

MCCPTA GRADING & REPORTING COMMITTEE UPDATE

February 14, 2007

The Grading & Reporting Committee met on February 7, 2007. During that meeting, the following topics were discussed:

Piloting of First and Second Grade Report Cards: including review of piloting schools' feedback from the public. Top concerns developed included:

Pros:

- Overall, teachers like the report card
- Report card offers better methods of home-school communication
- Teachers would like to see a similar format implemented for third grade

Cons:

- Questions as to whether the child is excelling - difficult to get an overall sense of student performance
- Number of tests (T1, T2 and T3) are too many
- Specials (especially arts, music and PE) should be more grade neutral to avoid penalizing a student who is less athletic or artistically prone
- 1st quarter parent-teacher conferences may be less effective than a 2nd quarter/end of semester conference.
- Amount of time teachers are required to report grades is too much
- Teachers need access to grade reporting (OASIS) from home as well as school

OARS/Pinnacle: Discussion included remedy of 1st Q issues and whether new 2nd Q issues have arisen; the process for monitoring, placing quality control measures for OARS at the local school level; how feedback is being collected from locals; and how MCPS is preparing schools for implementing OARS/Pinnacle in schools not yet using OARS next year.

Summer HW: The Committee supports discussion of the Summer HW packets with MCPS to discourage grading these assignments due to lack of teacher support while the assignments are being completed, lack of rubric dissemination for completion of the work. The Committee agreed that any work, to be graded as a result of reading or math assigned over the summer, should be assigned during the school year (fall) so that the proper supports and rubrics are in place.

Alignment of HS Finals to Curriculum as Administered During Grading Period: Lengthy discussions involved which subjects were affected and at what schools. Parents and Committee Members offered input as to the specifics of administration of the physics final at Blair and the County's insistence that the County exam be administered, despite the fact that the school's physics teachers taught curriculum out of order and some of the material covered on the final had not been taught in classroom. It was unanimously agreed by the Committee that 1) the students and student grades should not suffer as a consequence of a teachers indiscretion as to administration of the curriculum; 2) mention needs to be made by MCPS of which schools are piloting what (subject) county-wide finals; 3) MCPS should identify supports to be placed when new department leaders are placed; 4) MCPS should specify what training is mandated before piloting new finals and 5) to poll the

Delegates re: misalignment of curriculum content to exam content. Other courses affected in the past include Algebra and Algebra II With Analysis (f/k/a Trigonometry) and now Physics.

Computation of HS Semester/Final Grades: Discussions ensued regarding the unintended consequence of grade compression as a result of semester-ending grade computations used by MCPS (using a trend application). Examples offered demonstrated grade compression when using the trend method as opposed to computing the 1st quarter, 2nd quarter and final exam marks on a 0-100% grade scale. This topic was tabled for further discussion at the next meeting of the Committee.