



# MORGAN COUNTY CHARTER SCHOOL SYSTEM

---

James R. Woodard.  
Superintendent

Sarah E. Burbach  
Jean Triplett  
Assistant Superintendents

1065 East Avenue  
Madison, Georgia 30650  
Phone 706 752-4600  
FAX 706 752-4601  
[www.morgan.k12.ga.us](http://www.morgan.k12.ga.us)

Welcome to the 2015-16 School Year! We look forward to the learning opportunities afforded to the youth of Morgan County this school term. The staff and teachers are geared up for an exciting year. Teachers have been planning for the arrival of more than 3,200 students on August 3rd, 2015. Let's gear up and get ready for a very assertive individual learning plan for ALL students!

The Morgan Board of Education and Morgan County School System staff have worked this summer to identify our challenges and create a plan for accomplishing goals and objectives specific to this plan. We have named this plan the *Cornerstones of the Puzzle*. The first step in assembling a puzzle is identifying the picture, or outcome, of the puzzle. We have determined that the vision for our puzzle is improved individual student achievement. We envision a picture of success for ALL of our students.

The second step is to identify and find each of the four corner pieces of the puzzle. This process begins to create the foundation of student achievement by helping students, parents, teachers, administrators, staff and our community to stay focused on the important principles of student achievement. We have identified the following cornerstones for student achievement in Morgan County:

## **Student Safety/Discipline**

## **Student Support**

## **Rigorous and Engaged Classrooms**

## **Maintenance and Facilities**

### **Cornerstone 1 - Student Safety and Discipline**

First and foremost, our students and parents should be guaranteed a school climate characterized by an orderly environment which maximizes student learning. All of our schools will be undergoing a comprehensive safety study in order to ensure that our students are safe on a day-to-day basis. These safety plans will correlate with a District Wide Safety Initiative coordinated by a district safety coordinator.

Secondly, our system and schools will begin the implementation of a state endorsed program called *Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS)*. This program will help teachers and staff to learn how to coach a change in behavior. We have also completed a review of our system student code of conduct and discipline policies. The procedures and policies will change as a result of the identification of behaviors which will NOT be tolerated in our schools. We will train our staff and teachers to identify the non-negotiable behaviors and deal with them consistently from school to school, classroom to classroom, and teacher to teacher.

### **Cornerstone 2 - Student Support**

The Student Support cornerstone is designed to meet all of our students at their level of learning potential. To accomplish this, we must ask our community to ensure students are in attendance on a daily basis. Attendance is critical to student achievement and we must all work to improve the attendance and timeliness of our students arriving at school.

We will focus on improving the *Response to Intervention (RTI)* process. This process allows teachers and parents to work together to identify student challenges and appropriate interventions to allow our students to overcome any learning obstacle. Teachers and staff will continue to receive training to ensure that students have interventions to help them succeed regardless of their challenge.

The third aspect of student support is a focus to provide a stronger recognition program at both the school and system level. This recognition will be designed to be appropriate and provide students with a sense of pride and accomplishment. We will be able to promote the successes of our students and build strong pride about our school system and our community.

### Cornerstone 3 - Rigorous and Engaged Classrooms

The classrooms of the future require an engagement of students in problem based learning, collaboration, communication, and teamwork. Therefore, through a partnership with Morgan County Foundation for Excellence in Public Education (MCFEPE), Morgan County School System will be moving forward with a Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM) Initiative. The district STEAM initiative is designed to promote a problem solving approach to learning across all disciplines.

A systems approach will also be implemented relative to vertical alignment of all standards and courses. Teachers will continue the process of forming the building blocks of learning at each grade level while understanding what has been taught in the past and what will be taught in the future. This alignment will help students move from one grade level to the next and will assist in helping students transition from one building to the next. At the end of the day, every school and every teacher contributes to the development of our students through graduation and beyond.

The 2015-2016 professional development plan for staff and teachers is being developed and monitored to ensure that we are prepared to meet the challenges of creating and maintaining a rigorous and engaged classroom. Teachers are being trained on the most advanced instructional strategies to assist them in creating a performance based learning environment.

### Cornerstone 4 - Maintenance and Facilities

We all want the most advanced learning environments for our students. Therefore, we will continue the process of developing and implementing a Master Facility Plan for our systems. While our buildings are old and well kept, we must continue to explore the opportunity for our students to be trained in a 21st Century classroom. The options already discovered through this process provide promise for more advanced facilities for our students.

The College and Career Academy will begin to take shape and form this school year. The plans are being fine-tuned as we prepare to design the building, shape programs, and begin the actual building process. The College and Career Academy is designed to open in the Fall of 2017. The programs under this initiative will help students decide and engage in a career pathway of choice. Our College and Career Academy goals will also assist the system in implementing the *Move on When Ready* initiative. Move on When Ready is designed to allow students to advance through middle and high school at a faster rate with more career options. The partnership which we establish with near-by Georgia Piedmont Technical College will be instrumental to helping our students earn college credentials prior to leaving high school.

Finally, we are committed to providing cleaner and safer buildings and facilities for our students and community. We will be establishing standards of professionalism for our buildings and holding everyone to high expectations to keep our buildings clean and safe.

The Cornerstones of the Student Achievement Puzzle are critical to positioning our young people to be able to advance academically, as well as being prepared for the career opportunities which await

them. We ask that parents prepare their students for the daily rigors of learning, while we commit to providing them with a quality educational experience.

Let's have a great school year and prepare for the Student Achievement Puzzle to come together before our very own eyes.

James Woodard, Superintendent  
Morgan County Charter School System