Name of Committee: **Substance Use Prevention Subcommittee**

Chair: Laura Mitchell Phone: (410) 422 – 2694 Committee Email:

Vice Chair: Phone:

Communication (e-list, etc): N/A

**SUBCOMMITTEES / WORK GROUPS** (if applicable): None/TBD

**GOALS & OBJECTIVES**: Educate families, students, and the community at large about substance use prevalence, risks and ways to prevent substance use among students. Advocate for services for students who have substance use issues and help ensure the continuation of recovery academic programs.

**Substance Use Prevention Subcommittee Activities**

The Substance Use Prevention Subcommittee continues to partner with several outside groups and agencies toward prevention efforts and to address current substance use by MCPS students.

Committee work:

Montgomery County Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Advisory Council (AODAAC):

Attended monthly Council meeting as the MCCPTA representative. We continue to see increases in fatal and non-fatal overdoses during COVID-19. Stressors, lack of access to care as many treatment centers refuse new patients, and support meetings switched from in person to virtual.

* The Prevention subcommittee recommended, and the Council approved, a partnership with Parents Against Vaping E-Cigarettes (PAVe).
* In partnership with Parents Against Vaping E-Cigarettes (PAVe), we continue to work with the Maryland pod of PAVe on ways to collaborate to provide education on the dangers of vaping to students and parents and provide information on how we can advocate for laws that ban flavored vapes at the local, state and federal levels of government. We have held a MCCPTA/PAVe webinar for Montgomery County on December 16, 2020, with good participation from county residents.
* The Montgomery County webinar was bookended by statewide Legislative Town Halls to discuss bills to be introduced in the 2021 MD Legislative session. The bills, [SB0177](http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Legislation/Details/sb0177?ys=2021RS) (cross file [HB0134](http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Legislation/Details/hb0134?ys=2021RS)) titled Business Regulation - Flavored Tobacco Products – Prohibition, have been filed and are scheduled as follows:

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| Senate: [SB0177](http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Legislation/Details/sb0177?ys=2021RS) | 1/13/2021 First Reading Finance and Budget and Taxation  1/28/2021 Hearing 1:00 pm (Finance) [Click for Summary](https://drive.google.com/file/d/17MD_y3QxTe-NJ9po6e9jbRg4nmS5ZDfx/view?usp=sharing) |
| House: [HB0134](http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Legislation/Details/hb0134?ys=2021RS) | 1/13/2021 First Reading Economic Matters and Health and Government Operations  No Hearing Scheduled |

* I plan to provide testimony in support of banning all flavored tobacco products in MD. The form of that testimony will depend upon the rules set out by each chamber of the legislature for the 2021 GA session, given the pandemic. This initiative aligns with MCCPTA’s Health and Wellness Advocacy Priorities.
* You can view summaries of all pre-filed bills that I and other members of AODAAC have reviewed to date here: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1p44a5nfBx_UlbJdTzlDiAVKw10EKn_p7/view?usp=sharing>

Opioid Intervention Task Force (OIT):

* The group did not meet this month.

*Parity and Equity Coalition, Legal Action Center*:

* The most pressing issue for this group is fair and equitable coverage of mental health and substance use treatment via telemedicine by insurance companies and Medicaid. This is proving particularly challenging for audio only, or telephone only, appointments. It is a safety concern and an equity issue for patients who do not have access to internet services and devices needed for an online visit but cannot get in person visits at this time.
* The group determined the legislative priorities for the 2021 Maryland General Assembly session which includes the continuation of coverage for telemed services post-COVID-19 and balance billing issues (when a provider tries to bill the patient for the balance after insurance payments, often in violation of their provider agreements). The balance billing issue will not likely be taken up by the legislature this session but we will continue to work with the Maryland Insurance Administration (MIA) on the issue.
* We participated the second in a series of meetings with the Maryland Insurance Commission. We continue to be encouraged by Commission Chair Birrane ‘s comments and consumer focus and we are hopeful that the MIA will set adequate reporting requirements, and require that insurance providers to meet those requirements, so that parity and equity violations can be easily determined and addressed. Currently, there is no way for the public to obtain the metrics required to see blatant violations. Only the MIA can obtain the information by request, it is not required in ongoing reporting.
* We will continue our work to eliminate the barriers to SUD and mental health treatment that insurance companies continue to erect, in violation of the Mental Health Parity and Substance Use Equity Act. The SUP Chair has joined the legislative committee to advocate for bills that will provide adequate care and insurance coverage for mental health and substance use treatments in Maryland.
* The Maryland Insurance Administration held the first in a series of special public virtual meeting for providers and consumers on "Understanding How to Access Insurance Coverage for Mental Health/Substance Use Disorder Treatment" on Tuesday, January 12.

*MCPS:*

* I continue to work with OSFSE on the implementation of [Handle With Care](https://handlewithcaremd.org/), a program that has first responders notify school officials when a school aged child is present at a scene to which they responded. The school is then able to meet with the child with a trauma informed approach to assess the level of trauma (if any) experienced and to provide or refer the family for trauma informed care. Addressing childhood Adverse Childhood Events (ACEs) in a timely and effective manner is a very important step toward reducing the risk of future. Studies have shown that more than 80% of individuals treated for substance use experienced at least one ACE and most went unaddressed.

Local police departments are starting to put this initiative into practice, informally. We are working to ensure that privacy and other critical components of the HWC program are happening with fidelity, even in the informal practice. A pilot of Handle With Care was slated to begin in September, however, that was delayed due to COVID-19 and distance learning. I feel strongly that this the very time we need this program the most. We know that reports of child abuse and neglect are down substantially because students are not in school being seen or able to reach out for help. If MCPS were made aware of calls for service to the home, for whatever reason, their follow up outreach might reveal the students’ need for help.

Montgomery County Fire & Rescue/EMS are also notifying MCPS when they respond to a call regarding a child with suicidal ideation or an attempted suicide. Montgomery County EMS responded to 408 such calls in 2020. This does not include children who were transported privately by parents or others for suicidal ideation or attempts.

* Reviewing and providing input on the new MCPS substance use plan/policy revisions.
* We continue to participate in the planning of Anti-Vaping Symposium with MCPS & MCCPTA.
  + We are working to include information or a virtual tour of the C.O.P.E. trailer (mock teen bedroom/bathroom) at this event.