

Vice President of Educational Issues Officer Monthly Report February 2017

Jennifer McDonald: vpedissues@mccpta.com

January Activities

- January ExComm and Board of Directors meeting, January 4
- Operating Budget Hearing, January 5
- Curriculum Committee Meeting w/ Dr. Lang, January 30

Upcoming Activities

- February ExComm and Board of Directors meeting, February 2
- County Council CIP Hearing, February 7
- Education Budget Meeting with Councilmember Rice, Dr. Smith, Dr. Pollard, NWHS, February 15
- Delegates Assembly, February 27
- Joint MCPS/MCCPTA Science Night, March 20, 7-9pm, RMHS (Snow Date: March 22)

Recent and Ongoing Issues

RQAs

The Required Quarterly Assessments, the revised grading system rolled out this year that replaces cumulative final exams, should *come home* for parents to see. As you know from never getting to see your child's exams for pretty much an entire generation of students, this is a complete shift in methodology...and one that parents welcome. Unlike final exams, RQAs allow feedback *during the course of instruction* instead of after instruction has ended, and allows parents to facilitate communication with the teacher with regard to their child's specific weak spots. If your child does not bring home his or her RQAs feel free to (a) raid your child's backpack or (b) contact your child's school. The relatively quick shift in test programs has left an information gap between what schools should be doing and what parents should expect.

Here is the MCPS link to the Frequently Asked Questions regarding the new grading policy:

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/info/assessment-strategy/faq.aspx>

Next on the testing horizon is a shift from the classic 'bubbling in' of test answers to testing that includes essays and other test methods. This shift is meant to better evaluate our students; plus who doesn't love fudging it with essay questions? At least you can get partial credit. Will keep you informed as progress unfolds.

Special Ed Advocacy

Our Special Ed. Chair Jeanne Taylor is actively advocating for support for House Bill 174 with a letter to Eric Luedtke and members of the House Ways & Means Committee. This bill requires written parent/guardian consent prior to changes being made to a student's Individual Education Program. If this issue is important to you please contact Jeanne and write a quick note of your own in support of this House Bill. If you know someone with a Special Ed child, maybe one too young to even be in school yet; please encourage them to contact Jeanne and write in as well. Encourage them to advocate *now* for the *future*.