

## March 2018- RM Cluster Report to MCCPTA Board

Cluster coordinators – Monique Ashton, Rodney Peele, Mallika Sastry

Area VP- Jennifer Young

The cluster met on Jan 30<sup>th</sup> and Feb 15<sup>th</sup> to discuss plans for the Quadrennial Cluster Meetings with the BOE, paucity of laboratory space at RMHS as well as next steps for RMES#5.

- 1) With respect to the Quadrennial Cluster Meetings with the BOE, the cluster arrived at a tentative agenda for the evening. CCs are currently reaching out to PTAs to solicit active participation from delegates, PTA presidents, and the community to make it a productive meeting.
- 2) Paucity of laboratory space is of major concern for the cluster. With the postponement of RM addition, the Principal and staff of RMHS are trying to find working alternatives. Principal and staff of RMHS have submitted a Facility project request form (MCPS 230-27) to Lauren English, in the Division of Construction, outlining their needs. Toward this goal we hope to discuss approaches to expedite the process with BOE member Rebecca Smondrowski.
- 3) Ritchie Park Elementary school held an event focused on school safety on March 6<sup>th</sup>.
- 4) A workshop on “*Identifying and Treating Anxiety in Children*” has been organized at College Gardens Elementary School on April 3<sup>rd</sup>; this is open to the entire RM community.
- 5) The RM Cluster is continuing to advance the development of the new school (RMES#5). RM Cluster coordinators and Area VP will be meeting with the new principal Rachel Dubois on March 8 to discuss efforts to support the planning, creation of a PTA, and the opening of RMES#5, slated for August 2018. The school planning continues to progress, including:
  - i) School construction and selection of furniture, color scheme, and sustainability theme throughout the building.
  - ii) Communications with parents of incoming students, including visits to the school by the new principal, emails and mass calls with updates.
  - iii) Process for selection of before and after care provider
  - iv) Staff hiring
- 6) MCPS Board of Education began the process for naming RMES#5 and shared their list of recommended names, including:

Mary McLeod Bethune  
Emily Catherine Edmonson  
Josiah Henson  
Bayard Rustin
- 7) School naming process allows for two additional names suggested by community members. These can be presented for consideration to the BOE as part of the selection process. A committee of parents, including our cluster coordinator, is participating in the naming process and met on February 28. The next meeting will be March 15<sup>th</sup> at Julius West MS. The committee will help to gather feedback from the community and our cluster welcomes input from the broader MCCPTA community. An online survey will be posted soon to the new school website

at: <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/rmes/>. The BOE will make a final decision in April.

Lessons learnt thus far from the naming process and suggestions for other clusters-

We recommend that CCs and AVPs pay special attention to the composition of the naming committee for a new school. MCPS has strict guidelines (Section II(B)(1)(b) of Regulation FAA-RA): the individuals selected to be on the naming committee should be residents from each of the boundary zones assigned to a new school and should be drawn from different neighborhoods within the service area of the new school. RM cluster found inconsistencies in the selection process and brought this to the attention of MCPS. MCPS was receptive to our request and corrected the inconsistencies in the selection process.