

MAFSA Meeting  
October 27, 2017

Anne Arundel County Public Schools

Candice Lenet welcomed new and old members to the first meeting of this school year. Each participant introduced himself or herself. We began the early part of the meeting by sharing some difficult transcripts for all members to review.

**Analyzing Difficult Transcripts**

The first transcript was one from a London school. The student was in year 8 or grade 7. The member was trying to determine the grades for middle school foreign languages. It was determined that this transcript was an interim report and without the final grades the student would not receive credit.

The next was a clarification on a transcript from Venezuela. The student's year placement on the document did not match the MAFSA Charts. There is a new system structure in Venezuela that has been verified on the UK NARIC Website that needs to be added to our MAFSA Charts. Documentation will be given to Juana so that the Charts can be updated.

Fairfax County shared that there are also new school system structure changes for Eritrea and Djibouti and these will be shared at the next MAFSA Meeting for review.

A new member asked for assistance with a transcript from Finland that showed three-week sessions under different course titles. Combining of courses under the same academic area is a method that is used by many MAFSA members.

A transcript from China with no dates was discussed. Most members shared that their County would not accept such a document.

The representative from Alexandria shared that she would like to compile a document showing how English credits are awarded in different systems in Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia. She passed out a form that could be used to respond to her inquiry.

1. If a student coming from another country is able to be awarded enough credits from their transcript to be a 10<sup>th</sup> grader, but is not eligible for an English credit, what grade is the student placed in?
  - a) 10<sup>th</sup> grade and simultaneously take 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade English
  - b) 9<sup>th</sup> grade since the student does not have English 9 credit.
  - c) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

2. In order to award an English credit, high school students in our district take the following test:

- a) WIDA Screener

Must score a level: \_\_\_\_\_

- b) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Many members would like to see her results.

### **Review of Membership Terms**

Candice passed around the membership list for updating and explained that each system can have three members on the list but all are welcome to attend the meetings. However, only those on the member list have access to the MAFSA Website and Charts. Members must attend at least one meeting a year and the sign in sheets at each meeting tracks this.

### **Anne Arundel County Presentation**

Teresa Tutor from School and Family Partnerships shared that Anne Arundel County's International Office has been reorganized. The Office is now called the International Student and Family Welcome Center. A video was shown that explained the services of the new Welcome Center and testimonials from parents and students who were helped by the Counselor, Social Worker, Language Facilitator and Pupil Personnel

Worker. This video was also presented to the Board of Education and will be presented to the County Council.

### **Underage High School Graduates**

One county is dealing with a situation in which a 16 year-old student has graduated in her country but is petitioning to be enrolled under the compulsory age statute and a “comparison” of the foreign and US school system. The concern is being researched because a precedent would be set that other graduated students could be enrolled if this student is allowed. The family has taken their request to the Board of Education and the State. The MAFSA member was looking for input from other systems as to whether they would enroll the student and if so on what basis. The family also questioned the MAFSA Charts stating that you cannot compare one school system to another. A recommendation was made that the word alignment be used instead of comparison in the title of our charts. Another suggestion was that they just be called Charts. Maryland states in COMAR that graduated students are not enrolled however the Virginia Code is not as clear on this subject.

### **Pakistan**

Clarification was made that the Higher Secondary Certificate is the document that indicates completion of Secondary Education in that country and not the Secondary Certificate.

Candice share [The Index of Secondary Credentials](#) as a useful document that indicates “graduation documents” from different countries and the grade at which the student terminates their education. [www.ierf.org](http://www.ierf.org).

### **Puerto Rico and US Virgin Islands**

School systems are receiving many students from these countries as a result of the devastation caused by the hurricanes. Most systems have been directed to enroll the students as “Homeless” and to place them in their stated grades. Concerns were raised about the possibility that records might have been destroyed and the school will not get grades

for awarding credits and how will the students meet graduation requirements with our grades and credits.

John Turner shared that COMAR states options for awarding credits without grades and the LEA decides how this will be done from the following:

Administering of Standardized Tests

Observation

Interview (such as the Oral Declaration)

Inspection of Report Cards

Tulane is offering a free semester to students from Puerto Rico. NPR also has a list of other Universities doing the same.