



Board Agenda Item #	III A: Consent Item
Date:	September 9, 2021
To:	Magnolia Public Schools – Board of Directors
From:	Alfredo Rubalcava, CEO & Superintendent
Staff Lead:	David Yilmaz, Chief Accountability Officer
RE:	Approval of Revised MPS Home Visit Policy

Proposed Board Recommendation

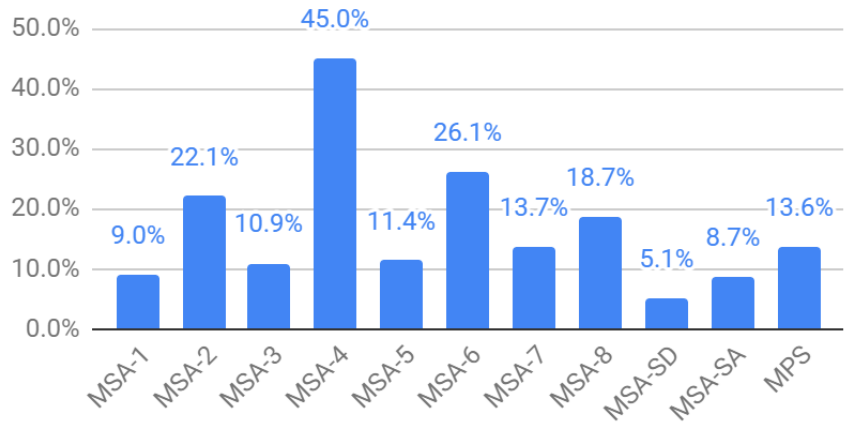
I move that the Board approve the revised Magnolia Public Schools Home Visit Policy.

Background

Home Visit is a signature MPS program that is consistently implemented by our teachers, school leaders, and staff across MPS. Each school sets a desired target in their LCAP for home visits, such as 25% of students will be visited at their home and checks progress during the year. For the 2020-21 school year, MPS was “partially” on target for home visits due to COVID-19 health and safety concerns. The 2020-21 school year started with distance learning until around mid-April after which we were able to offer hybrid instruction. There were challenges for in-person home visits. The practice of “virtual home visits” made it possible for our staff to connect with our students and their families on a personal basis during the pandemic.

MPS continues to encourage and monitor home visits done in-person and virtually. The following table and figure show the number of home visits made (in-person and virtual combined) and percentage of students home visited by each school in 2020-21 (as of April 16, 2021).

2020-21 Percentage of Students Home Visited (Updt. 4/16/21)



	2019-20:	2020-21:	4/16/21:	4/16/21:				
	Baseline	Target	Current Enrollment	# of Home Visits Made	# of Students Home Visited	Percentage	Exceeded Target by	On Target?
MSA-1	18.2%	25.0%	712	58	64	9.0%	-16.0%	P ▼
MSA-2	30.8%	25.0%	467	95	103	22.1%	-2.9%	Y ▼
MSA-3	18.3%	18.0%	421	43	46	10.9%	-7.1%	Y ▼
MSA-4	48.9%	25.0%	100	41	45	45.0%	20.0%	Y ▼
MSA-5	42.7%	30.0%	290	29	33	11.4%	-18.6%	Y ▼
MSA-6	30.6%	25.0%	161	38	42	26.1%	1.1%	Y ▼
MSA-7	16.8%	25.0%	292	37	40	13.7%	-11.3%	Y ▼
MSA-8	18.9%	25.0%	439	80	82	18.7%	-6.3%	Y ▼
MSA-SD	17.6%	15.0%	430	21	22	5.1%	-9.9%	P ▼
MSA-SA	15.9%	25.0%	543	36	47	8.7%	-16.3%	P ▼
MPS	22.4%	25.0%	3,855	478	524	13.6%	-11.4%	P ▼

Amendments to the Home Visit Policy:

Past Amendments:

MPS adopted its Home Visit Policy on 10/9/14 and amended it on the following dates:

Date of Amendment:	Amendments:
1/21/16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Compensation</u>: Compensation for in-person home visits was added.
6/11/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Compensation</u>: Compensation was clarified for the three different groups of employees: teachers and non-classroom based academic positions, school leaders, and classified staff. The reason for the change was the need to be consistent with the classified staff's hourly rates, to ensure required pre-approval for any overtime, and to afford more home visits within the school's home visit budget.
11/12/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Virtual Home Visits</u>: The main change to the policy is the addition of virtual home visits; Virtual Home Visit Procedures and Etiquette section was added. <u>Compensation</u>: The compensation of \$25 per virtual home visit was added for the 2020-21 FY, to be revisited for the 2021-22 FY.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Hours:</u> The statement that home visits by the teachers and non-classroom-based academic positions are to be done after work hours unless pre-approved by the principal was added. • <u>Number of staff:</u> The number of staff members to be compensated per visit was clarified. • <u>Pre-approval:</u> It was clarified that all home visit types and locations (in-person in the student’s home, in-person somewhere in the community, or virtual) must be pre-approved by the principal.
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Proposed Amendments:

The only change proposed to the policy is the approval of compensation for virtual home visits for the 2021-22 FY, to be revisited for the 2022-23 FY. The footnote #3 on page 3 reads as the following:

“Compensation for virtual home visits has been approved for the following fiscal years: 2020-21 and 2021-22. (To be revisited for the 2022-23 FY.)”

Please find attached the updated policy.

Budget Implications

N/A because the schools already determined their home visit allocations in their approved budgets.

How Does This Action Relate/Affect/Benefit All MSAs?

This action is recommended by the school leaders and the Home Office teams. We expect that the number of virtual home visits will increase with the continued compensation.

Name of Staff Originator:

David Yilmaz, Chief Accountability Officer

Exhibits (Attachments):

- Student Policies - MPS Home Visit Policy

MAGNOLIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS (MPS) HOME VISIT POLICY

I. Introduction

Research has shown that one of the keys to successful teaching and schooling is creating personal connections with students inside and outside of school. Additionally, among one of the most critical factors to supporting resilience in children is close relationships with competent caregivers or other caring adults. Knowing the students' outside interests, families, and home routines, and then using this information to connect in meaningful, individualized ways can have huge rewards in helping to create happier, healthier, and smarter children. Recognizing these facts, MPS uses home visits as one of the important features of its education program to not only improve student and school performance, but also to identify and intervene early with low-achieving students.

II. Why Home Visits?

Research has shown that one of the keys to successful teaching and schooling is creating personal connections with students. MPS teachers visit students at their homes to enhance student learning and involvement. Family visits offer invaluable insights about students. They can provide new understanding about students' learning styles and their environment outside of the traditional school setting. Visits might also reveal the emotional and social needs and behaviors of students. It is helpful to know if they react to problems with tears, anger, or withdrawal, and how they socialize with peers. Through family visits, teachers can identify students' latest interests or concerns, such as a new hobby, an upcoming trip, or a change in the family.

Family Involvement:

Research clearly shows that school programs, that emphasize family involvement and relate well to their community, have students who outperform those in schools lacking these qualities. Not only do students flourish, but also the schools are strengthened when families seize an active interest in their children's education. The results include (a) improved academic achievement, (b) better attendance, improved behavior, (c) higher quality of education, and (d) safe and disciplined learning environment.

Research by the Southwest Educational Developmental Laboratory found a positive and convincing relationship between family and community involvement and benefits to students, including academic achievement. Studies concluded that students with involved parents, no matter what income level or background, are more likely to have success in school.¹

For most students, home and school are two different domains. Especially for minority students even the people, languages, foods, rules, duties, and concerns are different in these two worlds. Parents and the teachers are critical partners in educating the "whole child." However, parent conferences and other school-hosted meetings do not provide sufficient means for the parties to communicate enough and effectively and to show the student that they are on the same team. Home visits are the teachers' attempt to break the virtual border between the partners, which is most of the time successful.

Personal Connections:

¹ Source: <http://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/evidence.pdf>

Key to a child's school success are the relationships established between the teacher and student, and the teacher and the student's family. Family visits offer a good way to develop these relationships on safe, "home" territory. Research has shown that one of the keys to successful teaching and schooling is creating personal connections with students inside and outside of school (Epstein 1998; Heath, 1983; Moll, Amanti, Neff, & González, 1992). Knowing the students' outside interests, families, and home routines, and then using this information to connect in meaningful ways can have huge rewards in helping to construct happier, healthier, and smarter kids.²

Proactive or Remedial?

MPS aims to be proactive in terms of prevention and teaching appropriate behavior by means of character education and college counseling classes and the active participation of teachers by setting up role models for the students and by effective communication through home visits.

As the famous saying goes, a good start leads to a great finish. The most important time of the academic year for the students is the beginning which mostly determines the end of year results. A home visit in the beginning of the year will help students succeed.

Home visits also ease teachers' job substantially. Investing time visiting homes of prospective or new students results in saving a lot of time throughout the year which would otherwise be spent on fixing problems and a healthy, stress-free academic year. Teachers can focus on raising the quality of their education instead of trying to minimize problems and maintain a healthy personal life.

III. Home Visit Specifics

Which students?

MPS aims to visit not only low-achieving students but all our students because every student benefits from home visits. Often, home visits reveal new ways or opportunities that school can offer to a high-achieving student in order for him/her to thrive more. Visit preferences in the case of limited resources (staff, time, etc.) will be given in the following order (some students may fall into multiple categories):

- New students
- Low-achieving students
- Seniors (for college guidance)
- Student Groups: Foster Youth (FY), Students With Disabilities (SWD), English Learners (EL), Low Income/Socioeconomically Disadvantaged (SED), Children/Youth Experiencing Homelessness
- All other students

Some parents may reject home visits due to their home condition or other reasons. For such parents/guardians, MPS will arrange other ways of communication, including but not limited to, inviting the parent/guardian to school or meeting at a public place.

² Source: <http://crede.berkeley.edu/research/pdd/pb1.shtml>

How often?

Students may be visited once a year or more, depending on circumstances. Each MPS school site will set annual percentage targets for home visits, depending on their resources.

Scheduling

Scheduling can be done in person, through phone, email, mail, or other means. Usually parent orientation meetings, back to school nights, parent-teacher conferences, and other parent involvement activities provide opportunities to schedule home visits in person.

Who Can Do a Home Visit?

Teacher, administrator, counselor, education specialist, nurse, attendance liaison, parent liaison, outreach consultant, and any MPS staff person informed of the home visit policy and procedures.

Principal's Approval

All home visit types and locations (in-person in the student's home, in-person somewhere in the community, or virtual) must be pre-approved by the principal.

Compensation

Visits will be compensated until the school budget for home visits has been exhausted. Typical home visit compensation capacity is two staff members per visit, not to exceed three persons unless pre-approved by the principal.

Each staff member will be compensated as follows:

- Teachers and non-classroom-based academic positions:
 - \$50 per home visit made in person.
 - \$25 for virtual home visits³
 - Home visits are to be done after work hours unless pre-approved by the principal.
- School leaders (principals, APs, and deans):
 - No compensation.
- Classified staff:
 - Paid based on their hourly rates; all visits must be pre-approved by the principal.
 - Classified staff should do home visits during their work hours; visits done after hours and any overtime payment must be pre-approved by the principal before the visit is done.

Employees will be reimbursed for mileage driven to and from the home from their school location. All visits, including follow-up visits, will be compensated. A Home Visit Form needs to be completed and submitted by the staff member(s) in order to receive compensation. Compensation will be paid on the next paycheck

³ Compensation for virtual home visits has been approved for the following fiscal years: 2020-21 and 2021-22. (To be revisited for the 2022-23 FY.)

following the home visit. Mileage must be submitted in the SchoolAbility system and will be paid on the next paycheck following approval.

IV. Home Visit Procedures

➤ Before the Visit:

Parent/Guardian Notification

- Contact family a week to 10 days in advance of the visit and follow up with a phone call.
- Convey purpose of the visit.
- Time options and days should be available to best meet the needs of individual parents.
- Home visits must occur in the student's home unless family feels more comfortable meeting somewhere in the community (i.e., café, library, conference room, etc.) and will be pre-approved by the principal.

Review of Student's Background

- Review student's records, family history, and cultural background as available in student's file.
- If possible, observe student interaction with staff and peers outside of the traditional setting of interaction between the staff member and student (i.e., during nutrition, lunch, or during another class period.)
- Check and accommodate for special needs (e.g., translation, etc.)

Developing a Plan for the Visit

- Plan your route to visit and know your destination.
- Leave schedule of home visits with the office staff. Inform them of any changes to your schedule.
- Take necessary records, forms, paperwork, and informational material with you. Ex: emergency card, attendance record, grade report, resources, brochures, etc.
- Review the Home Visit Procedures, Etiquette, and Safety Tips.
- Review the Professional Boundaries: Staff/Student Interactions Policy in the Employee Handbook.
- Schedule to be on time.

➤ Arrival:

- Set the tone (warm introduction, thank family for time and participation, etc.)
- Establish rapport/develop caring relationship.
- Include all family members in the home who would like to participate.

➤ During the Visit

- A parent or guardian must be present, and the employee should never be left alone with the student or any other minors.
 - Review purpose of visit; allow family input.
 - Keep good eye contact, sit near the parent, look at and relate to them, talk to child(ren).
 - Get to know the family. Ask open ended questions that are school appropriate such as “Tell me about your child. What does he/she like best about school? Do you have any concerns?” to elicit feedback from parents regarding student’s interests, concerns, and progress in program and at home.
 - Be sensitive to cultural, religious, political differences with families and avoid such personal/sensitive discussions or oversharing.
 - Establish social connection; be a good model when you interact with them by being willing to share about yourself in an appropriate and professional way.
 - Observe family interaction in its cultural context; show enthusiasm and acceptance; reinforce positive parenting.
 - Establish goals.
 - Share school rules and expectations to encourage consistency between home and school.
 - Share resources; answer questions.
 - Provide information about future school activities and events and parental involvement opportunities.
 - Employees should not accept money or other gifts from families in exchange for the home visit.
- **Concluding the Visit**
- Summarize visit.
 - Discuss next steps.
 - If applicable, discuss date and plans for the next visit.
 - Provide business cards, contact information. Make yourself available for follow-up and future contact.
 - Make closing remarks, shake hands, thank, and say goodbye.
 - Keep visit to a reasonable amount of time. (30-60 minutes; no more than 1 hour.)
- **After the Visit**
- Document visit (see Appendix A: Home Visit Form.)
 - Evaluate visit and share necessary information with the appropriate staff (grade level team, counselor, administrator, etc.)
 - Follow through on referrals, action items, etc.

V. Home Visit Etiquette**➤ “DO”s and “DON’T”s:****DO**

- Be a good listener.
- Have specific goals or objectives for each visit.
- Be flexible.
- Be prompt to your home visits.
- Realize the limitations of your role.
- Help parents become more independent.
- Keep language appropriate.
- Dress appropriately and comfortably.
- Be confident and yourself.
- Remember that small improvements lead to big ones.
- Respect cultural and ethnic values.
- Monitor your own behavior-the parent is observing you.
- Follow the Professional Boundaries: Staff/Student Interactions Policy.
- Report follow all mandated reporter duties.

DON’T

- Impose values.
- Bring visitors without the parent’s permission.
- Socialize excessively at the beginning of the visit.
- Exclude other members of the family from the visit.
- Be the center of attention.
- Expect perfection from the parent.
- Ask the parent to do something you wouldn't do.
- Be alone with students or minors.
- Accept gifts or money from the family.

➤ Safety Tips:

- Maintain appropriate appearance and grooming in order to protect an image of cleanliness, dress, and neatness.

- Limit bringing personal belongings during the home visit as you may accidentally leave something behind.
- valuables or money on your person when visiting students' homes; leave purse in your trunk.
- Carry necessary phone, keys, and driver license on person. Lock vehicle when traveling and when you return to it after a visit. Check inside and under your vehicle before entering it.
- If a situation arises where you do not feel safe or comfortable, remove yourself from dangerous situations and trust your instincts.
- Travel in pairs when possible.
- Survey the neighborhood.
- Identify safe areas (i.e., restaurants, telephones, restrooms, police stations.)
- Consider a neutral meeting location if visit cannot be made safely at home (i.e., library, conference rooms, restaurants.) The principal must pre-approve the location.
- Ask family members to come out to meet you if you are not familiar with the area.
- Stay alert. Carefully consider your safety before entering a home.
- Communicate your comfort level around any pets that may be present in the home.
- Keep emergency supplies in car, include all-weather gear.
- Staff shall carry a cell phone on all home visits. Cell phones shall be set to vibrate and shall not be answered during a visit unless it is an emergency.

VI. Virtual Home Visits

MPS asks that home visits occur in the student's home unless family feels more comfortable meeting somewhere in the community (i.e., café, library, conference room, etc.) If an in-person visit is not possible, safe, or convenient, the home visit may be conducted virtually. A virtual home visit is a scheduled video call between a teacher and a student's family, from the teacher's home or classroom to the family's home (duration varies but expect 20-30 minutes.) Virtual home visits are proactive, intentional re-engagement of families. Virtual home visits help teachers establish trusting relationships with students and families, even when they cannot meet face-to-face. MPS recommends that virtual home visits take place during the first grading period of the school year, with recommended follow-up at least once per semester depending on the needs of the student and family.

VII. Virtual Home Visit Procedures

➤ Before the Visit:

Parent/Guardian Notification

- Traditional home visit procedures apply, including scheduling a home visit by contacting the family with ample notice and explaining what the purpose of the home visit is and how long it will take. Request for student to be present during the time of the virtual home visit.
- In addition, share a google invite including the Zoom link or Google Hangouts option (or another online platform approved by the school), extend the invitation to any family members in the home or who support with the student's education during distance learning.
- Email the family the parent handout(s) and activity page prior to the visit so they can prepare. Encourage families to gather necessary materials to complete the activity before the visit.
- Virtual home visits must occur in the student's home unless family feels more comfortable meeting somewhere in the community (i.e., café, library, conference room, etc.) and will be pre-approved by the principal.

Review of Student's Background

- Review student's records, family history, and cultural background as available in student's file.
- If possible, observe student interaction with staff and peers outside of the traditional setting of interaction between the staff member and student (i.e., during nutrition, lunch, or during another class period.)
- Check and accommodate for special needs (e.g., translation, etc.)

Developing a Plan for the Visit

- Communicate schedule of home visits with the office staff. Inform them of any changes to your schedule.
- Have necessary records, forms, paperwork, and informational material with you as soft copies if available. Ex: emergency card, attendance record, grade report, resources, brochures, etc.
- Review the Home Visit Procedures, Etiquette, and Safety Tips.
- Review the Professional Boundaries: Staff/Student Interactions Policy in the Employee Handbook.

➤ *Beginning the Virtual Home Visit:*

- Set the tone (warm introduction, thank family for time and participation, etc.)
- Establish rapport/develop caring relationship.
- Include all family members in the home who would like to participate.
- Identify parent's internet capabilities and test bandwidth speed. Have a backup plan in case there is a glitch that cannot be remedied within the meeting.
- Prepare parent with procedures if/when technology problems occur. Prompt the parent to turn off all unnecessary programs to save bandwidth and reduce the chance of a system crash.
- Partner with the parent to identify a quiet place for the visit. Recommend that parents turn off TVs, radios, other auditory/visual distractions.

➤ **During the Visit**

- A parent or guardian must be present.
- Review purpose of visit; allow family input.
- Keep good eye contact, sit near the parent, look at and relate to them with virtual cues, talk to child(ren).
- Get to know the family. Ask open ended questions that are school appropriate such as “Tell me about your child. What does he/she like best about school? Do you have any concerns?” to elicit feedback from parents regarding student’s interests, concerns, and progress in program and at home.
- Be sensitive to cultural, religious, political differences with families and avoid such personal/sensitive discussions or oversharing.
- Establish social connection; be a good model when you interact with them by being willing to share about yourself in an appropriate and professional way.
- Observe family interaction in its cultural context; show enthusiasm and acceptance; reinforce positive parenting.
- Establish goals.
- Share school rules and expectations to encourage consistency between home and school.
- Share resources; answer questions.
- Provide information about future school activities and events and parental involvement opportunities.
- Employees should not accept money or other gifts from families in exchange for the home visit.

➤ **Concluding the Visit**

- Summarize visit.
- Discuss next steps.
- If applicable, discuss date and plans for the next visit.
- Provide contact information. Make yourself available for follow-up and future contact.
- Make closing remarks.
- Keep visit to a reasonable amount of time. (20-25 minutes; no more than 30 minutes.)

➤ **After the Visit**

- Document visit by using Zoom/online platform participants list and the Home Visit Form.
- Evaluate visit and share necessary information with the appropriate staff (grade level team, counselor, administrator, etc.)
- Follow through on referrals, action items, etc.

VIII. Virtual Home Visit Etiquette**➤ “DO”s and “DON’T”s:****DO**

- Be early or on time.
- Be a good listener.
- Have specific goals or objectives for each visit.
- Be flexible.
- Be prompt to your home visits.
- Realize the limitations of your role.
- Help parents become more independent.
- Keep language appropriate.
- Dress appropriately and comfortably.
- Be confident and yourself.
- Remember that small improvements lead to big ones.
- Respect cultural and ethnic values.
- Monitor your own behavior-the parent is observing you.
- Follow the Professional Boundaries: Staff/Student Interactions Policy.
- Report follow all mandated reporter duties.

DON’T

- Impose values.
- Bring visitors without the parent’s permission.
- Socialize excessively at the beginning of the visit.
- Exclude other members of the family from the visit.
- Be the center of attention.
- Expect perfection from the parent.
- Ask the parent to do something you wouldn't do.
- Be alone with students or minors.
- Accept gifts or money from the family.

➤ Safety Tips:

- Maintain appropriate appearance and grooming in order to protect an image of cleanliness, dress, and neatness.

- Review safeguards for Zoom or the online platform that will be used during the meeting.
- If possible, include access for a facilitator to help with the meeting and monitor chat or other requests.

IX. Reporting

Incident/Injury Reporting

Employees who are injured during a home visit must report the injury to MPS as soon as possible and prepare an incident report. Employee who become aware of parent or student complaints in a home visit must refer the complaint to their immediate supervisor. Employees are responsible for the personal belonging brought to a home visit and are discouraged from bringing non-MPS property or devices such as laptops.

Mandated Reporting

Employees who know or reasonably suspect child abuse or neglect during a home visit must report the known or suspected instance of child abuse to a child protective agency immediately, or as soon as practically possible, by telephone and to prepare and send a written report thereof within thirty-six (36) hours of receiving the information concerning the incident. The known or suspected child abuse must also be reported to MPS in a written statement.

APPENDIX A: HOME VISIT FORM

Person(s) making the home visit: School: _____ Date of Visit: _____

Name: _____ Title: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____ Title: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____ Title: _____ Email: _____

Principal's approval: Signature: _____ Check if the visit was virtual: Virtual HV

Student:

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Grade: _____

Check all that apply: New Senior Groups: FY SWD EL SED Homeless

Notes:

1. How is the family's experience about the student's social, emotional, and academic growth? What questions, concerns or suggestions does the family have?

2. What school resources did I present to the parents? (Tutoring/clubs, homework assistance, etc.)

3. Additional information and/or follow-up needed:
