

BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HARFORD COUNTY
INFORMATIONAL REPORT
PRESENTATION ON THE
IMPROVING DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES AND
INCLUSIVITY IN THE CURRICULUM
SEPTEMBER 14, 2020

Background:

The Office of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment (The Office) is responsible for the curriculum management plan and the selection/development of all written, taught, and assessed curricula for Harford County Public Schools (HCPS). The development and implementation of curriculum is a fluid process led by the Content Supervisors who continually revise and modify the curriculum based on changing societal demands and student populations. Changes to curriculum do not occur in a vacuum and must have the support of high-quality teachers and administrators not only in the development process, but the implementation of the curriculum through dynamic instruction.

Historically, a viable and rigorous curriculum deeply rooted in local, state, and national standards was central to the instructional program for HCPS. This expectation has not shifted even though the March 13, 2019 COVID19 system-wide closure impacted all traditional models of curriculum development and implementation of instruction by classroom teachers.

Discussion:

Due to the disruption of COVID19 to the instructional program, the Executive Director for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment charged the Content Supervisors to create 40-week *Critical Content Instructional Pacing Guides* with a clear focus on being more inclusive and diverse for the 2020-21 School Year.

The *Critical Content Instructional Pacing Guides* provide the roadmap for classroom teachers as they plan their instruction for students. In the upcoming school year, teachers and students will see a greater emphasis on diverse writers and viewpoints, as well as the removal of outdated novels, e.g., *Maniac Magee*, from the curriculum with a more diverse selection of contemporary novels written by authors like Jason Reynolds, Angie Thomas, and Marjane Satrapi from which to choose for instruction.

Moving the curriculum from the written page to classroom instruction requires professional development which aligns content with culturally responsive and equitable teaching practices. Teachers learn how to listen and facilitate classroom discussions from different perspectives or point of view, recognize stereotyping, bias, and other forms of hate in student work, and respond to microaggressions towards marginalized populations. This professional training affords teachers the necessary skill set to implement curricula so all students may see themselves represented in the content, as well as appreciate different viewpoints, become improved listeners, and develop sound problem solving strategies.

While there is still much work to accomplish, The Executive Director and the Content Supervisors will continue to partner with the Supervisor of Equity and Cultural Diversity to determine best practices for a diverse and inclusive curriculum and equitable teaching practices.

Superintendent's Recommendation:

The Superintendent of Schools recommends the Board of Education accept this informational report on the Improving Diverse Perspectives and Inclusivity in the Curriculum.