

MCCPTA President's Letter

January 15, 2008

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Visit our web site

www.mccpta.com

Greetings:

This month has gotten away from me. Students have just begun second semester and PTA presidents are on the downhill part of their term—although it may feel as though there is lots of hard work still to get through. It is time to begin thinking about who will lead your PTA next year. Most PTAs (check your bylaws for exact dates) should get their nominating committee in place in February. Depending on your bylaws, you will need 3, 5, or maybe 7 people willing to work on the nominating committee. Any member, except the president, can serve on the nominating committee. Committee members should start with a copy of their local bylaws and job descriptions and cast a wide net over their entire community to find people willing to serve next year. MCCPTA is also looking for officers for 2008-09. The MCCPTA nomination form is attached and available on our website.

Local PTAs should have already sent in dues to both Maryland PTA and MCCPTA. Maryland PTA continues to send you an invoice each month through March. Only pay for the members that you actually enroll; in March, locals return any unused membership cards to the state. You should continue to send in MCCPTA dues for any additional members you enroll too. Our dues payment form is available on our website. Invoices for 07-08 insurance were sent over a month ago. Please make sure you have sent in your payment to

MCCPTA. You may call our office or our treasurer to check on the status of your payment. It is not too late to enroll members. Consider assembling a packet of information for the school to give out to families who enroll new students throughout the year and include a membership form. Staff a membership table at family events, International nights, curriculum nights, etc.

We have scheduled several president, treasurer, and secretary trainings in the next six weeks at different locations in the county. We will cover some basics and spend time answering questions that have come up over the year. These trainings are open to all PTA members; if you are thinking of taking on the job for next year, feel free to attend to get a sense of the duties. Dates, times and locations are listed elsewhere in this letter. We still need a few sites for these, if you would like to host one, please contact our training chair, DeBora King, dkndc@msn.com

The budget news gets worse and worse. Mr. Leggett recommended full funding of the FY2009 capital budget but shifted money out of the future years of the CIP to fit within the county's spending affordability guidelines (SAG) which were set by the County Council this fall. Cluster coordinators will be testifying on February 6th to the County Council, 7pm in the third floor hearing room and will urge the council to increase the SAG to keep future projects on track. The Council can vote to

increase the SAG 10% overall. We also want to urge the council to fund any increase in the SAG 78% of its bond limit so could do more bond financing without imperiling its AAA bond rating. The superintendent released a memo with several possible scenarios all of which suggest serious delays for FY10 and beyond will occur if the SAG is not increased. In addition, the budget depends on \$55 million in state construction funding. The state allotted \$20 million for Montgomery County in the first round of CIP funding; please contact your state legislators and the governor to urge that we receive the remaining \$35 million for FY09.

The state recently released its calculations of how much funding MCPS will get for its operating budget. Because these calculations take into account the wealth of the county as well as the number of ESOL, FARMS, and Special Education students, and are based on measures of property tax values over a year ago, Montgomery County will receive \$17 million less than it had anticipated. While property values have recently fallen, based on last year's figures, Montgomery County grew wealthier in relation to the rest of the state. I have heard estimates that our county is contributing over \$600 million to the education budgets of other counties in the state because of these formulas. So, while the BOE will pass a budget to send to the council on Feb. 5, it is not at all certain that there will be money to fund the entire budget. Stay tuned.

MCCPTA will mail out a survey on school/parent partnerships this week. It is based on a book, which the Department of Family and Community Partners has used to focus its outreach efforts. This will go to PTA presidents (and be available on our website). Please set aside 10 minutes at a PTA meeting for parents to fill out the survey. Completed surveys should be returned to the MCCPTA office via the pony. If your PTA chooses not to distribute the survey, you can download it to fill out and return it directly to us.

Many thanks to all the delegates who brought food or made a financial contribution to the Manna Food Center at our January DA. I am still waiting to hear how many pounds of food we collected

with bonds not current tax dollars. The county is currently only borrowing with Carver staff, but have already been thanked by Manna for your donations.

Don't forget to discuss the PSAT resolution at your February PTA meeting. It appears that MCPS is about to change their practice in response to our initial questions, but we will still vote on the resolution at the February DA.

Monday, February 11, is PTA night in Annapolis. All PTA members are invited to come to Annapolis for a joint briefing to Maryland PTA and to meet with members of the Montgomery County Delegate afterwards. Registration begins at 6:00pm, the joint briefing takes place 6:30-7:00pm and we meet with our delegation from 7:00-8:00pm. You may also stay for a joint session from 8:00-9:00pm. Remember to bring a photo ID for entrance into the legislative services building; secondary students may earn SSL hours for attending. More information, including a map, is available on our website. This is an excellent opportunity to chat one on one with the delegation to raise issues of importance like school funding, Indoor Air Quality, HSAs, etc. Please join us.

We are taking nominations for the Champions for Children Award. MCBRE sponsors this \$1000 award to an outstanding PTA program that promotes parent involvement. The award is presented at the Business Roundtable dinner on April 15th. The form is available on our web site. Do you have an outstanding program? Could your PTA use \$1000? Apply now.

Also be thinking of how you can honor your outstanding PTA volunteers and leaders. Local PTAs can give Maryland and National Life Membership Awards. Nomination materials are available at www.mdpta.org and www.pta.org. MCCPTA will also be soliciting nominations for these awards to be given at our May dinner. Watch for our call for nominees in March.

Jane

MCCPTA Committee Updates – January 2008

Communications Committee Report

1) Website:

Website Coordinators: Sharon Goodall sharon.goodall@gmail.com Lin-Lin Mao linlinmao@earthlink.net

The Bluebook pages on the website have been updated with the 2007-2008 Bluebook information:

<http://mccpta.net/bluebook.html>

2) Listservs: Listservs Moderator: Patti Twigg LPTwigg@erols.com

As of December 28, 2007 membership on the various lists is as follows:

Listserv	# subscribed	Net increase/decrease from last month
MCCPTA Board	93	-1
MCCPTA Bulletin	544	-4
MCCPTA Delegates	432	-1
MCCPTA Presidents	285	-1

3) Spotlight:

“Spotlight” Reminder: Thank you to the people that have been sending in updates. If you have news and/or achievements from your school or PTA that should be highlighted in the “Spotlight” corner of the MCCPTA homepage, please notify MCCPTA (via email to office@mccpta.com and/or webmaster@mccpta.com).

Patti Twigg, Committee Chair and Listservs Moderator

LPTwigg@erols.com

Cultural Arts Committee Report

If your Cultural Arts Chair(s) is not a member of the PTArts listserv, please suggest he/she/they join. The Listserv is a communications tool among cultural arts chairs throughout Montgomery County and is an excellent place to ask for artist recommendations and keep up with any news. Your chair can join by sending their name, school, & committee position to: PTArts-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. They can also feel free to contact me at the email address below with any questions.

Randy Chin

Chair Cultural Arts Committee

Chinhaven@aol.com

MCCPTA Health Committee January 08 Update

Curriculum Advisory Committee: Subcommittees for PE and Health Seeking

Parent Input: Parents of students in Montgomery County Public Schools are urged to consider serving on the Curriculum Advisory Committees (CAC's) Subcommittee for PE and Health Ed. These are important sub-committees that make recommendations to MCPS for enhancements/modifications to the curricula. Here are some details:

There are two more CAC meetings this year (which is half the meetings), on January 28 and March 10 (Mondays).

The meetings are at Shady Grove Middle School from 7 to 8:30 pm. If interested, please contact Sharon Schulman (sharon29@comcast.net or 301-881-0465) or Ted Willard (twillard@aaas.org).

The time commitment is not huge – there are generally 4 meetings a year (with 2 remaining for this school year). It is fine to have more than one parent involved in each subcommittee since you may not be able to make each meeting. If a parent agrees to do this, we would like them to commit to attend most, if not all of the four yearly meetings. At the end of each meeting, Sharon and Ted would like to have a very brief report to let them know what happened – this info is then passed on to the MCCPTA delegates. Parents can also attend the MCCPTA Curriculum Committee meetings – but that is not mandatory. There is an MCCPTA Curriculum Committee listserv that parents are encouraged to join as well.

MCCPTA Health Committee Web Site: Additional articles and resources have been added to the Health Committee section of the MCCPTA web site.

Food Marketing Survey Conducted in MCPS schools: At the request of Councilman Leventhal, the Center for Science in the Public Interest, in partnership with MCPS Division of Food and Nutrition Services and the County Department of Health, conducted a food marketing survey in a random sample of schools. The final report will be presented to Councilman Leventhal, Chair of the Council Health Committee, on January 31st. There will likely be a number of recommendations regarding PTA fundraising practices.

April 2008 Delegates' Assembly Program: The April DA program will be devoted to Nutrition and Physical Activity/Education topics. Parents interested in helping plan this program are encouraged to contact Tracy Fox (tracyfox@comcast.net).

Physical Activity: BOE Member Abrams is interested in looking at recess in elementary schools to ensure that children are being active and that recess remains an integral part of the day. I will likely be meeting with some other PE teachers who have met with Mr. Abrams and looking at ways to enhance recess. County Councilmen Berlinger is also interested in the issue of physical education and activity in schools.

Tracy Fox, MPH, RD, Health Committee Chair, MCCPTA (tracyfox@comcast.net)
Update as of January 9, 2008

Gifted Child Committee

Our committee is getting ready for its January meeting, which will include a presentation about identifying students who need above grade level instruction in reading.

We have three (3) additional meetings scheduled for this year:

January 24th - Beyond the GT Label: How Teachers Identify Students Who Need Above Grade Level Instruction in Reading - How do teachers determine a students' need for above grade level programming? What assessments are used in reading? What other indicators do teachers use? What is MAP-R? What do the assessment scores mean?
Time 7:30 – 9:00PM Location Walter Johnson HS Auditorium

February 24, 2008 – Carolyn K webmaster of Hoagiesgifted.org will speak of the topic of Underachievement: Enforced, Learned and Twice Exceptional Enforced, learned, or twice exceptional: underachievement can have many causes, and a variety of solutions. Come learn about the differences, and similarities, and many of the possible solutions, to underachievement. The first step to resolving underachievement is to figure out what's causing the underachievement - then we can begin to resolve it! Time: 7:30 – 9:00pm
Location: Carver Auditorium

April 24th - Differentiating Instruction: Best Practices in Grouping Strategies & Teacher Preparation - What does differentiated instruction look like in Reading, Science and Social Studies at each school level? What are grouping strategies MCPS uses in ES and MS? What are the pros and cons of each? Does research support a particular strategy for gifted students? What are some practical strategies teachers can use for students who learn at different rates or bring prior knowledge to the classroom? How are teachers prepared/trained by MCPS to address the needs of gifted students and advanced learners? Is any training required? Does MCPS maintain information on what training each teacher has received? Time: 7:30 – 9:00pm Location: Walter Johnson HS Auditorium.

Holly Gaut, hollygaut@hotmail.com
Chair Gifted Child Committee

Grading & Reporting Committee

H.S. Final Exam Exemptions for AP, IB and Cambridge Students Last month, Dr. Weast and Erick Lang informed the MCPS community of the decision to exempt students in 9th, 10th and 11th grade AP, IB and CIE courses from the final exam, if they take the applicable external exam. In addition, we were informed that all AP, IB and CIE students will complete a culminating activity at the end of the second semester. These changes will take effect in this (07-08) school year. For more information, please visit the Committee's listserv at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MccptaGradingAndReporting/>.

ES OARS and IKA-RA At the January meeting of the Grading and Reporting Committee, we welcomed Betsy Brown, who gave a presentation on Standards-Based

G/R and Elementary School OARS, and Dr. Weast for a brief time. From Betsy Brown, the Committee learned of an entirely new use of trending, using Pinnacle for ES version 7.0. We also heard about Pinnacle's usefulness and how it can be customized to lessen the teacher's workload when entering grades. The OARS presentation was followed by Betsy Brown's presentation of the new IKA-RA and a historical review of the regulation, its review process, terminology and the goals, processes and time line for revision. The BOE endorsed the operational framework for IKA-RA in March 2003. Since that time, the regulation has become outdated in terms of accuracy and relevancy to the current curriculum. The goals, processes and time line of revision of IKA-RA were explained to the Committee in detail. The Committee was asked to review draft 11 IKA-RA and to return feedback, which will be taken to the Grading and Reporting Implementation Team and to the IKA-RA Work Group.

Also under revision are Grading and Reporting-related regulations IKB-RA (Homework), IKC-RA (GPAs and Weighted GPAs), ISB-RA (HS Graduation Requirements), JEA-RA (Student Attendance) and JNA (Curricular Expenses for Students). With one exception, all are being revised to comport with current procedures and Grading and Reporting Policy IKA. One revision to IKC-RA was brought before GRIT in regard to whether the original grade earned in HS courses that are retaken should be replaced by the new grade or the higher grade be retained on the student's transcript. Much discussion ensued and the group ran out of discussion time. GRIT members were, therefore, asked to complete and leave their feedback before the end of the meeting, which was or is being compiled for Carol Blum to take back to the IKC-RA Work Group for discussion.

The Grading Calculation One Text Work Group is on schedule to conclude its work in February - next month. The focus topics include: 1) number and name of grading categories; 2) marking period grade calculation method; 3) combination of [grading category] weights and 4) semester grade calculations. More information will follow as permitted by this Work Group.

Next Committee Meeting: Presentation by the Office of Curriculum and Instruction on 1st, 2nd and 3rd grade standards-based report cards on Monday, February 4, 2008 at 7:00 p.m., CESC Conference Room 120.

Beth Kennington, bkenn@starpower.net

Chair Grading & Reporting Committee

MCCPTA Mini Training Dates

MINI TRAINING INFORMATION

This flyer is to inform you that several mini training sessions will be available throughout the county. Please mark your calendars, and stay tuned as we confirm the locations for the trainings. The areas that have been determined are listed, and we still in the process of confirming areas for all dates and representatives. If you are interested in hosting one of these trainings, let us know.

SESSIONS

Presidents - Jane de Winter

February 13th Newport Mill MS, 7:30pm

February 28th

March 12th

Secretaries - Ted Willard

February 14th (Quince Orchard area)

February 20th (Northeast Consortium area)

Treasurers - Dale Ryan

February 13th (Clarksburg area)

February 20th (Churchill, Rockville, Richard Montgomery, Wootton area)

Bylaws - Linna Barnes

TBD

CONTACT INFORMATION

MCCPTA Office 301-208-0111 or DeBora King, Training Chair (301) 879-9511.

CHAMPIONS FOR CHILDREN AWARD

The Montgomery County Council of PTAs (MCCPTA) is looking to recognize and celebrate an outstanding local PTA program that promotes parent involvement.

Every local PTA strives to reach out to parents. Share your most successful effort with MCCPTA. Please nominate a local PTA program that meets either or both of the following criteria; (1) engages more parents in the educational mission of the school or (2) supports student learning through increased parent participation. To nominate your PTA program, complete the form below. You will need to submit a brief description of the program. Please include any materials that have been distributed to the local community relating to the program including flyers or announcements through the PTA. You should also provide a contact person at your local PTA who can answer any questions about this program.

The Montgomery County Business Roundtable for Education (MCBRE) will award \$1000 to the winning parent involvement program selected by MCCPTA. Funds will go to the local PTA. In addition, the volunteer program will be honored at the annual MCBRE Champion for Children's gala in April.

All nominations should be submitted to MCCPTA by February 1, 2008. By mail to the MCCPTA Office, 2096 Gaither Road, Suite 204, Rockville, MD, or by Fax (301)208-2003.

Nomination Form

School _____

PTA Program _____

Contact Person _____

Phone Number _____

Please write a brief description of your proudest PTA program that focuses on parent involvement. Be sure to include how the program

(1) engages more parents in the educational mission of the school or (2) supports student learning. There are materials accompanying this nomination.

_____ yes _____ no

Send the completed form to MCCPTA by February 1, 2008. By mail to the MCCPTA Office, 2096 Gaither Road, Suite 204, Rockville, MD 20850, or by Fax (301)208-2003.

For answers to questions, and for more information contact April Keyes at keyesa@sec.gov.

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MCCPTA NOMINATIONS ANNOUNCEMENT: JANUARY 2008

The MCCPTA Nominating Committee is charged with presenting a slate of nominees for officers, Area Vice-Presidents, and Cluster Coordinators for election at the Annual Meeting held at the April Delegate Assembly on April 22, 2008. We are looking for those who will be the leaders of the organization for the 2008-2009 school year.

These people will represent the diversity and strength of our membership, demonstrate leadership qualities, continue to provide support for the local PTAs in the coming year, and be committed to the vision of this county-wide organization. Our goal is to present a slate of strong and skillful leaders who are committed to serving together to assure that MCCPTA remains the foremost child advocacy organization in Montgomery County. Please look around you and think about how you can participate as a leader of MCCPTA. If you are interested in one of these leadership positions, or would like to nominate another qualified candidate, please fill out the attached form on the following page.

NOMINATING PROCESS FOR AVP AND CLUSTER COORDINATORS

The Nominating Committee member from your area will hold a meeting to solicit and nominate an Area Vice-President before February 1st. These nominations will be submitted to the full nominating committee by March 15th. Please refer to MCCPTA Bylaws, Article X, Section 4 for the specific nominating/election process for the AVPs and Cluster Coordinators. (MCCPTA bylaws available on our website.)

The MCCPTA Bylaws require the Nominating Committee to mail the nominations to the MCCPTA membership at least two weeks before the March Delegate Assembly on March 27th. Nominations for all positions may also be made from the floor at the MCCPTA Delegates Assembly on April 24, 2006.

MCCPTA NOMINATION FORM for 2007/2008
Please return completed form on or before **February 9, 2008**

Submitted by: Name: _____

Address: _____

Email _____ Preferred Contact time: AM _____ PM _____

Phone: Day (____) _____ Evening (____) _____ Cell:(____) _____

If different than above, then please provide the name and contact information for the nominee below! I wish to be considered or propose for nomination:

to the following position(s):

- _____ President
- _____ Vice President for Educational Issues
- _____ Vice President for Administration
- _____ Vice President for Programs
- _____ Recording Secretary, Board of Directors
- _____ Recording Secretary, Delegate Assembly
- _____ Treasurer

Please list your or the nominee's previous experiences/positions and any relevant professional experience. If you or the nominee is currently serving in one of the positions up for nomination, please include your specific contributions and/or significant accomplishments while serving in the position.

Describe for us how your or the nominee's skills and your or the nominee's previous experience will enable you, or the nominee, to serve effectively in the position you are seeking. See MCCPTA Bylaws, Articles IX and XII for descriptions of the duties of the positions. What is your vision for this position?

You may return the completed form to MCCPTA--Nominating Committee, 2096 Gaither Road, Suite 204, Rockville, MD 20850, or email it to any of the nominating committee members listed below. Only the committee will use your information.

THANK YOU FOR CONSIDERING INVOLVEMENT AND LEADERSHIP OF MCCPTA!

From the 2007 Nominating Committee Members:

'Andrea Bernardo' andrea@cosmosettlements.com,
'Sally Taber' <sataber@mindspring.com>, 'DeBora King' dkndc@msn.com,
'Deborah Missal' missals@comcast.net, 'Kristin & Tim Tribble' tribble4@verizon.net,
'David Lechner' lechnerd@wdn.com, 'Cleat Kennedy', cleatous@hotmail.com.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER
MCCPTA
2096 Gaither Road
Suite 204
Rockville, MD 20850

Pony Mailing

JANUARY 2008

MCCPTA Calendar 2007-2008

**Unless otherwise specified all meetings take place at the
 Carver Educational Services Center (850 Hungerford Drive, Rockville, MD 20850).**

February

	1		Champions for Children – Nominations Deadline
	4	7:00pm	Grading and Reporting Committee – Conference Room 120
	6	7:30pm	Special Education Committee- Cafeteria
		6:00-7:00pm	MCCPTA BOD dinner with County Council
hearing room		7:00pm	MCCPTA CIP testimony to County Council, 3 rd floor
	7	7:30pm	MCCPTA Board of Directors Meeting – Auditorium
	11	7:30pm	Curriculum Committee – Auditorium
		6:00-9:00pm	PTA Night in Annapolis, Legislative Services Building
Center	13	7:30pm	MCCPTA Presidents Training, Newport Mill MS, Media
		7:30pm	MCCPTA Treasurers Training, Location TBA
	14	7:30pm	MCCPTA Secretaries Training, Location TBA
TBA	20	7:30pm	MCCPTA Treasurers and Secretaries Training, locations
	26	10:00am	Guidance and Counseling - Board Room 120
			Delegate Assembly - Auditorium
		7:00pm	Program: Counseling
		8:00pm	Business Meeting
	28	7:30pm	Gifted Child – Auditorium
		7:30pm	MCCPTA Presidents training, location TBA

March

	1	9:30am-2:00pm	MCCPTA Board Training
	3	7:00pm	Grading and Reporting Committee - Auditorium
	6	7:30 pm	MCCPTA Board of Directors Meeting – Auditorium
	7		MCCPTA Special Education Recognition Nominations
	12	7:30pm	Special Education Committee – Cafeteria
	19		Delegate Assembly – Auditorium – Wednesday Meeting
		7:00pm	Program—SIP
		8:00pm	Business Meeting