Malcolm Baldrige
National Quality Award
2010 Award Recipient

August 2012

Dear MCPS Families:

I am excited to tell you about continuing upgrades to the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) elementary school curriculum that will better engage our students and help them develop the skills they need to be successful in school and beyond.

During the past three years, we have been rolling out an upgraded curriculum—called Curriculum 2.0—one grade at a time, starting with kindergarten. In the coming school year, Curriculum 2.0 will be fully implemented in kindergarten through Grade 3 classrooms at all schools. We also will improve our report card in these grades to better align with the curriculum and give you more information about what your student knows and is able to do.

Curriculum 2.0 is based on a strong body of research and is designed to provide a well-rounded education for students, while also developing the critical and creative thinking skills that are so important for success in academics and in life. In mathematics, reading, and writing, the curriculum is based on the Common Core State Standards, the new internationally driven standards adopted by Maryland and 45 other states. At the same time, Curriculum 2.0 allows for more instructional focus on the arts, information literacy, science, social studies, and physical education—areas that have been crowded out at times during the past decade. We know that Curriculum 2.0 will help give our students a strong educational foundation in elementary school and lead to greater success in middle and high school.

The improved "standards-based" report card in kindergarten through Grade 3 will provide you with information about how students are progressing in specific areas of the curriculum and how they are performing in relation to grade-level expectations. We have been piloting standards-based report cards in 25 schools for the past six years and have had positive feedback from parents, teachers, and administrators. Report cards in Grades 4 and 5 will not change this coming year.

Our MCPS team believes Curriculum 2.0 will help improve teaching and learning in every elementary classroom. You will hear more about Curriculum 2.0 at the beginning of the school year from your principal, but you may access additional information now by visiting our website at www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/2.0/. If you have questions, please contact your school principal.

Sincerely,

Joshua P. Starr, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools