

Aug 30 (start of school) - October 8 -- Meetings/Calls/Events:

- 8/31 Chief of Strategic Initiatives – MCPS Strategic Plan Input
- 9/1 DHHS Emergency Response/Holy Cross Hospital – Magruder Pop Up Clinic in Under-vaxed area
- 9/8 Dept Food and Nutritional Services – Low Enrollment in Farms; Quarantine Meal Distro
- 9/9 BOE Meeting (attend and provide feedback, as requested)
- 9/9 CHS PTSA – Preside over Election/Restart of PTSA
- 9/10 Chief of Staff – MCPS Quarantine Practice (based on symptoms)
- 9/10 MCPS Ombuds Interviews – Participate in formal panel interviews
- 9/10 BOE Staff – Discussion on Board/Cluster Meetings (virtual vs. postponing)
- 9/11 Understanding COVID Testing options – Discussion with medical professionals to explain various testing to parents (elected officials joined)
- 9/12 County Executive – strategic planning to rapid test symptomatic students in health rooms
- 9/13 County Council – calls with Councilmembers and staff re: Quarantine Concerns/Lack of Clarity
- 9/14 County Council – Board of Health/MCPS (attend and provide feedback, as requested)
- 9/15 Cannon Road ES – Request for assistance
- 9/16 County Executive's Office & NAACP – DHHS Quarantine Guidelines and Options for Test-to-Stay
- 9/17 MCPS Comms Team – Crisis Comms, Dashboard
- 9/20 KLA-RA – Revision of "Complaints from the Public" to create impartial/fair process
- 9/21 BOE Meeting – [Testimony](#)
- 9/23 Chief – Operations and Finance – Discussion on outside options
- 9/23 MCPS/DHHS Newcomers Discussion – (Host Only)
- 9/24 Chief, Office of Teaching, Learning and Schools – Concerns re: Meetings/Access
- 9/24 MCPS Human Resources – Substitute Teacher Shortage Discussion
- 9/25 CHS PTSA – transfer all banking/materials to new leadership team
- 9/27 Curriculum Advisory Assembly – Changes to HS Graduation Requirements
- 9/27 Springbrook HS PTSA – request for assistance
- 9/28 KLA-RA – Final Comments on "Complaints from the Public" before GC rewrite
- 9/29 Vaccine Partner Meeting – 5-11 Rollout Strategy Discussion
- 9/29 SIITT Call – (did not attend, conflicted with Interim Sup Call)
- 9/29 Interim Superintendent/Excomm – Update;
- 9/30 OTLS Chief and Assistant Chief – Discussion and Update on possible
- 10/1 Vaccine Partners – Discussion
- 10/1 Children's Opportunity Fund – Aligning MCCPTA concerns with the Foundation's purposes
- 10/1 BOE Staff – MCCPTA Board meeting with BOE members (planning discussion)
- 10/2 COVID Operations – quarantine approaches (multiple calls)
- 10/5 ES Principal – quarantine approach
- 10/6 Vaccine Partner Meeting – DHHS, countywide vax rates
- 10/6 Magruder Vaccination Clinic – Holy Cross Partnership
- 10/6 Excomm Meeting – Communications with Interim Superintendent
- 10/6 Antiracist Audit Advisory Meeting – Secondary survey feedback
- 10/7 MCPS OCIP (curriculum) Meeting – Magnet selection criteria plans
- 10/7 COVID Operations Advisory Team – 1st meeting (Yes to Test, Test to Stay, Vaccine Rollout)
- Many Interviews with media outlets on range of topics

Top 10 Activities/Concerns:

- 1) **Remaining in School (Safely)** – Many efforts in last month have been geared around remaining open. MCCPTA continues to advocate for MCPS to use everyday solutions as quickly as possible to interrupt transmission rates. Notably, ensuring buses are operating with windows down in certain parts of bus to improve ventilation and increase air exchange rates. Further, MCCPTA has been advocating for increased use of outdoor spaces and worked with several MCPS offices to gain clarity on process and options for funding. To date, some tasks (like

maintaining distancing) hasn't been clearly outlined – leaving the burden to the principal to figure out how to implement.

MCCPTA (through Green Schools Subcommittee under CIP and the Environmental Subcommittee under Health and Wellness) engages MCPS on the opportunities for using outdoor spaces (for meals but also for learning) and continue to try and pair this effort with better ventilation strategies when addressing an airborne virus, and how to best mitigate and keep students safe.

- 2) **MCPS Recovery** -- MCPS has established a Recovery Advisory team to support 4 areas. I am an “advisor” on the Digital Learning Committee but to date, that committee has not moved from discussion about the Virtual Academy. This does not address true RECOVERY topics. It is my aim to continue to advocate for discussions around the cohesion between Canvas and Synergy and address many of the technology issues experienced by the users.
- 3) **Ombuds** – At the last BOE meeting, MCPS [appointed an Ombuds](#) for the system. This is a huge step forward. MCPS has been without a full-time Ombuds for over a decade. Our advocacy has been centered on an Ombuds to ensure families are afforded a fair process when they have concerns about the system. While the Ombuds role is in the Complaint from the Public (KLA-RA – currently under review by a group that includes 3 MCCPTA reps), in the last meeting, the BOE Staff made clear what MCCPTA has been advocating for is not necessarily aligned with what the BOE staff have in mind for this new Ombuds position. At the last meeting of KLA-RA, other advocacy reps were voicing some of the same concerns around having someone impartial to ensure the process is followed (and remains fair) – which is one area where we imagined the Ombuds would provide support. So, our work here is not done. As the new Ombuds begins his position, we'll plan to invite him to meet our board and Delegates.
- 4) **MCPS Human Resources (HR)** – Hearing the concerns from our teachers they are losing planning periods because of lack of substitutes, I reached out to HR to better understand the current predicament. The system (on a regular year) has 2500 substitute teachers. At present, we have ~2000 systemwide. So, we are about 20% under our regular “pool.” On top of that, anecdotally, it seems we have more staff taking personal leave (many events from the last year were cancelled and rescheduled for this fall). HR sent me their recruitment flyer and I've posted, encouraging those willing to consider signing up as a substitute (think of it as a “field trip” you have volunteered to support) to lend assistance when schools are very short on subs. It seems Friday is THE DAY when subs are most needed and difficult to find.
- 5) **Vaccine Sites** – In collaboration with vaccine partners and providers, MCCPTA has been engaging in conversations about the vaccine rollout for 5-11 year olds. Clearly, some parts of the county will have no issues accessing the vaccine when it is approved. DHHS will likely release the doses (which are a lesser dose than the adult version) to pediatricians so many, many kids will be able to be vaccinated through their typical health care routes. But, that doesn't reach all students and so plans are underway for how to better assist in impacted areas of the county where transportation and/or timing can create barriers to access.
- 6) **FARMS Designation/Food Security** – We continue to press MCPS about food security issues and recently, concerns about FARMS eligibility was raised. The system relies on additional funds made available through Title 1 funding to create additional supports for impacted schools. With the universal free meals (available through June '22) there isn't the same response rate to fill out the paperwork. MCCPTA has engaged with the Foundation to explore options and is also following how other jurisdictions are creating proxies for impacts rather than having families fill out forms.
- 7) **MCCPTA Representation on Working Groups** – MCCPTA is asked to participate on a number of countywide working groups. Some are codified in regulation (e.g., Curriculum Advisory Assembly or Accelerated and Enriched Instruction Committee). Others are MCPS-created groups to enhance engagement (e.g., strategic initiatives working group, student welfare committee, covid operations advisory team). Recently, I've started asking MCPS who they have as the MCCPTA representatives and many of these groups include individuals that have not held MCCPTA leadership roles in several years though they may still be attending these meetings. I've mentioned to

the Associate Sups of these affected groups and will be asking the MCCPTA Board to assist in “crowd sourcing” all the working groups we participate in, identifying the reps, and we do a better job of updating representation for the system going forward.

- 8) **Quarantine Policy** – MCCPTA has advocated for MCPS to provide clear processes and procedures related to the quarantining of students. As school began, MCPS was operating off verbal advice from DHHS. Once DHHS put their counsel in writing, MCPS began implementing causing kids with any symptom to move into quarantine along with close contacts. MCCPTA worked with the County Executive and County Council to ensure we weren’t further disrupting student education because of longstanding allergies and other common maladies.
- 9) **School Improvement Plans** -- In a recent BOE meeting, an Office of Teaching Learning and Students (OTLS) Area Associate Superintendent and one of the OTLS Directors spoke about the School Improvement Plan (SIP) process. I’ve included the [link](#) to the discussion and encourage those that missed this discussion to jump to the near end of the [review the questions/comments at 2:55:39 – 2:59](#). In this segment, Board Member Harris specifically asks OTLS about the involvement of students and families in the SIP development. The response included that “obviously” PTAs are included in this summer work outlining where there needs to be school improvement and also some language about how students are engaged. There is some additional conversation around it is not a “one and done” experience but these families and students should be engaged throughout the year. In coming weeks, I’d like to revisit this and learn (perhaps through crowdsourced feedback from our PTA Presidents) how often PTAs are actually involved.
- 10) **Upcoming – Superintendent Search; Board-to-Board; Cluster Meetings** – Soon, the Superintendent Search will be underway. I’ve been advised the search firm would like to meet with MCCPTA leaders and begin getting community feedback in the coming weeks. In addition, MCCPTA will be meeting with the BOE in our annual “Board to Board” discussion in October where I’m hoping we will have a robust conversation about equity and collaborate on ways the board and/or community can create a more equitable system. Also coming up -- every year, 6-7 clusters have cluster meetings with the BOE elected officials so they hear directly from the communities on issues important to them. Those clusters involved will be contacted to see if they want to plan for a zoom meeting or postpone until future date.