

SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE

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Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

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August 11, 2016

Mr. Stephen H. Guthrie
Superintendent of Schools
Carroll County Public Schools
125 North Court Street
Westminster, MD 21157

Dear Mr. Guthrie,

On March 22, 2016, a team from the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) visited Carroll County Public Schools (CCPS) to conduct a Student Services Program Review pursuant to Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 13A.05.05.01F(2). The purpose of the review was to identify program strengths and professional development needs that exist in student services.

It was evident that central office leadership provides support to the Student Services program through the opening welcome and introductory remarks led by Mr. Steven Johnson, the Assistant Superintendent of Instruction. It was also apparent that the central office leadership operates collaboratively and with a clear goal in mind—to serve students and families in an effort to support student achievement. Mr. Dana Falls, the Director of Student Services, provided leadership during the day-long review in conjunction with Ms. Kimberly Muniz, Supervisor of Student Services and Special Programs. Additionally, during the day, Mr. Falls' staff, Ms. Judy Klinger, Supervisor of School Counseling; Ms. Filipa Gomes, Supervisor of Health Services; Ms. Kathi Green, Supervisor of Pupil Personnel and Student Support Services; and Mr. Steve Shoup, Pupil Personnel Worker of Home Instruction provided insightful presentations on the student service programs implemented in Carroll County. It was refreshing to see each presentation supported by data-driven analyses that clearly identified the concerns and the effectiveness of the programs being implemented.

The Central Office Presentation was followed by a school briefing from Gateway High School. The leadership team at the school consisted of Mr. Bryan Wetzel, Principal; Mr. Todd Wargo, Assistant Principal; Ms. Heather Brown, Science/Social Studies/Special Education Teacher; Ms. Melissa Doan, Clinical Therapist; Ms. Mary Naugle, School Counselor; Mr. Tom Larrimore, Crisis Counselor; Ms. Debra Kachik, School Psychologist; Ms. Jen Koutsoheras, School Nurse; Mr. Dave Danaher, Career Coordinator; and Ms. Heather Semies, Student Government Association (SGA) Advisor.

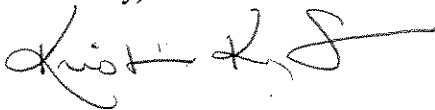
The school briefing began with a tour of the school conducted by students from the SGA at Gateway High School, lunch with those students, and a discussion panel with the students. The MSDE Team was very impressed by the conscientiousness of the students and the seriousness and focus they gave to this tour and discussion. It was clear the students were engaged and felt strong connections to the school staff. It was a wonderful demonstration of a positive school climate and an excellent site for us to see the impact of the student service program in Carroll County.

The members of the MSDE Team in attendance included the following: Mr. Walt Sallee, Director of Student Services and Strategic Planning; Dr. Deborah Nelson, Section Chief for School Safety and Climate and Specialist for Psychological Services; Mr. John McGinnis, Pupil Personnel and School Social Worker Specialist; Dr. Lynne Muller, Education Specialist for Student Services; Ms. Michelle Daley, Comprehensive Planning Specialist; Ms. Susan Oskin, Career Technology Education Specialist; and Mr. Robert Murphy, Specialist for School Completion and Alternative Programs.

MSDE is required by regulation to review local education agency (LEA) programs to ensure a coordinated program of pupil services for all students. Each LEA is required to define, develop, implement, and evaluate its program which should include preventive and remedial strategies, alternative and supplemental programs to address the needs of students. The Director of Student Services is responsible to communicate clear program priorities and provide support and direction to help central office and school staff to organize coordinated services and address program priorities. There is ample evidence to demonstrate that the student services disciplines are integrated and coordinated in Carroll County Public Schools. Recognizing that neither a school nor a school system can reach its potential for improving each child's cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development alone, there is clear support that Carroll County Student Services Program focuses on placing the student at the center of data-drive problem solving and goal setting to support teachers, student services staff, parents, and the community.

The attached report is provided for your information and consideration. We believe that the recommendations will serve to further strengthen the local program of student services. If you have any questions for need additional information, please contact Deborah Nelson, Section Chief for School Safety and Counseling at 410-767-0294 or email deborah.nelson@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,



Kristina Kyles-Smith, C.A.G.S.
Assistant State Superintendent
Division of Student, Family, and School Support

Attachment

C: Dana Falls
Kimberly Muniz
Walter Sallee
Deborah Nelson

**Student Services Program Review
Carroll County Public Schools
Central Office
March 22, 2016**

On March 22, 2016, a team from the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) visited Carroll County Public Schools (CCPS) to conduct a Student Services Program Review pursuant to Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 13A.05.05.01F(2). The purpose of the review was to identify program strengths and professional development needs that exist in student services.

COMAR 13A.05.05.01 requires each school system to provide a coordinated program of student services for all students, which shall include but not be limited to school counseling, pupil personnel, school psychology, and health services. The program must focus on the health, personal, interpersonal, academic, and career development of students. In addition, the regulation requires that each school system develop and implement a plan to determine the needs of students and indicates that the school system may use preventive and remedial approaches to meet student needs and alternative programs for students at risk.

Mr. Steve Johnson, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction; Mr. Dana Falls, Director of Student Services; and Ms. Kim Muniz, Supervisor of Student Services and Special Programs, welcomed the MSDE team and made introductory remarks. Mr. Walter Sallee, Director of Student Services and Strategic Planning, reviewed the one-day format for the Pupil Services Program Review that was instituted during the 2015-2016 school year. Mr. Dana Falls opened the visit by sharing reflections on the recommendations from the 2008 Pupil Services Program Review and the Student Services mission and vision.

The vision of Student Services in Carroll County Public Schools is the following:

The Student Services Department of CCPS exists for one primary purpose—to serve students. In order for students to achieve at their maximum potential, they must be “available” for learning and must be “ready” to learn. Therefore, it is the role of Student Services to work collaboratively with school-based and central office staff, family members, and community agencies to promote readiness to learn for all students. This must be accomplished by striving to remove the obstacles to student achievement on an individual basis.

The mission of Student Services in Carroll County Public Schools is the following:

To ensure that every child succeeds, the Student Services Department will promote a child-centered approach to customer service by combining empathy and support with personal accountability. We will strive to consistently apply appropriate educational laws, Carroll County Public School board of Education policies and administrative regulations, and Student Services procedures to every situation presented, while acting in the best interest of each individual child.

The commitment to this vision and mission were evident throughout the presentations and documents that were shared with the MSDE review team.

Recommendations from the 2008 Pupil Services Program Review

Mr. Dana Falls, the Student Service Director from Carroll County Public Schools, opened with a reflection on the recommendation from the 2008 MSDE Student Services Review. There was only one recommendation made which was the following:

Explore ways to use technology to help data collection and analysis to assess the effectiveness of the various programs in the local school system.

Extensive evidence was provided to demonstrate the actions taken to address this recommendation. Those actions included the following: ongoing discipline system enhancements, online bullying reporting and data collection system, Positive Response to Issues of Discipline with Elementary Students (PRIDE) behavior tracker, and Health Services Annual Survey. Each of these actions was addressed in detail and documentation was provided to support and demonstrate the use of these systems.

Commendations and Recommendations

The central office presentation and supporting materials provided ample evidence to demonstrate that the local program of student services meets the criteria outlined in the COMAR regulations 13A.05.05.01F(2). A worthy note is that MSDE was instituting a one-day student service review format and Carroll County was the second school system to experience this new format. The following commendations and recommendations are provided for the central office program:

General Commendations

A. Commendations

- Use of technology to organize and structure documentation for the Carroll County Student Services Review;
- Using a systematic approach to analyze data and being proactive in addressing the academic, physical, social emotional and behavioral needs of students;
- Ensuring that the critical work of student services is coordinated with other agencies and community partners;
- Demonstrating professionalism and expertise in working with schools and school staff;
- Addressing barriers to learning and making student support services accessible to all students;
- Engaging in professional reflection at the central office and school level in order to complete MSDE's pilot self-assessment tool for student service teams;
- Implementing programs and interventions to increase attendance and graduation rates and lower dropout and suspension rates for students in the system;
- Acknowledgement of office staff as valued and essential staff in the ongoing work of student services; and
- Coordination of annual student service pre-service to address topics that are of mutual importance to all staff.

Specific Commendations and Recommendations

Specific commendations and recommendations for Carroll County Public School Student Service Central Office staff include the following:

Technology and Data Analysis

A. Commendations

- Collaborating with central office staff and using system-level resources to develop a data collection system that captures data and provides feedback to all schools on critical areas, such as discipline, bullying, and alternative programs;
- Implementing data systems that can be used by student services staff to identify service needs, such as with school psychology, school counseling, and school health; and
- Aligning technology and data analysis with a Multi-Tiered System of Support Framework in order to ensure that services are delivered in a systematic way.

B. Recommendations

- Continue to update and refine technology and data analysis tools as the system demographic shift and change to continue to meet the needs of all students.
- Continue to use a collaborative, multidisciplinary approach as you refine and update technology and data analysis tools; and
- As MSDE rolls out the newly developed Disproportionality Model, ensure that technology and data analysis are aligned with those guidelines and expectations.

School Counseling

A. Commendations

- Focused use of reduced support staffing- behavior support specialists and alternative program interventionists;
- Alignment of Counselor evaluations and tasks with the *ASCA National Model* and the Danielson Model;
- Alignment of the *ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors for Student Success* standards with common core;
- Implementation of a task group to look at ASCA standards to align mindsets and behaviors to counselor functions;
- Implementation of ASCA components of direct and indirect services provided by all counselors at all levels;
- Continued use of data to drive school counseling plans;
- Creation of an electronic suicide intervention log;
- Building strong working connections with collaborative partners and agencies;
- Implementation of suicide risk assessment with CCYSB (Youth Service Bureau).
- Implementation of School Counselor Web Center to support career development and share resources;

- Collaboration with health teacher for bullying/cyberbullying/substance abuse curriculum;
- Creation of processes to collect counselor work time data and analysis;
- Identification of peer facilitators to teach younger students conflict resolution;
- Implementation of strong youth suicide prevention strategies including annual face-to-face staff training, Kognito training, and the creation of resources for teachers and families;
- Continuation of a variety of college and career readiness strategies based on the state college and career readiness standards, including elementary counselor lessons, collaboration with colleges and universities, tours, advisory in middle and some high schools, dual enrollment, increased AP participations, internships, and a central scholarship listing;
- Provision of professional development opportunities for all student service staff;
- Development of strong character education programs which have resulted in multiple school awards and system acknowledgement; and
- Development of CPI Institute for de-escalation and restraint training.

B. Recommendations

- As financial resources, and therefore, staff resources, decrease it is recommended that school counselors not be pulled for duties which remove them from direct services to students. These duties would include 504 case management, AP testing Coordination, acting as testing coordinators/monitors and generally being pulled away from the delivery of services for site-based “emergencies”; and
- Consider ways to implement compliance with the *ASCA National Standards for School Counseling* recommendations that at least 80% of school counselor time be in direct and indirect services to students which is the following:
 “To achieve maximum program effectiveness, the American School Counselor Association recommends a school counselor to student ratio of 1:250 and that school counselors spend 80% or more of their time in direct and indirect services to students.”
ASCA National Model.

Career Development/Career Technology Education

A. Commendations

- Providing leadership at the district level for the implementation of a systematic career development instructional programs for grades K-12 (COMAR 13A.04.10) including the involvement of higher education;
- Integrating the College Board NOSCA Framework components as the basis to systematically guide the career development process throughout students’ educational experience K-12;
- Training school counselors to use data-based decision making to identify students for specific support services;

- Conducting a gap analysis of the Maryland Career Development Framework K-12 and working with principals to bridge gaps in the delivery of the career development curriculum and supports;
- Collaborating with Family and Consumer Science Teachers to develop a curriculum for teaching the career development process across learning levels;
- Implementing career advisory programs in all middle and high schools;
- Creating a positive, supportive environment that encourages 98% of students transitioning from juvenile detention/ treatment facilities to re-enter the Carroll County public school system;
- Providing professional development for school counselors to understand academic and career-related course/program options to support students' academic /career planning and course selection;
- Working closely with the Career and Technology Education (CTE) District Supervisor and Director of High Schools to identify and implement CTE programs of study that meet the needs of students and the economic development needs of the county;
- Establishing a relationship with the Career and Technology Center and Gateway School for transitioning students into CTE programs of study; and
- Partnering with Towson University to provide summer academic support programs for students.

B. Recommendations

- Continue to ensure that students are aware of the continuum of options available for post-secondary education and careers; and
- At the school level, consider adding a section to the student academic and career plan for post high school planning and goal setting.

Health Services

A. Commendations

- Incorporating technology in order to enhance the eSchool Plus Health module, and provide more accurate data in areas such as immunizations, health room visits, medications and treatment, etc.;
- Engaging in collaborative partnerships with community agencies and businesses, such as Carroll County Health Department, Carroll Hospital Center, Access Carroll, Mount Airy Dental Associates, DHMH in order to ensure that the comprehensive health needs of students are addressed; and
- Implementing professional development that remains current with issues in the health field, such as the Maryland Overdose Response Program and Disaster Preparedness.

B. Recommendations

- Continue to provide ongoing professional development for school nurses and other school health services staff in collaboration with the local health department; and

- Continue to review annual school health services data to determine student health needs and acuity levels, and health care needs of students.

School Psychology

A. Commendations

- Adoption of the NASP Practice Model as a framework for service delivery, data collection, professional development plan, and goals;
- Alignment of School Psychology evaluations and tasks with the NASP Practice Model.
- Use of needs assessment that is aligned with the NASP Practice Model in order to assess staff needs and develop a comprehensive professional development plan;
- Providing consultation and collaboration to key system-level and school-level staff on workgroups, such as PBIS, Character Education, crisis response training, outside agencies, and problem-solving teams;
- Integration of NASP webinars and workshops into professional development opportunities to ensure that school psychologists remain abreast of trends in the field;
- Developing technology to collect and analyze data on practices in order to develop program goals that maximize services to students in need; and
- Development of a school psychology newsletter to provide a learning tool for parents and staff about key information regarding the practice of school psychologists.

B. Recommendations

- Explore ways and methods of lowering the ratio of school psychologists in the county so that it is more consistent with the national recommended ratio of 1: 700 which is recommended for full implementation of the NASP Practice Model; and
- Continue to ensure that school psychologists have dedicated time to seek, and receive, clinical supervision as the service delivery model and expectations for job duties change.

Pupil Personnel/Home and Hospital

A. Commendations

- (1) Increasing services to students, families, and school staff during a time of increased student enrollment and limited staff increases.
- (2) Demonstrating an active outreach and marketing to the community regarding services and alternative resources for students.
- (3) Coordinating efforts and activities with social agencies, community professionals and business that are a resource for the school and students.
- (4) Responding to crisis in the school community that affects students and staff.

Recommendations

- Continue the use of data to justify increase in staffing. Survey the school, the community and students to determine the resources that will contribute to student success.
- Expand the marketing of programs and activities in the schools and community. Promote Student Services' outreach programs to students, community, and the school through use of media.
- Promoting your services by marketing your knowledge of intervention strategies, programs, and the home-school-community resources to assist students.

Safe and Drug-Free Schools

A. Commendations

- Maintaining system-level commitment to substance use prevention and intervention programs despite cuts in state-level funding;
- Collaborating with school staff to implement programs to support youth and families, such as Student Assistance Program (SAP), Students Helping Others Understand Themselves (SHOUT), Youth Intervention Task Force (YITF), and Opioid Prevention and Education;
- Developing collaborative partnerships with community and system agencies, such as the State's Attorney Office and Weber's Safe and Sober Home to provide prevention and education services to students; and
- Working across levels to provide programming for elementary, middle, and high school students.

B. Recommendations

- Continue to develop collaborative partnerships within the system and community to provide education and services to students and families.

School SST, SS Leadership Survey and Data

A. Commendations

- Encouraging central office Student Service Team staff to complete MSDE's Student Service Team self-assessment;
- Encouraging school-level staff to complete MSDE's Student Service Team self-assessment; and
- Disaggregating and analyzing data by elementary, middle, and high schools to identify strengths and needs.

B. Recommendations

- Continue to engage periodically in self-reflective activities, such as the Student Service Team self-assessment, to plan programmatically to meet team needs at both the system and school level.

**Student Services Program Review
Carroll County Public Schools
Gateway High School
March 22, 2016**

On March 22, 2016, a team from the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) visited gateway School to conduct a Student Services Program Review pursuant to the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 13A.05.05.01F(2). The purpose of the review was to identify program strengths and professional development needs that exist in student services.

COMAR 13A.05.05.01 requires each school system to provide a coordinated program of student services for all students which shall include but not be limited to guidance (school counseling), pupil personnel, school psychology, and health services. The program must focus on the health, personal, interpersonal, academic, and career development of students. The following commendations and recommendations are provided for the school's program of student services.

Commendations

- Commitment to providing a diversity of programs and activities at the alternative school for students who required nontraditional education programs and services;
- Providing opportunity for students to have credit recovery that moves at the student's pace;
- Commitment to active Coordinated Student Services model (SST) with weekly meetings;
- Variety and quality of student engagement opportunities and partnerships (e.g., Springs, National Aquarium, Chesapeake Bay Foundation);
- Creation of Gateway seminar during the first class every day to promote personalized goal setting and skill development;
- Collaboration and communication across all staff to meet the needs of each student.
- Use of technology for credit recovery;
- Provision of opportunity to attend Gateway on a voluntary basis.
- Creation and maintenance of a clear, leveled system of rewards;
- Commitment to transition counselor for a seamless transition for student to and from the program;
- Coordination and collaboration with all staff;
- Maintenance of strong community partners for academic and behavioral needs (e.g., DJS, Mental Health, home schools, special educators, Career and Tec center, Carroll Community College, Youth Services Bureau, Substance Abuse Counselor, hospital staff, juvenile justice facilities);
- Involvement of parents in the transition process with ongoing communication;
- Relationship with Alternative Program Intervention Specialist; and Tom Larrimore, a full-time employee at Gateway.
- Active role in career and college readiness activities.
- Exemplary student-staff relationships which result in active student engagement in academic and extracurricular programs.

Recommendations

- Consider adding a section to the student academic and career plan for post high school planning and goal setting; and
- Continue to focus on the successful efforts of meeting individual needs of each student and maintaining the working relationships you have built.

Student Records Review

Process

In Maryland, the maintenance of student records is governed by the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR), 13A.08.02, and the **Maryland Students Records System Manual (MSRSM)**. Both the regulations and the MSRSM are aligned with the requirements of the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The personal identifying information, secondary academic performance, attendance, and enrollment information are maintained by a local education agency (LEA) permanently. Maryland uses a Student Record (SR) card to maintain student information during the student's educational career. Two of the cards, SR 1 and SR 3 are permanent records. Thorough maintenance of these records is necessary to ensure accurate information is available to plan for a child's current and future education.

As part of Maryland State Department of Education's Pupil Services Program Review, two schools are visited to determine the accuracy of implementation of the MSRSM. The following is a report for these schools.

Sandymount Elementary School

General Observation

- SR 1 – 10 incidents where both parent's names were not indicated on previously pulled or pulled on site records.
- SR 2 – 1 incident of Early Care & Education Experiences Prior to Kindergarten was not indicated on pulled on site records.
- SR 4 – All information present.
- SR 5 – All information present.
- SR 7 – 2 Students transferred-All information present.

Commendations and Considerations

- Staff was welcoming and accommodating.

Oklahoma Road Middle School

General Observation

- SR 1 – All information present except both parent's names.
- SR 2 – 5 incidents of Early Care & Education Experiences Prior to Kindergarten were not indicated on previously pulled and/or pulled on site records.
- SR 4 – All information present.
- SR 5 – All information present.
- SR 7 – 3 Students transferred-All information present.

Commendations and Considerations

- Staff was very accommodating and welcoming

Recommendations to Carroll County Public Schools

- This is the first Local Education Agency (LEA) to be reviewed that incorporated all electronic student records. Except for the SR 1 card, which most lacked both parent's name on the Responsible Adult at Student's Address, all SR cards were excellent.
- Intensive system-wide training for principals, registrars, school counselors, and other staff who maintain or supervise the maintenance of student records for compliance with the MSRSM should be considered especially when using an electronic system for student records.
- MSDE will continue to provide technical assistance to ensure the accuracy and maintenance of student records.