

**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)

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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 8<sup>th</sup> 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.**