

STRONG SCHOOLS WORCESTER COUNTY NEWS

January 15, 2023

Meeting with Ms. Shorts and Dr. Wallace

On Friday, Joan Roache, Deborah Fisher-Reynolds and Gail Jankowski had a very positive and transparent meeting with Ms. Dee Shorts (Chief Academic Officer, Grades PreK-8 AND Blueprint Implementation Coordinator) and Dr. Annette Wallace (Chief Safety and Academic Officer Grades 9-12)

They are both very supportive of the Blueprint and its goals. They are also VERY appreciative of the support from all of us, both in regard to implementation of the Blueprint as well as providing sound resistance to efforts by some in the community.

They have been working very hard to have the WCPS plan for the first 3 years of implementation submitted to the implementation board by June. There will be organized community input meetings scheduled around March 15. We will be notified as to date and location. In the meantime, **if you would like to participate, please email Ms. Shorts at DRShorts@worcesterk12.org and if you have students attending the Worcester County Schools, indicate the school(s) your children attend.**

Under the direction of Ms. Shorts, there is a Blueprint Steering Committee. Each Pillar* of the Blueprint has a working group that includes Administrators, Teachers and Community Stakeholders.

The Pillars/The Leads:

- I. Early Childhood Education/ Ms. Dee Shorts
- II. High Quality & Diverse Teachers and School Leaders/ Dr. Dwayne Abt
- III. New College & Career Readiness Pathways/ Dr. Annette Wallace
- IV. More Resources for All Students to Succeed/ Ms. Lauren William
- V. Governance & Accountability/ Mr. Vince Tolbert

DATES TO REMEMBER:

Tuesday, January 17, 12:30 pm

School Board Meeting
6720 Worcester Highway, Newark
New members will be sworn in.

We want to have a presence there, wearing our red shirts! We will see how Katie Addis acts as the new District 6 member. Please join us if you can!

Monday, February 13, Time TBD

Strong Schools Lobby Day in Annapolis
For more information, go to
<https://www.strongschoolsmaryland.org/>

Look for our Facebook page. We also have a Facebook Chat Group, if you'd like to join it, email Joan Roache. It's helpful for quick news.

Meeting, cont'd

We asked that they let us help lobby for any additional funding or tweaking of the plan that they need. For example, Pillar I has the goal that 30-50% of the Pre-K programs be private and the current per student funding is too low to attract enough programs to apply. We will find out how best to work on this issue.

There are several parts of the Blueprint that are already being implemented, such as expanding the number of their PreK classes, grants to help teachers attain their National Board Certification, and dual enrollment with Wor Wic, SU and UMES.

One Last item:

We know that many of the Commissioners are also talking about lack of funding for the Blueprint and we are working on a Letter to the Editor. **The Blueprint is FULLY FUNDED.** We may need follow up letters! Please watch local newspapers for news. **EMAIL JOAN ROACHE IF YOU HEAR OR SEE ANYTHING THAT CONCERNS YOU!** We can then schedule a zoom meeting, coordinate letter writing or plan any other any appropriate response.