

MCCPTA Health and Wellness Committee

April 2021 Report

Health and Wellness April 26 Meeting Attendance:

Laura Mitchell, Lynn Amano, Laura Stewart, Sandra Landis, and Hannah Donart

Notes:

Lynne's update:

- Letter being rewritten
- Meal deliveries
 - Less than 8 weeks: summertime delivery
- Wednesday delivery @10 or 11 in morning at Northwood (in Crystal Springs), will switch to Fridays
- 'VOLUNTEERS NEEDED SSL HOURS AVAILABLE FOR MCPS STUDENTS Healthy School Food 1 3 POSITION DUTIES Volunteers will pick up MCPS school meal boxes on Wednesdays between 12-4 pm and deliver them to families in Montgomery County. Volunteers will be assigned routes intended to take between 45 minutes and 1.5 hours to complete. INTERESTED? EMAIL: DELIVERIES@HEALTHYSCHOOLODMD.ORG'
- Telehealth Bill was passed
 - Parity violations, paying different rates violations
- Private proms and issues with substance use (MADD, Arise and Flourish, and other partners): SSL hours available

Sandra's update

- Reaching out to Will Jwando
 - She'll reach out to Pat O'Neal
- Excel beyond the bell: Free after school programs

Laura Mitchell's update:

- Telehealth Bill was passed
 - Parity violations, paying different rates violations
- Private proms and issues with substance use (MADD, Arise and Flourish, and other partners): SSL hours available

Nutrition Subcommittee Monthly Report

- After we testified against policy JPH (the one that included plans to collect outstanding debt on families and serve "alternate meals." We continued our advocacy to bring policy JPH to a halt. With great results!

- Fania and HSFM met with MD Hunger Solutions, and wrote letters to the individual Board of Education members. In addition, Fania was able to get an interview and subsequent article written by nationally known Bethesda Beat reporter, Caitlyn Peetz. This article drew national attention, including a commentary and between by Representative Ilhan Omar!
<https://bethesdamagazine.com/bethesda-beat/schools/mcps-considering-alternate-meals-for-students-with-lunch-debt/>
- As a result of this article, the Board of Education pulled the policy JPH from the May 11 agenda, and stated that it could be addressed at a later time. And we withdrew our request to testify on May 11, which would have been our second such testimony. [https://bethesdamagazine.com/bethesda-beat/schools/mcps-tables-proposal-for-alternate-meals-for-students-with-unpaid-lunch-bills/?utm_source=Bethesda+Magazine+%7C+Bethesda+Beat&utm_campaign=06ef1a0613-Beat%2005.07.21&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1bbe9df5d9-06ef1a0613-104454679&ct=t\(Y\)&mc_cid=06ef1a0613&mc_eid=ce7054a4d7](https://bethesdamagazine.com/bethesda-beat/schools/mcps-tables-proposal-for-alternate-meals-for-students-with-unpaid-lunch-bills/?utm_source=Bethesda+Magazine+%7C+Bethesda+Beat&utm_campaign=06ef1a0613-Beat%2005.07.21&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1bbe9df5d9-06ef1a0613-104454679&ct=t(Y)&mc_cid=06ef1a0613&mc_eid=ce7054a4d7)
- Subsequently, Fania was able to submit a second article as Executive Director of Healthy School Food Md, an opinion piece, to Bethesda Magazine thanking the Board for delaying action on the policy and suggesting means for moving forward to healthier and universally free school meals.
[https://bethesdamagazine.com/bethesda-beat/opinion/opinion-mcps-should-forgive-student-debt-provide-free-healthy-meals/?utm_source=Bethesda+Magazine+%7C+Bethesda+Beat&utm_campaign=1927e5e667-Beat-05.08.21&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1bbe9df5d9-1927e5e667-104454679&ct=t\(bethesda_beat_05.08.21\)&mc_cid=1927e5e667&mc_eid=ce7054a4d7](https://bethesdamagazine.com/bethesda-beat/opinion/opinion-mcps-should-forgive-student-debt-provide-free-healthy-meals/?utm_source=Bethesda+Magazine+%7C+Bethesda+Beat&utm_campaign=1927e5e667-Beat-05.08.21&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1bbe9df5d9-1927e5e667-104454679&ct=t(bethesda_beat_05.08.21)&mc_cid=1927e5e667&mc_eid=ce7054a4d7)

Substance Use Prevention Subcommittee Report

- See attachment

Mental Health Subcommittee updates

- New co-chairs: Lavanya Sithanandam and Jessica Hasson

Environmental Health Subcommittee Report

Environmental Health Subcommittee meeting April 19 Meeting Attendance: Dustin Poppendieck, Laura Stewart, and Deborah Schrab, and Hannah Donart

- Established an environmental health workgroup with MCPS that meets the last Friday of each month. First two meetings were held on March 26 and April 23
- March 26 Environmental Health Workgroup meeting notes:
 - Attendance: Seth Adams, Dustin, Laura Stewart, Deborah Schrab, Hannah

- Below are action items we discussed in our meeting that would go a long way towards building confidence and providing more transparency that we've prioritized for the near term (April):
 - Post eACH range and MERV filter rating used for each school in the spread sheet on your webpage [here](#).
 - Verify that ventilation and filtration mitigation measures bring schools up to the current ASHRAE science-based guidelines/recommendations of 4-6 air changes per hour (ACH) as stated on MCPS' website. (Our IAQ expert parents have several professionals and firms they can recommend). MCPS has followed the "playbook" for improving ventilation and filtration. However, as recommended by experts from [Harvard Healthy Buildings Program](#), **verifying ventilation and filtration performance after mitigation measures are in place** to reduce COVID-19 transmission indoors should include:
 - Verify through commissioning and testing
 - Work with an external expert to evaluate building systems, ventilation, filtration, and air cleaning
 - Measure carbon dioxide (CO₂) as a proxy for ventilation
 - Turn off all hydration stations that do not have NSF/ANSI 53 and 42 filter for lead capability.
 - Flush water fountains that are turned off in addition to all other sources so that they do not contaminant the water distribution system with legionella (which mimics many COVID-19 symptoms) or other harmful pathogens and test for recommended disinfectant residual levels at point of entry and farthest points of use.
 - Convene the water quality work group to help develop water management plans for every school during COVID-19 and after. (This is a CDC and EPA recommendation and would help with oversight of flushing protocol and the implementation of best practices and transparency.
 - Barriers to return to school for children with asthma due to the current lists of cleaning and disinfectant products for use within MCPS facilities posted [here](#) and [here](#) containing ammonia, bleach, and fragrances. Seth mentioned a 3M product that was a cleaner (not disinfectant) and did not contain ammonia, bleach, or fragrances that MCPS could use in the interim and said he'd email us the name of the product that he was referring to. We've received no response to date.
 - We shared information on safer alternatives in the MCCPTA Health and Wellness [safer cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting letter](#) to Superintendent Smith and the BOE but wanted to provide this information again in case it's helpful. We have received no response to date. As recently as [April 29, 2021](#) MCPS recently procured more

disinfectants with ammonia, bleach, and fragrances. They also bought microfiber cloths and more 3M Cleaner.

- April 23 Environmental Health Workgroup meeting notes:
 - Attendance: Seth Adams, Lynne Zarate, Joanna, Dustin, Deborah, Laura Stewart, Hannah,
 - IAQ
 - Short Term:
 - HVAC
 - Shifting from heating to cooling is challenging, but they are managing
 - Temperature
 - Filter changes-staffing challenges
 - Schools with positive cases?
 - Positive cases-DHHS gets involved
 - No procedure in validating spaces, only cleaning and filter changes
 - More construction and traffic pollution have to change filters more frequently
 - Have a lot of MERV 13 and 11
 - Monitoring station in each classroom-projects preparing for bidding
 - Monitor CO2, temp, humidity
 - Enhance ventilation and filtration capabilities
 - Set points
 - Supplemental equipment
 - Retrofits
 - Long Term:
 - Data Sharing-Seth will meet with Dustin to go over raw data. Still waiting for meeting.
 - WSA9 MPIA request
 - MCPS has binder of info
 - Enhanced ACH be maintained at high rates in the 2021-22 school year?
 - Focus on thermal comfort over energy
 - Push hard to push for IAQ alongside energy increases
 - Divergent plans for elementary vs middle schools and high schools
 - Fall will be back to somewhat normal, but not sure what exactly that means

- (Flu?)
 - Different for high schools/elementary schools?
 - Any push back on energy costs?
 - Disinfection changes since CDC surface guidelines:
 - Working towards getting these chemicals out of schools
 - Working with our materials management folks
 - CDC update helps
 - Clarify with MOUs with unions
 - Sprayer status? Still using them.
- Outdoor Space considerations for Spring/Summer pilots to aim for Fall implementation:
 - Seth is fine with pilots if school communities are interested. Need grass roots support and can't make mandatory.
 - There is funding for tents and other infrastructure
 - Joanna will work with Lynne Zarate on this and pull other stakeholders in
 - Joanna held a town hall to discuss outdoor space
 - Patty O'Neal was in attendance
- Safer Cleaning and Disinfecting
 - Seth Adams is the person to talk to about procurement of cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting products.
 - Seth will send the name of the 3M product that was a cleaner (not disinfectant) and did not contain ammonia, bleach, or fragrances that MCPS will use in the interim while MCPS reviews and updates their list of cleaners and disinfectants. Still no response.
- Scheduled separate meeting for May 12, 2021 to discuss water quality concerns with Lynne Zarate and ask to reconvene water quality workgroup.
- Laura Stewart quoted in article on aging school infrastructure
<https://www.chalkbeat.org/2021/4/14/22384257/biden-schools-infrastructure-research-environment>