**MCCPTA Health and Wellness Committee**

**February 2022 Report**

**Health and Wellness Committee Meeting: February 7, 2022**

* Claire gave an update on advisory board meeting
* Committee members drafted and voted in favor of it the COVID-19 mitigation recommendation letter co-signed by the MCCPTA Board and sent on to County and School leadership on January 21.
* The committee outreach to County Council
  + Committee members met with Tom Hucker and Hans Riemer to discuss MCPS COVID-19 mitigation measures
* Nutrition Subcommittee:
  + MCCPTA and HSFM signed a letter asking Congress to extend the authority of the Secretary of Agriculture to extend the waivers that are allowing the continuation of flexible universal meals.
  + The School Food and Nutrition Subcommittee is working on a post card campaign to ask both local and state officials to extend free meals to all students after the end of the pandemic. At the state level, we are supporting MD Hunger Solutions in supporting legislation that will extend free meals initially for a year, while we make them more permanent. We are doing this work with the help of a grant from CSPI.
  + Many more states have passed and/or implemented legislation to provide school meals for all kids. In most countries school meals are considered part of children’s education. There is a groundswell of support for continuing the free meals beyond the pandemic.
  + We are also supporting investment in improving the quality of school meals on a local level. In addition, food advocates are working to encourage the reinstatement of standards that were rolled back by the Trump administration. This is complicated by the school meal waivers that are currently in place, but we want the guidelines in place for when circumstances return more to normal. There is also consideration of a sugar standard for school food.
* Substance Use Subcommittee: Laura Mitchell gave a brief update
  + Handle with care (trauma recognition)
  + Setting up meetings with PTA’s
* Environmental Health Subcommittee: Hannah Donart gave an update
  + Indoor air quality
    - MCPS facilities is planning to monitor all classrooms districtwide and is taking bids from outside vendors to monitor and analyze data.
    - MCPS Facilities Director, Seth Adams and Dr. McKnight are in support of the [Safe School Indoor Air Act](https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Legislation/Details/hb0686) and will be attending the Press Conference on Thursday, February 24 to introduce it at the invitation of House Delegate Jared Solomon.
    - MCPS started the pilot CO2 monitoring project at Poolesville HS in late February
  + Water quality:
    - Corresponded with Lynne Zarate and Seth Adams:
      * Installation of hydration stations is ongoing. Status of Installation can now be found here. <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/facilities/default.aspx?id=679332.> It can also be found on the DFM-Covid-19 webpage in the water section. <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/facilities/default.aspx?id=674569>
      * Subcommittee asked MCPS to include the number of hydration stations each school has on this webpage and to post signs in the interim before all are retrofitted with filters that indicate filtration status (filtered/not filtered).
* **Mental Health Subcommittee update**
  + Claire Rosche Matzzie has been appointed the new Chair
  + Feb 28, 2022 Mental Health Subcommittee meeting
  + Claire sent an email to councilmembers and DHHS about integrating kindness and antibullying into their mental health efforts. #BeKindMoCo is a working hashtag and an email exists.
  + Lyric and Laura to work on a letter to MCPS to encourage them to have a standard operating procedure for teachers and staff, when they encounter a student in different levels of crisis. (ie. excused absences and assignments, referral, hotlines if needed).
  + Kids do not know their own resources in their own schools. ?Flyers w/ QR codes in bathrooms? Everymind has a pretty good resource flyer. We have a subcommittee working on this
  + Laura Mitchell has a mental health first aid class planned with Everymind.
  + Since Feb 28 meeting the subcommittee has communicated electronically about:
    - Later bell times letter is being voted on.
    - Respectfest relationship violence prevention event being held by MCPS and DHHS.