

Quince Orchard Cluster Report
October 11, 2018

Respectfully Submitted to the Board of Directors of MCCPTA:

Key Issues (A little over half of our schools participated in this discussion, so this NOT comprehensive):

- The cluster values enhanced educational programs that magnet schools provide and would like to advocate for an expansion of these programs at all levels of instruction to better meet the diverse education needs of our students.
- Overcrowding at some of our cluster schools continues to deal hardships to our children. The hardships come in the form of excessively early and late lunch times, overcrowded recess spaces, and extra wear and tear on facilities. At Rachel Carson in particular the schools is consistently several hundred students over capacity, and all indicators point to the problem not only not abating, but becoming much more pronounced.
- Reductions in funding at some of our schools are hitting those schools hard.
 - Particularly, Brown Station ES has lost Title 1 status, but was only shy of retaining the status by just a handful of students. The local PTA is investigating how it can re-attain Title 1 status. But at this time, they are down specialists and ESOL instructors.
 - Ridgeview MS has reported that they are down by 4 teachers due to budget cuts.
- Brown Station is enjoying their new building.
- A few of our school PTAs are reporting a less than fully cooperative relationship between principal and PTA. We are sharing ideas on how to help build up those relationships.
- Ridgeview MS is happy to report that their school spirit is high as is engagement, but they would like to find more success in recruiting teachers and parents to be the sponsor of various after-school activities.
- A few of our schools have significant surpluses from previous years and are actively finding worthy projects to spend their money.
- The emergency escape route for Rachel Carson became blocked when an elevated field was fenced in to allow their overflow of students to use that space for recess.

Activities:

- Growth Management Focus Groups – Cluster leaders (Coordinators, local officers, etc.) have attended two meetings this summer to give input to MCPS and their consultants on our perspectives about the factors that will influence changes in the school population in the next 10 years. For the first meeting a Cluster Coordinator took notes and provided those notes to the cluster PTA Presidents and MCCPTA officers. For the second meeting an MCCPTA officer took notes.
- SoCA – All local PTAs have been informed of documents needed for SoCA adherence. Several have resubmitted their documents.
- At our first cluster meeting (Oct. 10th) we nominated Rama Tangirala to be our third Cluster Coordinator. We are submitting his nomination to the Board of Directors for approval.
- CIP – We have signed up to deliver the CIP testimony to the BoE and are in the process of gathering comments to construct that testimony.

- One of our local PTAs (Brown Station) is setting up a distribution list email for the local officers of the cluster to use to facilitate communication between PTAs.