

DRAFT SUMMARY OF THE MCCPTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Thursday June 7, 2007, at Carver Education Services Center

Attendance:

Officers: Jane de Winter, President; Juan Johnson, Treasurer (and SV CC); April Keyes, VP Programs; Kay Romero, VP Educational Issues; Victor Salazar, VP Legislation; Susan Joyce Thomas, Recording Secretary BOD; Ted Willard, Recording Secretary DA (and Magruder CC and Curriculum Committee Co-Chair)

Area Vice Presidents and Cluster Coordinators: Carroll Lovelace, Gaithersburg CC; Jud Ashman, QO CC; Julie Lucas, SV CC; Janette Gilman, Churchill CC; Laurie Halverson, Churchill CC; Brenda Willett, Churchill CC; Michael Joseph, Rockville CC; Andrea Bernardo, Wooten CC; Dawn Dolan, Blake CC; Lee Ann Doerflinger, Blake CC; Patti Twigg, Paint Branch CC (and Listservs Committee Chair); Sally Taber, AVP/DCC Coordinator; Faye Nabavian, Einstein CC; Deborah DeMille-Wagman, AVP for BCC, WJ, Whitman & Wheaton; Liz Sadove, WJ CC; Pam Moomau, WJ CC (and Safety Committee Chair); Karen Smith, Wheaton CC.

Committee Chairs: Jim Keenan, CIP Co-Chair; Sharon Schulman, Curriculum Committee Co-Chair; Beth Kennington, G/R Committee Co-Chair; Tracy Fox, Health Committee Chair; Ellen Paul, Middle School Committee Chair; Neal Meyerson, Reflections Committee Chair; Diane Dickson, Sp Ed Committee Co-Chair; Linda B. White, Technology Committee Chair.

Opening:

Jane de Winter opened this informational meeting at 7:44 PM. There was no quorum achieved so no official business was conducted.

Agenda:

Minutes/Secretary Report: Minutes of January 4, 2007, February 7, 2007, April 11, 2007, and May 3, 2007 were not approved due to lack of quorum.

Treasurer Report: Oral report was given and two documents (Balance Sheet as of May 31, 2007; and Budget vs. Actuals: Approved Budget – FY07 P&L July 2006 – May 2007) were distributed.

Executive Committee Reports:

The President distributed a list of her activities from May 6, 2007 to June 4, 2007.

Committee Reorganization: A list of MCCPTA Officers, Area/Cluster Coordinators and Committee Chairs for 2007 – 2008 was distributed. Jane de Winter discussed a proposed committee structure that would involve two changes. First, the Student Service Learning (SSL) Committee would become part of the High School Committee; thus SSL would be abolished as a standing committee. Second, five committees (Cable TV, Listservs/Bulletin, Public Relations, Spotlight, and Website) would be combined into one Communications Committee. Approval for the new committee structure would be by a vote by a quorum of the Board of Directors, per MCCPTA Bylaws (Article VIII: Board of Directors Section 4: Duties of the Board of Directors shall be to: b. create committees) (Article XI: Committees. Section 2. The board of directors may establish such committees as it may deem necessary to promote the purposes of MCCPTA and to carry out the work of MCCPTA.)

Work Plans/Committee Training August Meeting: Jane de Winter asked that committee chairs have as many work plans as possible ready for the August BOD meeting. She confirmed that training would begin at 6:30 pm.

Cell Phones in Middle Schools: Kay Romero provided an update about the issue of cellphones in middle schools. A discussion on the topic began last June. In August, MCPS was asked about rules defining the instructional day, and the names of the schools piloting a new cellphone program. The results of the pilot were that the new program created no disturbance. The instructional day is not defined by Supt. Weast. Pat O'Neill of the BOE has an interest in this issue, saying that students should be able to call home if they will be late.

Graduation Venue: Jane de Winter noted that she had asked for clarification re cut off points for various potential graduation venues such as the DAR Constitution Hall, Showcase Arena, and Comcast Center. Historically, the choice of graduation venue was the principal's decision, though s/he can listen to input from parents and students. Herman L. Taylor, Jr., Member of the Maryland House of Delegates from District 14, Montgomery County, may ask the University of Maryland if MCPS schools could get a discount on use of U.Md. facilities, as Virginia schools get a discount on use of the Patriot Center at George Mason University.

Membership Drive: A report regarding the status of Montgomery County PTA Membership Cards as of June 6, 2007, was distributed. Maryland PTA holds locals accountable for all membership cards issued to them. Locals must return any unused and/or damaged membership cards to the Maryland PTA office. The number of memberships reported, unused cards and damaged cards must equal the number of cards that are sent to the local by Maryland PTA. Information about the Maryland PTA Summer Leadership Conference to be held on July 21, 2007, was also distributed. Jane de Winter emphasized the need for a Chair for the Membership Committee. A concern for many local PTAs is the new Online Membership Data Reporting System (OMDR). Local PTA presidents or membership chairs are now required to enter member information on a Maryland PTA website. Jane de Winter noted that this information is required by local and Maryland PTA bylaws. Maryland PTA charters each local PTA,

and each PTA has to provide requested information. When a member joins a local PTA, s/he also joins Maryland and national PTA. Maryland PTA says that use of the OMDR system will provide local PTAs with an email list and mailing labels. Local PTAs can raise their objections and concerns with Maryland PTA about the privacy and disclosure policies of Maryland PTA and/or national PTA.

Area Meetings: Information was distributed regarding the dates of MCCPTA Summer Area Meetings. They are June 14 for the Blair, Einstein, Kennedy and Northwood Clusters; June 18 for the Blake, Paint Branch, Springbrook and Sherwood Clusters; June 21 for the Churchill, Richard Montgomery, Rockville, and Wootton Clusters; June 26 for the Northwest, Poolesville, Quince Orchard and Seneca Valley Clusters; June 28 for the Bethesda Chevy Chase, Walter Johnson, Wheaton and Whitman Clusters; and July 9 for the Clarksburg, Damascus, Gaithersburg, Magruder and Watkins Mill Clusters. AVPs, Cluster Coordinators, Delegates, PTA/PTSA Presidents, Cluster representatives and key PTA/PTSA leaders are invited. The meetings are designed to build the framework for MCCPTA's advocacy for the coming school year and to gather input for the budget process. Jane de Winter emphasized that MCCPTA will have a seat at the table during Operating Budget discussions, and need to know the issues of concerns to locals and clusters by the end of the summer.

Other: Jane de Winter said that she cannot discuss the Maryland PTA action involving the Prince Georges (PG) PTA. Local PTAs in PG County can report directly to MD PTA. Jane de Winter also discussed the Presidents and Principals Dinner attendance and logistics. Sharon Schulman said that she may draft a resolution asking that an elective course on personal finance be offered in high schools.

Committee Reports:

Health: Tracy Fox reported that the Health and Human Services budget for next year includes funding for increased hours for health techs and school nurses, to increase coverage from five hours to seven hours each day. She also discussed school-based wellness centers that provide screenings and links to community services particularly vital at Title I schools. She noted that a focus group at Northwood High School suggested offering sports physicals to draw in students. Fox also noted that the County Council had banned trans fats, and that several soy-based products are being phased into the school lunch menu. Fox further reported that, regarding the MCPS Family Life and Human Development Advisory Committee, she was briefed on the results of the pilot tests of videos re condom use. The Maryland Board of Education had allowed the pilot testing to occur, and students had a 91% participation rate. Only 40 parents attended an informational session regarding the new curriculum. Jane de Winter noted that Citizens for a Responsible Curriculum (CRC) had responded to her letter about use of PTA directories by saying that CRC would like to have friendly relations with MCCPTA. De Winter noted that MCCPTA has written to many people or organizations to tell them not to use PTA directory information.

Middle School: Ellen Paul reported about new data collection and analysis efforts titled “Performance Matters” designed to help middle school teachers with differentiated instruction. This is being done in conjunction with the middle school reform initiative. In addition, MCPS is trying to compare its curricula with AP and College Board curricula in order to do “backmapping.”

CIP – Annual Growth Policy: Jim Keenan reported that the County Council is looking at taxes (such as Impact and Recordation) that feed the CIP. The council is talking about increasing taxes or amending the Annual Growth Policy (AGP). This change may lead to using MCPS program capacity in a new school test for imposition of the school facilities payment (at or over 110 percent) and the imposition of a building moratorium (at or over 135 percent.) Keenan discussed a possible draft resolution that the CIP Committee initiate an advocacy strategy to promote the use of a maximum 100 percent MCPS capacity, and that the committee monitor any changes to the impact and recordation taxes that would affect funding for primary and secondary education. Such a resolution could not be voted on at a Delegate’s Assembly until October. There was a show of hands by Board of Directors members present at this meeting in favor of advocating the tightening of the capacity test. It was also noted that the CIP task force held a pre-meeting with Mike Knapp, and said goodbye to Dick Hawes.

Safety: Pam Moomau said that the MCPS director of security met with the Safety Committee. Issues include use of security cameras and buzz-in systems. There is a proposal for \$9 million in the new CIP to upgrade security. Moomau also distributed a draft brochure titled “Parents Who Host Lose the Most.” It is designed to discourage parents from hosting parties where alcohol is served to minors. It contains a statement that “The following partners agree it is illegal and unhealthy for anyone under 21 to drink alcohol.” The statement is apparently endorsed by numerous organizations including MCPS, MADD, the Montgomery County Police Department Alcohol Enforcement Unit, etc. The brochure’s publishers apparently wish to add MCCPTA to the groups that endorse that statement. Moomau said that she will find out about the timeline for publication of the brochure and the position of the national PTA on such endorsements. Moomau then discussed issues involving pedestrian safety and parent drop-off of students, with complications involving construction and the presence or absence of crossing guards. The Safety Committee would like to have principals discuss these issues at Back-to-School nights. Jane de Winter noted that the Montgomery County Police Department is working on a vigil for victims of pedestrian accidents in the past year, and that Walk-to-School Day is scheduled for October 3.

Grading and Reporting: Beth Kennington said the committee had discussed summer homework packets, as well as the resolution that was tabled in April at the DA regarding computation of final grades. Ted Willard noted that the Grading and Reporting Implementation Team (GRIT) had met today. Kennington said that they will look at the grade calculations again because some parents expressed concern that calculations using percentages would cause their children to have lower scores. Ideas for proposed changes have not been discussed with principals, but will be discussed at the next GRIT meeting. Currently letter grades, not percentages, go into the Pinnacle electronic gradebook

program. Jane de Winter said that she has been pushing for 1 ½ years for MCPS to evaluate whether grades are a better predictor of whether students will pass the HSAs since the new grading policy was implemented. Homework completion as a component of grades has diminished. Re-teaching and reassessment were also discussed, as was implementation of standards-based report cards. A workgroup is proposing sweeping changes in Online Achievement and Reporting System (OARS). Teachers are including homework in formative (rather than summative) assessments.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 PM.