

Signature Programs FAQ

What is a *Signature Program*?

- ✚ A **Signature** is a theme chosen by a school and its surrounding community, to connect classroom instruction with real-world situations and workforce-relevant skills. A **Signature** brings together educators with local business and community leaders to make classroom instruction relevant, interesting, and challenging for students with opportunities that connect to the 21st century workplace. Each of the 12 comprehensive high schools in Anne Arundel County will offer a unique **Signature Program**. These programs align with the AACPS goals to eliminate the achievement gap by providing all students with access to rigorous coursework.

How is a *Signature Program* theme selected for a high school?

- ✚ Members of the community are invited to participate in formal and informal brainstorming to determine the unique needs of the community. A survey collects data reflecting the interest, culture, resources and businesses in the surrounding community. A **Signature Program** “theme” is then selected for the high school based on survey results and supporting data.

Who is responsible for implementing a *Signature Program* in each high school?

- ✚ The school personnel, including the *Signature Program* Facilitator (SPF) and the Integrated Community Stakeholder Team (ICST) are responsible for implementing the **Signature Program** in each high school. An Integrated Community Stakeholder Team (ICST), facilitated by the SPF, includes five or six individuals from each of 6 community arenas - business/industry, health, education, community services, media and communication, and government.

What are the roles and responsibilities of the Integrated Community Stakeholder Team (ICST)?

- ✚ After selecting the theme, the ICST works with the school to determine needs, timeline and budget, program elements, outcomes, resources, curricula and creates a detailed **Signature Program** plan. In partnership with school personnel, the ICST will remain involved with the sustainability of the **Signature Program**.

What is required of an ICST member?

- ✚ Each member of the ICST can be involved at various levels of responsibility and time commitment. One member may visit classrooms and discuss his or her career with students, while another member may work with a teacher to update his or her curriculum to include real-world connections. At the same time, a group of ICST members may work together to create job shadowing experiences for students. The possibilities are endless. Each member can choose the level of involvement he or she wishes to commit to the ICST.

What are the benefits of being involved with a *Signature Program*?

✚ There are wide-ranging benefits to businesses and employees in getting involved in *Signature Programs*.

These benefits include:

- Increased employee motivation through involvement in volunteering
- Development of leadership and management skills
- An opportunity to shape the future workforce
- Raising the profile of your business in the community through linking with local schools

If you are interested in being part of a Signature Program, contact the Signature Program Facilitator at the local high school for more information, or the Signature Support Team (SST).

Signature Support Team

Richard Burger rburger@aacps.org 410-570-7495

Reginald Wilson rwilson@aacps.org 410-570-8268

Lise Foran lforan@aacps.org 410-674-7710 x-299