

**DECEMBER 03 2020**

**UNOFFICIAL NOTES:**

**12/3/20 MCPS BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING -  
"OPENING SCHOOLS IN RECOVERY OF  
EDUCATION"**

# **MODERATELY MOCO**

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# **12/3/20 MCPS BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING - "OPENING SCHOOLS IN RECOVERY OF EDUCATION"**

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## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

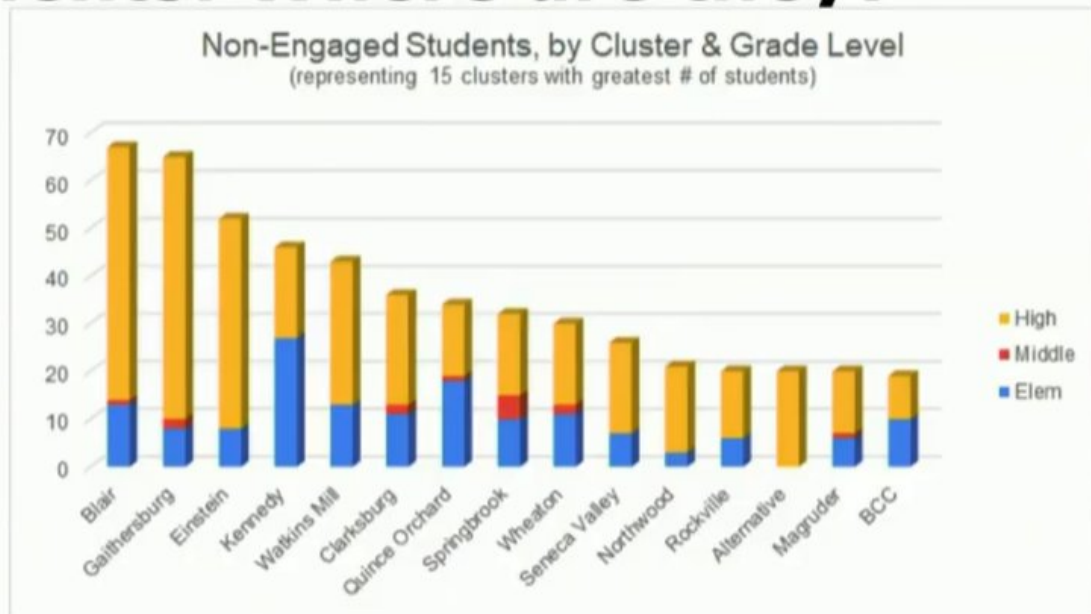
There were some technical difficulties with the video testimonies in public comments, so the meeting schedule was rearranged. Only the first 4 testimonies were presented.

Dr. Smith opened the presentation by saying MCPS is planning for the timeline of small groups of students returning to school in January and more students returning in February. He said there are more than 1 million people in Montgomery County with many perspectives. MCPS makes plans with the best interests of students and families in mind. He said they talk with the Maryland Health Department every week and follow CDC guidelines. They have protective equipment in place in schools. He acknowledged that COVID-19 will be with us for the future.

He mentioned the Burbio school tracker and nationwide percentages of all virtual (50%), hybrid (17%), and fully in school (33%). (Side note – the current percentages on the site today are 39.3%, 24.4%, and 36.3%, respectively).

### Stay Connected

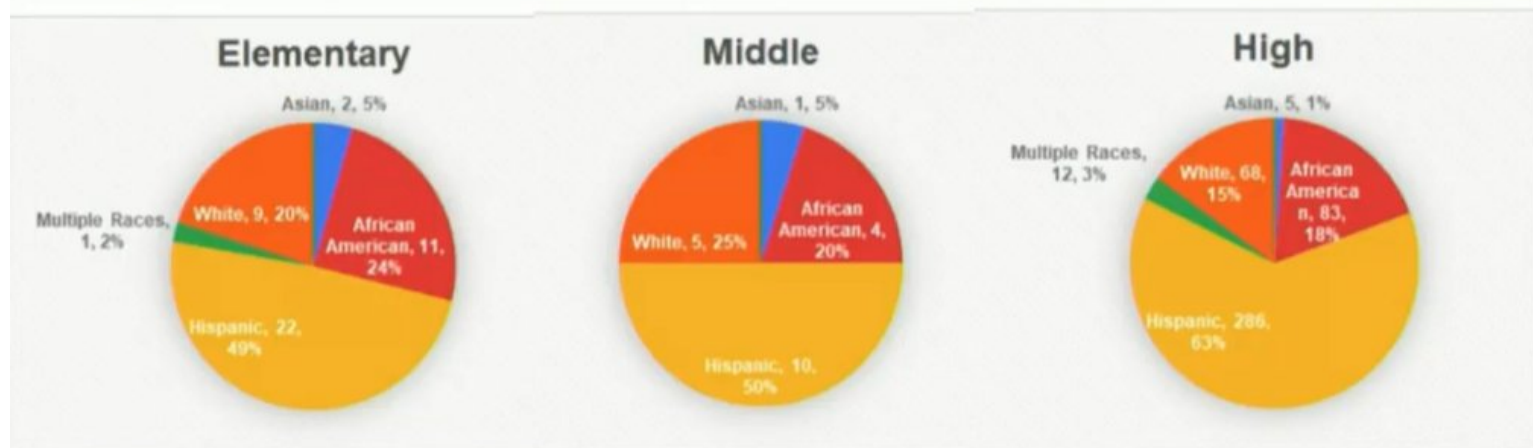
## Students: Where are they?



## STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Drs. Reuben, Neff, and St. John discussed student engagement (students who had not logged in at all). This number is down to 307 students (<1%). MCPS has worked hard to track down these students and is engaging community partners to help find families.

### Stay Connected Students: Who are they?



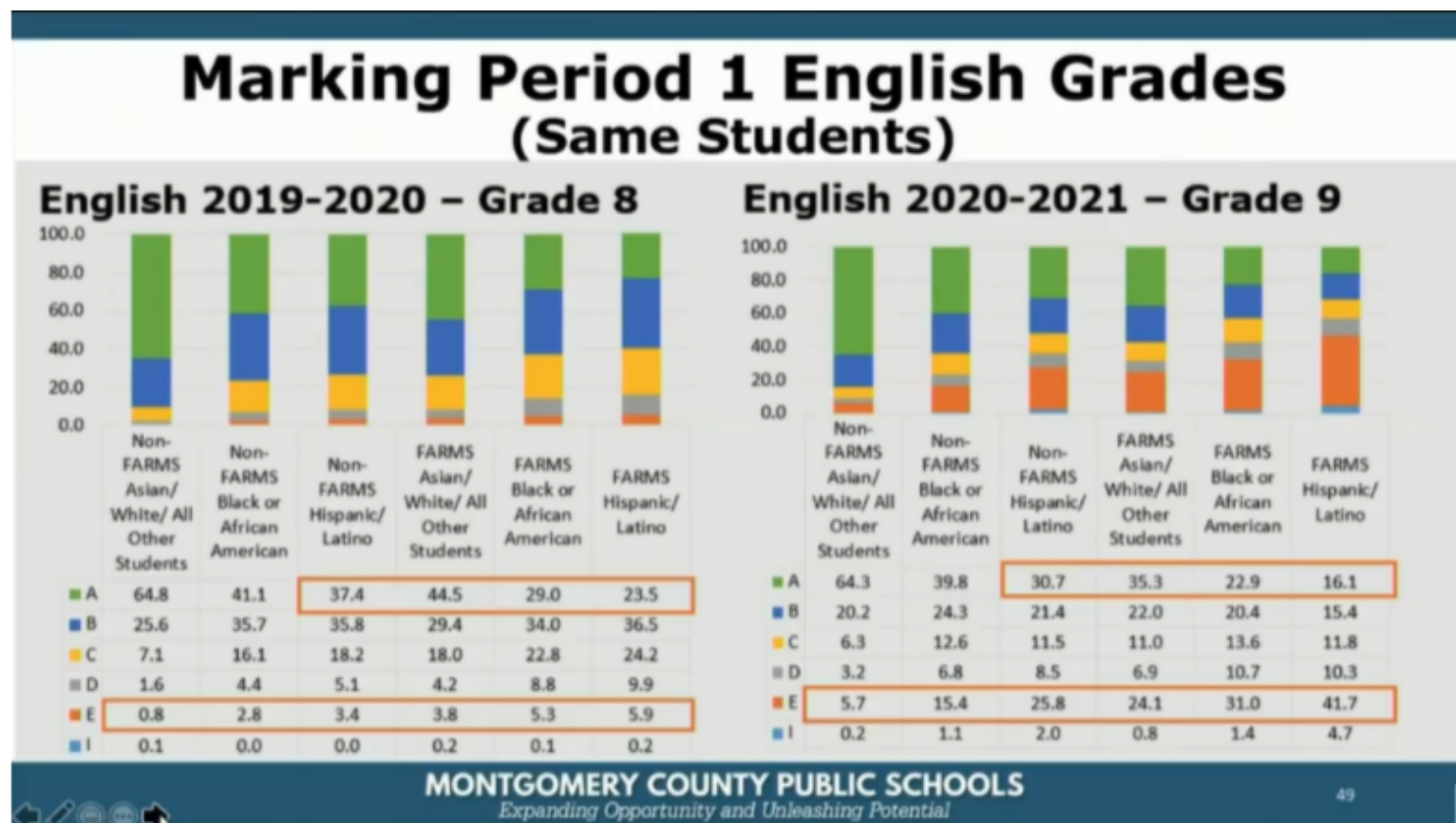
### Stay Connected Barriers to Engagement

Challenge to Engagement 60	
Family	4
Health	13
Need Technology	8
Out of Area Temporarily	1
Personal/Economic	11
Special Ed	5
Special Placement	2
Unique/Confidential	1
Will Engage	6
Working	9

Not Engaged 247	
No Communication w Family	196
No Interest Distance	17
No Reason Provided	30
Refusal	4

## STUDENT GRADES

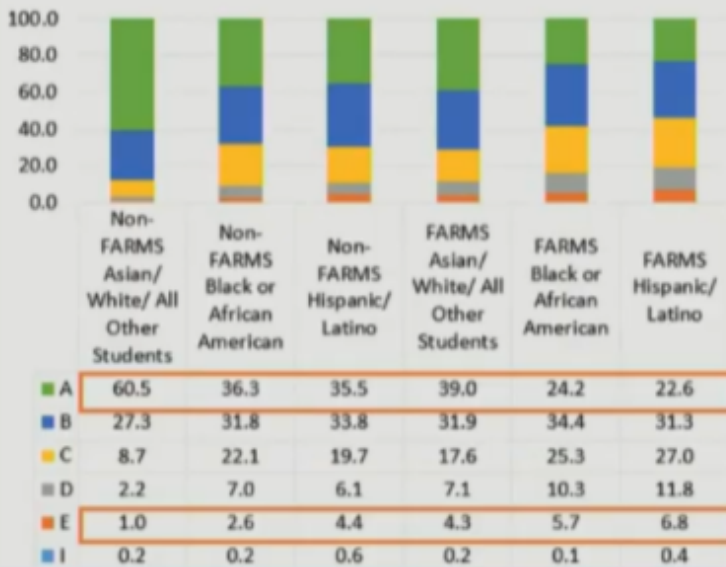
Dr. Addison presented data regarding first quarter grades, comparing English and Math grades this year to last year. Grade 6 students were in 2 cohorts – students from last year’s class and students from this year’s class (different students). Grades 9 and 12 used the same students, and their performance was compared to last year (ie, their grades in 8<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade). They also showed data by demographic groups, such as race/ethnicity, ESOL, special needs, and FARMS. There were increased numbers of E’s in all groups for English. Grades 6 and 12 did have more A’s, but grade 9 had fewer A’s. There were decreased numbers of A’s and increased numbers of E’s in all groups for math. Results were especially striking for math – groups with <5% grades of E last year now have 30 and 40% grades of E this year.



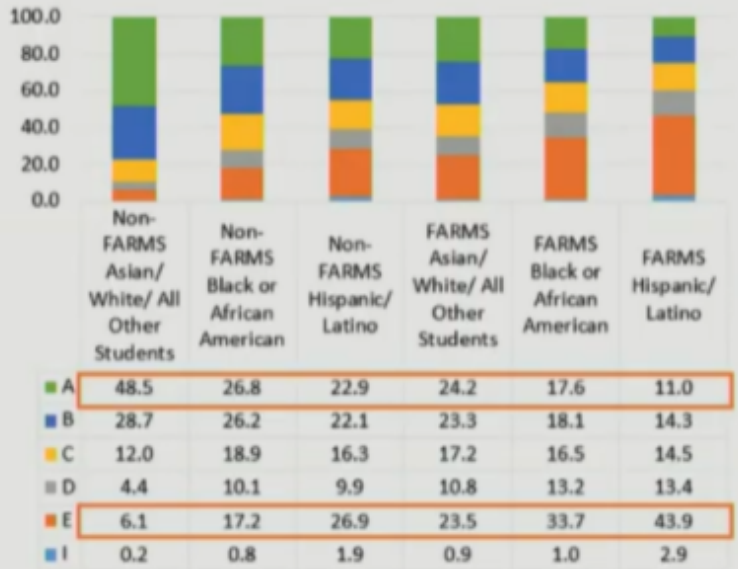
They plan to start with math instruction and focus on the standards (with assessments aligning with curriculum), adjust the course sequence for reteaching in marking period 3, provide teacher training regarding ESOL

# Marking Period 1 Mathematics Grades (Same Students)

## Math 2019-2020 – Grade 8



## Math 2020-2021 – Grade 9



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students beginning next week, and consider summer school for students with D's and E's. Additional options include after school tutoring and Saturday school.

## Grading and Reporting: Secondary

### ADJUSTMENTS FOR MARKING PERIOD 2:

- Removal of 10% category for Progress Checks
- Reduction in the recommended range of graded assignments
- Additional flexibility for students with due dates and deadlines
- Implementation of "50% Rule"
- Study of secondary virtual learning and schedule

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Dr. Murphy mentioned adjustments including removing the category of 10% of grade being progress checks, decreased number of graded assignments, flexibility with due dates, the 50% rule (in place of a 0 grade), and studying the secondary virtual learning schedule. There may be AP prep on Saturdays.

## **Q AND A STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND GRADES**

Ms. Harris asked about connecting with students at the individual school level. Dr. McKnight distinguished between engagement (meaning not logging on) vs. the difficulty with learning in a virtual environment as contributing to the lower grades. They are having outreach with stakeholders. Dr. Wilson said they are looking at individual students one at a time. Dr. Neff mentioned outreach work by Linkages to Learning.

Ms. Wolff asked for clarification about engagement meaning logging on because of some discrepancies in numbers. Dr. Wilson made a point about what students are doing when they are online, and that there could be before and after school tutoring in person when students are in school second semester.

Ms. Smondrowski said she has heard from parents of ESOL and special needs students, and they want more support. She asked if some of the adjustments were made to make numbers look better. She also said some students who didn't previously have an IEP might need one in the virtual learning setting.

Dr. Wilson said there is an analysis of who is on track for graduation on an individual student basis. Dr. Murphy said 20-30 assignments per class were too much and the progress checks counting as 10% of the grade caused anxiety. Dr. Wilson said special education assessments in centers started today.

Ms. O'Neill said there is a link between student mental well-being and grades. Kids are suffering from the isolation. There is sense of hopelessness until they are back in person. Math and foreign languages need to be taught every day.

She referenced the testimony of 60 minutes being too long for a middle school class.

Dr. Murphy said they might make adjustments because some classes need extra instruction time. Dr. Wilson mentioned an option of a potential lighter course load second semester and then offering classes in summer school (depending on the budget).

Ms. O'Neill asked if they have been in contact with the college board or IB.

Dr. Murphy said yes. IB is making adjustments to the exam. AP sent a survey, there may be a change to the May exams. He expects news in January.

Dr. Docca said she likes the adjustments to marking period 2.

Dr. Smith said you can't generalize to all students and a more individualized experience for students is needed. He said some students like virtual learning because they have outside interests they can spend more time on by not riding the bus 30 minutes each way to and from school.

He said in Montgomery County poverty correlates with being black or Hispanic.

Ms. Silvestre asked about feedback from students who are struggling. She asked what parents can do at the school level (involved vs non-involved parents). Ms. Wilson said if parents aren't involved, the responsibility shifts to MCPS. Dr. Hazel said if parents are involved, then contact counselors, teachers, have students have Wednesday connections with teachers, look for missing grades and assignments, help students get organized, and help students with work.

MCPS is looking at students getting D's and E's. Ms. Silvestre asked who contacts families. Dr. Hazel said the central office identifies the students and the school contacts them.



Mr. Asante asked if there is a process to reach out to students to ensure they don't fall back into being disengaged. Dr. Reuben said they are looking at mental health and well-being.

Dr. Smith discussed two more types of students – one with an A at the interim who backs off and one who does a lot of work at the end of the marking period.

Ms. Harris mentioned that some reasons for students not doing well could be quality of instruction, language barriers, lack of internet, learning styles, and supervision. For supervision, she asked about getting students into learning hubs or giving ESOL students an opportunity to show what they know in their native language. She also asked about teachers creating CTE content and about students repeating all or part of a course.

Dr. Wilson said they are looking at the individual student. There are long term lasting effects of not doing well in algebra. Students with Cs or Ds may need a boot camp experience to move on in math.

## **HEALTH METRICS**

Mr. Turner referenced the table below and said 15 cases per 100,000 are in line with the state and returning students to school. He said the community is focusing on where all the areas are green.

He also gave current numbers of 28.1 cases per 100,000, 5.3% test positivity rate in Montgomery County. Currently 172 MCPS staff have tested positive for COVID-19 and 33 are in quarantine. He said the CDC has updated the quarantine length and MCPS is waiting for local and state guidance.

# Health Metric Matrix for a Safe Phased-in Return to In-Person Instruction

14-Day Raw Average of New Cases		< 52	52-105	105 -157	> 157
14-Day Average New Case Rate* (MD Calculation Model)		< 5	5-10	10-15	> 15
14-Day Average New Case Rate* (CDC Calculation Model)		< 70	70 - 140	140 - 209	> 209
14-Day Average Test Positivity Rate <5%	Student Special Populations	Expanded in-person	Limited in-person	Consider minimal in-person	Virtual
	Group 1	In-person	Consider in-person	Virtual	Virtual
	Group 2	In-person following Group 1	Virtual **	Virtual	Virtual
	Group 3	In-person following Group 2	Virtual **	Virtual	Virtual

\* Per 100,000 Residents. The models are calculated using a population estimate of 1.05 million residents in Montgomery County

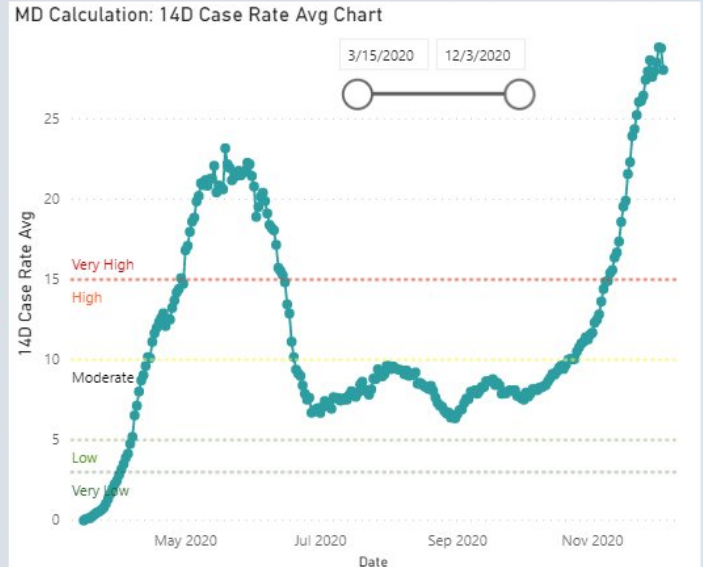
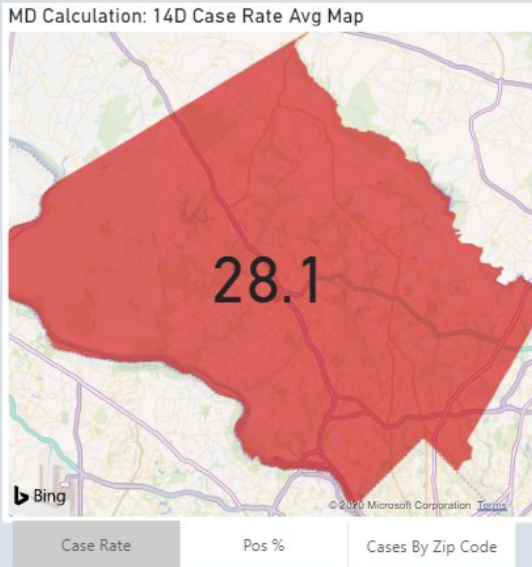
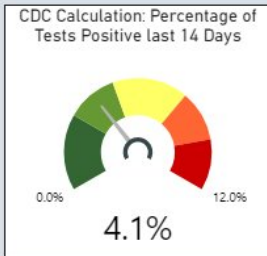
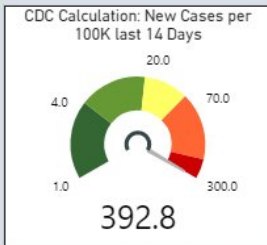
\*\* If numbers are trending toward 5 then consideration for hybrid in-person can be accelerated

**Reassess if new case rate increases by 2 per 100k or if positivity rate increases by 1.5% within 2 weeks**

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## School Reopening Benchmarks

Source MD iMap | Last Updated: 12/3/2020



COVID Positive Staff Cases Reported  
**172**

COVID Positive Staff Currently Quarantined  
**33**

Last Updated: 12/2/2020

Montgomery County Public Schools

## **OPERATIONS UPDATES**

Ms. McGuire gave an update on operations. 2 million meals have been distributed in the school year.

### **HVAC MODIFICATIONS FOR NEWER SYSTEMS INCLUDE:**

- **FILTER UPGRADES AND CONTROL ADJUSTMENTS**
- **AIR CLEANERS IN ADDITION**

### **HVAC MODIFICATIONS FOR OLDER SYSTEMS INCLUDE:**

- **AIR CLEANERS**
- **MORE EXTENSIVE MECHANICAL ATTENTION AND AIR CLEANERS**

**ALL SCHOOLS ARE UNDERGOING DUCT WORK AND AIR UNIT CLEANING. 50,000 FILTERS HAVE BEEN ORDERED (20,000 RECEIVED) AND 2000 AIR CLEANERS HAVE BEEN ORDERED**

For transportation, they are planning on 1 student in each bus seat.

## **Q AND A HEALTH METRICS AND OPERATIONS**

Ms. Smondrowski asked how tied to the metrics does MCPS need to be. Is there flexibility? Mr. Turner said the state guidance is working with 15 cases per 100,000 or below. Best thinking is between 5-15 cases per 100,000 based on local health. He compared it to the differences in cooking times for large and small turkeys.

Ms. Smondrowski asked if MCPS would be penalized by going above 15/100K. Mr. Turner said MCPS follows the health and science.

Ms. Smondrowski asked about the status of the advisory committee of health, medicine, and science professionals. Dr. Smith said once students can come back in schools, then MCPS will convene this advisory council to help with protocols to get more students back in.

He reiterated that the governor gave guidance of 5-15 cases/100,000 and 5% test positivity to return to school. Schools that opened in MD closed when their area reached 15/100K case rates.

Ms. O'Neill said the initial focus was on 5 cases/100K to open up. The science is evolving on schools. There is evidence to start with elementary schools. Her grandchildren in England are in schools. The schools stayed open there despite other closures.

She said Dr. Gayles is a dedicated health official. People can find any article they want to support a point.

She said there should be a full court press to get students age 12 and under back in school. She said to get children whose parents want them in school back in school.

Ms. Wolff said she completely agrees to bring back elementary school students back on the schedule they had planned on. Elementary students are a natural cohort. We are losing kids.

Ms. Silvestre said to listen to the health experts, things are ever evolving. Heads of national agencies say kids are safest in schools. She said we should see if CDC guidelines are adjusted and take a second look at the MCPS metrics. She thought MCPS should be more aggressive and closer to 15 cases/100K to get kids back sooner.

Dr. Smith said he is taking notes on the board's observations. MCPS is opening for SAT tests and specialized assessments.

Ms. Wolff asked if the HVAC systems in elementary schools will be ready in January. Ms. McGuire said they are on a good pace and purchasing of air filters is in progress. Mr. Adams said some individual classrooms will need more work and will open later.

Ms. O'Neill asked about contracts for school nurses and health techs and filling positions. She noted that New York City is doing randomized testing of students and DC is also testing students and mailing kits to teachers. Ms. McGuire said they are talking with the county government and working with them.

Ms. Harris said MCPS is not forcing anyone to come back. She noted that regarding metrics, when school openings are on the horizon, people in the community do better with public health actions (eg, wearing masks) to reach the metrics and open schools.

She asked about the air quality standards for schools, since hospital standards are 6 to 12 air exchanges per hour, and about data on COVID-19 cases in learning hubs.

Ms. McGuire said there have been some cases in the learning hubs, in the school age and in the birth to age 5 groups. Mr. Adams said they are measuring air changes and filtration effectiveness. They are using 5 to 6 exchanges an hour which are close to hospitals.

Ms. Silvestre asked how the public will be informed about HVAC at a school.  
**Mr. Adams said they will publish school by school information.**

## **CREATING INSTRUCTIONAL SCHEDULES SEMESTER 2**

Dr. Moran discussed the instructional schedules for semester 2. Results from parent and staff surveys will be provided to schools on December 7-8. School leadership teams will develop initial design models for phase 1 student groups.

## **THE PARENT SURVEY DEADLINE HAS BEEN EXTENDED TO DECEMBER 7.**

**Staff ADA requests are due December 11.**

**There will be a variability in programs between schools.**

## **TIMELINE FOR COMMUNICATION:**

- **JANUARY 4-8: SCHOOLS WILL INFORM FAMILIES ABOUT DETAILS OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL EXPERIENCE FOR STUDENT GROUPS IN PHASE 1 (SCHEDULE, TEACHER ASSIGNMENT, LOCATION)**
- **JANUARY 11-15: FAMILIES REVIEW DETAILS AND CONFIRM ACCEPTANCE (OR SELECT A RETURN TO VIRTUAL)**
- **JANUARY 18-29: BLACKOUT PERIOD – NO CHANGES**
- **TBD: PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**
- **TBD: TEACHER PREPARATION**
- **FEBRUARY 1: IN PERSON LAUNCH PHASE 1**

**DR. REDMOND JONES GAVE AN UPDATE OF SURVEY RESPONSES.**

**AS OF DECEMBER 2:**

- **96,418 RESPONSES RECEIVED**
- **51% PARTIAL IN PERSON**
- **49% ALL VIRTUAL**

She reiterated that there is a default to full virtual learning for families that do not respond.

Additionally, there are 341 responses from families who moved to private school (91% are interested in partial in person).

**AS OF DECEMBER 3:**

- **108,068 RESPONSES**
- **50.5% PARTIAL IN PERSON**
- **49.5% ALL VIRTUAL**

She also gave a reminder about the feedback form for input.

## Q AND A CREATING INSTRUCTIONAL SCHEDULES

Mr. Asante asked about counselor capacity for supporting students if schedules get shuffled. Dr. Moran said he doesn't expect large changes to high school schedules.

Ms. O'Neill said she talked with an elementary school principal who mentioned outreach to community members and who started moving desks around.

Ms. Harris mentioned CTE teachers needing to coordinate with community partners. She said what school will look like at the middle and high school level should be communicated to the community.

Dr. Wilson said cohorting is more difficult at the secondary level. But because of the time between classes, they can do an incremental staging of students changing classes.

Ms. Smondrowski asked if students at the secondary level could stay in the room in a cohort and have teachers rotate. Dr. Wilson said that would be difficult with student schedules.

Ms. Silvestre asked about how to support schools with higher rates of non-responsiveness to the survey. Dr. Redmond Jones said there is an all hands on deck of staff working on getting responses.

Ms. Wolff asked about reexamining metrics and reprioritizing which school level comes back first.

Ms. Silvestre proposed a motion to move the vote to approve the spring semester plan until the December 15<sup>th</sup> meeting so that the board could have complete information about revised metrics and the priority students for return.

# BUDGET PLANNING AND SHORTFALL

## Budget Planning: Assumptions & Considerations

- Anticipated enrollment increase of 2,500 – 3,000 students in FY 2022 (A combination of new students and previously withdrawn students)
- Adoption of a formula for state aid that does not solely rely on September 2020 enrollment
- Maintain current workforce to meet the needs of students and the system
- Reduction of unfilled positions, where possible

**MCPS will need at least \$35M to \$40M more than MOE to shield from projected state aid losses**

## Potential Changes in Funding Compared to Fiscal Year 2021

Local Maintenance of Effort **\$39.7 million**

State Aid (Formula Driven) **\$17.1 million**

Blueprint for Maryland's Future (Kirwan) **\$27.4 million**

