



## Systems Change to Implement Student-Centered Learning

Mark D. Benigni, Ed.D.  
*Superintendent of Schools*



What did we do?

"If you manage people or are a parent (which is a form of managing people), drop everything and read *Mindset*."

—GUY KAWASAKI, author of *The Art of the Start*

# mindset

THE NEW PSYCHOLOGY OF SUCCESS

HOW WE CAN  
LEARN TO FULFILL  
OUR POTENTIAL

- \*parenting
- \*business
- \*school
- \*relationships

"Will prove to be one of the most influential books ever about motivation."  
—Po BRONSON, author of *NurtureShock*

CAROL S. DWECK, Ph.D.



ABANDONED  
*The Fixed Mindset*

ADOPTED  
*The Growth Mindset*

# Raised the Bar for All Students

Collapsed Academic Levels from five to two



College Preparatory Pathways



Academic

Accelerated

Advanced Placement/Early College Enrollment

# No Zeros



We continue to:

- Encourage Work Completion
- Review Current Grading Procedures
- Engage and motivate students

**Assigning Dos and Homework Don'ts**

**Dos**

1. Do plan homework with topics and skills that:
  - Are familiar to students;
  - Have been introduced in class;
  - Are interesting and challenging;
  - Can be completed in a reasonable amount of time according to grade and age;
  - Give students the sense that they are making progress; and
  - Review and reinforce skills already taught.
2. Do create the general understanding that learning takes place inside and outside of school and classrooms. (Develop a work ethic for at-home assignments.)
3. Do plan ahead so that there is sufficient class time to give explicit directions for the homework assignment and to answer questions.
4. Do ensure that all students have access to all resources needed to complete the homework assignment and that written directions are given.

**Homework Don'ts**

Do not assign homework that:

- Is uninteresting

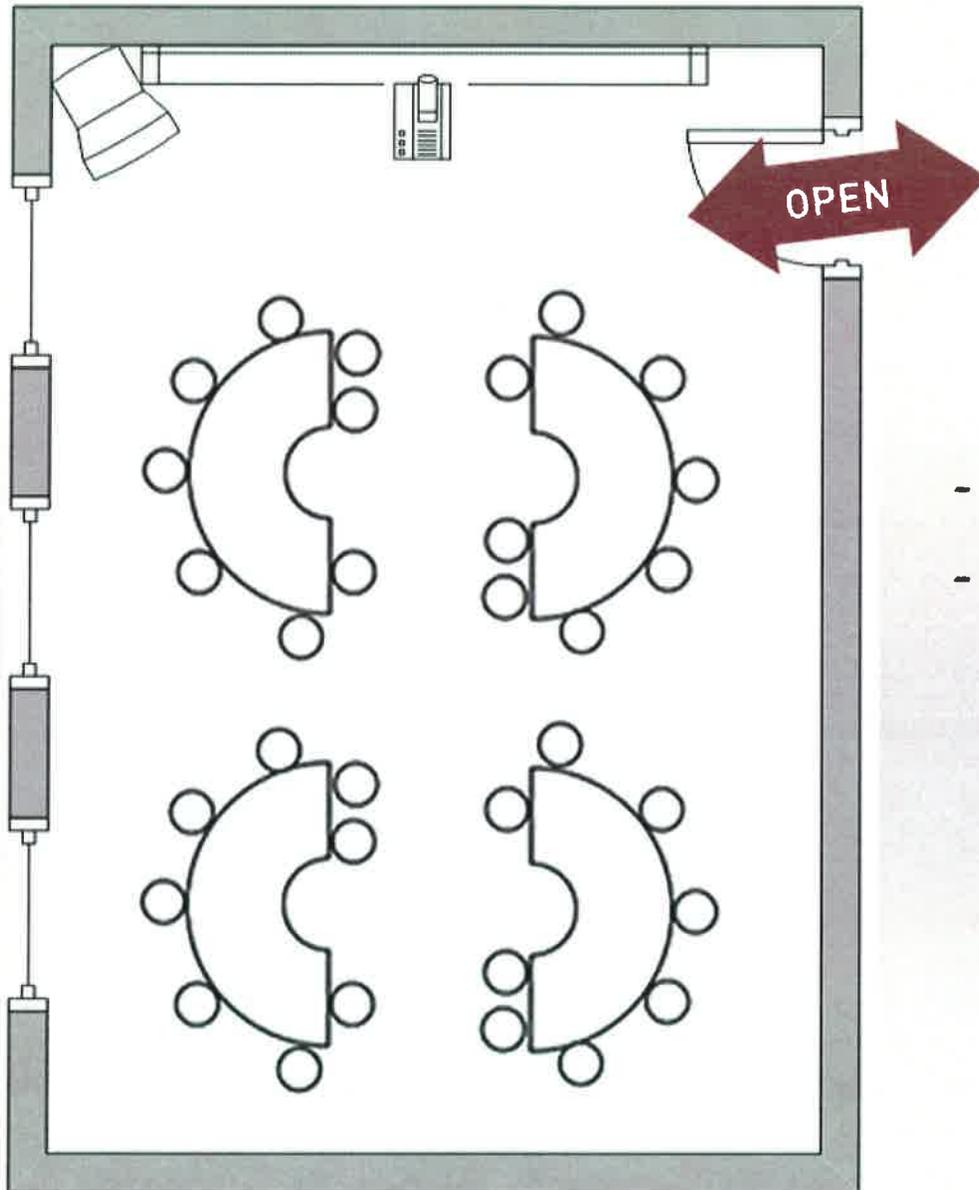
**The Case Against the Zero**

Even those who subscribe to the "punishment" theory of grading might want to reconsider the way they use zeros, Mr. Reeves suggests.

BY DOUGLAS B. REEVES

THIS IS not a trick question. If you are using a grading scale in which the numbers 4, 3, 2, 1, ... grades of A, B, C, D, and F, ... last who

# Open Access to All Classes



- Eliminated Prerequisites
- Give Students Choice

# MERIDEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Pride In All We Do



MPS is proud to offer **16** Advanced Placement/Early College Experience (ECE) course offerings for “all” of our students. Recently, the Board of Education unanimously approved the addition of the following three AP/ECE course offerings: AP Microeconomics, AP Government, and AP Physics.

AP/ECE PARTICIPATION	09/10	13/14	<b>INCREASE SINCE 09/10</b>
<b>ALL STUDENTS</b>	218	520	<b>139%</b>
<b>BLACK STUDENTS</b> (15%)	5	50	<b>900%</b>
<b>HISPANIC STUDENTS</b> (47%)	29	117	<b>303%</b>
<b>WHITE STUDENTS</b> (35%)	155	317	<b>105%</b>

For more information about AP/ECE Course Offerings, please contact:



ORVILLE H. PLATT High School  
*Home of the Panthers*

**Marc Guidone**

Director of School Counseling  
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(203) 235-7962 x126



FRANCIS T. MALONEY High School  
*Home of the Spartans*

**Sherry McLaughlin**

Director of School Counseling  
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# BOE Reviewed, Revised, and Developed District Policy and Goals to Put Students at the Center



Policy 5005

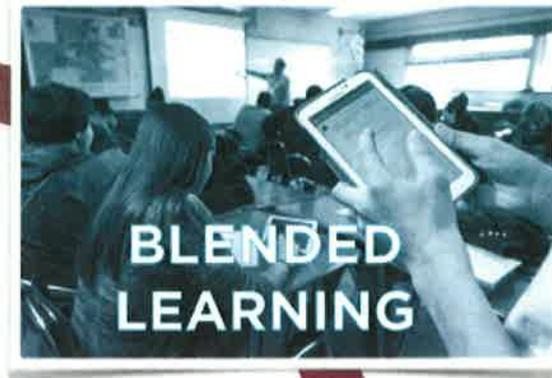
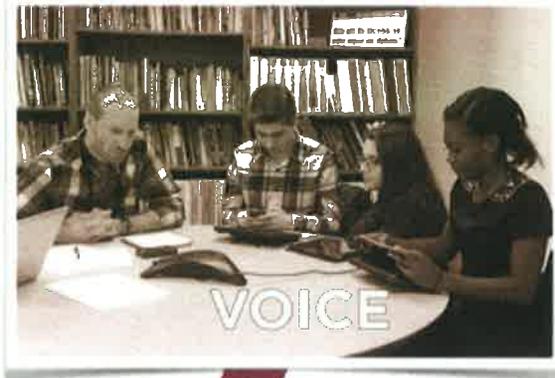
*Date Revised: August 19, 2014*

## **GOALS FOR STUDENTS**

The Board and staff shall work together to establish for each student an environment conducive to learning and shall aspire to the following goals regarding students:

to provide a student-centered learning environment to meet the individual needs

- to provide a student-centered learning environment to meet the individual needs of each student according to his or her specific background, capabilities, learning style, interests and aspirations;
- to provide an educational program which will lead to college and career readiness for all students;
- to provide a technology and resource rich learning environment;
- to provide opportunities for learning outside the traditional classroom and school building (e.g., online courses, independent study, internships and externships);



# Students at the Center

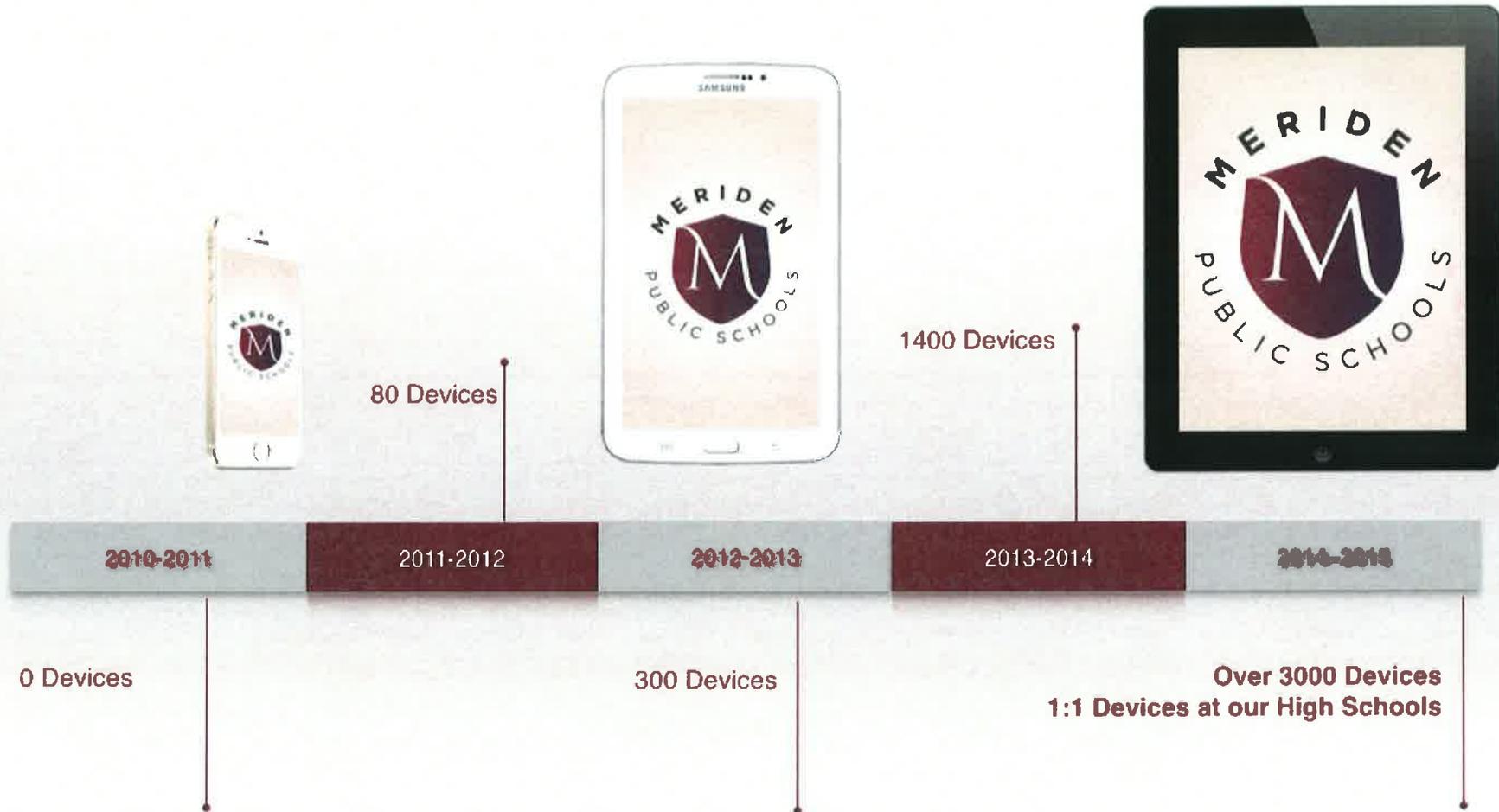


# Student Voice





# Increase in Mobile Devices





myON<sup>®</sup>

 Imagine Learning<sup>®</sup>

 ST Math

 ODYSSEYWARE<sup>®</sup>

District-Wide Online Learning Tools





Converted Media Centers to  
District-Wide Technology Centers





# Hundreds of Students Designed Their Own Personalized Learning Experiences





# Student Engagement





Integrated Collaboration Time for Teachers





- ❖ Professional Development
  - ❖ During School
  - ❖ After School
  - ❖ Evenings with Dinner
  - ❖ Summer Training
  - ❖ Online Experiences

Professional Development



# Funding Solutions



**Federal  
Funding**



**State  
Funding**



**Foundation  
Funding**



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# What Did We Learn?

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- ❖ Personalize
- ❖ Differentiate
- ❖ Engage



Will keep  
students at  
the center

# What Did We Learn?



Digital learning can level the playing field for all students and promote success.





# Highest Scores in District History



STATE TESTS 2013			DISTRICT TESTS 2014		
Grade 3	↑ Reading	✓ +	Grade 4	↑ Reading	✓ +
Grade 5	↑ Science	✓ +	Grade 5	↑ Math	✓ +
Grade 6	↑ Math	✓ +	Grade 6	↑ Reading	✓ +
Grade 7	↑ Reading	✓ +	Grade 7	↑ Math	✓ +
Grade 8	↑ Reading & Writing	✓ +	Grade 7	↑ Reading	✓ +

**HIGHEST SCORES IN DISTRICT HISTORY**



# Improved School Climate



## IMPROVED SCHOOL CLIMATE

**Suspensions**

↓↓↓ **58%**



**Expulsions**

↓↓↓ **88%**



**Arrests**

↓↓↓ **77%**

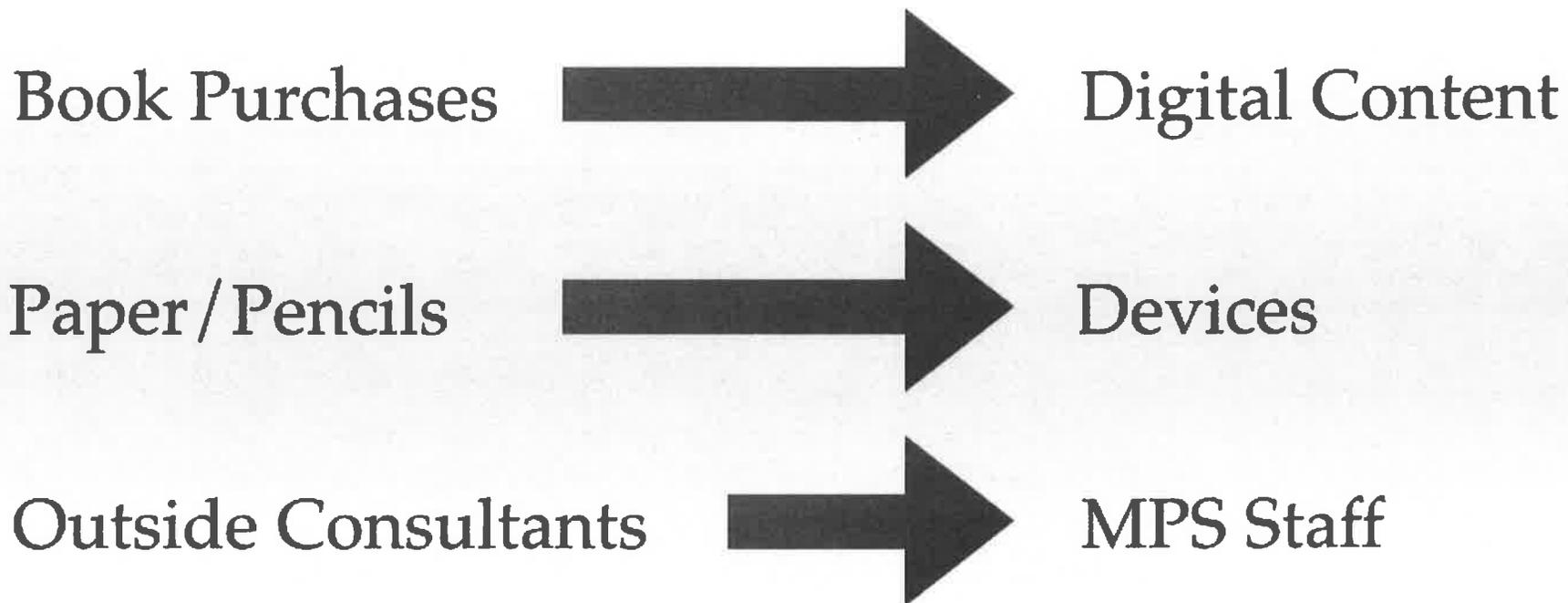


REDUCTIONS SINCE 2010-2011

# What Did We Learn?



**We needed to reallocate current resources to support today's learning environments**



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# What Did We Learn?

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**As we build the high schools of tomorrow, all our decisions are guided with our students at the center**



All Hurdles  
Can Be Overcome

