*** * * REVISED * D R A F T for 9/29/15 Delegates Assembly * * ***

2015-2016 Advocacy Priorities

MCCPTA Mission: To make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children.

Montgomery County Council of PTAs (MCCPTA) is an association of 192 local PT(S)As in Montgomery County, chartered by Maryland PTA, representing almost 50,000 members. MCCPTA advocates for the students, parents, and teachers of Montgomery County Public Schools on educational priorities, determined by the membership.

As an organization, MCCPTA commits to the following Advocacy Priorities for 2015-16.

(#1) Ensure that MCPS and related County agencies take Concrete Steps to Mitigate Impacts of Enrollment Growth

Issue: MCPS continues to experience tremendous annual enrollment growth due to the county's ongoing development, neighborhood turnover, and household/population increase.

MCCPTA will:

- encourage MCPS and other county agencies to openly communicate and coordinate planning and policy for necessary school capacity in concert with residential development.
- emphasize school staffing levels (administrators, teachers, counselors, and support professionals) must keep pace with student growth and essential smaller class sizes should be restored.
- support school staffing (teachers, para-educators, support professionals (counselors, nurses, etc.) and personnel, and administrators] in proportion to school size and need, not only by the grade level, so that larger schools or those with diverse needs have adequate professional resources.

(#3) Support School Construction & Capital Improvements

Issue: Schools should be safe, modern, comfortable, and welcoming environments for students and staff to facilitate learning.

MCCPTA will:

- encourage MCPS to consider projected student enrollment and the school's physical condition, as well as the impact of overcrowding on building systems (such as HVAC), lifecycle costs of relocatable classrooms, student and staff safety, quality of the education experience, and suitability of the educational environment in relation to student achievement.

- *ALTERNATE to above:* MCPS should conduct a deep analysis on building systems (such as HVAC), lifecycle costs of relocatable classrooms, student and staff safety (especially under potential lock-down situations), quality of the educational

Submitted Revisions

experience, suitability of the educational environment in relation to student achievement.

- encourage MCPS to re-evaluate the conditions of all schools in an unbiased, objective manner to determine an appropriate revitalization/expansion (rev/ex) schedule.

(#4) Take Action To Close the Achievement Gap
Issue: All students should have the opportunity to be successful in school, regardless of income, race, ethnicity, native language, and ability, and deserve highly skilled teachers who have high expectations for every student. MCCPTA continues to support targeted efforts by MCPS to close the opportunity and achievement gaps experienced by students of color.

MCCPTA will:

- encourage teacher diversity and cultural sensitivity training;
- advocate for additional, relevant instructional resources and appropriate training for students;
- advocate for necessary academic interventions;
- encourage increased parent outreach through appropriate MCPS staff
- encourage data driven monitoring in order to measure progress toward closing the achievement gap;
- advocate for measures to increase the number of students of color in accelerated and advanced level classes, and
- advocate for smaller classes in schools.

(#6) Improve accountability for effective communications between MCPS and parents
Issue: Parent engagement, which relies on access to information from the schools, enhances student academic performance and social competence..

MCCPTA will:

- support uniform, consistent, easily accessible, and timely communication between MCPS and parents regarding anything that affects the academics, safety, or health of our students;
- support offering information to parents in their native languages, given the diversity of the county.
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(#2) Support County and State Funded School Operating and Capital Budgets
Issue: Quality and equitable education must be a priority for our community and public officials. MCCPTA will continue to advocate at the County and State levels for adequate funding for public education.

MCCPTA will:

Submitted Revisions

- advocate with Maryland State Senators and Delegates who represent populations residing in Montgomery County and with the Maryland Governor for Montgomery County to receive operating (GCEI) and construction funds from the State in proportion to MCPS' need, growth, and size.
- We will urge the County Council to restore per pupil spending to 2009 levels for the operating budget and to increase funds for school construction based on recognizing that our aging and overcrowded buildings have reached a point of crisis, resulting in the frequent use of relocatable classrooms. There is no choice but to increase funds for school construction.

(#5) Encourage Resource Allocations for Specific Learning Groups
Issue: Children have different levels of academic ability and educational needs. Each one deserves and is entitled to an education in our public schools that meets his or her needs.

MCCPTA will:

- advocate for the appropriate resources, accommodations, and technology for students receiving special education services, whether mainstreamed or in special programs.
- call for appropriate resources and curriculum for all English language learners.
- support appropriate resources and curriculum for advanced level learners.

(#7) Support Successful Technology Integration in Classrooms
Students are growing up in a world that is increasingly technology dependent, and computer competency is essential. As new and emerging technologies transform the landscape of education, we advocate for the implementation of an up-to-date and fully-functional system-wide technology plan that supports the needs of curriculum and educational standards, provides flexible technology to meet the needs of diverse learners, and meets the requirements for statewide PARCC assessments.

ALTERNATE: advocate for a fully-functional system-wide technology plan that helps teachers use 21st-century knowledge, strategies, and skills that create an effective and motivational learning environment and facilitates statewide PARCC assessments.

NOTES on Changes:
 # indicates proposed new order – not re-ordered here so as not to lose "track changes" on edited copy

"ALTERNATE" indicates additional language that has been proposed which either was not identified as priority by ExComm or conveys different meaning than original text.

Submitted Revisions