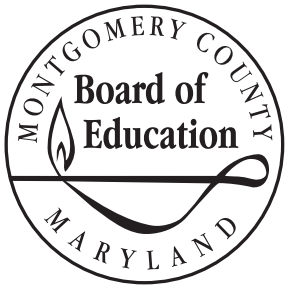
Supporting Services Professional Growth System

Montgomery County Public Schools, Rockville, Maryland

2020–2021 HANDBOOK

Maryland's Largest School District

MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS



VISION

We inspire learning by providing the greatest public education to each and every student.

MISSION

Every student will have the academic, creative problem solving, and social emotional skills to be successful in college and career.

CORE PURPOSE

Prepare all students to thrive in their future.

CORE VALUES

Learning
Relationships
Respect
Excellence
Equity

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INTRODUCTION

The third phase of reforming the professional development and evaluation programs for all employees of Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) began July 1, 2005, with the implementation of the Supporting Services Professional Growth System (SSPGS). This followed the rollout of similar systems for teachers and administrators and supervisors. These systems focus on building the capacity of staff to work efficiently and effectively with clear expectations and professionalism in achieving the school system's goal of providing the best educational opportunities for all students. Leaders from all of the employee representative organizations have played an important role in shaping the professional growth systems, and this new phase represented the first successful effort to improve the structure for developing, training, and evaluating supporting services staff in almost 30 years.

A collaborative planning process for the SSPGS was established between the leadership of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 500 and MCPS to design a system that would meet the professional development needs of the over 9,000 permanent support professionals who represent over 40 percent of the MCPS workforce of more than 24,000 employees. This process coincides with efforts to improve performance and accountability throughout the district, not only among students in terms of academic achievement, but also among teachers, administrators, and staff in fulfilling rigorous expectations for a high-performing organization. A comprehensive reform initiative of this magnitude—rarely undertaken let alone achieved elsewhere in the United States—underscores the commitment of our school system and unions to plan for the future and ensure the provision of a high-quality workforce.

Supporting services consists of all non-administrative and non-teacher-level positions. There are approximately 500 different supporting services position classifications. With this in mind, the development of the professional growth system recognizes the role of supporting services employees as multifaceted, ever-changing, and integral to supporting teaching and learning. The SSPGS establishes an infrastructure that describes the skills and knowledge required for supporting services staff to assist in building learning communities for students and adults.

Similar to the professional growth systems for teachers and administrators and supervisors, the purpose of the SSPGS is to establish a comprehensive system for recruiting, staffing, developing, evaluating, recognizing, and retaining high-quality supporting services staff in all of our schools and offices. This initiative supports ongoing strategies to ensure the employment of highly qualified and diverse professional and support personnel. As with the professional growth systems for teachers and administrators and supervisors, the SSPGS clearly outlines employee expectations for the evaluation process and the peer support process for underperforming supporting services staff.

SUPPORTING SERVICES PROFESSIONAL GROWTH SYSTEM MISSION STATEMENT

SSPGS is a collaborative process that promotes workforce excellence by applying a core competency model in order to encourage personal and systemic growth and focus on performance through continuous improvement.

PREAMBLE

Organizational Culture of Respect Statement

MCPS recognizes and values the role of all employees as contributors to a learning community that sets high standards of performance for staff and students. By working together through continuous improvement, effective communication, and meaningful involvement in the decision-making process, we provide a high-quality education to every student. We are committed to shared responsibility and a collaborative partnership, integrated into an organizational culture of respect. This culture is built on the belief that all employees, both school-based and non-school-based, are essential to a successful learning environment.

In order to sustain an organizational culture of respect, it is critical that all employees have an awareness, understanding, and tolerance of others' interests, viewpoints, cultures, and backgrounds. This culture promotes a positive work environment that supports the success of each employee, high student achievement, and continuous improvement in a self-renewing organization.

Equity and Cultural Competence

The commitment to foster an organizational culture of respect that is embedded throughout the school system is a priority of the employee associations/unions, the Montgomery County Board of Education, the superintendent of schools, and executive staff. Inherent to this belief is the recognition that there is strength in diversity and the belief that all employees are essential to a successful learning community. Therefore, MCPS commits to creating a positive work environment that does the following:

- Believes that the inclusion of individuals with a broad range of experiences and backgrounds broadens and strengthens education and contributes to student achievement.
- Promotes knowledge and understanding of one's own cultural identity as it influences a culturally competent workplace.
- Values the uniqueness of cultures other than one's own and the richness of cultural diversity and commonality.
- Promotes awareness of and sensitivity to individual differences within various cultural groups.
- Does not tolerate discrimination in any form. It impedes MCPS's ability to discharge its responsibilities to all students and staff and achieve our community's long-standing efforts to create, foster, and promote equity, inclusion, and acceptance for all. The Board recognizes that equity goes beyond meeting the letter of the law. Equity also requires taking proactive steps to identify and redress implicit biases and structural and institutional barriers that too often have resulted in identifiable groups of students and staff being unjustifiably or disproportionately excluded from or underrepresented in key educational program areas and sectors of the workforce, as well as over-identified in student discipline actions. Continued vigilance is necessary to end identified inequities that students and staff experience because of their actual or perceived personal characteristics.*

  **Personal characteristics include race, ethnicity, color, ancestry, national origin, religion, immigration status, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, family/parental status, marital status, age, physical or mental disability, poverty and socioeconomic status, language, or other legally or constitutionally protected attributes or affiliations.*
- Promotes the value of diversity and equity in its professional development offerings, recruitment, hiring, and promotional practices.
- Provides venues for courageous conversations about diversity and equity in a safe, nonjudgmental environment.
- Promotes a focus on diversity and equity through the implementation of each competency.

Role of the Professional Growth System Implementation Teams

Implementation of the components of each professional growth system (PGS) is overseen by a joint multi-stakeholder implementation team. Each team is charged with monitoring the processes and procedures as set forth in the design of the PGS. Through a collaborative and problem-solving process, the implementation teams are responsible for defining expectations and practices and assessing their implementation of the PGSs. In addressing issues that have arisen, the decision-making process will be to seek consensus; when that is not possible, a voting process may be used. Issues that cannot be resolved at the implementation team level may be referred to the appropriate collaboration committee. All PGS handbooks are continuously updated to reflect changes in processes and procedures approved by the appropriate implementation team.

- The implementation teams meet regularly on a schedule agreed on by the members at a meeting prior to July 1, for the subsequent year.

- The implementation teams consist of representative members of the employee associations and administration.
- The implementation teams are chaired by the employee association presidents or designees and MCPS designees, who are appointed by the deputy superintendent.
- The meetings are facilitated by an appointee of the associate superintendent, Office of Human Resources and Development (OHRD).
- An agenda is developed with input from implementation team members or other collaboration committees.

RECRUITING AND STAFFING

Purpose

The SSPGS is essential for attracting and recruiting high-quality supporting services personnel. This comprehensive professional growth system is based on core competencies and performance criteria that reflect the high level of skills and commitment to excellence that is expected of all supporting services personnel. Providing professional development opportunities, such as mentoring and performance recognition, creates a positive climate that motivates individuals to apply for support positions. One of the goals of the SSPGS is to attract a diverse group of individuals. The SSPGS processes are equitable and clearly described so that candidates know what to expect and have confidence in the integrity of the system.

Definition of Recruiting

Recruiting is the process by which candidates are given opportunities to learn about the requirements, job expectations, and benefits of being an MCPS supporting services employee. This includes defining the process used to identify individuals suitable to apply for specific positions.

Recruiting Candidates

In the SSPGS, the process of recruiting includes identifying and encouraging talented personnel who exhibit the competencies—skills, knowledge, and abilities—required of a supporting services employee. Any individual interested in understanding the requirements of a position can review the job descriptions available on the MCPS website.

OHRD seeks highly qualified internal and external candidates from diverse backgrounds. Pathways to internal opportunities are provided through the professional development opportunities in SSPGS. External recruitment offers the possibility for hiring experienced candidates to work for MCPS. Avenues for recruitment include local community outreach, universities, other school systems, personal contacts, employee referrals, professional conferences, national publications, and other methods for soliciting interest at local, regional, state, and national levels.

Candidates need to understand the core competencies expected of our employees and exhibit behaviors that demonstrate these competencies, such as the overall safety and well-being of the students. (See pages 15-21.) An understanding of student learning and MCPS educational goals is central to working for MCPS.

Conclusion

It is the goal of OHRD to recruit the most qualified and talented pool of candidates interested in working for MCPS.

EVALUATION

Purpose

The evaluation component of the MCPS SSPGS serves to ensure and document quality performance of supporting services employees and provide feedback for continuous professional development.

The goals of the system are to—

- promote personal and organizational excellence,
- streamline the evaluation process, and
- focus on performance and growth.

Element of the Evaluation Process

Definition and Responsibilities of the Parties Involved

- **Employee—**the person who is being evaluated according to core competency criteria.
- **Evaluator—**the person who is the direct supervisor of the employee. When possible, the evaluator should be one supervisory level above the employee. For example, a building service manager would be the evaluator for a building service worker. A paraeducator would be evaluated by the school principal or assistant principal.
- **Evaluations for employees without direct supervisors—**When a supporting services employee does not work under the direction of an immediate supervisor, the evaluation document and meeting will be performed by the principal or administrator/supervisor, with input provided from indirect feedback sources. It is the responsibility of the principal to remain fully knowledgeable of the employee's performance, through periodic meetings with the employee regarding their ongoing job performance and progress on their professional development plan, as well as through ongoing consultation with providers of indirect feedback.
- **Provider of indirect feedback—**an MCPS administrator/supervisor who does not have direct evaluator responsibility but who has first-hand knowledge of the employee's job performance, as measured by the core competencies. (See Evaluator Tip Sheet, p. 31.)
- **Reviewer—**the person who is ultimately responsible for the overall operations and performance of a division, department, or facility/school. When possible, the reviewer should be two supervisory levels above the employee. For example, the building service manager would ask a principal or designee to be the reviewer for a building service worker. In addition, the reviewer is responsible for ensuring that the evaluation accurately reflects an employee's job performance.

Note: In elementary schools where there are no assistant principals, the roles of evaluator and reviewer may be performed by the principal. In this case, no reviewer signature is required on the evaluation form.

Evaluation Cycles

Formal evaluations are performed according to a regular cycle, which is not linked to or determinative of an employee's scheduled step increase in compensation. Step increases occur independent of evaluation cycles.

- **New employees—**A Permanent Status Evaluation occurs immediately prior to the end of the six-month probationary period. Another formal evaluation of new employees is required 18 months later, at the two-year mark of MCPS employment. After year two, formal evaluations are performed every three years.
- **Current employees—**All employees who have been evaluated at the end of the two-year mark, or who have been employed by MCPS in the same job classification for more than two years, will undergo a formal evaluation every three years.

SUPPORT STAFF EVALUATION SCHEDULE FOR MEETING COMPETENCIES

LENGTH OF SERVICE (YEARS)	EVALUATION (E) OR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (P)
0.5 (6 mos.)	E
2	E
3	P
4	P
5	E
6	P
7	P
8	E
9	P
10	P
11	E
12	P
13	P
14	E
15	P
16	P
17	E
18	P
19	P
20	E
21	P
22	P
Note: Employees hired prior to March 1 of a given year will be credited with one year of service in the evaluation cycle.	

Circumstances Affecting Evaluation Cycles

If an employee has a change in position that requires a six-month probationary period, then the regular professional growth cycle would be interrupted. Upon successful completion of the probationary period in the new position, the employee would return to the place in the professional growth cycle where they were at the time immediately before the new position was taken. If the employee does not meet competency on the permanent status evaluation, they will be returned to their previously held position and will return to the place in the growth cycle where they were at the time immediately prior to taking the new position.

For employees who are in an evaluation year, evaluations are due for employees not meeting core competencies by the first Friday in March; but may be turned in as early as January 1 of that year. For employees who are meeting all core competencies, the evaluations are due by the last day of school for students. Regardless of the number of MCPS positions an employee holds, there will only be one professional growth cycle for each employee. For employees with multiple positions, a separate evaluation form should be completed for each position. Formal evaluations are not completed for employees who are in the Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) program.

Performance Improvement Process (PIP)

Overview

The Performance Improvement Process (PIP) provides underperforming supporting services employees with an opportunity to receive the intensive individualized assistance and professional development necessary to improve job performance and meet the core competency criteria of the SSPGS. PIP is the product of collaboration among representatives of the SEIU Local 500, administrators/supervisors, and MCPS, all of whom are committed to its successful implementation. PIP is available to all employees after their ninth month of employment, regardless of whether they are in an evaluation or a professional development year. Employees who are identified as underperforming between achieving permanent status and the end of the ninth month of employment may not be referred to PIP but must receive support at their work location.

PIP offers supporting services employees several strategies to address issues of underperformance, including a six-month Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) program, a 90-day (calendar days) Special Evaluation, the opportunity for reassignment to a previously held position at which the employee was successful, and resignation. Participation in the PAR program is voluntary. Underperforming employees who decide against participation in PAR and who reject the 90-day Special Evaluation option may choose to either return to a position at which they were successful in the past or resign. Employees are not eligible to voluntarily transfer to or apply for another position while they are in PAR or a 90-day Special Evaluation.

Definition and Responsibilities of the Parties Involved

- It is the responsibility of all parties to adhere to appropriate levels of confidentiality regarding an employee's inclusion in PIP.
- Employees who have received a "Does Not Meet Competency" rating in one or more core competencies on a formal evaluation, or who have a documented underperformance that has been discussed with them by their administrator/supervisor, are referred to PIP by the administrator/supervisor.

- In the multiyear professional growth cycle of the SSPGS, administrators/supervisors are responsible for evaluating their employees as well as supporting them during their professional growth years. They gather data independent of the professional growth consultant (PGC) on the employee's progress while the employee is in the PAR program. They continue to observe, provide feedback, and coordinate support when necessary. No information from the PGC reports may be used by an administrator/supervisor in their own evaluation of an employee.
- The PGCs are the direct liaisons among employees, administrators/supervisors, and the PAR Panel. They work under the direction of a lead PGC, or co-lead PGCs, who is the contact person for administrators/supervisors referring an employee to PIP. The lead PGC assigns cases and serves as the primary facilitator for the PGC staff. (When the SEIU executive vice president is not an MCPS employee, the SEIU president will appoint the SEIU Liaison to the Professional Growth Systems who will also serve as the co-chair of the SSPGS PAR Panel. In these instances, the appointee will take on the lead PGC responsibilities.) PGCs are experienced supporting services personnel who demonstrate outstanding professionalism and oral and written communication skills. They provide assistance and direct support to employees who do not meet core competencies during a formal evaluation or who are referred to PIP by an administrator/supervisor on the basis of a documented history of underperformance on the job. While PGCs share observations and final summative reports with administrators/supervisors, that documentation and the formal evaluation by the supervisor are independent of each other.

The duties of the PGC include the following:

  - » Conducting fact-finding with administrators/supervisors and the referred employees.
  - » Conducting initial intake meetings with employees to identify appropriate strategies for resolving job-related underperformance issues.
  - » Reporting the outcome of intake meetings to the PAR pair/triad and other stakeholders.
  - » Assisting with the design of action plans for employees who opt for Special Evaluation.
  - » Finalizing a PAR Agreement for employees who opt for the PAR program that specifies the commitments and expectations relating to job performance on the part of the referring administrator/supervisor and the employee.
  - » Maintaining a database of caseload histories.
  - » Performing on-site observations.
  - » Helping employees remedy core competency deficiencies.
  - » Coordinating support structures for improving technical job knowledge.
  - » Guiding employees' efforts to contribute to student achievement.
  - » Providing feedback to employees.
  - » Meeting with and providing feedback to referring administrators/supervisors.
  - » Preparing and submitting monthly to the PAR Panel, summary documentation and judgments regarding the progress of employees in the PAR program.
- The PAR Panel oversees the PAR component of PIP. It consists of 12 members appointed by the superintendent of schools: six representatives, including a co-chair, from supporting services recommended by SEIU Local 500 and six representatives, including a co-chair, recommended by MCPS. PAR Panel members are accountable to their respective organizations to ensure organizational and institutional support of the program. They hear the summative reports and recommendations provided by the PGCs and are responsible for the overall success of the program. The PAR Panel sends its recommendations directly to the superintendent of schools, or the superintendent's designee, who reviews and makes final decisions on all matters related to an individual employee's employment status.

The duties of the PAR Panel may include the following:

  - » Reviewing the disposition of all cases referred to PIP.
  - » Overseeing the cases of employees involved in PAR.
  - » Recruiting, interviewing, and selecting the PGCs.
  - » Evaluating the performance of the PGCs.
  - » Meeting monthly with the PGCs to receive reports on employee progress in the PAR program.
  - » Advising the PGCs regarding sources of support for employees.
  - » Reviewing concerns of participating employees or administrators/supervisors regarding PAR.
  - » Making one of the following personnel recommendations to the superintendent of schools, or their designee, at the completion of an employee's PAR participation, based on the PGC's reports, the administrator's/supervisor's data, and other supporting information.
    1. Successful completion of the PAR program and return to the regular professional growth cycle.
    2. Recommendation of a return to a previously successful position, if the underperformance is based solely on not meeting the Knowledge of Job competency.
    3. Dismissal.

Components of the Performance Improvement Process

PIP is designed to provide underperforming supporting services employees with the professional development opportunities required to improve performance and meet the core competency criteria of the SSPGS. It is a mechanism for maintaining systemwide quality control and a highly skilled and effective workforce. The following are components of PIP:

Referral—In order to make a referral and initiate PIP, an administrator/supervisor must contact the director of the Department of Professional Growth Systems (DPGS), OHRD, with evidence of an employee's underperformance. Referrals to PIP take place under the following circumstances:

- **Evaluation Year Process—**An administrator/supervisor assigns to an employee a "Does Not Meet Core Competency" rating on one or more core competencies during a formal evaluation. Documentation supporting this rating will be provided to the assigned PGC.
- **Non-Evaluation Year Process—**An administrator/supervisor has identified and documented underperformance that has been discussed with the employee over time. To make a referral, the administrator/supervisor should send e-mail to the director of DPGS.

Minimum Guidelines for Sufficient Documentation for Referral to the Performance Improvement Process

- The underperformance concerns and related documentation occurred within the last three years from the date of the referral.
- The documentation informing the employee of performance concerns was signed and dated by the employee. If the employee declined to sign, a witness to the interaction signed a sentence to that effect.
- The documentation indicated that the supervisor did the following:
  - » explained expectations for meeting competency;
  - » provided support, strategies, and feedback to improve performance; and
  - » allowed the employee a reasonable amount of time to improve performance.
- There are multiple documents meeting the above criteria.

Fact Finding/Eligibility to Transfer—A PGC is assigned to the case by the lead PGC. The PGC conducts interviews and, together with their PAR pair/triad, analyzes information from the administrator/supervisor and the employee to determine the merits of the referral.

If the PGC and PAR pair/triad determine there is sufficient data to substantiate underperformance concerns, an intake meeting is scheduled. The PGC notifies the director of DPGS, the assistant director of the Office of Certification and Staffing, the referring administrator/supervisor, the employee, and other stakeholders of the scheduled date. Until the notification occurs, the employee is eligible to participate in the voluntary transfer process. If the employee has an application in progress before the initial intake meeting is scheduled, it will not be interrupted; the employee will be allowed to interview and accept a position if it is offered.

The application and performance improvement processes continue on parallel tracks. Once the employee has been given notification of the initial intake meeting, no further new applications will be considered.

Intake Meeting—If the PGC and the PAR pair/triad determine that a referral is merited, an initial intake meeting is scheduled. The initial meeting will be scheduled within 10 working days of the submission of appropriate documentation by the referring administrator/supervisor and referred employee. The initial intake meeting provides the PGC with the opportunity to discuss with the employee the issues prompting the referral as well as options available to address the issues. The employee is then able to make an informed decision regarding the best action to take. At the final intake meeting, the employee informs the PGC of their choice. The results of all intake meetings go to the co-chairs of the PAR Panel, the Office of Human Resources and Development, the president of SEIU, and the administrator/supervisor.

If, on the basis of fact finding, the PGC believes that the documentation with the referral DOES NOT merit continued involvement in PIP, the PGC would report that outcome to the PAR pair/triad for review. Upon confirmation, the employee would remain in their current position and continue in the professional growth cycle. The PGC would notify the administrator/supervisor and the director of DPGS. They would then ensure that the final rating on the employee's evaluation is changed to "Meets All Core Competencies."

If, on the basis of fact finding, the PGC finds that the documentation supports competency deficiencies and indicates a need for continued involvement in PIP, the PGC would explain the options available to the employee. The employee would then reach a decision regarding which of the following options to choose:

- **Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) Program—**If, as a result of the intake meeting, the employee decides to participate in the PAR program, the PGC would inform the referring administrator/supervisor. Then, in collaboration with all stakeholders, the PGC creates a PAR Agreement and presents it to their PAR pair/triad for vetting. Once vetted, the PGC meets with the employee and administrator/supervisor to review and sign the Agreement. The PAR program may last for up to six months, during which time the PGC would carefully monitor the progress of the employee, conduct an interim conference to provide feedback on their work in the program, and report back to the PAR Panel. The employee waives their right to grieve a termination for performance reasons when they enter the PAR program. (See the SEIU Local 500 negotiated Agreement, Article 29F.)
- **Special Evaluation—**A 90-day (calendar days) Special Evaluation is available to the employee in lieu of the PAR program. In some circumstances, an employee's best option may not be PAR. A process of shorter duration or sharper focus may be accomplished by means of a 90-day Special Evaluation. A special evaluation, which occurs under the auspices of OHRD, offers local support, the development of an Action Plan to address issues of underperformance, and constructive feedback from local administrators. Action Plans are designed by the administrator/supervisor and the employee, in collaboration, and it is the responsibility of those two parties to see that the provisions for support and improvement are met. Because a special evaluation is not part of PAR, the employee is not assigned to a PGC and the PAR Panel has no oversight over the case. Grievance rights are retained. (See the SEIU Local 500 negotiated Agreement, Article 29F.)
- **Return to a previous position of success—**An employee may opt to return to a position in which they were previously successful, if that position is available and provided that returning to the previously held position does not result in a promotion within their existing job family (see MCPS Career Pathways website for more information www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/personnel/career-pathways/index.aspx). Positions with a separate POS Code, for reasons not related to job content, should be considered the same position, for purposes of this section. If the employee chooses to return to a position at which they were successful in the past, the six-month probationary period is waived and the regular evaluation process is applied. If the employee has held only one position in MCPS, and therefore does not have a previously successful position to return to, this option does not apply. This choice may result in a placement at a lower pay grade and salary reduction.

If an underperforming employee does not choose any of these options, the 90-day Special Evaluation would be the default decision.

Note: PAR is a one-time option per employee in any one job classification. If an employee already has taken advantage of the PAR program and underperformance concerns in the same job classification arise at a later date, a referral to PIP in the form of an email or evaluation may be made to OHRD. A PGC would conduct fact finding to determine the merits of the referral. If, on the basis of fact finding, the PGC finds that the documentation in the referral does not merit continued involvement in PIP, the PGC would report that outcome to the director of DPGS and the administrator/supervisor. If, on the basis of fact finding, the PGC finds that the documentation in the referral does relate to core competency deficiencies and indicates a need for continued involvement in PIP, the employee may choose the 90-day Special Evaluation, return to a previously held successful position, if available and applicable, or resign/retire.

The Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) Agreement or Action Plan—In order for PIP to work, both the employee and the referring administrator/supervisor must be invested in the process and committed to a strategy to address issues of underperformance. For employees opting for the PAR program, a PAR Agreement must be approved by the administrator/supervisor, the PGC, and employee, and then vetted by the PAR pair/triad. For employees opting for a 90-day Special Evaluation, an Action Plan must be designed by the referring administrator/supervisor and the employee, under the auspices of the director of the DPGS. The PAR Agreement and the Action Plan are intended to address specific areas of underperformance. They may include formal and informal training opportunities, peer coaching, and other appropriate avenues of support. Strategies for support included in the PAR Agreement or Action Plan should, whenever possible, be provided to an employee during their regular schedule. Employees shall be permitted to attend and be granted professional leave to fulfill the strategies listed in the PAR Agreement or Action Plan. It should take approximately 30 duty days between the original referral and the signing of the PAR Agreement or Action Plan. Communication and collaboration among the PGCs, administrators/supervisors, central services staff, and other MCPS offices and resources are essential to PIP.

Mechanics of the Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) Program

The PAR program is voluntary and is designed to resolve underperformance issues and provide employees with the skills they need for success. After referral to PIP, a PGC will research the case and schedule an intake meeting for the employee. PAR is one of the options presented by the PGC and begins once an employee and their administrator/supervisor are committed to a PAR Agreement and the Agreement has been vetted by all the parties involved. The PGC assigned to the case coordinates resources and monitors the employee's progress through six months of peer assistance. During this period, the PGC meets with administrator/supervisor and employee; performs a minimum of two formal observations—one announced and one unannounced; collects and records data pertinent to the case; provides additional resources for technical support as required; and makes monthly reports to the PAR Panel. At the three-month mark of the PAR program, the PGC, with the PAR Panel's acknowledgment, conducts an interim conference with the employee to discuss their progress in PAR.

- If demonstrable progress has been made toward the resolution of underperformance issues, the employee may continue in the PAR program for the remaining three-month period or, if underperformance issues have been resolved, the employee may be released from the PAR program at that time, if all stakeholders and the PAR Panel are in agreement.
- If demonstrable progress has not been made during the initial three months of the PAR program, the employee may continue in the PAR program for the remaining three-month period or the PGC may discuss with the employee an option to return to a position in which they were previously successful, if such a position is available.

The PAR Panel is informed of the determination.

If the employee chooses to return to a position in which they were previously successful, the PGC will inform the Department of Certification and Staffing. The Department of Certification and Staffing will follow the standard policy of reassignment. If the successful employee chooses to continue for the remaining three months of the PAR program, at the end of the sixth month, the PGC would present a summative report and final judgment to the PAR Panel. The PGC may determine that:

- The employee has met the core competencies.
- The employee has not met the core competencies.

The PGC meets with the administrator/supervisor before the final judgment is made to the PAR Panel. At that time, both parties would review the summative report and the PGC's judgment.

The PGC meets with and informs the employee of the judgment that is going to the PAR Panel and reviews the summative report with the employee. The PAR Panel would then make the final personnel recommendation to the superintendent of schools or their designee.

The PAR Panel requires a quorum of eight members in order to vote—four from SEIU and four from MCAAP/MCBOA. Outcomes are decided on a majority rules basis.

Recommendation Process

Agreement: *The PGC and administrator/supervisor agree that the employee meets competency.*

If the PGC and the administrator/supervisor agree that the employee meets competency, the PAR Panel would make a final recommendation to return the employee to their professional growth cycle. The PAR Panel notifies the employee and administrator/supervisor of the decision in writing. In the case of agreement among all parties, the employee and the administrator/supervisor do not attend a PAR Panel meeting.

Agreement: *The PGC and administrator/supervisor agree that the employee does not meet competency.*

If the PGC and administrator/supervisor agree that the employee does not meet competency, the administrator/supervisor would have to appear before the PAR Panel. The employee may appear before the PAR Panel.

Disagreement: *The PGC and administrator/supervisor disagree that the employee does not meet competency or the employee disagrees with PGC and administrator/supervisor that they do not meet competency.*

If the PGC and administrator/supervisor disagree about whether an employee has met competency, the administrator/supervisor would have to appear before the PAR Panel. The employee may appear before the PAR Panel.

In reviewing the facts related to the recommendation from the PGC that an employee has not met the competency, if the PAR Panel concludes that the underperformance is based solely on not meeting competency number 2, Knowledge of the Job, the PAR Panel may make a recommendation that the employee be allowed to return to a previously held position at which the employee was successful. This would be in lieu of a recommendation to the superintendent of schools for termination.

PAR Program Safeguards

In order to guarantee a fair and impartial outcome, the following safeguards have been put in place to protect all parties involved in the PAR program:

- Employees may not be forced into the PAR program. Based on information and guidance given to them at intake meetings by the PGC, they would decide whether or not to participate in PAR.
- If an administrator/supervisor refers an employee to PIP as a result of a formal evaluation or a documented history of underperformance and the recommendation of the PGC is that, based on the evidence, the employee does in fact meet competency and neither PAR nor Special Evaluation is needed, the administrator/supervisor may present additional data to the PAR Panel in support of their contention. Final decisions rest with the PGC/PAR pair/triad. If they determine the referral is not warranted, the employee's evaluation would be revised to reflect that the final rating is changed to "Meets All Core Competencies."
- Once an employee has gone through the PAR program, if they feel improperly assessed and that a judgment of not meeting competency by the PGC is not appropriate, the employee may present data to support their contention to the PAR Panel. The decision of the PAR Panel is final, pending the superintendent's or designee's approval.
- At the three- or six-month review, if the PAR Panel determines that an employee has met core competencies and recommends that the employee return to their professional growth cycle and the superintendent or designee overturns that determination, the employee may file a grievance. This is the only circumstance under which an employee who has opted for PAR may file a grievance.
- A memorandum will be placed in the employee's personnel file to reflect either successful completion of PAR or a recommendation of termination.

PAR Program Follow-up

One year after successful completion of PAR, the administrator/supervisor will evaluate the employee to ensure maintenance of skills using MCPS Form 430-90, *Evaluation Form: Supporting Services Professional Growth System*. The supervisor would indicate on the form that the evaluation is a PAR follow-up. If the PAR follow-up coincides with the employee's evaluation year in the professional growth cycle, then the PAR follow-up evaluation would replace the scheduled formal evaluation for that year.

- If the employee continues to meet competencies, they will continue in the professional growth cycle.
- If the employee does not meet one or more competencies, a PGC would conduct fact finding. If fact finding reveals that the documentation presented has merit, the employee would have only three options available:
  - » A 90-day Special Evaluation,
  - » Return to a previously held successful position if available and applicable, or
  - » Resignation/retirement.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Vision

The professional development process of the Supporting Services Professional Growth System (SSPGS) will provide comprehensive professional development opportunities that support the continuous growth of a skilled and effective workforce and reflect best practices for adult learners.

Purpose

A major component of SSPGS is a comprehensive professional development process for all support professionals. The professional development process provides employees with a variety of high-quality, work-related opportunities that expand their job knowledge, help them acquire new skills, and offer support toward meeting all core competency expectations at the time of their scheduled evaluations. A well-designed professional development process promotes individual success on the job and enhances the organizational effectiveness of MCPS.

Professional Development Plan (PDP)

SSPGS is based on a three-year evaluation and professional growth cycle that begins at the end of the second year of employment in a position. (For employees hired new to MCPS, the first six-month period of employment in any position is probationary. After permanent status is attained, the employee is evaluated 18 months later at the two-year mark. Scheduled evaluations occur every three years thereafter.) At the beginning of a professional growth cycle, each employee collaborates with their supervisor to design a Professional Development Plan (PDP). The PDP may reflect data gathered from the employee's most recent evaluation (see Part III of the evaluation form, page 30), demands specific to a job classification and location, and the employee's own perception of their professional needs. The objective of the PDP is to target areas for growth and identify strategies for successfully meeting professional goals.

It is expected that completion of the PDP form and meeting(s) with the unit member's supervisor should take place during the normal workday of the unit member. In the rare instance that this is not possible, the schedule of the unit member may be adjusted, by mutual agreement, on the day when the meeting is held. In situations where the meeting must occur outside the normal work hours of the unit member and the schedule cannot be adjusted, the supervisor must request and obtain approval for overtime prior to scheduling the meeting.

As the primary component of the professional development process, the PDP does the following:

- Provides structure and accountability so that expectations are realistic, understood by both parties, and met in a reasonable manner.
- Enhances performance in the seven core competencies.
- Provides flexibility in the identification of professional growth goals.
- Aligns individual opportunities with the goals and objectives of specific work locations.
- Offers potential for long-range planning that may be revisited and adjusted on an annual basis.
- Contributes to workforce and organizational excellence.

Activities and Practices for Professional Development

The kinds of activities that employee and supervisor include in the PDP demonstrate a thoughtful assessment of current needs; available development opportunities; and future individual, departmental, and organizational goals. Continuous professional development, which benefits both the employee and the organization, may take many forms. Examples of professional development activities appropriate for the PDP include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Training development
- Certificate/degree programs
- Staff development opportunities
- Advisor peer coach or shadowing
- Reflection log
- Committees, task forces, work groups, etc.

PDP Review

An employee's progress in meeting the goals of their PDP should be reviewed at least annually by the supervisor and the employee through a collaborative dialogue. By the end of the professional growth cycle, and in anticipation of an employee's scheduled evaluation, regular communication between the employee and the supervisor should ensure that measurable progress has been documented and professional goals met.

Exceptions to the PDP Requirement

There are two exceptions to the PDP requirement: employees who are participating in the PAR program under the terms of a PAR Agreement and employees who are in a 90-day Special Evaluation under the terms of an Action Plan are exempt from submitting a PDP while they are in PAR or Special Evaluation. When these employees successfully fulfill the terms of their PAR Agreement or Action Plan and meet the requirements of any follow-up evaluations, they resume participation in the professional growth cycle and are expected to collaborate with their supervisor to design a PDP.

Supporting Services Mentoring Program

The Supporting Services Mentoring Program is an important component of SSPGS that provides additional strategies to ensure the employment of highly qualified and diverse professional and support personnel. The Supporting Services Mentoring Program provides mentors upon request to permanent staff to help them excel in their roles, direct them to training and on-the-job work experiences, and prepare them for career development opportunities.

Career Pathways Program

The Career Pathways Program supports SEIU Local 500 unit members to identify career goals and obtain training and direction to attain those goals. The Career Pathways Program offers opportunities for employees to improve their knowledge and skills in content areas that will enable them to reach their career goals, with programs and processes in place to support those objectives.

Conclusion

SSPGS is intended to provide employees with an environment in which continuous professional development is encouraged. This presupposes that supervisors and employees together take an active role in the design of PDPs that are realistic, motivational, clear, and effective. The professional development of supporting services employees improves the performance of the individual employee, increases capacity in the organization, and contributes to the success of our students.

RECOGNITION

An organization's success ultimately depends on the commitment of its employees to the organization's vision and goals. Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) is committed to employee recognition. Recognizing and celebrating those employees who use their diverse knowledge, skills, creativity, and motivation to contribute to the overall success of MCPS is an important component of the Supporting Services Professional Growth System. The recognition component provides opportunity to highlight the individual achievement of staff in a positive and supportive manner that is consistent with a professional learning community.

Motivation and encouragement promotes a higher standard of performance from employees. The recognition component supports MCPS in its efforts to attract and retain the most qualified employees. Recognition identifies individuals and best practices for celebration and creates and supports an atmosphere of respect within the schools, offices, departments, and divisions of MCPS and the larger community.

Role of Recognition

The role of the recognition component is to identify those practices, performances, and achievements attained by an individual/team that make them stand out. The system sets a standard for excellence by acknowledging these accomplishments. Employee accomplishments to be recognized may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Earning a degree or certificate.
- Serving specified years in MCPS.
- Performing an act of heroism.
- Receiving awards outside of MCPS.
- Training an intern/new employee.
- Acting as a mentor or peer coach.
- Presenting at a professional conference.
- Holding office in a professional organization.
- Outstanding performance.
- Serving on school system committees.
- Developing better procedures for performing a task.
- Completing unique assignments.
- Teaching courses or training teams or individuals.
- Developing innovative or creative ideas.

Recognition Methods

The recognition of individuals for outstanding work is critical to a positive work environment and enhances the overall work climate. Locally made certificates and awards, verbal recognition at staff meetings, and a "thank you" are examples of employee recognition at the local level that promote increased morale and support a positive work environment. All stakeholders have a responsibility to identify and acknowledge the achievements of the people with whom they supervise and collaborate. As noted, recognition can take a variety of forms that include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Letters of appreciation.
- Recognition at a staff, cluster, administrative and supervisory, or Board of Education meeting.
- Plaques and certificates.
- Professional growth opportunities.
- Articles in The Bulletin/newspaper/website.
- Above and Beyond the Call of Duty (ABCD) awards.
- Nominations for community awards.
- Nominations for the Supporting Services Employee of the Year award.

CORE COMPETENCIES AND PERFORMANCE CRITERIA 1–7

CORE COMPETENCY 1: COMMITMENT TO STUDENTS

Performance Criteria: The employee—

- understands how the job contributes to success for every student;
- cares genuinely about the overall learning environment to ensure student success;
- acts with the student in mind;
- is dedicated to meeting the expectations of principals, supervisors, staff, parents, and students;
- is dedicated to supporting high-quality education for students; and
- is dedicated to the successful achievement/performance of all groups by supporting the elimination of racial and ethnic inequities.

Examples of Evidence: The employee does the following:

MEETS COMPETENCY	DOES NOT MEET COMPETENCY
• Assists and advocates on behalf of students. • Understands the needs of the students and follows up when appropriate. • Provides appropriate alternative solutions to student issues. • Builds successful relationships with students to ensure a productive learning environment. • Values student achievement. • Understands their role and responsibility and how they contribute to student achievement. • Anticipates and responds quickly to student needs. • Contributes to creating and maintaining a positive and safe environment for students. • Treats all students fairly. • Supports equitable practices in the school and workplace. • Supports and advocates for full stakeholder involvement in decision making. • Engages in professional learning that advances the commitment to equity. • Models respectful behavior in all interactions. • Treats all people fairly and with respect. • Contributes to initiatives that advance the commitment to equitable practices.	• Disregards the needs of students. • Does not follow up on issues that may negatively impact students. • Is unwilling to listen or offer assistance. • Does not display interest in student needs or inquiries. • Does not support efforts to provide a clean, safe learning environment for all students. • Is insensitive when dealing with students. • Displays an attitude that inhibits student confidence and self-esteem. • Does not support equitable practices in the school and workplace. • Does not support and advocate for full stakeholder involvement in decision making. • Is unwilling to engage in professional learning that advances the commitment to equity. • Does not model respectful behavior in all interactions. • Does not treat all people fairly and with respect. • Avoids opportunities to participate in initiatives that advance the commitment to equitable practices.

CORE COMPETENCY 2: KNOWLEDGE OF JOB

Performance Criteria: The employee—

- understands assigned job duties;
- is knowledgeable about current and new practices and methods;
- uses appropriate materials, equipment, and resources;
- implements and completes work assignments;
- learns new skills and procedures; and
- knows appropriate policies, procedures, and regulations.

For the position-specific knowledge, skills, and abilities, refer to the reference checklists as well as the job descriptions under the Classification section on the MCPS website, www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/personnel.

Examples of Evidence: The employee does the following:

MEETS COMPETENCY	DOES NOT MEET COMPETENCY
• Demonstrates a high degree of competence in job-related skills, as outlined in the classification description for the position being evaluated. • Maintains appropriate records and equipment. • Possesses the knowledge base to get work done. • Shares knowledge that will benefit others. • Keeps well informed on new procedures, policies, and guidelines. • Is effective and productive. • Consistently meets the performance criteria of quality and quantity of work. • Applies policies and procedures appropriately. • Uses resources and materials responsibly.	• Needs excessive supervision to complete routine tasks. • Does not complete assignments in a timely manner. • Does not display solid understanding of job responsibilities. • Does not adhere to operations standards, policies, and procedures. • Consistently makes mistakes and causes rework. • Does not attend to detail.

CORE COMPETENCY 3: PROFESSIONALISM

Performance Criteria: The employee—

- is patient to hear the entire story;
- is calm under pressure;
- is timely with information;
- is dependable, reliable, and trustworthy;
- responds to all people equitably;
- is proactive when handling all situations; and
- possesses the ability to handle all matters in a professional and confidential manner.

Examples of Evidence: The employee does the following:

MEETS COMPETENCY	DOES NOT MEET COMPETENCY
• Demonstrates patience and good listening skills. • Treats all people with respect and fairness. • Provides efficient and pleasant assistance. • Instills confidence in others. • Responds to questions and requests in a timely manner. • Is dependable and reliable. • Remains calm under pressure. • Approaches situations with a positive attitude. • Demonstrates initiative. • Keeps appropriate matters confidential. • Demonstrates leadership when circumstances warrant. • Shares accountability for outcomes.	• Lacks patience and interrupts frequently. • Uses inappropriate communication styles. • Is argumentative and/or intimidating. • Lacks initiative in job performance. • Rarely demonstrates a positive attitude and demeanor. • Does not treat others fairly/equitably. • Violates or is careless about protecting confidentiality.

CORE COMPETENCY 4: INTERPERSONAL

Performance Criteria: The employee—

- is polite and approachable;
- is able to be a team member/player;
- cares about people;
- is available and ready to help;
- treats people with respect;
- acts as a mentor and a student advocate;
- attempts to understand other perspectives; and
- relates well to others.

Examples of Evidence: The employee does the following:

MEETS COMPETENCY	DOES NOT MEET COMPETENCY
• Contributes to a positive work environment. • Is supportive, respectful, and polite. • Accepts feedback. • Works effectively with others. • Is receptive and open-minded. • Is willing to consider differing opinions. • Offers assistance when needed. • Promotes productive interactions. • Conveys positive personal qualities. • Understands the importance of getting things done as a team. • Handles confrontations with tact. • Respects the opinions, abilities, and contributions of others. • Contributes constructively to team efforts. • Demonstrates an appreciation of diversity in the workplace.	• Is impolite and insensitive to others. • Maintains distance from others and does not interact easily. • Rarely or never functions as a team player. • Does not demonstrate a caring attitude. • Is rarely available to or refuses to assist others. • Is disrespectful. • Displays lack of interest in helping and advocating for students. • Is unwilling to consider differing opinions. • Is arrogant. • Is argumentative. • Is impatient. • Is self-centered. • Constantly seeks easiest way out. • Is discourteous toward staff, parents, or students. • Cannot express feelings or relate to another point of view.

CORE COMPETENCY 5: COMMUNICATION

Performance Criteria: The employee—

- understands how to be an active listener;
- is effective in oral and written skills;
- is able to communicate well to manage conflict and deal effectively with problem situations; and
- is tactful when handling situations and difficulties, making the least possible disruption.

Examples of Evidence: The employee does the following:

MEETS COMPETENCY	DOES NOT MEET COMPETENCY
• Understands and engages in active listening practices. • Demonstrates good judgment in selecting the proper mode of communication, e.g., spoken word, memo, letter, e-mail, or fax. • Sends messages that are clear and concise. • Is direct and constructive in tone, words, and actions. • Ensures the least amount of disruption in handling difficult situations. • Produces organized and complete reports as required. • Communicates rules and procedures calmly and effectively. • Conveys a favorable image of the organization. • Keeps others informed appropriately at all levels of the organization. • Contributes to the efficient flow of information within the organization. • Verifies information and instructions, both given and received.	• Is not attentive or focused. • Does not respond to questions or requests. • Communicates in a way that disrupts the work environment. • Frequently interrupts. • Insults in tone and content. • Sends messages that aggravate difficult situations. • Inappropriately withholds information. • Uses inappropriate language. • Does not ask for clarification when needed. • Does not attempt to defuse situations when possible.

CORE COMPETENCY 6: ORGANIZATION

Performance Criteria: The employee—

- knows how to get things done in the classroom, school, office, or other work location;
- assists as needed to organize meetings and tasks;
- anticipates needs of principals, supervisors, staff, parents, and students;
- gets things done in a timely manner; and
- manages a broad range of activities.

Examples of Evidence: The employee does the following:

MEETS COMPETENCY	DOES NOT MEET COMPETENCY
• Anticipates and prepares for the completion of tasks, assignments, etc. • Accomplishes tasks in an orderly, systematic, and resourceful manner. • Demonstrates effective time management. • Handles multiple demands appropriately. • Uses correct procedures for maintaining and retrieving materials and records. • Attempts to restore order in disruptive situations. • Assembles available facts and makes timely decisions.	• Is inefficient and ineffective at completing tasks. • Frequently does not meet schedules and timelines for completing work. • Is not able to meet multiple demands. • Lacks an orderly approach to tasks. • Does not maintain an orderly work environment. • Cannot find materials or records. • Uses inappropriate information to justify an action. • Makes hasty, uninformed decisions.

CORE COMPETENCY 7: PROBLEM SOLVING

Performance Criteria: The employee—

- changes routines to fit the needs of the situation;
- accesses and uses resources effectively and efficiently;
- identifies process improvements;
- explores beyond the obvious when solving problems;
- asks appropriate questions to clarify situations;
- is logical when discussing the pros and cons of situations; and
- recognizes issues and their implications quickly.

Examples of Evidence: The employee does the following:

MEETS COMPETENCY	DOES NOT MEET COMPETENCY
• Adapts to changing situations. • Identifies new, creative, or innovative solutions. • Asks appropriate questions. • Knows when to seek help. • Assesses problems in a logical and calm manner. • Anticipates and takes steps to avoid problems before they arise. • Demonstrates the ability to identify and analyze situations quickly. • Recognizes issues and their implications. • Prioritizes situations and handles them accordingly. • Manages routine responsibilities while handling unusual or difficult situations when they arise. • Collaborates to find workable solutions to problems.	• Lacks flexibility. • Resists new or innovative ways to accomplish tasks. • Does not seek pertinent information beyond the obvious. • Is unwilling to ask for assistance. • Does not recognize issues or anticipate their consequences. • Does not apply practical solutions to problems. • Does not address problems before they become critical. • Makes excuses for ignoring problems.

APPENDICES

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PROCESS INTAKE MEETING FORM

Office of Human Resources and Development
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Rockville, Maryland

Employee Name: _____ Employee ID#: _____ Initial Date: _____

Section 1: Initial Intake Meeting

Using information gathered during fact-finding, the professional growth consultant (PGC) will

- Explain the intake meeting process
- Review performance concerns
- Share identified underperformance competency(ies)

❑ Commitment to Students ❑ Knowledge of Job ❑ Professionalism

❑ Interpersonal ❑ Communication ❑ Organization

❑ Problem Solving

- Present the options available to the employee (employee will have three working days to make a decision).

Employee initials:_____ Date: _____

Section 2: Final Intake Meeting

Based on the results of fact-finding, the documentation supports the referral to the Performance Improvement Process. The PGC has explained the options available to the employee to address issues of underperformance. The employee has chosen the following option by initialing it:

_____ 1. Participate in Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) program.*

_____ 2. Participate in the 90-Day Special Evaluation. (*Employee retains grievance rights.*)

_____ 3. Return to a previously held position at which they were successful, if available. (This choice may result in a voluntary placement at a lower pay grade and salary reduction.)

_____ 4. Resign.

*An employee who chooses the PAR process waives their right to grieve a termination for performance reasons, unless the decision by the superintendent or their designee to terminate the employee was not supported by a majority vote of the PAR Panel.

Note: If the employee does not choose one of the options above, they will automatically participate in the 90-Day Special Evaluation.

Section 3: Required signatures:

By signing this form, I verify that the PGC explained the options available to me. I understand each option, and I agree to abide by the option that I have chosen.

_____	_____	_____
Employee Name (PRINT)	Employee Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
PGC Name (PRINT)	SPGC Signature	Date

A confidential copy of this document is sent to OHRD, administrator/supervisor, SEIU Local 500 president, and employee.

November 2017

Evaluation Form:
Supporting Services Professional Growth System

Office of Human Resources and Development (OHRD)
Department of Professional Growth Systems
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Rockville, Maryland

MCPS Form 430-90
January 2018

Negotiated Agreement between SEIU Local 500, CTW, and the Board of Education of Montgomery County

Name _____ Employee ID # _____ Date _____

☐ *Permanent Status Evaluation ☐ Scheduled Evaluation ☐ **Off-cycle Evaluation ☐ PAR Follow-UP ☐ ***Interim Evaluation

Department/School _____ Position _____

Notes: *If this is a Permanent Status Evaluation, probationary employees should be able to demonstrate their potential to meet the general and technical Knowledge of Job core competency performance criteria.

**An Off-cycle Evaluation can be used:

- as a tool to work with underperforming employees to let them know the status of their current performance
- as a way to call attention to exceptionally good work
- following the end of the 90-day special evaluation within the Performance Improvement Process

***An Interim Evaluation is prepared if there is a change of supervisor or if employees transfer prior to the time for their regularly scheduled performance evaluation. (See Article 30, paragraph B2 of the Negotiated Agreement between SEIU Local 500, CTW, and the Board of Education of Montgomery County.)

Roles and Responsibilities

- The evaluator is the direct line supervisor. The reviewer is a higher level supervisor, if one exists. Montgomery County Education Association (MCEA) employees do not write evaluations and are not evaluators or reviewers, but may provide indirect feedback. (See Supporting Services Professional Growth System (SSPGS)—then link to: *http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/professionalgrowth/supporting/default.aspx* Handbook for clarification.)

Providing Examples and Evidence

- In the "Examples/Evidence" section, provide specific examples/evidence of how employees have demonstrated or not demonstrated meeting competency. Narratives written in the Claim, Examples/Evidence, Impact, Judgment (CEIJ) format are preferred.

Completing the Form

- Evaluator completes all parts of the form. Reviewer reviews and signs the form. No section of the form should be left blank.
- Evaluator discusses the evaluation with the employee.
- Evaluator and employee sign the evaluation.
- One copy is kept in the employee's local file, one is given to the employee, and one is sent to the OHRD Department of Professional Growth Systems.

Due Dates

- Permanent Status Evaluation: Due no later than six months after the date of hire.
- Scheduled Evaluation:
  - Meets Competency: Submit by the last instructional day for students.
  - Does Not Meet Competency: Submit by first Friday in March.
  - Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) Follow-Up: Due one year after completing PAR.

Name _____ Employee ID # _____ Date _____

PART I—CORE COMPETENCIES

The core competencies listed below are defined by performance criteria. These performance criteria offer suggestions for how the core competencies may be observed. (See SSPGS Handbook.)

Rating: There are two possible ratings—Meets Competency and Does Not Meet Competency. Using the examples/evidence, determine the overall assessment of the employee's performance in a particular competency.

- **Meets Competency (MC):** Reflects performance over a sustained period of time that clearly and consistently meets competency performance criteria as cited in the SSPGS Handbook.
- **Does Not Meet Competency (NMC):** Reflects performance that regularly fails to meet competency performance criteria.

Core Competencies/Performance Criteria	Examples/Evidence	Rating
COMMITMENT TO STUDENTS • Understands how the job contributes to Success for Every Student • Cares genuinely about the overall learning environment to ensure student success • Acts with the student in mind • Is dedicated to meeting expectations of principals, supervisors, staff, parents/ guardians, and students • Is dedicated to supporting high-quality education for students • Is dedicated to the successful achievement/ performance of all groups by supporting the elimination of racial and ethnic inequalities		☐ MC ☐ NMC
KNOWLEDGE OF JOB • General Competencies - Understands assigned job duties - Is knowledgeable about current and new practices and methods - Uses appropriate materials, equipment, and resources - Implements and completes work assignments - Learns new skills and procedures - Knows appropriate policies, procedures, and regulations • Technical Competencies Applies the knowledge and skills needed to do the job, including technical competencies required by employee's specific position classification (See job description and Reference Checklist.)		☐ MC ☐ NMC

Name _____ Employee ID # _____ Date _____

Core Competencies/Performance Criteria	Examples/Evidence	Rating
PROFESSIONALISM • Patient to hear the entire story • Calm under pressure • Timely with information • Positive, dependable, reliable, and trustworthy • Responds to all people equitably • Proactive when handling all situations • Possesses the ability to handle all matters in a professional and confidential manner		☐ MC ☐ NMC
INTERPERSONAL • Polite and approachable • Able to be a team member/team player • Cares about people • Available and ready to help • Treats people with respect • Acts as a mentor and a student advocate • Attempts to understand other perspectives • Relates well to others		☐ MC ☐ NMC

Name _____ Employee ID # _____ Date _____

Core Competencies/Performance Criteria	Examples/Evidence	Rating
COMMUNICATION • Understands how to be an active listener • Effective in oral and written skills • Able to communicate well to manage conflict and deal effectively with problem situations • Tactful when handling situations and difficulties with the least possible disruption		☐ MC ☐ NMC
ORGANIZATION • Knows how to get things done in the classroom, school, office, or other work locations • Assists as needed to organize meetings and tasks • Anticipates needs of principals, supervisors, staff, parents/guardians, and students • Gets things done in a timely manner • Manages a broad range of activities		☐ MC ☐ NMC

Name _____ Employee ID # _____ Date _____

Core Competencies/Performance Criteria	Examples/Evidence	Rating
PROBLEM SOLVING • Changes routines to fit the needs of the situation • Accesses and uses resources effectively and efficiently • Identifies process improvements • Explores beyond the obvious when solving problems • Asks appropriate questions to clarify a situation • Logical when discussing the pros and cons of situations • Quickly recognizes issues and their implications		☐ MC ☐ NMC

PART II—ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
(For example, you might address the past year's record of accomplishments, letters of recommendation, and training courses taken.)

Name _____ Employee ID # _____ Date _____

PART III—SUGGESTIONS FOR CONTINUED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PART IV—FINAL RATING

Please indicate the final rating by checking the appropriate box below. Evidence and comments to support this rating should be included in Parts I, II, and III.

☐ **Meets all core competencies** ☐ **Does not meet one or more of the core competencies**

PART V—SIGNATURES

_____ _____/_____/_____ _____

Signature, Evaluator *Date* *Printed Name and Job Title, Evaluator*

_____ _____/_____/_____ _____

Signature, Reviewer *Date* *Printed Name and Job Title, Reviewer*

I have participated in this evaluation _____ _____/_____/_____

Signature, Employee *Date*

(BY SIGNING THIS EVALUATION THE EMPLOYEE DOES NOT NECESSARILY HAVE TO AGREE WITH THE CONTENTS AND MAY ATTACH COMMENTS TO THIS FORM.)

EVALUATOR TIP SHEET

Some supporting services staff members spend most of their time working with an MCEA unit member or other MCPS employees (e.g., an area supervisor or manager, resource teacher, media specialist, or instructional specialist) who are not direct-line supervisors. The evaluator should request feedback from non-evaluators who participate in managing or directing the employee's work load. Feedback should—

- be aligned to the seven core competencies,
- be shared,
- be objective,
- recognize employee strengths, and
- provide suggestions to encourage improvement.

Providers of indirect feedback, including but not limited to MCEA unit members, may not write or sign evaluations.

Use the employee's job description to assist in evaluation writing.

Supporting Services
Professional Development Plan (PDP)

Professional Growth System
Office of Human Resources and Development
Rockville, Maryland 20855
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

MCPS Form 425-53
November 2012

Name _____ Employee Identification Number: ___ ___ ___ ___ ___

Position_____ Work Location_____

Timeframe for PDP: From _____ to _____

Professional Development Goal(s)

My professional development goal is to

☐ Maintain and/or enhance competency ☐ Explore other career opportunities in MCPS
(See www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/personnel/classification/ for job descriptions and required skills.)

Core Competencies

Check at least one core competency for your PDP focus. Your choice(s) will guide your PDP activities.

☐ 1. Commitment to Students
☐ 2. Knowledge of Job
☐ 3. Professionalism
☐ 4. Interpersonal
☐ 5. Communication
☐ 6. Organization
☐ 7. Problem Solving

PDP Activities

Discuss with your supervisor from the following list one or more ways that your plan to continue your professional growth.

Options may include, but are not limited to, participation in the following:

☐ Annual review of current job policies, practices, and/or updates
☐ Advisor, peer coach, or shadowing
☐ Apprenticeships or internships
☐ Certificate/Degree program
☐ Committee or task force
☐ Extracurricular activities sponsor
☐ Job-related book/article reading
☐ Language skills improvement
☐ License requirements
☐ Meetings with supervisor
☐ Meeting/trainer presenter
☐ Networking group
☐ Portfolio development
☐ Reflection log
☐ Staff development opportunities
☐ Staff meeting attendance
☐ Training development

Please note: Some activities have minimum requirements and/or may only be available to certain positions or work sites. In addition, some choices may require supervisor approval.

My goal for this PDP is

_____

_____

SIGNATURES: These signatures reflect shared understanding of the plan.

_____ _____ ____/____/____
Employee Name (Print) *Signature, Employee* *Date*

_____ _____ ____/____/____
Supervisor/Administrator Name (Print) *Signature, Supervisor/Administrator* *Date*

PDP Review:

What have I accomplished with my PDP?

_____

_____

_____

What have I learned?

_____

_____

_____

What do I need to continue to grow professionally?

_____

_____

_____

SIGNATURES: These signatures reflect completion of the plan.

_____	_____	____/____/____
Employee Name (Print)	*Signature, Employee*	*Date*
_____	_____	____/____/____
Supervisor/Administrator Name (Print)	*Signature, Supervisor/Administrator*	*Date*

SUGGESTED TIMELINE:

JANUARY—JUNE

By June 15, evaluation year:

Employee has a 30-minute conference with supervisor and receives evaluation feedback for use in development of PDP.

By June 15 of professional development year 2:

PDP activities are completed, shared with supervisor and the PDP Review section is signed by employee and supervisor. A copy of the PDP is kept in the school/office file, supervisor file, and the original with the employee.

JULY—DECEMBER

By October 15 of professional development year 1:

Office of Human Resources and Development (OHRD) sends list of employees in their evaluation and professional growth years to supervisors.

By December 15 of professional development year 1:

PDP is written together with the employee and the supervisor and their signatures are placed on the document.

GLOSSARY FOR PDP ACTIVITIES

Advisor, peer coach, shadowing: Coach/train coworker on knowledge of the job and best practices. Employee learns a job by following and observing another employee who knows or regularly does the job effectively.

Apprenticeships or internships: Work under a skilled professional in order to learn an art, craft, or trade and become qualified in it, or work as a low-level assistant or trainee in an occupation in order to gain practical experience.

Certificate/degree program: Enroll/continue in a certificate or degree program through an accredited college or university.

Committee or task force: Serve on a committee/task force to improve work environment, processes, student learning, and efficiency.

Extracurricular activities sponsor: Support student learning using leadership skills to direct students in MCPS-sponsored activities outside of the classroom.

Job-related book/article reading: Read trade publications, journals, magazines, and books to increase job knowledge.

Language skills improvement: Enroll in language classes to support improved communication of students, staff, and parents.

License requirements: Fulfill obligations/requirements to keep license(s) current.

Meetings with supervisor: Meet regularly to maintain good communication between the employee and the supervisor.

Meeting/training presenter: Conduct a meeting or training in the work environment in collaboration with the supervisor.

Networking group: Work with other employees in the same job classification to improve processes.

Portfolio development: Design, organize, and archive a variety of artifacts that demonstrate professional growth and accomplishments using the seven core competencies of the Supporting Services Professional Growth System.

Reflection log: Individually record in a journal completed tasks/jobs describing the events, what was learned from the events, and possible steps to improve.

Staff development opportunities: Attend training classes offered by the Office of Human Resources and Development through Professional Development Online (PDO) and/or other MCPS-sponsored training classes or seminars.

Training development: Design and develop training sessions, programs, and materials for use in MCPS training programs, departments/divisions.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT PDPS

Question: **Am I required to complete a PDP?**

Answer: Yes. Every permanent support professional must create a PDP at the beginning of their professional growth cycle.

Question: **Why?**

Answer: Professional development is an important part of helping each employee do their job better and consequently contributes to the success of every student.

Question: **How long is the professional growth cycle?**

Answer: The professional growth cycle is a three-year cycle. One year is your evaluation year followed by two years that are dedicated to your professional development using your PDP.

Question: **I am new to MCPS. When, in my MCPS career, do I begin using a PDP?**

Answer: You begin using a PDP at the end of your second year with MCPS.

Question: **Who "owns" the PDP?**

Answer: The employee "owns" the PDP.

Question: **How will a PDP help me?**

Answer: A PDP will help you—

- stay current and competent,
- plan your MCPS career, and
- build your capacity by participating in professional development opportunities.

Question: **How will I be compensated for training?**

Answer: Refer to SEIU Local 500 Negotiated Agreement, Article 28, for information on compensation for training.

Question: **How is the PDP linked to my evaluation?**

Answer: The evaluation and the PDP are tools used in the professional growth cycle. The evaluation measures your performance in meeting competency. The PDP guides your professional development activities during your professional development years.

Question: **What happens if I don't prepare a PDP?**

Answer: Not preparing a PDP may adversely impact your evaluation.

Question: **What if I do not complete everything in my PDP?**

Answer: The PDP is a flexible document. It should be reviewed annually with your supervisor and then revised, if necessary, to ensure successful completion.

Question: **What should an evaluator do for a newly transferred employee with a PDP?**

Answer: You should meet with the evaluator to review the PDP and revise it, where applicable.

SUPPORTING SERVICES PROFESSIONAL GROWTH SYSTEM (SSPGS) PEER ASSISTANCE AND REVIEW (PAR) AGREEMENT

Employee Name:	Employee ID:	Date:

Section 1: Instructions

The PAR agreement is a blueprint for improvement intended to address specific issues of underperformance. Once an employee and their administrator/supervisor are committed to PAR, a PAR agreement must be signed by all of the parties involved. By signing this PAR agreement, the employee commits to working with their administrator/supervisor and the Professional Growth Consulting (PGC) to address the underperformance issues and to work toward meeting competency and the administrator/supervisor commits to providing feedback and support to the employee during this process. The PGC coordinates resources and monitors the employee's progress through up to six months of peer assistance. All interactions between the administrator/supervisor, the employee, and the PGC are governed by the Compact of the Organizational Culture of Respect (September 2005) and the Expected Elements of Behaviors (Collaborative Compact—Climate Issues in School System (August 2010). A copy of these documents will be given to all parties involved and discussed at the meeting when the PAR agreement is signed.

Underperforming Competency	Example/Evidence	Strategies for Improvement	Resources	Success Measured By

Section 2: Progress meeting dates:

It is understood by all parties that these progress dates may be subject to change if necessary.

Section 3: Projected dates:

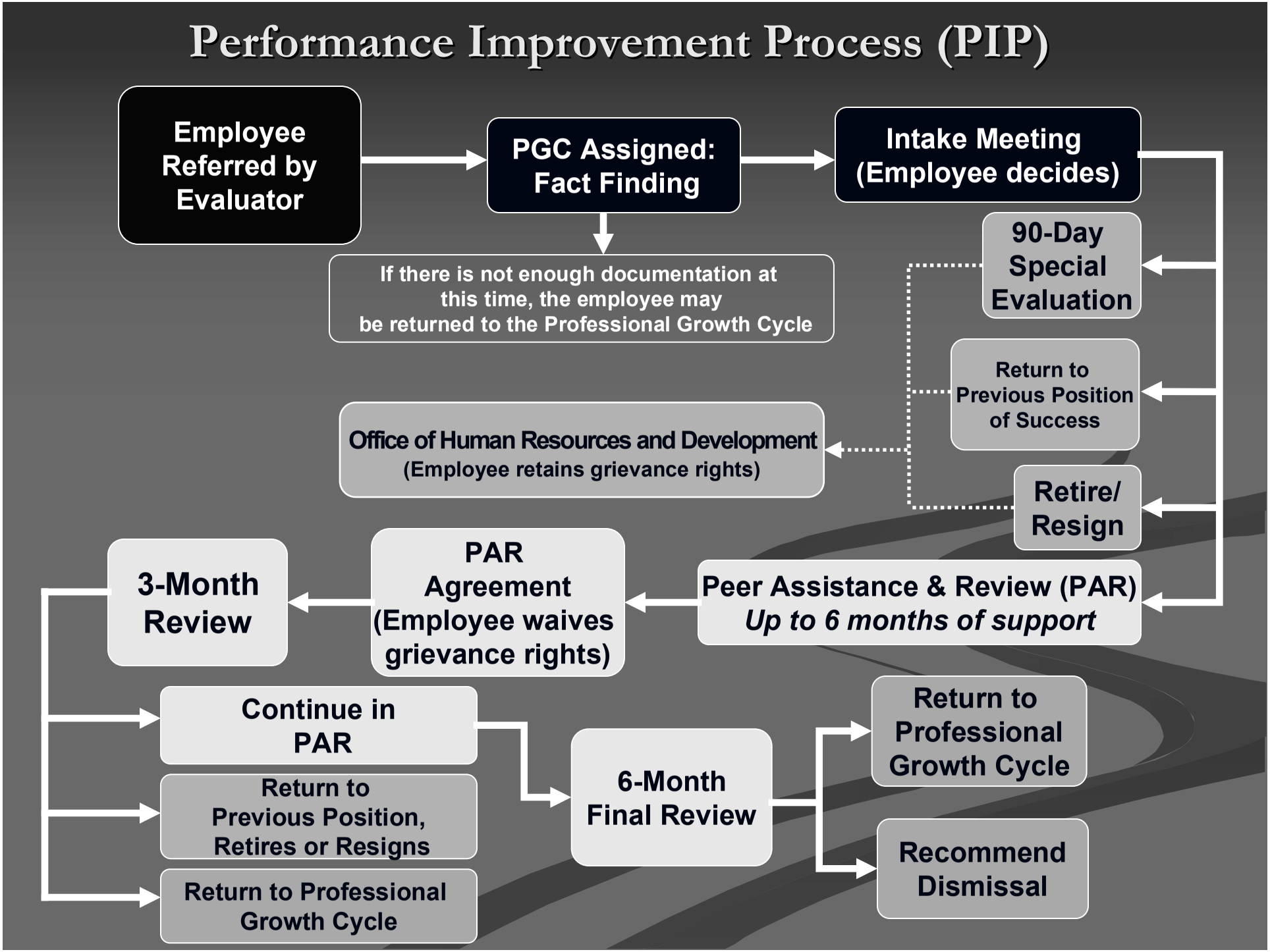
Three-month Report Date	PAR End Date	Final Summative Report Date

Section 4: Required signatures

The parties acknowledge that this PAR agreement represents a commitment by the employee to exercise their best efforts to work toward addressing the performance deficiencies outlined in the Agreement, and the supervisor and Office of Human Resources and Development to exercise their best efforts to contribute to a successful outcome. Strategies for support included in the PAR agreement should, whenever possible, be provided to an employee during their regular schedule. Employees shall be permitted to attend, and granted professional leave, to fulfill the strategies listed in the PAR agreement.

Employee Name (PRINT)	*Signature, Employee*	____/____/_____ *Date*
Evaluator Name (PRINT)	*Signature, Evaluator*	____/____/_____ *Date*
Reviewer (PRINT)	*Signature, Reviewer*	____/____/_____ *Date*
PGC Name (PRINT)	*Signature, PGC*	____/____/_____ *Date*

Performance Improvement Process (PIP)



MCPS NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) prohibits illegal discrimination based on race, ethnicity, color, ancestry, national origin, religion, immigration status, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, family/parental status, marital status, age, physical or mental disability, poverty and socioeconomic status, language, or other legally or constitutionally protected attributes or affiliations. Discrimination undermines our community's long-standing efforts to create, foster, and promote equity, inclusion, and acceptance for all. Some examples of discrimination include acts of hate, violence, insensitivity, harassment, bullying, disrespect, or retaliation. For more information, please review Montgomery County Board of Education Policy ACA, *Nondiscrimination, Equity, and Cultural Proficiency*. This Policy affirms the Board's belief that each and every student matters, and in particular, that educational outcomes should never be predictable by any individual's actual or perceived personal characteristics. The Policy also recognizes that equity requires proactive steps to identify and redress implicit biases, practices that have an unjustified disparate impact, and structural and institutional barriers that impede equality of educational or employment opportunities.

For inquiries or complaints about discrimination against MCPS staff *	**For inquiries or complaints about discrimination against MCPS students ***
Office of Employee Engagement and Labor Relations Department of Compliance and Investigations 850 Hungerford Drive, Room 55, Rockville, MD 20850 240-740-2888 OEELR-EmployeeEngagement@mcpsmd.org	Office of the Chief of Staff Student Welfare and Compliance 850 Hungerford Drive, Room 162, Rockville, MD 20850 240-740-3215 COS-StudentWelfare@mcpsmd.org
For inquiries or complaints about sex discrimination under Title IX, including sexual harassment, against students or staff*	
Title IX Coordinator Office of the Chief of Staff Student Welfare and Compliance 850 Hungerford Drive, Room 162, Rockville, MD 20850 240-740-3215 COS-TitleIX@mcpsmd.org	

**Inquiries, complaints, or requests for accommodations for students with disabilities also may be directed to the supervisor of the Office of Special Education, Resolution and Compliance Unit, at 240-740-3230. Inquiries regarding accommodations or modifications for staff may be directed to the Office of Employee Engagement and Labor Relations, Department of Compliance and Investigations, at 240-740-2888. In addition, discrimination complaints may be filed with other agencies, such as: the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Baltimore Field Office, City Crescent Bldg., 10 S. Howard Street, Third Floor, Baltimore, MD 21201, 1-800-669-4000, 1-800-669-6820 (TTY); or U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Lyndon Baines Johnson Dept. of Education Bldg., 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-1100, 1-800-421-3481, 1-800-877-8339 (TDD), OCR@ed.gov, or www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html.*

This document is available, upon request, in languages other than English and in an alternate format under the *Americans with Disabilities Act*, by contacting the MCPS Office of Communications at 240-740-2837, 1-800-735-2258 (Maryland Relay), or PIO@mcpsmd.org. Individuals who need sign language interpretation or cued speech transliteration may contact the MCPS Office of Interpreting Services at 240-740-1800, 301-637-2958 (VP) or MCPSInterpretingServices@mcpsmd.org. MCPS also provides equal access to the Boy/Girl Scouts and other designated youth groups.

Maryland's Largest School District

MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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