

PDS Council Meeting- ACPS and GCPS Partners

Wednesday, April 22 2026, 4:00-5:30 p.m. via Microsoft Teams

In Attendance:

- Maxine Riley, FSU, Field Experiences Coordinator
- Dr. Jennifer Bishoff, FSU, MAT/Secondary Coordinator
- Dr. Jodi Welsch, FSU, Data Analysis for P9 Program
- Kathleen Eirich, FSU Professor
- Dr. Nicole Miller
- Ethan DeVore, ACPS Board of Education, Social Studies & Professional Learning
- Dr. Nicole Bosley
- Kenneth Shoemake, Site Coordinator, South Penn Elementary
- Dr. Fannia Boayue
- Dr. Janet Mattern

Agenda:

- Welcome and Agenda Review
- County Updates
 - ACPS
 - GCPS
- Intern Concerns
- Counseling Program Updates
- Career Prep Day
- Placement Updates
- University Supervisor Recommendations
- P9 Data Review

Meeting Summary

District Updates:

- ACPS (Ethan DeVore)
 - Social studies will be removed from Mr. DeVore's current responsibilities to allow for a new focus on professional learning and teacher induction.
 - Mr. DeVore has received exceptional feedback regarding mentorship programs.
 - The new superintendent, Dr. Martirano, has been deeply involved in planning summer data meetings to drive district strategy.
 - There is a strategic shift toward unpacking standards (the "what" students must learn) rather than focusing solely on curriculum (the "how" or the specific resources used).
 - The district is beginning the rollout of "Visible Learning" strategies to make student progress and teacher impact more transparent.
 - Increased emphasis is being placed on Learning Science and Brain Science to inform classroom practices.
 - Focus will be directed toward Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), specifically strengthening Tier I (core universal instruction).
- GCPS (Dr. Nicole Miller)
 - Dr. Miller will officially assume the role of Superintendent of Schools starting with the 2026-27 school year.
 - Dawna Ashby is leading the effort to ensure GCPS is in full alignment with the new COMAR teacher induction regulations.
 - Broad Ford Elementary School has moved into the newly renovated building that formerly housed Southern Middle School.
 - The new facility will serve approximately 600 students and includes PreK through Grade 6.
 - This fall, the Head Start program will relocate from Dennett Road to the new Broad Ford Elementary site.
 - Interns completed three career modules with a focus on the Science of Learning and Restorative Practices.
 - Mentors engaged in learning groups designed to sharpen their specific coaching and mentoring skill sets.
 - Over the summer there will be an implementation of new K-8 Math Standards.
 - Specialized training focused on fractions, often regarded as the "gold standard" of

- math professional learning.
- Standard shifts are being navigated with support from High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM).

Intern Concerns: (Dr. Fannia Boayue)

- Primary Objective: To ensure the safety and protection of very young children (specifically three-year-olds) and to protect interns and the institution legally.
- Clarifying Expectations: The goal is to eliminate confusion regarding what interns are expected to do versus what they are legally restricted from doing.
- Collaborative Policy Development: * The initiative was prompted by Mrs. Riley following an internship in which a question was posed. A policy is currently a work in progress.
- The draft has already been reviewed and supported by Frederick and Washington counties.
- Based on prior feedback, the wording in the policy was strengthened from saying a candidate "may not be responsible" to "the candidate at no time will be" responsible for certain tasks.
- Role of the Intern vs. Mentor: * While interns are encouraged to participate and learn, the mentor teacher must remain the lead in all activities.
- Interns should only engage in specific sensitive tasks if the mentor grants explicit permission; otherwise, they are generally excluded from those activities to ensure compliance and safety.
- Dr. Miller noted that parental consent may be necessary for the mentor to grant permissions for intern presence.

Counseling Program Updates: (Maxine Riley)

- Revised Field Experience Structure: Moving from three separate placements (elementary, middle, and high school) to two placements: one Elementary and one Secondary.
- Alignment: This change aligns the counseling program with other K-12 certifications like Music, Art, and PE.
- Hour Requirements: Instead of splitting hours into smaller increments, students can complete a full internship of a single 500 hour placement in the fall.
- Catalog Update: The official catalog language has been approved to reflect these changes for upcoming fall interns.

Career Prep Day: (Maxine Riley)

- Attendance & Resilience: Despite severe weather that closed almost every district (except for Garrett County which operated virtually), representatives and many students still

attended.

- Student Value: Students who "braved the weather" reported positive experiences, specifically regarding the chance to ask about onboarding, applications, and general district expectations.

University Supervisor Recommendations: (Maxine Riley)

- Staffing Shortage: There is a critical need for secondary supervisors in Allegany County, as the MAT-Sprogram is potentially losing two supervisors with a cohort of 22 incoming students.
- Recruitment Request: Frostburg is seeking recommendations for recently retired secondary principals or administrators who may be interested in supervising interns.
- Music Specialty: There is a specific increase in music interns this year, which will likely require supervision coverage extending into Garrett County and surrounding areas.
- Dr. Janet Mattern will be retiring at the end of May.
- Dr. Mattern emphasized the vital importance of the relationship between higher education and local school systems in tackling regional problems.
- Concerns were raised by Mr. Shoemake regarding some interns sitting passively at the back of the classroom during the initial weeks of their placement.
- Faculty stressed that interns should be coached to get up, move around the room, and use proximity to engage with students rather than remaining stationary.
- Mentors are encouraged to be direct with interns about the expectation to circulate and assist throughout the school day. It is noted as an expectation during field experience orientations.

Data Review: (Jodi Welsch)

- A feedback form has been sent to mentors, site coordinators, and principals to gather their perspectives on the findings.
- Standard 1 & 3 (Learner Understanding & Planning): Over 90% of candidates met "effective" or "highly effective" levels in understanding learners and planning instruction.
- Strong performance (90%+) in using assessments to guide instruction.
- External Assessments:
 - Praxis: More than 70% of candidates passed on their first attempt.
 - edTPA: 85% of candidates scored 37 or above (the program's internal benchmark for success).
- MAT Elementary Candidates (Career Changers): Need more support in differentiation,

inclusive instruction, and using data for decision-making compared to traditional undergraduates.

- Praxis Content Gaps:
 - Reading/ELA: Weakness in foundational skills and grammar.
 - Math: Need for better mastery of fractions and ratios.
 - Reading (Second Test): Need for improvement in phonics, decoding, and writing.
- edTPA (Task 3): Candidates need to provide more specific, high-quality feedback to students and help students understand how to use that feedback for growth.
- Content Specific Pedagogy: Increasing focus on "disciplinary literacy"—teaching candidates how to instruct students to think and act like scientists, historians, and mathematicians.
- Grammar Support: Incorporating tools like Quill (an online grammar program) to address gaps in Maryland literacy competencies.
- Strategic Test Timing: Encouraging students to take Praxis exams immediately after the corresponding coursework rather than waiting until the end of the program.
- Feedback Training: Implementing practice sessions for feedback techniques earlier in the curriculum, well before the final internship semester.
- MAT Support: Program coordinators are implementing specific modeling for differentiation and assessment analysis for MAT students.
- The program is actively seeking further feedback from school partners via the shared form.
- Responses are being monitored in real-time (e.g., four responses have already been received from Allegany County) to address specific concerns regarding candidates or supervisors immediately.