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State Superintendent of Schools

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August 15, 2014

The Honorable Martin O'Malley  
Governor of Maryland  
State House  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Michael E. Busch  
Speaker of the House  
H-101 State House  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr.  
President of the Senate  
H-107 State House  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Charlene M. Dukes  
President of the State Board of Education  
200 West Baltimore Street  
Baltimore, MD 21201

RE: Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards and Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Implementation Workgroup - MSAR# 10043

Dear Governor O'Malley, President Miller, Speaker Busch, and Dr. Dukes:

I respectfully submit the attached preliminary report of the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards (MCCRS) and Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Implementation Workgroup. Jack R. Smith, Deputy Superintendent, and Betty Weller, President of the Maryland State Education Association, serve as the appointed co-chairs of this Workgroup.

The Workgroup has held three meetings and will continue its work in monthly meetings scheduled through December 2014. The attached report summarizes the status of the work in each area stipulated in legislation. The Workgroup has discussed many facets of the implementation of the MCCRS and PARCC, but has not formulated findings.

The final report will be submitted no later than December 31, 2014.

Sincerely,

Lillian M. Lowery, Ed.D.  
State Superintendent of Schools

LML/JRS

Attachment

**Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards and  
Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for  
College and Careers (PARCC)  
Implementation Review Workgroup**

**Preliminary Report**



**Annapolis, Maryland  
August 2014**

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**Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards and Partnership for  
Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)  
Implementation Review Workgroup  
2013 Membership Roster**

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Jack R. Smith, Maryland State Department of Education, Co-Chair  
Betty Weller, Maryland State Education Association, Co-Chair

Tiara Booker-Dwyer  
Gregory FitzGerald  
Daric Jackson  
Verjeana Jacobs  
Anne Kaiser  
Nancy King  
Robert Lissitz  
Carla McCoy  
Cheryl Novotny  
Paul Pinsky  
Kimerlyn Pratesi  
Nicholas Schmitz  
Guffrie Smith  
Karen Verbeke  
Henry Wagner  
Alonzo Washington  
Veronica Williams  
Elizabeth Ysla Leight

**Maryland State Department of Education Staff**

Henry Johnson  
Gail Hoerauf-Bennett

## Background

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On April 14, 2014, Governor Martin O'Malley signed legislation establishing the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards (MCCRS) and Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Implementation Review Workgroup. The Workgroup members were appointed on June 12, 2014.

The workgroup consists of the following:

- Two members of the Senate of Maryland
- Two members of the House of Delegates
- The State Superintendent of Schools, or designee
- The Secretary of Higher Education, or designee
- One representative of the State Board of Education
- Two representatives of the Maryland State Education Association
- One representative of the Baltimore Teachers Union
- One representative of the Public School Superintendents Association of Maryland
- One representative of the Maryland Association of Boards of Education
- Two representatives of the Maryland Parent Teacher Association who are parents of students enrolled in a Maryland public school
- One representative of the Maryland Association of Student Councils who is a student enrolled in a Maryland public school
- One academic expert whose area of expertise is educational measurement
- One academic expert whose area of expertise is curriculum and instruction
- One representative of the Maryland Business Roundtable for Education
- One representative from the Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals
- One representative from the Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals

So far, the workgroup has met on the following dates:

- July 10, 2014
- July 25, 2014
- August 12, 2014

Future meetings are scheduled for:

- September 17, 2014
- October 21, 2014
- November 12, 2014
- December 11, 2014

All meeting materials are posted at <http://marylandpublicschools.org/parccworkgroup/>.

## Workgroup Charge and Process

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The Workgroup shall:

- (1) identify and analyze the best practices of local education agencies in the State and in other jurisdictions that are successfully implementing the Common Core State Standards and the PARCC assessments;
- (2) assess how the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards and the PARCC assessments will affect the students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who qualify for free and reduced-price meals;
- (3) determine what, if any, new curriculum resources will be needed in order to fully implement the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards;
- (4) identify how the State Department of Education plans to assist local education agencies in preparing parents and students for the PARCC assessments;
- (5) assess the needs of teachers and principals in the area of professional development related to the implementation of the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards, including determining:
  - i. what, if any, State and federal funding is available to supplement the funding that local governments provide toward the professional development of teachers and principals; and
  - ii. what, if any, professional development and ongoing support from local education agencies is available to expand the use of technology as an instructional tool in the classroom;
- (6) assess the technological readiness and needs of the public schools for the implementation of the PARCC assessments, including what resources will be needed to teach students the necessary computer skills to take the PARCC assessments;
- (7) begin recommending a professional development plan for the State Department of Education to implement during the 2014-2015 school year to assist local education agencies in implementing the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards;
- (8) recommend a plan to meet the technological infrastructure needs of public schools related to the implementation of the PARCC assessments;
- (9) assess how the PARCC assessments testing window will affect the normal school calendar and school schedule;
- (10) assess how local education agencies are including teachers in the discussion to improve the implementation of the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards;
- (11) analyze the guidance local education agencies have received from the State Department of Education in regards to measuring student growth in light of the new teacher evaluation system and student learning objectives;

- (12) assess how the new teacher evaluation system is impacting local education agencies' ability to implement the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards; and
- (13) develop a plan to transfer from the Maryland High School Assessments in English and Algebra/Data Analysis to the comparable PARCC assessments as a graduation requirement.

On or before August 15, 2014, the Workgroup shall submit a preliminary report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor, the State Board of Education, and, in accordance with §2-1246 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly.

On or before December 31, 2014, the Workgroup shall submit a final report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor, the State Board of Education, and, in accordance with §2-1246 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly.

Appendix I contains the full legislation.

## **PROCESS**

Meetings have been organized around the areas of the Workgroup's charge. Each meeting starts with a presentation from a local school district about a best practice it is using to successfully implement the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards (MCCRS) and/or the PARCC assessments.

For each meeting agenda item, there has been a brief presentation followed by questions and comments. Some of these questions and comments may become the basis of recommendations.

## Status of Work

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### ***Identify and analyze the best practices of local education agencies in the State and in other jurisdictions that are successfully implementing the Common Core State Standards and the PARCC assessments***

The Workgroup begins each meeting with a local school system presentation about a best practice it uses to support the successful implementation of the MCCRS and/or PARCC. So far, the Workgroup has heard from the following districts:

- **Anne Arundel County Public Schools, July 10, 2014**

Presenter: Dr. Kathryn Kubic, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction

Topic: A model that visually presents how the Common Core State Standards and PARCC Claims are aligned in a purposeful way. Using this visual model as a starting point, the school system is unpacking the components for teachers. (Appendix II, Exhibit I)

- **Prince George's County Public Schools, July 25, 2014**

Presenters: Dr. Shawn Joseph, Deputy Superintendent; W. Wesley Watts, Jr., Chief Information Officer; Yakoubou Ousmanou, Director of Testing; Pauline Carey, Testing Administration Specialist

Topic: The collaboration between the departments of instruction and informational technology to ensure a successful online PARCC administration. The school system is ramping up the number of devices available for both instruction and testing while developing a plan for technology support. (Appendix II, Exhibit II)

- **Carroll County Public Schools, August 12, 2014**

Presenters: Dr. Margaret Pfaff, Director of Curriculum and Instructional Resources; English Language Arts Supervisor; Mathematics Supervisor

Topic: Best Practices in the areas of curriculum development, writing and implementation, including professional development and communications (Appendix II, Exhibit III)

In addition to monthly presentations, the Workgroup has asked each school district to provide a one-page white paper on one or more successful best practices. The Workgroup will review these submissions and consider how they can be effectively shared among districts. Appendix II, Exhibit IV )

### ***Assess how the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards and the PARCC assessments will affect the students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who qualify for free and reduced-price meals***



On July 10, Henry Johnson, Asst. Superintendent for the Division of Curriculum, Assessment and Accountability, Marcella Franczkowski, Asst. Superintendent for the Division of Special Education and Early Intervention Services, and Kristina Kyles, Asst. Superintendent for the Division of Student, Family, and School Support – all from the Maryland State Department of Education - presented data regarding the achievement of English language learners, students who qualify for Free and Reduced Meals, and students who receive special education services. Discussion revolved around the achievement gaps between these student groups and students as a whole. These gaps have persisted for decades.

The Workgroup requested additional, targeted information, which will be provided at future meetings. (Appendix XI)

***Determine what, if any, new curriculum resources will be needed in order to fully implement the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards***

On July 25, Judy Jenkins, Director of the Division of Curriculum, Assessment and Accountability, discussed some of the curricular resources that have been developed so far, what is in development, and how these are being shared with teachers, parents and students. Resources are available in all content areas and grades, and include the needed shifts in instruction. Resources are shared through organizations (e.g. PTA, Maryland Assoc. of Student Councils), at conferences, during school system visits and online.

As the MCCRS approach full implementation, more teachers and parents are accessing these resources.

To address this area of its charge, the Workgroup is developing a survey for distribution to local school districts about the curricular resources teachers need now. A draft survey was discussed on August 12. A new draft survey will be shared with the Workgroup prior to its distribution to teachers and superintendents.

***Identify how the State Department of Education plans to assist local education agencies in preparing parents and students for the PARCC assessments***

On July 25, Laura Motel, Communication Specialist at MSDE, said that communication strategies include producing print resources, posting online information, organizing demonstrations, inviting the media to visit schools, and the using social media to push out information. A flash drive containing resource documents was mailed to each school district so they could print materials for distribution to parents, staff and/or students. This coming year, communications will focus on what the transition looks like and the new graduation requirements. Information about the MCCRS and PARCC will be merged, since they operate in tandem. (See Appendix III, Exhibit I)

Douglas Strader, Interim Chief, Planning and Assessment Branches, said that MSDE is also sharing information from the PARCC online website, which has a wealth of information. [www.parcconline.org](http://www.parcconline.org) (Appendix III, Exhibit II)

Workgroup questions and comments dealt with issues such as hard to reach parents, the development of an App, asking students how they would like to receive information and giving parents information that is actionable.

***Assess the needs of teachers and principals in the area of professional development related to the implementation of the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards, including determining:***

- (1) what, if any, State and federal funding is available to supplement the funding that local governments provide toward the professional development of teachers and principals; and***
- (2) what, if any, professional development and ongoing support from local education agencies is available to expand the use of technology as an instructional tool in the classroom***

To address this charge, the Workgroup is developing a survey for distribution to local school districts. Questions may be added about what professional development and local government funding is available.

A draft survey was discussed on August 12. A new draft survey will be shared with the Workgroup prior to its distribution to teachers and superintendents.

MSDE is asking grant personnel to explore options that can be shared with school systems. MSDE will provide information about current funding available

***Assess the technological readiness and needs of the public schools for the implementation of the PARCC assessments, including what resources will be needed to teach students the necessary computer skills to take the PARCC assessments***

On July 10, MSDE provided a summary of the successes and challenges of the spring PARCC field testing. MSDE recommends that teachers use PARCC practice test items during class so students become familiar with the tasks. It also encourages teachers to use technology during instruction so students learn to use the device (iPad, laptop, desktop) in class in the same way they use it during testing. This use includes skills such as “drag and drop” and calculators.

School districts are being encouraged to increase each year the percentage of students participating in the online PARCC assessments. The goal is to have 100% online testing by 2016-2017.

The Workgroup members discussed the length of the PARCC assessments. On July 29, 2014, PARCC, Inc. recommended to the Governing Board changes in the assessment in English Language Arts to reduce testing times. The Governing Board approved the following changes:

- Grade 3 – reduce reading passages from 4 to 2, which will reduce the testing time by 72 minutes
- Grade 4 & 5 – reduce reading passages from 4 to 2, which will reduce the

testing time by 40 minutes

- Middle school and high school – reduce reading passages from 5 to 4, which will reduce testing time by 20 minutes

The Workgroup has preliminarily discussed the budgetary impact of technology infrastructure and support.

***Begin recommending a professional development plan for the State Department of Education to implement during the 2014-2015 school year to assist local education agencies in implementing the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards***

To address this charge, the Workgroup is developing a survey for distribution to local school districts about professional development needs. A draft survey was discussed on August 12. A new draft survey will be shared with the Workgroup prior to its distribution to teachers and superintendents.

***Recommend a plan to meet the technological infrastructure needs of public schools related to the implementation of the PARCC assessments***

Preliminary conversations took place on July 25 during the Prince George’s County Public Schools (PGCPS) presentation. PGCPS has created a comprehensive schedule that is posted on their website.

***Assess how the PARCC assessments testing window will affect the normal school calendar and school schedule***

On July 25, William Cappe, MSDE Ombudsman, presented school calendar considerations. He reviewed legal requirements (such as minimum number of school days and hours and certain holiday mandates), local school district opening and closing days, how inclement weather affects calendars, and how school systems have autonomy in setting calendars. (Appendix IV)

Discussion revolved around testing windows and the number of state and local testing days for students. PARCC is working on reducing testing time. The Workgroup plans to poll school districts about both of these issues.

***Assess how local education agencies are including teachers in the discussion to improve the implementation of the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards***

This area has not yet been discussed.

***Analyze the guidance local education agencies have received from the State Department of Education in regards to measuring student growth in light of the new teacher evaluation system and student learning objectives***

This area has not yet been discussed.

***Assess how the new teacher evaluation system is impacting local education agencies’ ability to implement the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards***

This area has not yet been discussed.

***Develop a plan to transfer from the Maryland High School Assessments in English and Algebra/Data Analysis to the comparable PARCC assessments as a graduation requirement***

On August 12, the workgroup was briefed on the State Board of Education's plan to transition from the Maryland High School Assessments in English and Algebra I/Data Analysis to the PARCC assessments as graduation requirements. The calendar of PARCC and HSA test administrations for the 2014 – 2015 and 2015 – 2016 school years, as well as a visual depiction of the calendar, were distributed. (Appendix VIII)

At each meeting, data and information is provided to address unanswered questions from previous meetings. (Appendix IX)

## Appendix Summary

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- Appendix I: Chapter 246 (HB 1164) Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards and Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Implementation Review Workgroup
- Appendix II: Exhibit I – Anne Arundel Public Schools Best Practice  
Exhibit II – Prince George’s County Public Schools Best Practice  
Exhibit III – Carroll County Public Schools Best Practice  
Exhibit IV – Local Education Agency Best Practice White Papers
- Appendix III: Exhibit I – Parent, Staff and Student Resources  
Exhibit II – PARCC Resources
- Appendix IV: School Calendar Handouts
- Appendix V: July 10, 2014 Agenda and Minutes
- Appendix VI: July 25, 2014 Agenda and Minutes
- Appendix VII: August 12, 2014 Agenda
- Appendix VIII: Maryland High School Assessment Program – Transition Plan
- Appendix IX: Data Addressing Workgroup Questions

## **Selected Appendixes**

All Appendixes are posted on the webpage that can be accessed through this link:

<http://marylandpublicschools.org/parccworkgroup/>

Attached to this Preliminary Report are selected appendixes of special interest:

Appendix II, Exhibit IV – Local Education Agency Best Practice White Papers

Appendix V – July 10, 2014 Agenda and Minutes

Appendix VI – July 25, 2014 Agenda and Minutes

Appendix VI – August 12, 2014 Agenda

## **Allegany County Public Schools (ACPS) Best Practices**

### **Information needed for MDCCRS/PARCC Implementation Review Workgroup**

- Build capacity within the district through professional development so that everyone is developing the skills and knowledge necessary to successfully implement MDCCRS and PARCC.
  - LEA Central Office and school teams attended Educator Effectiveness Academies in 2011, 2012, 2013.
  - School teams wrote and implemented MDCCRS Transition Plans during 2013-14
  - LEA School Teams attended CCR Conference in 2014
  - Teams provided professional development to each school staff during opening staff development
- Assist supervisors, school-based administrators, and teachers with the vision of what successful implementation of the MDCCRS looks like in the classroom.
- Facilitate opportunities for school staffs to work with ELA and mathematics model units, lessons and resources that will support effective implementation.
- Deliver professional development that increases skills and knowledge in the literacy standards in history/social studies, science, and the technical areas to support implementation of the MDCCRS.
- Deliver professional development that increases skills and knowledge regarding Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to support implementation of the MDCCRS and instruction within the classroom.
- Deliver professional development to supervisors, school-based administrators, and teachers about PARCC, the PARCC assessments, PARCC resources, and sample test items.
- Work with supervisors, school-based administration and teachers with determining the critical shifts in instruction necessary to align with the new PARCC assessments.
- Engage teachers throughout the year in examining PARCC test items and sample assessments to determine instructional implications needed. Engage students in completing PARCC sample test items.
- Provide communication and resources to parents and students on MDCCRS and PARCC via MSDE Blackboard resources and LEA parent meetings.
- Participate in the PARCC field test during the spring of 2014.

## Contacts

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**Calvert County Public Schools**  
**Best Practices in MCCRS/PARCC Implementation**

1. **Professional Development:**

- CCPS instructional supervisors have provided extensive teacher professional development related to the Maryland College & Career Ready Standards (MCCRS) for Mathematical Practice, ELA Anchor and Grade-Level Standards, STEM Practices and Standards for Literacy in Science, Social Studies and other Technical Subjects. Over the past four years, Calvert County Public Schools (CCPS) has dedicated a majority of county-wide professional learning time to helping teachers across all content areas develop a deep understanding of the MCCRS and their instructional implications.
- CCPS instructional supervisors and learning specialists have also made extensive use of school PLCs and department meetings to further enhance teachers' knowledge and provide opportunities for dialogue and questions. This two-way exchange has been critical to the CCPS roll out of the MCCRS.
- CCPS instituted EEA teams comprised of teachers trained at the State's Educator Effectiveness Academies. These teams met regularly with content area supervisors to plan focused professional development at each school.
- CCPS school-based and system-wide administrators, deans and core leads have also received significant training on the same core topics as the teachers they work with so that they are able support and monitor effective teacher instructional practices.
- CCPS teachers across all academic content areas receive on-going professional development on the academic writing types required by the MCCRS.

2. **Unpacking Standards:**

- CCPS math supervisors utilized the MCCRS progression documents to unpack the meaning of the individual math standards and to show the embedded coherence of each standard. Throughout the process of building teacher understanding, CCPS staff used tasks from Illustrative Mathematics, Mathematics Assessment Resource Service and the PARCC website. Through this process, teachers were able to see how multiple content standards and the practices can be assessed in a single item.
- ELA supervisors utilized the expertise of Educator Effectiveness Academy (EEA) and locally trained teachers to create "integrated" units modeled after those produced by MSDE. These integrated units created an ELA equivalent to the unpacked documents used by the mathematics supervisors.
- Science and social studies supervisors have integrated the standards for literacy into their roll out of the Next Generation Science Standards and "C3" standards document.

3. **Curriculum:**

- Math supervisors used the PARCC Model Content Frameworks with small groups of teachers to create curricular documents. These curriculum documents were also built in the "unpack" format so that teachers can connect the math standards with instructional objectives, resources and assessment standards.
- ELA integrated units have been developed for teachers in grades K – 8 and high school. These integrated units combine the key reading, writing, and speaking and listening components of the MCCRS as well as some strategic research opportunities.

4. **Assessments:**

- County level assessment items for ELA and mathematics have been created to reflect what CCPS currently knows about the PARCC assessments. In grades 6 – 8 math, CCPS is utilizing the Agile Mind Program along with Agile Assessment. This allows CCPS students to experience assessment items similar to PARCC with "drag and drop" and "multiple response" options.
- ELA supervisors have shared the task generation models, sample assessment items, and PARCC writing rubric with targeted groups.

**For More Information Contact:**

- ELA: Leanne Meisinger – [meisingerl@calvertnet.k12.md.us](mailto:meisingerl@calvertnet.k12.md.us) and Linda Flanagan – [flanaganl@calvertnet.k12.md.us](mailto:flanaganl@calvertnet.k12.md.us)
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August 6, 2014

## **Caroline County (LEA05)**

### **Best Practices for MDCCRS:**

- Unpack standards with details
- Embed math and reading into Science (reinforce STEM)
- With Social Studies refocus on reading and writing more routinely
- Guide SLOs for writing based on standards
- Carry over writing from a science activity into reading
- Carry over writing from a social studies activity into reading
- Use MSDE authored units with revisions based on district need

### **Best Practices for PARCC:**

- Prototypes for math and language arts
- Train Reading Resource Teachers on the Pearson practice tutorial and test to work with teacher as a train the trainer model
- Create PARCC unit assessments using PARCC "Frameworks"
- Adjust student IEPs accordingly throughout the year
- Integrate technology into instruction
- Increase access to technology at all grade levels

## **Information for the MDCCRS/PARCC Implementation Review Workgroup Carroll County Public Schools – Best Practices**

### **Curriculum**

In 2010, ELA and math curriculum supervisors created curriculum writing teams that represented as many schools as possible and often included special educators, GT resource teachers, and technology specialists. Each team began with a gap analysis to determine their scope of work followed by a multi-year plan that laid out each step of a phased in implementation process. Since 2010, changes to the ELA and math curricula from PreK – 12 have been gradually implemented with opportunity for teacher feedback and revision.

### **Instructional Organization**

The four high school English credit requirement was changed from 2 course specific credits and 2 elective credits to an English 9, 10, 11, and 12 four credit requirement with the option of substituting an advanced placement course in grades 11 and 12.

A Conceptual Algebra course was added to the secondary math sequence to bridge the gap between Algebra I aligned to the VSC and Algebra I MCCRS.

The elementary schedule for grades 3, 4, and 5 was changed to a 2.5 hour STEM instructional block and a 2.5 hour Humanities block. In most cases, teachers teach either STEM or Humanities allowing for more specialization and targeted professional development at this level. The primary purpose is to facilitate more meaningful integration of content and skills.

### **Professional Development**

For each component of the MCCRS, a team of teacher leaders was created to support both the curriculum writing requirements and the related professional development. By having as many schools represented as possible, we were able to have at least one math and/or one ELA teacher leader in every school. Professional development was provided to these groups throughout the last four years so that they had the skills and knowledge to provide site-based and job-embedded PD to their peers. Curriculum supervisors also provided continuous PD to administrators to build their understandings and to help them set appropriate expectations for curriculum implementation.

In addition to site based learning opportunities, summer institutes were held each summer for both math and ELA teachers. Each institute targeted whatever portion of the curriculum was scheduled for roll out during the coming school year.

### **Communication**

MCCRS curriculum examples with hands-on learning experiences were provided to members of our Curriculum Council at each meeting beginning in 2010. The curriculum council is a Board appointed group of parents and community members representing each of our PreK – 12 schools.

### **Contact Person:**

Dr. Margaret Pfaff, Director of Curriculum and Instructional Resources  
410-751-3067 [mepfaff@carrollk12.org](mailto:mepfaff@carrollk12.org)



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D’Ette W. Devine, Ed.D.  
Superintendent

Dawn K. Branch  
President, Board of Education

Best Practices in the Implementation of Maryland College and Career Readiness Standards (MDCCRS) and Teacher Principal Evaluation (TPE)

MDCCRS:

- CCPS developed new concept-based curriculum which is fully aligned to the MDCCRS. Curricula in the areas of language arts and mathematics (prekindergarten through grade 12) were implemented beginning in August of 2012.
- All teachers have received comprehensive training in the implementation of a concept-based curriculum. All teachers have also received training in the following areas: Concept Enhancement Routines, UDL, differentiation of instruction, cooperative structures and ascending intellectual demand. Mathematics teachers have received concept specific training. Secondary Language Arts teachers have been trained in Writing Routines and Touchstones Discussion processes. Secondary Social Studies Teachers have been trained in Touchstones Discussion processes. Elementary Teachers have been trained in Writing Routines and Touchpebbles Discussion processes.
- All school-based and content administrators have received comprehensive training in developing and implementing concept-based curricula. All school-based and content administrators have also received training in leadership during times of change, Concept Enhancement Routines, UDL, differentiation of instruction, cooperative structures and ascending intellectual demand.  
***\*\*It should be noted that our long range professional development plan for both teachers and administrators was launched in 2010. Therefore, teachers and administrators received the training necessary for successful implementation of the new curriculum in 2012.***
- Formative and Summative assessments have been developed that are aligned with the language arts and mathematics curricula.
- A common writing rubric has been developed and is utilized by all secondary teachers in core content areas (language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science).
- A stakeholder committee meets monthly to review, provide feedback, and formally endorse all newly developed curricula. The Curriculum Review Committee has been trained in protocols that they utilize when reviewing curricular documents.
- A stakeholder committee has been established to review potential resources for alignment with the new curriculum. The Resource Review Committee has been trained in protocols that they utilize when reviewing and making recommendations regarding the resources that will best support implementation of the curriculum in the classroom.

## TPE:

- TPE documents were developed for both Administrator and Teacher Evaluation processes. The Administrator Evaluation Workgroup consisted of both school and central office based administrators. The Teacher Evaluation Workgroup consisted of teachers (identified by the Cecil County Classroom Teacher Association – CCCTA), CCCTA Leadership (president and MSEA Uniserv Representative), school and central office based leadership.
- The Administrator Evaluation was written to fully align with the ISLLAC.
- The Teacher Observation and Evaluation processes are fully aligned with Charlotte Danielson’s framework.
- CCPS began full implementation of the new administrator evaluation process in August 2012.
- CCPS piloted the new teacher observation and evaluation process during the 2012-13 school year with fully implementation during the 2013-2014 school year.
- System-wide SLOs were developed for every content area and course. Each teacher selects 3 SLOs each year from a bank of approximately 5 potential SLOs for their particular content/course/grade level. All SLOs are posted online for teachers and administrators to access.
- Teacher observation and evaluation documents are hosted by the Data Service Center for online access. This service also enables Executive Directors to see and monitor the observation process in “real time.”
- The state MATAI matrix was the result of a matrix proposed to MSDE by CCPS for inclusion in the teacher evaluation system.
- A three tiered system was developed to replace the 20% MSA measure on the teacher evaluation instrument. This system would track student progress in the areas of academic performance, behavior, and discipline. Teacher performance in this area would be rated based on the progress of their students in each of these three areas and then would be weighted as 20% of the student achievement portion of their evaluation. This system was recently presented to the Maryland State Board of Education for their consideration.

MDCCRS/PARCC Implementation Best Practices  
Charles County Public Schools  
Contact: Amy Hollstein, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction

Charles County Public Schools began the transition into the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards by completing a gap analysis of our current RELA and mathematics curriculum. That same school year, social studies and science completed an analysis of the CC Literacy Standards, identifying gaps existing in the current curriculum.

Once the gap analysis was completed, course sequencing was examined, and changes to the CCPS sequence of math courses were implemented over several years in order to meet the needs of MCCRS. The second major step after the gap analysis was to revise curriculum of the core content areas. The revision of curriculum is ongoing as more information is received concerning MCCRS and PARCC. Our current focus is on creating a cohesive writing curriculum for pre-kindergarten through grade 12 students.

An essential aspect of the CCPS transition to the MCCRS is the professional development that has occurred on a regular basis. Over the past year, monthly professional development was provided to all principals with an emphasis upon close reading in all courses at all levels. This “packaged” professional development is then used by each principal with their respective staff, allowing for consistency of content and message. In addition, CCPS has developed a curriculum repository that houses all teacher resources. It is a “one-stop shop” where resources are linked to student test items and a plan is in place to include a parent and student portals.

This year, the monthly professional development sessions with all principals will focus on the *Core Six Essential Strategies for Achieving Excellence with the Common Core*. In turn, the principals will provide that PD to their own staff. These sessions will also include using formative assessments as a means of promoting student responsibility for their own learning. . As an incentive for teachers, we hope to offer two continuing CPD credits for the year.

Formative assessments are being developed at all levels in a wide variety of contents. As soon as the “One Assessment System Grant” is approved, we will expand the number of formative assessments to be offered in addition to providing teacher training on effective use of data collected to improve instruction. These formative assessments are designed to provide on-going monitoring of student acquisition of college and career readiness standards.

We have created an online testing platform for formative and benchmark assessments where students can be assessed on MDCCRS curriculum with technology enhanced items modeled on PARCC. This will give students multiple opportunities to complete PARCC-like formative assessment items such as Prose Constructed Responses and Evidence Based Responses. It will also provide teachers the opportunity to score online using PARCC generated rubrics.

In addition, the CCPS technology committee has been formed in order to bring stakeholders together to analyze the capacity of each individual school’s readiness for the full on-line implementation of PARCC.

**Dorchester County Public Schools  
MDCCRS and PARCC Readiness Initiatives**

**Dr. Lorenzo Hughes, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction – (410) 221-1111 x. 1033/ [hughesl@dcpsmd.org](mailto:hughesl@dcpsmd.org)**

**Leadership Development**

Beginning in 2010, DCPS entered into a formal partnership with the MSDE Breakthrough Center (under the leadership of Dr. Robert Glascock) to promote instructional leadership capacity through enhanced classroom teacher professional development. The four instructional improvement cycle “tools” developed during this partnership – formal observation conferencing, informal classroom visits, walkthroughs, and data analysis conversations – have dramatically improved appraisal team functioning in our district. These improvements have been chronicled in the CAIRE Study conducted by Towson University.

**Contact Info - Dr. Henry V. Wagner, Jr., Superintendent – (410) 221-1111 x. 1001/ [wagnerh@dcpsmd.org](mailto:wagnerh@dcpsmd.org)**

**Elementary Programs - Math**

Three years ago, the plan for rolling out Common Core math with grade level bands was begun with the goal of making the transition for children easier. Grade level meetings were held to unpack the standards and discuss instructional shifts to address the new curriculum content. The Instructional Coaches worked as a group to create the frameworks and assessments beginning with pre-kindergarten through first grade. During year two, feedback was sought from pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and first grade teachers to improve assessments which informed the work done for second and third grades. Special education teachers were also involved in this work. Then it was replicated for grades four and five. There were also some curricular shifts. There was a review of the resources for teachers as well, utilizing The Arizona Progressions documents. Quite a bit of collaboration occurred among the Eastern Shore Nine for creating end of the year benchmarks.

**Elementary Programs - Language Arts**

A concerted effort was made to increase non-fiction text from second grade through fifth grade. Benchmarks were created for grades one through five following the PARCC Content Model Frameworks. Curricular documents were reorganized using the PARCC Framework. Benchmarks were created for each term using all the PARCC resources to create PARCC-like assessments. There was a professional development session in which elementary teachers actually took practice PARCC assessments, which both informed and validated the work done to create district assessments. A greater emphasis was placed on the writing process and use of rubrics for scoring students' work. There were lots of vertical articulation meetings.

**Contact Info - Regina Teat, Supervisor of Elementary Education - (410) 221-1111 x. 1029/ [teatr@dcpsmd.org](mailto:teatr@dcpsmd.org)**

**Secondary English**

Performance tasks have been developed in collaboration with many of the Eastern Shore counties. Research simulations and literary tasks were developed with plans to make models of the narrative tasks during the upcoming school year. The research simulation tasks are being used for teacher Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) for writing. Professional development was provided on the Six Traits of Writing and ongoing professional development on high quality text dependent questions, which included social studies and science teachers. We also utilized Achieve the Core resources and professional development modules for many of the listed items. Instructional coaches developed benchmark assessments that are aligned with the PARCC Framework.

**Contact Info- Theresa Connor, Supervisor of English - (410) 221-1111 x. 1025/ [connorst@dcpsmd.org](mailto:connorst@dcpsmd.org)**

**Secondary Math**

Performance tasks have been developed in collaboration with many Eastern Shore nine counties. Instructional Coaches have unpacked the Common Core State Standards and developed benchmark assessments.

**Contact Info - Dr. Michael Johnson, Supervisor of Mathematics - (410) 221-1111 x. 1026/ [johnsonm@dcpsmd.org](mailto:johnsonm@dcpsmd.org)**

**PARCC Online Preparedness**

The FY 2015 Operating Budget includes an allocation of \$800,000 for the purchase of hardware and connectivity for both instructional and assessment purposes. Also, a dedicated Local Accountability Coordinator position has been established to provide focused attention to assessment issues.

**Contact Info – LeAnn McWilliams, Information Technology Manager – (410) 221-1111 x. 1004/ [mckilliamsl@dcpsmd.org](mailto:mckilliamsl@dcpsmd.org)**

**System: Jamie Aliveto, Supervisor of Student Achievement**

**([jamie.aliveto@fcps.org](mailto:jamie.aliveto@fcps.org); 301-696-6877)**

- FCPS has established a PARCC Implementation Team (PARCC IT) that includes staff in Research, Development and Accountability, Technology Infrastructure, Curriculum, Instruction and Innovation, and Special Education. The primary purpose of this team is to gather and process information from multiple sources in a collective manner and to discuss operational changes that impact all offices. This team meets almost monthly to collaboratively implement needed changes related PARCC.
- Educational Leadership Cadre (ELC) resources electronically organized in a central location available to all staff

**Curriculum: Dr. Kevin Cuppett, Executive Director**

**([kevin.cuppett@fcps.org](mailto:kevin.cuppett@fcps.org); 301-644-5125)**

- Identification and development of school-based Elementary Math Instructional Leaders (EMILs) to write curriculum, generate resources, and deliver professional learning in schools
- TechNow initiative for creating a 1-1 device environment in middle schools for more personalized learning
- Professional learning for Salient 5 best practices in pedagogy (verbal discourse, questioning, collaborative practice, formative assessment, and technological expression and delivery)

**Assessment: Jamie Aliveto, Supervisor of Student Achievement**

**([jamie.aliveto@fcps.org](mailto:jamie.aliveto@fcps.org); 301-696-6877)**

- Considered state/local testing needs in creation of system testing calendar (decision to census test in first 2 weeks)
- Established collaborative workgroup with CII/RDA staff to focus on quality aligned local assessment (comprehensive formative and summative assessment system). Assessment revisions included consideration to TEI, text complexity, depths of knowledge, multi-standard, multi-part questions, and increase in performance based assessment
- Implemented normed computer adaptive assessment aligned to CCS county wide

**Special Education: Daniel Martz, Director of Special Education and Psychological Services**

**([daniel.martz@fcps.org](mailto:daniel.martz@fcps.org); 301-644-5281)**

- Special education workgroups have met to identify data points that are most appropriate in assisting schools in choosing appropriate accommodations for students; creating local electronic tools to assist with effective IEP processes

**Technology Infrastructure: Derek Root, Director of Technology Infrastructure**

**([derek.root@fcps.org](mailto:derek.root@fcps.org); 301-644-5323)**

- Revised FCPS capacity tool with consideration to logical test administration schedules in schools assisted with decisions related to Technology Infrastructure and decision to paper test for grades 3, 6, English 11, and Geometry
- FCPS webinar for STC's related to new capacity tool



## **Best Practices in Implementing MDCCRS and PARCC Garrett County Public Schools**

### **Developing Units in Mathematics**

As elementary teachers transitioned into the Maryland Career and College Readiness Standards, they assembled in collaborative grade level teams to develop mathematic units with a focus on problems that varied in content and complexity. Teachers determined that there must be a deliberate focus on the need for students to unpack math problems that varied in computational fluency and complex problem solving. Teachers completed a curriculum scroll by using the math progressions document by domain. The teachers displayed the math domain standards on index cards color-coded by grade level for each standard. Once the standards were complete, teachers created the instructional units to ensure skills within the standard aligned to the appropriate progression vertically and connected through multiple representations with other standards. The math problems required students to analyze viewpoints about various topics that prompted the application of multiple layers of knowledge including facts, rules, skills, procedures, and plans. Through this practice, teachers will scaffold their support to students. For example, mathematics consists of different standards including addition, subtraction, fraction, percentage, geometry, etc. Teachers can have students examine each topic from various perspectives and practice to connect and appropriately apply the layers within a topic.

### **Integration of Multi-Disciplinary Strategy**

During grade level team meetings, middle school teachers developed cross-curricular units. The teachers shared their respective content standards with their grade level colleagues for each grading term. The teachers determined the concepts and standards that naturally connected and based on this determination, they developed units based on a trans-disciplinary approach. For example, the social studies and math teachers developed lessons on map skills utilizing ratios, latitude and longitude and working with the coordinate plane. Additionally, teachers examined the practice PARCC assessments to increase their understanding of the PARCC. Teachers created assessments for units based on their understanding of PARCC.

### **Formation of Jigsaw Groups**

High school teachers devised educational “jigsaw” groups that are led by experts in particular areas who share strategies in their respective areas with others in the group. The principals dedicated one late-night professional development session per month for English, math, and STEM groups to meet. They customized lessons for teachers in other areas. For example, the English leader assisted career and technology and art teachers with embedding English standards into their lessons. Midway through the year, teachers met in their departments in additional late night sessions for the purpose of sharing ideas with each other. By forming “jigsaw” groups, social studies teachers participated in the English workgroup, math workgroup, or in the STEM workgroup. Later, in department meetings after a full semester in the jigsaw groups, teachers shared best practices they learned so that all of them will be exposed to some degree to standards from each workgroup. At the beginning of next year, departments will move within the jigsaw requiring that the social studies teacher previously assigned to English move to a different workgroup i.e. STEM or math.

Barbara L. Baker, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services  
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## Best Practices for Implementing PARCC

Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) participated in PARCC field testing during the 2013-2014 school year. The district experienced struggles and successes throughout the Performance-Based Assessment (PBA) and the End of Year (EOY) assessment. Many of the difficulties experienced were issues that were beyond local control and very much anticipated. Although not all issues were resolved, the district found that much of the preparation was critical to the successes with field testing. The following table provides a brief description of best practices implemented during PARCC field testing in HCPS.

<b>Communication</b>	<p>The frequency of PARCC email notifications, updates, and changes were overwhelming.</p> <p><b>Best Practice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Streamline communication to STCs/school in a summary email once per week.</li> <li>• Send additional information only if urgent action required.</li> <li>• Have additional phone coverage in the LAC office to field the numerous calls.</li> <li>• Provide STCs with letter templates regarding the PARCC assessments that can be used for schools to communicate with parents.</li> <li>• Work with the Curriculum and Instruction office to have general testing information available via system calendar and website.</li> </ul>
<b>Manuals</b>	<p>Test Coordinator Manuals (TCMs) and Test Administrator Manuals (TAMs) were difficult to understand with multiple contents, grades, and testing administrations in one book.</p> <p><b>Best Practice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preview and annotate Test Coordinator Manuals (TCMs) and Test Administrator Manuals (TAMs) prior to delivering to school personnel.</li> <li>• Provide annotated copies of TCMs and TAMs to STCs for school use.</li> </ul>
<b>Support</b>	<p>PARCC assessments require collaboration from central office in order to fully support schools.</p> <p><b>Best Practice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a PARCC committee with key personnel from system offices including: LAC, ELA, Math, Special Education, 504, ESOL, Technology, Professional Development, and school based staff.</li> <li>• Utilize the PARCC committee to strategize the implementation of the assessments in all facets: instructional implications, accommodations, technical support, and overall testing logistics and security.</li> <li>• Have PARCC committee members and the LAC staff conduct site visits during testing to provide on-site support to schools throughout the testing window.</li> </ul>
<b>Training</b>	<p>PARCC implementation has significant differences in logistics, test security, and accommodation delivery.</p> <p><b>Best Practice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train school teams rather than only School Test Coordinators (STCs).</li> <li>• Deliver training in conjunction with other offices, i.e. Special Education, 504, ESOL, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Test Administrator and Student Preparation</b>	<p>The online platform for the PARCC assessments and item types are more advanced from not only a content perspective, but also a technical perspective.</p> <p><b>Best Practice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedule sessions for students to practice tests in the format and become familiar with items types and online tools.</li> </ul>

## Howard County Public School System - Best Practices Update for MDCCRS/PARCC Implementation Review Workgroup - July 2014

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The HCPSS provided professional learning, curriculum and assessment resource development, and parent and community communication to support the transition to the MDCCRS and PARCC Assessments. The system developed a staggered timeline of implementation designed to provide job-embedded professional learning in a systematic fashion.

*Professional Development:* All elementary schools received on-site, on-going training to support teacher understanding of the instructional shifts necessitated by the Common Core. Each grade level team received appropriate information about their grade level standards and pedagogy. Secondary teachers had access to school-based professional learning communities facilitated by school-based teacher leaders and they had access to after school workshops for which they received stipends. All teachers participated in twice-yearly professional learning days that focused on the standards, revised curriculum, performance assessment, and student learning objectives (SLOs). Teachers also were able to choose to participate in continuing professional development courses for which they received credit.

Additionally, each year following EEA, two half-day trainings were held to support teachers who represented Language Arts at the summer Educational Effectiveness Academy. This training was designed to increase their competencies to lead staff throughout the transition. In 2014–15 the Office of Elementary Mathematics is planning a half-day workshop for two teachers from each of the 41 elementary schools. This professional learning session will focus on the expectations for PARCC and provide examples of the Type I, II, and III questions that students will be expected to answer. The examples will include the public release items that are available. Teachers will take a practice test to help them understand the expectations of PARCC and what the students will be experiencing. Practice examples include the content concepts as well as the technology skills.

*Curricular Resources:* All curriculum offices revised curriculum to reflect the new standards. Summer curriculum workshops were an opportunity to provide intensive professional development to teachers who then developed and revised curriculum. These teachers were also able to then serve as resources to others at their schools in understanding the instructional shifts required by the revised standards. An emphasis in curriculum development was the creation of integrated units of study that emphasized the writing, reading, language, and speaking/listening standards of the Common Core. These integrated units of study are designed to serve as models of instructional best practices. Writing Units of Study were created to help teachers ensure that students wrote across the curriculum daily for a variety of purposes aligned with the Common Core State Writing Standards. Grade level writing assessments were designed to measure student progress on opinion writing, informative writing, and narrative writing. Prompts and rubrics were provided, along with on-site training, to help teachers monitor student's ability to write effectively. Clusters of reading assessments around the three purposes were designed to model the task generated model and provide awareness to teachers of what the new assessments would encompass and provide practice to students in the new format.

The mathematics curriculum is provided through wikis for each grade level. The resources include the scope and sequence of standards for the four quarters of each grade level, lessons and lesson seeds, aligned print and web resources, and ideas for formative assessments. In the curricular documents, there are examples of formative assessments for each grade level standards. Teachers are encouraged to use these to drive instruction. These examples provide prototypes for teachers to create their own formative assessments.

*Parent Resources:* The curriculum staff offered four countywide Common Core forums to provide parents and community members with information about the standards and the revised curriculum. Staff compiled a website of resources for parents to assist their children in the area of reading/language arts. The link to the website was provided to parents during the February conference period and through school communications. For mathematics a Family Mathematics Support Center has been developed for parents and the community to provide information on what children will be learning in each grade level. Resources for games, mobile apps and ideas for working with children at home are included.

**Best Practices for Implementing MDCCRS/PARCC  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs**

1. **Begin curriculum realignment and revision early.** MCPS began aligning and redeveloping curriculum to CCSS, as soon as drafts were available in 2010. A multi-year rollout plan was established to avoid, as much as possible, too many grade levels or courses implementing new curriculum simultaneously. This was done to reduce impact on students, teachers, and resources.
2. **Communicate early and frequently to stakeholders.** MCPS developed a communication plan for staff, parents, and community beginning in 2010. The plan has been updated and implemented each year since 2010. The first step was a local Board of Education adoption of the CCSS as the basis for curriculum development.
3. **Explain to all stakeholders that CCSS/MDCCRS are about improving learning for all students, not implementing required initiatives.** MCPS incorporated CCSS/MDCCRS into Curriculum 2.0, a recasting of curriculum and instruction to include 21st century skills such as critical thinking, creative thinking, and academic success skills. Establishing the context for change—that other nations are out-performing the United States—was essential.
4. **Expanding professional learning time, at the macro and micro levels, is essential.** MCPS expanded systemwide professional learning opportunities and also provided each teacher implementing new curriculum additional professional substitute time (usually three days in the year of implementation and two days in the second year).
5. **Listen to teacher and school leader implementation concerns and make changes based on their feedback as much as possible.** MCPS convenes Councils on Teaching and Learning with our partner, the Montgomery County Education Association. There is a council for each grade level and subject area comprised of classroom teachers chosen by their peers. The curriculum office meets with them on a monthly basis to gather feedback and make changes. This connection has been an invaluable forum for working out the bugs of implementing new initiatives. Each major office within the system also has a principal advisory group that meets on a regular basis to work out operational and strategic issues.
6. **School leader professional development must focus on understanding the changes as well as how to monitor for effective implementation.** Initial professional learning for school leaders focused on the shifts in CCSS/MDCCRS and was complimentary to MSDE EEA opportunities. Professional learning since then has deepened knowledge of the CCSS/MDCCRS, and now PARCC, but has overwhelmingly focused on developing professional learning communities at specific grade levels and courses to collaboratively plan, implement, and monitor effective instruction and assessment.

7. **CCSS/MDCCRS is a shared responsibility among school teams and departments.** MCPS' approach to implementing CCSS/MDCCRS at the elementary level has been to integrate the curriculum through thinking and academic success skills. This approach ensures that all content areas focus on the shifts represented in the standards and that other content areas, such as social studies and science, are not diminished by a narrowing of curriculum. At the secondary level, all content areas agreed upon Core Literacy Practices based on the MDCCRS and Next Generation Science Standards. These practices, written in the language of observable student behaviors, provide look-fors for monitoring instruction and provide a common language of literacy in all secondary content areas.
  
8. **CCSS/MDCCRS/PARCC is a shared responsibility among system offices.** In large systems it is important that all offices collaborate on system messages and share responsibility for implementation. MCPS established CCSS/MDCCRS as a system priority in 2010 and has focused the work of all instructionally related offices on implementation. Budget development has prioritized effective implementation.

Questions: Please contact Dr. Erick J. Lang, associate superintendent for curriculum and instructional programs, Office of the Chief Academic Officer, at 301-279-3411 or via e-mail at [Erick\\_J\\_Lang@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Erick_J_Lang@mcpsmd.org).

# Prince George's County Public Schools

Best Practices from the 2014 Online Administration of the PARCC assessments.

Best Practices are categorized into three different areas: Technology Readiness, Staff Readiness, and Student Readiness.

## Technology Readiness

1. PGCPs utilized Pearson's Tech Readiness Tool to capture device and enrollment data.
2. Use of the tool began in June 2012 and allowed both the schools and the district to use the data to make informed decisions related to the purchase of needed technology.
3. IT Technicians were trained by the Department of Testing as to the technical requirements and their role in supporting the assessments.
4. The collaborative efforts and ongoing communication between the Testing and Technology departments has made online testing successful in PGCPs.
5. All PGCPs schools conducted an Infrastructure Trial to assess the readiness of both the network and the local devices.

## School Readiness

1. School Test Coordinators received differentiated training over multiple sessions to assure understanding of Pearson Access and Tests Nav.
2. Surveys were utilized between sessions to assess individual and school needs.
3. The Department of Testing introduced the ePats (Practice Tests) and PARCC Tutorials to multiple stakeholder groups throughout PGCPs.

## Student Readiness

1. School Test Coordinators worked with classroom teachers and special education teachers to introduce the PARCC tutorial and Practice Tests.
2. The Testing Office highly recommended that all students have hands-on opportunities to practice the navigation and tools of the online assessment.
3. An Online Testing area of the Student Page of PGCPs allowed parents and students to readily link to practice and operational tests.

Yakoubou Ousmanou, Director

Department of Testing

Prince George's County Public Schools

## QACPS Best Practices for PARCC and CC

QACPS recognized that the foundation of transitioning to a new curriculum and new assessment system is based on a strong communication system, professional development for staff, and time for implementation. We have in place a systemic organization plan that allows key information to be delivered to stakeholders in a face-to-face fashion in a timely manner. Our Curriculum and Supervision team meets twice a month. Administrators and Supervisors meet together once a month for a full day meeting. Teacher Specialists, Reading Specialists, and Math Specialists also meet each month in their respective groups. In addition, our Assistant Principals and leveled Principal groups meet quarterly. Through these meetings we are able to discuss and share necessary information throughout this massive undertaking.

Despite being a small system with limited staff, from the beginning we encouraged and allowed staff to participate in state meetings and committees related to CC and PARCC whenever possible. The information gleaned (if not confidential) could then be quickly passed on to the appropriate staff in a timely fashion. One clear example of how this benefitted our system as a whole is how allowable information was disseminated by our PARCC Educator Leadership Cadre member. This individual has attended all meetings and then shared the information through a systemic plan – first to C&I team members, then administrators, then to Teacher Specialists each month. This communication cycle assured that key stakeholders heard the information first hand.

In order to assure consistency, quality and pace, our approach to this curricular transition has always been led by the System. We developed all 3 years of transition plans at the system level, differentiating the plans by elementary, middle and high. Under the leadership of the Content Supervisors, our teachers, Specialists and Administrators had input into the plans that were generated. The Professional Development and activities that were outlined were delivered through the supervisors with the support of the school based specialists. Planning for activities were done through the monthly meetings. Close monitoring of the completion of school-based activities was done through the Teacher Specialists meetings, thus assuring that all schools were progressing at the same rate.

Professional Development began early with RELA and Math specialists and teachers completing gap analysis and focusing on the instructional shifts and standards of practice for STEM and Mathematics. The majority of our RTTT funding was obligated to stipends for professional development so we were able to provide extensive PD beyond the school days and during the summers. As our knowledge and understanding grew we turned our attention to curriculum writing and assessment revision/development. Through the years we were able to utilize the expertise of our Master Teachers to deliver PD beyond the EEA to teachers and administrators through our established meetings. The purchase of an online cloud platform for storing and previewing resources, lessons and assessments was a welcome addition to our teachers. At this point, we are channeling time and resources into converting our assessments into online versions. This will allow us to embed technology enhanced test items and assure our students are exposed to PARCC-like items.

We became an early adopter, implementing instructional shifts, standards of practice and facets of Maryland's framework into our schools and classrooms as early as 2011-12. By 2012-13, teachers and administrators wanted to move more fully into the implementation. Despite the impact on our performance on MSA, we believe this was critical to providing our teachers time to work with the new standards and fill in gaps in students' skills and knowledge. The system produced a document each year outlining the changes at the various levels and curriculums that would change for students that was distributed to parents. This document also contained information on the PARCC assessment and field test. Every school hosted various events to share information about the Common Core and its impact on their child.

The initiatives/actions described above are only some of the best practices we have utilized in our progress toward full implementation, student mastery of standards and success on PARCC. Please contact Roberta D. Leaverton, Assistant Superintendent for additional information.

# St. Mary's County Public Schools

DIVISION OF INSTRUCTION



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TO: Dr. Jack Smith, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction, MSDE

FROM: Ms. Tracey Heibel, LAC, St. Mary's County Public Schools *TH*

DATE: July 29, 2014

RE: Best Practices in Implementing MDCCSS/PARCC

Best Practices in Implementing PARCC

- Constant, ongoing collaboration between the state, district, and school levels. This collaboration was conducted via the state share site for LACs, the Maryland Online Testing website, and the SMCPs PARCC Google site.
- Restricted streaming access on the SMCPs wireless network during testing windows. This gave more available bandwidth to schools for purposes of testing.
- Shipment of Materials. It was convenient to have rulers, protractors and formula sheets sent to the schools. Next-day test pick up alleviated the need to store confidential materials for long periods of time.
- Flexible testing schedule. The testing windows allowed schools to schedule days and times for testing that worked best for the schools.
- Contact: Tracey Heibel, LAC

Best Practices in Implementing CCSS:

- Cross-disciplinary focus on critical and analytical reading, including consistent emphasis on annotation of text.
- Cross-disciplinary focus on writing, with emphasis on citing text.
- Alignment of local formative and growth assessments to mirror PARCC blueprints and utilizing data warehouse (Performance Matters) for analysis.
- Emphasis on content vocabulary and close reading in all curricular areas, esp. in special areas such as fine arts and physical education.
- Implementation of performance tasks based on the Task Generation Models.
- Ongoing professional development, including focused work with PLCs.
- Contact: Jeff Maher, Exec. Director, Teaching, Learning, and Professional Development





# Somerset County Public Schools

Dr. John B. Gaddis  
Superintendent of Schools

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William M. Miles, Chairperson  
Robert T. Wells, Vice Chairperson  
Margo Green-Gale  
Dan Kuebler  
BG Warner I. Sumpter USA (Ret.)

## Best Local Practices for PARCC and Maryland CCR Initiatives

- Afternoon Professional Development for Staff in Grades 6-12
  - All staff paid to attend weekly 75 min PD/collaborative Work after school
  - one month rotation includes system wide content/school improvement/technology/teacher selected PD
  - Provides continual support for professional learning communities
- Student Intervention
  - Programs available at all three levels
  - RTI framework to guide participation
- Elementary Professional Learning Communities
  - Led by Reading Coaches and Math Facilitators
  - Weekly data meetings to discuss and adjust strategies
  - New assessments developed by leadership
- Secondary RELA Work
  - Pre and Post Writing Assessments and collaborative scoring and anchor papers
  - Collaboratively developed prototype/practice items by standard and question type; new assessments and performance tasks
- Elementary RELA
  - Focus on writing with new assessments
- STEM Activities
  - At least one project based STEM unit per grade in elementary
  - STEM elective classes in Intermediate level
  - 8<sup>th</sup> Grade STEM projects
  - Robotics and project based learning in Technology Education at H.S.
- Summer Professional Development
  - Three to four day workshops for all core contents during the summer
  - FLEX day PD program to encourage individual learning
- Data Warehouse
  - *Performance Matters* stores local and standardized assessments
  - Locally developed TPE system will be managed within *PM*
- Enhanced Career Guidance
  - Use of *Naviance* to assist students in completing Career Portfolios
  - Assists students with choosing and applying to post-graduate programs
- Student Engagement
  - *Kagan* workshop open to K-12 to encourage cooperative learning
  - *Universal Design for Learning* PD provided to all staff
  - Special Education services expanded to meet diverse student needs
- Use of Technology
  - Promethean Boards in all classrooms K-8
  - Increased PD on effective use of Instructional Technology

For information, please contact: [delebash@somerset.k12.md.us](mailto:delebash@somerset.k12.md.us)

**Angela Domingue, Ph.D.**

Associate Superintendent &  
Chief Academic Officer

Content		Contact Person
Mathematics		Kara Burhans <a href="mailto:reedkar@wcps.k12.md.us">reedkar@wcps.k12.md.us</a> 301-766-2926
Best Practices	Level	Brief Description
Phased in implementation of the CCSS	ALL	We began phasing in the CCSS in 2012 and gradually increased use of CCSS to full implementation
Unpacking the standards	ALL	In all grade levels, professional development was provided through a variety of platforms to support unpacking the standards through use of the CCSS, appendices, and supporting documents
Math Institutes	K-Algebra II	Year-long MSDE courses focused on supporting teachers in developing a deep understanding of the CCSS for their grade level and to support them in building student-centered mathematics classrooms
Centralized curricular hub	ALL	We provided a centralized location (formerly via wiki and My Big Campus, not through google drive) for teachers to access a plethora of materials and resources to support their understanding of the standards and also to provide them with resources and structure for teaching
School-Based Professional Development	ALL	Central office team facilitates and/or supports school based PD including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Book studies</li> <li>• Unpacking standards</li> <li>• CFIP support</li> <li>• Scrolling/unit standard work</li> </ul>
Department Leader Meetings	Middle and High	Focus on student-centered classrooms, content changes in courses and grade levels, the shifts of the MDCCRS, how to support teachers, implications of PARCC
Central Office Team resources support	ALL	Review and develop resources for teachers to use for MDCCRS instruction, unpacking standards, understanding the standards, shifts, math practices, instructional planning supports, assessment supports, development of assessments, math fact fluency support, review and recommend instructional materials and resources for procurement.
County-Wide Professional Development	Middle & High	Three county-wide professional development days/year: structured in conference-style to ensure teachers participate in sessions that are relevant to them and their work in their content as well as sessions focused on the SMPs and student-centered instructional strategies.
Summer Workshops	ALL	Teachers collaborate and provide input on scope and sequence, resources, and assessment development

Teacher PLCs	CC Geometry	Teachers formed a PLC for CC Geometry to unpack the standards as a county group that met regularly and reviewed and activities that were aligned by central office staff, as well as reviewing assessments and making suggestions for any changes/etc to central office team.
New Course Development	CC Algebra IA, IB, and CC Algebra IIA, IIB	New courses developed to ensure opportunities for all students in accessing the content of the MDCCRS
Collaboration with Special Ed, ELL	ALL	Collaboration between central office staff and school based staff to ensure that professional development and supports of sp ed and ELL staff align with MDCCRS expectations
Collaboration with other contents	ALL	Working to make connections between mathematics expectations and other contents in regards to SMP, student-centered, vocab, reading, and writing
New Teacher Support	ALL	Mentoring, new teacher academy, new teacher support
Classroom visits and walk throughs	ALL	Classroom visits, coaching and feedback regarding eliciting the SMPs, student-centered math classrooms, and MDCCRS implementation
Checkpoint development and review	ALL	Development of math checkpoints that align with PARCC assessment item types and expectations.
Number Corner	K, 1, 2	Purchase and implementation of Number Corner by Bridges in all K, 1, 2 classrooms to strategically support MDCCRS implementation.

<b>Content</b>	<b>Contact Person</b>
English	Beth Downin <a href="mailto:downibet@wcps.k12.md.us">downibet@wcps.k12.md.us</a> 301-766-8706
<b>Best Practices</b>	<b>Brief Description</b>
Professional Development	The ELA staff provides ongoing professional development on: the standards themselves, instructional practices, backward design, planning, and assessment

<b>Content</b>	<b>Contact Person</b>
Science	Sandy Graff <a href="mailto:GraffSan@wcps.k12.md.us">GraffSan@wcps.k12.md.us</a> 301-766-2924
<b>Best Practices</b>	<b>Brief Description</b>
Professional Development	The Science staff provides ongoing professional development on: Next Generation Science Standards, Disciplinary Literacy topics, and Argumentative and Explanatory writing.

## Worcester County Public Schools (WCPS) – Preparing for MDCCRS

Below is a list of best practices that WCPS has employed to prepare staff and students for MDCCRS

### Assessment – Stephanie Zanich, Local Accountability Coordinator

- All local assessments have been aligned to the MD Common Core College and Career Standards
- Professional Development has been given to all administrators and teachers in MDCCR standards and how they drive instruction and teachers in analyzing data from county assessments, teacher assessments, and everyday activities to inform instructional decisions making.
- A MDCCRS diagnostic assessment system and intervention system (*iReady*) will be implemented in 2014/15.
- Students have been given opportunities to take assessments online in order to prepare them for the way that PARCC in 2014/15.

### English Language Arts – Denise Shorts, Coordinator of Instruction for K-12 Literacy

- ELA curriculum has been developed that is aligned to the MDCCRS using an Understanding by Design (*UbD*) unit framework with identified curriculum embedded performance tasks.
- All ELA curricula will be housed and accessible in WCPS' customized curriculum cloud.
- Resources in both paper and digital format have been purchased for teachers that incorporate more complex texts and informational text. These include *Treasures (K-5)*, *Springboard (6-8)* and *Defined STEM (all grades)*.
- Professional development has been provided and continues to be provided in unpacking the standards so they can be effectively taught and in the teaching of writing.
- A *WCPS Literacy Guide* has been created for distribution in 2014/15 that spells out teacher literacy expectations.
- Professional development has been provided and continues to be provided in the *Universal Design for Learning (UDL)* to meet the needs of all students in accessing grade level, rigorous content.
- Model lessons have been developed that incorporate MDCCRS and emphasize rigor, more complex text, independent reading, close reading, the reading of nonfiction materials, and writing.
- Interventions have been reviewed and new one are being piloted for students who require Tier Two and Tier Three support within the RTI framework.

### Mathematics Program – Rosemary Heher, Coordinator of Instruction for Mathematics

- Elementary, middle and high school curricula have been developed that are aligned to the MDCCRS for math.
- Both print and digital materials of instruction have been purchased to support MDCCRS at the elementary, middle and high school levels.
- Professional development programs continue to reflect identified needs associated with new math curricula and assessments. Programs are provided to teachers, principals, and educational assistants throughout the school year and during the summer. Instructional formats include face-to-face programs after the school day, on inservice days, and during the summer. New formats for engaging educators in professional development include offering set of customized math graduate courses delivered in a hybrid format for teachers in grades 3-12, developed from a unique partnership between WCPS and Salisbury University's Department of Mathematics. Another new format for the district are locally designed and produced online Blackboard courses for teachers that address important new math content and pedagogy and are offered across the grade bands, "by math teachers for math teachers."
- Newly developed curriculum documents and instructional resources are now warehoused in a customized curriculum cloud to allow teachers greater access to, storage of, and customization of math curriculum and instructional materials.
- Work is underway district-wide to address a broader Response to Intervention program in grades K-5 emphasizing meeting the instructional needs of math students requiring Tier 2 and Tier 3 support.

- New accelerated pathway courses have been created which address a compacted approach to new math standards in grades seven through Algebra. Teachers have been trained and instruction delivered using both digital and non-digital supports during the school year, during the school day, in after-school settings and throughout the summer months.
- The development of units of instruction in mathematics will become a focus for work in the district, using *UbD* formats and principles associated with *UDL*. When completed for each grade level, these units will be incorporated into online professional development platforms, be housed and accessible via the district's customized curriculum cloud, and will eventually span all grade bands. Most importantly, the mathematics units will reflect the important instructional shifts associated with new mathematics standards and research-based best teaching practices and resources.

### **Communications – Barbara Witherow, Coordinator of Public Relations and Special Programs**

- Launched in 2014, Worcester County Public Schools' new school system website, at [www.worcesterk12.com](http://www.worcesterk12.com), is an information source for the Maryland College & Career Ready Standards and for PARCC.
- Within the Academics & Programs super-menu, stakeholders can access a plethora of resources for MDCCRS. Links are also provided to the Maryland State Department of Education's website, MSDE resources, and the Common Core State Standards' website.
- Under the Faculty & Staff super-menu, teachers can access links to the new standards for English Language Arts, Mathematics, and the Next Generation Science Standards.
- Within the Academic & Programs super-menu, stakeholders can access the Assessment section and find information on PARCC, the testing schedule, and 2014 MSA results.
- Information about PARCC testing, including the 2014-2015 testing schedule, is published in the Student Handbook – the highest rated communications tool for the school system. Each child and employee receives a Student Handbook.
- Twitter and Facebook are used to announce information, such as the release of accountability data. In the social media notification, links are provided to our website "News" section.
- WCPS submits a weekly bylined column to a local county newspaper (the Worcester County Times). Many articles have focused on the implementation and benefits of the Maryland College & Career Ready Standards. This has helped inform the public.
- The Superintendent of Schools used *Socrative* – a mobile survey app – to measure each school faculty's readiness for change around the new standards and PARCC assessments. Results were shared with each school.
- The Superintendent of Schools facilitated teacher advisory committees to glean feedback on progress in the implementation of the new standards, as well as related initiatives.
- The Superintendent of Schools visited community organizations to share WCPS' Strategic Direction, which included information on MDCCRS.
- The Chief Academic Officer presented information on shifts in the math curriculum at PTA meetings.
- Schools have access to an automated notification system to remind parents and students of testing, to encourage best-practices prior to being tested, and to urge students to do their best.
- Publications have been created and distributed a Q&A document on MDCCRS.

### **Technology – Tom Mascara, Coordinator of Information Technology**

- Replacement of old desktop computers and purchase of new laptop carts to permit PARCC testing
- Upgrades in bandwidth and wifi capabilities to meet PARCC guidelines,
- Software upgrades to permit proctor caching for PARCC administration
- Opportunities for student practice using PARCC testing tools.

# Agenda

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## Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards (MCCRS) and Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Implementation Review Workgroup

**July 10, 2014, 9:00 – 12:00**

**Howard County Public Schools Board of Education – Board Rooms A & B  
10910 Clarksville Pike (Rt. 108)  
Ellicott City, MD 21042**

### I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

### II. REVIEW OF THE CHARGE - Chapter 246 (House Bill 1164) Questions

### III. LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM BEST PRACTICES

*Section 1(f)(2) “identify and analyze the best practices of local education agencies in the State and in other jurisdictions that are successfully implementing the Common Core State Standards and PARCC assessments”*

### IV. IMPACT ON SELECTED STUDENT POPULATIONS

*Section 1(f)(3) “assess how the MCCRS and the PARCC assessments will affect students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who qualify for free and reduced-price meals”*

### V. TECHNOLOGY READINESS

*Section 1(f)(7) “assess the technological readiness and the needs of the public schools for the implementation of the PARCC assessments, including what resources will be needed to teach students the necessary computer skills to take the PARCC assessments”*

### VI. Comments and Questions

### VII. Adjourn

### NEXT MEETING

July 25, 2014 – 9:00 – 12:00

West County Area Library – Anne Arundel County Public Library  
1325 Annapolis Road, Odenton, MD 21113

# Minutes

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## **Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards (MCCRS) and Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Implementation Review Workgroup July 10, 2014**

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m. by co-chairs Jack R. Smith and Betty Weller.

**ATTENDANCE:** Fourteen (14) workgroup members were present (see attendance log). There were 14 observers in attendance (see sign-in sheet).

The co-chairs welcomed the members who introduced themselves.

### **LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM BEST PRACTICE**

*Section 1(f)(2) “identify and analyze the best practices of local education agencies in the State and in other jurisdictions that are successfully implementing the Common Core State Standards and PARCC assessments”*

One of the responsibilities of the workgroup is to report on best practices of local school systems. Dr. Kathryn Kubic, Asst. Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction for Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS), presented a model they are using to visually present how the Common Core State Standards and PARCC Claims are aligned in a purposeful way. At the core of the visual representation is the Model Content Framework, with the Common Core Standards, Cognitive Complexity, Evidence Statements, Performance Level Descriptors, PARCC Claims, Task Types, Blueprints, and Mathematical (or English Language Arts) Practices all connecting to the core. The school district is unpacking all of these components for teachers.

*Question:* Teachers need time to find available tools and learn how to use them before they are part of the teachers’ evaluations. Is the school district including teaching best practices in professional development?

*Answer:* AACPS is working to compact tools, give teachers curricular documents, and unpack items in a rolling document in the curriculum. This is a work in progress.

*Comment:* This is a time saver, but it still takes teachers’ time.

*Question:* What is the feedback AACPS is getting?

*Answer:* The initial reaction is often “Whoa!” But, then teachers are appreciative.

*Question:* Is there time in the day in AACPS for professional development?

*Answer:* AACPS parses professional development opportunities during the school year.

*Comment:* Sometimes teachers get planning time taken away for professional development.

*Response:* School districts are careful to honor teacher contracts and often build in additional collaborative planning time so individual planning time is not impacted.

*Comment:* Teachers often plan during the summer, so waiting until the start of the school year to give teachers this information is too late. Teachers feel pressured to implement what they don't fully understand.

*Question:* Do you start where the child is, even if the child is behind?

*Answer:* Teachers are not teaching as many standards, but they are teaching to higher rigor. AACPS is helping teachers know how to use the tools to help students meet the standards.

*Question:* Has AACPS developed tools for parents and students?

*Answer:* AACPS will be rolling out a parent portal so they know what to do to help the child meet the standards.

*Comment:* There is concern about the consistency of standards across states, as there is great inconsistency.

*Comment:* School systems are at different places in the implementation of the standards, but this has been true in the past with former standards as well. The goal is for the state to bring consistency while still maintaining local control.

Best practices will be a regular agenda item.

## **REVIEW OF THE CHARGE - Chapter 246 (House Bill 1164)**

The co-chairs reviewed the responsibilities of the workgroup as delineated in legislation. Agenda items at each meeting will be organized around specific responsibilities.

*Comments:*

- There is anxiety about what is successful; that is not always obvious until after the fact.
- The workgroup needs to talk about the bumps in the road; members must be honest about problems.
- The study being done by the workgroup should have been done prior to the implementation of the MCCRS and PARCC. The General Assembly wants to do this now in an effort to help.
- There must be an open evaluation process of what is going on. The State Board of Education is interested in sharing best practices. The summer Educator Effectiveness Academies are breaking down some of the past barriers in sharing best practices.
- Members can email concerns or questions in any of the areas covered by the workgroup's charge to the co-chairs. These will be used to build future agendas and presentations. Since the MCCRS and PARCC are in the implementation process, the information provided will be a snapshot in time.
- A preliminary report will be provided to the General Assembly by August 15. A draft will be written after the July 25 meeting and reviewed/ revised by the group on August 12.

## **IMPACT ON SELECTED STUDENT POPULATIONS**

*Section 1(f)(3) "assess how the MCCRS and the PARCC assessments will affect students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who qualify for free and reduced-price meals"*



Presentation by Maryland State Department of Education Assistant Superintendents Henry Johnson, Kristina Kyles, Marcella Franczkowski

- A PowerPoint was presented and discussed (see attached)
- For English Language Learners (ELL):
  - The achievement gap for these students has remained virtually the same from 2010-13, with gaps at the elementary, middle and high school levels
  - MCCRS can help identify strategies to help students
  - Students are assessed with a test aligned with the MCCRS that assesses English language acquisition
  - *Questions/comments:*
    - Students enter Maryland schools in many grades. Are we doing a better job with students entering in earlier grades?
    - The dropout gap is dismal but has improved 20% from 2010-13.
    - There is a gap in elementary school, which improves in middle school and then gets larger again in high school. What is happening?
- For students qualifying for Free and Reduced Meals (FARMS)
  - MCCRS will help in addressing equity in education
  - Achievement gaps for these students have grown slightly.
  - MSDE is providing targeted support.
  - *Questions/comments:*
    - Can MSDE provide data and best practices by school district?
    - What percentage of FARMS students are also ELL?
    - How will Bridge Projects change during the transition? Is the number of Bridge Projects increasing or decreasing over time?
    - FARMS students struggle from the beginning. How do we do things differently for these students knowing that MCCRS are more rigorous? Will students just struggle more? *Response:* There will be an implementation gap, but will be able to target instruction more strategically with the more dynamic, clear and streamlined curriculum.
    - Information about the Early Childhood Race to the Top would be interesting.
    - Can the workgroup get information about the attendance rates for various student groups by district and grade?
- For students receiving special education services:
  - Achievement gaps can be looked at at three levels: individual student, over time, and in the aggregate.
  - It is harder to erase learning gaps in later grades.
  - MCCRS/PARCC change the way we are doing business. The standards will be built into the Individualized Education Programs and will drive instruction.
  - PARCC can be used as a diagnostic tool.
  - *Questions and comments:*
    - How well or how poorly are IEPs implemented? *Response:* Early identification is critical to student success. IEP implementation is critical.

- Can the workgroup get information on student exit levels for special education and ELL students. How does this affect graduation rates?
- What is done for students who are in the Infants and Toddler program, enter regular education and are unsuccessful? *Response:* Those students can be re-evaluated by the school's IEP teach.
- PARCC and self-contained classrooms – When skills are not covered, how do we provide a foundation for all students? *Response:* Universal Design for Learning can help all students. 1% of students will need an alternative assessment and 2% will need test accommodations.
- This information must be provided to teachers so they will not be as worried. *Response:* The Student Learning Objective (SLO) process will be very helpful to help mark student progress.
- NCLB forces states to give students the same assessment. The balance that needs to be reached is to have teachers teach to the IEPs and also hold high expectations for learning.

## TECHNOLOGY READINESS

*Section 1(f)(7) “assess the technological readiness and the needs of the public schools for the implementation of the PARCC assessments, including what resources will be needed to teach students the necessary computer skills to take the PARCC assessments”*

- MSDE provided a summary of the PARCC field test – see attached. Maryland is the only state that field tested PARCC in every school. This gave schools an opportunity to test the hardware and the accommodations. MSDE is recommending that teachers use PARCC practice tests during the school year so students are exposed to the technology and the experience.
- *Questions and comments:*
  - Do schools have enough devices for all students to take the test? *Response:* Students can take a paper version of the assessment through 2017, so there is time to gear-up.
  - When will districts have to declare whether they are using paper/pencil or computer tests for the next administration? *Response:* Will provide the answer at the next workgroup meeting.
  - Will someone be looking at comparability of results between paper/pencil and computer? *Response:* There will be comparability studies after the 2014-15 administration.
  - Will there be reports from all 24 school districts? *Response:* yes
  - Will school districts be encouraged to increase the % of online administration each year? *Response:* Yes. The goal is to have everyone ready by 2016-17, which is one year early.
  - Will there be efficiency in purchasing technology? *Response:* School districts can piggyback on state and other district contracts.
  - At the school level, as more devices are used for testing, fewer will be available for instruction. *Response:* MSDE and PARCC will be looking at the amount of testing time that is essential – especially for ELL students.
  - Schools will need tech support. *Response:* This is one reason that PARCC was field tested in every school.
  - Baltimore City used virtual desktop, which helps when districts are using multiple types of devices for testing.

- Part of having students who are college and career ready is having teachers who are comfortable using technology.
- Will MSDE be monitoring the use of technology to see how much is being used for testing vs. instruction? *Response:* Yes. MSDE staff will be visiting more classrooms.
- Can the workgroup get a breakdown of the testing time/calendar for 2014-15?
- How much money will school districts need so there is enough technology?  
*Response:* MSDE polled school districts, and this resulted in a huge number. There have been subsequent conversations to clarify what was included in those projections. This fall MSDE and districts will have a better idea of the bandwidth and device needs. This information will be included in the districts' plan for digital conversion. Some money can come out of the textbook allocation.
- What is the expectation that school districts will realign their budgets? Technology acquisition must start now. Will MSDE be monitoring this? *Response:* It will have to. It is also important for instruction in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. MSDE must make clear how it can and cannot help school districts.
- What information does MSDE need to ensure school districts are on track? Will MSDE send out timelines? *Response:* Yes.

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Minutes adopted: July 25, 2014

NEXT MEETING

July 25, 2014 – 9:15 – 12:00

West County Area Library – Anne Arundel County Public Library  
1325 Annapolis Road, Odenton, MD 21113

FUTURE MEETING DATES

Tuesday, August 12 – 9:15 – 12:00

Wednesday, September 17 – 9:15 – 12:00

Tuesday, October 21 – 1:00 – 4:00

Wednesday, November 12 – 9:15 – 12:00

Thursday, December 11 – 9:15 – 12:00

# Agenda

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## Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards (MCCRS) and Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Implementation Review Workgroup

July 25, 2014 – 9:15 – 12:00

West County Area Library – Anne Arundel County Public Library  
1325 Annapolis Road, Odenton, MD 21113

- I. WELCOME & APPROVAL OF MINUTES
- II. LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM BEST PRACTICE  
*Section 1(f)(2) “identify and analyze the best practices of local education agencies in the State and in other jurisdictions that are successfully implementing the Common Core State Standards and PARCC assessments”*
- III. FOLLOW-UP ON QUESTIONS FROM JUNE 10
- IV. CURRICULUM RESOURCES  
*Section 1(f)(4) “determine what, if any, new curriculum resources will be needed in order to fully implement the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards”*
- V. PARENT AND STUDENT PREPARATION  
*Section 1(f)(5) “identify how the State Department of Education plans to assist local education agencies in preparing parents and students for the PARCC assessments”*
- VI. SCHOOL CALENDAR  
*Section 1(f)(10) “assess how the PARCC assessments testing window will affect the normal school calendar and school schedule.”*
- VII. TRANSFERRING FROM HSA TO PARCC  
*Section 1(f)(5) “develop a plan to transfer from the Maryland High School Assessments in English and Algebra Data/Analysis to the comparable PARCC assessments as a graduation requirement”*
- VI. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS
- VII. ADJOURN

### FUTURE MEETING DATES

Tuesday, August 12 – 9:15 – 12:00

Wednesday, September 17 – 9:15 – 12:00

Tuesday, October 21 – 1:00 – 4:00

Wednesday, November 12 – 9:15 – 12:00

Thursday, December 11 – 9:15 – 12:00

# Minutes

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## **Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards (MCCRS) and Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Implementation Review Workgroup July 25, 2014**

The meeting was called to order at 9:15 a.m. by co-chairs Jack R. Smith and Betty Weller.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Fifteen (15) workgroup members were present (see attendance log). There were 15 observers in attendance (see sign-in sheet).

The co-chairs welcomed the members who introduced themselves. Mr. Daric Jackson moved and Sen. Paul Pinsky seconded that the minutes be approved as written; the minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

Dr. Smith said that the State Board of Education made the decision to only administer three PARCC high school assessments – English 10, Algebra I, and Algebra II – in 2014-15. English 10 and Algebra I are needed for students to meet graduation requirements and Algebra II is the measure of college and career-readiness.

### **LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM BEST PRACTICE**

*Section 1(f)(2) “identify and analyze the best practices of local education agencies in the State and in other jurisdictions that are successfully implementing the Common Core State Standards and PARCC assessments”*

Dr. Shawn Joseph, Deputy Superintendent; W. Wesley Watts, Jr., Chief Information Officer; Yakoubou Ousmanou, Director of Testing; and Pauline Carey, Testing Administration Specialist; all from Prince George’s County Public Schools (PGCPS), presented PARCC Assessment Best Practices and Challenges. See attached PowerPoint.

The goal of the school system is to ensure outstanding student achievement for all students with a focus on literacy. The collaboration between instruction and informational technology supports this goal.

Since PGCPS had tested 100% of its students online for the MSA, it felt more ready for the online PARCC administration. It used a technology readiness tool provided by PARCC to project its needs. An infrastructure trial emphasized the need for an opportunity for students to use the same device during instruction that they will use for testing (e.g. iPad, desktop, laptop). Differentiated trainings are needed for staff (school technicians, School Test Coordinators (STCs)) and various student populations.

Over four years, PGCPS evaluated the bandwidth needed for instruction and testing, increasing the bandwidth as needed. Wireless was added to all buildings. Additional devices

were added and the system evaluated which devices were most effective. They are concerned about the tech support needed for STCs and schools, especially during the 20-day testing window. They will be developing a plan during the 2014-15 school year.

*Question:* Does PGCPs take advantage of bulk buying opportunities?

*Answer:* Yes, it purchases technology through state contracts.

Challenges include support to schools, infrastructure readiness for Charter schools, online assessment scheduling, and online test security. Challenges and essential questions will be addressed by a cross-functional team that meets monthly.

*Question:* How are you training teachers:

*Answer:* PGCPs is using the trainer-of-trainers model. There are monthly online tutorials for STCs and IT specialists, with a focus on digital literacy in the classroom. Information is provided on technology-enhanced lessons. Staff is also looking at training for students so they are ready. Principals provide information on what is needed at the school level.

*Question:* Do you have a FAQ document:

*Answer:* the Local Accountability Coordinator workgroup, which holds statewide meetings, share best practices.

*Question:* Does the school communicate information to parents?

*Answer:* The school system is working on this aspect of communication. Parents want more information. The district is preparing a PARCC video as well as a generic presentation that can be used as a resource by multiple presenters.

*Question:* Do you have budget concerns? Technology is expensive.

*Answer:* It is a challenge to get funds for the network; PGCPs has used grants and e-rate funds, in addition to local funding. The next challenge will be to get sufficient funds to provide tech support to schools. Devices are purchased over time. One-to-one student devices are not necessarily the answer; PGCPs is studying the best distribution of instructional technology. Charter schools can be a challenge because they have their own networks and devices. PGCPs is considering establishing a lab that can support student testing.

*Comment:* The lab should be as portable as possible for budget requirements and maximum flexibility.

*Comment:* Perhaps one of the workgroup recommendations should address technology funding.

*Comment:* When making recommendations, be mindful of various district needs, which differ greatly.

*Question:* How do you handle the constant need for computer updates?

*Answer:* PGCPs works on a 4-5 year replacement schedule. Most software is installed remotely, but some work needs to be done in-person.

## **FOLLOW-UP ON QUESTIONS FROM JUNE 10**

Written information will be provided to the group in the future; a brief oral presentation was provided by Dr. Douglas Strader, Interim Chief, Planning and Assessment Branches at MSDE.

- Data for English Language Learners and students receiving Free and Reduced Meals is available by school district.
- Districts will have to declare the mode of delivering the PARCC assessments when they submit their pre-test files. This designation can be done at the student level. MSDE has written into the contract with PARCC that over the 4-year contract, 75% of the administration will be paper in the first year with 25% in the fourth year. This will give school districts time to transition to online testing. While the eventual goal is 100% of students testing online, it is recognized that there will be some students who will have paper assessments stipulated in their IEPs.
- LEAs will have to realign their budgets to some extent to purchase technology for test administration and student instruction. MSDE has an online consultant that is communicating with local school districts.
- Each PARCC content area assessment has 2 parts. One part is performance-based and the other is an end of year (EOY). The assessment is not timed, so the assessment window is long to allow all students adequate time to complete the assessment. PARCC is dedicated to reducing the testing time and will be evaluating it this year.
  - *Question* – can local districts design an alternate activity for those students who complete the assessment before the end of the assessment window? *Answer:* MSDE will discuss this with PARCC.

## **SCHOOL CALENDAR**

*Section 1(f)(10) “assess how the PARCC assessments testing window will affect the normal school calendar and school schedule”*

Bill Cappe, Maryland State Department of Education Ombudsman, presented school calendar considerations

- Section 7-103 of the Education Article sets the parameters of what school systems are required to do when setting their calendars. Systems must be open for students a minimum of 180 school days and a minimum of 1080 hours during a 10-month period. Most school systems exceed the minimum hour requirement. The law also stipulates certain holidays that requires school closures.
- COMAR 13A.03.02.12 defines the length of the school year for high schools, stipulating 1170 hours during a 10-month period.
- Handouts (attached) are:
  - Public school openings and closings for 2014-15
  - Days and hours per district for 2014-15
  - 2014-15 inclement weather days per school district

- School systems have local autonomy in setting their school calendars within the legal guidelines, and establish the calendars 2-3 years out. School systems use calendar committees, including a variety of stakeholders. Testing windows are established within these calendars.

*Comment:* Local school system autonomy is important. Instructional days in August and September are more important than in mid-June.

*Question:* do we know how many days are allocated for testing – local and state testing – in each district?

*Answer:* The PARCC testing window is 8 weeks – 4 performance based and 4 EOY.

*Comment:* Instructional time can be disrupted by testing.

*Comment:* The actual number of testing days per student is very different from the length of the testing window.

*Comment:* We can poll districts about both the testing windows and the number of actual test days per student

*Comment:* Longer testing windows give districts more flexibility in deciding when to schedule individual tests.

## **CURRICULUM RESOURCES**

*Section 1(f)(4) “determine what, if any, new curriculum resources will be needed in order to fully implement the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards”*

Judy Jenkins, Director in the Division of Curriculum, Assessment and Accountability at MSDE, said that curricular resources reside online in Blackboard. These were developed in various content areas for all grade levels and in collaboration with teachers across the state. These resources include the needed shifts in instruction, address the learning needs of different student populations, and embed Universal Design for Learning. MSDE started sharing these units with teachers during the 2012 Educator Effectiveness Academies.

It is important to create resources and share them. Parent resources are posted on the website, are shared through the PTA, and include videos. Staff resources are shared in the following ways.

- At monthly Assistant Superintendent meetings
- At quarterly Content Coordinator meetings
- At state conferences such as Common Ground and MSEA
- During MSDE visits to local school districts
- Online through LEA connections to Blackboard

Resources include STEM and PARCC resources.

MSDE shares the PARCC test design and sample assessment items so teachers can use these during instruction. Tools need to include sample technological enhancements so teachers feel comfortable incorporating these into their daily instruction. Students need to practice things like “drag and drop” so they are familiar with this during testing.

*Question:* For whose use are the intervention modules designed?



*Answer:* Intervention modules are available for teachers, parents and students.

*Question:* Are there long-term plans for using data to automatically notify students and parents of where a student needs extra work and providing them with the appropriate module?

*Answer:* A formative assessment program is being developed to help identify weaknesses. Some of this will depend on local school systems. Many private vendors are working on this.

*Question:* What will be the trend for teachers who struggle with this?

*Answer:* The vast majority of teachers are grasping these changes. Help and information must be provided “in the moment.” Teachers are ready now, so it is a good time to provide resources and support.

*Comment:* We should poll districts to find out what curricular and professional resources they need now.

*Comment:* This is a cultural shift. Teachers used to be prescriptive and now they have more flexibility. Some teachers are not comfortable with this new role yet. It is a transition.

*Comment:* It is important to remember there are 4 areas of educational reform and this committee is only considering 2 of the 4. On the survey it is important to consider the fidelity of the implementation.

*Question:* Does MSDE know if local districts are incorporating MSDE resources? Are they being used?

*Answer:* This was asked during MSDE visits to all 24 school districts. It varies from district-to-district. MSDE is working with Blackboard so MSDE can get this information moving forward.

*Question:* Is MSDE getting feedback from districts on what resources are helpful?

*Answer:* MSDE gets this information through district visits as well as at the Educator Effectiveness Academies. Teachers are still not aware of all of the available units. The number one request is videos showing classroom implementation.

*Comment:* There will probably be more teachers accessing the information this year as teachers are shifting to the new instructional methods.

## **PARENT AND STUDENT PREPARATION**

*Section 1(f)(5) “identify how the State Department of Education plans to assist local education agencies in preparing parents and students for PARCC assessments”*

Laura Motel, Race to the Top Communications Specialist, said that last year, MSDE focused on the following communication strategies:

- Providing print resources
- Demonstrating PARCC assessments at conferences, including the Maryland Association of Student Councils and PTA
- Inviting members of the media to visit schools during practice test administrations
- Providing information on social media platforms

Goals for communications this year include providing information about

- What the transition looks like
- New graduation requirements
- Merging information about MCCRS and PARCC

The following sample print documents were distributed:

- Parents Guide to New Assessments in Maryland  
[http://www.msde.state.md.us/w/PTAGuide\\_MD\\_MDCCRS\\_042014.pdf](http://www.msde.state.md.us/w/PTAGuide_MD_MDCCRS_042014.pdf)
- Top 10 Things Every Maryland Teacher Should Know about the PARCC Assessments and 2014 Field Test  
[http://www.msde.state.md.us/mdclassroom/Vol19\\_No2\\_032014.pdf](http://www.msde.state.md.us/mdclassroom/Vol19_No2_032014.pdf)
- Top 10 Things Parents Need to Know about Testing in Maryland  
<http://www.msde.state.md.us/w/Top10TestingMD2014.pdf>
- Content Guide – Resources on the PARCC Assessments – see attached

In July, MSDE mailed flash drives to schools so they have electronic documents to share with parents. MSDE is partnering with MPT to produce videos for parents.

Doug Strader said that MSDE is also sharing information from the PARCC online website, which has a wealth of information. There are links that are relevant to parents, students and teachers. <http://parconline.org/for-parents>

*Question:* What are we doing to market to students?

*Answer:* To some extent, we are hoping information filters through teachers to students. Also, it is hoped that students access the social media sources.

MSDE does not want the communications to get too far ahead of where people are. One important thing to communication this year is that this is a totally new test, so we can't compare the results. MSDE is learning from states that are ahead of Maryland in test administration. It is important to give parents information that is actionable so they can be involved in helping their children.

*Comment:* PTA is working to reach parents who are culturally not participating or who do not have access to information.

*Question:* Is MSDE working to reach hard to reach parents?

*Answer:* We are working to improve outreach. Publications are translated into multiple languages.

*Comment:* There is a lot of good information, but it is not reaching parents

*Answer:* We are providing information to schools so they can, in turn, share it with parents. We are also partnering with PTA.

*Question:* Does information go to school system public information officers?

*Answer:* Yes.

*Question:* Is MSDE developing an app?

*Answer:* We will look into that.

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Minutes adopted:

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, August 12 – 9:15 – 12:00  
House Appropriations Committee Room  
House Office Building  
6 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

FUTURE MEETINGS

Wednesday, September 17 – 9:15 – 12:00  
House Appropriations Committee Room  
House Office Building  
6 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Tuesday, October 21 – **1:00 – 4:00**

Howard County Public Schools Board of Education – Board Rooms A & B  
10910 Clarksville Pike (Rt. 108)  
Ellicott City, MD 21042

Wednesday, November 12 – 9:15 – 12:00

Howard County Public Schools Board of Education – Board Rooms A & B  
10910 Clarksville Pike (Rt. 108)  
Ellicott City, MD 21042

Thursday, December 11 – 9:15 – 12:00

Howard County Public Schools Board of Education – Board Rooms A & B  
10910 Clarksville Pike (Rt. 108)  
Ellicott City, MD 21042

# Agenda

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## Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards (MCCRS) and Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Implementation Review Workgroup

<http://marylandpublicschools.org/parccworkgroup/>

August 12, 2014 - 9:00 – 12:00  
Appropriations Committee Room  
House Office Building  
6 Bladen Street, Annapolis, MD 21401

### I. WELCOME AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

### II. LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM BEST PRACTICES

*Section 1(f)(2) “identify and analyze the best practices of local education agencies in the State and in other jurisdictions that are successfully implementing the Common Core State Standards and PARCC assessments”*

### III. FOLLOW-UP ON QUESTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

### IV. TRANSFERRING FROM HSA TO PARCC

*Section 1(f)(5) “develop a plan to transfer from the Maryland High School Assessments in English and Algebra Data/Analysis to the comparable PARCC assessments as a graduation requirement”*

### V. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CURRICULUM RESOURCES – SURVEY REVIEW

*Section 1(f)(4) “determine what, if any, new curriculum resources will be needed in order to fully implement the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards”*

*Section 1(f)(6) “assess the needs of teachers and principals in the area of professional development related to the implementation of the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards, including determining:*

- (i) what, if any, State and federal funding is available to supplement the funding that local governments provide toward the professional development of teachers and principals; and*
- (ii) what, if any, professional development and ongoing support from local education agencies is available to expand the use of technology as an instructional tool in the classroom”*

### VI. REVIEW PRELIMINARY REPORT – DUE AUGUST 15

### VII. Comments and Questions

### VII. Adjourn

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, September 17 – 9:15 – 12:00  
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