

Metropolitan Area Foreign Students Advisors (MAFSA)

October 17, 2014 Meeting Notes

Chair: Candice Lenet

Dundalk H.S., Baltimore, Maryland

10:00 – 11:00 Analysis of Difficult Transcripts

The following were discussed from 10:00 until 11:00 a.m.

➤ AWARDING MIDDLE SCHOOL CREDITS

Do schools award high school credits for classes taken in middle school?

Some do not (New Jersey) and some do. Some schools only award credit for m.s. courses, if those courses are equivalent to high school courses. It depends on guidelines of state and of local school system. Some schools award foreign language credit for 2 years of ESOL. Only award English credit if the student tested English proficiency is advanced. For Va., see 8 VAC 20-131-110 and [VDOE/accountability/soa/html](#)

➤ AWARDING MATH CREDITS:

Some school systems administer math tests to determine if credit is warranted. If students do not pass the test, they are awarded elective credit, but not math credit.

➤ CHINESE TRANSCRIPT

A Chinese transcript translation, titled “Overseas Chinese Middle School of Changle Fujian Province” was presented for discussion. The following observations were made by members: student did not complete the school year; there needs to be an interview with the student, to clarify questions; need to determine how many hours per week each class was held; may combine all the sciences to award one (or more) credits, allocating that credit to Biology first.

11:00 -12:00 Agenda Items

➤ Seventeen Plus (17+) Students:

Regardless of years of schooling, or lack of schooling, students should be placed according to their age (chronologically).

Students who enter after January can get a half-year’s credit, if allowed in the school system.

Even if no credit can be awarded, students should be allowed to audit the classes (NG= No Grade); they can repeat the classes next term/year.

Some school systems have programs for older students with limited education. Some information may be found in International Network of High Schools and in Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL). Arlington has a program called Accelerated Literacy Program (ALPS).

➤ Undocumented or Alien Minors

All schools admit students placed by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (OCR); if student’s parents are not in the U.S., then they should be referred as Unaccompanied Minors. McKinney-Vento protections may apply. Refer to the McKinney Vento liaison in the school system. Students with mental health related issues should be referred to their counselors.

➤ DANISH and SWEDISH GRADING SCALES

Member Silvia Hoke sent new scales for Denmark and Sweden, and suggested, via email, that the MAFSA grading chart may need adjustments for some European Union countries, under a system called ECTS. These scales will be discussed at the next MAFSA meeting.

➤ PHILIPPINES (Philippine Islands, or PI)

Bev Foster presented forthcoming K-12 Changes in Philippines Education System. The school system is going to change in the future. The overall change will be the implementation of mandatory K-12 education; specific changes likely to include: required K; 1-6 elementary grades; 7-10 junior high grades; and 11-12 senior high grades. It is projected that the first students to graduate under the new system will be graduating in 2017-2018. It was suggested that a note about this should be made on the MAFSA chart.

➤ MATH ASSESSMENTS

Anne Arundel (and maybe others) will share their math assessments; send to Candice, who will send to members.

➤ SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS?

Candice asked if schools were familiar with "Scottish Qualifications", and if the term indicates that student has graduated. (No resolution.)

➤ LANGUAGE or SP.ED. ISSUES?

In distinguishing between the two, it is difficult and tedious to ask for a Student Study meeting. Parents can ask directly for a student study; which would then have to be held within a given number of days (10 days?). Some school systems are tiered intervention (RTI) or RTI²; the latter seem to be more useful.

➤ NEW MAFSA PASSWORD

The password for the MAFSA website will change, and will be mailed to MAFSA members. Members are reminded that they must attend one of the three MAFSA yearly meetings, in order to remain a member in good standing.

➤ EBOLA

It seems that many schools have not received guidance on concerns about Ebola, particularly in relation to international students and school registration. One office is scheduling appointment for 21 days after the request for registration is received. Discussion of prevention was discussed by Arlington, based on guidance to school administrators, provided by the Arlington County Health Dept., regarding health precautions about communicable diseases, including Ebola and Enterovirus.

➤ NEXT MAFSA MEETING

Next meeting will be on February 20th or 27th. Location (possibly Loudon) and date will be confirmed at a later date.