

**November BOD Report**  
**Safety Committee**  
**11/06/08**

**Pam Montgomery, MCPS Director of System Wide Safety Programs** attended our October meeting as our guest speaker. She explained her role and responsibilities in the safety of our children and MCPS staff .

MCPS spends approximately \$4 million per year on workers compensation, and that is why her "System-Wide Safety Programs" are very important to help reduce and prevent injuries in the workplace. Currently, there is no "dedicated" budget for system-wide safety programs. She is striving to provide a proactive safety program to prevent accidents before they occur. Some areas she is and has been involved in are emergency crisis preparedness development and implementation, including training of staff, overseeing the MCPS Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Program, overseeing the Automated External Defibrillator (AED) Program at high schools, overseeing hazardous material training on storage and use of such products in science, cleaning products, etc. She oversees OSHA/MOSH compliance with all applicable safety and health regulations including working with construction on safety requirements for new buildings, safety training, and responding to safety concerns at schools. She also oversees the play equipment replacement program for elementary schools, and assists schools with fire code compliance issues, facility safety issues, and work process safety issues.

Pam will soon have a program assistant to help with some of the administrative tasks and injury analysis, and data collection.

Pam has a safety handbook which will be updated. It has guidelines on safety equipment and recess supervision, but there are no requirements for a certain number of recess aides on the playground. Our nation or state does not have a requirement for various reasons such as liability, or different circumstances that make each playground unique (special ed students, blind spots or other factors making it difficult to view everyone from one location, type of equipment installed, etc.) Principals are given a budget and determine the need for their own schools. All new playground equipment is CPSI certified.

As part of the school's emergency crisis plan, volunteers and playground/recess aides should be aware of what to do in a code red or blue situation. It is recommended for one aide to hold a clipboard and a whistle with a blue or red sheet to hold up to alert other playground/recess aides/volunteers so they can quickly implement the appropriate plan if the students are on the playground . At least one aide should have a 2-way radio to call the nurse to attend to a medical emergency.

Pam answered several questions and gave contact numbers for traffic safety, security issues, pedestrian and bus safety and who to contact for more information.

**Pedestrian Safety:** PTAs are encouraged to let Laurie Halverson know if their schools have dangerous crossing areas. Our committee is gathering information to help us advocate for more crossing guards. Also, the short timing of lights came up as an issue at our last meeting, so if the lights don't allow enough time for crossing, please let us know where these locations are.

**Indoor Air Quality:** There are many problems associated with portables that involve the safety, security and health of our children. Laurie met with Sean Yarup of the Indoor Air Quality Team. His department responds to IAQ complaints, inspects and evaluates portables, and performs preventive services through BMPs, building maintenance plans. A few years ago, his department completed 17 BMPs and the past couple years has only been able to do 2 to 3 BMPs each year because of limited resources. They currently have an HVAC mechanic opening that is not frozen but has yet to be filled. They currently have 6 IAQ technicians and 4 mechanics (1 opening) and 1 electrician.

Last year, IAQ received 310 complaints compared to the previous year of 262 complaints. CO2 levels are elevated in portables, which affects the safety and health of our children. They are doing a pilot program with Fairland Center using a new heat pump/CO2 and humidity sensor that seems to be working. Rock Creek, Dufief, Burning Tree and Luxmanor are getting attention this year to some portables that need repairs and have a factory representative from Resun that is working on them.

Schools are chosen for BMPs using criteria like age, number of air quality complaints, number of air quality orders, geographic dispersion. New schools typically do not get BMPs such as Clarksburg HS.

The reason MCPS moved 1986 portables last summer to another school is that the MCPS owned portables are of better quality than leased portables and have been maintained better. IAQ is not involved unless asked when portables are moved from one school to another. The portables that moved to Clarksburg HS and Rocky Hill MS were inspected by IAQ at some point during the inspection process sometime in the past three years.

IAQ has inspected most of MCPS owned and leased portables in the past three years but does not inspect them on a periodic basis. No preventive work is done on portables by the IAQ department, only reactive based on IAQ complaints. However, schools with BMPs may receive preventive maintenance from the building service workers (if portables were on the property at the time the BMP was created.) In this case, the building service workers would be keeping a record of preventive maintenance they are performing in buildings and portables.

School Plant Operations has managers that periodically come to schools of those non-BMP schools to monitor work done by the building service workers. These managers have a manual with their own procedures for maintaining the schools.

**Playground Supervisor Training Resolution:** A proposed resolution is attached which will be discussed by the BOD at the November meeting.

**Incident Report:** In mid-November, an Incident Report will be made available on the MCPS website which will be in a similar format to “Schools at a Glance.”

**Ground Covering on Playgrounds:** Safety chairs should check the ground covering on their school playgrounds. MCPS used to have a periodic mulch delivery but they are now only delivering when they are called. If it looks like it has not been replaced and there isn't much cushion to be safe in a fall, voice your concern to the principal to call Pam Montgomery to request a delivery of “engineered wood fiber.” Laurie was not certain what amount is considered safe by MCPS, but 9 inches of ground cover (after settling) is what is recommended on The National Program for Playground Safety website.