



**Montgomery County Council of  
Parent Teacher Associations**

# **MCCPTA DELEGATES**

Revised: June 2017

***MCCPTA Office***

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GUIDEBOOK



## MISSION OF PTA

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

## VALUES OF PTA

- **Collaboration:** We will work in partnership with a wide array of individuals and organizations to broaden and enhance our ability to serve and advocate for all children and families.
- **Commitment:** We are dedicated to children's educational success, health, and well-being through strong family and community engagement, while remaining accountable to the principles upon which our association was founded.
- **Diversity:** We acknowledge the potential of everyone without regard, including but not limited to: age, culture, economic status, educational background, ethnicity, gender, geographic location, legal status, marital status, mental ability, national origin, organizational position, parental status, physical ability, political philosophy, race, religion, sexual orientation, and work experience.
- **Respect:** We value the individual contributions of members, employees, volunteers, and partners as we work collaboratively to achieve our association's goals.
- **Accountability:** All members, employees, volunteers, and partners have a shared responsibility to align their efforts toward the achievement of our association's strategic initiatives.

### *Contact PTA*

**MCCPTA**

www.mccpta.org  
301-208-0111  
P.O. Box 10754  
500 N. Washington St  
Rockville, MD 20849

**Maryland PTA**

www.mdpta.org  
1-800-707-7972  
410-760-6221  
410-760-6344 (FAX)  
5 Central Avenue  
Glen Burnie, MD 21061

**National PTA**

www.pta.org  
Back-to-School Kit  
www.ptakit.org  
Alexandria, VA

## **MCCPTA: PTA in Montgomery County**

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Founded in 1944, MCCPTA has grown from 15 PTAs to 193 local PTAs and PTSAs. This growth reflects the vital role PTAs have had - individually and in council - in meeting the needs of our children and families.

Local PTA Presidents and their MCCPTA Delegates serve as a link between the Montgomery County Council of PTAs and the local PTA by participating in MCCPTA Delegates Assemblies, working with their Cluster Coordinators and Area Vice Presidents, and sharing information between the two organizations. Delegates will have information about what is happening across the school system to share with the members of their local PTA and will bring the perspective of their local PTA to the discussions at the county level.

General MCCPTA meetings, Delegates Assemblies, normally are held on the fourth Tuesday of the month during the school year at 7:30 pm at Carver Educational Services Center in Rockville and are open to all PTA members. The privileges of introducing motions, debating, and voting are limited to the voting body, which consists of the delegates from local PTAs (the president, or alternate, and two accredited delegates) and the members of the MCCPTA Board of Directors (the officers, area vice presidents, cluster coordinators, and committee chairs). The monthly meetings provide an opportunity for delegates to present ideas, debate issues, become better informed, make personal contacts with other PTA leaders, and vote on MCCPTA business.

Area Vice Presidents and Cluster Coordinators will also coordinate meetings with their local respective PTAs to develop the relationship between the PTAs and discuss issues of concern across PTAs.

MCCPTA Presents!, special informational programs, is usually held from 6:30-7:30 pm on the fourth Tuesday of the month prior to the Delegates Assembly. This program is open to the public.

## **MCCPTA Delegates In Brief**

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- Each local PTA is entitled to three (3) voting delegates - the president and two delegates. These names should be submitted on the Blue Book form, or if not available when the form is submitted, added when available.
- The local PTA may have one or more alternate delegates attend when the regulars cannot.
- The local PTA bylaws determine whether delegates are elected (and by whom) or appointed.
- Each school will receive three (3) voting cards upon payment of MCCPTA dues.
- Delegates represent the position of the local PTA at Delegates Assemblies.
- There is one vote per delegate, even if he/she represents two or more different schools, or holds a position on the MCCPTA Board.
- Delegates can amend motions and, when necessary, take votes without prior direction from their local.
- The Delegates Assembly is generally the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month, 7:30 pm, at the Carver Educational Services Center, 850 Hungerford Drive, Rockville.

## **Expectations and Responsibilities of MCCPTA Delegates**

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Delegates are the link between local school communities and the county PTA and are essential to two-way communication. They help their PT(S)A members understand the critical role they can play in county and state advocacy efforts and school-system sponsored focus groups, task forces, etc. to benefit all children and public schools in the county.

To accomplish this work, delegates should:

1. Report on the Delegates Assembly topics at local PTA executive board meetings and general membership meetings, in newsletter articles, on schools list serves, and other communication media used by the school. It is essential that they report on any item that requires a position or vote by the local PTA.
2. Represent the views of the local PTA, not their personal views, during discussions and in votes cast at Delegates Assemblies.

3. Be familiar with the MCPS Operating Budget and Capital Improvements Budget and the views of the local PTA regarding specific items in the budgets. Plan to attend Board of Education and County Council hearings—and bring members of the local PTA—to support their school community's needs.
  - Attend the special MCCPTA work sessions or forums on the Operating or Capital Budgets in preparation for Board of Education and the County Council public hearings.
  - Encourage the local PTA to discuss and develop priorities, possible solutions, and ideas of their own and communicate their views to the Board of Education or the County Council as appropriate.
4. Keep the local PTA informed of projects and activities of MCCPTA, upcoming MCCPTA Presents! programs, workshops, and forums, and encourage attendance.
5. Inform local PTA members about the opportunities to serve on MCCPTA committees and information distributed at the Delegates Assemblies.
6. Be familiar with Robert's Rules of Order, parliamentary procedure, and MCCPTA's bylaws and standing rules. Be prepared to make or amend motions, discuss motions, and cast one vote per delegate on motions - sometimes without prior direction from the local PTA. If the delegate must cast a vote without discussing the issue with the local PTA, the vote should be based on prior discussions of the local PTA's priorities.
7. Plan on attending the Maryland PTA Summer Leadership Conference and encourage other leaders in the local PTA to attend, as well.
8. Be familiar with local, Maryland, and National PTA legislative issues affecting children and education.
  - Be prepared to represent the local PTA in MCCPTA discussions to adopt and support legislative priorities for the Maryland General Assembly session.
  - Be an active advocate for the children of Montgomery County; attend BOE and County Council hearings, write letters, and send emails and encourage local PTA leadership to do the same.
  - Encourage local PTA members to participate in legislative advocacy activities of the Maryland PTA and National PTA, such as PTA Night in Annapolis, Maryland PTA Summer Leadership Conference and National PTA Legislative Convention.

9. Join the MCCPTA Delegates eList to stay on top of current information and to discuss issues.
10. Keep a binder, procedure book, or electronic files containing:
  - Local PTA bylaws
  - List of MCCPTA officers and executive board members
  - Calendar of events/meetings of MCCPTA and the local PTA
  - Agenda and information items handed out at Delegates Assemblies, including Minutes of MCCPTA Delegates Assemblies
  - MCCPTA Standing Rules
  - MCCPTA priority documents (Operating Budget priorities, Capital Improvement Program priorities, legislative priorities, as applicable, for the school year)
  - List of elected officials that represent the population of the school school and their contact information (federal and state legislators, county council members, all Board of Education members)

All Delegates must have their voting card to vote at the Delegates Assembly. Each local PTA is mailed three delegate voting cards and the MCCPTA Blue Book (directory) when dues have been paid to MCCPTA. The PTA President should distribute the voting cards to their PTA delegates. Delegates should also be members of and have a membership card from their local PTA.

The delegate is chosen to represent the views of the local PTA. MCCPTA leadership tries very hard to present major issues and background material early enough so the delegates have a full month to assess the views of their local PTAs before they vote at the next Delegates Assembly. In some cases, discussion with local PTAs is not possible. If MCCPTA is to make its voice heard on an issue pending before the Board of Education, the County Council, or the Maryland General Assembly, sometimes a month's delay will render such action useless. In these instances, the delegates must have the confidence of their PTA in order to vote on time-sensitive issues. Occasionally, the timeliness of an issue requires that the MCCPTA Board of Directors take a position, identified as such, on an issue of importance. Such an action without input of the Delegates Assembly is allowed by the MCCPTA bylaws, but does not happen often.

## **Tips for Keeping The PTA Informed and Representing The PTA**

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- Ensure time for a Delegate's Report on the local PTA Agenda.
- Write brief summaries of each Delegates Assembly and send this out via the eList or PTA newsletter. Having a regular format with categories may make it easier for members to follow. For example: actions taken; informational items; resolutions and motions introduced for action next month.
- Circulate proposed MCCPTA resolution to the local membership through the PTA eList ahead of time with a short synopsis or links to supporting material on the MCCPTA website. When time allows, resolutions and motions are introduced at least a month before the vote takes place at a Delegates Assembly to allow PTAs time to review and discuss the resolutions. Providing the resolution to the local membership before the PTA meeting gives people familiarity with the issue before the meeting and allows you to briefly restate the purpose of the resolution rather than going through it in detail.
- Many times, resolutions are a starting place and there will be amendments from the floor that Delegates will be asked to vote on. If Delegates follow conversations on the Delegate eList and/or discuss with their Cluster Coordinator and fellow Cluster leaders they may anticipate amendments. Some delegates bring up potential amendments at their local meetings to get direction as to how their membership would feel given certain changes. It can be difficult to anticipate everything and delegates will at times have to go on their best judgment to represent the PTA.
- Work with the local president to make sure that there is an opportunity for the membership to vote on proposed MCCPTA resolutions at the local PTA meetings. This process has a greater chance of generating substantive dialogue and a fuller understanding of nuanced viewpoints to assist in relaying the community's concerns/voting. While not preferred as the sole mechanism for soliciting input, delegates can also bring up issues and resolutions at the local PTA meeting and ask members to follow up via e-mail or telephone with their thoughts. Distilling and communicating what was heard back to the community is important in either case.

## **MCCPTA Standing Rules**

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In order to assure a consistent and effective process for bringing resolutions to the MCCPTA delegates, standing rules are adopted each Fall to govern MCCPTA meetings. The standing rules currently in force—including guidance and procedures for introducing and debating resolutions at the Delegates Assembly—can be found on the MCCPTA website.

## **Content of an MCCPTA Resolution**

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MCCPTA delegates may take positions on issues of countywide concern by adopting resolutions, simple motions, or position statements such as the Operating Budget Compact. The positions taken are forwarded to the appropriate agencies of government and to the local PTAs.

### *A Resolution Illustrating Its Own Proper Form*

- Whereas, That portion of a resolution comprising the phrases starting with the word "whereas" is known as the preamble of the resolution; and
- Whereas, The preamble includes only statements of fact or background information comprising the reasons for the action proposed in the resolving clauses that are not common knowledge or self-evident and may be overlooked if not stated; and
- Whereas, The action taken on a resolution is really only action on the motion incorporated solely in its resolving clauses, not the preamble; and
- Whereas, Brevity creates a good listener; therefore, be it
- Resolved, That it is directed that the resolutions submitted to MCCPTA for consideration shall follow this sample resolution in structure, punctuation, and content.

(This sample resolution adapted from New Jersey PTA and National PTA materials.)