

From: Sunil Dasgupta, Chair, Health and Safety Committee
To: MCCPTA Board of Directors
Sub: Health and Safety Committee Monthly Report
Date: 2017-12-03

This report is divided into parts. The first addresses H&S Committee as a whole. This is followed by subcommittee reports.

H&S Committee

The Health and Safety Committee had its first meeting with MCPS today. Our interlocutor was Dr. Jonathan Brice, Associate Superintendent of the Office of Student and Family support and Engagement. Assya Pascalev, co-chair of the SafeTech Subcommittee, Janet Sanchez, Susan Kelly and Sunil Dasgupta attended from H&S. Our agenda was as below:

1. Progress of full report on school climate and safety
--how are students, staff, parents being involved
2. Progress on inventory of prevention programs as outlined in the interim safety report
3. Understanding OSFSE functions
4. Possible dissemination of the CEPHAC report to staff and parents (report at https://phpa.health.maryland.gov/OEHFP/EH/Shared%20Documents/WifiinSchoolsinMaryland_CEPHAC.pdf)
5. MCPS substance abuse/opioid initiative

The discussion was wide-ranging. The school climate work is progressing largely under the leadership of MCPS COO Dr. Zuckerman. There are parent, student, staff surveys in the works. Expect to see them. See the attached organization structure chart for Dr. Brice's office. That is a useful guide our interaction with OSFSE. Next time, we can try to have OSSI join us as well. MCPS is also collecting school by school information on prevention programs as well as wellness programs. I will report more as I know more.

As it happens at these meetings, we couldn't quite get to agenda items #4 and 5, but we did address them in our discussion on climate. We are looking forward to developing a monthly venue to discuss health and safety-related issues. If you are interested in joining us or want us to bring any concern you have to future meetings, please let me know.

Next meeting scheduled for 12/20/2017. Tentative agenda:

- a) Prevention programs inventory and update on School Climate report
- b) Scaling up Poolesville program on problem-solving skills, combating hate and promoting equity
- c) School/parent engagement and input on cell tower decisions
- d) CEPHAC report distribution
- e) Recovery School plans

School Nutrition

On October 25, Sunil Dasgupta and Lisa Mandell met with Susan McCarron, the new director of MCPS Division of Food and Nutrition Services. We had a very productive and positive discussion about her vision for school food in Montgomery County. Also, we touched upon several topics in the MCCPTA School Food Resolution. We learned that Ms. McCarron is interested in doing scratch cooking over time, implementing salad bars, increasing communication with parents about a la carte options, and getting kids to eat more fruits and vegetables--all things for which the resolution advocates. The school nutrition committee is planning to meet quarterly with Ms. McCarron. Our next meeting will be sometime in January (Date TBD), and Ms. McCarron offered to take us on a tour of the central facility.

Safe Technology

This past month, we have:

- made further inroads with the CTO, creating a Best Practices document at his request. Assya Pascalev and Sunil Dasgupta met CTO Cevenini on 11/17/2107 for a brief introduction.
- met with Asst. Superintendent Brice to discuss the CEPHAC report
- met with the MCCPTA Curriculum Committee to create a joint memo asking MCPS to share screentime incurred in the classroom with parents
- added a number of articles to our online library
- been quoted in a Washington Post piece about cell phones in schools
- Safe Tech member Brad Shear participated in an MCCPTA Presents panel discussion about how to keep kids safer online
- Began collaborating with the School Climate and Safety subcommittee on identifying toolbox resources on the appropriate use of digital technology

School Climate

- 11/28 MCCPTA Presents event on "Partners Combatting Hate", featuring MCPS programs and community organizations that partner with schools to improve school climate and address discrimination, promote dialogue, respectful dating, and online safety. Featured programs included MCPS' Study Circles, the Anti-Defamation League's No Place for Hate, Communities United Against Hate, Montgomery County Regional Student Government Association, Digital Armor, and Choose Respect.
- The Sub-Committee on School Climate and Safety has begun to compile a list of resources. Some of these resources are links to National PTA or MCCPTA resolutions or position statements. Others are local or online resources that may be of interest to local PTAs. This list is just a start. We hope those involved with specific issues such as online safety and mental health will contribute their expertise. Please use the link below to add resources. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ylQtwev-wcP7_ygiF_XX5hJqQ0_LXIT8/view?usp=sharing