

MINUTES OF THE MCCPTA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING
Thursday, January 5, 2006 at the Carver Educational Services Center

ATTENDANCE:

Officers: Cindy Kerr, Victor Salazar, Juan Johnson, Shirley Brandman, Liz Wheeler, Sharon St. Pierre

Area Vice Presidents and Cluster Coordinators: Ellen Paul, Ted Willard, Jim Keenan, Phil Kaufman, Jane deWinter, Lilo Mitz, Carley Lee, Kate Savage, Deborah Stevens Panzer, Steve Crowley, Carroll Lovelace, Bob Braun, Rosanne Hurwitz, Lilo Mitz, Janis Sartucci, Susie Scofield, Victoria Campbell Carter, Pam Moomau

Committee Chairs: Kay Romero, Marney Jacobs, Diane McHale, Meredith Walters, Neal Meyerson and Patti Twigg, Tom Murphy, Anne Turner

Visitors: Darnell K. Daisey and Peter C. Calhoun III, PTA members from Drew Elementary School

OPENNING BUSINESS:

Call to Order: MCCPTA President Cindy Kerr called the meeting to order at 7:39 PM.

Agenda: Requested additions to the agenda were: Meredith Walters to add a training committee date for spring training and Ted Willard to share a curriculum committee update in writing. Rosanne Hurwitz requested an update on the comment from the civic federation on the disposition of Carver Educational Services Center under new business. Cluster coordinator updates will be done at the next executive board meeting.

Meeting Minutes: The December 1, 2005 executive board meeting minutes were distributed. Grammatical corrections were made. The minutes were approved as corrected.

Treasurer's Report:

Juan Johnson distributed the MCCPTA's, Inc. Treasurer's Report of November 23, 2005 through January 4, 2006, the Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual report for July 1, 2005 through January 4, 2006, and a list of some MCCPTA committees (gifted and talented; curriculum; special needs; high school and safety), general and administrative, and community outreach expenses. This last list includes all approved expenses that are included in the executive board minutes with the exception of the legislative dinner expenses. A receipts list by local unit for MCCPTA dues received beginning in July 2005 was distributed. Contact your local school if it is not on the local unit dues received list. MCCPTA has about \$5,000 in the bank. Insurance bills went out in late September and Juan is getting a lot back now. The insurance premiums due list includes those schools who owe money. Please contact your locals re: payment. The audit update is much slower than Juan anticipated, but it's moving along. Hopefully, it will wrap up by end of the month and next year should be smoother. The treasurer's report will be filed for audit.

OFFICERS' REPORTS:

President: Cindy Kerr announced that as of November 2005 she is now the Vice President for Councils of the MD PTA. National PTA doesn't see a conflict of interest in Cindy serving as both the state vice president and our MCCPTA president. Cindy is appointing Sharon St. Pierre to represent MCCPTA at the state board of directors meetings since Cindy can't vote for both positions that she holds. Sharon will remain as our representative until the new president MCCPTA is elected.

Several officers met with Larry Bowers for a dialogue about establishing a work group on the organizational culture of respect that MCPS is currently using with its unions. This probably wouldn't cover the Board of Education. If you are interested in serving on this work group, please let Cindy know.

Laura Steinberg, from MCPS, contacted Cindy regarding record keeping - specifically the data base for MCPS as it relates to military recruiting. Currently topic of military recruiting at high schools has come to their attention because some school PTAs are allowing directories to be used by recruiters. Cindy reviewed our recent directory use background position and how we help our locals. Cluster coordinators should contact their local high school PTA presidents to remind them that directories can only be used by recruiters, or others, with the permission of the PTA membership. Opting out of releasing your child's name to recruiters can be done following the outcry from NCLB clause. ROTC can recruit through the school career centers. MCPS understands that we lose control of directory distribution once they're printed. Our offered language may preclude this practice of directory distribution to recruiters, but it is a local PTA decision.

Cindy continues to work on a middle school reform by working on parent involvement and communication. She is the one of only two parents in the group who participates, but she has been told that she's not the "uninvolved" parent that MCPS is looking for. They are trying to recruit an "uninvolved" parent. Discussion of parental involvement followed her statements.

Officers continue to meet with Board members and the county council. Valerie Ervin, in her role as George Leventhal's chief of staff, contacted Cindy regarding our testimony before the county council. Because there was no time to come back to MCCPTA for direction in two or three days, Cindy told her to keep it "status quo".

The council continues to push for "helpful" changes in our testimony and would like for it to be done over periods of time rather than by clusters. Cindy pushed group testimony for stronger voices. We will have to officially request how we want our CIP and Operating Budget testimony to be given next year. No dates have been given to Victor for the county council testimony, yet. Cindy will contact Valerie Ervin, in her role as chief of staff, for dates.

Cindy met with Valerie Ervin yesterday regarding background of her motion on school reassignment requests. Board of Education member Valerie Ervin's January 10, 2006 memorandum on school assignment requests given to us by George Margolies was distributed tonight:

On December 13, 2005, I moved and Mr. Johnson seconded the following resolution:
Resolved, That the Board of Education schedule a discussion as to the desirability of amending Policy FAA (Long-Range Educational Facilities Planning) to consider addressing extraordinary school reassignment requests, absent a full-blown boundary study, without being limited to the regular CIP cycle.

Valerie stated that, it's simple there is no background on her motion. Our visitors from Hampshire Greens will have comments to share. If the Board discussion leads to action, we will have comments, opinions and positions. MCCPTA favors public Board discussion. Discussion of list serve comments from the community, including tonight's visitors, was made during the agenda item for CIP/Policy FAA Update/Valerie Ervin Motion.

Vice President – Educational Issues:

Shirley Brandman passed around a correspondence file. On behalf of committee chair Alies Muskin, Shirley announced that the high school committee will have an extended discussion meeting based upon a list of questions and concerns (e.g. concept high school, smaller learning communities, graduation rates) on February 4 from 9 to 1 PM. This will mean a substantial savings from the original request of \$1,000 for a conference. Shirley will ask Alies to submit a revised request. Two committees, Parent Leadership and Curriculum, will meet on January 11. Grading and Reporting will meet on January 25. Deborah DeMille-Wagman stepped down as co-chair of the curriculum committee, but will stay as cluster coordinator. Ted Willard is now the sole curriculum chair. Committee chairs were asked to look at the operating budget and offer their input to Jane de Winter.

Vice President – Programs:

Sharon St. Pierre has moved the start time for Shelly Johnson's program on career academies at the January Delegate Assembly to 6:30 PM based upon the action of the delegates at the last assembly. We'll monitor the attendance with the earlier start time. February's program was supposed to be diversity in the PTA, but in discussing it with the officers it was decided to eliminate it in favor of a total business meeting. March is a parent leadership program with Vicky Strella. Depending upon attendance feedback, discussion and a decision by the delegates the March program could be moved to start at 7 PM. A potential audit concern is the requirement of PTAs to not just conduct business, but provide information and prove how our monies are spent to serve the community.

Vice President – Administration:

Victor Salazar will be meeting this month with parents in Clarksburg to help them start a PTA at the new high school. The operating budget testimony sheet was circulated.

AGENDA ITEMS:

Operating Budget Update –

Operating Budget chair Jane de Winter reported that the operating budget testimony writing workshop will be held in the media center at Gaithersburg HS on Sat., Jan. 7 from 9:30 to 11:30 AM.

Jane de Winter made a motion to for a budget request of \$100 for the operating budget committee to purchase refreshments for the operating budget testimony workshop. It was seconded and passed by a voice vote.

Points of reference and two or three themes will be developed at Saturday's workshop for our priorities. Questions for the county council members for the operating budget forum on Monday night will also be collected, or you can give them to Jane tonight or e-mail her later. She may consolidate/re-write questions. Electronic copies of the results from the workshop will be posted for those who can't attend. The budget

compact is on the website. Attending Monday night's forum will be: Sharon Cox, Charles Haughey, Beverly Swaim-Staley (for Doug Duncan), Marshall Spatz, and seven county council members, excluding Perez and Subin. Jane doesn't know if Monday night's forum will be televised. Following the forum the MCCPTA budget compact will be voted on by delegates (with or without changes or amendments) at 9 PM. Suggested changes may be sent to Jane before the meeting, so she has an overhead ready. Marshall Spatz wants ideas for how to spend the \$2.6 allocated for high schools, middle school money, and money for bullying/gang violence. Spatz also wants feedback on the fall strategic plan community forums. MCPS and Board of Education ideas proposed include: cluster coordinators attending assigned meetings; having only PTA leaders involved; and only including "average" parents. Discussion followed on our role in the forums, including the concept of the "average" parent, the timing of the fall forums, the MCPS goal of the forums versus the community goals, potential educational researchers/consultants as resources for input, role of the facilitators in forums, and the suggestion that the Board listen and learn like MCCPTA does during the summer months. Valerie Ervin is the new chair for the research, so she oversees the forums.

Grading and Reporting:

Shirley Brandman did not have a copies of the motion from the last executive board meeting regarding monitoring of grading and reporting, and feedback. She will post it on the executive board listserv tomorrow. Grading and Reporting is not on the agenda for the next Board of Education meeting, and Shirley doesn't know when it will be back on their agenda. MCPS has a FAQ list designed to clarify homework and reassessment. The report card roll out will realistically not be complete as first scheduled. The pilot report card is questionable for the third through fifth grade for next year. First and second grade report cards will not be fully implemented next year, and have been pushed back for at least a year. The high school report card is about 10 years out. Originally report cards were to have been finished by 2009.

CIP/Policy FAA Update/Valerie Ervin Motion:

Marney Jacobs and Jim Keenan reported that the CIP testimony will probably be in February, so it's a quick turn around. We'd like for quad clusters to be grouped for testimony time. A letter should be sent to the governor, to the Montgomery County delegation and to other state legislators because we need the state money to get what we need.

FAA-RA workgroup MCCPTA Position Paper was distributed. The key point is that we support the workgroup and the changes in language they drafted. Site size, school capacity and enrollment, boundary studies and other facilities planning advisory committees, and most importantly community involvement should be put back into the policy. The due date for CIP cluster comments has been changed from July 1 to May 1 by request. Changes can still be made over the summer. Comments are not tied to the master plan, but to what's happening in your building instead. A spring workshop will be held several weeks before comments are due. The next meeting of the workgroup is Jan. 18. The position paper will be brought to the delegate assembly on Jan. 24. Voting will be on Jan. 25. The MCCPTA report is included in the report going to the superintendent at the Feb. 27 Board of Education meeting. No dramatic changes were made by the workgroup. Public testimony on the capital budget by quad cluster is included. There's been discussion with the civic federation on the definition of community with regard to parents, staff and students as the primary stakeholders. Wherever possible Jim and Marney have spelled out MCCPTA, area vice presidents, PTA presidents, and whatever they can to define parent involvement. With the executive board approval Jim and Marney will put the position paper out to the delegates for them to take it back to their PTAs.

Discussion was held on review by the policy committee since this is a regulation, and how this review would be apparently contrary to what we were led to believe regarding policy and regulation. Cindy suggested that we sit in on the policy committee review. We would respond if necessary if the policy committee tries to change anything without sending it back to the workgroup. Boundary committee discussions would include area vice presidents, cluster coordinators or local PTA presidents with the latter picking the participants. PTA has a role since MCPS staff works with MCCPTA area vice presidents, cluster coordinators, or PTA presidents to form a site selection advisory committee composed of MCPS staff, PTA and appropriate local officials. Following discussion a request for clarification will be made for, so we know who chooses participants for boundary studies. Cindy Kerr will write it out. The draft can be read through the link, so feedback can be given to Marney and Jim by Sunday. Monday it will be sent out to the delegates.

Valerie Ervin's motion of Dec. 13, 2005 to the members of the Board of Education on school reassignment requests was distributed. It reads:

Resolved, that the Board of Education schedule a discussion as to the desirability of amending Policy FAA (Long-Range Educational Facilities Planning) to consider addressing extraordinary school reassignment requests, absent a full-blown boundary study, without being limited to the regular CIP cycle.

Her motion opens up discussion. A draft proposal letter from Cindy to the Board of Education has been written by Jim and Marney dealing with this motion. Jim and Marney would like to send the letter because discussion

will be held on Jan. 10, although the likelihood of finalizing anything then is remote. We want the opportunity to discuss what the Board come ups with. Our work on FAA should be done by the end of January. Our stand on policy FAA is covered in the draft letter, including inclusive communication, no reduction in testimony, parental inclusion on boundary advisory committees and input on criteria, our strong recommendation that "extraordinary" be defined carefully. The final suggestion is to look at the FAA policy regulation and in particular the last paragraph in the regulation because of its mention of unusual circumstances. Those people who think they're impacted by a boundary should have the opportunity to speak, not only those that MCPS designates. The letter asks that MCCPTA be involved in any conversation regarding school reassignment requests. This letter doesn't preclude the discussion of what is "extraordinary". MCCPTA doesn't historically interfere with local boundary issues.

One visitor from Hampshire Green was allowed to speak to the executive board about Valerie Ervin's motion. He expressed appreciation for its importance to MCCPTA, but was concerned about our involvement. He is concerned that the PTA will be pitted against the average parent and that this gives "ammunition" to some on the Board to wait. Based on the previous boundary study, he doesn't agree with our key bullets, and thinks our "uninformed" letter is a barrier to a solution. The community has been working on this policy since 1997, so they want the policy worked on before the regulation.

Cindy Kerr asked us to look at Ervin's resolution as it is and the suggestions in this letter and address that for their overriding impact on the county not just for this particular issue for this community. Discussion included: state levels of appeal, further development for extraordinary circumstances under point C in the policy FAA draft, boundary changes without parent participation, agreement with the workgroup, but questioning if the policy is working, precedence, policy versus practice, a need for clearer communication to parents about what a boundary study involves, "islands", and our premature committal in a letter before we know what the board discussion and decision will be.

Cindy Kerr summarized that points A, B and C are acceptable, but point D is not, so it the consensus seems to be that it should be removed. The delegates need to weigh in on this. So, the letter should say while we applaud the idea of opening up discussion, these are some of the concerns we'd like to see included in the discussion, and if there are any actions that will result from this discussion we want to be allowed the opportunity to come back and be involved in the action. The workgroup wants to make sure that extraordinary is narrowly defined. The general belief is that the current way raising some questions, so we should go back and look at criteria used in boundary studies. We need to be careful of political maneuvering and stay neutral, while still having an opinion. The last paragraph will be done and we'll put in a different conclusion and closing. Discussion on point A concluded that it should be included to be respectful to the workgroup.

Ted Willard made a motion that the executive board sends a letter to the Board of Education in response to the Valerie Ervin motion. It was seconded. It passed on a standing vote.

Jim Keenan made a motion that the executive board to send the proposed letter to the Board of Education as written through "C", eliminating point D and the last paragraph; concluding that we be included in any discussion and any action that is a result of this discussion; allowing us to do any editing, and to send the letter out to the executive board prior to it being sent. It was seconded. It passed on a standing vote.

Wordsmithing will be done with the CIP committee chairs. Jim Keenan will check with Joe Lavorgna for clarifications.

Carver Facility: The issue of the Carver facility being considered for use by Montgomery College as discussed by the Education subcommittee of the county council was discussed. Mike Subin talked to Cindy at the superintendent's operating budget presentation. MCCPTA's immediate reaction was what about Rock Terrace and the impact on children. Cindy will meet with Mike Subin again next week. We will delay more discussion until we have more information that will be brought to the next executive board meeting by Cindy, the CIP chairs, and the cluster involved. (The mayor of Rockville has invited the cluster to meet with him.) We all will remind people discussing the issue of the unique program at Rock Terrace HS.

List Serves:

Patti Twigg distributed her master tally from the ballot on listserve issues that was taken at the last delegate assembly. Patti Twigg said the executive board has complete control over the executive board list serve rules, and guidelines. Recent discussion has indicated that the executive board listserve is not being utilized as it was meant to be. It was to be used for discussion in between meetings, and discussions were not to be forwarded to other places. Efficiency, not secrecy was intended. Everything on the executive listserve is for the executive board use for meetings.

Ted Willard made a motion that if you are a member of the executive board list serve and you forward information that has been shared on the executive board list serve for action at an upcoming meeting to the delegates list serve, or any other list serve, that you will be warned once through e-mail from the moderator, with a copy to the president, that this is unacceptable; and if happens a second time you will be removed from the executive board list serve. It was seconded. It passed by a standing vote.

Commentary and analysis should be the focus of the executive board listserve, even though opinions are there, too. Questions were raised about items intended to be forwarded by request. This motion applies to unsolicited forwarding. A statement of clarification, "This is for discussion, commentary and analysis by the executive board for action to be shared at the executive board that will result in action that will then be shared with the delegates" will be added. Patti suggested it might be easier to put shared items on the bulletin. An idea against the motion is that all listserves have no confidentiality after a posting is made. E-mail warnings will come from the moderator with a copy to the president. Everyone can post to the executive board, but usually it is used by officers and committee chairs. Look for executive board use only in the subject line and don't forward it.

Forwarding of summaries will be left to the professional judgment of the moderator.

Patti researched Juan Johnson's motion from last month's meeting. It should work, but people who read on the web will have to make a separate message.

Juan Johnson made a motion that we make the changes to the executive board list serve serves so that a "reply" is sent to the sender only, and "reply to all" is sent to the sender and all of the executive board. The motion was seconded. It passed on a standing vote.

NEC Naming Committee (Abrams motion):

Phil Kaufman said that last July the naming process for a new school was changed from the process in the regulations including the timing, the members of the committee, and who would run it. Steve Abrams gave a single name, Roscoe Nix, (a living person) for the committee to consider. The cluster coordinators in the consortium wrote letters of objection this summer to the Board of Education. Phil drafted a letter for the MCCPTA executive board to send to the Board of Education since then naming committee didn't follow policy. The naming committee was formed by the principal and the community superintendent and included members from Burnt Mills and Cresthaven, as well as Phil. Next week the naming committee will recommend Brookview Park as the name. Steve Abrams has gotten feedback from county council members to suggest that he make a resolution for the Board of Education to put names forward by just changing the policy to be able to do it. This is up for discussion at the January 10 Board of Education meeting. The draft letter has incorporated these concepts to say that we're concerned about what's happening, we want the Board to be respectful of local community preferences and we oppose any changes to the naming policy that would eliminate community involvement.

Phil Kaufman made a motion that the executive board to send his letter to the Board of Education. It was seconded. Diane McHale made an amendment to the motion to specifically take out the name of Roscoe Nix to make it more general statement. The amendment was seconded and passed on a voice vote. The motion was passed on a voice vote.

Discussion included that the issue isn't this name, but process that was used to choose it.

Academic Ineligibility Policy:

Shirley Brandman said that the Board originally announced that comments were due on the academic ineligibility policy on Jan. 26 for Board action on Feb. 14, but the mailed letter said comments were due Jan. 11. The Jan. 11 date was an error. Since voting at the delegate meeting would be on Jan. 24, and the policy committee is meeting on Jan. 12, the executive board needs to make a statement to the Board before their policy committee meeting. The delegate assembly would be able to vote before Board action is taken.

Shirley Brandman made a motion that the executive board submits comments to the Board of Education encouraging them not to drop the academic standards of eligibility, but allowing for increased flexibility as proposed by the minority report for students who in good faith seek to pursue academic supports, so they're not automatically eliminated from their extracurricular activity. It was seconded. It passed on a voice vote.

Discussion points included: it will be brought to the delegates but, it's not assured that the delegates will approve it; the policy committee needs to consider the minority report; no recommendation on a pilot program; academic supports should be offered for all, not just athletes; not advocating lowering GPA standards; extracurricular activities (other than athletics) with and without academic eligibility as a threshold; high school list of activities and clubs with and without academic eligibility; MCCPTA would like this generic list; stipended positions equity; principals fear of lowering of standards below 2.0 GPA; Shirley will send a summary of the main points from the minority report leaving out time frame reference due to no consensus; extracurriculars as way of holding onto students; every school should have some extracurriculars that are not academically eligible linked; tie between academic supports and participation; special needs students; and the message we send to students.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Training:

Training chair Meredith Walters proposed Wed., June 7 as the date for spring training.

Gifted and Talented:

Diane McHale gave an update about the annual application process for third graders to apply to fourth and fifth grade programs. In past years, the schools invited (with some guidelines from MCPS) some third graders to apply, but this year MCPS sent a letter of application to every third grader's family with the result being fewer applications. The deadline was extended and locals were told to do more outreach. The issue is that these are competitive programs and MCPS can't keep changing the deadline. Does this have more of an affect on children from low income or bilingual families? Diane will bring back more information.

Curriculum:

Ted Willard distributed a resolution from the curriculum committee. The committee will meet on Jan. 11. This resolution will be brought to the delegate assembly to take back to their locals.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 10:02 PM.