

Charles County Support Visit

March 24, 2014

Schools visited:

LaPlata High School and Mary H. Matula Elementary School

Central Office Participation:

Central office administrators representing numerous offices participated in the visit throughout the day. In the morning central office administrators representing various content areas and special areas/programs joined the conversation. Mrs. Amy Hollstein, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, was available throughout the visit to answer questions, and facilitate the visit.

Teacher and Principal Participation:

In the morning, central office administrators and classroom teachers met briefly to share information about their transition. After visiting the high school classrooms, teachers met with us to share information; after visiting elementary school classrooms, teachers shared insights and information.

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

- Charles County has imported all of the model lesson plans, units at a glance and lesson seeds from MSDE Blackboard Learn into their curriculum repository – this is where they want the teachers to go first for support
- Gradual but early implementation of Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards in ELA and Mathematics helped with the transition
- More inclusion of special education educators in professional development and a change in the co-teaching model
- District led professional development in close reading strategies – delivered first to administrators and then to teachers
 - Seeing much more rigor and use of close reading strategies
- Mathematics utilized the Train the Trainer model with NCTM essential understandings as a guide
- Lots of conversations with PLCs

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

- Videos of Maryland educators implementing the new standards (short, focused videos, such as a lesson on teaching fractions)
- More information about the EQUIP rubric
- More scaffolding and differentiation guidance in mathematics
- ELL help at the secondary level – next year one high school will be devoted to ELL students
- More information and resources related to Disciplinary Literacy
- More information and resources related to STEM and to Close Reading
- More examples of non-fiction texts
- Student exemplars
- More information from PARCC beyond test items
- More searching capabilities in Blackboard
- Clarification on Service Learning and the high school Government course
- Address the gap between HSA Algebra I to Algebra II to Geometry – need more prototypes
- Address the gaps between preK and first grade – writing and reading
- Address the disconnect and gaps between HSA and PARCC (ELA and Mathematics)

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

- How to use the EQUIP rubric for lesson planning and for student work
- How to create lessons that focus on students' gaps in understandings
- Strategies for teaching students to develop word-processing skills
- Teachers are very concerned about time and how students will do on PARCC assessments
- How to integrate technology in their lessons
- Mathematics PD needs to focus on content as well as strategies and standards
- Mathematics PD that incorporates writing
- Formative Assessment
- Writing and questioning – district is going to provide PD but additional resources and guidance will be helpful
- Address the gap between HSA Algebra I to Algebra II to Geometry
- How to incorporate strategies related to Maryland College and Career Ready-Standards, STEM Standards of Practice, and Disciplinary Literacy Practices into non-ELA or non-mathematics content areas?

Key Messages from Charles County:

- Time is a challenge; changes in curriculum, accountability, and new report cards are overwhelming
- One big concern is the members in the community who are against the Common Core – very vocal and are running for School Board positions
- Professional development opportunities have really been important to providing administrators and classroom teachers with the knowledge they need for the transition
- Central office educators have a good grasp on student and teacher needs. All professional development is designed to target these needs.
- Central office educators and school-based educators work together closely and this continues to be strength