



February 20, 2007

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We've all had a vivid reminder this month of why it's so nice that our children attend school for most of the day. Here's to snow only on the weekends for the rest of the winter!

The Board of Education did approve the FY 2008 budget last week and is set to move forward with its plan to phase out the learning centers over the next six years. They reversed course on extended school year (summer school) for special education students—ESY will continue to be a five day a week program and money was restored to fund buses for the fifth day. It is our understanding that all secondary learning centers will be moving more toward a model of co-teaching and it is important that each individual school has a process in place to monitor whether students do indeed increase their performance when placed in a co-teaching setting. MCCPTA will continue to press MCPS to demonstrate that individual student performance increases with these changes and not claim success solely because the number of schools making AYP increases. Since over 600 students are currently enrolled in SLCs it is likely that there would have been more than 45 current fifth graders placed in learning centers in 2007-08. These students need to be monitored also. Local elementary PTAs should make sure that they are forwarding information on this issue to their list serves.

The lack of progress on parent community outreach coordinators was a big disappointment this budget season. Frankly, I believed the newly elected BOE would be more in tune with this request and that they grasped what a difference such a position could make at an individual school. In the end I think it was a combination of the fiscal situation which made them very reluctant to increase their budget request and the school system's

continued inability to see value in this type of position.

It is important to realize that the budget process is not over; the BOE's request still needs to be funded by the County Council so continue to advocate with council members.

MD PTA's final membership due date is March 15th. There are still some local PTAs that have not paid any dues to MD PTA this year. If you have not paid your dues by March 15th, your PTA will not be credentialed at next fall's convention. MCCPTA will be contacting the PTAs that have not paid any dues to state or us. All other PTAs will be contacted by their cluster coordinator and provided with the most up to date figures for state and county dues. Most PTAs have made at least one payment for each, but now it is time to pay for any members that have joined since you last made a payment and to make sure that you have paid for the same number of dues to the state and county. Remember that you must pay dues for each individual that joins your PTA regardless of whether you sell the memberships in that way. This is noted on the cover sheet of all local bylaws.

You may wonder whether the MD PTA convention is relevant to your PTA.

The convention will be in Towson, MD, in fall 2007, and MCCPTA will be asking all of you to be represented there. Montgomery County has more members than any other council in the state yet it often appears that some MD PTA rules and policies are more appropriate for smaller councils. In November, 2006, the voting body at the MD PTA convention was barely 100 persons—less than we have at many delegate assemblies.

MCCPTA surely has the people to be able to influence MD PTA if we show up and exercise our right to vote.

The new bylaws template for locals is about to be released and we just learned that MD PTA has set a cut off date of April 1st. If you are in the middle of revising your bylaws and you submit them before April 1, 2007, you may submit on the old template. If you will not be submitting them until after April 1, 2007, you will need to use the new template. While MD PTA has greatly improved their turn around time for bylaws approval, there are some PTAs that have been waiting a long time. Please contact our bylaws chair, Vicki Rafael, for help with figuring out what the hold up is if you have been waiting for bylaws approval. You should be aware that MD PTA is also checking that PTAs are incorporated and withholding bylaw approval if your PTA is not incorporated. When your bylaws are approved you will receive a letter from the state which sometimes notes technical corrections. Make sure that all of these technical corrections accurately reflect the intent of your PTA.

Clusters should be meeting to nominate cluster coordinators for next year. These names are due to the nominating committee by March 15. Names of nominees that come in after March 15 will be nominated from the floor at our April DA. Local PTAs should be

establishing their own nominating committees if they haven't already done so.

Our next delegate assembly will be held at Walter Johnson HS cafeteria next Tuesday. The program on the High School Assessments will take place from 7-8pm, and the business meeting will begin at 8:00pm. We will be voting on the resolution on the financial literacy course and discussing whether there is the need for a May DA or not. Directions to Walter Johnson (near the intersection of I-270, the Beltway, and Old Georgetown Road) will be included in the reminder sent out on Bulletin.

I would like to thank all the PTA folks who ventured out to Annapolis on a snowy evening last week and Victor Salazar who rounded up many members of the Montgomery County delegation to meet with us. We discussed a number of bills in play this session; the delegation members are eager to hear from PTAs—write away!

Jane

**MCCPTA DUES PAYMENT VOUCHER FOR 2006-07
FINAL INSTALLMENT**

Please Note: This is the final installment for any new members since your first payment in Nov. 2006.

Return to the MCCPTA office at: MCCPTA, 2096 Gaither Road, Suite 204, Rockville, MD 20850 (or through the Pony mail system to MCCPTA, 2096 Gaither Road, Suite 204).

MCCPTA Dues - Final Payment - Due March 15,2007

Name of PTA: _____

Number of Member: Adults _____ Teachers _____ Students _____ Total _____

Amount Remitted (\$1.00 per member): \$ _____ **Check#** _____

PTA Treasurer: _____ **Phone Number** _____

MCCPTA Committee Updates – February 2007

(Please note: Additional Committee updates are shared electronically on the MCCPTA Bulletin)

Cultural Arts Committee:

Joan Wolf Chiaverini, Chair, joanwolfjoanwolf@aol.com

ALL Cultural Arts chairs should contact Joan Wolf at the above email address to be included in the PTArts listserv----we do not have 100% participation!

Capital Improvement Program Committee:

Marney Jacobs (Co-Chair): mjdti@bellatlantic.net, Jim Keenan (Co-Chair): jim.keenan@fmcsa.dot.gov

The CIP committee continues to monitor the process of approval of this year's CIP. The County Executive has made his recommendation and it was not as aggressive as Dr. Weast's plan to build more additions and reduce the number of portables. However, the impact of Mr. Leggett's plan does not delay any projects that are currently in planning or pre-construction. The Superintendent's amendment started planning earlier for several addition projects that will be started next year. MCPS Facilities Department anticipates finding a way to plan for East Silver Spring Elementary and Takoma Park Elementary additions since they will be complicated projects. We are following the Council's work on the CIP (although Education Committee meetings do not address the school CIP until March) and state legislation for the capital budget. See the letter sent to the Governor and sample letters to legislators on the MCCPTA website.

Grading and Reporting Committee:

Sharon St.Pierre, (Co-Chair), stpierre619@comcast.net, Beth Kennington, (Co-Chair), bkenn@starpower.net

The Grading & Reporting Committee met on February 7, 2007. During that meeting, the follow topics were discussed:

Piloting of First and Second Grade Report Cards: including review of piloting schools' feedback from the public. Top concerns developed included:

Pros:

- Overall, teachers like the report card
- Report card offers better methods of home-school communication
- Teachers would like to see a similar format implemented for third grade

Cons:

- Questions as to whether the child is excelling - difficult to get an overall sense of student performance
- Number of tests (T1, T2 and T3) are too many
- Specials (especially arts, music and PE) should be more grade neutral to avoid penalizing a student who is less athletic or artistically prone
- 1st quarter parent-teacher conferences may be less effective than a 2nd quarter/end of semester conference.
- Amount of time teachers are required to report grades is too much
- Teachers need access to grade reporting (OASIS) from home as well as school

OARS/Pinnacle: Discussion included remedy of 1st Q issues and whether new 2nd Q issues have arisen; the process for monitoring, placing quality control measures for OARS at the local school level; how feedback is being collected from locals; and how MCPS is preparing schools for implementing OARS/Pinnacle in schools not yet using OARS next year.

Summer HW: The Committee supports discussion of the Summer HW packets with MCPS to discourage grading these assignments due to lack of teacher support while the assignments are being completed, lack of rubric dissemination for completion of the work. The Committee agreed that any work, to be graded as a result of reading or math assigned over the summer, should be assigned during the school year (fall) so that the proper supports and rubrics are in place.

Alignment of HS Finals to Curriculum as Administered During Grading Period: Lengthy discussions involved which subjects were affected and at what schools. Parents and Committee Members offered input as to the specifics of administration of the physics final at Blair and the County's insistence that the County exam be administered, despite the fact that the school's physics teachers taught curriculum out of order and some of the material covered on the final had not

been taught in classroom. It was unanimously agreed by the Committee that 1) the students and student grades should not suffer as a consequence of a teachers indiscretion as to administration of the curriculum; 2) mention needs to be made by MCPS of which schools are piloting what (subject) county-wide finals; 3) MCPS should identify supports to be placed when new department leaders are placed; 4) MCPS should specify what training is mandated before piloting new finals and 5) to poll the Delegates re: misalignment of curriculum content to exam content. Other courses affected in the past include Algebra and Algebra II With Analysis (f/k/a Trigonometry) and now Physics.

Computation of HS Semester/Final Grades: Discussions ensued regarding the unintended consequence of grade compression as a result of semester-ending grade computations used by MCPS (using a trend application). Examples offered demonstrated grade compression when using the trend method as opposed to computing the 1st quarter, 2nd quarter and final exam marks on a 0-100% grade scale. This topic was tabled for further discussion at the next meeting of the Committee.

Health Committee: Tracy Fox, Chair, tracyfox@comcast.net

National Heart Month: February is national heart month; there is no better time than now to start taking care of your heart and the hearts of your loved ones. Heart disease is the leading cause of death among Americans, both men and women. A healthy diet and active lifestyle can help reduce the risk of heart disease. Here are some heart healthy tips for you and your family:

- Limit total fat and saturated fat intake; choose heart healthy fats (canola, olive oils) over saturated and trans fats
- Limit sugar and sodium intake
- Increase fiber by choosing more whole grains, legumes, fruits and vegetable.
- Choose low fat and fat free dairy products
- Choose lean meats and poultry- bake, grill or roast rather than pan and deep fry
- Eat more fish rich in omega 3 fatty acids (salmon)
- Practice portion control
- Avoid smoking; limit alcohol consumption
- Maintain or improve your weight
- Be physically active - 30 minutes for adults and 60 minutes for children and adolescents most days of the week.

Article submitted by Susan Hippchen, RD, MCPS Food and Nutrition Services (Susan_Hippchen@mcpsmd.org)

Healthy Fundraising Report now available:

The Center for Science in the Public Interest recently unveiled a fundraising report: “Sweet Deals: School Fundraising Can Be Healthy and Profitable.” At the press conference, a Whitman HS parent spoke about how the school ditched a candy fundraiser for a walk-a-thon. Plenty of other healthy options are highlighted in the report that can be found at: <http://www.cspinet.org/nutritionpolicy/index.html>. Please consider healthy fundraising options in your school!

Girls on the Run in MoCo:

Girls on the Run of Montgomery County will kick-off its Spring Pilot season at 8 public elementary schools. Girls on the Run Programs will be held at the following locations and times:

- Burning Tree ES, Tu/Th, 8:00-9:00am
- Bradley Hills ES, Tu/Th, 3:30-4:30pm
- Potomac ES, M/W, 3:45-4:45pm
- Woodacres ES, Tu/Th, 3:30-4:30pm
- Wyngate ES, M/W, 3:30-4:30pm
- Travilah ES, Mon, 3:30-4:30pm and Fri 8:00-9:00am
- Germantown ES, M/Th, 3:45-4:45pm
- Strawberry Knoll ES, M/W, 3:30-4:30pm

Registration will begin Tuesday February 20th at 7am and will remain open until each location has 12 registered participants. Those registrants who attend one of the schools listed above will be given priority registration for the first 24 hours. For more information about Girls on the Run please visit www.girlsontherun.org.

The registration website for Montgomery County is <http://gotrmoco.com/registration.html>

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Eve Mills southboundmills@comcast.net, or Jennifer Gill, jennifer.gill7@verizon.net.

Update On MCPS Sex-Ed Curriculum:

The county's new sex-education lessons, approved by the school board last month, will be introduced in field tests next month (March) at Argyle Middle School in Silver Spring, Julius West Middle in Rockville, Westland Middle in Bethesda,

Bethesda-Chevy Chase High, Sherwood High in Sandy Spring and Watkins Mill High in Gaithersburg. Schools were chosen for the pilot program based on statements of interests from principals. Each school will have an informational meeting; and students will be taught the lessons only if parents have given written permission. Results of the field test will be available in the spring, to give the school system time to refine the lessons before county-wide implementation in the fall. Three groups have appealed to the State Board of Education to halt the program (Citizens for a Responsible Curriculum, Parents and Friends of Ex-Gays and Gays and the Family Leader Network).

High School Committee: Phil Kauffman, Chair, phkauff@aol.com

MCCPTA to Host HS Forum for PTSA Leaders

MCCPTA will be hosting a forum for high school PTSA leaders on March 3rd from 10 AM to 1 PM at Albert Einstein High School. This forum is for current PTSA presidents and other leaders to discuss prevailing issues in our high schools. PTSA presidents are encouraged to attend and bring a guest from your school - a future PTSA president; chair member or interested parent who wishes to be more involved. There will be a short presentation by Ms. Susan Marks, Associate Superintendent for Human Resources, who will speak on "Attracting, Recruiting, and Maintaining a Highly Qualified Workforce." Other topics to be discussed include graduation venues, high school assessments, extracurricular activities, school-parent partnerships, AP/IB benefits, and others. Please contact Phil Kauffman, MCCPTA High School Committee Chair, at phkauff@aol.com, or 301-570-4836, if you can attend. (See attached flyer)

Legislative Committee: Sharon Barbee, Chair, sbarbee@verizon.net

MCCPTA Legislative Update / PTA Night in Annapolis, 2/12/07

For most parents, the night began with the decision to brave icy and snowy conditions to get to Annapolis. Those that made the courageous journey were treated to legislators speaking with candor about the State of financial affairs in Annapolis.

The Legislative Briefing was kicked off by a welcome from the President of the State PTA, Mary Jo Neil. Corinne Patt, State VP for Legislation and members of the State PTA Legislative Committee gave briefings on bills and other subjects related to: the appointment of parents with children in public schools to the State Board of Education, the State PTA's participation with the newly formed Maryland Coalition for Excellent Schools (MCES) <http://www.mdces.org/index.html>, school construction and the impact of BRAC (base realignment and closure).

Then the floor was turned over to Mr. Mike Miller, President of the Senate.

Mr. Miller set the tone for his legislative brief by introducing himself "a business man" and conveyed his support for "all of the laudible goals that pta members are currently pursuing on behalf of youth and children" and "fulfilling one of his two Maryland constitutional mandates, funding education." Mr. Miller continued utilizing his analogy of business in comparing Maryland's current state of financial affairs claiming "when my business fails to make money, I forego a paycheck so my employees get paid.... We can't go on doing business this way." Transitioning from analogies, Mr. Miller discussed the challenges faced by leaders in the Senate and House trying to find consensus in making up a \$1.5 Billion Dollar structural deficit. Some delegations are opposed to slots while supporting an increase in the sales tax or vice-versa. This makes it hard for everyone to come to consensus on a revenue enhancement. Delegates Roger Manno and Heather Mizuer were present before and during the legislative briefing.

At the conclusion of the legislative briefing, parents met with Del. Karen Montgomery, Sen. Rob Garagiola, Del. Brian Feldman, Del. Craig Rice, Sen. Brian Frosh, Del. William Bronrott, Del. Susan Lee, Sen. Jennie Forehand, Del. James Gilchrist, Sen. Rich Madaleno, Del. Ana Sol Gutierrez, Del. Jane Lawton, Sen. Mike Lenett, Sen. Jamie Raskin, Del. Tom Hucker, , Sen. P.J. Hogan, Del. Charlie Barkley, and Del. Nancy King.

During the breakout session with the delegation Senator P.J. Hogan and Del. Charles Barkley were asked to respond to comments made by Mr. Miller. Senator Hogan discussed that even with the adoption of slots providing \$800 million, and an increase in the sales tax by "a penny" providing \$600 million, we still fall short. There isn't the stomach in our area to increase taxes. But the bill is coming due.

Senator Madaleno and Del. King provided an update on school construction funding in response to rumors floating around the Montgomery county community that the county would not be receiving any construction dollars. Of the \$242 million already appropriated, \$29 million has been committed to Montgomery County. There remains the balance of \$158 million of the \$400 million to be appropriated and it is expected that more money will be committed to the county to address the needs of our large public school student body.

Del. King commented that the Legislative Alert issued by MCCPTA had been effective and that many emails supporting construction standards for relocatable classrooms were received. Pam Moomau pointed out that the legislation failed to address "leased portables" and that Montgomery County leases and does not purchase relocatable classrooms. The bill needs to be amended.

Del. Montgomery discussed the issue of fee waivers and locating appropriate venues for high school graduations.

At the conclusion of the discussion issues were expressed to the Montgomery County delegation with regards to the funding of GCEI, School Construction, BRAC funding, Portable Construction Standards, and securing laws for the protection of youth and children.

A huge thanks to the brave souls, through rain, through sleet, through snow, they made the journey to make sure the message got through....

MCCPTA Board of Directors: Jane de Winter, Sharon St. Pierre, April Keyes, Sonya Leahman, Donna Pfeiffer, Jamie Jacobson, Victor Salazar, Diane Dickson, Pam Moomau, Ellen Paul

PTA Presidents Jill Ortman-Fouse, Highland View, ES, Laurie Halverson, Bells Mill, ES, Janette Gilman and her daughter, Beverly Farms, ES

Submitted by: Victor Salazar, VP for Legislation, MCCPTA

Listserv Committee: Patti Twigg, Chair, lptwigg@erols.com

As of Feb. 13, 2007, membership on the various lists is as follows:

Listserv	# subscribed
MCCPTA Board	98
MCCPTA Bulletin	476
MCCPTA Delegates	399
MCCPTA Presidents	275

Parent Involvement Committee: Elisia George, Chair, dalisha3313@hotmail.com

Our next meeting is scheduled for March 7th at 7:30 PM in Carver Room 127. I just received confirmation of our speaker for that evening. We will have Nan Iuculano from The Division of Family and Community Partnership with us to share some ways we can reach out to parent volunteers and form a working partnership.

Reflections Committee: Neal Myerson, Chair, nealmbshs70@:yahoo.com

County judging has been completed and 73 entries were sent to Maryland PTA for statewide judging. We have also identified 48 honorable mentions. The winners list has been posted on the Bulletin Listserv. I am happy to report that ZERO entries were ruled ineligible because of out of date bylaws or unpaid dues. Work has begun on the April 25 awards ceremony.

Safety Committee: Pam Moomau, Chair, Pammoomau@comcast.net

The safety committee met January 18, 2007 with MCPS Acting Director of School Safety and Security, Robert Hellmuth. Mr. Hellmuth discussed issues related to school building security, emergency communications between MCPS and parents and between MCPS and the police department, and student violence. He noted that in general, while MCPS provides broad guidelines and procedures, with respect to building security the principal of a school is like the captain of a ship. It is up to the principal to determine the appropriate balance between limiting building access and impeding the smooth operation of a building. He also noted that statistically, both nationally and within Montgomery County, troubled students pose a bigger threat to student and staff security than random intruders. We discussed the confusion caused at the beginning of the year by the simultaneous declaration of "Code Blues" at numerous schools in response to a reported threat at a bus stop. It was apparent that communications both between MCPD and MCPS, and between MCPS and the parent community were less than ideal, and lessons were learned.

After the discussion with Bob Hellmuth, Safety Committee members and liaisons and chairs from local PTAs talked about issues of concern in various local communities. High priority issues include, in addition to building security, bus stop and pedestrian safety, recess supervision, bullying prevention, gang recruiting, and building environmental safety.

Building security

A resolution calling for a security inventory of each school, and for allocation of resources for security improvements to buildings and portables, was passed by the Delegates' Assembly January 23, 2007. MCCPTA President Jane de Winter conveyed this resolution to MCPS, noting that the security inventories that are currently conducted do not adequately address concerns noted in this resolution, including limiting access to buildings and improving portable security. The resolution may be found on the MCCPTA website. Please feel free to refer to this resolution in any security advocacy efforts, including future budget testimony to the County Council.

MCPS safety and emergency communications policy

We received a response (from Brian Edwards, MCPS Director of Public Information, and Bob Hellmuth) to our letter to Dr. Weast requesting information "about any regulations or other guidelines Montgomery County Public Schools uses to guide both central office and local school staff on providing information to parents and the community about potential emergency situations and other security concerns affecting students." The response referred us to MCPS Regulation COB-RA, which provides guidelines for reporting of serious incidents both within the school system, and to the parent community. In composing the letter requesting information, the Safety Committee was aware of Regulation COB-RA, but felt that it is very general with respect to reporting to the parent community; specifically, COB-RA does not provide enough detail to enable parents to know what type of communications they can expect from their principals.

Local School Involvement Critical to Safety

The MCCPTA Safety Committee urges each local PT(S)A to form its own Safety Committee to monitor and advocate for safety within your own school.

Student Service Learning Hours Committee:

Karen Judson, Chair, bszjudson@comcast.net

One of the primary goals of MCCPTA's new SSL Committee is to help make information on SSL more accessible to students and parents. As a first step, PTSA's have been asked to designate SSL liaisons, parents who will partner with their school based SSL coordinator to increase the amount of SSL related information (on the requirement, opportunities to fulfill it, and documentation procedures) going out to their school communities via PTSA meetings and newsletters, school list servs and web sites, etc. For example, beginning with this year's eighth graders, the graduation requirement has gone from 60 SSL hours to 75 and the new SSL liaisons are now assisting in getting that word out. In addition, the SSL liaisons can serve as a resource to both the school coordinator and to students and parents, helping to create school-wide SSL activities, publicize specific SSL accomplishments, and highlight recognition opportunities. To date a pilot group of 7 middle schools and 6 high schools have designated SSL liaisons. These SSL liaisons met for the first time on January 18 to hear Pam Meador, SSL Coordinator for MCPS, give a general overview of the SSL program and to discuss their role as PTSA SSL liaisons. Over the next few weeks, the SSL Committee will continue to encourage more PTSAs to designate liaisons and will be exploring other ways to have input into and support the SSL program.

Special Education Committee:

Diane Dickson rydianedickson@yahoo.com (Co-Chair); Jennifer Zaranis jfr4806@juno.com (Co-Chair)

Each year the MCCPTA - Special Education Committee holds a recognition ceremony in the spring to honor educators, programs, parents, and students who have contributed to the acceptance and success of students with special needs in MCPS during the school year. At this ceremony, which will be held May 7, 2007, guests include, families, community members, MCCPTA leadership, MCPS administrators, as well as Members of the Board of Education and the County Council. To download a printable nomination form, go to http://www.mccpta.com/specneeds_dir/NominationsPacket_12-1-06.pdf or you can email your nomination by going to http://www.mccpta.com/specneeds_dir/specNeedsRecForm.html. Both of these links can be found on the MCCPTA website as well.

Technology Committee: Linda White, Chair, lindabwhite1@aol.com

Last month we met with Doreen Heath Assistant Chief Information Officer Technology Implementation and Support and Shelly Johnson Director of Career and Technology Education.

They shared the future vision for Technology Modernization in Montgomery County Schools.

We reviewed the Maryland Technology Literacy Standards, The Maryland Education Technology Plan for the New Millennium (Proposed), The current Technology programs and pathways, courses and programs. We also got a quick review of the Technology Modernization Program, Middle school Magnet Consortium and the Intelligent Classroom initiatives underway.

The last half of the meeting was spent on their vision for the future; more high school credit-bearing courses in middle school, Integration of Technology Literacy by Grade 8 into the MCPS curriculum, Robotics and gaming/simulation curriculum in middle school, establishment of an approved Interactive Media Program at the high school level and Development of a Biomedical PLTW Program.

We hope to collaborate more and set up a task force like the web site workgroup below so we can work as a team on a recommendation for a seamless K-12 technology curriculum that could be integrated into the school system county wide.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Feb 26th 7:30-9pm at Carver Educational Center in room 127.

We will be starting the first of a series of workgroups to make recommendations around improving school web sites.

MCCPTA School Web Site Workgroup -

School web sites have become an indispensable communication tool for families and school staff. Yet some school web sites are more effective than others.

The Technology Committee of the MCCPTA (Montgomery County Council of PTAs) invites you to join a School Web Site Workgroup to recommend how to improve school web communications.

Linda B. White, chair of the MCCPTA Technology Committee, will chair the workgroup with Chris Noonan Sturm, MCPS director of Web Services. The purpose of the workgroup is to define the current state of MCPS school web sites and make recommendations for their improvement.

While the committee is comprised of parents, it is vital that the workgroup include school webmasters and administrators, as well as students.

All meetings are held in the CESC Auditorium from 7:30 to 9 p.m. The dates are:

- * Monday, February 26
- * Monday, April 23
- * Tuesday, June 12

We hope you can join us for this interesting and important work.

How is your high school doing?

An interactive forum for HS PTSA leaders

Saturday, March 3
10:00 am - 1:00 pm

Albert Einstein High School Media Center
11135 Newport Mill Road
Kensington, MD

This forum is for current PTSA presidents and other leaders to discuss prevailing issues in high schools. There will be a short presentation by Ms. Susan Marks, Associate Superintendent for Human Resources, who will speak on "Attracting, Recruiting, and Maintaining a Highly Qualified Workforce." But most of this meeting will be devoted to listening to you. Some of the issues to be discussed include:

- What are your concerns on graduation venues?
- How does your PTSA work with your Booster club?
- Do you need guidelines for your listserv and website?
- How do students benefit from AP, IB, and other college preparatory courses?
- Is the PTSA Board included in Leadership activities, Instructional Council meetings, School Improvement meetings?
- How are your schools preparing all students to successfully complete High School Assessments and other exams?
- How do extracurricular activities benefit all students?
- How can parents form better partnerships with teachers and administrators to help their child and improve schools?

Why attend another meeting?

Our high schools are changing. New programs are being implemented. Students are facing more assessments with greater impact on graduation. We want to hear what challenges face your high school community. You have given time throughout this year and in past years, so who is in a better position to raise key issues?

What do you need to do?

1. Let me know if you can attend. RSVP by February 24 to phkauff@aol.com or call me at (301) 570-4836.
2. Plan to bring a guest from your school - a future PTSA president, the chair of the NAACP, Hispanic or Asian parent group or Special Education, or a parent who wants to become more involved. Send me the name of your guest.
3. Let me know any issues you would like to discuss.

Phil Kauffman

Lunch will be provided
Sponsored by MCCPTA High School Committee

Draft Minutes MCCPTA Delegates Assembly
January 23, 2007
Carver Educational Service Center

Program-7:05PM-8:03PM- Middle School Reform-Linda Ferrell, MCPS Middle School Instruction and Achievement Unit

Business Meeting called to order at 8:05 PM by Jane de Winter, MCCPTA President

Mission of the PTA-Sharon St.Pierre, MCCPS VP for Education

Approval of Minutes- On motion made and seconded, the draft minutes of the November 28, 2006 MCCPTA

Delegates Assembly were approved as written by voice vote.

Business Items

Treasurer's Report-Juan Johnson, MCCPTA Treasurer presented Balance Sheet as of January 23, 2007, Budget vs. Actuals (July 2006-January 2007), Profit & Loss (November 29, 2006-January 23, 2007). Outstanding dues from some locals are to be paid to MCCPTA for insurance.

Reflections-Jane de Winter noted the entries were being sent to state. If state dues are not paid, state will not accept entries. Report will be coming to Cluster Coordinators in February.

Safety Committee, Pam Moomau, Chair, presents proposed resolution from November 28, 2006 MCCPTA Delegates Assembly

Safety Resolution which requests MCPS to assess and provide for school and portable security

WHEREAS recent incidents involving violence and threats of violence from intruders in schools both nationally and in Montgomery County have revealed the vulnerability of many Montgomery County school buildings to potential intruders; and

WHEREAS the potential for threats from intruders varies from school to school depending on the configuration of each school, its site, and its location; and,

WHEREAS all students and staff in Montgomery County Public Schools should be assured that everything that is reasonably possible is being done to enhance school security; and

WHEREAS portable classrooms pose the following security hazards relating to

- * Movement of students and staff between portables and the main building,
 - * Isolation of students and staff , often without visual contact between the portable doorway and the main school building; and
 - * Lack of access to building facilities such as bathrooms and water in the event of lockdown situations;
- now therefore be it

RESOLVED that Montgomery County Public Schools conduct a security inventory of their school facilities, including soliciting input from staff and parents associated with each facility;

RESOLVED that MCPS provide resources as may be required to ensure that access to the school is adequately limited during the school day;

RESOLVED that MCPS amend the portable siting specifications to include consideration of security-related criteria; and

RESOLVED that MCPS investigate ways to improve access to bathroom facilities for students in portables, particularly during lockdown situations.

Discussion items: More monitoring needed in schools. MCPS conducts safety assessments- second piece portables, guidelines not always followed at schools- Code Blue vs. Code Red. Suggest better communication between central security and guidelines. Code Blue and outdoor recess, bathroom concerns

Delegate from Loiederman MS offers a motion for amendment on second Resolve – *Resolved that MCPS provide resources as may be required to ensure that access to the school and the school perimeter is adequately limited before, during and after school day; when students are present.*

The motion was seconded.

Discussion about proposed amendment: MCPS has little control after school day, when students are present patrolling perimeter issues, how to patrol extensive grounds, perimeter impossible to patrol. Problems with vandalism in Wheaton Cluster are discussed.

Proposed amendment failed on voice vote.

Discussion on proposed Safety Resolution continues: Concern raised about keys to portables and only one key per portable available, basic security provisions needed. Has security audit been done? Pam noted that schools according to head of security do safety check and talk to principal and that all areas are not investigated. One example noted line of sight and the risk of intruders. On corrective action, who ensures it is done? Schools do get checklist and narratives but the report is in broadest of concerns.

Jane de Winter states that letter is to accompany resolution and will mention current level of security audit found to be lacking. Motion was made and seconded for letter indicating current level of security audit is inadequate. Motion passes by voice vote.

Proposed resolution from Safety Committee passed by voice vote.

Middle School Policy (IEB)-Final action by Board of Education in February

Motion from Middle School Committee: Bullet point document is being used to do a follow up letter from MCCPTA about Middle School Policy (IEB) and Middle School Reform Report. Since we asked that MCPS wait for Middle School Reform Report, now we need to address additional concerns since report has been made public with another letter. Motion was made to move bullet points forward as basis of letter.

MCCPTA comments on Middle School Reform Report and Policy IEB

- Goal 2: Engage all students in effective and differentiated instructional practices using a rigorous, standards-based curriculum and challenging assessments. The first bullet states "Align mathematics and English curricula with The College Board standards and use formative and benchmark assessments." MCPS states in the report that it will review its curriculum in these areas and make adjustments to align with College Board standards. Does this mean that the math and English curriculum will be rewritten? What will this alignment involve in terms of work; substance and evaluation?
- Goal 2: The second bullet states "Identify explicit accelerated pathways within the middle school curriculum areas." MCCPTA would like clarification of what these accelerated pathways are and content areas they will include beyond reading and English. What support services will be provided to schools for students who wish to take more rigorous courses? We would like to see a broad release of Middle School Magnet Consortium data and analysis to understand its broader use in all middle schools.
- Goal 2: The professional development plan to build staff knowledge, skills, and content expertise is not projected to cost any additional money. Is that because money currently exists within the Office of Organizational Development for training? If so, how is that reconciled with the reduction in OOD funding in the FY2008 budget?
- Goal 4: More information on what it means to establish and require schools to use system-wide criteria for selecting a schedule model. Will schools still have the flexibility to select 7 period scheduling or block scheduling? What specifics are involved here and what implications does this have for schools with activity periods?
- Goal 6: There is no money allocated to the parent academy. Does this mean staff will volunteer their time? Or MCPS will rely on community partners to run this academy? Or funds will come out of money already in the budget? If the latter, what department will head this effort and how much money will be allocated for this?
- Goal 6: MCPS needs to enhance its objective of two-way communication between the school and parents by providing multiple opportunities for parents to be both involved in their child's education and to be included in local school's educational decision-making processes. The middle school report does not incorporate parent participation in such critical workgroups within the school such as School Improvement Teams and Instructional Leadership Teams. There is vast inconsistency among middle schools in the school's outreach of parents and parental involvement on these teams. Given the lack of meaningful two-way communication in the report, the policy should be strengthened to require schools to work with parents as partners.
- Where is the \$1.6million in realigned funds coming from?
- The full sub-committee reports and the complete list of recommendations and justifications from the sub-committee groups should be released. This should include the top ten recommendations from each sub-committee.
- A glossary of terms used in the MS Reform report & policy.
- Clarification is needed in regards to how the pilot programs in the five schools will be evaluated and what data will be collected. What will the opportunities be for public input once the evaluation of data has been completed for these pilots?

Additional items and concerns raised by Delegates to be added to bulleted items (white sheet) and to be included in letter to Board of Education.

What is the evidence that heterogeneous grouping aids student achievement?

Getting rid of GT classes...what is involved in process?

In schools where students are all honors what is differentiation?

Control....what is local and what is more MCPS central office (building leadership, G/T etc.)

College Board Standards...are we adding more testing? Differentiation within curriculum? Why use College Board to develop criteria/curriculum? How does it tie into MSAs? Meeting needs of all students?

Community input as to College Board Standards (implementation....assessments)

Motion passes by voice vote.

MCCPTA VP for Legislation, Victor Salazar, reminds everyone about PTA Night in Annapolis February 12, 2007, legislative platform and talking points. More information will be put on website including driving directions.

MCCPTA VP for Legislation, Victor Salazar proposes a motion for a resolution on GCEI (Geographic Coast of Education Index) for full funding.

**MCCPTA Motion on the Geographic Cost of Education Index
(GCEI)**

MCCPTA believes that full funding of Thornton includes the GCEI and urges Governor O'Malley and the State Delegation to fully fund the GCEI in FY 2008.

Background is given related to GCEI and Bridge to Excellence Act. MCCPTA is already on record and motion supports this as well as purpose of motion.

Motion passes by voice vote.

CIP Committee Report-Marney Jacobs, Co-chair discusses draft letter to Governor related to construction funding that will be posted to website including sample letters. Invite County Council members to your schools and bring up your projects. Keep conversations going to encourage full funding of projects. More information regarding testimony for CIP before County Council will be forthcoming.

Curriculum Committee, Sharon Schulman, Co-Chair presents a proposed resolution on Course in Personal Financial Management to be taken back to locals for a February vote.

The following resolution was previously passed by the MCCPTA Curriculum Committee and the MCCPTA Board of Directors and is now offered to MCCPTA Delegates.

RESOLUTION ON COURSE IN PERSONAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

WHEREAS, one of the most critical skills needed by adults in our society is personal financial management; including but not limited to knowledge of: how to manage bank accounts and credit/debit cards and understand the interest on them, how to create and follow a budget, how to understand a contract and its legal ramifications, how to calculate the aggregate costs of a loan, how to understand the nature of stocks and bonds, how to understand the charges on a bill, how to determine the true value of discounts, why gambling is not recommended as a career choice, and how to guard against identity theft and scams; and

WHEREAS, intelligent, educated people regularly and increasingly are taken in by scams, outspend their incomes, declare bankruptcy, wind up in court, or simply waste their money because they lack these skills; and

WHEREAS, credit cards are now routinely available to teenagers and college students who can legally sign contracts when they are 18 years old, but who have no experience or instruction in money management; and

WHEREAS, personal financial competence is as critical to success and happiness as physical health or a successful career, but the needed skills cannot be picked up from the media or social activities and a large proportion of parents either do not or cannot teach these skills to their children; and

WHEREAS, The Maryland Council on Economic Education, as stated in its mission statement, recommends that children leave high school equipped with the economic knowledge and decision-making skills they need to make informed, rational decisions as consumers, workers, citizens, savers, investors and participants in the global economy.

An understanding of basic economic principles and our free enterprise system is vital to an individual's ability to be a responsible consumer, a productive worker, a prudent saver, an investor, and an informed voter, and

WHEREAS, a one semester course in Health is required by the State of Maryland for high school graduation on the assumption that this is critical knowledge, even though it does not fit into the course progression for other academic disciplines; therefore be it

RESOLVED that Montgomery County schools should develop a one semester course in personal finance that should cover these and related subjects and that this course should be made available at every county high school.

Sharon presented background for resolution. Credit cards offered to students and more is needed to give information related to this critical area of life involving finances. Proposed as one semester course and can be paired with Health at high school level for 10th graders and for those with hanging semester requirements. This is not suggested as a requirement but it could be available at every school. MCPS to create the course as asked.

Additional questions raised by Delegates: (Sharon will address questions and post answers to listserv.)

What is offered in MCPS?

Other models in other school districts? ...requirements...???

Timeline for this?

Research for state standards and this topic?

What is actually being done in other high schools?

Financial Management -2 course item

Montgomery College and some course items already in schools?

If kids are GT/Honors how does this course impact weighted GPAs?

Is this the curriculum committee's highest priority this year?

Nominating Committee-Nomination forms are on website and nominations are being accepted. Cluster Coordinators and Area VP timeline items related to nominations should be discussed in clusters. More information is available on MCCPTA website.

President Report-Jane de Winter, MCCPTA President

MCPS has heard from Nancy Grasmick related to phase in of SSL hours increase to 75 hours in what we/MCPS asked for from MSDE as related to current 8th graders (2011). 60 hours currently are required.

Maryland PTA Bylaws template for locals is coming soon and trying to get template translated in Spanish. Also, MD PTA testing sending out template electronically. We are not sure how this is going. Regional training is being offered through Maryland PTA. The calendar of dates will be posted to MCCPTA Website. MCCPTA will offer training in June.

Middle school music including choral and beginning instrumental band is to be offered in course bulletin according to conversations with Don Kress, Office of School Performance. Parents/PTAs need to follow up to make sure these are included and offered.

High School Plus proposed in current budget and replacement for evening high school. Initial proposal was for no more night school. Right now courses offered during evening for students. MCPS wanting to connect student to school, getting teachers to do this and having after school at own school maybe better. Questions brought up about students who pursue activities and how this can be done. Need 15 students and what happens if there are not 15? Regional offering and how that would work? Doubling English course in school day? 400,000 dollars in proposed MCPS funding for 20 schools is not very much money so there are adequate funding concerns. We need more information as to current status.

New Business-Items brought up were summer school program cuts and decision being left up to individual schools plus vending machine sales, yearbook sales, etc., now going to central office and not to individual schools. Email Jane with list of any other concerns and Jane try to get more information...

Special Education Committee, Diane Dickson, CoChair, brings forward a motion for another letter to be written to Board of Education to reinforce position on Learning Centers and other cuts in special education budget. MCCPTA needs to reinforce position in April 2005 Resolution while going on record that MCCPTA is not in favor of new proposal for realignment as related to secondary learning centers as well as other items in past proposal.

Motion presented by Diane Dickson, Co-Chair MCCPTA Special Education Committee

A letter to be sent to the Board of Education to reinforce MCCPTA's position reflected in the resolution passed in April, 2005, calling for parent choice from a full continuum of special education services and that we do not favor the revised proposed realignment of special education services which calls for phasing out the learning centers over 6 years, eliminating one GT/LD program and reducing the summer program (ESY) from 5days/week to 4 days/week.

Concerns raised by Delegates that schools are still not informed. Time is of the essence. Support of motion and noting school positions on record we are ready to vote on this.

Motion passes by voice vote.

Meeting adjourned at 9:40 PM

*** Please make note that the next MCCPTA Delegates Assembly, February 27, 2007, is to be held at Walter Johnson High School.**

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

Pony Mailing

FEBRUARY 2007

MCCPTA Calendar 2006-2007

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

February	27	7:30	Delegate Assembly (Location: WALTER JOHNSON HS)
March	1	7:30	BOD's Meeting
	3	10am – 1pm	Interactive Forum for HS PTSA Leaders (Albert Einstein HS)
	27	7:00	Delegates Assembly (Program – Safety)
April	11	7:30	BOD's Meeting
	24	7:15	Delegates Assembly (Program – Drive for Supplies)
May	3	7:30	BOD's Meeting
	7	7:30	Special Ed Recognition Ceremony (Rockville HS)
	22	7:30	Delegates Assembly
	23	6:00	Presidents/ Principals Dinner (Bethesda North Marriott)