

March 2009

MCCPTA Safety Committee Report

Chair: Laurie Halverson

Indoor Air Quality: The Safety Committee approved a resolution on Indoor Air Quality at MCPS Schools. The resolution will be discussed at the MCCPTA Board meeting on March 5 and if the Board approves, it will be introduced to the Delegates at the March DA meeting.

On February 5, Laurie Halverson, Kay Romero and Rebecca Smondrowski met with Director of Facilities, Joe Lavorgna, Director of Construction, James Song and Supervisor of Indoor Air Quality, Sean Yarup to discuss portable concerns. Joe gave us a list of all portables and their inspection rating. Here are some things we learned:

- Joe's Department lost 7.5 positions with the budget amendment which will reflect painfully.
- A Cluster Coordinator last summer observed HVAC work on some portables and learned that filters at this particular school were the wrong size. We asked about this and Joe said there was a problem with the vendor delivering the wrong size frequently when orders were placed, so other schools experienced the same problem. MCPS has now switched vendors and the first delivery was 100% accurate.
- There are about 93 portables listed by the IAQ Department in "fair" condition. MCPS is focusing on making repairs to these portables.
- An indeterminate number of MCPS portables have fiberglass lining inside the HVAC system. This is allowed by building code, however, if the HVAC system has ever been damaged with moisture, fiberglass cannot be cleaned. Mold spores can attach and cannot be removed and often cannot be seen if visually checked. Another product exists that can be cleaned and MCPS already uses it they suspect mold, called Rubberflex. There currently are no plans to replace all fiberglass lining with Rubberflex. There are also no plans to remove all carpet
- About 75 units will be moved over the summer. There are 437 portables for class use currently at MCPS. Every summer, they send back 20-30 portables to the vendor.
- Site placement depends on many factors and is the result of collaboration between principals, staff and the community. Factors considered include blacktop available, exit door location, drainage issues, bus loop, parking areas, county codes, etc. An architectural engineer is involved to assure correct grading and drainage. Portables that are going to be moved over the summer are evaluated by Sean in February/ March. The Department of Construction is responsible for the movement of portables to another school. Once the move is completed, parents can expect the portables should be in good condition.
- It costs about \$75,000 in a year for one portable to be leased and installed on site. Joe says "green" portables or better quality portables are not an option this year because MCPS must use current revenue and cannot afford more expensive portables.

Joe, James and Sean expressed a desire to be as transparent as possible, but are concerned about putting data out without explanation. MCCPTA will have a meeting for all parents concerned about portables near the beginning of the 2009/10 school year.

Bullying Policy: MSDE has announced the completion of the "Maryland's Model Anti-Bullying, Harassment, and Intimidation Policy." The new policy prohibits bullying, harassment, or intimidation of any person on school property or at school-sponsored functions, or by the use of electronic technology at a public school. Reprisals against individuals reporting bullying also are prohibited.

By July 1, MCPS must send a copy of its policy to MSDE (Maryland State Department of Education.) This spring, MCPS will gather stakeholder input in developing the policy. The Safety Committee has informed MCPS that we would like a representative at the table for discussion and we are waiting for more details.

A bullying subcommittee has formed. If you are interested in being on the subcommittee, please contact Laurie Halverson. The Subcommittee Chair is Melissa Kupferschmid.

Visitor Management System: This month, we have not received feedback from any schools on this new security technology. If you have any comments or concerns, please contact Laurie Halverson.