



The Montgomery County Council of Parent-Teacher Associations

Good Evening, President Brandman, Dr. Weast and members of the board. I am Kay Romero, President of the Montgomery County Council of PTAs.

In 2007, MCPS initiated a phase out of the secondary Learning Centers. MCPS just released an evaluation of the first year of this phase out. MCCPTA would urge the board to rethink the phase out of the learning centers based on these initial findings after one year. These students cannot afford a continued loss to their educational opportunities. They must be supported on their educational road of success. Their numbers may be smaller, but that does not mean their hopes, goals and dreams are smaller.

Differentiated instruction is not happening on a consistent basis according to the evaluation report. Co-teaching is hampered by the lack of planning time for instruction. Students with complex academic needs require staff that is trained and ready to meet those needs. Staff must be confident that they can deliver instruction tailored to meet various ability needs in their classrooms. Professional development is crucial and it has to be ongoing. Attendance at mandatory training has to mean what it says.

The report stated, *“It is important to hear from a larger number of parents of both transitioned and remaining LC students to be able to best meet their needs and determine areas of improvement to promote students’ success.”* MCPS should now re-evaluate the decision to phase out the Learning Centers. Parents and families of these students were promised that supports and services would be in place to fully support their children. This has not been the case.

Based on the findings in this most recent report, MCCPTA asks that MCPS broaden the continuum of services in the least restrictive environment available to students in special education. MCPS must explore and provide a full continuum of services and placement choices while including a full range of options. MCPS should consider implementing a choice based model that requires consideration of multiple alternatives. Special education students should be able to exercise more control over their educational options as supported in the April 2005, MCCPTA resolution.

Our most complex students should have an educational path that is tailored to their needs and not tailored to fit a square peg into a round hole.

Kay Romero
President
Montgomery County Council of PTAs



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MCCPTA Special Education Resolution
Approved April 26, 2005 by the MCCPTA Delegates

Whereas MCPS has proposed a Least Restrictive Environment Placement Initiative to better address the needs of the special education population; and

Whereas this initiative is an important and necessary step but is not appropriate for responding to the needs of all children within special education; be it therefore

RESOLVED that MCCPTA urges MCPS to broaden the scope of its strategic plan for special education to provide more and various alternatives in the Least Restrictive Environment placement for those students who will not be otherwise able to derive educational benefit from an LRE placement, and be it further

RESOLVED that MCPS shall specifically broaden the continuum of services in the least restrictive environment available to students in special education by exploring and providing a full continuum of services and placement choices with a full range of options within and be it further

RESOLVED that MCCPTA urges MCPS to consider implementation of a choice based model that requires consideration of multiple alternatives so that special education students may exercise more control over their educational options.