Cabin John PTSA General Meeting, 15 October 2026

31 attendees were counted at the meeting.

Debbie Fleischer (DF), CJMS PTSA President called the meeting to order at 6.32pm.

Welcome and introduction

DF introduced herself and her role, and talked through the meeting agenda.

CJMS Career Advising Program – David Adams (DA), Career Coach

DA provided an overview of the MCPS career program and talked through it's 3 key workstreams: approach, reach & impact, and family involvement. DA is career coach for 2 middle schools and meets each child twice a year. More details about the program can be found at https://mococap.com and in DA's presentation. FAQs and a parent survey can be found on the last slide of the linked presentation.

Regional High School Programs – Carla Malozowski-Kieval (CMK), MCPS Instructional Specialist & Melissa Keller (MK), Cabin John Middle School Counselor

CMK and MK shared an overview of the regional high school centers. The information provided has already been shared with 8th grade during school hours. The full presentation can be found here.

Cabin John MS students are part of the Central region and can only apply to programs at the 4 high schools in Central region (Churchill, Wootton, Richard Montgomery, Rockville). For students who choose to just attend their home high school, nothing has changed about the standard programming and the same options will be available as before. Criteria for admission varies for each program.

CMK and MK strongly encouraged all parents to complete the application (found under Documents on ParentVue) by the deadline of 6 November. Even if your student wishes to attend their home school, MCPS would like to capture data about how many students actively made that choice on the form.

More information can be found in the evening's presentation <LINK> and on MCPS's website. The MCPS website has details about each program and the class progression from 9 thru 12,

CMK and MK then answered many questions from attendees, including:

- Q: On the website, each program shows blue program classes and white 'regular' classes. Will the blue classes only be open to program students?
  A: Blue classes will primarily be program students but if there is space then they may have other students who are not in the program.

- Q: Can I go to another region and if not, why not?
  A: The decision has been made that you can only can apply within your region, transportation will be provided although the exact details of the transportation points will not be confirmed until the summer. The only exception is ROTC at Kennedy High School which is open to applications from all MCPS students.
- Q: Is the purpose of these programs really if my child has an interest in a specific path?
  A: Essentially yes, it gives them a head start if they have a specific interest. We encourage you to look at the different pathways with your student and see if it sparks interest for them.
- Q: Is there an opportunity to change programs or to drop out of the program once students are already in high school?
  A: It's not possible to move into STEM or computer science programs. It may be possible to move into some of the other programs in 10th grade, but not before then. It's important to note if students decide to stop participating in the program, they must go back to their home school.
- Q: Is there college credit from any of the programs?
  A; Yes for some of the programs, but also in some regular high school classes too.
- Q: If the program my student interested in is at their home high school, do they need to apply for it?
  A: Yes! Students have to apply for any program they are interested in.
- Q: If the deadline is Nov 6th, when do we get MAP scores etc to know if our student is eligible for the programs?
  A: You won't get that before the deadline. We encourage students to apply and MCPS will review eligibility in the background. Make sure to rank programs in order and if you are a MCPS student then do not upload any documentation or ask for teacher recommendations – none of this is needed and recommendations will not be read. For students who are coming from private school or out of state, then you should upload supporting test scores, reports etc.
- Q: Will home high schools still offer the same options for 'regular' students?
  A: Yes, nothing changes for home students.
- Q: Will every child be accepted to the interest programs?
  A: Yes, subject to space considerations. There are multiple rounds. Once admitted, you will have a few weeks to choose to accept or not. If you choose not to accept the first offer, then you will be able to enter the second round – details of which will be in the letter you'll receive from the first round.
- Q: Should I rank all programs?
  A: No, only rank the programs that your student will actually want to participate in.

- Q: What percentage of students do you think, or hope, will be in programs?
  A: We don't have a target and until students apply, we don't really know. Programs will only run if there is sufficient interest. MCPS hopes to offer all of the programs planned, but they will only run if there is enough interest.
- Q: How will students be selected if some programs are over-subscribed?
  A: MCPS has invested in a computerized match system that is designed to maximize best results for each student. Students' ranking of programs will be important.
- Q: Is the second round essentially filling empty spaces?
  A: Yes. The second round is likely to be followed by a numbered waitlist as needed.
- Q: How will transportation work?
  Central transportation will be provided but final details won't be until August.
- Q: For the criteria programs, is it in/out of the pool or a ranked list of students based on test scores?
  A: It is an in the pool / or not system. All students in the pool will be eligible for the program and run through the matching system. For the math/science/computer science programs, the top 1% of students from each middle school will be automatically admitted/invited even if they don't apply. These students will be informed at the same time (mid-January) and can of course decline the place.
- Q: When do we have to decide by?
  A: Applications are due 6 November. You will receive a letter in mid-January with the results and be required to decide by early/mid Feb (possibly 13th). Note: All 8th graders will fill out course requests for their home high school before you hear the programs outcome (done at school with support from counseling team). It's important they do this in case they do end up going to their home high school.

PTSA Overview – Debbie Fleischer (DF), PTSA President

PTSA Updates Slide Deck is available here
DF highlighted the status and role of PTSA, and set out briefly what our $40k budget supports at Cabin John Middle School.

Treasurer's Report – La-Tasha Patel (LP), PTSA Treasurer

LP talked through the PTSA finances September snapshot. The financial situation is positive, highlights include already reaching 81% of our membership goal and 40% of our donations goal for the year.

LP introduced the annual Finance review which all PTSAs are required to complete to remain in good standing. The review helps the Board and members confirm the PTSA's finances are being

properly managed and protects against fraudulent actions. LP confirmed the financial review had found no significant areas of concern and confirmed the finances are in good order.

A motion to approve the financial review and its recommendations was made by Banoo Pightling and seconded by John Sorrenti. The motion was unanimously approved by members.

Membership & Fundraising, Rachel Azoff (RA), VP Membership & Fundraising

RF updated that membership numbers are positive with 460 members signed up (494 last year) and our donation drive has raised $5675 so far.
Upcoming events: Shake shack fundraising night (28 Oct); School store will be open on Friday lunchtimes from 10/30. Color Run (Nov 14) – is a new fundraiser with SGA with a goal of raising $10k; Giving Tuesday campaign planned again this year.

Communications & Events, Harmony Yang (HY), VP Comms & Events and John Sorrenti (JS), Communications

JS introduced the newly revamped cougar clips. Clips are no longer shared on the PTSA website to streamline our information, but they are being sent to a wider audience using directory information approved and received from school.
HY updated on a very successful Cougar Fest last month – thank you to all the volunteers who helped deliver a really fun event for the kids and on School Beautification Day (10/10) where more than 50 volunteers worked hard to clear up trash and weeds around our school campus.

School Support, Claire Andrews (CA), VP School Support

CA announced the Reflections art program has launched and Cabin John will be participating again this year. The theme is 'What my culture means to me' and the deadline for entries is 12/7. More details on PTSA website.

Fall book fair will be 6-13 November in the media center. Volunteers are desperately needed for this event – please think about signing up!

Advocacy

DF introduced the two MCCPTA representatives for this year: Priyanka Kamat (Wootton) and Karen Lust (Churchill). The representatives advocate for our school / students at a county level. They will provide an update at the next PTSA meeting and encourage parents to be aware of the following advocacy issues:

MCPS elementary and middle school closure / consolidation and boundary study.

Middle school program study – changes driven by the State's introduction of a 60 minutes daily math requirement. Board of Education has postponed this discussion / decision to next year.

Meeting was adjourned at 8.02pm.