

THE FACTS

Proposal to Restructure HCPSS Middle School Reading

A proposal is being presented to the Board of Education that will change the current requirement that all students take a reading class in grades 6, 7, and 8. Why is this change being recommended?

- ✓ Howard County middle school students have demonstrated that they are ready for a high-level of reading instruction based on their performance on the Maryland School Assessment (MSA) in reading. In 2011, 95.3% of middle school students across all grades are scoring at proficient or above on the MSA. Of those, 63% are scoring at the advanced level.
- ✓ Most importantly, the HCPSS wants all students to be well prepared for college and careers when they graduate from high school. This requires that they be able to read and understand technical content in all subject areas and respond to high-level questions about what they have read.
- ✓ The new Common Core Standards also call for instruction to move beyond skill building in basic reading comprehension to teaching higher-level literacy skills in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects. By 2013-2014, schools need to be fully implementing the Common Core State Curriculum and the state will be field testing new assessments. The new rigorous assessments will replace the current Maryland School Assessments in 2014-2015
- ✓ Literacy will be integrated into all courses, which requires that time for content courses be increased. This restructuring increases time for mathematics, science and social studies by moving from an 8-period schedule to a 7-period schedule. Students who are performing below grade-level expectations in reading will have a double English language arts class or specific reading intervention.
- ✓ Students will receive 90 days per year of physical education, when possible, and have the option of beginning world language instruction in 6th grade.

Approach: Seven 50-minute Instructional Periods
English Language Arts Social Studies Mathematics Science
Seminar/Core Plus – Band, Orchestra, Chorus, Interventions, Seminars
Related Arts
Related Arts

Related Arts Classes

- World Language
- Physical Education
- Health
- Art
- Music
- Family and Consumer Sciences
- Technology Education

The staff report to the Board of Education on Middle School Reading will be available on the school system website in BoardDocs on Tuesday, December 6. The public presentation will take place at the Board of Education meeting on Thursday, December 8.