

## Carroll County Support Visit

November 13, 2013

### Schools visited:

Westminster Middle School and William Winchester Elementary School

### Central Office Participation:

Nine central office educators attended the morning discussion, including the principal from the middle school

### Teacher and Principal Participation:

Including the debriefing sessions, there were about 20 classroom educators.

Summary of MSDE resources central office and school personnel felt was **most useful** in transitioning to the Common Core State Standards:

- The resources shared at the Summer Educator Effectiveness Academies, and especially the lesson seeds.
- Teachers appreciated having curriculum materials online – both local resources and MSDE resources.
- Teachers like the consistent language in the CCSS and that all MSDE resources use that language.

Summary of MSDE resources central office and school personnel felt could be more helpful if modified:

- Webinars would be better if they were limited in length.
- More resources that are differentiated for both gifted and talented students, students with disabilities, and English Learners
- Clearer communication about compacting and CCSS for mathematics; while CCSS Initiative makes some recommendations, it is not clear that local systems have flexibility.

Summary of resources district and school personnel stated they would like from MSDE:

- More frequent/current information about the upcoming PARCC assessments, including what may be available for the primary grades.

- Carroll County has created parent videos about the CCSS. Additional videos what instruction on certain standards “looks like” would be helpful. There was discussion about gathering videos created by all LEAs and posting them on BlackBoard Learn for all Maryland educators to use. Carroll County educators stated that the ones they developed were designed to help parents understand and help their children with elementary mathematics. These same videos proved to be helpful for teachers and even for middle school educators.
- Additional Common Core resources for parents
- There is a need for additional resources to help with technology – both around instruction and assessment.
- There was also a caution about BlackBoard Learn. MDK12.org was very useful when it was first launched, but then it became unwieldy with so many resources. Please take care not to make the same mistake with BlackBoard Learn.

Summary of professional development opportunities district and school personnel would like MSDE to facilitate:

- Teachers and district personnel were concerned about technology for instruction and assessment. They would like as much support as possible on effective practices for using technology.
- More support for differentiating/scaffolding instruction
- More information on identifying complex text.
- Short focused videos on a variety of content/pedagogy

Key Messages from Carroll County:

Carroll County began implementation in the primary grades early and this has been very beneficial.

Videos have been extremely successful with parents, as well as educators.

Carroll County has embraced the integration of STEM in their elementary schools so that it isn’t an “add-on”.

Flex programs in the middle schools has helped “fill the gaps” between the VSC and the CCSS.