

**Minutes MCCPTA Delegates Assembly
November 24, 2009
Carver Educational Service Center**

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 pm by President Kay Romero.

Mission Statement:

Jaimie Jacobson, MCCPTA Treasurer, read the PTA Mission Statement.

Approval of Agenda and October 27, 2009 Minutes:

The agenda was approved as submitted by a voice vote.

The minutes from October 2009 were reviewed and approved as submitted by a voice vote.

Treasurer's Report:

MCCPTA Treasurer, Jaimie Jacobson, reviewed the treasurer's report. Some items highlighted were our goal of 51,000 members, and he noted that we are more than half way there. Currently all checks received have been deposited. He requested that PTAs hold off on sending in checks for small amounts until they have larger amounts to pay.

Kay noted that there was one correction to the budget, in the line item for the Blue Book. We had \$4,100 budgeted, but only spent \$2,500 by making some changes in the number printed and other adjustments. This was done as a cost saving measure.

Jaimie also noted that we are making fewer copies of handouts this year in order to save money, because we had noted a lot of waste and extra copies left over. Kay stated that the Office Committee is trying to be good stewards of MCCPTA's funds.

A Delegate asked where the extra money would be spent? The response was, nowhere yet, since we might need it for the Principals and Presidents dinner due to fewer donations this year. A Delegate then asked for an explanation of the Principals and Presidents dinner, and it was explained that this is our end of the year dinner, during which we install officers, give awards, and connect with other PTAs, elected officials, and MCPS personnel. Last year, we had over 400 in attendance, including Chuck Saylor, National PTA President who gave the keynote speech, and Leon Harris, of WJLA TV, who was our master of ceremonies.

Jaimie then continued his review of the treasurer's report.

He pointed out that our biggest asset is our office computer equipment, and that we do have one employee, so we have payroll expenses. He also noted that we had expenses incurred for our fall training and for the MD PTA convention, and will also have expenses for the upcoming spring training.

Kay Romero stated that the treasurer's report would be filed.

Reports:

Officer Reports:

Kay reported that the Blue Books had arrived from the printer. She stated that if a local has paid its MCCPTA dues, then their copies of the Blue Book would be sent to the PTA President via pony mail. These books are invaluable for containing not only PTA and MCCPTA information, but also contact information for all PTAs in Montgomery County plus elected officials, and MCPS staff. She noted that they are not to be used for solicitation purposes, and to please report any such abuse to us.

Kay gave a report on the MD PTA State Convention held November 14-15, 2009 in Frederick, MD. We have three officers on the Maryland PTA Board – Kay Romero is President Elect, Liz Wheeler is VP for Leadership Development, and Merry Eisner is VP for Legislation. The new Secretary is Donna Shaffer from Allegany County. Also at the convention, 18 amendments to the MD PTA bylaws were considered; 15 passed, 3 did not, and she would be posting those amendments as soon as she received them. Of special note was the fact that our Council was one of four to be awarded a Certificate of Excellence, the top level of the award. Finally, we also had 4 PTAs from Montgomery County that received Maryland PTA Parent/Family Involvement Grant Awards: DuFief ES, Fields Road ES, Georgian Forest ES, and Brown Station ES.

Kay noted that there are currently three Board of Education Policies up for public comment. One is Policy JHF, Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation, and MCCPTA had two representatives, Laurie Halverson, current Health/Safety Committee Chair, and Emily Sudbrink on the Bullying Policy workgroup that worked on the policy update. Kay has been told that there have been very few public comments thus far, and asked the Delegates to please remind their PTAs that comments are due by Jan 18, 2010. The other two policies are Policy GIJ, Operating Fund Investments and Policy EID, Tax Deferred Annuity Program, which also have the same deadline for comments, and all three are accessible on the MCPS website at this URL:

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/policy/>.

Carol Salsbury, VP for Programs, reported that the January program preceding the Delegates Assembly on January 26, 2010 would be on Men in PTA. Jaimie Jacobson, MCCPTA Treasurer, will be leading the presentation that night.

Rebecca Smondrowski, VP for Legislation reported on the impromptu Legislative Committee meeting held before tonight's DA. Anne Kaiser, Maryland Delegate, District

14, spoke to the committee about legislation. Rebecca said the committee wants to present such meetings with legislators once a month, and encouraged people to contact her if they were interested in attending.

Committee Reports:

CIP Committee:

Steve Augustino, CIP Committee Chair, briefly reviewed the testimony given on Nov. 11 and 12 before the BOE regarding the Superintendent's Recommend CIP Budget for FY11. He said there was a packed room both nights, which is great, and that a lot of questions were asked by BOE members of MCPS staff. The responses to those questions are available on the CIP Committee webpage, and despite our disappointment that they were not more comprehensive, they are a starting point.

He stated that BOE approved the construction budget as proposed, but did not approve the proposed process for closing Monocacy ES. Instead, the BOE will convene a roundtable to discuss options to address under-enrollment at Monocacy. The BOE intends to address Monocacy in next year's CIP.

The focus now shifts to advocating for the money with the County Executive, County Council, and Maryland Legislature. The County Council will take final action on the proposed budget in the spring. He asked Delegates to email him if they are interested in joining his committee.

Kay asked Steve to explain more as to why we are going to Annapolis to advocate. He replied that it is important for us to advocate to our legislators the importance of us getting the money we are entitled to. In recent years, the county has requested over \$100 million in annual aid, but has received far less than that amount. The county projects getting \$40 million in state aid in FY 11, but last year we received far less than that and it appears unlikely we will receive this amount in the current environment. It will be important for us to work to receive as much as is possible.

Kay stated that at the most recent County council Education Committee meeting, Valerie Ervin discussed this very issue, and it seems they will be advocating harder for the money we are owed.

Steve added that the money for our projects comes from several sources, but the State funds are critical to our projects.

Operating Budget Committee:

Pam Moomau, Operating Budget Committee Chair, reminded the Delegates of the Operating Budget Priorities resolution approved last month. She noted that along with Kay, she has met with MCPS staff regarding the Operating Budget, in an advisory role only. The superintendent will release his recommended Operating Budget December 9,

but unlike in past years, there will be no special presentation, because this year is expected to be a maintenance of effort budget, with not much fanfare.

Pam then discussed the Maintenance of Effort controversy currently in the news. MCPS must get all its funding from the County Council and the State of Maryland, since it has no independent funding source. The state aid formula is based on enrollment and the wealth of the county, among other things, and also the Maintenance of Effort by the local government. The state wants to make sure that local governments do not substitute state money for local money, so they require a Maintenance of Effort level for local governments. Last year, the state aid was lower than expected, the economy was bad, and both MCPS and Montgomery County Government tightened their budgets. It was then discovered that we did not receive the amount of State aid we were entitled to, so when that extra money arrived, it provided a cushion.

The County applied for a waiver on the Maintenance of Effort rule, but it was denied. The County Council then decided to instead include some MCPS debt service funding in the MCPS operating budget in order to bring the total amount of the operating budget up to required MOE levels. MCPS objected to this strategy because (a) it established a precedent that debt service on MCPS capital projects would become part of the MCPS operating budget, and (b) it effectively reduced the level of true operating expenses funded by the County Council. The State Attorney General ruled that this did not meet the Maintenance of Effort requirement.

A letter has been sent to the State from the BOE stating that we did not meet Maintenance of Effort. Failure to meet MOE will expose Montgomery County to a loss of state school funding equal to the increment of FY 2010 funding over FY 2009 funding. The amount of state funding at risk is uncertain because the baseline amount that the state will use to determine the increment is not well defined. We stand to lose anywhere from 14 to 64 million dollars. It is believed that there will be lawsuits involved before this is resolved.

However, MCPS would not like to see the County Executive prevail in establishing that debt service newly included in the operating budget meets the state MOE requirement, because this could set a bad precedent for future years, by placing CIP money into the Operating Budget, which then sets a lower bar for items normally funded by the Operating budget.

Paul Morrison, Quince Orchard Cluster Coordinator, added that at the recent meeting between the BOE and State Legislators, he heard the Legislators say that the MOE rule is a mess, and they may attempt new legislation to "straighten it out." Pam replied that such an effort may or may not be a good thing, as the MOE standard applied by the state is not generally a high standard for school funding. If the MOE is revised to be less stringent for counties, that could adversely affect school funding.

Pam further stated that adding to uncertainties over MOE funding, there is an uncertain fiscal situation, because the income tax receipts are down from last year. This will result

in a lot of pressure on the budget. Thus, there is a need to express our support for school funding to the County Executive and the County Council, who must approve the budget.

When the Superintendent releases his budget recommendation, if it is a Maintenance of Effort budget, then it is bare bones, because the Maintenance of Effort means funding at the current service level, but in this climate, getting that is considered lucky. This is why it is so important for us to advocate that school funding is very important.

She reminded the Delegates of the upcoming operating Budget forum on Jan. 4. It will be a brief presentation followed by a Q&A with elected officials and MCPS staff on the FY11 budget. She emphasized the importance of bringing lots of friends to fill the room – because that shows the officials that we feel strongly about school funding.

When asked about the goal of the forum, Pam responded that it is partly information gathering, and partly an affirmation of support for school funding. Parents are encouraged to submit questions. Her committee will also provide questions to be asked.

A Delegate asked if there would be any discussion of the teacher contracts? Kay stated that we do not get involved in that at all as directed by National PTA.

Important dates to remember:

January 4, 2010 – MCCPTA Operating Budget forum, 7:30 pm, CESC
January 9, 2010 – MCCPTA Operating Budget Testimony writing workshop
January 13 and 20, 2010 – testimony before BOE on Operating Budget
January 27 and 28, 2010 – BOE Worksession on Operating Budget

Pam stated that she would get something written and put up on the MCCPTA website to explain all of this. It was suggested that Delegates read the Maintenance of Effort opinion received from the State Attorney General, which is up on the MCCPTA website at this URL: http://www.mccpta.com/testimonies_dir/MOE_OPINION.pdf. A Delegate asked if there would be sample letters to be sent to our elected officials, and Pam replied that at this time there are none.

Nominating Committee:

Janette Gilman, Nominating Committee Chair, reported on their activities. A recent request for nominees went out via the Bulletin listserv. They are looking for nominees for next year for officer, Area Vice President and Cluster Coordinator positions. She is requesting that nomination forms be sent to her by February 2010. She noted that each AVP is required to set up a local nominating committee for Cluster Coordinator and AVP positions, and those names must be submitted by March 15, 2010. They will be contacted

to be sure this is done. She then introduced the members of the committee that were present. Please see last month's minutes for a list of Nominating Committee members.

Curriculum Committee:

Ted Willard, Curriculum Committee Co-Chair, reported on the success of the Nov. 4 forum the committee held on Mathematics. The MCPS Math Workgroup is scheduled to release findings in the spring, and the committee is watching for that. It is generally agreed, though, that the math curriculum is not where we want it to be.

The forum on the 7 Keys will be rescheduled due to a conflict on the Dec. 14 date previously announced. Some of the questions parents have about the 7 Keys are: how were these guidelines decided, who is the intended audience, what is MCPS trying to get across?

He also stated that there is interest in the middle school curriculum as it is being rolled out for science, social studies and English, and the committee would like to do a presentation in the spring.

A Delegate asked about the recent math survey results? Ted responded that the replies had been fed into MCPS, and that his reading of the responses sent in was very useful. Rebecca Smondrowski, Curriculum committee Co-Chair, who is also sitting on the Math Workgroup, said they took the input and were looking at it, but she was not sure if a summary of the responses would be compiled. Ted added that there is a consensus on concerns about acceleration, learning of math facts and access to higher levels of math instruction.

Health/Safety Committee:

The upcoming meeting of the Health/Safety Committee will have a presentation on EFOs. Committee Chair Laurie Halverson was not in attendance, but Pam Moomau, who is a former Safety Committee Chair, explained to the Delegates what an EFO is. EFO stands for Educational Facilities Officer. They are police officers assigned to a school. Every high school in the county has one, and some middle schools. It used to be one officer per cluster, but that has now changed. The officers are there to assist the principals. MCCPTA has advocated for EFOs in the past.

New Business:

A motion was brought forward from the Sherwood cluster schools. Background was given by Patti Twigg, NEC AVP. Virginia Twombly, Sherwood Cluster coordinator reinforced that all Sherwood cluster schools support this resolution.

The schools of the Sherwood Cluster request the elimination of the *Sherwood Area Vice President* position and their administrative consolidation into a unified four cluster Area with the Blake, Paint Branch and Springbrook Clusters.

This change includes the position currently named *Northeast Consortium Area Vice President* to be renamed **Northeast Consortium (Blake/Paint Branch/Springbrook) and Sherwood Clusters Area Vice President.**

It will be voted on at the January DA.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Patti Twigg, MCCPTA secretary for DA.