

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting Minutes

October 5, 2026, 6:00 p.m.



Welcome and Introduction

Board member and CAC committee chairperson Brian Hampton welcomed CAC members (seated at the tables) and guests. Attendees introduced themselves. He reviewed the agenda.

There were 33 total attendees: 31 CAC members, 1 presenter, and 1 guest.

The Science of Reading (Dr. Jenni Hammer, Associate Superintendent for Education Services; Dr. Shawn Johnson, Chief Academic Officer; Ms. Sherry Eichinger-Wilson, Program Coordinator for ELA)

The presentation included:

- The definition of the Science of Reading
- Scarborough's Reading Rope
- The State Literacy Policy (what MD requires around literacy)
 - System of support for educators
 - Instructional supports
 - Ready to Read Act
 - Parent involvement and possible student retention
- The classroom impact, including the instruction, tiered support, and evidence-based support, and differentiated support that is currently happening
- Next steps with the Science of Reading
 - Continued teacher and admin learning (MSDE offers free courses for admins, teachers, and specialists who support students)
 - Provide interventions and report progress to families
 - Adopt and implement State Policy (pending final approval)

Questions/Discussion:

CAC members engaged in a discussion regarding assessments and universal screenings, dyslexia support, educator training, and operational needs (current funding and human resources are insufficient to serve all identified students).

Cell Phone Law and Policy (Dr. David Foye, Chief Academic Officer)

The presentation included:

- CCPS Portable Electronic (cell phone) Regulation and Practices (in student handbook) for elementary, middle, and high school levels
- Steps CCPS has taken to reduce usage
 - Middle School: Yondr pouches, lockers, cell phone flowchart
 - High School: Cell phone hotel, Yondr pouches, progressive discipline
- HB 525 (Joanne C. Benson Maryland Phone-Free Schools Act) Draft Regulations: Cell Phone Use Policies in MD (effective 2027–28 school year)
 - Dr. Foye highlighted some requirements and differences between new State policy and current CCPS practices.
 - LEAs must submit local policy to MSDE by September 1, 2027, and review device policies every 3 years.
- Phones in Focus (PIF) Study

Questions/Discussion:

CAC members expressed general support of cell phone and device restrictions and emphasized the need for consistency across schools and the importance of responsible technology use, particularly since major assessments like the SAT are online. Members raised questions regarding monitoring and enforcement, as well as personal vs. CCPS-issued devices. The discussion also addressed student safety, noting that while students worry about phone access during emergencies, SROs caution that active device use creates dangerous distractions. Additionally, CAC members discussed the impact of social media use on student mental health.

North East Middle School/ High School Summary (Dr. Jeffrey Lawson, Superintendent)

Dr. Lawson presented an overview of the NEMS/NEHS project, including progress photos and a timeline of project funding. The new school is scheduled to open for the upcoming school year, with demolition of the current high school to follow. Open houses are expected to be planned for both the new school and the existing high school prior to demolition.

Adjournment

Mr. Hampton adjourned the meeting at 7:24 p.m. The next CAC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 17, 2027. More information will be sent to CAC members via email.