documentation, and screening students who are identified for possible ESOL services.

In our professional learning efforts, IAE staff (instructional specialists, PCCs and ETCs) in collaboration with the curriculum and instructional programs ESOL supervisor and a school support and improvement achievement specialist, have facilitated newcomer enrollment presentations to a variety of MCPS and community groups. Since April 2021, IAE and partners have delivered newcomer orientations to IAE staff (office, PCCs, ETCs), the Senior Leadership Team, Board members, the directors of learning achievement and administration, County Council, and elementary, middle, and high school counselors.

We also have presented to community partners including Identity, Inc. and CASA. We plan to continue presenting to various groups such as school-based ESOL counselors (SBECs), school psychologists, and new MCPS employees during the New Employee Orientation to name a few. In preparation for these presentations and trainings, we have developed a variety of resources ranging from best practices documents, an enrollment guide slide show, enrollment Google documents in different languages with a QR code for easy access by families via their smart phones, and tutorials.

Additionally, OSFSE staff has contracted the services of National Compadres Network, Inc. to begin the Cultura Cura training this fall with 90 MCPS staff members (ETCs, PCCs, SBECs, counselors, and psychologists). This training will prepare facilitators in the development and maintenance of restorative and transformative circles of support, healing, and leadership development to support newcomers. OSFSE staff also has contracted the services of The Neurosequential Network to provide training to ETCs who may build the capacity of MCPS central office and school staff. The Neurosequential Model in Education draws upon the NMT (a neurodevelopmentally-informed, biologically respectful perspective on human development and functioning) to help educators understand student behavior and performance as pertains to trauma.

In our collaboration efforts with community partners, we are actively coordinating with organizations including Identity, Inc., CASA, Direct Support for Immigrants, and the Primary Care Coalition to not only help families connect with MCPS for enrollment purposes, but to also allow MCPS to connect families with these organizations for access to a variety of services and resources. For example, during orientation at enrollment, we connect families with Primary Care Coalition staff to help them enroll in the Care for Kids program. These partners also are assisting MCPS to inform newcomers of the enrollment process, how to best reach IAE, and assisting families with gathering the documents and forms needed for enrolling in school.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Everett Davis, acting associate superintendent for student and family support and engagement, Office of the Chief of Teaching, Learning, and Schools, via email.

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Copy to:
Executive Staff
Ms. Webb