

# Summary of African American Community Parent Academy Feedback Session Survey Results April 11, 2015

**Summary:** In addition to the below six (6) sessions initially identified, 2 additional sessions were added based on feedback from the participants. The sessions are expected to be conducted in the Fall, starting in September 2015 with two sessions conducted a month.

Question	SUMMARIZED RESPONSES				Total Responses
	Highly Interested	Interested	Little Interest	Not Interested	
1) Getting to Know HCPSS	13	6	0	0	19
2) What Will Your Child Learn?	12	5	0	0	17
3) How to Stay Informed	14	4	0	0	18
4) Students with Varied Needs	10	5	2	1	18
5) Getting Students in Above Grade Level	13	3	2	0	18
6) Social Media/Digital Age	12	4	3	0	19

## **Summer Sessions**

- How to conduct successful Parent/Teacher Conferences – was not voted to be a “live” session. This will be a pre-recorded session presented 2-3 weeks available on-line before the start of school.
- Understanding the Parent Concern Process – was voted to be a “live” session. This will also be a pre-recorded session available online during the summer and include information about the process and utilizing the Ombudsman.
- Social Media/Digital Age – was voted to be a “live” session in the Fall 2015. This will also be a pre-recorded session, per grade level available online during the summer.

## **1) Getting to know HCPSS**

- Advocacy
- Schedules
- Home Support
- Homework Support
- Consistent Contacts at the School – there are at least 3 consistent contacts across levels (Pupil Personnel Worker (PPW), Guidance Counselor and School Psychologist). The contacts that are available per school level will be discussed in the breakout sessions.
- Volunteer Opportunities – the importance of volunteering and having visibility
- What to do if new to Howard County? Since this is covered in Back-to-School nights per school, this will not be covered in detail by the Parent Academy. There will be reference information provided, including types of community programs and the Student Parent Handbook that talks about support services.

## **2) Instruction and assessment of Language Arts, Social Studies, Math and Science (Elementary and Middle)**

- a. Provide reference to “What your child will learn in <grade> booklets? This information exists on the website.
- b. Discuss the various assessments and when they are offered and what reports parents receive as a result of the assessment. Reference the testing section on the HCPSS website.
- c. Discuss the definition of the various levels within school (below-grade level, on-grade level and above-grade level) and how a student is classified to be at this level. Inform the parents of the articulation processes for enrolling (students come home with the forms of the selected classes). Parents to know there is a process and they do have flexibility to change courses and when it registration is occurring.
- d. Inclusion of African American History in schools (how is taught) – Black Expo in elementary school, Black saga in middle school (TCOE is addressing adding this with HCPSS regarding the curriculum from Pre-K to 12<sup>th</sup> grade)
- e. For elementary school, discuss early developmental education/childhood education (i.e. bonding with your child, nurturing etc.)
- f. For 8<sup>th</sup> graders, discuss the Career Academies in October to expose the parents and students about what is available in 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

## **For high school, this session is called: Understanding the High School Curriculum for Placement, Advancement and College Preparation**

- a. Provide reference to “What your child will learn in <grade> booklets? This information exists on the website.
- b. Discuss the various assessments and when they are offered and what reports parents receive as a result of the assessment. Reference the testing section on the HCPSS website.
- c. Discuss the definition of the various levels within school and how a student is classified to be at this level. Inform the parents of the articulation processes (students come home with the forms of the selected classes). Parents to know there is a process and they do have flexibility to change courses and when it registration is occurring.
- d. Inclusion of African American History in schools (how is taught) – This is an elective in high schools (TCOE is addressing adding this to the HCPSS curriculum from Pre-k to 12<sup>th</sup> grade)
- e. Discuss Career Academies in October, as this is the time that sessions are held at Career Academies.
- f. What other resources or options are available for students that are not going to college? (Trade Schools, etc.)
- g. Discuss benchmarks for College and Career Preparation
- h. Discuss life after High School

### **3) How to stay informed about Student Performance**

- a. Discuss what the new Learning Management System (LMS) is for HCPSS.
- b. Discuss the staff/teacher responsibility for managing student grades real-time and the two policies (Policy 8020 for high school, Policy 8010 – Elementary/Middle)
- c. Discuss the parents' rights and abilities to request a conference at any time with the staff/teachers.
- d. Discuss the parents' right to review your child's folder (especially for high school as this information goes to colleges) – can review the file with notice to the school.
- e. Discuss viewing a students' English/Writing sample file – students have a file that follows them.
- f. Discuss the importance of critical transitions and parents remaining involved. Maybe something specialized for 5 to 6 (discuss in elementary and middle), 8 to 9 (discuss in middle and high) and other milestone transitions. –
- g. Discuss the support is available to assist with student performance, including the Library Support services, After-school Support Services and the availability of Teacher Support.

### **4) Students with Varied Needs (OPTIONAL Session)**

This will be discussed into a general session to cover this area across the board and to break into two different sessions

#### *General Session for All:*

- a. How to identify if your child has special needs? What to do/who to go to if you suspect your child has a disability? How do you tell?
- b. What are the qualifications for an IEP or 504? What happens if your child does not qualify for an IEP or 504, but is a struggler learner?
- c. What is the first step in the process (does it include Pediatrician or other medical evaluations)?

#### *Breakout Sessions:*

- 1) General Education supports for students with diverse learning needs (which includes struggling learners and students with a 504.
  - What is the impact to your student's school record if they have a 504?
  - What are the rights of the students and parents that have a 504? What support can be expected from HCPSS?
  - What are the rights of the students and parents that are struggling learners? What support can be expected from HCPSS?
  - What support is available after High School?
- 2) Understanding the Special Education process (a session to help parents whose children have an IEP, how to engage in the IEP process)
  - What is the impact to your student's school record if they have an IEP?
  - What are the rights of the students and parents that have an IEP? What support can be expected from HCPSS?
  - What support is available after High School?

## **5) Accessing Advanced Level Class**

- a. How does the process work?
- b. How do the students get access to these opportunities?
- c. For High School only,
  - How do parents get information about scholarships, awards, etc. Other opportunities?
  - Helping students know how to get involved in high school and the benefits of doing so.

## **6) Social Media/The Digital Age (new name will be identified)**

*\* May look at including students in some of the sessions – need to figure out how this will work*

- a. Discuss what applications the students are using in school.
- b. Discuss options of using social media at home? This includes the safe use of social media, texting, setting minutes at home, having an honest conversation about research and what is going on in today's adolescent age (i.e. pornography)
- c. Discuss the Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) pilot and Cyber-Bullying policy
- d. Discuss the availability and access students have to the web during lunch by some schools. Also discuss restrictions by parents who do not want their children to use technology.
- e. Discuss the repercussions of Social Media (permanent record) and that the police department can see this information at any time (digital footprint)

## **7) Dating/Relationships (Domestic Violence)**

*\* May look at including students in some of the sessions – need to figure out how this will work*

- a. Identify what can be discussed at all 3 levels?
- b. Discuss the importance of reporting/lack of reporting when it gets to a certain age
- c. Discuss parental support/what to do/where to go
- d. Possible break-out options for boys/girls
  - For girls, there is minimal activity for involvement, a low number of outlets and a lot of focus on boys

## **8) Social/Emotional Needs of Students – Mental Health (OPTIONAL Session)**

Look at having medical professionals to share about the social, emotional needs of African American students. Discuss mental health, including what's common/uncommon behavior.

***Great Suggestion by the parents: Invite the high school students to the high school sessions so they can start to take responsibility and accountability! Agreed this is a good suggestion, but we need to identify which sessions will be appropriate for students to attend. We want the parents to be comfortable with sharing and do not want the students hearing some of the information shared, which could have a negative impact on their behavior with teachers/administrators.***