

Office of the Superintendent of Schools
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Rockville, Maryland

September 9, 2021

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education
From: Monifa B. McKnight, Interim Superintendent of Schools
Subject: Financial Literacy (07-15-2021-01-D, -E, -F)

During the *Public Comments* section of the agenda, Board members requested the following:

In response to the public testimony advocating for financial literacy course offers for interested students, Board members requested the following:

Question D

Ms. O'Looney requested information regarding the current efforts of the system to expand the financial literacy course to students. Please include an update report regarding the financial literacy work group's progress.

Response D

Social studies central services staff members are collaborating with Innovative X, a student-created and led, cross-county advocacy group, to expand student access to financial literacy in all high schools. Below is a timeline and description of the work group's work.

- Early Winter 2020: Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Financial Literacy Work Group composed of teachers, students, central services staff, and representatives from nonprofit organizations met and created a student survey to assess the state of financial literacy in high schools and gather data on student wants and needs in regard to financial literacy.
- Spring 2021: the student survey was shared in all high schools with more than 1,250 students from 18 high schools completing the survey.
- Summer/fall 2021: The Innovative X work group met and will continue to meet to analyze student data and generate recommendations for the Board of Education. The group will make their official recommendations to the Board in fall 2021.

Question E

Ms. O’Looney requested that staff look into making the Financial Literacy course available to all students. Ms. O’Looney suggested that staff look into incorporating a virtual learning option.

Response E

- Students enrolled in the Virtual Academy will have access to the content, materials, and experience of Finance Park through the World Studies 7 course.
- All National, State, and Local Government students engage in learning on financial literacy at the end of marking period four. All high schools have access to virtual Ever-Fi financial literacy lessons.
- A high school elective course, Personal Finance, is available to all schools. The Financial Literacy Work Group is examining ways to increase schools’ and students’ awareness of the Personal Finance elective.

Question F #1

Ms. Harris requested that staff look into the following regarding Finance Park at Edison High School.

1. Follow-up with students that have attended Finance Park to gauge how much they have retained.

Response F #1

- After experiencing the Finance Park simulation, students complete a reflection using the Naviance platform to share how they can use their time in MCPS to prepare for the future including college, career, and the challenges of adulthood.
- Teachers complete a culminating survey created by central office staff and Junior Achievement (JA) in which they report teacher and student experiences and feedback as well as any suggestions to improve the overall Finance Park experience.
- This year central services staff will consider methods of gathering information from students at the end of their middle and high school experiences regarding the retention of their financial literacy knowledge.

Question F #2

2. How did the course work for them when attending Edison?

Response F #2

- Middle school World Studies 7 students experience the Finance Park simulation at Thomas Edison High School of Technology as the culminating exercise in the three-week financial literacy learning block. Lessons and activities were created by JA.
- As part of their school field trip experience to Finance Park, the World Studies 7 students tour the Thomas Edison High School of Technology facility to generate interest in college and career readiness programs prior to engaging in the Finance Park experience.

If you have questions, please contact Mrs. Niki T. Hazel, associate superintendent of curriculum and instructional programs, Office of Teaching, Learning, and Schools, at 240-740-3970 or via email.

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