

MAFSA meeting minutes
November 1, 2013
Recorded by Silvia Hoke, Secretary

Welcome from Silvia Koch
Arlington Intake Center changed its name to Language Services Registration Services (LSRC)
Registration, ESOL testing, train interpreters, transcript evaluations

A. Min Kim – Howard County – withdrawal code for students who have aged out of the school system. Coded as dropout. Lisa Smith, Henrico County, VA coded as 'sliders' that don't count against dropout list. They can stay until age 22. In MD, there's a four year cohort. Advocate to MSDE so they are not coded as dropout. MAFSA could petition, write a letter, etc. so MSDE can change the coding.

Nancy Davis- Frederick County-advocates for a change in 4-year cohort (given a waiver so students can remain more than 4 years in the cohort for AYP purposes). Pressure of meeting the grad requirements in 4 years is not fair. With Common Core and PARCC it will be harder. Students feel isolated and stop attending.

Ilhye Yoon-MSDE – Title III law lays out the regulation. They take it to federal level. We are still bound by old rules, so no ESEA flexibility. It will help if we share something with the fed so we can advocate.

Suggestion: develop a letter to have Ilhye share with the fed. Present letter as two issues:

1. Not counting as dropout when age out
2. Being forced to graduate in a 4 year cohort without school being penalized.
(Governor's Model – language is already there for special ed)

Google Doc will be created and started (Silvia)

B. Unaccompanied Youth – Jasmine Shortridge (LIRS)
Angela Solly (MD) – Bethany Christian Services
Jessica Ram... (MD/VA) Bethany Christian Services, NOVA Children's Services

Provide services for ORR throughout the US.

Unaccompanied youth who need additional support. Shelters need power of attorney to release to a relative, but some school districts required guardianship. Also some principals have not wanted to enroll due to older age. Minors not like refugees – don't have access to services that refugees have. Not joining gangs or causing trouble – these are kids with trauma.

Jessica – VA cases. Have had cases of students not being enrolled and being referred for guardianship.

In the past, students could be registered with ORR letter. In Howard County, they no longer can – their legal counsel says they need guardianship. In AACPS, there's a PPW who investigates.

Kids they see are referred based on needs of the student (therapy, medical issue, family members they never met, etc.)

Referred for Family reunification from shelters to LIRS or Catholic Services. Includes a home visit, to check school enrollment, offer services and referrals. No health services provided. Work with kids who were caught and have been identified as needing support. No ORR oversight. Services are voluntary (families can refuse). Available until they turn 18.

Legal representation is needed (unlike refugees) – not enough pro-bono lawyers.

Rely on community services for legal, mental, health services.

LIRS sees a small number of students who need support. How can all others get support? They try to find pro-bono providers once they have been referred by ORR.

Some may get legal relief (SIJS, Asylum, URM, human trafficking relief).

Charts:

Silvia-A levels

Bev – Brazil – change new system

Hong Kong – change new system

Nepal – new structure

Turkey – new structure

Ecuador – grading scale

Lori - Chinese Comprehensive Transcripts – do we use the actual transcripts issued by the school to the parent or the comprehensive document that is given to the family if they ask for it in China before travelling to the U.S. Need more research.

Silvia. Lori will also check with WES.

LeHang - Angola – change in school system – replace with 2 systems, before/after 2001

Grading systems: BECE = 9th grade

Ghana – chart is correct

Gambia – needs to be corrected

Sierra Leone – need to add grading scale (different from others)

Grading system: WASSC = 12th grade

Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria, Liberia, Sierra Leone

Next meeting: TBD

Agenda items: Chinese Comprehensive Transcript

Google Doc for 4-year Cohort
North Sudan school system (8+3)
South Sudan school system (6+3+3) Need updates and grading scale
(ahmed.osman@apsva.us)

Presentation by Brenda Coffield – Military Child Education Coalition