**MSDE Digital Learning Advisory
Stakeholders Committee Meeting**

**April 22, 2020
Virtual Meeting**

Meeting Minutes

Council Members in Attendance: Dr. Carol A. Williamson (Chairperson), Ms. Donna Baker, Mr. Brian Beaubien, Ms. Nancy Cahlink-Seidler, Dr. Colleen Eisenbeiser, Mr. Brad Engel, Dr. Julie Evans, Ms. Anna Gannon, Dr. Joey Jones, Ms. Yasmine Juhar, Ms. Marsye Kaplan, Ms. Rebecca Pensero, Mr. Marshall Pike, Dr. Peggy Pugh, Ms. Nina Riggs, Ms. Kelly Ruby, Ms. Leeann Schubert, Ms. Amy Shepler, Dr. Gina Solano, Ms. Tonya Sweat, Mr. John Tompkins, and Dr. Christine Welch

MSDE Staff in Attendance: Ms. Val Emrich, Mr. Shane J. McCormick, Ms. Lynne Muller, and Ms. Erin Senior

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. and a quorum was established.

Welcome, Introductions & Approval of Minutes

Dr. Carol Williamson, chairperson, welcomed the members, and reviewed the mission, short-term and long-term goals of the committee. Dr. Williamson welcomed Ms. Yasmine Juhar to the committee. Ms. Juhar is a student member representing Prince George's County Public Schools. The members reviewed the meeting agenda and topics that would be discussed.

The members reviewed the minutes from the February 18, 2020, meeting. A motion to approve the minutes as presented was made by Dr. Peggy Pugh and seconded by Ms. Nancy Cahlink-Seidler. The motion carried.

The members were reminded that the meeting was a public meeting and open to members of the public to call-in, but that there would be no public comment during the meeting.

Presentation on Broadcast Learning

Ms. Erin Senior, MSDE staff, and Ms. Donna Baker, Anne Arundel County Public Schools and committee member, facilitated a presentation on Broadcast Learning. The members received a technical definition of broadcast learning, which is the synchronous instruction from a facilitator in one location to students in multiple locations using web conferencing software or other digital resources. The members were provided with recent State-wide participation data in broadcast

learning, including participating local school systems, total enrollment, and the types of courses offered.

Ms. Baker reviewed with the members the rationale of broadcast learning. Broadcast learning is an option made available to students enrolled in courses with low enrollment, such as Advanced Placement (AP) courses. The mission is to be able to provide the same course offerings to students throughout a local school system regardless of distance or location.

Ms. Baker reviewed the components required for teachers and students to participate in broadcast learning, including staff training and professional development, and the need for reliable internet broadband for both parties. Ms. Baker stated that relationship building between teachers and students, just as in the physical classroom, is a critical component in the effectiveness of broadcast learning.

Presentation on Blended Learning in Maryland

Ms. Val Emrich, MSDE staff, facilitated a presentation with the members on blended learning in the State of Maryland. The members received a technical definition of blended learning, which is the access to online coursework and resources to supplement in-class instruction. This includes blending instruction with vendor courses or digital resources. The members were provided information on various blended learning models, and a current framework for classroom technology integration.

Presentation on Alternate Programs

Ms. Leeann Schubert, Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) and committee member, facilitated a presentation on self-paced blended learning programs (SPBL) in BCPS. Ms. Schubert shared that SPBL programs are offered to diploma-bound high school students and are used for credit acceleration and/or credit recovery. Instruction is offered both in traditional school settings and in non-traditional school settings. SPBL programs utilize a flex-blended model that aims to maximize face-to-face instruction, direct instruction, and independent digital instruction. Ms. Schubert reviewed components of the flexible option with the members.

Ms. Schubert reviewed BCPS School Programs for Acceleration and Recovery of Credit (SPARC) academies and programs with the members. Both SPARC academies and programs are offered to diploma bound high school students for credit acceleration and/or credit recovery. SPARC academies are offered to high students at six BCPS high schools during regular school hours, as well as via online so that students can complete courses at home. SPARC academies offer remediation and gap instruction and allow for customization and personalization.

Ms. Schubert stated that SPARC programs are like SPARC academies, specifically in that they allow for students to complete coursework from home, and that they also allow for remediation and gap instruction to be customized and personalized. Ms. Schubert noted that the major distinction between the two involves staffing. Under SPARC academies staffing is provided by the BCPS Office of Educational Options and are identified by school principals. Under SPARC programs the school leadership identifies instructional staff to implement the SPBL.

Ms. Schubert reviewed with the members Extended Day Learning Programs (EDLP) and Extended Year Learning Programs (EYLP), which are additional credit acceleration and/or credit recovery programs for diploma bound high school students. EDLP is offered in five BCPS high schools and features voluntary participation and/or reassignment for brief periods. EDLP also offers customizable and personalized remediation and gap instruction for students and has provided added benefits to BCPS students each academic school year, such as free access and meals to students.

EYLP is hosted at all comprehensive high schools in BCPS and offers customizable and personalized remediation and gap instruction. EYLP focuses on recovery versus acceleration as determined by school need. The program is facilitated through a four-week summer program and allows for students to complete courses from home. Staffing is determined by school leadership, and financial allocations are provided by BCPS to schools based on prior year enrollment.

Ms. Schubert reviewed the implementation standards of SPBL with the members. These standards are general best practices that set expectations for instructional staff in ensuring delivery of services and providing support to students. BCPS has also established a series of instructional standards and non-negotiable expectations for SPBL. These expectations include restrictions on where pre and post assessments, and tests and quizzes can be proctored.

Ms. Schubert reviewed the fidelity checks utilized by BCPS. These checks are used to monitor that goals and that all components and deliverables have been met. Ms. Schubert concluded by providing enrollment data in SPBL, noting that over four thousand students participated in the 2018-2019 school year, and that twenty-four percent of BCPS graduates completed at least one SPBL course. The members were provided enrollment data by course for the 2019-2020 school year as of January 2020.

The members discussed various questions regarding the integration of content from face-to-face courses into blended and online learning courses, and for teacher prep offerings in online learning.

Presentation on Credit Recovery

Mr. Brad Engel, MSDE staff and committee member, facilitated a presentation on credit recovery. Mr. Engel discussed his background with credit recovery in Queen Anne's County Public Schools; Mr. Engel noted that credit recovery was the number one dropout prevention resource in Queen Anne's County. Credit recovery and provisions for earning credit is established under COMAR 13A.03.02.05, whereby, "each local school system may provide summer school programs for original and review credit as determined by the needs of students."

Mr. Engel discussed further credit recovery in Queen Anne's County, including the prerequisites and components of credit recovery. Students were eligible for credit recovery if they had earned a fifty-nine percent or less as a final course grade. A traditional summer school was offered to

students who were required to attend forty hours of face-to-face instruction in July, or through an extended day in the fall and spring.

Mr. Engel noted that determining eligibility for enrollment into credit recovery was a challenge. In addition, there were challenges with authenticating student work and providing support for students, and with students being unable to complete courses during established timeframes. Mr. Engel reviewed additional information on credit recovery, including costs to students, length of summer programs, and the education vendors used. Mr. Engel concluded by stating that online learning must be personalized, engaging, rigorous, and ensure the mastery of concepts and skills

Presentation on Home and Hospital versus Homeschool Instruction

Ms. Lynne Muller, MSDE staff, facilitated a presentation on the differences between home instruction and home hospital instruction, both of which are established under COMAR. Home instruction is used to determine if a child participating in a home instruction program is receiving regular, thorough instruction during the school year. Home and hospital instruction are to provide instructional services to public school students who are unable to participate in their school of enrollment due to a physical or emotional medical condition.

Ms. Muller highlighted the differences between both forms of instruction. These differences include whether attendance is taken, whether the local school system provides instructional materials, whether web-based materials for instruction are used, whether grades are provided by school system personnel, the length of time, and the number of hours of instruction. Home and hospital instruction include provisions for students with physical or emotional conditions. This includes students with an individualized education plan (IEP).

Both home instruction and home and hospital instruction have verification requirements, provisions on specialized or related services, and restrictions on whether students can participate in other public-school activities. Ms. Muller reviewed additional details for both home instruction and home and hospital instruction. Under home instruction the local superintendent shall review and determine the placement of students and be the deciding authority on the awarding of any credits for high school graduation.

Mr. Brian Beaubien, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) and committee member, facilitated a presentation on home and hospital instruction in MCPS. Mr. Beaubien reviewed enrollment data, teacher staffing data and teacher responsibilities with the members. These responsibilities include collecting work from the home, instructing students, grading work, and completing grade sheets. Mr. Beaubien reviewed modifications within MCPS to home and hospital instruction. These modifications include the creation of digital courses for use in credit bearing courses, and the implementation of web-conferencing classrooms for additional secondary courses.

Mr. Beaubien reviewed the standards and guidelines for home and hospital instruction. These include centrally taught home and hospital instruction online courses, web-conferencing courses, and individualized web conferences.

<u>Review</u>

Dr. Williamson reviewed with the members roadblocks to digital and virtual learning that had been identified by the members during the February meeting. The members were asked to identify potential solutions for each roadblock; the members would discuss these solutions during the meetings on May 5 and May 19.

<u>Adjournment</u>

The meeting was adjourned at 12:07 p.m.