

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

January 16, 2019

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education
From: Jack R. Smith, Superintendent of Schools
Subject: Grading and Reporting (12-04-18-02-A-B-C)

During the Grading and Reporting discussion, Board members requested the following information:

Question A

Ms. Dixon requested information regarding teaching staff feedback on the new grading policy. [What are teachers saying about these changes? Are teachers saying that they feel the grades are inflated? What are they saying about the “no grade lower than fifty percent” rule? Are teachers expressing that they have concerns with the current grading system? What are teachers saying about the elimination of final exams, the Required Quarterly Assessments (RQAs) and now assessments? What are teacher views on these, and do teachers think we are on the right course with this?]

Response

Teachers in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) continue to provide feedback about current grading and reporting procedures and the replacement of final exams with quarterly assessments. In fact, teachers brought forward final exam concerns at a recent Montgomery County Education Association meeting held December 19, 2018, detailed in my December 28, 2018, memorandum to the Board (Attachment).

The Board amended Policy IKA, *Grading and Reporting*, in November 2015 (Resolution No. 492-15), which led to the replacement of final exams with quarterly assessments. If system final exams were reinstated in the manner they were implemented prior to the amended policy, this would exceed the testing limits allowed by the *More Learning, Less Testing Act of 2017*. Teacher-developed assessments, however, are not subject to the time limits in the legislation and teachers who desire to do so may give final exams, albeit as part of their regularly scheduled classes. Much of the teacher advocacy around final exams also has been about restoring the previous “half day” exam schedules in high schools.

The movement to more frequent standards-aligned assessments provides the opportunity for reteaching and acceleration prior to moving forward in the content scope and sequence. As part of a multiple measures system, district assessments—along with classroom and external measures—create a more comprehensive view of students’ learning.

In regard to grading and reporting, when final examinations were administered in MCPS in the past, the final exam counted for 25 percent of the student’s final semester grade. An analysis of the effect final exams had on student grades revealed virtually no impact on the final course grade, as detailed in my December 28, 2018, memorandum. Also, it is important to note that while there have been consistent increases in Grade Point Averages in the last several years and more final grades of “A,” this time period also has seen increases in students successfully meeting requirements on external measures such as Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers Algebra in Grade 8 and the SAT.

When quarterly assessments were first administered in place of final exams, changes were made to the calculation of the semester grade in high school courses, effective with the 2016–2017 school year. Since that time, MCPS has closely monitored trends in marking period and semester grades and implications of those trends. Interests from Board members, teachers, and the community about the impact of the grading calculation on student engagement and potential grade inflation also have arisen. As a result, staff is convening a stakeholder team comprising teachers, school administrators, parents/guardians, and central services staff to review grading structures across schools and make recommendations for improvement as we work to refine our practices with grading and reporting and ensure consistency across schools. I will continue to keep you apprised of these developments.

Question B

Ms. Dixon suggested that staff investigate the grading system used in New York City as a possibility for implementation for MCPS.

Response

As part of the ongoing study of grading and reporting practices, benchmarking with other districts, colleges, and universities is an important part of the process. As the stakeholder team (mentioned in the Question A response) completes its work, benchmarking, which will include the New York City Department of Education, will be a part of the process.

Question C

Mrs. Smondrowski suggested changing the naming convention for “EOS” (Equal Opportunity Schools) to “EOI” (Equal Opportunity Initiative).

Response

MCPS shares the belief that the Equal Opportunity Schools initiative should not single out specific schools; rather it should communicate the importance of expanding opportunity and access for students to take on the challenge of advanced courses. As a result, we have considered this feedback and have begun referring to this ongoing work as the “Equal Opportunity” initiative.

If you have questions, please contact Dr. Maria V. Navarro, chief academic officer, at 240-740-3040.

JRS:MVN:BJC:jpm

Attachment

Copy to:

Executive Staff

Mr. Murphy

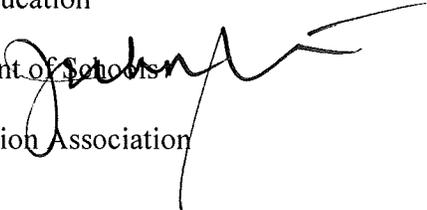
Ms. Webb

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

December 28, 2018

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Jack R. Smith, Superintendent of Schools 

Subject: Montgomery County Education Association

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) has a longstanding commitment to work closely with our teacher association and other employee associations to ensure every student in our schools has the access and opportunity needed to be successful in college, career, and in our community.

The negotiated agreement between MCPS and the Montgomery County Education Association (MCEA) is one of the most comprehensive in the country and, through the years, has resulted in not only strong compensation and benefit systems, but also a well-defined framework for collaboration that we work to implement with our associations every day. MCPS, MCEA, Service Employees International Union, Local 500 (SEIU), and Montgomery County Association of Administrators and Principals (MCAAP) have partnered on a wide range of issues and must continue to do so in the years ahead to meet the needs of our students.

I have had the opportunity to meet with the MCEA Board of Directors several times during my tenure and on a monthly basis this year—a meeting structure memorialized in the collaboration article of the negotiated agreement—and have been engaged on many of the issues the MCEA Board of Directors members discussed on Wednesday, December 19, 2018. My staff and I are committed to this ongoing partnership and to the collaborative articles in all three employee contracts. We are looking forward to continuing our work together in service of student learning and achievement.

During Wednesday evening's meeting between the Board of Education and MCEA, I had the unusual opportunity to observe the meeting as a member of the audience. I took copious notes, as did several members of the senior leadership team, as association members shared their perspective on issues important to them.

We appreciate this feedback and will continue to work collaboratively with MCEA. While school system administration was not invited to participate in this discussion about our schools, I do feel it is my responsibility to address some of the more critical issues raised with additional facts and context.

Time with Young Students (Scholars) and Class Size Guidelines

Teacher of Record

Question or Concern: During a narrative about class size, an MCEA member voiced the idea that we should have more *Teachers of Record*. There was an extended conversation about the ratios, numbers of students assigned to an individual teacher, often referred to as, “Teacher of Record.”

Additional Background: I have long endorsed exploring how we can examine the use of our existing resources to increase the number of *Teachers of Record*, given budgetary constraints. This can be done in a budget neutral manner by assigning other teachers as teachers of record. Essentially this will reduce class sizes across schools. We can provide a list of positions already in the budget that the Board of Education can consider. Additionally, if the state budget provides adequate funds, I will recommend that class size be addressed to some degree with those funds. The use of state funds would allow us to avoid realigning positions. This is a discussion that I think the Board and staff should continue to explore.

Class Size Guidelines

Question or Concern: Large general education class sizes

Additional Background: Examples were provided during the meeting of some large classes. It is important to note that there are examples of classes that exceed school system guidelines, but these are the exception. These are guidelines and not absolutes and are based on averages. They are used to allocate staffing but does not mean that additional staff always is allocated when a particular guideline is exceeded. With more than 3270 elementary homeroom sections, there are less than 1.5 percent of these classes that exceed guidelines. Another example is in middle school mathematics, 1550 sections with 1.7 percent exceeding the guideline. We can provide the percentage of classes exceeding guidelines in any grade level or subject area.

We monitor all class sizes in every school on a regular basis and work with schools to ensure students have the supports they need. Depending on the situation, different approaches are utilized when a class exceeds guidelines. A class exceeding guidelines requires that we examine the reasons why it exists. An example is 33 students registering for a particular course. Depending on the course, the school may determine to run the class at this size. An Advanced Placement class, for example, may be run at this size rather than adding another section and staffing at class sizes of 16 and 17. Alternatively, an Algebra 1 class for Grade 9 students may be split into two sections.

In other situations, all resources supporting the classroom are reviewed and it is determined that an additional teacher is not required. MCPS has more than 2750 paraeducators allocated to schools who support classrooms. These and resources such as co-teachers are supporting students in classrooms reducing ratios of students to adult support. Paraeducators and many co-teachers are not included when class sizes are reported. It is important to review this information when considering what resources are needed to support students. We have been and will continue to examine the ratio of adults to students when considering the teachers or record, co-teachers and paraeducators.

Last summer, MCPS embarked on a resource study that includes staffing. This report will be presented to the Board of Education no later than May 2019. In addition, class size will be included in the next MCPS Data Dashboards to be released by spring 2019.

Testing

Question or Concern: An elementary teacher stated during the MCEA meeting with the Board that he/she “feels like there is more testing.”

Additional Background: House Bill 461, known as the *More Learning, Less Testing Act of 2017*, required the Maryland State Board of Education to adopt regulations limiting the amount of time that may be devoted to federal, state, and locally mandated assessments. These regulations require that assessments for each grade be limited to 2.2 percent of the annual instructional hours, with the exception of Grade 8 which is capped at 2.3 percent. Teacher selected classroom quizzes and exams do not count toward the cap.

In accordance with the law, beginning on or after January 1, 2018, and each January 1 thereafter in an even-numbered year, a County Board shall establish a District Committee on Assessments that includes administrators, parents, and teachers selected by the exclusive bargaining unit to advise and make recommendations in the following areas:

- The time required to administer each assessment;
- The duplicativeness of assessments;
- The purpose of assessments;
- The value of feedback provided to educators; and
- The timeliness of results.

The work of the Board-appointed committee began during the 2017-2018 school year. Members of this committee represent students, teachers, principals, central services staff, community members, and the MCEA president. The committee has the responsibility of representing the perspectives and concerns of each stakeholder group they represent. Information on the committee membership and the meetings may be found at:

<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/boe/community/assessments.aspx>

A comprehensive report of assessments is available at:

<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/sharedaccountability/>

The committee’s report will be provided to the Board prior to June 1, 2019.

The MCPS Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs has responded to teacher feedback and decreased assessment to eliminate duplication. For example, Grade 2 students who are scoring Level M or higher do not have to take DIBELS; and Level 1 and 2 ESOL students in the MODEL Schools are not required to take the Measures of Academic Progress–Reading Fluency assessment. MCPS will continue to monitor the number of assessments given and will make adjustments as appropriate.

Final Exams

Question or Concern: An MCEA member voiced a desire to reinstate final exams for secondary students.

Additional Background: The Board of Education made revisions to *Policy IKA, Grading and Reporting* on November 15, 2015 (Resolution No. 493-15), which led to the replacement of final exams with quarterly assessments. If system final exams were reinstated in the manner they were implemented prior to the policy revisions, this would exceed the testing limits allowed by the *More Learning, Less Testing Act of 2017*¹. Teacher-developed assessments, however, are not subject to the time limits in the law and teachers who desire to do so may give final exams, albeit as part of their regularly scheduled classes.

The movement to more frequent standards-aligned assessments provides the opportunity for reteaching and acceleration prior to moving forward in the content scope and sequence. As part of a multiple measures system, district assessments—along with classroom and external measures—create a more comprehensive view of students’ learning.

In addition, an analysis of the effect final exams had on student grades revealed virtually no impact on the final course grade. The analysis on the report, *Quarter Mark/Final Exam Combination Data for 2013-2014*, indicates that the final exam did not change the trajectory of students’ grades beyond the quarterly grade average. See Appendix I for the table that illustrates grades for quarters 1 and 2, semester final exam grades and semester 1 grades, and for the 2013–2014 school year. I encourage Board members to carefully review this chart. The variation among subject areas is deeply troubling as is the effect of the final exam on the semester course grade. To return to the exam system represented in Appendix A would be unconscionable.

Special Education

Question or Concern: A unit member stated that there is a reduction in Special Education staffing in the Superintendent's Recommended FY 2020 Operating Budget.

Additional Background: There is no reduction in special education staffing in the recommended FY 2020 Operating Budget. In fact, overall staffing in the area of special education is budgeted to increase based on student enrollment growth. As illustrated in the report entitled *FY 2020 Staffing Increase for Enrollment Growth*, 40 additional staffing positions will be added to the budget for FY 2020.

Transportation

Question or Concern: “MCPS spent more on special education transportation than special education staffing.”

¹<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/boe/community/Maryland%20House%20Bill%200461e.pdf>

Additional Background: This statement is not accurate. MCPS spends approximately \$40 million dollars on special education transportation. The special education operating budget is \$365,690,306 with 98.6 percent of the budget allocated to staff positions, including non-public placements.

Reduced Paperwork Mandate

Question or Concern: MCEA asked Board of Education members to commit to three planning periods and to decrease the mandated paperwork for special education teachers.

Additional Background: We are concerned that MCEA chose to ask for a commitment from the Board on this topic at this venue, as this issue is a mandated subject of bargaining.

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) process is federally mandated. In FY2018, MCPS shifted to the state's online IEP system, which required more time to implement during the initial year of implementation. By aligning with Maryland's IEP system, MCPS has increased assurance that students will receive the correct accommodations and has the ability to be transparent with the state about the district's processes and procedures. While MCPS does not have the authority to change mandated federal and state paperwork, the use of the state's online system significantly decreases the amount of paperwork because information is prepopulated and data for students who move within the state will be moved with them.

Single Administrator Schools

Question or Concern: Principals and administrators participate in IEP meetings and there are not enough resources in the schools to complete these mandated meetings.

Additional Background: Chairing IEP meetings is the responsibility of administrators. MCPS is working to add assistant principals to schools with single administrators, as well as reducing ratios of students/staff to administrators. For FY 2020, this includes adding a total of eight assistant principal positions—two in elementary schools (one for the new school and one for an additional school with the possibility of more being added depending on state funding) and six in secondary schools, where we have the largest ratio of students to administrators. The Board will consider this request in the FY 2020 Operating Budget. This will leave no more than 17 elementary schools with a single administrator. It is important to note that with smaller enrollments there are fewer IEP meetings and fewer families to serve. I think that this will be an important conversation during the Board of Education Operating Budget Work Sessions.

English Language Learners

Staffing Formula and Classroom Size

Question or Concern: "Will you support returning to the 2013 staff formula?"

Additional Background: Since 2013, the system has experienced tremendous change and we should continue to study how best to serve our ESOL students' learning needs.

A Historical View of ESOL Staffing: 2007-2019

Fiscal Year	Approx. # ESOL students (incl. Level 10)	ESOL Staffing Model	ESOL FTE
2007	14,785	Ratio-based Staffing: ES 1:41, MS 1:36; HS 1:31	Teacher: 385.1 Resource Teacher: 20 Para: 38.895
2008	15,931	Ratio-based Staffing: ES 1:41, MS 1:36; HS 1:31	Teacher: 416.7 Resource Teacher: 20.2 Para: 39.645
2009	16,250	Ratio-based Staffing: ES 1:41, MS 1:36; HS 1:31	Teacher: 433.7 Resource Teacher: 20.2 Para: 41.145
2010	17,669	Ratio-based Staffing: ES 1:41, MS 1:36; HS 1:31	Teacher: 441.9 Resource Teacher: 20.2 Para: 41.145
2011	18,735	Ratio-based Staffing: ES 1:41, MS 1:36; HS 1:32	Teacher: 456.87 Resource Teacher: 20.2 Para: 38.645
2012	19,078	Ratio-based Staffing: ES 1:41, MS 1:36; HS 1:33	Teacher: 470.27 Resource Teacher: 20.2 Para: 34.395
2013	19,846	Ratio-based Staffing: ES 1:41, MS 1:36; HS 1:34	Teacher: 484.87 Resource Teacher: 18 Para: 34.395
2014	19,938	Ratio-based Staffing: ES 1:41, MS 1:36; HS 1:35	Teacher: 507.07 Resource Teacher: 18 Para: 34.395
2015	21,463	Proficiency-based Staffing: See tables below	Teacher: 522.47 Resource Teacher: 18 Para: 34.395

Fiscal Year	Approx. # ESOL students (incl. Level 10)	ESOL Staffing Model	ESOL FTE
2016	21,864	Proficiency-based Staffing: See tables below	Teacher: 540.79 Resource Teacher: 18 Para: 38.895
2017	23,332	Proficiency-based Staffing: See tables below	Teacher: 577.39 Resource Teacher: 18 Para: 38.895
2018	25,536	Proficiency-based Staffing: See tables below	Teacher: 594.425 Resource Teacher: 18 Para: 45.4
2019	26,025	Proficiency-based Staffing: See tables below	Teacher: 609.425 Resource Teacher: 18 Para: 53.4

Elementary Schools

Non-METS	2014 - Ratio Based		2015 - Proficiency Based		2016 - 2019 - Proficiency Based	
ESOL Level	Non -Title I	Title I	Non -Title I	Title I	Non -Title I	Title I
Lvl 1	44.5:1		FTE = Students/6*.2		FTE = Students/7*.2	FTE = Students/6*.2
Lvl 2			FTE = Students/6*.18		FTE = Students/7*.18	FTE = Students/7*.18
Lvl 3			FTE = Students/6*.16		FTE = Students/7*.16	FTE = Students/7*.16
Lvl 4			FTE = Students/8*.14		FTE = Students/9*.14	FTE = Students/8*.14
Lvl 5			FTE = Students/8*.10		FTE = Students/9*.10	FTE = Students/8*.10
Minimum Instruction Guidelines						
ESOL Level	2014		2015 - 2019			
Lvl 1	50 minutes 4-5days/wk		50 minutes 5 days/wk			
Lvl 2	50 minutes 4-5days/wk		50 minutes 4.5 days/wk			
Lvl 3	40 minutes 4-5 days/wk		40 minutes 5 days/wk			
Lvl 4	40 minutes 4-5 days/wk		40 minutes 4.5 days/wk			
Lvl 5	40 minutes 2-3 days/wk		40 minutes 3 days/wk			
METS Staffing Allocation	2014		2015		2016 - 2019	
					For every 15 students: 1 teacher + .75 para	

Middle Schools

Non-METS Staffing			
ESOL Level	2014 - Ratio Based	2015 - Proficiency Based	2016 - 2019 - Proficiency Based
Lvl 1	36:1	FTE = Students/10*.7	FTE = Students/13*.7
Lvl 2		FTE = Students/10*.5	FTE = Students/13*.5
Lvl 3		FTE = Students/15*.3	FTE = Students/18*.3
Lvl 4		FTE = Students/15*.3	FTE = Students/18*.3
Lvl 5		FTE = Students/15*.3	FTE = Students/18*.3
Minimum Instruction Guidelines			
ESOL Level	2014	2015 - 2019	
Lvl 1		3 classes per day	
Lvl 2		2 classes per day	
Lvl 3		1 class per day	
Lvl 4		1 class per day	
Lvl 5		1 class per day	
METS Staffing			
Allocation	2014	2015	2016 - 2019
			For every 15 students: 1 teacher + .75 para

High Schools

Non-METS Staffing						
ESOL Level	2014 - Ratio Based	2015 - Proficiency Based	2016 - 2019 - Proficiency Based			
Lvl 1	31:1	FTE = Students/10*.7	FTE = Students/13*.7			
Lvl 2		FTE = Students/10*.5	FTE = Students/13*.5			
Lvl 3		FTE = Students/15*.3	FTE = Students/18*.3			
Lvl 4		FTE = Students/15*.3	FTE = Students/18*.3			
Lvl 5		FTE = Students/15*.3	FTE = Students/18*.3			
Minimum Instruction Guidelines						
ESOL Level	2014	2015	2016 - 2019			
Lvl 1		3 classes per day				
Lvl 2		2 classes per day				
Lvl 3		1 class per day				
Lvl 4		1 class per day				
Lvl 5		1 class per day				
METS Staffing						
	2014	2015	2016 - 2019			
	Enrollment	Teacher	Para	Enrollment	Teacher	Para
	>=32	1.2	0.5	>=52	2.4	1.5
	25-31	1.0	0.5	45-51	2.0	1.0
	18-24	0.8	0.5	38-44	1.6	1.0
	11-17	0.6	0.5	32-38	1.2	1.0
	4-10	0.4	0.5	25-31	1.0	0.5
	0-3		0.5	18-24	0.8	0.5
				11-17	0.6	0.5
				4-10	0.4	0.5
				0-3		0.5

Negotiated Contract

School Climate

At the meeting, Mr. Brian Donlon presented the school climate issue on behalf of MCEA. School climate is an issue MCPS and the three associations have been working on together for years. I would like to share with you the work that we have done to address some of the concerns raised. In April of 2018, Dr. Kimberly A. Statham, deputy superintendent of school support and improvement, met with Mr. Christopher Lloyd, president, MCEA, and 30 teachers and staff at Kemp Mill Elementary School to hear their concerns. Immediately afterward, Dr. Statham met with the principal and director to develop a plan to address the expressed concerns. This past summer, the issue of school climate escalated with a planned rally by MCEA to address issues at Kemp Mill Elementary School. After the rally was canceled, members of the administration continued to work with MCEA leadership to plan ways in which, together, we could provide support to the staff members at the school and to the principal.

On August 20, 2018, Dr. Henry R. Johnson, chief of staff, Mr. Sherwin A. Collette, associate superintendent for employee engagement and employee relations, and Dr. Sarah E. Sirgo, director of learning, achievement, and administration, met with staff members from Kemp Mill Elementary School, MCEA leadership, and a parent representative to continue to map a course of action that could be instituted before the 2018-2019 school year. Staff in the Office of School Support and Improvement worked with staff at the school to plan triad meetings as a collaborative way to work with the principal, teachers and members of SEIU. That same day, I met with Dr. Andrew M. Zuckerman, chief operating officer, Dr. Statham, Dr. Johnson and Mr. Collette to discuss the plan for Kemp Mill Elementary School as we approached the opening of school.

On October 3, 2018, at one of the MCEA Board of Directors' meetings that I attend monthly, members of their Board presented me with a list of schools they praised for high ratings on school climate and schools they outlined as having significant climate issues based upon the results of the staff survey administered during spring of 2017-2018. Upon review, I became concerned because of the racial makeup of the principals on both lists. In reviewing the data provided to me by both MCEA and the Office of Shared of Accountability, I determined that 15 of the 18 principals with the most positive ratings were White/Caucasian and 11 of the 15 principals with the lowest ratings were Black/African American or Hispanic.

As a result of that information, I asked to meet with Mr. Lloyd and Ms. Heather Carroll-Fisher, executive director, MCEA, to address my concerns and to share that data with them. That initial meeting was held on November 8, 2018, with Mr. Lloyd, Ms. Carroll-Fisher, Dr. Statham, Dr. Johnson and me. I shared my findings with Mr. Lloyd and Ms. Carroll-Fisher. During that conversation, I indicated that the perception should not be that only Black/African American principals who represent 44 of the 54 principals of color and Hispanics who represent 4 of the 54 principals in our 134 elementary schools have school climate issues/concerns. Both Mr. Lloyd and Ms. Carroll-Fisher agreed. I asked Mr. Lloyd and Ms. Carroll-Fisher if they would like me to address this issue at the next Board of Directors meeting and they declined.

I held my monthly meeting with Mr. Lloyd on November 13, 2018. We did not address the issue during that meeting but agreed that it would be discussed again at a planned meeting with the same group on November 19, 2018. During the November 19 meeting, we discussed ways that we could address

the school climate concerns, particularly how we might work together to create a next generation of the School Leadership Team Institute (SLTI), a program they felt worked well in providing ways in which school and teacher leaders could work together to support effective teaching and learning. During that same conversation, I identified that cultural proficiency training needs to be a critical part of this work.

Dr. Statham, the area associate superintendents, and directors in the Office of School Support and Improvement (OSSI) have continued to work with MCEA to address the concerns raised. (Refer to the timeline of meetings/correspondence that follows.) I continue to meet with the MCEA Board of Directors with members of my cabinet so that we can address concerns and specifically deal with issues they raise and provide a course of action going forward.

It is imperative that MCPS and the three associations work together to create an instrument that will accurately measure school climate and leadership across the system. It is interesting to note that the State climate surveys for both students and staff will be administered in February, 2019. It will be important that the instrument we create complement the State surveys. While having new surveys from the State, it is critical that the associations, the school system, and the Board of Education ensure that the work around cultural proficiency and implicit bias continue as an integral part of the process. To use an instrument that results in the over-identification of any race, gender, age, or culture is unacceptable.

Mr. Donlon asked the Board of Education for an intervention implying that school climate concerns had not been addressed. We take the matter of school climate seriously. Schools develop goals and action plans to address areas of need. Those plans are monitored by the directors in OSSI and are discussed at the Association Deputy Chief's (ADC) meetings.

Below you will find a list of meetings/discussions/correspondence held with MCEA to address issues of school climate and culture during this school year:

October 2, 2018 (10:01 p.m.) E-mail Sent from Mr. Lloyd to Dr. Smith and Dr. Statham

Informing them that he will be having conversations (monthly) with directors in OSSI related to working conditions and specific worksites

October 2, 2018 (10:06 p.m.) E-mail Sent from Mr. Lloyd to Directors

Requesting 15 minutes of their time via telephone

October 3, 2018: MCEA Board of Directors Meeting

Dr. Smith, Dr. Statham, Dr. Johnson, Mr. Lloyd and Ms. Carroll-Fisher

Cultural Proficiency

Equity

SLTI

COMAR

October 11, 2018: Climate Action Plan for All Schools

Dr. Statham, Mr. Lloyd, Ms. Carroll-Fisher and Dr. Arronza LaBatt

Of 15 red schools, focusing on seven

Building Action Teams

Fairland ES

October 30, 2018: Climate Survey Action Plan

Dr. Statham and Mr. Lloyd

Triads

Working conditions and expectations, guidance on MCEA staff visits to schools

COMAR & Negotiation Agreement

November 2, 2018: Climate Survey Action Plan

Dr. Statham, Mr. Lloyd and Ms. Carroll-Fisher

Discussed SLTI

Discussed 7 schools

November 8, 2018: Meeting with Dr. Smith, Dr. Statham, Dr. Johnson, Mr. Lloyd and Ms. Carroll-Fisher

Reference above summary

November 19, 2018: Meeting with Dr. Smith, Dr. Statham, Dr. Johnson, Mr. Lloyd and Ms. Carroll-Fisher

Revisiting the Collaborative Management Coordinating Committee (CMCC) structure

Mr. Lloyd meeting with area associates around seven schools

We will continue to work with all association leaders on this important topic and will have a new system to measure school climate prior to the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year. In addition, I have added a program specialist for culture and climate to the FY 2020 Recommended Budget.

Planning Time

Question or Concern: Requested three planning periods for each special education teacher across the county.

Additional Background: Planning time is a negotiated item and therefore should be addressed as we enter into conversations during the FY 2021–2023 negotiations.

Duty Free Lunch Grievance

Question or Concern: A unit member described situations in which teachers are not scheduled for duty free lunch period during the course of the day.

Additional Background: I have consistently and clearly stated that as a district, we must honor each of our negotiated agreements with our associations. Since the 2018–2020 negotiated contractual agreement with MCEA was initiated, there have been no grievances or administrative complaints filed pertaining to bargaining unit members not being able to have their duty free lunch. It is the obligation of MCPS administrators, including me, to administer the contract in each area to include: duty free lunch, planning time, and all other working conditions. In any case in which this is not being implemented, we encourage members to seek resolution at their schools and through all processes provided to them.

No Evaluations Completed

Question or Concern: What is the current state of formal grievances that have been submitted to date regarding this?

Additional Background: A unit member expressed concern around the completion of evaluations at a school. While the completion rate for evaluations exceeds 95% across school levels, I have asked the Office of School Support and Improvement to perform an audit of every school to determine the status of evaluations. It is always my expectation that principals fulfill contractual obligations in the area of staff evaluation and, in fact, in all areas of contract administration.

Let me be clear in restating that all guaranteed rights as prescribed by contract **should always be enforced**. Where any MCEA member believes that has not been the case, they should follow the formal grievance process. This includes addressing the issue directly with their principal and with their association.

In closing, we appreciate the role MCEA plays in supporting our teacher workforce. In fact, all three of our associations play a vital role in all areas of the operation of the school system including, culture, climate, and contract administration. This school system has a great many stakeholders that must be included in any conversation. The topics discussed on December 19, 2018, with the MCEA Board of Directors are of concern to the other associations as well as the Montgomery County Council of PTAs, Inc., student leadership organizations, and the many other groups that advocate on behalf of schools and students.

It was interesting to me that Mr. Lloyd began the meeting discussing international standards. As someone who lived in Asia for seven years during the 1990s, I have seen firsthand the work of educators and schools in Shanghai, Beijing, Seoul, Tokyo, Singapore, and Bangkok. I also have had the opportunity to work with students from schools in Finland, Norway, and many other European countries, and every other continent, except Antarctica. I concur with Mr. Lloyd's remarks about the work of the Kirwan Commission as it relates to high performing countries around the world. The structures, accountability systems, and the level of commitment both among educators and in the society lead to high levels of student performance in many places in the world. While I have no doubt that educators around the world discuss these same issues of working conditions and school climate, while working in Asia, I saw a level of commitment to student learning that resulted in high levels of achievement for virtually every student. This is my hope for every student, school, and classroom in Montgomery County.

Attachment

Copy to:

Executive Staff

Ms. Cuttitta

Mr. Koutsos

Mr. Lloyd

Ms. Webb

