



December 19, 2006

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Greetings,

This has been a very busy month. We accomplished a great deal of business at the Delegate Assembly at the end of November and consequently we've been busy following up on those items. The delegates approved the FY 2008 Operating Budget Compact and FY 2008 Operating Budget Priorities. These are posted on our web site and will be attached to our operating budget testimony and provided to the participants at our Operating Budget Forum.

The delegates approved a letter regarding Policy FFA: *Naming Schools*, which was sent to the Board of Education. The BOE will take final action on this policy on February 13, 2007, and MCCPTA will likely provide public comments on FFA on the 13th. The delegates also passed a resolution regarding Policy IEB: *Middle School Education*, which was the basis of a MCCPTA letter sent to the BOE last week. This policy, as well as Middle School Initiatives, is on the BOE's agenda for the January 9, 2007 meeting. MCCPTA will be meeting with MCPS staff to discuss our concerns regarding IEB.

The final action item in November was a resolution passed regarding Policy JFA: *Students Rights and Responsibilities*. This resolution can be viewed on our web site. In general, the delegates instructed us to not take a position on the proposed changes, but to point out the many questions raised by the changes. Local PTAs were strongly urged to discuss these changes with their own PTAs and submit their own comments. These comments are due on January 19, 2007. The BOE will take final action on JFA on February 13th.

I would like to compliment the delegates for their fine work at the fall DAs. Each month we have had a very full agenda but

we have managed to complete all our business each meeting, even when the business meeting has not started until 8:00pm! Delegates have provided many thoughtful comments and amendments and have demonstrated a good grasp of Robert's Rules and the need to keep discussion focused on the specific item on the floor at that moment.

Getting back to the FY 2008 Operating Budget, there will be a special Delegate Assembly on January 8, 2007, at 7:30pm in the Carver Auditorium. MCPS budget personnel, the President and Vice President of the BOE, County Council members, and a representative from the County Executive's office have been invited to answer questions about the school budget and funding issues. Please publicize this within your school community as it is open to all. Forward questions to our operating budget committee chair (see his report for contact info.) Committee chairs should be looking at the portions of the MCPS budget that relate to their committee charge and submitting input that can be incorporated into testimony to the operating budget committee. There will be a testimony writing workshop on Saturday, January 6th, time and location TBA. This is primarily geared toward cluster coordinators, but any other interested members may attend.

There were some surprises in this budget regarding secondary learning centers and hours based staffing. Secondary learning centers are being phased out with students returning to their home schools. MCPS is also proposing expanding the hours based staffing model to 10 additional middle schools. On the face of it, the expansion of the hours based staffing model addresses one of our most important priorities. There is a great deal of concern that these changes can be properly implemented with existing funding and MCCPTA is continuing to gather information on both

of these. There are additional concerns that completely closing learning centers seems to be contrary to a resolution we passed in spring 2005 that MCPS provide a continuum of services to address the wide range of special needs within our student community.

The January 9th, BOE meeting is jam packed; the BOE will also take up the final report of the Citizens Advisory Committee and revisions to the health curriculum. The MCCPTA Board will discuss this at its January 4th meeting. Our Health Committee will bring a recommendation to our BOD.

All PTAs should have sent in their initial membership payments to MD PTA and MCCPTA. Cluster coordinators have been provided with lists of who has and has not paid and should be contacting their locals with reminders. You can verify MCCPTA payment information with our office manager. PTAs can continue to enroll members all year. If you are having a second back to school night or other school wide events, consider having a membership table to enroll new members. Ask your school if they will provide a membership form to parents as they enroll new students; perhaps your PTA would also like to provide information on its activities to these new families. MCCPTA has also sent an invoice to each local for your insurance payment. If you have not received an invoice, please contact our office. All PTAs should have received their blue book directories. Please give one copy to your principal and distribute the remainder to officers and/or delegates. If there are any additions or

corrections to the blue book, please notify our office manager.

PTAs should begin to think about local nominating committees when we come back from break. Most PTAs should have their nominating committee established by their February PTA meeting (check your bylaws for timeline). The MCCPTA nominating committee needs your help to identify county-wide candidates for next year. Use the attached form or download from our web site.

Our Special Events Committee has been working on a packet to send out to potential corporate sponsors for our 2007 Presidents/Principals Dinner. If you have family, friends, or professional connections to businesses or organizations that might be inclined to help underwrite our dinner, please let us know and we will send them the packet. Our funding levels range from \$500-\$5,000; we are trying to raise between \$15-20,000 to be able to reduce the ticket price to below \$50.

Please refer to our MCCPTA web site to review the November Delegate Assembly minutes.

I wish you a relaxing and enjoyable break so you can return renewed and refreshed. A very Happy New Year to you and your families!

Jane

PTA NIGHT IN ANNAPOLIS
Monday, February 12, 2007
Legislative Services Building – Joint Hearing Room
Annapolis
6:00 to 8:00pm

Meet with the Legislators and be the voice of the PTA!
Please call your legislators and let them know you will be in attendance.
Remind them that education is the #1 priority of Maryland PTA.

More information on PTA Night in Annapolis will be forthcoming from MCCPTA but you may also visit the MD PTA website at www.mdpta.org

MCCPTA Nominations Announcement: January, 2007

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, the April delegate assembly. We are looking for those who will be the leaders of the organization for the 2007-2008 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 countywide 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 and return it to the MCCPTA office by February 9, 2007. (Attention: MCCPTA--Nominating Committee, 20906 Gaither Road, Suite 204, Rockville, MD, 20850 or you can send it by email to mdrother@comcast.net).

Please don't overlook the positions of Area Vice Presidents and Cluster Coordinators. An Area Vice President represents specific groups of clusters as designated by the Executive Board and approved by MCCPTA. They help extend PTA work in all local PTA/PTSAs in the specific clusters which they represent; assist in the training of PTA/PTSAs in their clusters; assist in the organization of new PTA/PTSAs in their clusters; coordinate the work of cluster coordinators; and perform such other duties as he/she may be assigned by the Executive Board. Clusters consists of a high school plus its feeder schools, and has up to three cluster coordinators who serve for a term of one (1) year, and not more than four (4) consecutive terms, until the election of their successors. Cluster coordinators conduct meetings of the cluster; serve as a link between the area vice presidents and local units; represent the cluster at meetings of the Board of Directors, at meetings with the area vice president responsible for the cluster, and at other meetings; coordinate the testimony of the cluster before the Board of Education and the County Council; assist the area vice presidents in the administration of PTA business, and perform such other duties as may be required.

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.

The MCCPTA Bylaws require the nominating committee to mail the nominations to the MCCPTA membership at least two weeks before the March delegate assembly, March 27th. Nominations for all positions may also be made from the floor at the MCCPTA Delegates meeting on April 24, 2006.

The members of the Nominating Committee are **Mark Rother**, Chair, *Blair, Einstein, Kennedy and Northwood*; **Karen Smith**, *Bethesda-Chevy Chase, Walter Johnson, Wheaton, and Whitman*, **Steve Augustino**, *Clarksburg, Damascus, Magruder, Gaithersburg, and Watkins Mill*; **Paul Morrison**, *Northwest, Poolesville, Quince Orchard, and Seneca Valley*; **Deborah Stevens-Panzer**, *Blake, Paint Branch, Sherwood and Springbrook*; **Livleen Gill**, *Richard Montgomery, Rockville, Churchill, and Wooten*; **Tom Kenton**, *Member-at-Large*.

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

Submitted by: Name: _____

Address: _____

Email _____ Preferred Contact time: AM _____ PM _____

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

**I wish to be considered or propose for nomination _____
_____ (name and contact information) for 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. We encourage you to attach a separate sheet for this.

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. We encourage you attach a separate sheet for this.

You may return the completed form to MCCPTA--Nominating Committee, 2096 Gaither Road, Suite 204, Rockville, MD 20850, or email it to mdrother@comcast.net. You may also contact Mark Rother, the Chair of this committee at 301-933-9111. Only the committee will use your information.

MCCPTA Committee Updates – December 2006

(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!

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

The Citizens Advisory Committee on Family Life and Human Development (the committee) has completed its review of the revised lessons on health education being prepared for students in MCPS. In October, the committee provided Dr. Weast with a report in support of the condom use demonstration video and lesson for grade 10, with recommended changes.

In November, the committee completed its review of the revised lessons on “Respect for Differences in Human Sexuality” for grade 8 and Grade 10. In late November, the committee provided Dr. Weast with a report in support of the lessons with recommended changes. The committee spent many hours in public meetings closely reviewing, analyzing and discussing the lessons.

While most committee members supported the lessons and felt they provided essential information to help students in 8th and 10th grades in these important areas, a “Minority Report” has been submitted to the Superintendents office for his review. The Minority Report was submitted on behalf of Citizens for Responsible Curriculum and Parents and Friends of Ex-gays and Gays, and a committee member – Ms. Faustino. This report contends that the curriculum contains inaccurate information, is using a resource that they contend is one-sided, and the lessons fail to recognize the ex-gay community. The report will be analyzed and considered by the superintendent and staff in the development of the final recommendations to the Board on the revised curriculum.

MCCPTA was represented on the committee by Tracy Fox, Chair of the MCCPTA Health Committee.

The BOE will be voting on the revised lessons and video at the Jan. 9th meeting.

Operating Budget Committee: Steve Crowley, Chair, stevecrowley@att.net

The Superintendent of Schools introduced his proposed FY 2008 Operating Budget on December 15, 2006. The proposed budget contains an increase of \$132 Million over the current FY 2007 budget, a 7.1% increase. The proposed budget is now just shy of \$2 Billion. The increase includes negotiated salary increases to all three unions, salary increments to non-union staff, and increases in the cost of employee benefits. Only \$9.6 Million of new initiatives have been requested.

It is anticipated by MCPS that \$56 Million of the increase will be funded by Montgomery County with \$74 Million from state, federal and other sources.

MCCPTA will host a forum where the views of members of the Board of Education and the County Council will be solicited over a range of topics relevant to the Operating Budget. It will be held on Monday, January 8th from 7:30-9:00 PM at the Carver auditorium. All PTA members are invited. Questions for the panelists will be collected in advance by the Operating Budget Committee. Please forward your questions to Steve Crowley at SteveCrowley@ATT.net. If time permits, additional questions may be submitted from the floor.

Operating Budget testimony is coming up soon. While the cluster schedule has not yet been released, testimony will take place on Wednesday January 10th and Thursday January 11th. An Operating Budget Testimony workshop is being planned for Saturday, January 6th. The location of the workshop has yet to be determined. Please watch for additional information on the MCCPTA list serves.

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

We got feedback on what is working, what has worked and what still needs some time. Thurgood Marshall Elementary School has tried providing transportation to parents which worked in the beginning but wasn't as successful the past few times. They are committed to continuing it along with providing dinner to parents at future events.

At Twinbrook Elementary, having a Hispanic parent group has been very successful. Having staff members from the different grades share on what is going on in the various grades has made a difference. Thinking outside the box they will begin hosting Saturday events and working along with the Student Government on various projects. For the next quarter we will work on getting to know the cultures, faiths and organizations that we are working with so that we are better able to include them while being respectful and sensitive to their beliefs. We will seek to form partnership with various civic groups, homeowners associations etc to build relationships that will benefit our school and students as well as a media to get our message out.

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

As local units complete their Reflections programs here are some reminders:

1. Local entries are due to the MCCPTA office by January 2, 2007.
2. Locals can submit up to 4 entries in each age group and art category.
3. Make sure that your unit is in good standing.
4. Make sure that the application form is complete including required signatures. Although not required for all categories, encourage your students to included an artists' statement. It is helpful to the judges.

We have just learned that Northwest High School will host the Montgomery County Reflections Awards Ceremony on Wednesday, April 25th. More information will follow about this event, but you can get it on your calendars now.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

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Safety Committee: Pam Mommau, Chair, Pammomau@comcast.net

Building security

The Safety Committee introduced the following resolution at the November Delegates' Assembly, to be voted on in the January 23 Delegates' Assembly:

“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.”

MCPS safety and emergency communications policy

In response to concerns expressed by parents about inadequate communications from MCPS during several recent incidents with MCPS, the Safety Committee sent a letter to Dr. Weast, cc'ing members of the Board of Education, 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.” We hope that the response to this letter will enable us to help parents stay informed about events in their schools, as well as to identify any areas where parents might wish to see procedural changes. We'll keep you informed.

Safety in the operating budget

As you prepare your testimony for the MCPS operating budget, please be sure to remember categories in the operating budget that might be affecting safety and security at your schools. Operating budget issues that have been mentioned repeatedly to the safety committee include bullying prevention, recess aides, and building and portable maintenance and security. Individual school anecdotes are always effective testimony tools. The MCCPTA Operating Budget Compact and operating budget resolution include safety and security as priorities for the operating budget.

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. **Watch for notice of the next MCCPTA Safety Committee meeting on January 18.**

Student Service Learning (SSL) Committee:
Karen Judson, Chair: bszjudson@comcast.net

As MCPS and MCCPTA both see a need to significantly improve communication with students and parents about the SSL requirement and opportunities to fulfill it, each middle and high school PTSA is being encouraged to designate SSL liaisons. The PTSA SSL liaisons will help the staff person responsible for SSL in each school answer questions and disseminate information related to SSL. In addition, all the SSL liaisons will be in contact with the new MCCPTA SSL Committee and with each other so that up to date information on the program can be shared as well as ideas and suggestions. A meeting in January for all SSL liaisons is being planned. At that meeting, Pam Meador, who coordinates the SSL program for MCPS, will talk about the SSL program in general, and more specifically about how the PTSA liaisons can work with the SSL staff person in each school most effectively.

The following schools have designated SSL liaisons to date:

- Middle Schools:***
Sligo Middle School
Cabin John Middle School
Pyle Middle School

- High Schools:***
Northwest High School
Sherwood High School
Whitman High School
Magruder High School
Churchill High School

We hope to hear from more schools over the next few weeks and will publicize the January meeting date as soon as it is finalized.

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

The Technology Committee is focused on two objectives:

1. Improving the County Wide Websites for all School within MCPS.
2. Making recommendations for change to the k-12 Technology curriculum.

Healthy Holiday Tips

Article submitted by Susan Hippchen, RD, MCPS Food and Nutrition Services (Susan_Hippchen@mcpsmd.org) and Tracy Fox, MPH, RD, Health Committee Chair, MCCPTA (tracyfox@comcast.net)

The holiday season is well upon us once again! The hustle and bustle of the season can sometimes cause us to forget the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Holidays only add to our already busy, hectic and stressful schedules. Remember moderation and balance will help you maintain a healthy lifestyle and still enjoy parties, dinners, and family gatherings. Here are just a few tips to keep you on the healthy track during the holidays:

- Eat a low fat, high fiber snack before going to a holiday celebration – a piece of fruit, raw vegetables or even a small sandwich on whole wheat bread with a cup of low fat or fat free milk.
- Do not skip meals because – this can cause you to be too hungry and overeat.
- Eat low-fat meals and snack during the day so you can enjoy a holiday treat.
- Drink plenty of water and choose sugar-free or reduced calorie beverages; alternate water or sparkling water with higher calorie beverages.
- Watch your portion sizes!
- Avoid standing by the buffet line or table of appetizers – it's too tempting – move around and mingle with family and friends.
- Nibble on fruit and veggies rather than cheese cubes, chips, creamy dips and desserts.
- Offer to bring a low-fat appetizer, dish or dessert.

And just as important as watching calories, keep moving and make sure to get regular – and rigorous exercise; this will help burn extra calories and reduce stress.

Always keep in mind that the holiday season is not all about food, but most importantly it is about enjoying memorable times with family and friend. Have a happy and healthy holiday season!!!

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

Pony Mailing

DECEMBER 2006

MCCPTA Calendar 2006-2007

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

December	4	7:30	Curriculum Committee Meeting
	7	7:30	BOD's meeting
January	2		Reflection Entries due to MCCPTA office
	4	7:30	BOD's meeting
	8	7:30	Special Delegate Assembly, Operating Budget Forum
	23	7:30	Delegate Assembly
	31	7:30	Special Ed Committee Meeting
February	1	7:30	BOD's meeting
	12		PTA Night in Annapolis
	27	7:30	Delegate Assembly