

MAFSA Meeting Minutes
February 15, 2019
Submitted by: Silvia Hoke, Secretary

10:00 – 11:00 Analyzing transcripts and discussion

- Dubai
- Pakistan (O levels)
- Singapore (O levels)
- Note: at last meeting, presentation was made on IGCSE and O levels – Cambridge System. Check presentation posted on website for more information.
- Mauritania – school system update confirmed by Fairfax County and UK NARIC. New information posted on Chart.
- Cambodia – the embassy generated a new grading scale, different than the Charts.
- European Union (EU) – new Chart provided by MCPS will be scanned and posted on the website for reference.
- A discussion was held about most common countries encountered by the different districts. This data will be posted on the website.

11:00 – 2:00. General Meeting

- Website updates. Silvia Hoke presented updates to the website (www.MAFSA.info). A suggestion was made to change the membership list that's posted on the website to reflect only the member counties with hyperlinks to the main office, rather than individual members' names and contact information. Motion was accepted and the change will be made ASAP. The detailed membership list will now appear in the password protected page (with the Charts).
- MSDE presentation (Ilhye Yun) regarding SCED for WL and ESOL (the national codes for identifying courses students are taking in World Languages and ESOL)
 - Overview of presentation: Guidelines for Maryland include
 - Districts can use the World Language Other (I – V) codes: 24952 to 24956
 - Els who are enrolled in ESOL courses but getting WL credit can use World Language Other for Native Speakers code (24957)
 - WIDA Paper Screener Attemptedness – testing can be stopped if student answers at least one question in each domain.
 - K ESOL Services Eligibility Discussion Results – the new cut score for 1st semester (2019-2020) Kindergarten students is 27 or below to receive ESOL services (combined Listening/Speaking)
 - Awarding English credit for ESOL courses in MD – an ESOL code cannot be used to give English credit. Course must have an English SCED code and must be aligned to English curriculum and taught by a certified teacher.
 - ESSA Accountability – Ilhye can offer a webinar from MSDE if there's interest.
- Membership to MAFSA – Guests are always welcome. Three members per district will be allowed and each must attend at least one meeting per academic year to

remain in good standing. Donations were collected to renew the website. \$3.50 per member suggested.

- MAFSA does not have a grading scale for Uzbekistan. Fairfax County will look one up on UK NARIC and report back.
- Question from Washington, DC – Can students retake a course to increase their GPA? Most districts indicated that YES they could retake a course, but they would not get double credit for the course. Check district policy.
- Another question was posed about what to do with older students (24 years old). In MD, the maximum age is 21. In VA, it's 22.
- Can credit be given for classes taken 2 X per week? It depends on the transcript, length of each class period, and the interview. In Guatemala and Honduras, where shortened class times are in effect, it's usually not enough time to grant credit for classes held twice per week, 30 minutes each.
- European Union Charts presented by MCPS. Do we add to the Charts or use as a resource only? Since the document does not list a source, it was decided that it would be used as a resource by any members who wished to do so, with caveat.
- New Business:
 - How can additional counselors in the districts do transcript evaluations and grade placements when there isn't a central office to oversee the process? Who can train others to do transcript evaluations if they are not members of MAFSA and don't have access to the Charts? It is MAFSA's position that a centralized office or limited staff members within a district should be responsible for transcript evaluations and grade placement of foreign students. When this is not possible, then MAFSA members may train others responsible for these tasks within their districts, using any of the resources available to them through the website or with the support of other members. The Charts may be used internally by those responsible for completing transcript evaluations and/or grade placements, but non-members do not have direct access to the Charts on the website and the use of the copyrighted Charts should be monitored and safeguarded by the members. Consistency and fidelity to the process are key elements.
 - There will be a Charts training for new members or anyone wishing to refresh/practice their skills at the next meeting – May 17, 2019.
 - Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) has added state financial aid to certain categories of undocumented students. Students who had been eligible for the MD Dream Act of 2012 (graduated from a MD high school after having studied for 3+ years, paid taxes each of those years, etc.) and who qualify by income and GPA are now eligible for the Howard-Rawlings Grant, Occupational Opportunity Grant, and Promise Scholarship. Deadline to apply is March 1.
 - O level / A level. A discussion was held at the last meeting in February. The presentation is posted on the website. Some clarifications about the GCSE

grading scale were requested from Keith (the presenter) but so far no response.

- Suggestions for website blog
 - How to have difficult conversations with parents
 - Comparison of districts roles and tasks
 - Discussion on how to apply for college when there are mixed transcripts (native country and US), and add letter that students can send when they apply for college and scholarships
- Next Meeting Date: May 17, 2019 in Fauquier County, VA. Details TBD

Meeting adjourned at 2:00 pm