MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Preparing World-Class Students

Bernard J. Sadusky, Ed.D.
Interim State Superintendent of Schools

200 West Baltimore Street • Baltimore, MD 21201 • 410-767-0100 • 410-333-6442 TTY/TDD • MarylandPublicSchools.org

TO: Members of the State Board of Education

FROM: Bernard J. Sadusky, Ed.D.

DATE: February 28, 2012

SUBJECT: Transition to the Maryland Common Core State Curriculum and Assessments

PURPOSE:

To continue the January 24, 2012 discussion of the state transitioning to the Maryland Common Core State Curriculum and the new assessment system. This month's discussion will focus on the various options that the State has for making this transition.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

Maryland initiated a third wave of reform in 2009-2010 (Attachment 1). Two major components of the reform effort were the design, development, and implementation of a new state curriculum that would be based on national standards and to create new assessments in mathematics and English language arts through participation in a multi-state assessment consortium. Both the curriculum work and the assessment work have implications for the new teacher and principal evaluation system. During the 2010-2011 school year, educators across the state participated in the development of the Common Core Frameworks in mathematics and English language arts. This 600-page document based on the national Common Core Standards and consisting of the skills and content that students need to know and be able to do in order to meet the standards was completed and accepted by the Maryland State Board of Education in June 2011 and posted on the department website. It serves as the guide for curriculum development work that is occurring this year. The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) is the consortium that Maryland joined, and we are a governing state in that body. The assessment work has progressed slowly, but we are beginning to receive more information as to the overall assessment design. The initial field testing is now scheduled for second semester of 2012-2013.

The timeline for curriculum and assessment implementation demonstrates how the implementation of each converges and how it, in turn, relates to the timing of the new teacher/principal evaluation system. Related to all of these matters are decision points and policy implications. During the January 24, 2012 Maryland State Board meeting, the board members discussed the timelines, the work to date, and the points of policy and decision making.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

A listing of options regarding the implementation of the present assessment system, the new assessment system, and the associated accountability issues is included as Attachment 2. These options are currently under further review and analysis by staff and will have been discussed with the local superintendents of school at a special meeting held on Friday, February 24. The risks related to different possible decisions will be discussed, as well.

Based on these discussions and the one that occurred at the State Board meeting in January, Board members will be poised to make decisions related to assessments and accountability at the March State Board meeting.

ACTION:

For information and discussion.

BJS:mc

Attachments (2)