



November 17, 2006

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Greetings,

I sit here with a heavy heart three days after the death of a 7th grade student in my community whose mother has served as PTA president at Garrett Park Elementary School. While his death was not school-related it is a sobering reminder that we all must renew our efforts to make pedestrian safety a higher priority through our advocacy work. This is not the only tragedy that has befallen a student this year and we must take these events as a reminder of our mission which is to support and speak on behalf of children.

This week MCCPTA and cluster coordinators testified before the Board of Education regarding the capital budget and CIP. At the November Board of Directors meeting we discussed approaching the County Council to set up a work group to take a broader look at facilities planning. Mike Knapp has agreed to head such a group; you can read more about this group and the questions we bring to the table in the MCCPTA CIP testimony on our web site.

This month I sent our SSL resolution to Nancy Grasmick at the Maryland State Department of Education and the Health Technician resolution to George Leventhal at the County Council. At the upcoming delegate assembly we will vote on the operating budget compact and the operating budget priorities resolution that are attached to this letter. The purpose of naming a small set of priorities is to allow us to focus on a few areas where we would

like to see increased funding included in this year's operating budget. While the compact is a fairly succinct way of encompassing a wide array of priorities, it has been difficult for MCCPTA officers to answer the question we are frequently asked, "What are your highest budget priorities for this year," based solely on the compact since it does cover so much ground. Our BOD endorsed both the compact and the resolution at its November meeting.

PTA presidents should expect their blue books to arrive in about 2-3 weeks. It is at the printers now. Each president will receive six books, one for their principal and the others to distribute among their board.

Some of you may have attended the first MS forum on November 13. There will be a second forum at Silver Spring International Middle School on November 29, 2006, from 7-9pm. MCCPTA is holding a MS committee meeting on Monday, November 20, to discuss the new Middle School Policy and to help develop a MCCPTA response to the draft policy. Comments on the new policy are due to the BOE on December 12, 2006, so we will be bringing a list of comments to the DA and asking you to endorse them that night so we can submit them to the BOE by the December deadline.

At Tuesday's BOE meeting, the BOE tentatively adopted an amendment to Policy JFA, *Student Rights and Responsibilities*, stipulating that a student's conduct prior to election or appointment to a leadership position

meet a “higher standard” in order for the student to be eligible to attain, or retain, such leadership positions. Previously this policy only required a student to meet a “higher standard” after they were in a leadership position. This proposed change is presumably in reaction to the election of a transfer student from Whitman HS as the captain of the Wheaton HS football team this fall. This revision will be out for public comment soon.

At that same board meeting, Pat O’Neill offered an amendment which was seconded by Nancy Navarro to provide a 5 minute operating budget testimony slot to each cluster. There will be a vote on this at the next meeting.

Last weekend Sharon St.Pierre, Cassandra Abdelmeguid, April Keyes, Juan Johnson and I attended the MD PTA convention in Ocean City. Reflections chair Neal Myerson attended in his role as MD PTA reflections chair and our bylaws chair Vicki Rafael conducted two workshops on resolutions. There were a number of PTA members from locals—who surely had more fun than the officers did. When MD PTA pays your way, they own you for the convention! We learned at the Friday evening awards dinner that Cold Spring ES parent Ralph Nelson received the Dad 4 PTA Award and Rock Creek Forest ES received a Parent/Family Involvement Grant. Congratulations!

We received membership and bylaws updates at the convention. Maryland PTA is about 7,000 members ahead of last year’s membership numbers at the same point in time. We are making headway in bringing all local bylaws up to date. MD PTA has a pilot program where the bylaws template is

available on their web site for download. You may print the template out and fill in the blanks by hand. In the spring MD PTA will evaluate this pilot and see if allowing the template to be downloaded increases the amount of time it takes to review revisions and make a decision whether to continue with the electronic template. We are also advised that MD PTA might be ready to release an updated template in January. If you are due for a bylaws update, you may still proceed now with the current template. All changes from the current (2003) template and the new one will be mandatory (with #’s) so they will be automatically applied to all PTAs.

Secondary PTSA presidents should have received a flyer from MCPS regarding the June 21, 2007, Partners for Rigor through Relevancy Conference. The 2007 theme will be “Secondary School and Beyond—Inspiring All Students.” In the past, this has been an excellent conference and I recommend all secondary PTSA leaders attend and that PTAs cover the registration fee. It will be held at Northwest HS; all secondary presidents will receive a registration packet in the spring, the conference is open to all parents.

This Thanksgiving give thanks for all those you love and hold dear.

Jane

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.

DRAFT MCCPTA FY2008 OPERATING BUDGET COMPACT

The Montgomery County Council of Parent-Teacher Associations (MCCPTA) believes that an Operating Budget for the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) must provide funding to make progress towards the fundamental requirements described in this budget compact. This compact will provide the basis for testimony before the Board of Education and the County Council and in other forums concerning the MCPS Operating Budget for FY 2008. MCCPTA will not support any budget, MCPS Strategic Plan, or other planning or policy document, that does not make progress towards the requirements of this compact.

Goal 1 of the MCPS Strategic Plan: Ensure Success for Every Student.

MCPS must focus on raising academic performance of all students so that all may reach their full potential, no matter where they reside in the county. There is a need for uniformly high expectations that all students will succeed and will have their needs met including Special Education, ESOL, and Gifted/Talented students. There must be sufficient funding for programs to raise the performance of under-performing students. There must also be adequate funding to enhance the performance of students who have attained satisfactory levels of performance but who can do better, and to challenge students who exceed satisfactory levels of performance but are able to perform at even higher levels. In order to further these goals, MCCPTA supports the following staff initiatives from the past several years and encourages continued support for these initiatives:

- Reduced class sizes throughout the county
- Reduced class sizes for art, music, and physical education
- Improved staffing ratios for LAD
- Move toward hours based staffing for special education students participating in order to ensure the success of a move toward promoting education in the least restrictive environment
- Support of the rollout of all-day kindergarten in all schools.
- Phase-in of additional assistant principals.

In addition, the budget should provide for the following:

- Math specialists to provide early intervention for students
- Certification in the appropriate content areas for middle school teachers teaching high school courses and specialty courses offered in signature programs
- Additional reduction in student/teacher staffing ratios for art, music, and physical education
- Reduction in the use of substitute teachers in the classroom during academic year for teacher training
- Academic intervention/support such as summer learning opportunities for all students based on need. Resource allocation should not be limited to Title I schools.

Goal 2 of the Strategic Plan: Provide an Adequate Instructional Program

As adequate educational staffing is achieved, it will become even more important to provide staff with the tools necessary to assure success. In order to further this goal, MCCPTA supports the following staff initiatives from the past several years and encourages continued support for these initiatives:

- Reform of the middle school curriculum to increase rigor and ensure instruction appropriate for each student.
- Increased support for high school literacy
- Expansion of gifted and talented programs into more secondary schools
- Improvements to technology and support for improved technology use.

In addition, priority should be given to providing for the following academic and developmental supports for students:

- More emphasis on providing a well-rounded curriculum including a rich science, social studies, and arts curriculum
- Increased academic intervention/support resources to meet the demand based on need, including:
 - Specific action/intervention plans for students not meeting standards under the new grading and reporting policy
 - Specific action/intervention plans for students not meeting extracurricular activity eligibility requirements.
 - Consistent funding and implementation of special programs across the county
- Increased attention and resources to students who fail at the 9th grade level to anticipate and avoid risk of later drop outs
- Timely provision of new materials and textbooks when new curricula are introduced
- Improved vertical articulation to ensure students receive the foundation for future curriculum options.

Goal 3 of the Strategic Plan: Strengthen productive partnerships for education.

In a system with sufficient teaching resources in adequate buildings, other supports will still be needed to ensure a quality education for all children. We support continuation of the following former initiatives:

- Enhanced translation services
- Expanded study circles
- Implementation of Ed Line in all secondary schools.

However, there is a desperate need for enhanced communication and outreach at the local school level, especially in light of the growing number of families with limited knowledge of English. There is also a need for more general support for students and families. Therefore, we request more support for the following:

- Local school based resources for communications, especially with non-English speaking parents and increase translation services
- Additional guidance counselors and pupil personnel workers, and staff to address social/emotional/developmental needs at all levels
- More attention to addressing discipline problems, especially at the middle school level, including the problem of gangs, bullying and risk to student safety.

Goal 4 of the Strategic Plan: Create a Positive Work Environment in a Self-Renewing Organization.

Development, retention, and recruitment of talented educational, administrative, and support staff are fundamental to maintaining a high quality of education in Montgomery County. The following initiatives are needed:

- Reduction in high turnover rate for staff from Principals to building services staff
- Increased diversity in hiring
- Adequate training for all staff, including supporting services.

Goal 5 of the Strategic Plan: Provide high quality business services that are essential to the educational success of students.

Consistent with the goal of promoting maximum performance by all students, there must be greater attention to the health and safety of MCPS students and staff. We applaud the creation of a new goal in the strategic plan that acknowledges the importance of supporting services and facilities in promoting academic success. In addition, MCPS accountability for effective use of resources should be increased by using an inventory of all MCPS programs to reduce duplications and overlaps, and through outcome measurement rigorously evaluate programs for effectiveness and efficiency. We support the following initiatives in prior and current plans:

- Increased staffing for the Ride by the Rules program, to improve communication between bus drivers and principals
- Increased staffing of building services
- Key-card locking of ES doors to portables
- Overhaul of the financial and budgeting information systems.

We urge that additional attention and resources be devoted to the following:

- Adequate assessment of new programs and curricula before and after implementation, including assurance that sufficient course materials are available, and teacher training completed before implementation
- Evaluation of the use of new technology to ensure that it is the most cost-effective way to increase student performance.
- More oversight of local schools by the Community Superintendents.
- Budget documents that are more comprehensible to the public and that will allow decision -makers and the community to assess the costs and benefits of particular programs and initiatives.

Finally, the setting in which education takes place should not be neglected. For optimal learning our schools must be a place where the children feel safe, and their health is protected. The following issues need to be addressed:

- Revision of salary structures or increased outside contracting for positions that are persistently vacant, such as HVAC mechanics and speech and language therapists
- More maintenance and repair personnel, particularly HVAC mechanics
- Expanded indoor air quality staff, with training in building envelope issues
- Adequate security personnel and other resources necessary for securing school buildings and portables
- Reassessment and adjustment of traffic patterns around schools to promote pedestrian safety
- Reassessment of bus stop placement to promote safety
- Improved nutritional value for school lunch and a la carte menu selections
- Improved coverage of school health rooms.

MCCPTA recognizes that an Operating Budget that satisfies all of these requirements will necessitate a continued strong commitment to education by Montgomery County. Such a commitment and investment, however, is more than justified by the benefits a well-resourced educational system provides to the community.



Since 1944

Resolution on FY2008 Operating Budget Priorities

Whereas, MCCPTA's mission is to speak for children and without question our highest budget priority is education;

Whereas, the Delegates have approved an "Operating Budget Compact" from which these priorities are taken;

Be it resolved that the MCCPTA Delegates approve the following operating budget priorities for the organization to concentrate on this budget year.

- Increase Secondary Literacy,
- Close the achievement gap,
- Expand after school programs and in school programs for prevention and intervention of bullying and gang activity,
- Expand the Special Education Hours based staffing Model,
- Increase the number of Parent Community Outreach Coordinators, and
- Provide for safe, clean, healthy, modern school facilities.

MCCPTA update on Policy CNA: November, 2006

What does Policy CNA cover?

Policy CNA is concerned only with printed informational material sent home with students, i.e. backpack mail, and displaying printed informational materials and announcements at schools. Policy CNA does not cover, or impose any restrictions on, PTAs' uses of their own listserves, websites, or mailings through U.S. mail.

Which groups are allowed to send home information under the new policy CNA?

Four groups have backpack privileges at any time during the school year. They are: 1. MCPS, 2. Federal, state, or local governmental entities, 3. Nationally affiliated PTAs operating within MCPS and MCCPTA and 4. Parent teacher organizations at special education schools and alternative centers that operate in lieu of nationally affiliated PTAs.

Other nonprofit community organizations shall be permitted to distribute materials through students 2-4 times per year.

Community organizations and businesses shall be permitted to display printed materials at schools.

My PTA uses backpack mail to distribute its newsletter. Can we attach flyers from other groups to it or send them home separately?

The Board of Education has not placed any restrictions on the materials PTAs send home via backpacks. MCCPTA recommends that you wait until it can issue a further clarification on any situation not covered below.

My PTA mails its newsletter home. Can it attach flyers or include information from other groups in it?

Policy CNA does not pertain to any materials your PTA chooses to mail to parents. Your PTA can include information in its mailed newsletter from other groups, including flyers.

The NAACP Parent Council Representative is a member of our PTA's Executive Board, as specified in our bylaws. Can our PTA distribute NAACP Parent Council materials through the backpacks?

If your PTA concludes that NAACP Parent Council materials are appropriate for PTA distribution, then the PTA may reasonably decide to distribute the material through backpacks. The fact that your PTA has chosen to include the NAACP Parent Council Representative on its executive board reflects a reasonable judgment that the organization's mission is related to and consistent with the PTA's mission, and that the information supplied by the NAACP Parent Council will also be useful to parents.

Our PTA provides financial support to an Asian Parent Group within our school; we have a line item in our budget for this. Can our PTA distribute information from this Asian Parent Group in the backpacks?

The fact that your PTA has chosen to provide financial support on regular basis, such as in a budget line item, to the Asian Parent Group at your school reflects a reasonable judgment by your PTA that this Asian

Parent Group's mission is related to and consistent with the PTA's mission and is useful to parents. If your PTA concludes that Asian Parent Group materials are appropriate for PTA distribution, then your PTA may reasonably decide to distribute the materials through backpacks.

Can my PTA send out information from other groups on our list serve?

If your list serve is owned and maintained by your PTA (this could be true even if your school administrators use the list for announcements) then you have complete control over what you choose to send out via this list.

Can my PTA post information from other groups on our web site?

If your PTA owns the domain name it can post anything it likes on its web site including announcements, flyers, and links to other organizations.

What if our school site has a link to our web site, can we still post materials on our web site?

If your PTA owns the domain name it can post anything it likes on its web site including announcements, flyers, and links to other organizations. MCPS regulation KBA-RB Educational Purposes and Administration of the MCPS Web states regarding its web sites "Web pages with links to non-MCPS sites will include the disclaimer, "This Web page may contain links to one or more pages that are outside the MCPS. MCPS does not control the content or relevancy of these pages." A link on the MCPS Web to a non-MCPS site does not represent MCPS sponsorship of the linked entity." You may wish to recommend to the school that it post a notice on its own web site such as "you are now leaving the MCPS web site" when users click on the PTA link from the school web site. Your PTA may want to place a disclaimer on its web site stating "This is a web site of the PTA, not the school."

What if our web site is part of the MCPS site? Are there any restrictions?

Policy CNA does not address MCPS web sites; MCPS released regulation KBA-RB in October, 2006, which addresses MCPS web sites. This regulation outlines what can and can be posted on MCPS sites, and contains restrictions on allowable web technologies. This regulation does not contain restrictions specifically addressed to PTA content (there are restrictions on advertising that PTAs may find relevant) but individual schools may have agreements with their PTAs about what materials the PTA posts. MCCPTA recommends that your PTA purchase its own domain name so that you can maintain complete control over your site. If you need advice on this, you may contact our web site committee chairs at webmaster@mccpta.com.

MCCPTA Committee Updates – November 2006

(Please note: Additional Committee updates are shared electronically on the MCCPTA Bulletin)

Capital Improvement Program Committee:

Marney Jacobs (Co-Chair): mjdti@bellatlantic.net

Jim Keenan (Co-Chair): jim.keenan@fmcsa.dot.gov

Highlights of CIP Testimony on November 15, 2006 (Complete Testimony is posted on website):

MCCPTA supports the Superintendent's Recommended FY08 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY 2007-2012 Capital Improvements Program.

MCCPTA agrees with the Superintendent that portables must not be a long-term solution.

MCCPTA believes that every child should attend school in a safe, secure, modern facility- secure classrooms, adequate program space, appropriate technology, good air quality, water, and bathrooms.

We believe it is critical in this amendment year to focus on long-range planning.

We will continue to ask for additional focus and funds for maintenance projects, maintenance staff to repair and replace systems, and for preventative maintenance projects in both capital and operating budgets.

We need a set of criteria for schools that do not have FACT scores in order to put these schools on a preliminary ranking list,

MCPS needs to evaluate the FACT score process and formula and consider options.

MCPS should develop a clear set of criteria for school additions- these might include: capacity, enrollment, construction projects on site, modernization date, special programs, number and age of portables.

We have a number of questions relating to long-range planning and propose that a task force be developed to ask, study and answer these questions.

MCCPTA would like to begin the discussion on Policy FAA (as promised by the Board in 2005) and requests that there be language added back into the policy to define the role of parents, the PTA's and the community, and that the preferred ranges of enrollment, capacity calculations and site and school size be spelled out in the policy so that there is opportunity for notification and public comment.

Testimony by cluster coordinators focused on individual school needs.

The Board will take final action on November 20th.

Listserv Committee: Patti Twigg, Chair, lptwigg@aol.com

I have updated the documents found on the MCCPTA website that relate to the listservs. Specifically, I targeted correcting the outdated information created by Yahoo groups changing their message delivery and other options and also on correcting some slight inaccuracies that I had been unaware of – again relating to Yahoo and their procedures.

I also have tried to increase the clarity of the information and instructions, and create consistency among the documents. I added a line to the summary table for how message replies are handled by the different lists, and that BOD members are now automatically added to the Bulletin listserv.

The document on etiquette will replace the briefer one that is sent out monthly - again to provide consistency.

All of these documents have been updated on the MCCPTA website as well as on the Yahoo groups website. I have also organized the files section of the MCCPTA_Bulletin and MCCPTA_Delegates Yahoo groups web pages by creating folders and moving the files into them.

The Beginners Guide to the MCCPTA Listservs has been added to the Yahoo groups web page for the MCCPTA_Presidents list, and will now be going out automatically whenever someone joins the list.

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

At our December meeting I hope to share on some of the ideas that I came back with from Detroit. Even as I am putting together a plan for MD PTA, I am trying to also use some of the strategies to see how they would impact us. One of the strategies that we got was being aware of the various cultures and religions that we deal with and being sensitive to their beliefs. I am trying to find out about the beliefs of a few of these to share with the committee.

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.

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

Safety Committee resolution to be introduced at November delegates' assembly:

The Safety Committee submitted a resolution regarding building security to the November MCCPTA Board of Directors' Meeting. That resolution was approved with amendments, to be presented to the November delegates' assembly. The resolution will be introduced at the assembly, with a brief report from the Safety Committee. We are asking you to take it back to your local PTAs so that it can be voted on in the January Delegates' Assembly.

Building Security update - all visitors to schools asked to check in at the front office:

MCPS letter to principals

Deputy Superintendent Larry Bowers issued a security memo to all principals on October 31, reminding them of security requirements for their buildings. This memo was not a public announcement from MCPS, but principals are free to share it with their school communities. The memo includes instructions to keep all but one entrance to schools "secured" during the school day, including entrances to portables. It also asks principals to post signs on all doors directing any visitors (which would include parent volunteers) to stop in at the front office, sign in, and get a name tag, and instructs staff and students to report any "suspicious activity or individuals." Any ES that does not have an operational key card locking system for building access from portables are directed to report this to their field security coordinator immediately.

General information about MCPS security policy (also posted on MCCPTA website)

1. Each school is ultimately responsible for its own security plan and procedures, although all schools are required to have Code Red/Code Blue plans and drills. The central MCPS office provides guidelines, training for staff, technical assistance, and monitoring.
2. All high schools have one or more security guards and one "education facilitates officer (EFO)." Security guards are often retired police officers or military, but are not commissioned police officers. EFOs are commissioned police officers. All middle schools have at least one security guard; only two have their own EFO. No elementary school has a security guard or EFO. The HS EFO's provide advice and occasional assistance to all the schools in their cluster.
3. In general, schools are supposed to keep all doors except for their central entrance locked during the school day. The exception is those middle and high schools that have portables, which require students to

move in and out of the building at each class change. All elementary schools with portables are supposed to have key card locking of the doors between the schools and the portables. Newer schools have been designed to facilitate monitoring of the central entrance from the main office. This is not possible in many older schools.

4. Visitors to schools, including parent volunteers, should wear visitor i.d. tags obtained in the central office. Signs directing visitors to the main office must be posted on all exterior doors.

5. All high schools have security cameras covering most major hallways. The extent of monitoring is uneven. Middle and elementary schools do not, by and large, have security cameras.

6. All portables are supposed to have at least an intercom connection to the main building.

Letter on emergency communication between MCPS and parents:

The Safety Committee is preparing a letter to send to MCPS requesting information about regulations and other guidelines governing communications from and MCPS and local schools to parents about emergency situations and other potential security hazards. We will keep you informed on this issue.

Update on lead-in-water remediation:

The MCPS environmental safety unit continues to work on developing and implementing plans to eliminate lead in water within the schools. Progress is slow. As of November 8, 44 schools had been “graduated” from the program, meaning either it was determined no action was required (14 schools) or action was taken, and test results revealed the problem had been solved (30 schools). There are 79 schools where remediation plans have been implemented, but they are still testing to see if the problem has been solved. This includes 9 schools that had major work done over the summer. The Safety Committee will be investigating why so many schools are still in post-testing, including investigating what the testing protocol is, and how many schools are showing unsatisfactory results. Another 60 schools haven’t been remediated at all.

We are encouraging MCPS to update their website with respect to the status of each school. If you have questions about your school, you should ask your principal, or call Lynne Zarate, MCPS team leader, Environmental Services, 301-926-4378.

Focus on safety in local PT(S)A’s:

The MCCPTA Safety Committee is interested in hearing from parents about their safety concerns, general and specific. We urge local PTA’s to create their own separate safety committees in order to provide for more concerted focus on safety issues within each school. Please email Pammoomau@comcast.net or call me (Pam Moomau) at 301-530-9691 with your questions and commentary on school safety and security issues.

Website Committee:

Sharon Goodall (Co-Chair): Sharon_Goodall@hotmail.com

Lin Lin Mao (Co-Chair): linlinmao@earthlink.net

The MCCPTA website continues to be the MCCPTA community's source for upcoming events and news. This month sees the addition of the Spotlight corner on the main page, highlighting news and/or achievements from schools and PTAs around the county. The first Spotlight is on Lee Middle School, for winning the Family Partnership Award.

Be sure to notify MCCPTA (via email to office@mccpta.com and/or webmaster@mccpta.com) of any news that should be in the Spotlight!

**Draft Minutes MCCPTA Delegates Assembly
October 24, 2006
Carver Educational Services Center**

MCCPTA Candidates Forum began at 7:03 PM and ended at 8:10 PM

Board of Education Candidates in attendance were: (District 5) Nancy Navarro, Phil Kauffman, (District 3) Patricia O'Neill (District 1) Michael Ibanez, Judy Docca, (At Large) Shirley Brandman, Tommy Le

MCCPTA Delegates Assembly Business Meeting

Call to Order: Jane de Winter, MCCPTA President called the meeting to order at 8:17 PM

Mission of the PTA: Sharon St.Pierre, MCCPTA VP for Education

Approval of Minutes: On motion made and seconded, the draft minutes of the September 26, 2006 Delegates Assembly were approved as written by voice vote.

Treasurer's Report: Juan Johnson, MCCPTA Treasurer presented copies of the MCCPTA approved budget for 2006-07, MCCPTA Balance Sheet as of October 24, 2006, MCCPTA Profit and Loss(P & L) Sheet - September 25-October 24, 2006, as well as Budget vs. Actuals: Approved Budget- FY07, P&L - July-October 2006. Next month Juan will submit a sheet showing which PTAs have paid dues and which PTAs have not. Treasurer report was filed.

Business Items: Proposed resolutions from September 26, 2006 Delegates Assembly were then reintroduced for discussion and vote.

Proposed Resolution on Students Service Learning Hours (SSL)

No motion for a second was needed as this resolution came from committee. Delegates voted to allow 5 minutes of discussion (with option to extend) with each speaker having 1 minute to speak for or against motion.

MCCPTA Delegate from Walter Johnson HS raised concerns that it unreasonable for upper class students to have this new requirement given they would also be first to pass HSAs and possibly meeting both requirements for graduation. Eighth grade was noted by speaker as more appropriate.

MCCPTA Delegate from Cabin John MS offered an amendment to the resolution. The amendment was offered on the last Resolve: *Resolves that the state mandated increase of SSL hours from 60 to 75 should begin no sooner than with the graduating class of 2011 (current 8th graders).*

Motion was offered and seconded on amendment to proposed resolution. The amended resolution passed by voice vote.

SSL Hours Resolution as Passed:

Student Service Learning Hours (SSL) Resolution

Presented by: Sharon St.Pierre, MCCPTA VP for Education

WHEREAS, Maryland State Dept of Education (MSDE) mandates 75 SSL hours for all students as a requirement for graduation under COMAR (Code of Maryland Regulations);

WHEREAS, MCPS was granted an exemption to this requirement, and set a requirement of 60 SSL hours. On May 2006, MSDE wrote to MCPS requesting that MCPS raise its SSL requirement to the state standard of 75 hours and begin this requirement with the class of 2009 (current 10th grade class).

WHEREAS, students in their 8th grade year create their 4-year plan, and are notified of graduation requirements at that time.

MCCPTA RESOLVES, that the state mandated increase of SSL hours from 60 to 75 should begin no sooner than with the graduating class of 2011 (current 8th graders).

Proposed Resolution on Health Technicians

Rich Edelman, Co Cluster Coordinator for Wooten Cluster and Frost MS Delegate reintroduced his resolution concerning Health Technicians from the September Delegates Assembly.

Delegates voted to allow 5 minutes of discussion (with option to extend) with each speaker having 1 minute to speak for or against motion.

Pam Moomau (Safety Committee) noted items as brought forwarded by Health Committee related to this resolution.

School Nurses and Health Room Technicians re funded out of Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services budget and not MCPS.

1. 10 schools have nurse coverage throughout school day specifically for special needs population or have large special needs populations.
2. The rest of the schools have 5 to 6 hours of nurse or tech coverage.
 - a. Elementary school day is 6 hr-15 min: 5 hour techs (26) work 30 minutes less than full school day; 6 hour techs work 15 minutes less than the full day.
 - b. Secondary school day is 6 hours-45 min: 6 hour techs are assigned and work 45 minutes less than school day.
3. The number of paid hours allotted per health tech ranges from 15 minutes to 1 hour-15 minutes short of a school day. It would cost approximately \$715, 000 to extend health tech hours such that each health tech covers whole school day.
4. Many school staff are willing to fill in when a nurse or tech is no available. In order to dispense medication or provide CPR, these staff are supposed to get certification, and in most schools there are at least one or two non-health staff members on site who are certified. However at some schools MCPS staff are not willing to provide such services because of liability concerns.

Discussion continued with an additional 5 minutes for additional discussion approved by Delegates.

MCCPTA Delegate from Tilden Middle School offered an amendment to proposed resolution which was approved for discussion by motion and seconded. The amendment was offered on the last Resolve:

Resolved that MCCPTA supports and will advocate for increased Health Room Aide services so that a Nurse or Health Room Aide will be on duty at every school from the start of the school day to the end of the school day. After discussion and debate Delegates opposed the amendment by voice vote.

The original proposed resolution was then approved by voice vote.

Health Technician Resolution as passed:

Resolution on Health Technicians

Presented by Richard Edelman, Wootton Cluster Co-Coordinator and Frost MS Delegate

Whereas most MCPS Schools have Health Room Aides for between 5 and 6 hours;

Whereas MCC PTA believes that 5 or 6 hours of Health Room Aide coverage is insufficient to meet the needs of our children; it is

Resolved that MCC PTA supports and will advocate for increased Health Room Aide services so that a Nurse or Health Room Aide will be on duty at every school from ½ hour before the start of the school day to ½ hour after the end of the school day.

Nominating Committee: Cassandra Abdelmeguid, VP for Administration introduced the proposed nominating committee that had been previously approved by MCCPTA Board of Directors. With no nominations from the floor the proposed nominating committee passed by voice vote.

Nominees for Nominating Committee

Magruder, Damascus/Gaithersburg/Watkins Mill/Clarksburg - Steve Augustino

Northwest/Poolesville/Quince Orchard/Seneca Valley - Paul Morrison

Churchill/Richard Montgomery/Rockville/Wootton - Livleen Gill

Blake/Paint Branch/Sherwood/Springbrook - Deborah Stevens-Panzer

Blair/Einstein/Kennedy/Northwood - Mark Rother

B-CC/Walter Johnson/Walt Whitman/Wheaton - Karen Smith

At-Large - Tom Kenton

Operating Budget (2 items): Steve Crowley Operating Budget Chair:

Proposed Resolution for FY 2008 Operating Budget Priorities was brought forward. Delegates were asked to take back to locals for discussion to gather input for vote in the November Delegates Assembly. This is aligned with MCPS Strategic Plan.

Proposed Resolution on FY2008 Operating Budget Priorities

Whereas, MCCPTA's mission is to speak for children and without question our highest budget priority is education;

Whereas, the Delegates have approved an "Operating Budget Compact" from which these priorities are taken;

Be it resolved that the MCCPTA Delegates approve the following operating budget priorities for the organization to concentrate on this budget year.

- Increase Secondary Literacy,
- Close the achievement gap,
- Expand after school programs and in school programs for prevention and intervention of bullying and gang activity,
- Expand the Special Education Hours Based Staffing model,
- Increase the number of Parent Community Outreach Coordinators, and
- Provide for safe, clean, healthy, modern school facilities.

DRAFT MCCPTA FY2008 OPERATING BUDGET COMPACT

The Montgomery County Council of Parent-Teacher Associations (MCCPTA) believes that an Operating Budget for the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) must provide funding to make progress towards the fundamental requirements described in this budget compact. This compact will provide the basis for testimony before the Board of Education, the County Council and in other forums concerning the MCPS Operating Budget for FY 2008. MCCPTA will not support any budget, MCPS Strategic Plan, or other planning or policy document, that does not make progress towards the requirements of this compact. The new items are marked with an asterisk following them.

Goal 1 of the MCPS Strategic Plan: Ensure Success for Every Student.

MCPS must focus on raising academic performance of all students so that all may reach their full potential, no matter where they reside in the county. There is a need for uniformly high expectations that all students will succeed and will have their needs met including Special Education, ESOL, and Gifted/Talented students. There must be sufficient funding for programs to raise the performance of under-performing students. There must also be adequate funding to enhance the performance of students who have attained satisfactory levels of performance but who can do better, and to challenge students who exceed satisfactory levels of performance but are able to perform at even higher levels. In order to further these goals, MCCPTA supports the following staff initiatives from the past several years and encourages continued support for these initiatives:

- Reduced class sizes throughout the county
- Reduced class sizes for art, music, and physical education
- Improved staffing ratios for LAD* (Learning and Academic Disabilities)
- Move toward hours based staffing for special education students participating in order to ensure the success of a move toward promoting education in the least restrictive environment*
- Support of the rollout of all-day kindergarten in all schools
- Phase-in of additional assistant principals.

In addition, the budget should provide for the following:

- Math specialists to provide early intervention for students
- Certification in the appropriate content areas for middle school teachers teaching high school courses and specialty courses offered in signature programs
- Additional reduction in student/teacher staffing ratios for art, music, and physical education
- Reduction in the use of substitute teachers in the classroom during academic year for teacher training
- Academic intervention/support such as summer learning opportunities for all students based on need. Resource allocation should not be limited to Title I schools.

Goal 2 of the Strategic Plan: Provide an Adequate Instructional Program

As adequate educational staffing is achieved, it will become even more important to provide staff with the tools necessary to assure success. In order to further this goal, MCCPTA supports the following staff initiatives from the past several years and encourages continued support for these initiatives:

- Reform of the middle school curriculum to increase rigor and ensure instruction appropriate for each student.
- Increased support for high school literacy*
- Expansion of gifted and talented programs into more secondary schools
- Improvements to technology and support for improved technology use.*

In addition, priority should be given to providing for the following academic and developmental supports for students:

- More emphasis on providing a well-rounded curriculum including a rich science, social studies, and arts curriculum
- Increased academic intervention/support resources to meet the demand based on need, including:
 - Specific action/intervention plans for students not meeting standards under the new grading and reporting policy
 - Specific action/intervention plans for students not meeting extracurricular activity eligibility requirements.
 - Consistent funding and implementation of special programs across the county
- Increased attention and resources to students who fail at the 9th grade level to anticipate and avoid risk of later drop outs
- Timely provision of new materials and textbooks when new curricula are introduced
- Improved vertical articulation to ensure students receive the foundation for future curriculum options.

Goal 3 of the Strategic Plan: Strengthen productive partnerships for education.

In a system with sufficient teaching resources in adequate buildings, other supports will still be needed to ensure a quality education for all children. We support continuation of the following former initiatives:

- Enhanced translation services*
- Expanded study circles*
- Implementation of Ed Line in all secondary schools.*

However, there is a desperate need for enhanced communication and outreach at the local school level, especially in light of the growing number of families with limited knowledge of English. There is also a need for more general support for students and families. Therefore, we request more support for the following:

- Local school based resources for communications, especially with non-English speaking parents and increase translation services
- Additional guidance counselors and pupil personnel workers, and staff to address social/emotional/developmental needs at all levels*
- More attention to addressing discipline problems, especially at the middle school level, including the problem of gangs, bullying and risk to student safety.

Goal 4 of the Strategic Plan: Create a Positive Work Environment in a Self-Renewing Organization.

Development, retention, and recruitment of talented educational, administrative, and support staff are fundamental to maintaining a high quality of education in Montgomery County. The following initiatives are needed:

- Reduction in high turnover rate for staff from Principals to building services staff
- Increased diversity in hiring
- Adequate training for all staff, including supporting services.

Goal 5 of the Strategic Plan: Provide high quality business services that are essential to the educational success of students.

Consistent with the goal of promoting maximum performance by all students, there must be greater attention to the health and safety of MCPS students and staff. We applaud the creation of a new goal in the strategic plan that acknowledges the importance of supporting services and facilities in promoting academic success. In addition, MCPS accountability for effective use of resources should be increased by using an inventory of all MCPS programs to reduce duplications and overlaps, and through outcome measurement rigorously evaluate programs for effectiveness and efficiency. We support the following initiatives in prior and current plans:

- Increased staffing for the Ride by the Rules program, to improve communication between bus drivers and principals*
- Increased staffing of building services
- Key-card locking of ES doors to portables*
- Overhaul of the financial and budgeting information systems.

We urge that additional attention and resources be devoted to the following:

- Adequate assessment of new programs and curricula before and after implementation, including assurance that sufficient course materials are available, and teacher training completed before implementation
- Evaluation of the use of new technology to ensure that it is the most cost-effective way to increase student performance.
- More oversight of local schools by the Community Superintendents.
- Budget documents that are more comprehensible to the public and that will allow decision-makers and the community to assess the costs and benefits of particular programs and initiatives.

Finally, the setting in which education takes place should not be neglected. For optimal learning our schools must be a place where the children feel safe, and their health is protected. The following issues need to be addressed:

- Revision of salary structures or increased outside contracting for positions that are persistently vacant, such as HVAC mechanics and speech and language therapists
- More maintenance and repair personnel, particularly HVAC mechanics
- Expanded indoor air quality staff, with training in building envelope issues
- Adequate security personnel and other resources necessary for securing school buildings and portables (*expanded)
- Reassessment and adjustment of traffic patterns around schools to promote pedestrian safety
- Reassessment of bus stop placement to promote safety*
- Improved nutritional value for school lunch and a la carte menu selections
- Improved coverage of school health rooms.*

MCCPTA recognizes that an Operating Budget that satisfies all of these requirements will necessitate a continued strong commitment to education by Montgomery County. Such a commitment and investment, however, is more than justified by the benefits a well-resourced educational system provides to the community.

These are target areas but all things are important. These are items that guide testimony and were items were gathered from area meetings. The lists are not ranked but Delegates can do that if they so desire.

These items will be put out on listservs. Both items will be voted on separately in November Delegates Assembly. Delegates should take both items back to their local PTAs for discussion and comments.

Committee Reports: *Written Committee Reports for CIP Committee, Cultural Arts, Downcounty Consortium, Gifted Child, Grading and Reporting, Health, Legislative, Listserv, Parent Leadership, Safety were included on separate handouts for Delegates.*

CIP Committee- Marney Jacobs, CoChair--There will be a CIP Forum on November 1, 2006 in the cafeteria at Carver. MCPS staff Bruce Crispell, MCPS Long Range Planning and Facilities and Roy Higgins, Dept. of Facilities Management will be available for any questions. There will be discussion on the new CIP prior to cluster testimony, Board of Education work sessions and action.

MCCPTA chairs will discuss coordinated testimony and strategies. Amendments to the FY 2008-2012 CIP will be released October 30, 2006 with public hearings scheduled for November 15 and 16 for testimony. Be sure to invite locals to budget testimony.

Membership- Cassandra Abdelmeguid, VP for Administration--Highlights: Get dues in, increase memberships, utilize National PTA Resources packets for PTA membership and make sure to highlight in local PTA newsletters the need for individuals and family members to join local PTAs. Students and teachers may also join PTAs. MCPS Family and Community Partnership note that there are MCPS employees who want to join local PTAs and would like school PTAs to send info on how they can join.

Safety Committee: Pam Moomau, Chair—Safety/Security issues are ongoing concerns. Concerns are raised about safety as related to doors on school building and which are to remain locked, etc. Portables and security item related to key card locks and well as safety of kids in portables were brought up. Security at schools is handled at local level such as for Code Blue. Concern noted about information coming from MCPS not only needs to be timely but accurate. Importance of improved communication between schools and parents is noted. Safety Committee will be putting together “points to advocate for.” Serious incident report/OLO report was discussed with MCCPTA having given input. All local PTAs need a Safety Committee. Contact Pam Moomau if you have any question or concerns.

President’s Report: Jane de Winter, MCCPTA President--A Delegates Assembly in May needs to be discussed and to see if Delegates want to hold May meeting. MCCPTA will reserve a space and Delegates can decide in March or April if they want to meet. Public Access Television information and request item was highlighted. Due to change in board makeup for this there will be a vote to see who gets seats on private board. Ginny Hillhouse has represented MCCPTA for the last few years and would like to try to be voted in for an At Large seat. It has been researched that MCCPTA can endorse this seat since it is a private board. Delegates and PTAs are encouraged to fill out membership forms to receive Public Access TV Guides and to be able to vote. Submit forms to Ginny by November 1. The cost is nothing.

Policy for Middle School Education is out for public comment. It is available on MCPS website as well as on MCCPTA website. Take policy to locals to receive comments. Those comments need to be returned to MCPS. Middle School Reform will possibly be on BOE agenda in December with action in February. Nothing is written yet with things not decided. If anyone has any concerns or comments please share those with Juan Johnson who is on Middle School Reform Steering Committee.

New Business: Calendar discussion-- Sharon St. Pierre, MCCPTA VP for Education noted that she has taken all posted concerns and comments to share with committee and will continue to do that. More information will be coming next month. MCCPTA has 3 representatives on calendar committee.

Adjournment: The Delegates Assembly adjourned at 9:34 PM.

MCCPTA DUES PAYMENT VOUCHER FOR 2006-07

Return bottom portion to the MCCPTA office at: MCCPTA, 2096 Gaither Road, Suite 204, Rockville, MD 20850 (or through the Pony mail system to MCCPTA, 2096 Gaither Road, Suite 204). Keep the top portion for your records.

MCCPTA Dues - Initial Payment - Due November 1, 2006

Name of PTA: _____

Number of Member: Adults _____ Teachers _____ Students _____ Total _____

Amount Remitted (\$1.00 per member): \$ _____ Check# _____

PTA Treasurer: _____ Phone Number _____

Keep this portion for your records.

MCCPTA Dues - Initial Payment - Due November 1, 2006

Name of PTA: _____

Federal Tax ID Number: _____

Number of Member: Adults _____ Teachers _____ Students _____ Total _____

Amount Remitted (\$1.00 per member): \$ _____ Check# _____

PTA Treasurer: _____ Phone Number _____

For MCCPTA Office Use Only:

Delegate Card Numbers:

Date:

Return this portion to MCCPTA

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

Pony Mailing

NOVEMBER 2006

MCCPTA Calendar 2006-2007

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

November	20	7:30	Middle School Committee Meeting, Rm 120
	20	7:30pm	BOE meeting/CIP decisions
	28	7:30pm	Delegate Assembly
	29	7 – 9pm	Middle School Forum, Silver Spring International MS
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
February	31	7:30	Special Ed Committee Meeting
	1	7:30	BOD's meeting
	12		PTA Night in Annapolis
	27	7:30	Delegate Assembly