

ADVOCACY AT RICHARD MONTGOMERY HIGH SCHOOL

Teachers, school counselors, students, parents, coordinators, administrators, and staff all work together to advocate for the needs of our students at Richard Montgomery High School. In order to do so effectively, we must have clear expectations about how to best advocate for needs and how to support one another. Below are suggestions for best practices for students, parents, school counselors, and coordinators. (As a best practice, students should always initiate advocacy by contacting their teachers before pursuing other pathways.)

How students can best advocate for themselves...

- Approach teachers before or after class or during lunch or after school to ask about materials, assessments, or other concerns.
 - Understand MCPS policies regarding grading and reporting.
<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/info/grading/report-cards-secondary.aspx>
 - Discuss with the teacher what they can do to help students grow academically and meet with success.
 - If parent-teacher communication is what is called for, that contact will be more productive if the teacher has heard from the student first.
- If needed, ask a trusted adult to help you advocate for yourself (school counselor, ESOL counselor, teacher, staff, parent, etc.).
- Understand MCPS policies regarding grading and reporting (no extra credit, no “bumping” grades, etc.).
- Talk to the school counselor, if desired.
- If issues are unresolved, speak to department Resource Teacher.
- If applicable, speak to the appropriate Coordinator and/or Administrator.

How parents can best advocate...

- Encourage students to self-advocate.
- If concerns persist after students’ self-advocate, contact the teacher (e-mail, phone call, or parent-initiated conference with the teacher).
- When necessary, contact the department Resource Teacher.
- When necessary, contact the appropriate Coordinator and/or Administrator.

How teachers can best advocate. . .

- Explain to students how to best advocate for themselves in the course (i.e. office hours, e-mail, etc).
- When students do not self-advocate, initiate conversations with students.
- If concerns regarding a student persist, engage in a two-way conversation with the parent

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through a phone call, e-mail or a teacher-initiated parent conference.

- When a teacher's concern about a student persists after conversations with the student, the teacher should be the staff member who initiates the parent communication.

How school counselors can best advocate...

- Listen to the student. Ensure student has already discussed with the teacher.
- Talk to and listen to teacher.
- Share student comments when appropriate.
- Develop intervention plans to address the needs of the student's academic, personal, college/ career plans and social-emotional well-being.
- When there are concerns from multiple teachers regarding a student, ***the counselor should be consulted for additional possible next steps: parent phone call; parent conference; counselor meeting with student; grade level admin consultation; etc.***
- Communicate with parents, staff, administrators, and outside agencies as needed.

How the MYP and Diploma Programme Coordinators can best advocate...

- Listen to the student. Ensure student has already discussed with the teacher and counselor.
- Talk to and listen to teacher.
- Share student comments with teachers regarding assignments, instruction, assessments, etc.
- Communicate with students, counselors, and parents.
- When applicable, assist teachers and students in developing a plan to elevate learning.
- When necessary, contact administrator for intervention.

How the Administrators can best advocate...

- Listen to students. Ensure student has already discussed with the teacher, resource teacher, counselor, and coordinator, if applicable.
- Talk to and listen to teacher.
- Share student's comments with teachers regarding assignments, instruction, assessments, etc.
- Communicate with students and parents.
- When applicable, assist teachers and students in developing a plan to elevate learning.
- When there are concerns from multiple teachers regarding a student, the administrator collaborates with the counselor to initiate and coordinate a parent conference where the concerns can be addressed.