

October 8, 2007

Dr. Jerry Weast, Superintendent
Montgomery County Public Schools
850 Hungerford Drive
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Dr. Weast:

MCCPTA appreciated the opportunity to participate and give input to the 2008-2009 school calendar. Our three representatives felt that they were being listened to and their advocacy on behalf of our 52,000 members duly noted.

However, we have two concerns we feel are important to share. At the meeting our three representatives attended, it was discussed that there would be two other stakeholder meetings for different groups of stakeholders before the draft calendar would be presented to the BOE. We feel that separating stakeholder groups into three different meetings is counter productive to the collaborative process necessary to the formulation of the calendar and leaves large gaps in understanding the myriad concerns that go into the creation of the calendar. Therefore, in the future we would like to see one meeting, with all stakeholders present at the same time. We feel that everyone can benefit from hearing other points-of-view. We note that calendar meetings held several years ago did include all stakeholders. Last year was the first year that separate meetings were held for each set of stakeholders.

Our second concern reflects one expressed to us by our members, namely that we would like to see calendars be developed in a multi year format. MCCPTA members feel that the current release schedule for the calendar does not give families adequate lead time for planning vacations and other activities. We would ideally like to see a 2-3 year calendar developed. We understand that there are parts of the calendar that are not under your control, such as the dates of state mandated tests, but other aspects of the calendar are not dependent on those dates and thus could still be developed and released.

We appreciate your taking the time to hear and consider our concerns, and look forward to continuing to work on these issues with you in the future.

Sincerely,

Jane de Winter
President