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Fill out the blue book so you can get the newsletter and other emails. <https://tiny.cc/bluebook2023>

Clarksburg Cluster Newsletter Sep 25, 2023

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General:

1. MCCPTA Delegates Assembly Tuesday, Sep 26 at 7:00  [DA September 2023](#)
 - Register in advance for this meeting:
 - <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZytceirrTssGteK0MJcrgWiocjFMT-63o3c>
 - After registering, you will receive an automated confirmation email with information and a link for joining the meeting. As always, if you need to forward the meeting invitation to someone, please forward this invitation to register so the other person registers under their own name and not yours. Do not forward the confirmation email you receive after registering.
 - If you have trouble accessing the folders, please first check your own computer settings and ensure you have enabled pop-ups.
2. PTA board: fill out bluebook **again** (directory for MCCPTA)
 - After your election of the next cycle of officers, please remind them to submit contact info at: <https://tiny.cc/bluebook2023>
 - Please also invite your new liaisons and committee chairs to submit as well.
 - MCCPTA will clean up the old subscribers from e-lists and will add new members in early Fall.
 - Here are the e-lists you can subscribe to (any PTA member can join)
3. Cluster Coordinators: fill out different blue book link **again**
 - If you are staying and/or newly elected for 2023-2024:
 - MCCPTA officer
 - Area VP
 - Cluster Coordinator
 - MCCPTA Committee Chair (and Vice Chair if any)
 - MCCPTA Sub-committee Chairplease submit your contact and PONY info at: <https://tiny.cc/board2023>
 - If you are retiring from your position, please invite your successor to submit promptly.
1. Turn in your Treasurer Financial review to FreeState (MD PTA)
 - Submit the Annual Financial Review to Free State PTA along with the Annual Financial Report, within 120 days of the close of the fiscal year (**October 31st**).
 - Email it to treasurer@fspta.org, FSPTA@pta.org; office@mccpta.org; treasurer@mccpta.org;
4. FreeState Membership dues form
 - <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dJLezxzWJd17b-0diYsldE4YbTgZs946/view?usp=sharing>
5. Did you get a failure to file form 990N email? Have till Sep 30 to fix
 - If you filed under MD instead of DE, IRS may be sending you deficiency notices
 - Researched by Cluster Coordinator Nadia check your 2022 filing. For the 2021 one, the IRS provides this information. Link of approved 990N postcard filers:
<https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/tax-year-2021-exempt-organizations-modernized-e-file-mef-providers-form-990-n>
 - There may be a fee associated with it. I checked one out and was \$54. But if we don't file, we risk our 501c3 being revoked bc we didn't file for 3 consecutive years.
 - There may be an issue with the fiscal cycle. IRS may have somehow switched us from fiscal to calendar year in their system? We are all supposed to be on a fiscal cycle of July 1 to June 30.
 - This is a direct copy from the [FreeState Financial guide](#): These forms MUST be filed with the IRS by the 15th day of the 5th month after the close of the PTA'S fiscal year (November 15th). A copy of the forms MUST also be sent to Free State PTA by December 15 th annually. The IRS will AUTOMATICALLY REVOKE tax-exempt status when an

exempt organization REQUIRED to file an annual return (e.g., Form 990, electronic 990-EZ, or electronic 990-N e-Postcard) does not do so for three (3) consecutive years. Under the law, the organization's federal tax-exempt status is automatically revoked

6. From 990 needs to be submitted before Nov 15

- Form 990s are due 5 and a half months after the end of an organization's fiscal year.
- PTAs have a June 30 year end, our 990s are due Nov. 15, whether you file the postcard or EZ. You can file for an automatically-granted 6-month extension. I don't recommend doing that unless there are extenuating circumstances. A lot of things can get lost, and memories fade, if you wait to file almost at the end of the next year.
- Some PTA's do use a professional account to (1) do our annual review and (2) prepare our 990 EZ and file it electronically. Our Treasurer does our state filings (Annual Renewal of Registration and Annual Return). We use a local self-employed CPA who used to be a school parent (that's how we found her). She performs a review of our books, but does NOT perform an audit. To an accountant, those are two very different things. If you are looking for an accountant to do your review, be sure to ask for pricing for a review, not an audit. We spend about \$1,000 for both of those services and that is an annual budget item for us.

7. Committee plans of work forms

- Wilson Wims shared their committee [plans of work](#) templates.
- Committee chairs (even if that person is also a member of the PTA Executive Board) to submit a Plan of Work for each event as well as an items list. The items list would include all the items that need to be purchased for the event to accomplish the mission set forth on the Plan of Work. This would show whether or not the event is meeting the budget and automatically support any requests for the budget to be increased.

8. Avoid religious holidays for PTA meetings

- To avoid this issue in the future, schools and PTAs can use the Calendar provided on the MCPS website and check off "holidays/religious observances.". Download the ical and your calendar will populate with all of the holidays and religious observances.
- <https://ww2.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/calendar/index.aspx?calendarViewType=list&calendarDate=9/11/2023&filters=&isAll=n&langId=1033&monthShows=1>
- You can pick different dates for PTA meetings, but the following is the standard to avoid conflicts between schools
 - 1st Tuesday: Elementary Schools
 - 2nd Tuesday: Middle Schools
 - 3rd Tuesday: High Schools
 - 1st Wed: MCCPTA Board meeting
 - 4th Wed: MCCPTA Delegates meeting

1. Fundraising through Harris Teeter

- The check will go directly to the school, not the PTA. So, its fundraising for the school

9. BoxTops for K-8 fundraising

- <https://www.boxtops4education.com/s/about?redi=302>
- The reviews I am finding on the new BoxTops aren't very good: <https://justuseapp.com/en/app/1150038564/box-tops-for-education/reviews>
- Then I looked up the app and the most recent reviews on both the apple and googleplay are not very happy. Up to you.

2. Grants available from National PTA, deadline Oct 4

- National PTA is offering over \$600K to over 500 PTAs to help conduct programs for families in the areas of digital safety, STEM, healthy lifestyles, the arts and family engagement. **The application period is now open.** By answering a few questions, your PTA can be eligible for \$1,250 or more in program funding to help cover expenses like food, transportation and translation services to ensure all families can participate. No prior grant writing experience is needed.
- Use these grant writing tips <https://bit.ly/3QGy56z> and apply now at PTA.org/Grants. The deadline to submit applications is **Tuesday, Oct. 4 at 5:00 p.m. EDT.**
- 2023-24 Advancing Family-School Partnerships Challenge Grant
 - National PTA's [Center for Family Engagement](#), with the generous support of GoGuardian, is excited to support up to eight district/council/region (DCR) PTAs to adopt the updated [National Standards for Family-School Partnerships](#) through systems change approaches with a **\$2,000 funding opportunity**. Do not miss the opportunity to network with fellow DCR PTAs, build partnerships and mobilize your community to enhance family engagement practices in your locality.
 - **Apply now!**
- National PTA Principal Fellowship for Family-School Partnerships
 - Are you/do you know an exceptional principal with a commitment to family-school partnerships? National PTA's [Center for Family Engagement](#), with the generous support of GoGuardian, will support up to five principals with a **\$1,500 stipend** for their learning and contributions. Through this 12-month fellowship, principals will identify a local problem of practice to strengthen their leadership around family-school partnerships.
 - **Apply today** to join a cohort of trailblazing school leaders in developing new family engagement resources and building your knowledge to advance family-school partnerships.

10. School of Excellence Enrollment Open

- Don't you want something to celebrate? Local PTAs can enroll in the School of Excellence program at PTA.org/Excellence through Oct. 15 to improve their school, strengthen family-school partnerships and CELEBRATE the amazing work they do every day
- Visit PTA.org/StateExcellenceLibrary to see how you can help the PTAs in your state on their School of Excellence journey.

11. Volunteer Recognition Ideas

- Keychains
- Buy blank canvas bags on Amazon, black vinyl and used my Cricut to cut out the words "Dragon Repair Kit". (We're the DuFief Dragons).
- Also purchased simple first aid items like cold compresses, band aids, etc. In all, the first aid kits cost about \$2.50 each

12. WhatsApp (posting only) for West Area Push Messages (for any PTA member)

- I created this push WhatsApp for the entire West Area: Quince Orchard, Clarksburg, Northwest and Seneca Valley.
- I really don't care who is on it. Presidents, cluster coordinators, whatever, since you can't chat 😊
- <https://chat.whatsapp.com/HGvuQODIVxH302euKrWkgw>
- **Anyone else want to be admin for this site so you can post announcements?**

13. WhatsApp chat for West Area 🍇 Chat (for any PTA member too)

- <https://chat.whatsapp.com/BfyO9zizl1QBkeH7uTYpmn>

14. Here is the new [link](#) to find your Area Superintendent or DLAA.

- It's a googledoc with multiple tabs
- The link is found on the MCPS website. Click on any Team and it goes to the same google doc <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/otls/>
- Tab 2 for Quince Orchard and Seneca Valley
- Tab 3 for Northwest and Clarksburg

15. Cancelled: DLAA meeting is Sep 13, and Rocky Hill MS

16. DLAA meeting question and answers updated and in the google drive [link](#)

- [Link](#) to running list of topics that is shared with Mr. Turk **along with the meeting notes**.
- New plan: bring up the many questions during the Principals meeting. Next one will be at the high school after schools re-open.
- Director of Learning, Achievement and Administration (DLAA) or the Cluster Director, that is Mr. Turk's title
- The DLAA reports to the OSSI: the Area Associate Superintendent
- Here is the [presentation](#) on what to expect from the DLAA meeting.

Time: 6:00-7:30 PM

Date	Principal	School	Medium
01/18/23	Yolanda Allen	Snowden Farm ES	In Person
02/15/23	Barbara Woodward	Hallie Wells MS	In Person
03/15/23	Kevin Burns	Wilson Wims ES	In Person
04/26/23	Lita Yates	Fox Chapel ES	Zoom
05/17/23	Evan Bernstein	Little Bennett ES	Zoom
06/20/23	Edward Owusu	Clarksburg HS	Zoom
09/13/23	Darryl Johnson	Rocky Hill MS	In Person
10/11/23	Carl Bencal	Clarksburg ES	In Person
11/15/23	Pedro Cedeno	Daly ES	Zoom
12/13/23	Chris Wynne	Cedar Grove ES	Zoom
01/17/24	Kim Bosnic	Gibbs ES	Zoom

Advocacy:

17. MCCPTA Special Interest Facebook groups

- A. MCCPTA (Mont. County Council of PTAs): <https://www.facebook.com/groups/630013914466313>
- B. MCCPTA Gifted Education Committee: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/875483609961996>
- C. MCCPTA Special Education Committee: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/619359349469893>
- The first presentation has been recorded and saved onto Facebook and YouTube: Building a Strong Foundation: The Fundamentals of the Special Education Process in MCPS by special education advocate, Monica Martinez.
- D. MCCPTA ESOL and Non-English Speaking Families: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/817002515736926>

18. First MCCPTA Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee meeting Sep 28, 12:00 Zoom

- The Zoom link is https://us06web.zoom.us/join/tZYIf-GqrjgvGdRlcW1rq_qEFyI7w0AIH-po You must register to be able to join.

At our first meeting, we'd like to kick off the year with a Town Hall format and offer everyone a chance to let us know what their most critical topics of interest are this year, as you all review the needs of your school communities with respect to diversity, equity and inclusion. We would like to plan our year based on your input.

Here are some other topics that many of you have brought up to us recently:

- How do I go about my role as a DEI representative for my school community?
What are some of the things I can do to engage widely with our families and staff?
What is the best way to conduct outreach consistently this year as our school's DEP rep?
Our school is about to lose our PTA status because we have not been able to turn all of our required paperwork in. Is there anyone within MCCPTA or Free State who can help us retain our membership?
How can we best role model being inclusive when there are so many fights breaking out in different parts of the community?
- How can we get interpreters to help us include a wider reach of parents, care givers, staff and/or students at our PT(S)A functions?
- We would love to have people share what other topics or activities would be helpful to you and your communities this year.

Our last year focused on many things, not the least of which were: holding collaborative workshops with DEI representatives; collaborating with Black & Brown Coalition; participating in MCPS anti-racism audit workshops; holding a workshop on Sustainability in partnership with the MCCPTA Green Team; participating in workshops on Social Studies curriculum updates with the MCCPTA Curriculum Committee; holding an LGBTQ+ speaker forum; holding a workshop on antisemitism and anti-discrimination strategies with several non-profit and religious community and MCPS leaders; holding a Restorative Justice program with the MCPS RJ team; providing planning and support for the Spanish speaking Family Day at Kennedy High School in partnership with the MCCPTA ESOL committee; and providing testimony on numerous DEI issues at various Board of Education meetings throughout the year. We also formalized our DEI content on the newly revised MCCPTA web site.

Our goals for 2023-2024 academic year include continuing our work with a brand new DEI audit of MCCPTA's structure and outreach and programming to help ensure that all planning and programming activities are conducted with an inclusive and equitable approach for all schools; incorporating DEI training for the DEI representatives and the wider community within MCCPTA in fall and spring workshops; continuing to focus on sharing events, best practices and other opportunities with DEI reps and their schools and clusters; and continuing to work with the MCPS RJ team to amplify awareness within the MCPS community of the need for creating healthy, restorative cultures within our schools. The MCPS anti-racist audit is undergoing a review and we look forward to hearing soon what their approach and next steps will be for this year.

19. Does every student have a calculator?

- There is an app for the graphing calculator on phones. But what about students without phones?
- Yes, the policy is no phones in ES and MS, but teachers are allowed to make exceptions, such as for math class.
 - 1) This should be resolved at the lowest possible level. I'd recommend an inquiry go to the principal (or math RT) expressing concern over lack of calculator availability during these exams and if the principal has a count on how many were denied access.
 - a. If the parents bringing this to your attention have already done this, then it is appropriate to elevate the conversation. But, if this is new information for the principal/RT, then start the advocacy there...
 - b. If this isn't new information, the question is "why" and "what are we going to do about it?" Again, I'd encourage allowing the principal/RT to resolve before elevating to central office.
 - 2) With regard to taking calculators home – I'd encourage you to ask what the practice is for the school with regard to calculators. Once upon a time, the math department at one of the two high schools where my kids have matriculated, used to take "orders" at the beginning of the school year so students could purchase the same

calculator the school used at the same discounted cost as the school. I haven't seen that in a while so not sure if that still happens...

- a. The aim of the school should be to have calculators for every student in class... I don't remember (and I'm on my 4th high schooler now) there ever being a calculator assigned (like a text book) for them to bring home.
 - b. HOWEVER, as someone else pointed out, though it isn't a practice to assign a calculator to every student for "at home use" – it wouldn't surprise me at all if there is a mechanism for just such an activity where there is need expressed. Before covid and chromebooks were assigned to every student, our high school (through the media center) did assign chromebooks to ~200 to kids to ensure they had computer access at home. It wouldn't surprise me if there is a similar activity related to calculators. And, those students must return at the end of the school year with text books.
- 3) In terms of budgets to pay for these calculators -- the principal receives an allocation each year to purchase text books, supplies, etc. If the school doesn't have enough calculators for all students in these classes, this conversation should spur the intention to purchase more through this mechanism for next year.
 - 4) There may be instances where a PTSA would be asked to purchase something like this but it is incumbent on the principal to ensure PTSA funds are not being used for purposes already allocated (and having calculators in the classrooms seems to be a necessary "tool" for these classes and should be included in the course supply list).

20. Clarksburg Cluster Fair is Oct 13th

- At the CSA game night
- Invite Cluster schools to have a presence there and possible be able to run to the field during half-time or before the game, or both? They will do a parade of sorts which I believe is done at other high schools in some format.
- Invite the Cluster PTAs to have some presence and lift up the spirit and excitement, and build connections with fellow families. Maybe they can have a table each, if they sign up?

21. Health B EVENING class survey for high school

- Was EVENING option communicated in your child's high school? The fall online evening course appears to be full. <https://www2.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/onlinelearning/courses/health/>
- We are asking how many seats they allotted. This was the letter we sent August 25 to MCPS: <https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1V9Y8OJwUvkaRUIEZxdfmSZMndKUKrL-1>
- MCPS has said for two years that they would have an online Health B course the summer of 2024, once Maryland State Dept of Ed creates the course. We will ask for an update and hopefully will get one at the next CAC meeting (September 26).
- The fall and spring online courses also are up: <https://www2.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/onlinelearning/courses/health/>
- Please send any additional questions or feedback to us, hopefully ahead of our September 26 Advisory Committee meeting. Curriculum@mccpta.org I don't have a rep for Health yet, but we have some volunteers willing to at least sit in on September meeting.
- attendance which is a critical current need. Thank you very much for this important budget consideration.

22. Need a PTA member to represent Health on the MCPS Advisory Committee.

- If anyone is willing, please fill out this google doc. We will get what we want, only by staying on top of MCPS and asking for what we want! <https://forms.gle/Q3QPCsmW41Wo85tm6>
- If you volunteer, there are four meetings you need to attend from 4: 15 to 5:00, on Zoom, and then immediately write up a report and send to the curriculum committee. Sept. 28, Nov. 30, Feb. 8, and Apr. 25

23. Update on Literacy numbers for MCPS from MCCPTA Curriculum Committee

- MCPS just reported to the Board of Education the baseline results of the third grade MAP-R. They are baseline because most of this group of third graders has not benefitted from the countywide rollout of Really Great Reading that started last year. (Unless they were in a pilot school). I attached the results - you can see there was

less than 60 percent proficiency across all groups, and lower rates for Black and Hispanic students than other groups.

- Here is the BOE testimony and slides:
<https://mcpsmd.new.swagit.com/videos/272273?ts=3835>
[https://www.boarddocs.com/mabe/mcpsmd/Board.nsf/files/CVWQJY699A32/\\$file/Data%20Pathway%20Milestone%20Reading%20Gr%203%20230921%20PPT.pdf](https://www.boarddocs.com/mabe/mcpsmd/Board.nsf/files/CVWQJY699A32/$file/Data%20Pathway%20Milestone%20Reading%20Gr%203%20230921%20PPT.pdf)
- Attached is my testimony:
[Evelyn Chung BOE Testimony 09 21 23.pdf \(106 KB\)](#)
[Evelyn Chung BOE Video Testimony 09 21 23.pdf \(27 KB\)](#)
- In short, we have been supporting MCPS's shift to Structured Literacy but asked for school level data so we can see how well each school is doing. Then we asked MCPS to finish the job by choosing and implementing a stronger K-5 curriculum. This is something we have been advocating for in the last year directly with MCPS through our terrific Elementary ELA Lead Regan Kelly.
- Strong literacy curriculum and instruction - not just in elementary but in middle and high school too - benefits everyone. The podcast Sold a Story is an interesting one for your car ride - it talks about how many school districts - including Montgomery County - weren't following the science when teaching reading. One MCPS teacher said she assumed there were no issues in an affluent school, but the truth is that affluent parents were getting tutors and supplementing.
- If we see systemic disparities, that often is a sign of broader issues that affect all of our children. I am really excited about and fully support the work the Black and Brown Coalition is doing to raise awareness of these issues.

24. Need PTA member for Early Childhood Coordinator Council

- MCCPTA is looking for a Representative for the Early Childhood Coordinator Council
- What is the ECC: The Early Childhood Coordinating Council (ECCC) was established by Bill 13-15 and is Montgomery County's local Early Childhood Advisory Council for the State of Maryland. The ECCC monitors, advocates, and makes policy recommendations for the development of a comprehensive system of early care and education (ECE) in Montgomery County that supports children entering school ready to learn.
- Who is on the ECC: The ECCC is comprised of a variety of stakeholders and professionals with expertise in the early childhood field including County parents, business and foundation representatives, child care providers, local ECE associations' representatives, a pediatric representative, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) staff, Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) staff, Montgomery County Libraries and County Government representatives. Our collective knowledge and expertise about ECE, the importance of school readiness, and the needs of children and families in Montgomery County allows the ECCC to examine, discuss, problem solve, and provide a comprehensive perspective about early care and education to County officials.
- [Current members](#)
- How often and where does the ECC meet? Online and once per month.
- However, the ECC is undergoing changes because of the recent creation of the Children's Opportunity Alliance. As a result, the ECC is currently on hiatus. Nevertheless, since our current ECC representative's term ends in October, we want to ensure that we have a replacement selected before her term ends, and to ensure a smooth transition/handover.
- How long is the term? Two years
- How do I apply?: Fill out this form: <https://forms.gle/zGxTghoTZzmhptM76>.
- If you have any questions, email curriculum@mccpta.org. Evelyn Chung
MCCPTA Curriculum Committee Chair | DEI, GEC and Health & Wellness Committee Member
Chevy Chase ES Center Rep and GEC Rep

25. Bridge program for IEP students

- Bridge. The MCPS web site describes the program as designed to meet the needs of middle and HS students who may have social emotional challenges that impact their ability to meet the general education curriculum. These challenges may include: emotional social vulnerability, problem solving, abstract thinking, organizing and

planning, interpreting social cues, establishing relationships with peers, coping with anxiety, sensory sensitivity, pragmatic language and attention. It appears to be an excellent program and extremely helpful for many families.

- Best Buddies which pairs neurotypical peers with students with IEP's to meet once a month at school and do occasional activities out of school. All those programs were run and/or coached by LFI/SCB teachers and paras. Damascus HS lucky to have staff that volunteered their time to support these programs and also parents that volunteered to help as well.
- We can't force/require paras to support without being paid. We have always been lucky in our programs in the DHS cluster but I know as a parent of an adult with intensive special needs that this wasn't the norm. MCPS has a great allied sports program in high school but many schools don't participate for lack of support. That in my experience has correlated to lack of parent support as well.
- There are students that attend with respite providers and personal aides. That is the only real solution I see currently. The burden to provide them falls on the families of students or the parents can attend and facilitate the extra personalized attention the student requires.
- There are also a ton of non MCPS opportunities for special needs students like MoCo Movement, Zam Dance, Autism Ambassadors social group, SOMD, Miracle League in Germantown and the DSA Challengers to name a few.
- <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/b/300.117>
- <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/dcl-factsheet-201301-504.html>
- <https://disabilityrightsmd.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/OST-final-for-website.pdf>
- Key point: What I remember most from that experience was how incredibly grateful the families were to be asked where we could include/invite/support. Most didn't take us up on our offer. But, among those that did, some of those parents were my most faithful volunteers, coming to run concessions or hand out glow sticks (so they were available, if needed).

26. Black and Brown coalition on literacy forum Nov 9

- It's time for us all to STEP UP and SHOW UP for our next Black and Brown Coalition Forum to understand today's urgent educational challenges impacting Black and Brown students and what imperatives leaders, parents, and community members must work together to address.
- **Action Requested:** Review the attached Forum Flyers (English and Spanish) and register for the event using the QR Code. Please share with your school communities. This Forum will be the first in a series of 4, taking place **November 9th - June, 2024.**
- https://drive.google.com/file/d/14cKGjivlOPnO5zMTj8Md_CwtXXNUG5Hn/view?usp=sharing
- https://drive.google.com/file/d/1NleP3frycQ92YHOy-5OI34hZIQcKudF/view?usp=drive_link
- 2019 the NAACP Parents' Council and Identity, Inc. co-Founded the Black and Brown Coalition for Educational Equity and Excellence (<https://www.bandbcoalition.org/>) to address systemic barriers impacting all MCPS students, Black and Brown students in particular, and ensure they have equitable access to the resources, opportunities and supports they need to be successful in college, career, and life. Our inaugural Forum was in 2019 and over 1200 Black and Brown parents and caregivers came together with leaders from the MCPS Administration, Board of Education, County Executive and County Council members to elevate priority and demand change.
- Since the pandemic we have been working and making incremental progress in some areas, but our communities have not come together in-person with MCPS and County Leaders. RSVP:
- <https://forms.gle/Tjp7xpmJ7pW XK51m8>

27. MCPS offers Free Days of Fun when school is out

- **Kids Day Out**, for elementary school students, is a day filled with fun, supervised activities, planned with an emphasis on kid-friendly, healthy recreation. Programs will take place at various locations across the County beginning Monday, Oct. 9.

- The **Teens Day Out** program is available for middle school youth, ages 11-14. Middle schoolers will enjoy a day filled with fun, including field trips and other special activities. Teens Day Out will be offered at East County Community Recreation Center, Plum Gar Community Recreation Center, Silver Spring Recreation and Aquatic Center* and Wheaton Community Recreation Center. *April dates only
- Both programs are free to county residents through a partnership with Montgomery County Public Schools OST.
- Registration is available at [ActiveMontgomery.org](https://www.ActiveMontgomery.org). Search activity number R05113 for Kids Day Out and R09017 for Teens Day Out. For more information or for help with registration, contact the customer service team at 240-777-6840.

28. FUTURE: West Area BOE visit on March 20, 2024

- These are in the evening. The first three were 5:00 pm - 8:00 pm, with a "private" portion first where the AVP and CCs could mix and mingle with the BOE members and present their important areas for discussion. Then, there is a "public" portion where the first group joins with members of the community and there are tables set up for all the schools with each school having the opportunity to provide school specific information to the BOE members that are supposed to visit all of the schools.
- North Area (Damascus, Gaithersburg, Magruder and Watkins Mill) is on May 20th
- North East Consortium (NEC) is on April 17th

29. PTA Reflections (arts awards) due by Feb 1, 2024 through local PTA's

- Film, music, visual arts, dance, literature and photography
- <https://www.pta.org/home/programs/reflections?fbclid=IwAR3OrRxVV1K3IE6kxjPm3LQlt8P9n0En8gyV908VVNqeYS3EtfcdtSpjI44,IwAR3OrRxVV1K3IE6kxjPm3LQlt8P9n0En8gyV908VVNqeYS3EtfcdtSpjI44>
- National PTA Reflections: www.pta.org/reflections
- Free State PTA Reflections: <https://www.fspta.org/reflections>
- If you are planning to run the program through your PTA this year, please be sure to register on the National PTA website:
- [Reflections PTA Registration](#) as well as fill out the MCCPTA Blue Book with the Reflections Chair for your school so they can be added to the MCCPTA Reflections Listserve: [MCCPTA BlueBook 23-24](#)
- If you have any questions about the Reflections Arts Program, please reach out to me at reflections@mccpta.org

30. MCCPTA Reflections Information Session on **Tuesday, October 10th at 7:30 p.m.**

- **for all local PTA leaders who want to learn more about the Reflections program and how to start the program at your school** (it's easy and inexpensive - you can do it!!). Register for the Zoom here - a recording will be available for those who cannot attend live:
- <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom/register/tZMtc-yrD0pH9zuakrxNyX5YMkDZVXT9hK4>
- For those local PTAs who are already running the Reflections program, please pass the information below on to your Reflections Leader/chairperson for this year:
- **The deadline to submit all artwork to the MCCPTA is Sunday, December 24th at 11:59 p.m. Instructions on how to submit artwork will be sent out closer to the due date.** All artwork will be submitted digitally this year.

31. Fine Arts support in MCPS budget: send email to MCPS and BOE

- Dear Fine Arts supporters,
The MCPS Operating budget historically, significantly underfunds arts classes (instrumental music, visual arts, chorus, dance, ceramics, theatre). These curriculum based classes require budgets for instrument sales and purchases, stage sets, music licensing, transportation to juried festivals, arts materials such as paint, brushes, canvases, clay, dark room supplies, etc. Arts warrant the same attention as our other terrific classes (and are included in diploma requirements). Our creative students deserve programming support to participate in a fully robust educational setting. Generally, the arts programs are funded 50% of what is required (which leads to an inconsistent hodge podge across the county, often resulting in inequitable circumstances).

Please send an email to Dr. Peggy Pugh, Chief Academic Officer and Dr. Patrick Murphy, Deputy Superintendent

asking for full funding of all arts programs.

Peggy_Pugh@mcpsmd.org

Patrick_K_Murphy@mcpsmd.org

Your email could include:

fund arts classes (which are curriculum based, not an 'after school club')

double the current budgets that have had increases in many years

funding has not kept pace with demand

arts classes can be the ones that help students to attend

arts classes contribute to higher math and reading scores

these classes are engaging

these classes support social emotional learning

any personal stories of students and their experience and/or performances

Your email to Dr. Pugh and Dr. Murphy does not need to be long. A simple request is sufficient. Example:

"As you are creating the next Operating Budget, please include full funding of all the Fine Arts programs. These programs deserve what is needed to bring the best to our Kindergarten through 12th grade students who make music, art, ceramics, dances, photography and sing. By not fully funding, inequitable circumstance prevail and the budget can remedy this. These classes also increase

32. Elected officials with emails [spreadsheet](#)

- To do repetitive emails to your elected officials, I created this google spreadsheet with all of the elected officials and their emails
- Use it to create a mail merge with the free Google Utility "Form Mule". Find a YouTube video on how to use it.
- You need the excel in google sheet. It must be created in google so that it's a .docx file.
- Then in the spreadsheet, go to Extension and find Form Mule. Install the Utility if its not there.
- You cannot do a mail merge on a set of rows from the spreadsheet, it has to be the entire row. Groups have to be created in separate tabs.
- Do a test and send one email so you can make sure it's formatted correctly.
- Spreadsheet must have a header for each column and there cannot be blank rows
- **Elected officials do not like form emails, so create your own version of the email and then use the Form Mule to send out the personalized email to your representatives.**

33. Arts Funding, application starts June 2023

- Arts Program funding assistance from MSAC for 2024. Applications start June 2023.
<https://msac.org/programs/grants-artists>
- New Arts Funding Resource guide:
<https://artsforlearningmd.us1.list-manage.com/track/click?u=41e22e73806bbbed9b705f59d0&id=0b8d19113d&e=9cc7bdd586>
- And the beauty of this process is that they get to do the grant writing for you!
- Contact Fatima Oladosu - Program Coordinator <fatimaoladosu@yamd.org>
- All you need to do is choose your preferred MSAC-approved program, provide them with some basic information and review the write-up.
- Grants for the FY 2023-24 school year opens in June.
- [https://www.artsforlearningmd.org/programs/...](https://www.artsforlearningmd.org/programs/)
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