



**Montgomery County Council of
Parent Teacher Associations**

MCCPTA DELEGATES

Revised: October 2022

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GUIDEBOOK



MISSION OF PTA

To make every child’s potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children.

VALUES OF PTA

- **Collaboration:** We will work in partnership with a wide array of individuals and organizations to broaden and enhance our ability to serve and advocate for all children and families.
- **Commitment:** We are dedicated to children’s educational success, health, and well-being through strong family and community engagement, while remaining accountable to the principles upon which our association was founded.
- **Diversity:** We acknowledge the potential of everyone without regard, including but not limited to: age, culture, economic status, educational background, ethnicity, gender, geographic location, legal status, marital status, mental ability, national origin, organizational position, parental status, physical ability, political philosophy, race, religion, sexual orientation, and work experience.
- **Respect:** We value the individual contributions of members, employees, volunteers, and partners as we work collaboratively to achieve our association’s goals.
- **Accountability:** All members, employees, volunteers, and partners have a shared responsibility to align their efforts toward the achievement of our association’s strategic initiatives.

Contact PTA		
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MCCPTA: PTA in Montgomery County

Founded in 1944, MCCPTA is the Council that advocates as a countywide body and also supports the work of the county's local chapters. MCCPTA has grown from 15 Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) to 196 local PTAs and Parent Teacher Student Associations (PTSAs) and counting. This growth reflects the vital role PTA/PTSAs have had - individually and in this Council – in meeting the needs of our children and families of Montgomery County.

MCCPTA holds no authoritative role with PTA/PTSAs. Instead, MCCPTA serves as a support mechanism to the State chapter, Free State PTA, and assists the Montgomery County PTAs and PTSAs in carrying out the mission of the organization.

MCCPTA's organizational structure has grown over time. The Board of Directors (BOD)¹ includes an Executive Committee (made up of 8 officers), Standing and Administrative Committees and Subcommittee Chairs (focused on specific areas of work), Area Vice Presidents (supporting 3-5 clusters each), and Cluster Coordinators (3 individuals, per high school cluster, designated to provide the first line of support for the schools within the cluster). Through active elists, regular meetings, and periodic trainings, MCCPTA leaders answer questions and provide guidance to assist local chapters.

Purpose of the MCCPTA Delegates – MCCPTA is an *advocacy* organization, and the Delegates Assembly (DA) is the body that carries out the “business” of the organization. Key Points:

- The privileges of participating in the MCCPTA business including introducing motions, debating, and voting are limited to the voting body, which consists of the Delegates from local PTA/PTSAs (the president, or alternate, and two accredited delegates) and the members of the MCCPTA Board of Directors. The local PTA/PTSA bylaws determine whether delegates are elected (and by whom) or appointed. *Please consult your Local PTA/PTSA Bylaws to verify the process your PTA/PTSA follows.*
- Among the responsibilities, the Delegates elect the MCCPTA Officers, approve the MCCPTA categorical budget, set the annual advocacy priorities, and pass MCCPTA resolutions (and more).
- The Delegates provide the necessary link between the Council and the PTA/PTSAs.
 - Through participation in the DA and access to the active elist, Delegates are able to share with the members of their local PTA/PTSA what is happening across the school system and in turn, the Delegates bring the perspective of their local PTA/PTSA to discussions occurring at the county level.
- The Delegates shape MCCPTA's advocacy and also build support and foster ideas for how schools throughout our county might further their own PTA/PTSAs advocacy priorities.

¹ MCCPTA Board of Directors election/selection is outlined in the MCCPTA Bylaws available at www.mccpta.org.

MCCPTA Delegates in Brief

When do the Delegates Meet? – The general MCCPTA meetings, Delegates Assemblies (DA), normally are held on the fourth Tuesday of the month during the school year.

- The dates and locations (whether in person or held virtually) are voted on by the Board of Directors (BOD) and presented at the first meeting of the year and posted on the MCCPTA website (www.mccpta.org).
- The monthly meetings provide an opportunity for Delegates to present ideas, debate issues, become better informed, make personal contacts with other PTA leaders, and vote on MCCPTA business.
- PTA/PTSA elected (or appointed) Delegates must fill out their information ANNUALLY to remain on the Delegates List. (This link changes each year but can always be accessed on the website or by contacting office@mccpta.org.)
- Only PTA/PTSAs in good standing² with MCCPTA may have voting privileges and participate in the business of the organization.

Expectations and Responsibilities of MCCPTA Delegates

Delegates are the link between local school communities and the county PTA and are essential to two-way communication. They help their PTA/PTSA members understand the critical role they can play in county and state advocacy efforts and school-system sponsored focus groups, task forces, etc., to benefit all children and public schools in the county.

To accomplish this work, Delegates should:

1. Report on the Delegates Assembly topics at PTA/PTSA executive board meetings and general membership meetings, in newsletter articles, on schools list serves, and other communication media used by the school. It is essential that they report on any item that requires a position or vote by the local PTA/PTSA.
2. Represent the views of the local PTA/PTSA, not their personal views, during discussions and in votes cast at Delegates Assemblies.
3. Become familiar with the MCPS Operating Budget and Capital Improvements Budget so as to engage the local PTA/PTSA regarding specific items in the budgets. Plan to provide input to MCCPTA Board Members (e.g., Cluster Coordinators) and, as appropriate, provide testimony for the local PTA/PTSA at Board of Education and County Council hearings—and bring members of the local PTA/PTSA—to support school community's needs.
 - Delegates are encouraged to attend MCCPTA committee work sessions or forums on the Operating or Capital Budgets in preparation for Board of Education and the County Council public hearings.
 - Encourage the local PTA/PTSA to discuss and develop priorities, possible solutions, and ideas of their own and communicate their views to the Board of Education or the

² Per MCCPTA Standing Rules, in order to receive voting privileges, a local PTA must submit the names of delegates to the MCCPTA Office and pay dues (\$1 per member) for at least 25 members to MCCPTA. The dues requirement does not apply for the September or October meeting.

County Council as appropriate.

4. Keep the local PTA informed of projects and activities of MCCPTA, upcoming MCCPTA programs, workshops, and forums, and encourage attendance.
5. Inform local PTA/PTSA members about the opportunities to serve on MCCPTA committees and information distributed at the Delegates Assemblies.
6. Be familiar with Robert's Rules of Order, parliamentary procedure, and MCCPTA's bylaws and standing rules. Be prepared to make or amend motions, discuss motions, and cast one vote per delegate on motions - sometimes without prior direction from the local PTA/PTSA. *If the delegate must cast a vote without discussing the issue with the local PTA/PTSA, the vote should be based on prior discussions of the local PTA/PTSA's priorities.*
7. Plan on attending the Free State PTA Summer Leadership Conference and encourage other leaders in the local PTA/PTSA to attend, as well.
8. Be familiar with local, Maryland, and National PTA legislative issues affecting children and education.
 - Be prepared to represent the local PTA/PTSA in MCCPTA discussions to adopt and support legislative priorities for the Maryland General Assembly session (in session from January – April).
 - Be an active advocate for the children of Montgomery County; attend BOE and County Council hearings, write letters, and send emails and encourage local PTA/PTSA leadership to do the same.
 - Encourage local PTA/PTSA members to participate in legislative advocacy activities of the Free State PTA and National PTA, such as PTA Night in Annapolis, Free State PTA Summer Leadership Conference and National PTA Legislative Convention.
9. Participate in the MCCPTA Delegates eList to stay on top of current information and to discuss issues.
10. As appropriate, pass along/verify pertinent information relevant to the administrative functioning of the local unit (e.g., conveying updates from MCCPTA Treasurer regarding state/federal filings, Bylaws Chair updates, and/or Membership Chair concerns about dues receipts, etc.).
11. Consider keeping a binder, procedure book, or electronic files containing:
 - Local PTA/PTSA bylaws
 - List of MCCPTA officers and committee chairs
 - Calendar of events/meetings of MCCPTA and the local PTA/PTSA
 - Agenda and information items handed out at Delegates Assemblies, including Minutes of MCCPTA Delegates Assemblies
 - MCCPTA Standing Rules
 - MCCPTA priority documents (Operating Budget priorities, Capital Improvement Program priorities, legislative/advocacy priorities, as applicable, for the school year)
 - List of elected officials that represent the population of the school and their contact information (federal and state legislators, county council members, all Board of Education members)

MCCPTA BOD and Relationship to the Delegates

All MCCPTA Board of Directors (BOD) members are Delegates of MCCPTA; however, not all Delegates are Board Members (though many BOD members also serve as local unit Delegates). The MCCPTA Board of Directors (BOD) meets monthly and provides the leadership of the organization. The BOD consists of:

- Executive Committee (President, 4 Vice Presidents, 2 Secretaries, and Treasurer elected by the Delegates).
- Area Vice Presidents and Cluster Coordinators (selected by the Local Units these individuals represent; confirmed by the BOD).
- Standing and Administrative Committee and Subcommittee Chairs and Vice Chairs (Approved by the Executive Committee).

The MCCPTA BOD provides the leadership for the organization BUT relies on the Delegates to represent the views of the local units across the county and shape the direction going forward. For some MCCPTA Business (e.g., approving and/or amending the MCCPTA budget, electing officers, etc.) the expectation is the Delegates have the confidence of their PTA/PTSA to vote on these items.

MCCPTA Resolutions³

After a topic is selected for development and debate as a potential MCCPTA position, the steps below will be followed. This preferred process allows initial input by the relevant committee, the MCCPTA BOD and further discussion by the delegates assembly and local units. Expedited processes for time sensitive issues are presented later in this document.

1. The committee drafts a resolution that includes background information and a recommended MCCPTA position. It is expected that the committee is comprised of individuals who are experts in the subject matter or who have a high interest in the subject and will conduct thorough research. Thus, an in-depth discussion of the topic should occur at the committee level.
2. The draft resolution is presented to the MCCPTA BOD for discussion, debate, and vote. The purpose of the vote is to determine whether the resolution is sent to the DA for further discussion, sent back to the committee for further development, or not developed into an MCCPTA position.
3. The draft resolution is presented to the DA. The DA does not vote on the resolution when it is first presented. The committee presents the resolution and provides relevant background information to ensure the delegates understand the rationale and context of the resolution.
4. Delegates take the resolution to their local PTA/PTSA for discussion and input. Each delegate should request time at the next PTA/PTSA meeting for discussion of the resolution. To aid broad discussion of the resolution, the topic should be publicized to the local PTA/PTSA prior to the meeting. The PTA/PTSA considers the issue and provides guidance to the delegate, so the delegate can vote on behalf of the local PTA/PTSA.
5. The resolution is presented for vote at the next DA. The committee chair summarizes the background information and presents the proposed MCCPTA position in motion form which, coming from a committee, does not require a second. Debate on the motion and any amendments is conducted by the president, with the committee chair serving as a resource person for questions from the floor. The amendment and voting process is also conducted by the

³ From MCCPTA Standing Rules, Approved by the Delegates Assembly January 25, 2022.
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president. Delegates represent the opinion of their local PT(S)A when they present and/or vote on amendments and vote on resolutions.

Time sensitive issues

In some cases, time constraints make the above procedure impossible. For example, an earlier position statement by MCCPTA may be needed prior to action by the Board of Education, County Council, or other official body. Depending on the time constraints, one of the following expedited procedures is followed. The expedited procedures are presented in decreasing order of preference. The goal is to allow input from as broad a representation of MCCPTA members as possible. The BOD will be notified (email) prior to initiation of any expedited process.

Expedited process one

Skip the discussion at the BOD meeting and begin the process at the DA, followed by local PTA/PTSA discussion and a vote at the next DA.

Expedited process two

Following discussion at the BOD meeting, present the position for discussion and vote at the next DA. The draft resolution, which includes background information and a recommended MCCPTA position, is sent to the delegates at least 10 days prior to the next delegates assembly. Delegates should get input from their local PTA/PTSA prior to the discussion and vote at the DA. It is recognized that some PTA/PTSAs may not meet prior to the DA. Delegates should work with their PTA/PTSAs to solicit input on the issue, holding a special meeting if needed. *(At the DA, a motion to consider the resolution on an emergency basis must be proposed and then approved by a two-thirds majority. Adoption of the emergency resolution is accomplished by a majority vote.)*

Expedited process three

The BOD takes an official position (motion by the board), without any discussion at a DA. *(At the BOD, a motion to consider the motion on an emergency basis must be proposed and then approved by a two-thirds majority. Adoption of the emergency motion is accomplished by a majority vote.)* Communications related to approval of the motion will indicate the decision was made by the BOD, not the DA.

Debate of a Motion or Resolution at a DA

All motions shall be presented in writing. Debate shall be limited to 15 minutes per motion, unless the executive committee determines prior to the meeting that a longer duration is needed. Also, the DA may determine at the beginning of the meeting that a longer duration is needed (majority vote). An individual designated by the president shall serve as timekeeper during the meeting. Motions to extend debate should be made prior to the time expiration. Debate is limited to members of the DA.

Debate alternates between speakers for and against the motion. In debate, each speaker will be limited to one minute per turn. Each individual has the right to speak more than once on the same question on the same day but may not make additional remarks on the same question so long as anyone who has not spoken on that question desires the floor.

The debate, including motions for amendments, follows parliamentary procedures outlined in the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

MCCPTA Resolutions- review and reconsideration

Approved MCCPTA resolutions will be reviewed every five years (on a school year basis), to determine whether they need to be retired (no longer relevant), rescinded (if not aligned with current MCCPTA priorities), amended (acceptable with changes), or maintained in its current form. The executive committee will work with the relevant committees and present a proposal for the relevant resolutions to the BOD at the first or second BOD meeting of the year. The decision is presented to the DA at their next meeting. Delegates report the decision for discussion with the local PTA/PTSA and vote at the following DA.

This process will begin with resolutions passed in the 2020-2021 school year. The executive committee will determine a timeline for addressing the resolutions passed prior to the 2020-2021 school year.

Resolution Format⁴

MCCPTA Delegates may take positions on issues of countywide concern by adopting resolutions, simple motions, or position statements such as the Operating Budget Compact. The positions taken are forwarded to the appropriate agencies of government and to the local PTA/PTSAs.

A Resolution Illustrating Its Own Proper Form

Whereas,	That portion of a resolution comprising the phrases starting with the word "whereas" is known as the preamble of the resolution; and
Whereas,	The preamble includes only statements of fact or background information comprising the reasons for the action proposed in the resolving clauses that are not common knowledge or self-evident and may be overlooked if not stated; and
Whereas,	The action taken on a resolution is really only action on the motion incorporated solely in its resolving clauses, not the preamble; and
Whereas,	Brevity creates a good listener; therefore, be it
Resolved,	That it is directed that the resolutions submitted to MCCPTA for consideration shall follow this sample resolution in structure, punctuation, and content.

MCCPTA Standing Rules

In order to assure a consistent and effective process for bringing resolutions to the MCCPTA delegates, standing rules are adopted to govern MCCPTA meetings. The standing rules currently in force—including guidance and procedures for introducing and debating resolutions at the Delegates Assembly—can be found on the MCCPTA website.

⁴ This sample resolution adapted from New Jersey PTA and National PTA materials.
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Speaking on behalf of MCCPTA⁵

External communications from MCCPTA BOD members and committees are perceived as messages “from MCCPTA” so it is essential to have appropriate clearance. Opportunities to speak to MCCPTA priorities via letters, testimony at public hearings, and other public statements can be helpful advocacy tools. When a committee or subcommittee plans to make a public communication, they must inform the MCCPTA executive committee overseeing officer who will ensure the content is within scope and aligned with the MCCPTA mission and previous deliberations and will approve the planned communications.

In instances where a timely statement from MCCPTA seems prudent due to current events, the MCCPTA Executive Committee, following the same requirements for input and voting outlined above, may put out a statement on behalf of MCCPTA. The statement will include wording that indicates it is from MCCPTA Executive Committee.

Requests for comments or interviews with the press need to go through the MCCPTA President or designee. Details of the discussions and decisions described above need to be included in the President’s report (may be delegated to another MCCPTA officer) to the BOD, which is also shared with the DA.

Note: Comments or testimony on behalf of specific cluster(s), areas, or local PTA/PTSA do not need to be approved beyond the scope of the group represented. However, the communications need to clearly indicate on whose behalf they are made. When BOD members provide statements in their personal capacity, they should clarify they are speaking as an individual, not a representative of MCCPTA.

⁵ From language included in the MCCPTA Standing Rules, approved January 25, 2022.
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