

# ADVOCACY AT RICHARD MONTGOMERY HIGH SCHOOL

Teachers, school counselors, students, parents, coordinators, administrators, and staff all work together to advocate for the needs of our students at Richard Montgomery High School. In order to do so effectively, we must have clear expectations about how to best advocate for needs and how to support one another. Below are suggestions for best practices for students, parents, teachers, school counselors, and coordinators. **(As a best practice, students should always initiate advocacy by contacting their teachers before pursuing other pathways.)**

## How students can best advocate for themselves...

- Approach teachers before or after class or during lunch or after school to ask about materials, assessments, or other concerns.
  - Understand MCPS policies regarding grading and reporting (no extra credit, no “bumping” grades, etc.)
    - [Link to MCPS Grading and Reporting Policies](#)
  - Discuss with the teacher what they can do to help students grow academically and meet with success.
  - If parent-teacher communication is what is called for, that contact will be more productive if the teacher has heard from the student first.
- If needed, ask a trusted adult to help you advocate for yourself.
  - A trusted adult would be:
    - a school counselor
    - a teacher
    - a staff member
    - a parent
- If issues are unresolved, speak to department Resource Teacher.
- If issues remain unresolved, speak to the appropriate Coordinator and/or Administrator.

## How parents can best advocate...

- Encourage students to self-advocate (see above for student self-advocacy).
  - If concerns persist after students self-advocate, contact the teacher (email, phone call, or parent-initiated conference with the teacher).
- When necessary, contact the department Resource Teacher.
- When necessary, contact the appropriate Coordinator and/or Administrator.

## How teachers can best advocate. . .

- Explain to students how to best advocate for themselves in the course (i.e. office hours, email, etc.)
- When students do not self-advocate, initiate conversations with students.
- If concerns regarding a student persist, engage in a two-way conversation with the parent

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through a phone call, email, or a teacher-initiated parent conference.

- For a teacher-initiated parent conference, the teacher should coordinate with the parent to determine a mutually agreeable time for this meeting.

### **How school counselors can best advocate...**

- Listen to the student. When listening to the student, ensure that the student has already communicated with the teacher.
- Communicate student concerns to the teacher and gather teacher feedback related to the concern.
  - Share student comments when appropriate.
- Develop intervention plans to address the needs of the student's academic and personal needs, as well as college/ career plans and social-emotional well-being.
- When there are concerns from multiple teachers regarding a student, the counselor should be consulted for additional possible next steps, i.e. parent phone call, parent conference, counselor meeting with student, grade level administration consultation, etc.
- In the instance that a parent conference involving multiple teachers is needed, the counselor will coordinate the parent conference.
- Communicate with other staff, administrators, and outside agencies as needed.

### **How the MYP and Diploma Programme Coordinators can best advocate...**

- Listen to the student. When listening to the student, ensure that the student has already communicated with the teacher.
- Communicate student concerns to the teacher and gather teacher feedback related to the concern.
  - When appropriate, share student comments with teachers regarding assignments, instruction, assessments, etc.
  - When appropriate, assist teachers and students in developing a plan to elevate learning.
- Communicate with counselors and parents.
- When necessary, contact the administrator for additional support.

### **How the Administrators can best advocate...**

- Listen to students. Ensure student has already communicated with the teacher, resource teacher, counselor, and coordinator, if applicable.
- Communicate student concerns to the teacher and gather teacher feedback related to the concern.

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- When appropriate, share student comments with teachers regarding assignments, instruction, assessments, etc.
- When applicable, assist teachers and students in developing a plan to elevate learning.
- Communicate with students and parents.
- When there are concerns from multiple teachers regarding a student, the administrator collaborates with the counselor.
  - In the instance that a parent conference involving multiple teachers is needed, the counselor will coordinate the parent conference. The administrator will attend the conference to partner with the counselor and teachers in informing the parents of the concern and possible next steps.