**Acting President/ VP Educational Issues Report Submitted by: Cynthia Simonson**

**February 11, 2020 \_\_ president@mccpta.org**

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

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| 1/03 | MCEA Legislative Reception |
| 1/04 | Operating Budget Forum/Kirwan Forum |
| 1/08 | Meeting with Superintendent – Executive Committee |
| 1/09 | Testimony before BOE (Request for more transparency and better communications) |
| 1/13 | COG-RA Meeting (cell phone usage policy) |
| 1/13 | BOE Operating Budget |
| 1/14 | MCPS Teacher of the Year Selection |
| 1/14 | NW HS Boundary Analysis Meeting |
| 1/17 | MCPS Communications Call |
| 1/20 | MLK Breakfast |
| 1/27 | County Council Education & Culture Meeting |
| 1/28 | AVP/OSSI Meeting |
| 1/28 | Delegates Assembly |
| 1/31 | MCCPTA Climate and Culture Call |
| 2/02 | Interview with Fox News – Calendar <https://www.fox5dc.com/video/650910> |
| 2/05 | OSSI – Meeting with Statham |
| 2/11 | Interview with Washington Post – SRO/Security |
| 2/11 | MCEA Bargaining Session -- Guest |

**Key Activities/Concerns:**

1. **Transition** --- In mid-January, Lynne Harris resigned (per MCCPTA bylaws requirements for officers declaring candidacy for public office). I accepted the role of Acting President, as outlined in the MCCPTA bylaws, and began participating in the calls, meetings, and activities previously represented by the MCCPTA President. Specific actions that were not in my previous function – soliciting individuals to participate in interview panels, joining Communications calls with MCPS, fielding interview requests with Fox News and Washington Post, and observing the MCEA bargaining session.
2. **MISA requirements** – Sent a message to Delegates that MSDE will re-vamp the MISA HS graduation assessment requirement. (I’ve been following this closely and asking questions about this assessment on behalf of MCCPTA for 18 months – trying to get clarity on this graduation requirement.) Below is the memo and presentation presented to the State BOE on Tuesday, January 28.

<http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/stateboard/Documents/2020/0128/TabG-HighSchoolMISAStructure.pdf>

For those interested in hearing the discussion, concerns, and rationale for the change at the State BOE meeting, here is the video link of the meeting. <http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/stateboard/Pages/meeting-agendas/2020/2020-01-28.aspx> Discussion on MISA starts ~2:43 until ~ 3:15 (of the 7:55 minute meeting – and we thought our BOE meetings were long!).  Bruce Lesh does a nice job laying out how we got where we are!

1. **Delegates Assembly** – Prepared PPT to help delegates transmit information back to the local units including the following activities that may be of interest to Montgomery County schools/families:
   1. Election Guidelines for PTAs (what PTAs can and cannot do during elections)
   2. MCPS Course Selection Information (recounting OSSI discussions)
   3. Board of Education Structure and Committees
      1. MCCPTA Resolutions awaiting being addressed by BOE Policy Committee
   4. Capital Improvement Plan – Next Actions
   5. Boundary Analysis – Next Actions
   6. MCPS Operating Budget – Q/A Archives
   7. Annapolis – Legislative Activities (how to find information)
   8. Office of Legislative Oversight – Report on MCPS
   9. Calendar of Upcoming Events



1. **MCPS Course Selection (OSSI Update)** – This information was shared at the Delegates Assembly in January (referenced above) but worth repeating here related to Course Selection Process.
   * MS and HS students select courses for next year each January/February.
   * According to Dr. Smith, the staffing is to follow the student interest. So, students should be given a variety of courses to choose from, recognizing if there is low enrollment, not all courses will be offered.
   * Schools use this early registration to determine what positions the school may need for the following year.
   * MCCPTA has expressed concern when a school significantly narrows the options (e.g., MS doesn’t offer any tech options or does not allow 6th graders to access foreign language).
   * MCCPTA AVPs have discussed MS/HS course options *extensively* with OSSI Area Associate Superintendents
   * November 2018, January 2019, March 2019, November 2019
   * Specific concerns centered around:
   * Range of electives being offered (particularly at MS)
   * School-specific pre-requisites (not matching MCPS prereqs)
   * Elimination of on-level courses/only offering honors/AP options in some disciplines
   * As of this year -- Principals must get OSSI permission to eliminate course levels AND if the school has already eliminated level, must justify to OSSI to continue the practice.
   * OSSI Chief advised in November 2019 that the OSSI Director assigned to that cluster can answer questions about why levels are (or are not) present.
     + Note – Cluster Coordinators meet with OSSI Directors monthly so be sure to pass along any concerns.