

PDS Council Meeting- WCPS and FCPS Partners

Monday, March 20, 2026, 1:00-2:23 p.m. via Microsoft Teams

In Attendance:

- Maxine Riley, FSU, Field Experiences Coordinator
- Dr. Jennifer Bishoff, FSU, MAT/Secondary Coordinator
- Dr. Kristine McGee, MAT-E Coordinator
- Jennifer Delaney, FSU, Program Specialist
- Dr. Jodi Welsch, FSU, Data Analysis for P9 Program
- Kathleen Eirich, FSU Professor
- Jeffrey Byard, Fountain Hill Elementary School, Lead Teacher
- Jordan Lowery, Western Heights Middle School, Department Leader
- Robert Koogle, Rockland Woods Elementary School, Principal
- April Vierra, FCPS, Recruitment and Retention Specialist
- Heather Hoffert, FSU Assistant Professor
- Brianne Munday, Pangborn Elementary School, Site Coordinator

Agenda:

- Welcome and Agenda Review
- County Updates
 - Frederick County
 - Washington County
- Grow Your Own Grant
- Intern Questions
- Career Prep Day
- Gigi's Playhouse
- Calendar Update
- Fall Placements
- Data Review
- Departmentalization

Meeting Summary

District Updates:

- FCPS (Toya Newman-Piermarini)
 - Send any intern questions to Ms. Newman-Piermarini.
 - If interested, Frostburg graduates should be applying for FCPS positions very soon.
 - FCPS still has initial teacher interview options available for the end of April.
 - Interns should complete their fingerprinting and background checks for this upcoming fall.
 - FCPS will be having their Become an Educator Night on Tuesday May 12 at Oakdale High School.
- WCPS (Timothy Haines)
 - WCPS' initial screening interviews have started and will continue until June.
 - Fall interns should start applying as substitute teachers as soon as possible.
 - As more of WCPS schools become departmentalized, FSU and the county will need to work through the impact of that on internships and mentors.
 - Upon final approval WCPS will begin participating in the registered teacher apprenticeship beginning in the fall. (?)

Grow Your Own Grant: (Kathleen Eirich)

- Ms. Eirich has been working with WCPS and HCC regarding this grant.
- The grant will provide some candidates and employees at WCPS to complete their courses while working.
- Classes will either be completed on the job or in the evening.
- Applications are currently open.
- Courses will also be offered at USMH.

Intern Questions: (Fannia Boayue)

- We want to develop a policy in collaboration with our partner districts to policies that safeguard interns.
- One clear policy that interns are to abide by is never being responsible for children and their bodily needs (i.e., throwing up, bathroom functions).
- These policies will give clear guidelines for student interns about what they are, and are not, responsible for in the classroom.
- Once finalized, the policy will be added to future field experience handbooks.

Career Prep Day: (Maxine Riley)

- Due to inclement weather, many WCPS and FCPS interns were unable to attend.
- We appreciated the participation of WCPS and FCPS representatives despite their districts being closed for the day.

Gigi's Playhouse: (Maxine Riley)

- The information was put together by Dr. Heather Hoffert, will be held on April 10th from 6:00-8:00 p.m. at Lane Center on FSU's campus.
- This is a professional development opportunity for teaching strategies for inclusive classrooms.
- Gigi's Playhouse is a non-profit organization that is focused on the achievement and well-being of students with down syndrome.

Calendar Update: (Maxine Riley)

- The ACPS district calendar has not yet been approved, and until then, we cannot schedule our orientation date.
- The ACPS board expects to have their decision made by April 14th or 15th.
- There is a minimum of five full days of teaching for Internship I. During Internship II, interns must have a minimum of 10 full days of teaching.
- A new deadline for edTPA was released and will be put on the upcoming calendar.
- Mentor contracts for last semester have not yet been sent but will be soon. Denise Arnold prepares and sends these. They may come from an OFE email address.

Fall Placements: (Maxine Riley)

- Placements have begun in Frederick County.
- P9 placement requests are being prepared on for Washington County.
- There is a request for supervisor recommendations.
- Please send any recommendations for supervisors, specifically retired administrators.

Data Review: (Jodi Welsch)

- Internal Assessments: Goal of 80% of candidates at "Effective" or above.
- External Assessments: Goal of 70% passing rate.
- Overall, Strengths: Candidates are performing well in Standard 1 (Learner Development), Standard 3 (Assessment/Planning), and Standard 4 (Instructional Strategies).
- Internship 1 Candidates:
 - Strong understanding of learners and instructional planning.

- Effective use of assessment data for decision-making (especially undergraduates).
- Success in implementing active learning across whole-group, small-group, and individual settings.
- Graduating Candidates (External)
- Praxis: Over 70% overall pass rate.
- edTPA: 85.7% met or exceeded the internal goal score of 37.
- Learning Environments: 100% of candidates scored a 3 or higher on edTPA Rubric 6.
- Notable success in engaging students and using academic language.
- MAT Candidates (1-Year Track):
- Need more support in differentiation and inclusive instruction.
- Challenges with assessment alignment and the specific use of data.
- Content Knowledge (Praxis Subtests):
 - Reading/ELA: Weaknesses in foundational skills, grammar, mechanics, and conventions.
 - Math: Specific struggles with ratios and fractions.
- Teaching Reading: Phonics and decoding continue to be areas of focus.
- Instructional Skills (All Candidates):
 - Need for better "subject-specific pedagogy" (teaching methods unique to a specific content area).
 - edTPA Task 3: Rubrics 12 and 13 (providing quality feedback and helping students *use* that feedback) were below the 60% threshold.
- Coursework Adjustments:
 - Introducing Quill modules to address gaps in grammar and language conventions.
 - Increasing focus on phonics background knowledge in literacy courses.
 - Providing more practice on Task 3 of the edTPA regarding student feedback loops.
- Praxis Support:
 - Integrating practice tests directly into methods courses.
 - Encouraging students to take tests immediately after their content methods courses while the material is fresh.
- Mentorship Collaboration:
 - Distributing a summary report and feedback form to district mentor teachers.
 - Eliciting feedback from mentors to compare faculty data with real-world classroom performance.

Departmentalization: (Maxine Riley)

- There are challenges in placing interns with teachers who specialize in a single subject (e.g., only ELA or only math) when interns are required to teach a variety of content areas.
- Interns may need to follow their homeroom mentor's student group through different classrooms (such as moving to a math, science, or social studies classroom with another teacher) to complete their required instruction.
- Requirements & Lesson Planning:
 - If an intern understands the standards and the lesson is approved by the corresponding content-area teacher, most of the instruction can focus on ELA while still meeting the minimum requirements for other subjects.
 - The team agreed that coordination expectations must be clearly communicated from the beginning, and this will be brought up at an upcoming committee meeting.
- Placement Grade Levels:
 - Assistantships specifically require 4th and 5th-grade placements.
 - Finding placements at these grade levels has been challenging at the primary partner site. The team is exploring nearby schools to accommodate students and enable supervision to be within a short distance between sites.
- Next Steps & Timelines:
 - There are currently 59 applicants for the WCPS grant positions, requiring a large number of interviews after the Easter holiday. The team emphasized moving forward with the placement process as quickly as possible.