

## **President's Message**

Greetings!

We are heading into a very busy time of the year for Frederick County Public Schools. Part of our job as the PTA Council of Frederick County is to monitor and share any pertinent information coming from FCPS and the Board of Education. As an example, the 2013-2014 calendar was voted on by the Board of Education on January 23<sup>rd</sup> at their afternoon meeting. The approved calendar is significantly different from past calendars and holds very real implications for the students and families of our school system. Please see NEWS FLASH on page two of this letter for more info. We know how busy everyone is, especially our PTA leaders! It is so important, though, for you, as leaders, to be aware of the current issues that may affect or impact your school and your membership. So, in advance, let me say thank you for putting up with my correspondence as I let you know what the latest and greatest is! Please be sure to pass my communications to your board and membership, if requested, so we can keep all Frederick County PTA members updated with current information.

*Julie Marker*  
PTA Council President  
[Frederick@mdpta.org](mailto:Frederick@mdpta.org)

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The next PTA Council meeting is on **January 28, 2013 at 7:00 p.m.** at Monocacy Middle School. The PTA Council had to cancel our October meeting due to Hurricane Sandy, so we will continue the business of the Council at the January meeting.

The agenda will include adopting our legislative position statements and discussing advocacy. In addition, our Superintendent, Dr.

Teresa Alban, will briefly discuss her recommended FCPS operating budget.

**Each PTA in good standing has 4 votes on the PTA Council (see your unit's bylaws for your unit's specific voting members).**

**Others may attend as guests.**

# Hot off the press.....



*At the Board of Education meeting on January 23, 2013 the board voted to support proposed calendar option A with a full day off for Fair Day. This calendar starts school on August 19, 2013 and ends school on June 4, 2014, with five snow days. Parent-teacher conferences are eliminated for the high school level and will only be held in the fall for elementary and middle school families.*

*The PTA Council's mission – and the mission of the National PTA and all PTAs – is to support and speak on behalf of children and youth in the schools, in the community, and before governmental agencies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children; to assist parents in developing the skills they need to raise and protect their children; and to encourage parent and public involvement in the public schools of this nation.*

*Eliminating conferences, especially without putting in place other opportunities for parents to have meaningful, two-way communication with teachers, is contrary to our PTA mission. The PTA Council held an emergency meeting on January 10<sup>th</sup> to take a formal position on the proposed calendar options after those options were made public at the January 2, 2013 BOE meeting. The following resolution was adopted at that meeting:*

**Whereas,** The National PTA has established 6 standards (National Standards, Goals and Indicators for Family-School Partnerships) which define meaningful family involvement in our schools;

**Standard #2** – Communicating Effectively – states that “Families and school staff engage in regular, two-way, meaningful communication about student learning”;

**Standard #3** – Supporting Student Success – states that “Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students’ learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge to do so effectively”;

**Standard #5** – Sharing Power – states that “Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices and programs”;

**Whereas,** The calendar committee has proposed two options for the calendar, both of which remove conferences entirely for high school students and in the spring for middle and elementary students;

**Whereas,** At this time, no alternative in this county has been piloted and proven more effective for meaningful two-way communication other than conferences;

**Whereas,** No alternative option to conferences is presented as part of the calendar proposals;

**Whereas,** PTA Council of Frederick County is chartered under the National PTA and therefore supports the approved National PTA positions; and

**Whereas,** PTA should be advocating for and promoting more (not less) opportunities for parents to engage in dialogues with their child’s teachers and school staff;

**Therefore be it resolved that:**

The PTA Council of Frederick County is opposed to both calendar options A and B, as presented to the Board of Education on January 2, 2013, and will remain opposed to any proposed calendars that do not provide dedicated opportunities for regular, meaningful two-way communication between the home and the school for all families as established by the *National PTA in the National Standards, Goals and Indicators for Family-School Partnerships*.

**The PTA Council will continue to advocate for opportunities for parents to have meaningful communication with their child/children’s teacher(s), because, just like there is not one calendar which suits all families, we know there is not only one way for parents and teachers to have meaningful, face-to-face communications with teachers.**

**2012-2013 PTA Council of Frederick County  
Board of Directors**

<i>President</i>	Julie Marker
<i>1<sup>st</sup> Vice President</i>	vacant
<i>2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President</i>	MC Keegan-Ayer
<i>Secretary</i>	Susie Yost
<i>Treasurer</i>	Jan Baseley
<i>Immediate</i>	
<i>Past President</i>	Daphne Gabb
<i>Membership</i>	Jennifer Sunday
<i>Communications</i>	Janice Spiegel
<i>Outreach</i>	Christine McFadden
<i>Curriculum &amp;</i>	
<i>Instruction</i>	George Yourick
<i>Family Involvement</i>	Kyle Bostian
<i>Health &amp; Nutrition</i>	Susie Yost
<i>Reflections</i>	Robyn Myers

Do you want to get a copy of the PTA Council's monthly newsletter?  
Email [Frederick@mdpta.org](mailto:Frederick@mdpta.org) and ask to be added to the distribution list.  
**Presidents- you will automatically receive a copy; please share with your entire board of directors.**

## **WE'RE ASKING, LET US KNOW...**

The PTA Council provides this space in the monthly newsletter so that you can share your ideas for programs and projects with other PTAs and they can get ideas from your PTA. One of the things our members have told us is that they like collaborate with other PTAs. So far, we asked for your feedback on some specific questions – but we got little response. So this month, let's try something different....

## **ARE THERE ANY QUESTIONS YOU WOULD LIKE TO ASK OTHER PTAs?**

Are you having fundraising issues and need new ideas? Do you need a good idea for a cultural art program? All questions will be considered – but please, if someone asks, provide feedback!

**PLEASE SEND YOUR QUESTIONS TO JULIE AT [FREDERICK@MDPTA.ORG](mailto:FREDERICK@MDPTA.ORG) AND WE WILL PRINT IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER! PLEASE LET JULIE KNOW.**

## **Upcoming Maryland PTA Training Opportunities**

**January 26, 2013 Maryland PTA Financial Training Maryland PTA Office, Glen Burnie**

*If you are interested in a training program, please contact the state office at [office@mdpta.org](mailto:office@mdpta.org) or call 410-760-6221.*

## Treasurer's Corner

Hello Treasurers!

***Did your unit complete the ANNUAL UPDATE to register your unit as a charitable organization?***

The registration was due by December 31<sup>st</sup>. You MUST send a copy of your completed form to the Maryland PTA office in addition to filing with the state of Maryland. Please contact the PTA Council if you need help getting your forms completed, [Frederick@mdpta.org](mailto:Frederick@mdpta.org).

***Have you checked the status of your unit's incorporation?***

If you are not considered "In Good Standing" by the Maryland Department of Assessments, you need to contact them (410-767-1350) to find out what is required to bring you into Good Standing. Not being in good standing can result in the loss of your incorporation and the protection it provides. It will cause your local to not be in good standing, and thus not be able to participate in several of our programs and benefits. This loss of standing by the MD Dept of State is usually a result of not filing your property tax report.

**THIS REPORT NEEDS TO BE FILED WHETHER YOUR PTA/PTSA OWNS ANY PROPERTY OR NOT!!!**

Check your status at [www.dat.state.md.us](http://www.dat.state.md.us)

- Click on Business Data Search
- Click on Business Entity Search
- Then enter either the PTA name as originally submitted OR enter the Incorporation number for your PTA.
- When you see your PTA, click on general information
- This will give you an overview of the status of your PTA.

Contact the Frederick PTA Council Treasurer, Jan Baseley, at [jbaseley@hotmail.com](mailto:jbaseley@hotmail.com) or the Council President, Julie Marker, at [Frederick@mdpta.org](mailto:Frederick@mdpta.org) if you have any questions or need help.

## **It Is Nominating Time – Local PTAs Should be Setting up Nominating Committees!**

Beginning in February, many local PTAs should be forming nominating committees to seek officers for the upcoming year. Be sure to check your PTA's bylaws to see what your timeline is, and the required number and composition of your nominating committees. Please refer to ARTICLE VI Officers and Their Election- Section 3 in your local PTA bylaws for information regarding your nominating committee.

In order for PTAs to grow their own membership, they must be actively involved in looking for leadership in your school communities. Sometimes, all it takes is asking another if they would like to consider a leadership role in your PTA. PTAs work very hard in their school communities advocating on behalf of children and are a great support for their schools. Be inviting!

### **Calendar Updates**

**January 28** – PTA Council Meeting, 7:00 p.m. at Monocacy Middle School

**February 4** – Superintendent's Chat, 7:00 p.m. at Tuscarora High School

**February 6** – Board of Education Public Hearing on the FCPS Operating Budget, 6:00 p.m. at Walkersville High School

**February 13** – Board of Education meeting

**February 19** – Joint BOE/BOCC meeting

### **Membership Info**

- \* The FINAL membership dues payment must be made to both the Maryland PTA and the PTA Council of Frederick County by **March 31, 2013**. Dues received after that date will not be added to this year's totals.
  
- \* Please remind your members to activate their membership cards. Information for how to activate the card is printed on the card.

## **AGENDA BRIEFS – LEGISLATIVE POSITIONS**

The next meeting of the PTA Council will be on January 28<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 p.m. at Monocacy Middle School.

At this meeting, we will vote on the Council Legislative Position Statements, which were postponed from the October meeting due to Hurricane Sandy. Below is a copy of the proposed legislative positions statements (the positions were sent to your unit in October also).

## Frederick County Council



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### **Legislative Position Statements 2012-2013**

#### ***“To secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth”***

*The authority of the PTA Council of Frederick County’s legislative activity* is the third object of the National PTA’s Purposes. The PTA Council of Frederick County recognizes that an organization dedicated to the welfare of children and youth must concern itself with the laws and issues that affect children.

*The PTA Council of Frederick County’s Legislative Position Statements* are adopted by the general membership, at a general membership meeting, and establish the authority, direction and priority for action on advocacy issues, and in accordance with National PTA and Maryland PTA’s Purposes and Basic Policies. The PTA Council of Frederick County, Inc. believes all levels of government play varying roles in ensuring that the health and welfare needs of all children and youth are met.

#### **Summary of the Legislative Position Statements**

- *The PTA Council of Frederick County’s Legislative Position Statements* is the basis for any action taken on public policy, legislation and regulations affecting the health, education and general welfare of children and youth by the PTA Council of Frederick County, Inc. or the local PTA units in Frederick County.
- **Local Frederick County PTAs and its members may support or abstain from taking action, but they may not take action in opposition or conflict with National PTA, Maryland PTA, or the PTA Council of Frederick County, Inc. (i.e., Policies, Directives, Resolutions, etc.).**

### **The 2012-2013 PTA Council of Frederick County, Inc. Legislative Position Statements focus on the following:**

In addition to supporting the National and Maryland PTA positions, PTA Council of Frederick County, Inc. endorses the following positions based upon three general areas of support, (I) Public Education; (II) Family Involvement; and (III) Safe and Nurturing Environment.

#### **I. Support for Public Education**

*Strengthen public education for our nation’s children through advocacy, promotion and engaging community members in support of public education. Therefore, the PTA Council of Frederick County, Inc. supports the following:*

**A. Educational Funding:** We support full fiscal implementation of the Elementary Secondary Education Act (ESEA)/No Child Left Behind (NCLB), Common Core Standards and the Public Schools Facilities Act (2004) as the means to provide adequate funding for both the capital and operating educational budgets. We support the concept of maintenance of effort (MOE) as a commitment that the local government makes to education funding. This concept embodies the government’s commitment to our students ensuring local school systems receive the funding required to deliver the basic educational programs.

##### **1. General Education Funding:**

- a. We support the current formulas for educational funding as the absolute minimum funding level necessary to provide a “free and adequate public education”, as required by federal and state law, for every student in Frederick County.
- b. We believe that educational funding formulas for specialized programs such as special education, ELL and gifted and talented must be maintained and will need to be increased in order for FCPS students to be able to meet the goals and standards established by ESEA-NCLB and Common Core Standards.
- c. We believe that in order to increase performance for students who have not yet met federal and state requirements, funding levels will need to be increased.
- d. We believe that the public education budgets should be easily understood by parents and the community, so they are able to take an active role in the development of these budgets.

##### **2. State Educational Funding:**

- a. We support an equitable distribution of state public education funding between all counties in

Maryland.

- b. We support productive, ongoing collaboration between all elected appropriate representatives to ensure that Frederick County receives its fair share of state educational funding.
- c. We support a revenue structure that will reliably fund Maryland's responsibility for education, children and youth without shifting undue burdens to local governments.

**3. Local Educational Funding:**

- a. We support maintaining full funding of the operating budget as established by the Frederick County Board of Education as the minimum funding level required.
- b. We support a dedicated local source of revenue for the FCPS capital budget for new capacity, as well as renovations/modernizations, and systemic maintenance/improvements.
- c. We support, at a minimum, maintaining the current student to teacher ratios for elementary and secondary levels.
- d. We support the recruitment and retention of highly qualified teachers for every classroom.
- e. We believe that the authority to determine the priorities of the operating and capital budgets for FCPS rests with the Board of Education of Frederick County.

**4. Capital Improvement Programs:**

- a. We support the Board of Education placing an equal importance on the renovation of older schools as is placed on capacity needs.
- b. We support the ability of Frederick County Public Schools to reallocate state or local capital money, which remains unspent at the conclusion of a project, to another approved capital project.
- c. If fund balances are required to be returned at the end of a project so that they will no longer be available to address FCPS' critical systemic maintenance needs, we support specific dedicated local funding for systemic projects within the capital budget.
- d. We support FCPS and the BOE as the authority to determine the facility needs of the system in order to provide every child a seat within a safe and appropriate school building.

**B. Equity in Education:**

1. We support on-going dedicated funding to address disproportionate achievement levels in the educational system.
2. We support measures which ensure individuals with disabilities accessibility to public places, especially public schools, and require that those facilities totally accommodate individuals with disabilities.
3. We support an educational system that is equitable in resources and programs and is free from bias.
4. We support the right to a free, quality public education, adequate food and shelter, and basic health care services for all children and youth.

**C. Adequate School Facilities:**

1. We define "adequate school capacity" for each school as less than 100% of the state-rated capacity.
2. We support each municipality in Frederick County having an Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) with an appropriate educational component.
3. We support the premise that the educational component of all APFOs should reflect capacity measurements that include existing and background enrollment numbers, as well as proposed and approved development projections, AND a reasonable timeframe under which capacity can be added without unfair consequences on other CIP priorities as determined by the BOE.
4. We support the BOE as the governing body responsible for initiating policies that outline developer requirements to mitigate educational APFO restrictions.
5. We support mitigation proposals aimed at addressing failed school capacity tests under the APFO that completely mitigate the cost to adequately design, build, equip, and open public school facilities. If proposals do not actually mitigate the true cost of needed public school facilities, then the developer should be required to wait until adequate school facilities are made available through traditional funding.
6. We support the BOE policy, Developer-Funded School Construction Priorities, which sets requirements for developers proposing to fund school construction projects.

**II. Family Involvement**

*Studies continue to show that regardless of the economic, ethnic, or cultural background, family involvement in a child's*

education is a major factor in determining success in school. Therefore, the PTA Council of Frederick County, Inc. supports the following:

- A. **Family /Community Partnerships:** We support the BOE policy “Family/Community Partnerships”, and support the development of regulations to implement this policy as outlined in the Master Plan and according to the National PTA Standards for Family-School Partnerships.
- B. **Measurable Standards:** We support the establishment of measurable standards for participation of FCPS schools in family involvement initiatives. We support every FCPS family being actively involved with their child’s education.
- C. **Participation on Committees:** We support members of the community and key stakeholders to be included as full participants on FCPS committees, focus groups, and other decision-making bodies.
- D. **Parent and Family Involvement Coordinator:** We support the inclusion of a full-time, dedicated, FCPS Parent and Family Involvement Coordinator.
- E. **Participation in Policy Making:** We support encouragement by the Board of Education for citizen involvement and active participation in the policy making process as the BOE conducts business.
- F. **Civility in all discussions/debates/meetings/public comments:** We support maintaining civility at all times during all discussions, debates, public meetings and during public comments. We support respectful discourse/discussion in all public forums to serve as a role model to our children and youth.

### III. Safe and Nurturing Environment

National PTA, and its member organizations, support initiatives that foster a safe and supportive school climate, including violence prevention measures, delinquency prevention initiatives, class-size reduction efforts, counseling programs, and health and welfare reforms that meet the needs of underserved children and families. Therefore, the PTA Council of Frederick County, Inc. supports the following:

- A. **Student Transportation To/From School:** We support initiatives that foster a safe and timely means to and from school, regardless of the student’s mode of transportation.
- B. **Child Protection:** We support appropriate child protection and delinquency prevention initiatives, as well as gang resistance and prevention education efforts, within the school system and community.
- C. **Disciplinary Accountability:** We support strong disciplinary accountability for perpetrators of violent acts and bullying, as well as adequate services to address the needs of all involved students.
- D. **Health and Nutrition:** We support policies that will address the epidemic of obesity and related chronic diseases in children and youth to include healthier food choices and ensure adequate daily physical activity for all children.
- E. **Environmental Hazards:**
  - 1. We support initiatives that strengthen the protection of children and youth on school grounds and in the community from environmental hazards in accordance with National PTA and Maryland PTA directives.
  - 2. We support requirements that ensure parents and communities be notified of environmental conditions and remedial actions in and around school buildings.
  - 3. We support appropriate and periodic testing of air, water, fungi, mold and other microbial contaminants in public school buildings, and the results of such tests be released to the public.
  - 4. We support the same tests and standards being applied to portable classrooms.
- F. **Emergency Preparedness:** We support timely communications of FCPS emergency preparedness plans and notification efforts. We encourage FCPS to include family involvement in FCPS emergency preparedness planning.
- G. **School Security:** We support the development, funding and implementation of necessary security measures for the safety of children and youth in school buildings, including relocatable classrooms and the main office.