**President’s Report Submitted by: Cynthia Simonson**

**April 14 , 2020 \_ \_ president@mccpta.org**

**Since March 1 -- Meetings/Calls/Events:**

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| 3/10 | BOE Public Comment (Topics: COVID-19 updates, Upcounty Transitions, Bridge Projects) |
| 3/11 | OSSI DLLA Interview Panel |
| 3/11 | WAMU Interview (Topic: COVID-19, Parent Concerns/Reaction) |
| 3/12 | MCCPTA BOD Meeting (remote) |
| 3/14 | Discussion with Cluster Coordinators on Upcounty Boundary Process |
| 3/17 | OCIP Discussion |
| 3/20 | MCPS Communications Call |
| 3/23 | Elementary Level – Continuation of Learning Presentation |
| 3/24 | State BOE Meeting -- remote |
| 3/24 | Secondary Level – Continuity of Learning Presentation |
| 3/26 | Special Education – Continuity of Learning |
| 4/02 | Special Education – Follow Up Meeting |
| 4/06 | Councilmember Hucker Townhall – Guest |
| 4/08 | Office of Legislative Oversight – Discussion |
| 4/08 | Excomm Call with Superintendent’s Office |
| 4/13 | Excomm Discussion |
| 4/14 | State Board of Education Meeting |
| 4/14 | OSSI call regarding Principal selection process |
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**Key Activities/Concerns:**

1. **COVID-19 Communications** – Gillian Huebner and I have been coordinating efforts with the MCPS Communications officials to keep information flowing to the parents during the transition to distance learning. Updates have been sent via elists and also posted on MCCPTA COVID-19 Facebook page (public group). I’ve participated in numerous calls with MCPS – curriculum, school support, communications, senior leadership, special education – everyone aiming to “do the right thing” for our students. It is rather heartening to see the care of our system. This is a monumental task and from my seat, what the system has accomplished has been remarkable. Thanks for being the eyes and ears to help us plug the gaping holes and identify opportunities to provide additional supports. Well done, team!
2. **Updated State Requirements** – I’ve tried to keep the membership informed as the State Board of Education (SBOE) has made decisions regarding testing requirements. On 3/24, the SBOE voted to request a waiver from the federal government to waive the testing and accountability metrics within the current State Plan. The waiver was sent to the Department of Education and granted. On 4/14, the SBOE convened a special session and addressed high school graduation requirements. This link provides an outline of what was discussed. Please let me know if you have any questions. I love this topic but don’t want to bore you! <http://marylandpublicschools.org/stateboard/Documents/2020/0414/Waivers_Requests_Graduation_Assessments.pdf> One item of note, students that took the courses associated with assessment requirements (Alg 1, ELA10, Govt, and Science) have not had the requirements to sit those exams waived through this action. This was addressed briefly but the expectation is students will sit the exams upon return, perhaps with additional test windows identified. As you can imagine, I’ll be watching that closely.
3. **School Year Calendar/Extensions --** In the 4/14 SBOE meeting, the board unanimously voted to allow Local districts to request a waiver from 180 to 175 days of instruction. The motion passed, allowing the State Superintendent to grant these waivers without further SBOE approval. There are a few aspects related to what is permissible. We should anticipate this to be a topic with the MCPS BOE in the upcoming meeting, April 21. <http://marylandpublicschools.org/stateboard/Documents/2020/0414/InstructionalDaysWaiverRequestBoard.pdf>
4. **Principal Selection Process** – Last month in our meeting with the Superintendent (and a few days later with the communications team), we discussed the principal selection process. At present, we have 8 principalships where the current leader has provided notice (either retirement or taking another position) and are currently in the interview process. OSSI confirmed they will continue the community engagement process with affected communities able to watch a pre-recorded presentation about the principal selection process followed by a “zoom-like” option to ask specific questions, raise concerns, offer feedback on what a successful candidate will look like for the affected school. OSSI has asked MCCPTA to engage in a conversation about adjustments to the principal selection process.
5. **Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO)** – MCCPTA was contacted a few weeks ago advising us the County Council has tasked this group to provide the Council with a report on PTA funding. MCCPTA does not have access to the information being requested. We’ve offered background information and insights to OLO on how PTA budgets can vary from school to school. OLO is currently in the process of contacting our PTAs to gather the needed information for the report.