

Since October 1-- Meetings/Calls/Events:

10/05 League of Women Voters BOE Forum (co-sponsored by MCCPTA)
10/06 Guest Speaker – Candlewood Elementary School
10/09 MC/USG/HHS/MCPS/IAG – Community Discussion
10/12 Deputy Superintendent Advisory Group Meeting
10/12 Council Presidents' Meeting
10/14 MCCPTA BOD Meeting
10/15 Black & Brown Coalition Meeting
10/15 Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce/MCCPTA Meeting
10/15 MoCo Chamber/Dr. Pines of UMD – Educational Outlook in Pandemic
10/20 MCCPTA Comms Team discussion
10/21 Excomm Meeting with Superintendent
10/22 Curriculum Advisory Assembly
10/22 BOE Policy Advisory Committee
10/23 MCCPTA/MCPS Communications Staff Meeting
10/27 CIP discussion – MCCPTA Clusters and MCPS Capital Planning
10/27 MCCPTA Delegates Assembly
10/28 OCIP Meeting
10/29 Annual MCCPTA BOD/Board of Education Meeting
11/2 Facilities and Boundary Public Hearing
11/5 Facilities and Boundary Public Hearing
11/5 Recovery Education -- Policy and Regulation Team Discussion
11/11 Student Welfare Stakeholders Team Discussion

Top 10 -- Activities/Concerns:

- 1) **MDPTA Concerns** – Continued to provide updates to elists (Presidents, Treasurers, Delegates and Board) outlining latest understandings of activities (9/10, 9/16, 10/10, 10/22, 11/9) with MDPTA and the process followed by National. The most recent update included a decision by the US district court to deny the MDPTA request to Remand the Proceedings back to Anne Arundel Circuit Court and the court granted the motion to dissolve the Temporary Restraining Order MDPTA requested against National PTA.

On 11/9, I sent a message to National PTA Support Team asking for a meeting with the 7 Council Presidents to better understand next actions and whether MDPTA is complying with restructuring or will proceed with their intention to revoke the MDPTA Charter (at which point, National will launch a new charter and all local units will be immediately transferred to the new organization).

- 2) **Reopening Schools** – I've engaged in conversations through multiple mechanisms (Superintendent, DSAG, Community Partners) regarding the reopening plans. I've repeatedly requested better communications and opportunity to review of survey data (who is responding, are we reaching a broader audience with each survey). How decisions are being made and what we should expect with decisions. On November 11th, MCPS did release a survey (not reviewed by MCCPTA but reportedly did have other parent stakeholders review). At first glance, I am concerned students/parents, without the staff survey to compare, may not have adequate information to make an informed decision.
- 3) **Donations/Education Foundation** – I've continued to ask questions about the opportunities within the Education Foundation to meet basic supply needs and create more equitable opportunities for students. I've sent multiple messages to the Education Foundation Executive Director (no response on most recent

inquiries) and raised the concern with the Superintendent (who sits on the board), asking for more clarity so we can use the foundation effectively. <https://www.mcpsfoundation.org/covid-19-gift-card-campaign?fbclid=IwAR0qoj2nqThHPmf0nVEiFaaNy7EqnyRpSltRR0SHq0VTBzmJ53Wm2oUJV2k>

- 4) **Student Welfare Team Meeting** – Student welfare is critically important. MCPS has a team that has been working on this effort (MCCPTA is included in the stakeholder group) and created the following link for secondary students on The Culture of Respect. How this module will be rolled out to schools and transmitted to students is still TBD. Students that complete will be eligible for 2 SSL hours. <https://360.articulate.com/review/content/d3f1b831-2ca2-43de-8e4d-9dc7a776aea4/review>
- 5) **Chamber of Commerce Discussion** – With several members of our Executive Committee, we met with the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce to discuss where there is natural synergy between our organizations. Over the coming months, we'll be looking for additional opportunities to discuss where there is natural alignment between our education advocacy and the county's business interests.
- 6) **Trouble shooting Synergy/Student Information System Launch** – Continued to provide feedback to the Chief Technology Officer (CTO) on needs parents have in navigating the new technology system. I've communicated the frustration parents are experiencing with the Canvas/Synergy interface (a frustration repeated by teachers) and have invited the senior leadership to our Delegates Assembly next week.
- 7) **Communications** – The theme of the meeting with the Superintendent last month was communications. We continue to request MCPS provide more clarity on "what to expect." MCPS (as a system) will continue to have issues surface but having clear communication protocols that are followed can assist the community. When there is an incident under investigation, providing outside support "with intention" to the community (not simply suggesting students connect with their counselor, if wanted).
- 8) **BOE Meetings** – Last month, the MCCPTA Board of Directors engaged in a virtual meeting with the BOE. This event covered 4 topics. For those unable to participate (or watch online), the conversation can be accessed <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RgvTFcsj3DI>
- 9) **CIP Testimony** – On behalf of MCCPTA, I provided testimony at the CIP hearings before the Board of Education on November 5th. My comments centered on the need to ensure programming decisions are not exacerbating capacity concerns and continued MCCPTA's advocacy around maintenance concerns. [https://go.boarddocs.com/mabe/mcpsmd/Board.nsf/files/BV3JWH4EB463/\\$file/Cynthia%20Simonson%20Written.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/mabe/mcpsmd/Board.nsf/files/BV3JWH4EB463/$file/Cynthia%20Simonson%20Written.pdf) and video -- <https://drive.google.com/file/d/15ntjw3tUr9L2TZfNQYykvx9NWI3-ZgbV/view>
- 10) **Food Security** – I continue to be concerned about food security issues and how the food service is being rolled out and communicated to our most vulnerable families. I've had numerous conversations with MCPS on the communications surrounding the food distribution – most notably, the miscommunications about whether names are required to access food or not. Once I get clarity, I'll be asking our PTA leaders to be our "secret shoppers" to ensure the system is operating as expected.