

## Alternative to High School Plus Project Team

April 13, 2010

**Charge Statement:** The Alternative to HS+ Project Team project team will address the current limitations of the HS+ program and develop an enhanced HS+ program to address limitations for implementation in FY11. The HS+ model does not address students who are no longer enrolled in MCPS, scheduling conflicts that make HS+ inaccessible as an option to regain credit, or limited local school population to run an essential course. The HS+ model does not address schools that do not have a HS+ program

**Project Scope:** This project team will develop an implementation plan for a single facility alternative HS+ program for the FY 11 school year.

- Background Information
  - Regional Evening High School (EHS) closed in FY 2010.
  - Students not enrolled in day school impacted Background data: 45 of the 574 students; Semester 1.
  - Dr. Weast gave permission to investigate the potential extension of HS+ at the Mark Twain facility (now Blair Ewing Center) during FY 2011.

### Limitations of current HS+

1. Does not address students not enrolled in MCPS
2. Students with scheduling conflicts
3. High Schools do not have capacity to run an essential course
4. Seniors who lacking half a semester or full credit of course
5. Level 2 and Level 3 Alternative Program

### Current Best Practices

The following are practices that are currently implemented in some schools. The project team applauds these solutions:

1. Principals sharing of resources and courses. For example, High School A offers Algebra and students from the quad/quint cluster attend that school.
2. Adjust start time for teachers/students. Allows students to take course, such as Technology or Biology that requires lab after school
3. HS+ keeping students in home school
4. Individual student plans (identifying before failure)
5. Bridge Plan (incorporates different instructional methodology)
6. Test of knowledge

### Practices Implemented with either marginal or low impact

1. Distance learning: typical student who requires HS+ requires direct, differential instruction to improve skills and maintain motivation to successfully earning credit

Proposal:

Target Student population:

- need wider, flexible time schedules
- working
- alternative 2 and 3 program
- course not offered in HS+ or not HS+ in a school
- behind in credit requirements
- completion of HS requirements w/o having to take additional courses

Comment: Need to expand HS+ to be more comprehensive in order to totally meet needs of students. Principals expressed concerns that MCPS has too many students taking 5<sup>th</sup> year

**Option 1:**

Collaborate with established Saturday School Program (George B. Thomas) hiring highly qualified to continue their work and have students earn credits

**Option 2:**

Establish POD programs in one facility:

1. high school assessment classes:
  - English 9A/B, 10A/B, 11A/B, 12A/B
  - Math courses—Business Math, Algebra, Geometry
  - Science—Biology, Physical Science
  - History—NSL, US History, Modern World
2. Virtual core courses: grades 9-12 with focus on credit recovery
3. Social component: paired with other agencies to provide mental health services, services to teen parents, students in recovery
4. First year ninth graders from middle school (criteria: Target population: COO placement, not successful from Alt 2 programs. Outcome: improve identified individual skill sets in order to earn high school credit
5. Integrated courses offer English, history, math, science using an integrated curriculum approach with focus to pass high school assessments. Combination of online programs and direct instruction
6. Work program

Hours of operation:

1. Start later, end later
2. Shorter day

Requirements:

1. Remain in the program for minimum of one year
2. Transition back to home school
3. Scores and dropout/graduation rate remain with home school
4. Partner with home school for any completer courses

Staffing:

Administrator

Secretary

Security

Support for special education, ESOL

Teaching

Challenges to committee work:

- Confusion about the scope: committee wants to focus on a single facility alternative HS+
- Data: data from both the current HS+ and on-line pathways program not readily accessible
- Instructional model: specifically looking at instructional delivery models to address the needs of targeted population
- Concerns about meeting the graduation rate
- Discussion about the impact of current HS+ on staffing within school
- Research and experience with on-line courses (research pointing towards success with motivated and disciplined learner)
- Looking at creative ways to address charge statement
- Graduation rate
- Disproportionality
- Evaluation and monitoring effectiveness