

**Superintendent's Report
Board of Education meeting
November 13, 2018**

Last month, Maryland moved a little closer to finalizing its plans to implement the Every Student Succeeds Act or ESSA. ESSA replaces the No Child Left Behind Act, which was in effect for more than a decade. ESSA is designed to shift the authority for school accountability from the federal government to the states. The law requires states to ensure that all students have access to excellent teachers and positive, safe learning environments with the supports needed to prepare them for success in college, a career and life.

The Maryland Report Card, which is available on the MSDE website is undergoing significant change. Maryland has created a five- star system to rate schools at each level — elementary, middle and high school. The star ranking will show how each school is doing and where it needs to improve its performance. The star rating system will use test scores as one measure, but also incorporate a number of other factors including academic achievement, teacher and student surveys, attendance rates and whether or not students have access to a well-rounded curriculum.

Later today, Cliff Eichel and Karen Peters as well as Mrs. Hollstein and members of the office of instruction will update you on the new Maryland Report Card and the Bridge Program.

Student absenteeism is part of Maryland's accountability plan, and high rates of absenteeism are a concern nationwide. Researchers at Attendance Works, a San Francisco-based nonprofit, collaborated with Johns Hopkins University and the Brookings Institution to publish a report this September that took a look at attendance in every state in the U.S. In eight states and the District of Columbia, more than 20 percent of all students were chronically absent. In Maryland 29 percent of students were truant. (2015-2016 data) As of October 31st of this year, there were 359 students in our school system who have already missed 10 or more days of school. That means that these students have already missed a combined 5,176 days of school. Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) has procedures in place to notify parents when students reach certain levels of absences. We are working on additional ways to involve families, community organizations and others to reduce absenteeism in our school system.

I'd like to update you on our peer-to-peer buddy systems, which are utilized at several of our schools. At Henry E. Lackey and La Plata high schools, students mentor and tutor elementary school children. St. Charles High School's Key Club members tutor at Mary B. Neal Elementary School. Later today, you will meet and recognize Teresa Higgs, a Westlake High School special education teacher, who sponsors the Best Buddies program which matches students with their peers in

athletic competitions and community activities. Andrea Landis of Indian Head runs the Best Buddies program at Indian Head to promote the acceptance of children with disabilities. These are just a few examples of peer-to-peer buddy programs in our schools.

Last month, a Board member requested the demographic breakdown of teaching staff. The information requested is posted on BoardDocs and includes demographics for the current teaching staff hired both before July 1, 2018, and on or after July 1 by race and gender. To provide some context, approximately 18 percent of K-12 teachers nationwide identify themselves as nonwhite (U.S Department of Education in 2016).

In CCPS, 20 percent of teachers hired prior to July 1, 2018 identified as nonwhite. Eighteen percent were black or African American. While 20 percent teachers of color was above the national average, our HR staff has made amazing progress in diversifying our teaching staff over the past several years. In 2016, nonwhite teachers made up 29.9% of all teachers hired. The following year, 2017, 37.2% of new teachers were nonwhite. Since July 1, 2018, 43.2 percent of our new teacher hires identify themselves as nonwhite, with 40 percent identifying as black or African American. CCPS continues to make diversity in our teaching corps a priority. Although we don't yet match the demographics of our students, we far exceed the national average of 18 percent of teachers who identify as nonwhite.

Finally, I'd like to send a special thank you to the La Plata Business Association for a \$36,500 donation to our fine arts programs. The St. Charles High School Chamber Choir performed for the business association members as a thank you for the continued partnership and support of our students. The donation comes from the proceeds from the association's annual Rocktoberfest. Over the past five years, the La Plata Business Association has donated over \$90,000 to our fine and performing arts programs.

Thank you for your support of teaching and learning in Charles County Public Schools.