**2019-20 MCCPTA ADVOCACY PRIORITIES (DRAFT)**

● **ACCESS TO EQUITABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

To ensure that all MCPS students have equitable access to challenging programming, high-quality instruction and a variety of opportunities, by December 2019 MCPS must conduct a review of courses, programs and highly qualified teachers available in all schools to identify disparities. A plan to address inequities and expand options should be completed by March 31, 2020, with 60 days of public comment before a final plan is approved in June 2020 for implementation the following year. Schools with 40%+ FARMS should be a priority. To reach all students, MCPS must implement distance learning, transportation and expanded use of Change of School Assignments approved by the Board of Education. Additional resources should be provided to children in underperforming cohorts that have been identified in each school’s Equity Accountability Model. We support the Community Schools model in order to meet the needs of all children.

● **CAPITAL FUNDS AND FACILITIES**

MCCPTA supports an increase in the State and County capital budget to reduce overcrowding and maintain existing infrastructure. The Key Facility Indicator data should reflect the student and staff experience in the school. The socioeconomic makeup of the school population should be a factor in prioritization of projects. MCCPTA supports exploring alternative calculations of student generation to better project student enrollment. The Subdivision Staging Policy should ensure school infrastructure keeps pace with development. We support improvements to infrastructure around schools, including roadways and adjacent pedestrian facilities, to provide safe routes to schools.

● **COMMUNICATION**

MCPS should partner with MCCPTA and community organizations to prioritize *interpersonal outreach,* instead of relying mostly on electronic communication, especially to diverse families in communities with limited Internet access. MCPS must expand and implement door-knocking campaigns, parent and student focus groups, morning/weekend informational gatherings, targeted personal phone calls to families, and text alerts. OSSI Directors must clearly articulate this expectation to principals and follow up to ensure compliance. When major program, curriculum, staff (including school leadership positions) or district wide changes are being considered, MCPS must provide a minimum of 60 days notice to families before implementation, and reserve 50% of all meetings for parent and student feedback. In addition to regular updates on the ongoing boundary review, MCPS must inform parents about academic options and districtwide efforts. MCPS should continue offering all materials in multiple languages and expand the availability of interpreters to foster robust two-way engagement with all families. MCCPTA strongly supports Open Data so that data is more accessible to school communities.

● **DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

MCCPTA supports thoughtful approaches to make MCPS a system of schools that are more reflective of our county’s diversity. We recognize the research showing that truly diverse schools enhance learning for all students. We believe the staff of MCPS, at the school and central level, should reflect the diversity of the MCPS student body.

● **CURRICULUM**

Curriculum should meet the needs of all children and include enrichment and appropriate challenges for all children, this includes not only our students that thrive in on-grade level studies but also our children with special needs, our English language learners, and our students that exhibit academic giftedness (and combinations of these). Professional development for staff implementing existing and new curriculum must be a priority to ensure the best outcome for our students. Further, the curriculum, at all levels, should include diverse content and culturally-relevant teaching strategies. MCPS should follow evidence-based best practices for determining appropriate courses to meet the needs of our students. MCPS should also look closely at the use of digital content in the classroom and ensure our students use of screens/digital media results in positive outcomes.

● **HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

Consistent with the rollout of BeWell365, MCCPTA supports an expansion of available wellness resources to ensure that all MCPS students have access to appropriate physical and mental health services including suicide prevention. Students must have access to addiction services and vaping education and cessation programs in all secondary schools. We recommend MCPS implement Handle With Care as well as training for trauma-informed practices among school staff. MCPS should appropriately test air and water quality and use health-based standards to guide remediation. School fields should be appropriately installed, maintained, monitored, and tested to ensure the safety of children during outdoor activities. MCCPTA recommends improving the nutrition and quality of school-provided meals that are free from toxic substances.

● **INSPECTOR GENERAL OVERSIGHT**

MCCPTA supports an Inspector General that would have the ability to oversee MCPS.

● **OPERATING FUNDS AND THE KIRWAN COMMISSION**

MCCPTA supports state funding formulas that address increasing enrollment, operational needs, and the needs of Montgomery County’s diverse population of learners. MCCPTA supports The Kirwan Commission (Maryland State Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education) and expect it to promote proven high-quality instruction, promote reducing class sizes in Montgomery County, and provide high-quality early childhood education. MCPS should fully implement the Community Schools model.

● **SCHOOL CLIMATE AND SECURITY**

MCCPTA supports continued assessments of school climate and maintenance of safe conditions and positive school environments that protect all students and adults from bullying, discrimination, harassment, and assault. MCPS should expeditiously improve security in all school buildings by providing secure vestibules, expanding video surveillance in and around all buildings, and ensuring adequate security staff at all schools. MCPS must also work to ensure fidelity in the implementation of policies and protocols related to child protection and safety within all schools and on school buses. MCPS should provide prompt and transparent reporting of incidents within schools, school buses, and criminal activity near schools or involving students; work to reduce disproportionality in discipline; promote restorative practices; and prevent, address and track incidences of bias, discrimination, hate, and sexual harassment.