

Safety Committee Update - 8/10/07

Support a safe and secure environment for your kids - form a safety committee and/or appoint an MCCPTA Safety Committee liaison for your local PT(S)A!

Do you have concerns about traffic, pedestrian, or bus safety around your school? Are you worried about your school building security? Are there problems with bullying, student discipline, gangs or other student violence - in the school or on the playground? Have you noticed mold and other hazards to indoor air quality around your school? Are you up to date on issues affecting teen driving safety, and drug and alcohol abuse prevention? The MCCPTA safety committee works to gather and disseminate information about these issues to all MCPS parents. We need the help of each local PTA to keep us informed about the issues that your schools are facing, and to help us provide information about parent resources, MCPS policies, and advocacy steps at the local level. Please designate at least one person in your PTA to keep track of these issues - if you have a lot of them, a committee would be better. Watch for notices of MCCPTA Safety Committee meetings - we will try to schedule one each quarter- and check out the MCCPTA website under Committees/Safety for information.

Watch for support for building security in the MCPS Capital Improvement Program.

Last year, the Delegates' Assembly approved a Safety Committee resolution calling for more careful assessment of school building security by MCPS, and for resources to be allocated toward security where the assessments warrant. The new MCPS Master Plan for the FY 2008-13 Capital Improvement Program includes funds to install or upgrade security cameras in middle and high schools, and to improve the ability of elementary schools to monitor their main entrances. Remember to mention support for these initiatives in your capital budget advocacy.

A new School Safety Report is under development by MCPS.

Responding to a requirement by the County Council Office of Legislative Oversight, MCPS has been developing a template to provide information about school security for each school community. The current plan is to develop a one-page summary of statistics about suspensions, serious incident reports, safety-related climate survey responses, and available programs and resources for each school in MCPS. The format is modeled after *Schools at a Glance*, and it looks like a promising leap forward in providing parents with information about safety in their schools. MCPS plans to begin gathering input from "stakeholder groups," including parents. We will keep you informed as the process continues. They are targeting summer of 2008 for the publication of the first report.

Please email me at Pammoomau@comcast.net or call me at 301-530-9691 with any questions, suggestions, or other commentary on school safety.

Pam Moomau
Chair, MCCPTA Safety Committee