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## Happy Holidays!!

PTA is an organization that speaks for children, The message for all PTAs is *everychild. onevoice.*

We are midway through the year, and all PTAs are busy within their school communities, doing all kinds of supportive, proactive volunteer work. PTAs do all sorts of advocacy on many issues, some publicly and some behind the scenes. The most recent was the issue of BusRadio, and the piloting of this program on some MCPS buses. Our PTA members took this very seriously and went to work contacting MCPS and the Board of Education with their concerns related to student exposure to commercialization while riding on our school buses. Many of you reviewed National and Maryland PTA's stances relative to BusRadio and the commercials being played during the programs. That enabled our PTA members to take action to advocate on behalf of children. MCPS made the decision not to pursue BusRadio. Everyone deserves a pat on the back for taking time to address this concern. Hard work, persistence and respectful advocacy pay off. Our local PTAs do this all the time, sometimes with fanfare and sometimes amid criticism from others who may not understand the effectiveness of respectful advocacy that our leaders employ. Our PTAs must forge ahead and not lose sight that we have a mission and vision of *making every child's potential a reality while being a powerful voice for all children in being a relevant resource for families and communities, and continuing as a strong advocate for the education and well-being of every child.* Great job everyone!!

As we get ready to advocate during difficult budget times, please put on your calendars an additional special

Delegates Assembly in January related to the FY10 Operating Budget. MCCPTA will host an Operating Budget Forum on Monday, January 5, 2009, at 7:30 pm in the Carver Auditorium. Board of Education members, MCPS staff, County Executive and staff, as well as members of the County Council have been invited to attend. This is a tight fiscal budget year and every dollar matters. PTA members and school community members should attend to ask budget questions of our elected officials. This is an opportunity to seek clarification about MCPS decisions as to how the budget is constructed and how decisions are made for proposed expenditures for school, staff and programs. It is also an opportunity to ask our elected officials what their plans are in advocating for budgetary needs from our Annapolis Delegation and Governor O'Malley.

Do not miss your opportunity to publicly testify about the FY10 Recommended Operating Budget. Call the Board of Education at 301-279-3617 beginning December 26. Public hearings are set for two Wednesday evenings; Jan. 14 and 21 in 2009. These public hearings will be held at 7 p.m. in the Carver Educational Services Center (CESC) auditorium.

### FY 2010 Operating Budget Timeline

- Board of Education operating budget hearings: Jan. 14 and 21 at 7 p.m. each evening.
- Board of Education operating budget worksessions: Jan. 28 and 29 at 6 p.m. each evening
- Board of Education operating budget adoption: Feb. 9, 10 a.m.
- Operating budget request presented to County Executive and County Council: Feb. 27
- County Executive issues operating budget: March 16

-County Council operating budget hearings: April  
-Council approves operating budget: May 21  
-Board of Education takes final action to adopt FY 2010  
Operating Budget: June 9

The MCCPTA Operating Budget Committee will host an operating budget testimony workshop. This workshop helps our PTA leadership prepare for testimony as well as allowing time for discussions about strategies in testifying. Anyone interested in preparing for budget testimony may attend. The workshop will be held on January 10, 2009 at Kensington Parkwood Elementary School in the Media Center, 9 AM- 12 PM. We will also develop our budget theme for the year.

As a reminder, if you cannot attend the operating budget hearings you may submit written comments directly to the Board of Education at the address below or via email to: [boe@mcpsmd.org](mailto:boe@mcpsmd.org)

Montgomery County Board of Education  
850 Hungerford Drive  
Rockville, Maryland 20850

You may also submit a budget question online or review previous budget questions submitted at: <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/budget/question.shtm>

A copy of the Superintendent's Recommended FY2010 Operating Budget will be ponied to PTA Presidents at their schools. MCCPTA Board of Directors members who provided a pony address can also pick them up at those schools or you may pick them up from the MCPS Budget Office.

We also want to know from the state level funding plans. We want our PTAs to advocate as hard as they can to help our children receive the school funding they need. That can be done by phone calls, emails and other forms of communication. See below:

Current Action Alerts and Legislation - <http://capwiz.com/npta2/issues/>  
Member-to-Member Network - <http://capwiz.com/npta2/mlm/signup/>

Now let's talk PTA membership. The 2008 - 2009 Maryland PTA Membership Theme is "Let's Get Growing" and it is still in full swing. Maryland PTA is challenging all local units to increase their membership by "5" members over last year's membership - a campaign referred to as "HIGH 5!" Anyone may join a local PTA. They do not need to have children in the school. When PTAs grow their membership base, they are helping to grow future parent leaders in their schools. The next time you see another parent from your school community that you do not see at your school's PTA meetings, take time to personally invite them to attend and become a member. Our MCCPTA Membership Chair is April Keyes and she can be reached at (301) 515-8249 or [keyesa@sec.gov](mailto:keyesa@sec.gov). Please contact April to get more

information related to increasing your membership and attending the MCCPTA membership committee meetings. *From MDPTA: All local units are required to submit to Maryland PTA dues of \$3.25 for each member that joins their PTAs. Remember, membership is year long and in fact we will be kicking off the January membership campaign soon. All membership dues payments for the 2008-2009 year will be due by March 31 to be eligible for consideration of a membership award and it is one of the requirements to be a unit in good standing. One of the key ways to increase membership in your local unit is to make sure that your members know what their membership dues and fundraising is used for. Don't just assume that everyone knows. Be sure to post flyers, notices on website and newsletters with all the great activities and programs that the PTA supports in your school. Review your membership book (or look on line [www.mdpta.org](http://www.mdpta.org)) for information on the Membership Awards. This year, we will be combining our membership recognition with our Reflections program to be held in May. Further information will be coming in the New Year.*

It is important that local PTAs pay their MCCPTA dues too. Your dues are MCCPTA's operating money to keep our office up and running in support of local PTA needs, as well as going toward the cost of printing the Blue Books, as just one example. Your MCCPTA dues, (\$1.00 per member) all go directly back into MCCPTA to help continue committee work, office/phone support, copying and more. MCCPTA does not make a profit off its members. In order to participate as voting members at our Delegates Assemblies for 2008-09, each school should have by now paid at least a first installment of MCCPTA dues - \$1.00 per member. Once your first payment is received by MCCPTA, your school will receive 3 green Delegate voting cards (Note, these are different than the green credential cards recently used at the MD PTA Convention. Our cards are just a little larger than a credit card, and have the MCCPTA tree logo on them). These voting cards are promptly mailed back to each PTA when they send their first dues payment to the MCCPTA Office.

Every voting Delegate should bring their voting card to meetings they attend in order to participate in discussions and vote on any organizational positions related to MCCPTA. Delegates are reminded that when your school PTA votes to take a position on a particular issue, you have an obligation to bring that position forward. Two things to note: 1. Delegates are chosen to represent the views of the local PTA. 2. Delegates represent the position of the local PTA membership at Delegate Assemblies. The Delegates Guidebook is available on the MCCPTA website: <http://www.mccpta.com/DelegatesHandbook.pdf>.

A dues voucher is now being pony mailed to your PTAs each month so you can pay regularly for additional members that join after your PTA's initial payment to MCCPTA. This coincides with any monthly payments your PTAs make to MDPTA and will make it easier for your PTA treasurer to keep track of dues payments. If your PTA has not paid any dues to MCCPTA, your PTA will not be able to participate in MCCPTA business meetings as voting members or receive Blue Books.

Blue Books have arrived and are on their way to all schools that have paid their MCCPTA dues. They were sent via pony mail on Friday, December 12. The MCCPTA Directory, aka Blue Book, is a comprehensive list that includes the names and telephone numbers of the MCCPTA Board of Directors; elected officers, cluster coordinators, area vice presidents and committee chairs. The Blue Book also contains listings for all local PTAs and their officers, as well as information about BOE, county and state elected officials, and community organizations, including information on how to reach each via phone numbers or email addresses. It is a valuable tool for your PTA community. Other community entities use the Blue Book to contact your local PTA when important issues/concerns pertaining to your PTA come up. Each school that has paid their MCCPTA dues will receive 6 Blue Books in care of your PTA president. One should be kept by the PTA president, one given to your principal and the rest distributed among your PTA Board.

MCCPTA's Nominating Committee will be seeking nominations for MCCPTA Officers for 2009-10. Please consider stepping up into leadership roles or consider nominating others. 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 held at the April Delegates Assembly, April 28, 2009. Visit the committee's webpage at: <http://www.mccpta.com/nomComm.html>

Our MCCPTA Reflections Committee is hard at work on the 2008-2009 National PTA Reflections Program, which allows students to express themselves through original works of arts on a specific identified theme. This program was established by National PTA board member Mary Lou Anderson in 1969. This year's Reflections theme is "Wow!" The deadline for submission to the county level competition is **January 5, 2009**. Submissions should be delivered to the MCCPTA office by the local chairperson. Each submission should have a completed official entry form attached to it. In addition, a copy of the Local Participation Form (page 24 of [guideline booklet](#)) should be included with the PTA's entries. Visit the MCCPTA Reflections Committee webpage at: <http://www.mccpta.com/reflections.html>

Entries must be mailed or delivered to the MCCPTA office:

2096 Gaither Road, Suite 204  
Rockville, MD 20850  
(301) 208-0111

The MCCPTA Special Education Committee will host its 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Special Education Recognition Ceremony on Monday, May 4, 2009, from 7:00 pm -9:00 pm at Rockville High School. The Committee will be looking for nominations of outstanding contributions to the success of students with special needs by Parents, Educators, Students and Programs. This ceremony is an important way for the Special Education Community to say thank you to those who through instinct, creativity, empathy, patience and determination, help our children enjoy success. It is also a way to acknowledge the benefits of investing in programs for students with special needs. More information will be coming soon. Please keep that special nominee in mind and nominate them.

To review last year's award winners, please visit the MCCPTA Special Education Webpage:

<http://www.mccpta.com/specneeds.html> and  
[http://www.mccpta.com/specneeds\\_dir/recognition\\_ceremony2008.pdf](http://www.mccpta.com/specneeds_dir/recognition_ceremony2008.pdf)

A happy holiday period to everyone!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

## Kay Romero

Draft Minutes MCCPTA Delegates Assembly  
November 25, 2008  
Carver Educational Service Center

### **6:30 -7:30 PM Program: Presentation on Internet Safety and Cyberbullying**

*Special guests: Dr. Jerry D. Weast, Superintendent of Schools  
Ms. Nancy Navarro, President, Board of Education  
Chief J. Thomas Manger, Montgomery County Police Department  
Mr. John J. McCarthy, Montgomery County State's Attorney*

### **Call to Order:**

Kay Romero, President, brought the meeting to order at 7:38 PM

Liz Wheeler, VP for Administration, read the PTA mission.

### **Approval of Agenda and Oct. 28, 2008 Minutes:**

The agenda was amended to move: New Business: Election for VP for Educational Issues, Election for VP for Legislation; Motion: Proposed by Juan Johnson, AVP for Northwest, Poolesville, Quince Orchard, & Seneca Valley; and Discussion: School system closing (or not) for Inauguration Day (January 20, 2009) to before Reports, and was approved as amended.

The minutes from the Oct. 28, 2008 DA were amended to correct Delegates names and were approved as amended.

### **Treasurer's Report:**

Dale Ryan, Treasurer, reviewed Expenditures for November. Our total YTD income was \$30,592. She then reviewed the Budget, and reminded Delegates that MCCPTA is now asking that local PTAs pay their MCCPTA dues monthly, to coincide with their payments to MD PTA. The first installment was due November 1, 2008. Our total YTD expenses of \$21,826 leave us with \$8,765 net operating income. She then reviewed the Balance Sheet. She stated that we have money to cover our expenses, but reiterated that it is important for locals to get their dues into us.

Kay Romero stated that the Treasurer's Report will be filed, and added a brief list of our operating expenses; office manager, Blue Book, copying, materials, etc., and noted that when the Blue Books return from the printer in about 2 weeks, they will only be sent via pony mail to schools that have paid MCCPTA dues. Blue Books are pre paid out of the PTA dues collected. The printer is paid upfront before printing and that is a large expense for MCCPTA.

### **New Business:**

#### **Elections:**

Liz Wheeler read the section of the bylaws pertaining to the election of officers to fill vacancies. She noted that the Nominating Committee, which was voted in at the DA in October, went straight to work and has been working hard to fill vacancies that arose. They were required to have nominees sent out in under two weeks per our bylaws, but accomplished the task in under two weeks. She offered kudos to them for their diligence. She then provided an overhead that contained the duties of officers.

Carol Salisbury, Nominating Committee Chair then presented the nominees:

***Merry Eisner, VP for Educational Issues***  
***Rebecca Smondrowski, VP for Legislation***

Kay Romero called for nominees from the floor for each office, but there were none. Since there were none, the Body agreed to vote for them as a slate by voice vote. The vote carried.

#### **Motion:**

Juan Johnson, AVP for Northwest, Poolesville, Quince Orchard, & Seneca Valley brought forth the following motion:

*Move that the MCCPTA Delegates Assembly set a 10 minute time limit on original motions, and that this limit be in effect beginning with the November 25, 2008 Delegates Assembly.*

The motion was seconded, and Juan spoke to the motion by saying that this was a way for the chair to set a limit, and that the time could always be extended if the Body felt it was necessary. With no further discussion, the motion passed on voice vote.

#### **Discussion:**

School system closing (or not) for Inauguration Day (January 20, 2009).

Kay reviewed Dr. Weast's recommendation regarding Inauguration Day 2009. She reminded the Body that the BOE has the final say. She also noted that Christopher Barclay, member of the BOE, has put forward a proposed resolution to the BOE that the schools be closed that day and in the future for Inauguration Day.

Rebecca Smondrowski, Roberto Clemente MS Delegate, brought forward the following motion:

*Move that the schools be closed on Inauguration Day, January 20, 2009.*

The motion was seconded. It was noted in response to a question that this motion was only for Inauguration Day, 2009, not for future Inauguration Days.

Rich Edelman, Wootton Cluster coordinator, spoke in opposition to the motion.

Lori Wilen, Magruder HS Delegate, offered an amendment to the motion in support of Chris Barclay's resolution:

*Amend to close every four years on Inauguration Day.*

Her amendment was seconded.

Tony Zagami, Sherwood ES President, asked if the BOE could tie the hands of future BOEs by forcing the schools to be closed every Inauguration Day in the future.

Kay pointed out that we have past resolutions and motions that remain organization positions. She then re-read parts of Chris Barclay's resolution for clarification.

Bill Jacobs, Olney ES Delegate, stated that he felt it could be viewed as partisan if we only supported the 2009 Inauguration Day as a holiday and not future Inaugurations.

Helene Bernstein, Little Bennett ES Delegate, was in opposition to the amendment and the motion, questioning if parents would really take their kids to the Inauguration, and if this could possibly result in schools being open later into the summer.

Frances Frost, Bel Pre/Strathmore ES President, added that while closing the schools was probably not a partisan move, the teachers had requested the day off, and she was concerned about there being adequate coverage that day. She moved:

*That the two parts of the motion be split so that the amendment was separate from the original motion.*

The motion was seconded.

Linda Bozzonetti, Julius West MS Delegate, suggested the word "Presidential" be added to the original motion, so that we were clear which Inauguration we were speaking about.

Monique Riddick, Brooke Grove ES Delegate, stated that their PTA wanted school open, but if it is closed, that it should be for all future Inaugurations also, not just this one.

Kay reminded the Body that currently we had the motion to separate the two parts on the floor for discussion.

Laurie Halverson, Safety Committee Chair, moved:

*That we extend the time for discussion by 10 minutes.*

The motion was seconded and approved by voice vote.

Lori Wilen, Magruder HS Delegate, stated that the reason she would like to see the resolution and amendment to stay as one was because it then mirrors what Chris Barclay had presented in his resolution to the BOE.

Since there was no further discussion on this point, a vote was taken, and the motion to separate the parts failed on a voice vote.

Laurie Halverson, Churchill Cluster Coordinator, felt that PTAs should not feel pressured to vote, and that they should abstain if they felt pressured.

Linda Bozzonetti, Julius West MS Delegate, stated that she felt the schools should be open because of childcare issues for parents that must work that day and children on free and reduced meals would be coming off an already three day weekend and thus miss 4 consecutive days of meals. She offered an amendment that the day be considered an excused absence but that the students would need to turn in a meaningful activity like a BCR or the equivalent on the day. It was pointed out that Dr. Weast had already suggested that it be an excused day off.

Sharon Bland, Seven Locks ES Delegate, felt that the schools should be open because kids will likely not pay attention to the Inauguration and just be out playing and that they would be better off in school with guided discussions.

Sally Taber, DCC Coordinator, said that high school exams (and some middle school students take them too) were that week, and closing schools that day would mean there are no make up days for exams. She also elaborated for parents of younger children that the exams need to be finished that week, because the next week the high school students start a new semester, frequently with new teachers.

Andrea Bernardo, AVP for the Churchill, Richard Montgomery, Rockville, Wootton clusters, said that she is perturbed that the teacher union insists on a day off for the State Teacher Convention that most teachers do not attend, and so she is not sympathetic to the teachers in this request.

Suzanne Babich, Rockville HS Delegate, continued the expression of concern regarding high school exam week, and included the fact that some students take classes at Montgomery College, and the buses for transporting the students from the middle schools to the high schools were already arranged. Also, if school was closed it might mean three exams a day for some students, and that would add a lot of stress to the students.

Anita Balaehandra, Bradley Hills ES Delegate, (but speaking for herself) felt it was too late to be changing the calendar now. This should have been thought of earlier.

Tony Zagami, Sherwood ES President, but speaking only for himself, agreed that the disruption would be too much and that the kids were better off in school that day.

Sharon Bland, Seven Locks ES Delegate, called the question.

Susan Thomas, Gifted Child Committee Chair asked for clarification on two points: 1) Are people able to vote if their PTA had not met to discuss this matter? and 2) If the PTA had not paid its dues, can those schools vote?

Kay clarified that sometimes delegates are asked to vote without bringing the issue back to their community if it is time sensitive. This issue has been out on the MCCPTA listservs and community/PTA listservs for a while now, as well as having been discussed at some PTA meetings.

Since the question had been called, the Body voted to end debate.

Kay then read the list of schools that had paid their dues that night (11/25/2008). Then she read the list of schools that had not paid. We now voted on the complete motion, with amendments.

*Move that the schools be closed on Inauguration Day, January 20, 2009 and to close every four years on the Presidential Inauguration Day.*

By voice vote, the motion failed. A standing vote was done with a check of what school the Delegates were from, using the list of who had paid their dues. The count was 53 against the motion, 19 in favor.

Anne Witkowsky, Bethesda ES Delegate, asked if we could bring this up for future years. Kay clarified that every year there is a calendar workgroup that MCCPTA has representation on, along with MCPS staff and unions. Anyone can bring it up when MCCPTA seeks feedback on the upcoming calendars or can send recommendations to the BOE. In any year, a Delegate can bring a motion before the body.

Dale Ryan reminded the Delegates that it was important to bring their voting cards to the Delegates Assemblies. She encouraged the Delegates to ask their PTA Presidents for them. If a PTA does not have them, and has paid their dues, they can call the MCCPTA office for assistance. PTAs that paid that night would get cards ponied to schools the next day by the MCCPTA office manager.

A point of clarification was requested as to what we had just voted on and what it meant. The clarification was that there was no vote to support either Dr. Weast's recommendation or Chris Barclay's proposed resolution, but a vote on a specific motion approved by this body.

Chris Biamonte, Cannon Road ES President, moved:

*That if schools are open on Inauguration Day 2009, to allow students an excused absence.*

Monique Riddick, Broke Grove ES Delegate, added that she would like to see excused absences not just for students that are being taken to the Inauguration, but for any students to stay home and watch on TV with their parents too. A friendly amendment was offered to add:

*To celebrate this historic event.*

The motion, with the friendly amendment, was seconded.

Beth Kennington, Grading and Reporting Committee Chair and Northwest HS Delegate, said that it is important for students taking exams to have an excused absence so that they can make up the exams.

Cherly Peirce, Twinbrook ES President, because parents might want to keep their children home from school that day for other reasons than to celebrate the Inauguration, such as concerns about adequate coverage, offered an amendment to remove:

*To celebrate this historic event.*

It was seconded and passed on a voice vote.

A vote was then taken on the motion:

*That if schools are open on Inauguration Day 2009, to allow students an excused absence.*

It passed on vice vote.

Kay stated that she would write a letter stating our position to Dr. Weast and the BOE and include the motions the Delegates approved.

Kelly Rogers, Darnestown ES President, felt that staff deserves some opportunities to take time off that day, and thus moved:

*To recommend to Dr. Weast that staff who request leave on Inauguration Day, January 20, 2009, be allowed to take leave.*

The motion was seconded.

Lora Johnson, Thurgood Marshall ES Delegate, thought that teachers should use a personal day if they want the day off.

Bob Quackenbush, Frost MS President, was opposed to this motion, being concerned that there would not be enough coverage if the teachers were allowed to take the day off.

Clarification requested – could principals deny leave on that day if a teacher requests it? A Delegate who is also an MCPS employee responded that yes, a principal can deny leave if they think that coverage for that day is low. If they take sick leave, a principal can require that the staff member bring a sick note when they return to work.

Laurie Halverson, Churchill Cluster Coordinator, felt this was a personnel issue and that we should not get involved in it.

On a voice vote, the motion was defeated.

Rebecca Smondrowski, Roberto Clemente MS Delegate and MCCPTA Curriculum Chair, felt as Curriculum Chair, that it would be good for the students to benefit from the events on Inauguration Day. Thus she offered the following motion:

*That if schools are open January 20, 2009, that we support a change in curriculum, when/where able, to include discussion and viewing of the day's events.*

It was seconded.

The question was called, and the vote for calling the question passed on voice vote.

It passed on a voice vote.

### **Reports:**

#### **President's Report:**

Kay offered a brief summary of the MD PTA Convention, and read the bylaws change adopted that would impact the locals: within 2 weeks of their election, local PTA must send to Maryland PTA the contact information of their officers. She also noted there were 10 bylaws changes, some related to Council Bylaws and MDPTA Bylaws. MCCPTA was currently in the process of updating its bylaws.

On the recent parent surveys, she was looking for feedback as to when the cards with info arrived. They were supposed to have arrived before parents went to schools for parent conferences, so that the parents could use the computers in the schools, but apparently some cards arrived after conferences. The cards were mailed and sent home in backpacks.

Kay Romero informed the Body that the Office of Shared Accountability would be bringing a survey on health and nutrition related to Policy JPG (Wellness: Physical and Nutritional Health) implementation in schools to either the January or February DA to be filled out by Delegates.

She reminded everyone that Policy AEB was currently up for public comment, until Jan. 23, 2009.

She noted that Dr. Weast had canceled his Operating Budget Presentation that was originally scheduled for Dec. 11. This was possibly due to the current economic climate.

Kay pointed out that the MCPS was scheduled to discuss curricular fees at a meeting tomorrow (Nov. 26, 2008) and that she had been invited. She would attend but had no further information as to where MCPS was in this process since MCCPTA had not been a part of the workgroup related to curricular fees.

### **CIP Committee:**

Steve Augustino, CIP Committee Chair presented a summary. He stated that every day we seem to be getting more bad news about the budget. On Nov. 20, the BOE approved the Superintendent's recommendation, which included \$200 million for construction. But, he cautioned that we need to make it all the way to May with that amount intact, and we may be short \$10 million from the State. Other sources of fund may also fall short, including the recordation tax. His committee will watch the process as it goes forward. Every dollar will count. They are also working with the Annapolis Delegation, and may call on the local PTAs to support us by lobbying on behalf of MCCPTA with the Delegation.

A Delegate asked for clarification on what happens if the County Council votes the BOE approved budget down?

In late May, there is a reconciliation meeting. Last year the budget was cut \$75 million.

Further clarification was asked on if we are able to advocate during this time or if we need to wait for testimony time?

We definitely can advocate at any time. There will be testimony before the County Council, probably in February, and of course there is PTA night in Annapolis in January. So there will be opportunities to advocate.

### **Legislative Update:**

Rebecca Smondrowski, VP for Legislation, gave the Legislative Update. She stated that the Legislative Committee will be working hard to advocate for our schools and will certainly let PTAs know about opportunities to advocate. Kay Romero and Cluster Coordinators recently attended the BOE Legislative dinner, which had 16 MCCPTA Cluster coordinators representing 14 clusters. She also noted that she would be putting something out on the listserv as to when the Legislative committee would be meeting and where.

### **Operating Budget:**

Liz Wheeler, VP for Administration asked Delegates to make note of the following dates:

Operating Budget Workshop, January 10, 2009, 9-11 am, location yet TBD

Operating Budget forum, Jan. 5, 2008, 7 pm, CESC

Operating Budget testimony before the BOE, Jan. 14 and 21 at 7 pm. She arranges testimony times for cluster coordinators, but individuals can testify to if they call the BOE office to sign up. Dec. 18 is the date for individuals to sign up.

The workshop is open to all interested people, and focuses on testimony writing tips. The forum is important to attend. We will formulate some question in advance, but it is really important for people to attend, since we have elected officials from County council, County executive's office, MCPS, BOE, Annapolis, all in the room at the same time. If we don't have sufficient numbers of people they will think we don't care. This forum is separate from the January DA later that month.

The awards to the local PTAs that won Maryland PTA awards at the MDPTA State Convention will be personally delivered to schools by Kay Romero next week.

**AWARD WINNERS**

*Montgomery County Award Winners-Maryland PTA State Convention President's Dinner and Award Celebration-November 14, 2008.*

**MEMBERSHIP**

*This was calculated based on the information that was submitted by the local units to Maryland PTA on March 31, 2008*

**Membership, 5 percent growth**

*Burning Tree Elementary  
Laytonsville Elementary  
Sherwood Elementary  
Spark Matsunaga Elementary*

**Membership, 15 percent growth**

*Westover Elementary  
Whetstone Elementary  
Robert Frost Middle School*

**Membership, 25 percent growth**

*Damascus Elementary  
Fairland Elementary  
John T Baker Middle School  
James Hubert Blake High School  
Northwood High School*

**PTSA Student Membership**

*Ridgeview Middle School*

**Outstanding County/City Award**

*Given to one local in each county/city for the largest percentage of membership based on school population. This was calculated based on the information that was submitted by the local units to Maryland PTA*

*Winston Churchill HS*

**DAD4PTA Award**

*A male PTA member who has made contributions, which are outstanding and exemplary and reflect the Purposes of the PTA*

*Mr. Melvin Moore, Briggs Chaney Middle School PTSA- Mr. Moore attended the awards dinner and we congratulate him on his award and his commitment to PTA.*

The meeting was adjourned at 9:23 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Patti Twigg, Secretary for Delegates Assembly

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**Board of Directors Meeting - December 4, 2008  
MCCPTA Committee Reports**

**MCCPTA Legislative Committee Report  
Rebecca Smondrowski, VP for Legislation**

November has been a Strong but busy month for the Legislative group.

On Monday November 10<sup>th</sup>, we had our annual legislative dinner. Thanks to the efforts of Merry Eisner and our Legislative committee, more than 50 members of the BOD and 17 members of our Annapolis delegation were in attendance. It was a great night and a wonderful chance for us to advocate for our county.

In addition to this, 16 people from 14 clusters as well as our president, Kay Romero, were in attendance when the Board of Ed presented to the County Council's Education Sub-committee as well as several members of our Annapolis delegation.

As we get closer to the legislative session in Annapolis, which begins on January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2009 there is a sense that our priorities are being heard, and our lobbying efforts will continue. (as they're especially important in this harsh economic climate.)

In the next week or so I will be working to put together a date for a December meeting of the (MCCPTA) Legislative Committee. Once I have all of that information, we will post it on the bulletin, and anyone interested in joining us in our efforts, should feel free to contact me.

I want to go ahead and thank everyone for all of the time and effort that they have contributed to things so far. What we do is a long road, but we are making a difference and I am looking forward to a great year!

## **MCCPTA Safety Committee Report**

**Chair: Laurie Halverson**

Visitor Management System: MCPS will be providing visitor management systems to the following schools as of July 2009:

### HIGH SCHOOLS

\*Walter Johnson (CCTV only), \*Richard Montgomery (CCTV only)

Note: "CCTV" means "closed circuit television" cameras.

### MIDDLE SCHOOLS

\*Parkland, \*Loiderman, \*Sligo, \*Kingsview, \*Eastern, \*Forest Oak, \*King, \*Banneker, \*Montgomery Village, \*Clemente, \*Wood, \*Farquhar, \*Westland, \*Julius West (CCTV only)

### ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

\*Harmony Hills, \*Sligo Creek, \*Glenallan, \*Oakland Terrace, \*Highland, \*Pine Crest, New Hampshire Estates, East Silver Spring, Shriver, Brookhaven, Viers Mill, Weller Road, Wheaton Woods, Burnt Mills, Broad Acres, Jackson Road, Cannon Road, Greencastle, Drew, Strawberry Knolls, Gaithersburg, Goshen, Watkins Mill, Whetstone, Stedwick

\*already installed

Laurie Halverson, Kay Romero and Merry Eisner will visit Westland Middle School on December 5 to get an overview of how the new system works and will report back to MCCPTA on what they learn.

Advocacy Efforts with Elected Officials: MCCPTA board members met with our state delegates on November 10. Laurie Halverson shared safety concerns with state delegates and senators such as Rob Garagiola, Nancy King, Kathleen Dumais and Brian Feldman. Laurie also met with County Councilman Roger Berliner and BOE member, Shirley Brandman this month.

Bullying: At our November committee meeting, we discussed the current protocol for bullying as explained on the MCPS website. We looked at the bullying forms. There is a form that parents can complete to report a bullying incident, (MCPS Form 230-35, "Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Reporting Form." <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/forms/pdf/230-35.pdf>.) Once the form is completed, the administration must follow up with another form, (MCPS Form 230-36, "Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Incident School Investigation Form." <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/forms/pdf/230-36.pdf>.) However, there seems to be a missing link for the parents. It appears to parents that administrators don't always follow up and parents usually don't know what action has been taken which is very frustrating. It seems there is not enough education for parents on how to communicate with MCPS when they are aware of a bullying incident affecting their child. Most don't even know that a form to report a bullying incident exists. Often, parents are not even aware that their child is being bullied. We discussed that principals aren't motivated to educate parents about the bullying form because of the pressure by MCPS to reduce incidents. The more educated parents become, the more likely forms will be completed which ends up reflecting poorly on the schools and the performance of the staff. There is not enough oversight and there is an "ostrich" affect with the bullying policy. Stronger actions need to take place and more education will help improve the current protocol. We are hoping to gain more knowledge on the current MCPS protocol at our meeting on December 18. We will try to have a guest speaker from MCPS to give us a better understanding about how MCPS is directing the schools on bullying protocol.

Incidents at a Glance: A new report is available called "School Safety and Security at a Glance" which is a comprehensive report per school that includes information on suspensions, serious incidents, safety related programs, safety incidents requiring code red or blue status, and selected responses to the school environment surveys. We will discuss this new report at our December meeting.

**MCCPTA Communications Committee Report**  
**Committee Chair: Patti Twigg, [listservsmod@mccpta.com](mailto:listservsmod@mccpta.com)**

**1) Website:**

Website Coordinators:

Sharon Goodall [webmaster@mccpta.com](mailto:webmaster@mccpta.com)

Lin-Lin Mao [webmaster@mccpta.com](mailto:webmaster@mccpta.com)

The Website subcommittee updated the MCCPTA website with the following:

Webpages updated in November:

- MCCPTA Homepage
- Gifted Child Committee
- CIP Committee
- Nominating Committee with this year's committee members
- Testimonies, Press Releases, & Correspondence
- Local PTAs Websites with updated or new links
- MCCPTA officers
- Dues Voucher form
- MCCPTA Calendar

Other additions:

- Memo from MCPS to Principals on the Parent Satisfaction Survey
- Email address for new Special Events chair
- October BOD minutes
- Webpage for MCCPTA Ad Hoc Committee related to ICB
- Statewide School Breakfast Contest announcement
- MCCPTA Testimony to BOE on School Calendar
- MCCPTA and Cluster Testimonies to Montgomery County BOE on the Superintendent's Recommended FY 2010 Capital Budget and the Amended FY 2009-2014 CIP
- Memos from Superintendent Jerry Weast to Members of BOE with Follow-ups from the November 12 & 13, 2008, Public Hearings on the FY 2009-2014 Amended Capital Improvements Program (CIP)
- November MCCPTA President's Letter
- MSDE slide presentation on working effectively with diverse families
- Letter from Montgomery County BOE President Nancy Navarro to Senator Madaleno, Delegate Feldman and Members of the Montgomery County Delegation on November 18, 2008 meeting
- Presentation from The Montgomery County BOE and The Montgomery County Delegation Annual Meeting, November 18, 2008
- Presentation on Montgomery County Public Schools Demographic Trends and CIP Issues, October 14, 2008
- Presentation from Board of Education Work Session - Superintendent's Recommended FY 2010 Capital Budget and Amended FY2009-2014 CIP, November 6, 2008

There were several changes to alias email addresses due to changes in officers.

Committee chairs, please look at your committee's website page and let the Website subcommittee know of any changes you would like to make. All MCCPTA standing committees website pages can be accessed from the following link:

<http://mccpta.net/committees.html>.

Officers, please take a look at the other MCCPTA website pages and let us know if there is information that is no longer relevant or needs to be updated. The MCCPTA website is at <http://mccpta.net>.

**2) Listservs:**

Listsers Moderator:

Patti Twigg [listservsmod@mccpta.com](mailto:listservsmod@mccpta.com)

As of November 30, 2008 membership on the various lists is as follows:

Listserv	# subscribed	Net increase/decrease from last report
MCCPTA_Board	86	+2
MCCPTA_Bulletin	613	-3

MCCPTA Delegates	470	+3
MCCPTA Presidents	288	+1
MCCPTA Treasurers	218	-1

The auto-reminder calendar for the Bulletin and BOD listservs has been updated as meetings and events are scheduled or changed.

### 3) Spotlight:

The MCCPTA website has a corner just for your school or PTA and its accomplishments! “Spotlight” is the place for your school or PTA to shine – for the whole county to see! Don't be shy - you know how great you are, here's your chance to let everyone else know it too! If you have news and/or achievements from your school or PTA, please notify MCCPTA (via email to [office@mccpta.com](mailto:office@mccpta.com) and/or [webmaster@mccpta.com](mailto:webmaster@mccpta.com)).

### MCCPTA Cultural Arts Committee Report

**Chair: Priscilla Peterson**

There continues to be a healthy interaction of information exchanged on our PTArts listserv, with many MCPS Cultural Arts chairpersons writing in about performances they are having in their schools, giving or asking for recommendations of performers. If the Cultural Arts Chair from your school is not a member of the PTArts listserv, please encourage them to join - it is an excellent communications tool. They can join by sending their name, school and committee position to: PTArts-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. They can also feel free to contact me at the email address below with any questions.

I am continuing to receive information from Cultural Arts chairpersons about their school budgets, and hope to post a list of all MCPS Cultural Arts Budgets soon on the PTArts listserv. In the past, this has been a big help to Cultural Arts reps who are trying to increase their budgets for performances, and can then show their school's PTA what other schools in the county are spending on Cultural Arts.

After the MCPS Showcases ended in October, there was some discussion of changes that may be made to the schedule for these next year. Several Cultural Arts chairpersons suggested that the Showcases begin at 9:30 a.m. rather than 9:00, in order to better accommodate the many elementary school reps who attend. Also, many people requested that Seda Gelenian, who runs the Showcases, allow for a half hour lunch break, particularly since there is a cafeteria right here at Carver where the Showcases are held. She will no doubt be making an announcement about these changes early next fall.

### MCCPTA Health Committee Report

**Chair: Susan Young**

**Update on MCPS School Wellness Committee:** The MCPS Wellness Policy Work Group, in cooperation with the Office of Shared Accountability, has developed a comprehensive survey to determine the number and types of health- and wellness-related activities currently taking place in our schools. There will be separate surveys for principals, teachers, and PTA leaders. The surveys will be distributed early in 2009, and will form the basis for the development of a “toolkit” of strategies for promoting wellness in our schools.

To join the MCCPTA Health Committee list serve, contact Susan Young at [susan@youngspa.com](mailto:susan@youngspa.com).

### MCCPTA Grading & Reporting Committee Report

**Chair: Beth Kennington**

1. Standards-based report cards are being field-tested in 24 elementaries
2. The Grading and Reporting Committee is preparing a survey targeting parents in the field-test schools.
3. MCPS recently sent a memo to all secondary school principals, communicating the proper use of special grades X, Z and zero. Look for your school to post that slide (which looks similar to the attached document) in school newsletters, on school listservs (through the PTSAs too) and on each school's Edline splash page.
4. The Grading and Reporting Implementation Team set its meeting focus topics to the remaining meetings for the 2008-2009 SY. Among several other topics, course grade calculations will be discussed at GRIT in February.

### MCCPTA Special Education Committee Report

**Chair: Jeanne Taylor**

I still receive occasional e-mails requesting information about the Special Education Committee. This is very encouraging.

On December 1, 2008 we will hold our next meeting. Judy Pattik and Gwen Mason, Directors of Special Education for MCPS, will stop by to introduce themselves to the group and briefly explain their departments. In addition, Rich Weinfeld and members of his consulting group will come speak about Best Practices for educating students who are Gifted/Talented & Learning Disabled

(GTL), Best Practices for working with students who have Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Mentoring Programs. Rich is a well-known and highly respected author and speaker on issues such as these. Hard copies of the slide show will be available at the meeting.

On December 2, 2008 I have been invited to speak about Special Education in MCPS at the Fox Chapel ES PTA meeting.

In the next few weeks I plan to send out an article by E-mail about the difference between Individual Education Programs (IEPs) and 504 Plans.

### **Report by Janice Edwing, GRIT Committee Member for the MCCPTA Special Education Committee (GRIT- Grading and Reporting Implementation Team)**

#### Some Stakeholder feedback on Standards Based Reporting (from the 11/20/08 GRIT meeting):

1. Teachers are given a good amount of discretion to put together varied data points to support kids grades above and beyond some of the normal assessment tools like math unit testing.

A concern is that the same amount of creativity and initiative is used for all levels and abilities from GT to SPED. One could imagine a scenario (especially this accelerated mode MCPS seems to be in)—that a teacher might look extra hard for data to support a GT child's grades if data (up to that point) wasn't necessarily reflecting the GT status. Where as if a child is known to struggle or be tagged LD and the data up to that point just serves to confirm that level of underachievement... a teacher could not make the same choice to go for an extra data point or two... thereby not necessarily providing both children the same benefit of the doubt... so to speak.

2. Grades of 1,2,3 or 4: Using Reading as the easier example— In standards based reporting it appears *technically*-- a child can perform Above grade level, On grade level or Below grade level and receive grades of 1, 2, 3 or 4 in that respective area. Therefore resulting example grades could be:

- ❖ Tommy reads Above his grade level and gets a 2 as his grade;
- ❖ Benny reads Below his grade level but gets a 3;
- ❖ Mary reads On/within her grade level and gets a 4...

Comparatively, it's been a little hard for parents to grasp this aspect;

Additionally (from the GRIT FLASH REPORT on 11/20/08):

- GRIT planned the calendar for 2008-2009 using priority topics. The calendar will be shared with constituents.
- DCI is developing rubrics and assessments for Grades 4 and 5, standards-based grading and reporting, for use in 24 schools in 2009-2010.
- ES OARS forum was reviewed. It was developed for use by teachers in the 24 implementation schools.
- Communication for special scores has been distributed to secondary principals. See attachment.

The GRIT December agenda includes the following:

- Frequency of posting grades in Pinnacle (3-week rule)
- OSA process for assessing impact of secondary grading and reporting procedures

### **MCCPTA CIP Committee Report**

**Chair: Steve Augustino**

On October 28, 2008, the Superintendent released his proposed FY 2010 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY 2009-14 Capital Improvement Program ("Recommendation"). The Recommendation proposes a FY 2010 budget of \$200 million and amendments that increase the six-year CIP by \$15 million.

In preparation for cluster testimony on the Recommendation, the Committee co-hosted a CIP Forum with the MCPS Division of Construction on November 3 and a CIP Testimony Workshop on November 8.

MCCPTA and each cluster gave testimony on November 12 and 13, 2008. On November 20, the Board of Education approved the Recommendation with minor clarifications and instructions.

Also, the Committee produced a Guide to the 2010 CIP, which was distributed to the MCCPTA Board of Directors. This Guide will provide background for future discussions concerning the elements that comprise the CIP. In coming months, the Committee will work with the VP Legislation and VP Educational Issues to lobby for state and local funding for the CIP. The Committee also is exploring opportunities to testify in Annapolis in support of state construction funding.

## **MCCPTA By-Laws Committee Report**

**Chair: Joe Stewart**

Local training/assistance requests

- Currently reviewing new MD PTA Local Bylaws Unit Report
- Contacting PTAs that are not in compliance
- Asking cluster coordinators for their assistance
- Working on a new approval check-off list

Update of MCCPTA Bylaws

- Waiting on MD PTA for new county bylaws template

Known Bylaws Update Issues to Review

- Nominating Committee election timeline
  - when to elect the nominating committee,
  - (Allow summer to meet potential candidates?)
  - first meeting within two weeks of election,
  - replace member if moves or no longer in PTA,
- Legislative Vice President (conflicts with committee)
- Quorum and reorganization (Cluster Coordinator's attendance @ BoD)
- Duties of Officers – Secretary should be the holder of documents.
- Other issues?

Bylaws Submission Timeline

- Meet in December
- Present pre-draft to BOD in January
- Draft in February (post on list server)
- DA vote in March (DA vote in April if March DA snowed out)
- Submit to MD PTA by May

## **MCCPTA Reflections Committee Report**

**Chair: Melissa McDonald**

There is nothing new to report this month. This year's Reflections art program seems to be coming along nicely for the local PTAs. This year's theme is "Wow!" and it has the potential to be the biggest year so far for submissions from Montgomery county schools. The official Reflections guidelines were sent by MDPTA to the local presidents in September. The guidelines and other resources (flyers, posters etc) are also available in pdf format on the National PTA website, the MDPTA website, the MCCPTA website, and my MCCPTA Yahoo! Group listserv. Many schools' Reflections deadlines were the first week of November, so entries being forwarded to the county level should begin arriving at the MCCPTA office by mid-December. The deadline for submission to MCCPTA is January 5, 2009, which I have extended by three days from the MDPTA council deadline. The deadline for submission to state is January 23, 2009.

I continue to receive e-mails from students (and parents of students) interested in the Reflections program. These people are referred to their local PTA's Reflections chairperson for assistance.

Most correspondence between the local chairs and me is via the Yahoo! Group listserv, or via e-mail. A face-to-face committee meeting will be scheduled in January.

MCCPTA Reflections Awards Ceremony is scheduled for Wednesday, April 29, 2009, at the BlackRock Center for the Arts in Germantown.

## **MCCPTA Operating Budget Committee Report**

**Chair: Pam Moomau**

The MCCPTA Operating Budget Priorities Resolution and MCCPTA Operating Budget Compact have been delivered to MCPS officials.

MCCPTA will have a chance to talk with MCPS and County officials at **our annual Operating Budget Forum on Monday, January 5, 7:30-9 p.m.** Invitations to Board and School officials go out next week. We are asking each participant to make a brief (2 minute statement) and then participate in a Q&A session. Please mark your calendars.

We will conduct an Operating Budget Workshop to help cluster coordinators prepare operating budget testimony on **Saturday, January 10, Kensington Parkwood ES media center, tentatively 9 a.m. -noon.** A notice will be posted to the website.

The Budget picture keeps getting worse. **While the Superintendent still plans to release his proposed budget December 11, the big roll-out public meeting has been cancelled** (an indicator of how bad the news is going to be.) Recent information from the County Council is that the County's expected shortfall for FY 2010 is as much as \$500 million (up from an earlier estimate of \$250 million). This doesn't incorporate reduced energy costs, so the picture may improve on that front; but it also doesn't incorporate further downturns in the economy, which would work in the opposite direction. MCPS's share of the shortfall is a bit less than half. The union contracts have been reopened. If all the COLAs for next year were rescinded, that would make up about ¼ of the shortfall for the County, a little more than 1/3 for MCPS. (MCCPTA, per National PTA policy, does not comment on contract issues.) The State revenue picture is also grim, although some of us were assured by some members of the Montgomery County State delegation that they are making education funding a priority.

Bottom line: MCPS is anticipating having to make somewhere between \$60 million and \$140 million in cuts. Savings per teaching position: \$60,000. To put these figures in context, the total MCPS budget for FY 2009 (current year) is \$2.07 billion.

### **MCCPTA Curriculum Committee Report**

**Rebecca Smondrowski, Committee Member and Merry Eisner, VP for Educational Issues**

November has been a month of collecting feedback and prioritizing initiatives for the Curriculum Committee. After our first meeting with the CAC as well as the CAA, we have focused on preparing possible resolutions that we would like MCCPTA and MCPS to consider. At this point in time, we consider our top priority to be Consistency in Curriculum. This would include a resolution to develop our own list of measurements for a "successful and well balanced curriculum" as well as a strong approach to curriculum rollout.

December carries another set of CAC meetings for the Curriculum Committee as well as another chance for MCCPTA to meet with MCPS and review where things are heading. When the Curriculum Committee meets again in January, we will continue to work on completing our list of priorities.

***PRESIDENT'S LETTER***

**MCCPTA  
2096 Gaither Road  
Suite 204  
Delegates  
Rockville, MD 20850**

**PONY MAIL to PTA  
Presidents to be shared  
with School PTA**

**December 2008**

**MCCPTA Calendar 2008-2009**

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

**Upcoming Calendar Items:**

**December**

**18 MCCPTA Safety Committee Meeting 12:30pm - 2:30pm**

**January**

**5 Reflections entries due to PTA Office  
5 MCCPTA Operating Budget Forum 7:30pm – 9:00pm  
7 MCCPTA Safety Committee Meeting 7:00pm – 9:00pm  
8 MCCPTA Board of Directors Meeting 7:30pm – 10:00pm  
10 MCCPTA Operating Budget Workshop  
14 MCPS BOE Operating Budget Hearing 7:00pm  
21 MCPS BOE Operating Budget Hearing 7:00pm  
27 MCCPTA Delegate Assembly 6:30pm – 10:00pm**

**February**

**2 MCCPTA Special Education Committee Meeting 7:30pm – 9:00pm  
5 MCCPTA Board of Directors Meeting 7:30pm – 10:00pm  
9 MCCPTA Safety Committee Meeting 7:30pm – 9:00pm  
12 BOE Cluster Meeting 7:30pm – 9:00pm  
18 MCCPTA Curriculum Committee Meeting 7:00pm – 9:00p  
24 MCCPTA Delegate Assembly 6:30pm – 10:00pm  
25 BOE Cluster Meeting 7:30 pm – 9:00pm**

**FROM THE MARYLAND PTA CALENDAR - SAVE THE TIME IN 2009!**

**July 18, 2009 - Summer Leadership Conference**  
The Conference Center at the Maritime Institute  
Linthicum Heights, Maryland

**November 13-14, 2009 94th Fall Convention**  
Holiday Inn & Conference Center  
Frederick, Maryland

**2009 PTA National Convention**  
113th Annual PTA National Convention & Exhibition  
Friday, June 26–Monday, June 29, 2009

Greater Ft. Lauderdale Broward County Convention Center, Ft. Lauderdale, FL