

Marriotts Ridge High School

Howard County Public School System, Marriottsville, Maryland

Location type: Rural

District enrollment: 52,806 students

School enrollment: 1,223 students

Percentage of students at school eligible for free and reduced price meals: 5

Key Takeaways

Marriotts Ridge High School (MRHS) took the OECD Test for Schools for the first time during the 2013-2014 school year. The results indicated a need to make improvements across math, reading, and science. For example, only 18 percent and 14 percent were performing at the highest levels (5 and 6) in reading and science, respectively. The data also indicated that teachers needed to build student instrumental motivation and self-efficacy in science as only 65 percent of students agreed with the statement: "I will learn many things in my school science subject(s) that will help me get a job," and less than 70 percent of students agreed that they could "identify the science question associated with the disposal of garbage" or "describe the role of antibiotics in the treatment of disease." The school was surprised to find that students performed lower than would be expected in science given the socioeconomic status of MRHS.

Actions Taken

To increase the proportion of students who perform at levels 5 and 6 in math, reading, and science, MRHS has taken action across content areas.

-  A committee of informal teacher leaders was selected to analyze the school's OECD Test for Schools data and make suggestions for implementation. Data was shared, and agendas at content team meetings began to focus on topics such as rigor, critical thinking, creativity, problem solving, decision making, and self-efficacy.
-  The literacy coach assigned to MRHS met monthly with the leadership team and individually with teachers throughout the school year to develop student learning objectives, rubrics, lessons, and assessments.
-  Science teachers collaboratively planned to create skills-based activities for students, and they began the process of vertical articulation. Science teachers engaged in discourse about rigor in the science classroom and had conversations about the students' positive attitude toward science versus their reluctance to go into a science-related career to improve students' instrumental motivation with regard to science.
-  MRHS has also made plans to implement additional improvements during the 2015-2016 school year. These plans include:
 -  Establishing 9th and 10th grade cohort classes for students who need additional support. Teachers have been hand-selected to teach the cohort classes in which selected students have been placed. Those teachers will have a common planning period.
 -  One Monday a month will be dedicated to an after school content team meetings and one Monday a month will be dedicated to vertical articulation meetings. It is during these times that teachers will discuss instruction and assessments, rigor, and the skills necessary for students to reach proficiency levels 5 and 6 on the OECD Test for Schools.
 -  Across the curriculum, teachers will focus on critical reading and reading for pleasure. Staff will focus on the following key skills: analysis, demonstration, reflection, evaluation, inference, interpretation, understanding, construct, connection, and summarization. Rigor will be the umbrella under which all teachers operate.
-  Taking advantage of the peer-to-peer learning opportunities available through the Global Learning Network, MRHS has participated in several virtual convenings and attended the 2014 Convening of World-Leading Schools.

Those wishing to learn more about the practices at Marriotts Ridge High School may visit the school's website [here](#).