

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

May 5, 2021

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Jack R. Smith, Superintendent of Schools

Subject: Student Schedules, Programs, and Social Emotional Learning
(02-23-2021-02-D, -E, -G)

During the *Opening Schools in Recovery of Education* discussion, Board members requested the following information:

Question D

Mr. Asante requested additional information regarding the handling of schedules for dual enrollment students

Response

Since March 2020, Montgomery College has shifted to all-virtual college course options for Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) students dually enrolled in college courses, which has provided increased access and flexibility for students. For example, courses that historically were available only on the high school campus or the college campus were accessible to all students throughout the district, thus making additional options available if there were constraints on a student's schedule. Once the MCPS virtual schedule was finalized in summer 2020, staff at Montgomery College worked in collaboration with staff at MCPS to schedule college courses designated for the high school campus outside the school day, thus eliminating additional barriers to access, which may have resulted due to high school scheduling conflicts with synchronous courses. In some cases, individual students had schedule conflicts that were resolved on a case-by-case basis.

In addition, Montgomery College expanded enrollment options for courses that previously were closed and for the first time, implemented two abbreviated seven-week semesters. This provided students the option of enrolling in 1 or both shortened semesters or the typical 15-week semester courses.

Question E

Mrs. Evans requested additional information regarding the handling of schedules for education students with internships. How will they fulfill their classroom requirements if they are teaching in person, yet then must rush home to be online for a virtual course?

Response

As of March 15, 2021, and the beginning of Phase 1 in-person learning, students have been permitted to report to participate in off-site internships and site work experiences with parental/guardian consent and the support of the employer/sponsor. Approximately 200 students have participated in on-site internships or work-based learning in March and April 2021.

The majority of internships are scheduled in the afternoons, and the high school “B” day follows an afternoon schedule. This has allowed students to participate in internships in alignment with the high school schedule, thus avoiding the need to return to school for further coursework.

Question G

Ms. Silvestre requested additional information regarding the diversion program model and the social-emotional learning curriculum referenced on slide 54 of the presentation.

Response*Diversion Program*

The MCPS Diversion program is being developed in order to reduce the number of school referrals of students to the juvenile justice system, expulsions, and multiple suspensions, and help create and maintain safe school environments for all staff and students. A Diversion Work Group has been formed with representatives from MCPS central services, schools (elementary, middle, and high schools), students, community groups, the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Montgomery County Police Department, and the Maryland State’s Attorney’s Office. Work group members meet regularly. The Diversion pilot program is expected to commence in schools in fall 2021.

Social Emotional Learning Curriculum

MCPS is researching the process to purchase a universal Social Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum for all schools in MCPS. A SEL Curriculum Work Group has been formed and consists of 48 participants from all MCPS stakeholders, including principals, teachers, counselors, and parents/guardians. Currently, staff is reviewing the Request for Proposals (RFP). It is anticipated that a RFP will be presented to the Board of Education for approval at its May 25, 2021, meeting. Additional information about the curriculum will be shared at a later date.

If you have any questions about student schedules and high school programs, please contact Mr. Scott W. Murphy, director, Department of College and Career Readiness and Districtwide Programs, Office of Teaching, Learning, and Schools, via e-mail.

If you have any questions about the Diversion program or the Social Emotional Learning curriculum, please contact Ms. Ruschelle Reuben, associate superintendent of student and family support and engagement, Office of Teaching, Learning, and Schools, via e-mail.

JRS:MBM:JSW:kde

Copy to:

Executive Staff

Mr. Murphy

Ms. Webb