

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

December 19, 2018

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education
From: Jack R. Smith, Superintendent of Schools
Subject: Accountability Model Comparison (10-29-18-05)

Question

Dr. Smith stated that staff would provide Board members with a memorandum regarding the difference between the new evolving accountability model and the model that is now in use.

Response

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) released a new accountability report card for every school in the state of Maryland on December 4, 2018. The report card is designed to measure the success of schools and identify areas for improvement. The report card was developed in response to the requirements of the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA), a federal law that seeks to ensure public schools provide a quality education for all children.

The Maryland Report Card is designed to measure school success in several ways, including state tests in English Language Arts and mathematics; postsecondary readiness; progress of English learners in achieving English language proficiency; graduation rate; and students with access to and earning credit for a well-rounded curriculum.

While this year's release of the Maryland Report Card did not include science and social studies achievement (Grades 5 and 8 and Grade 8, respectively), or the results of a student/educator climate survey, next year's release is slated to do so. Based on all performance indicators, the state gives each school a percentile rank, a total earned points percent with 100% being the highest and a star rating, on a scale of 1 to 5 stars. In addition, details regarding the inclusion of computational learning in the School Quality/Student Success indicator will be determined prior to next year's reporting. Each school's state [Report Card](#) may be viewed on the Maryland State Department of Education website.

Equity Accountability Model Reporting

While the Maryland Report Card uses multiple indicators in several categories, academic achievement and growth for students solely is measured on one data point—the Partnership

for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) results. The PARCC score simulates an end-of-course view of students' performance or progress. While this is one useful measure, we cannot wait until the end of the year, or even semester, to systematically measure how students are progressing and respond accordingly. While the Report Card does provide important information about our schools, the selected data points must be comparable to other districts and therefore, provide a limited view into the progress of our nearly 163,000 students. As in previous federal reporting systems, the Maryland Report Card disaggregates performance data by race/ethnicity and service groups but it does not afford the frequency, intensity, and level of disaggregated performance data necessary for true school improvement planning and measurement of the impact our schools have on their students.

School improvement is inherently a local responsibility. We know our students best, how they are impacted, who is thriving, and who needs our support. To address the limitations of the Maryland Report Card, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) is developing an Equity Accountability Model that provides a more detailed and focused report of school success. The Equity Accountability Model uses multiple and frequent measures of students' progress to determine if a school is meeting the needs of ALL students with a special emphasis on reducing and eliminating disparities in student achievement. The components of the Equity Accountability Model include academic achievement; graduation rate; academic progress; limited English proficiency; students with disabilities; culture and equity, and a priority focus area based on district and/or school priorities. Both the report card for Maryland and the local equity accountability model will include measures of student well-being in the future and that is a positive step forward.

Differences in the Reporting Systems Specific to Achievement

School improvement planning based on a single performance measure obtained at the end of the year has proven to be a challenge for schools and districts. In fact, nearly twenty years of federal accountability systems have not yielded the reduction and elimination of the achievement gap, a keystone of what the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* intended. It is incumbent upon school districts to develop their own local models, using local, more available measures to respond to students' needs.

Our schools have the tools necessary to monitor multiple data points gathered throughout the year upon which instructional decisions can be made to provide the necessary supports and acceleration to every student. Our local data analyzed and applied through the lens of the Evidence of Learning framework provides a more complete picture of our students enabling schools to program to meet the needs of all of our learners. As a district, we have the ability to respond in the moment as opposed to waiting for the next release of summative data such as PARCC.

The Equity Accountability Model monitors the progress of all students and reports a score on the progress of the five focus groups: non-FARMS African American and Hispanic; FARMS African American and Hispanic; and all other FARMS using the Evidence of Learning (EOL) data (multiple measures) gathered from the classroom, district and external measures. Data gathered periodically provides evidence of what students know and are able to demonstrate allowing schools to provide necessary supports and acceleration throughout the year. The use of frequent measures designed to elevate the intensity of work will result in an immediate focus on reducing and eliminating achievement disparities among our most impacted students.

We recognize the Maryland Report Card as part of the MCPS story. However, the Equity Accountability Model ensures that schools focus beyond the lagging measure of PARCC reported in the aggregate to focusing on data specific to each and every student as they progress through the year. It is through the instructional responses to the data that we will ensure all of our graduates are ready to be successful in college, career and the community.

If you have any questions about the Maryland Report Card and the Equity Accountability Model achievement reporting, please contact me at 240-740-3020.

JRS:jc

Copy to:

Executive Staff
Ms. Webb