Montgomery County Education Association

Bargaining Proposal to Montgomery County Public Schools

December 5, 2022

Article 9: ~~School~~ Worksite Quality and Improvement

The parties agree that **educator voice is essential to** ~~schools and those who work in them are at the heart of~~ improving teaching and learning. ~~We expect each school continuously to renew itself, explore innovative approaches, and build the capacity of staff to improve the achievement of our students.~~ The parties recognize the needs of students we serve and are interested in collaboratively exploring new and innovative approaches to the work, which are aligned with the assumptions below.

A. The parties agree on the following assumptions about ~~school~~**worksite** quality and improvement:

- **1.** Decisions about teaching and learning must involve those closest to the teaching and learning process, including ~~classroom-based~~ teachers **and service providers.**

  > **Commented [C[1]:** anyone who is not a teacher

- **2.** The school is where people make a difference in the daily life of each student. Each school community, which includes ~~classroom-based~~ teachers **and service providers**, has the best information and is in the best position to craft appropriate and effective strategies to improve student learning.

- **3.** A continuous-improvement philosophy takes the traditional pyramid of leadership and decision making and turns it upside down. Central office positions and departments work to serve the interests and meet the needs of those in schools. ~~In schools, a~~**Administrators** and support staff strengthen the learning process by providing supports to teachers **and service providers** to meet the needs of students.

- **4.** Strategic and planful innovation is required to meet student learning needs, at both the ~~school~~**worksite** and system levels. Transforming ~~schools~~**worksites** and systems to best meet the 21st century educational needs of students requires creative thinking and a focus on problem solving.

- **5.** Within each ~~school~~**worksite**, the critical process of learning takes place ~~in the classroom~~. Continuous improvement should ensure maximum support for our ~~classroom~~ educators by empowering them with the appropriate authority and responsibility to make decisions that will improve teaching and learning.

B. Staff Involvement in Decision Making

We believe collaboration is a core value of Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) and, at the same time, we believe time is a valuable resource in effective teaching and learning. The parties agree that educators need a balance of both individual planning time and collaborative planning time in order to meet the needs of students effectively.

~~Schools and those who work in them are at the heart of improving teaching and learning.~~ Each ~~school~~**worksite** is responsible for continuously renewing itself and building the capacity of its staff to improve the achievement of its students. Decisions about teaching and learning must involve those closest to the teaching and learning process within each ~~school~~**worksite** community. Each ~~school~~**worksite** community has the best information and is in the best position to craft appropriate and effective strategies to improve student learning.

The emphasis on authority, responsibility, and support for the classroom can best be accomplished by collaboration and shared decision making ~~in schools~~. ~~Collaborative school-based decision making brings people together, who then share responsibility for implementing needed changes and accountability for results.~~

1. In order to accomplish this:

- a) Each school shall have a leadership structure that includes the following: Principal, Elected Faculty Representative(s), Elected Support Representative(s), Instructional Leadership Team, Other Teams, Departments, and Committees
- **b)** The leadership structure of each school shall work collaboratively to ensure that the parties' agreed-upon assumptions on school quality and improvement are put into practice.
- c) **In non-school based settings, the Elected Faculty Representative (EFR) will work with the appropriate administrators to facilitate the opportunity for input on issues pertinent to their work.**
- ~~It is expected that schools will follow guidelines that have been developed for each type of team. It also is expected that ILTs will utilize self-assessment tools to determine how effectively they are operating. In addition, ILTs are expected to ask for support when these assessments indicate there are opportunities to improve the effectiveness of the operations of the teams and/or the decision-making processes in the school. There is a commitment to provide this support when it is requested.~~

2. ~~1.~~ **Principal and Elected Faculty Representative(s)**

Each school shall have one (1) elected faculty representative for every seventy-five (75) MCEA unit members, or portion thereof, in the school. **Non-school based,**

> **Commented [BA[2]:** This language goes with EFT language in 1 below.

office-based, and itinerant staff should have one Elected Faculty Representative (EFR) for every 75 unit members, or portion thereof, in the worksite.

It is important that the elected faculty representatives and the principal of each school**worksite** form a team that works together to enhance the collaborative decision-making processes in the school.

At the beginning of each year, the principal**/supervisor** and elected faculty representative(s) (EFRs) of each school**worksite** shall meet and agree upon how they will work together, and this information shall be shared with staff in the school**worksite**, for their agreement and understanding. The principal**/supervisor**, ESR, and EFRs shall meet formally at least once a month (Triad) to discuss the school**worksite** climate and address issues that are of concern to school staff.

The expectations of the elected representatives and these teams include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **a)** The elected faculty representative(s) are expected to be members of and participate on the school leadership team.
- **b)** The elected faculty representative(s) establish a feedback and input loop with unit members to identify interests and issues that are important to them.
- **c)** These interests and issues will be shared with the principal. The elected faculty representative(s) and the principal will discuss them and determine how and in what venue they should be addressed and identify topics that are important for the leadership team to address.
- **d)** The principal and elected faculty representative(s) identify communications plans for sharing important information with staff about school-system or school**worksite**-based decisions and to communicate decisions, resolutions, and actions that have been taken.
- **e)** The team participates in MCPS training offered, including interest-based decision-making training, to build capacity to operate effectively.
- **f) In non-school based settings, the EFR shall work with appropriate administrators to address climate and other issues.**

3. 2. **Instructional Leadership Teams (ILTs)**
    a) Each school shall have an Instructional Leadership Team (ILT), to serve as the school's decision-making body in collaboration with the principal. ILTs are expected to operate collaboratively, be representative of and accountable to staff, and involve staff in decision making. The leadership team is the core group that has primary responsibility for collaborative decision making with the administration on the instructional program.

MCEA unit members on the team may include resource teachers, team leaders, content specialists, classroom teachers, and others designated by the principal. The leadership team shall include the elected faculty representative(s).

b) It is in the best interest of the school system to have input from various staff on ILTs; teams may be expanded to include teacher representatives from groups without team leaders, such as English **Language Development (ELD)**~~for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)~~, Special Education, and where appropriate, Head Start/Pre-K, and specialists.

c) If a unit member is assigned to a teacher leader position with a supplement for more than ten (10) consecutive duty days, they shall be paid the prorated portion of that supplement for time worked.

d) The leadership team shall develop a process by which agendas are developed collaboratively by the leadership team members and roles are established and rotated. During preservice, staff shall be informed of the process for developing the agendas.

e) ILTs will be engaged in decision-making about the following:
   1) Curriculum, assessment, and instruction
   2) Professional development
   3) Positive, safe, and orderly school learning climates
   4) School improvement plans, including the analysis of school and student performance data to be used to improve student achievement
   5) Scheduling that affects the whole school
   6) Schoolwide interventions for groups of students
   7) Local school processes for grading and reporting, parent communication, including expectations for online communications, and other tasks that enhance student learning
   8) Expectations for the work that grade-level, content, and other school teams will accomplish
   9) Creation and evaluation of central holding or dismissal plan

f) Communication and Openness
   1) ILTs will operate in an open manner and their decision-making processes will be communicated to all staff. The EFR(s) and other MCEA unit members on the leadership team serve as communicators and liaisons with the school's faculty. Meetings of ILTs shall be open to any interested staff as observers. Leadership teams should design and implement two-way communication between staff and leadership teams.
   2) ILTs will be responsible for gathering input from all faculty for use in making decisions surrounding the areas identified in B.2.e.

3) All ILTs shall publish the agenda to the staff of the school before each leadership team meeting. Notes from the meeting shall be published within two (2) duty days of the meeting.

4) ILTs are responsible for the following:

- **(a)** Discussing issues/topics as a leadership team
- **(b)** Discussing issues/topics with teams and/or departments
- **(c)** Engaging in effective decision-making processes that provide all stakeholders with a voice
- **(d)** Reporting such findings from teams/ departments back to the leadership team in writing
- **(e)** Utilizing findings/data from teams/ departments to inform the decisions of the leadership team and reporting back to the faculty about how the feedback factored into the process

g) Ensuring Collaborative Decision Making

1) ILTs are expected to be knowledgeable about the nature of decision making in their school, and implement best practices of shared/distributive leadership that **will adhere to the terms and conditions of this agreement, and** will include the following:

- **(a)** Establishing a shared vision

> **Commented [BA[3]:** From this point down, there are only numbering, lettering, and housekeeping formatting changes.

- **(b)** Balancing the emphasis among results, relationships, and processes
- **(c)** Increasing investment and ownership of decisions
- **(d)** Creating and implementing an action plan
- **(e)** Engaging in effective decision-making processes in order to facilitate agreement
- **(f)** Building capacity of stakeholders
- **(g)** Building leadership capacity
- **(h)** Celebrating individual and group successes

2) ILTs will also be responsible for gathering data annually to review the effective functioning and efficiency of the leadership team as well as other teams, departments, and committees in the school. One (1) or more self-assessment instruments will be provided to leadership teams to assist them with this assessment. This self-assessment information should be provided to the school staff and the MCEA UniServ director. If the leadership team determines that there are opportunities to improve the operations of the teams and the decision-making processes in the school, a conference will be held to consider options for supporting the school.

h) ILTs will have access to training, including training in collaborative decision-making, interest-based approaches to problem solving, facilitation, effective meetings, and team development. The ADC will work to ensure that all leadership teams have access to this training.

i) Leadership teams that would benefit from support in collaborative, decision-making, and representative processes and systems may request support from the Systemwide Labor Management Collaboration Committee.

j) Information Report

Each principal will submit to the Office of School Support and Well-Being (OSSWB) at the beginning of each school year, the title of the team, a complete roster of team members, and the frequency of meetings. OSSWB shall provide MCEA with a copy of this information.

4. **3. School Triad Team**

Each school shall have a school Triad Team (Triad) which includes the principal, Elected SEIU Representative (ESR), and Elected Faculty Representatives. The purpose of the Triad is to form a team that regularly works together to enhance the collaborative processes and collaborative decision-making at the school. Records of the Triad Committee meetings shall be maintained at the school and shall include Triad decisions, resolutions, action steps and/or other communiques to staff. Such material shall be sent out within five (5) days of the meeting.

5. **4. Grade-level, Department Teams and Committees**

a) ILTs will identify the goals of the work that needs to be accomplished by teams, departments and committees, within the context of school improvement.

b) Expectations and parameters outlined for teams, departments, and committees shall be collaboratively established between teams and school leadership. This should include who may attend meetings, what needs to be accomplished through the meetings and what information will be communicated between stakeholders.

c) Teams, departments, and committees will determine, in accordance with Article 17, Section C.8

- **1)** How the work gets accomplished, including but not limited to agendas, action items, and communication of the work to stakeholders.
- **2)** When and where they will accomplish this work.
- **3)** Who needs to attend individual meetings to support this work, including but not limited to the media specialist, staff development teacher, reading specialist, and math content coach.

These decisions are contingent on teams being able to meet the expectations identified by ILTs.

d) When teams are unable to accomplish the work as identified by ILTs, the principal or designee shall provide the team with written feedback regarding concerns with the work of the team and determine
- **1)** when they will accomplish the work,
- **2)** who needs to attend individual meetings to support this work, including but not limited to the media specialist, staff development specialist, reading specialist, and math content coach.
- **3)** how the team will communicate its progress to stakeholders.

e) The principal and the team leader shall agree on the timeline of supports and intervention by administration for the purpose of having the team return to governing the work themselves, as quickly as possible.

6. ~~5.~~ **Effective Use of Collaborative Time**

The following characteristics are provided as guidelines for the effective use of collaborative time:

a) **Content**~~ONTENT~~ **A clear focus on student learning,** which could take one of the following forms:
- **1)** Collaborative planning around both subject content and/or pedagogy.
- **2)** Application of qualitative and quantitative data to drive planning, with a focus on

  (a) students who are struggling and have not met benchmarks,

  (b) students who are meeting benchmarks, and

  (c) students who are exceeding benchmarks

- **3)** Creation of common formative assessments as a team
- **4)** Looking at student work, using a rubric
- **5)** Building instructional capacity of staff and being engaged in professional development to improve practice.

b) **Process**~~ROCESS~~ **Collaborative and shared leadership**, which should include the following:
- **1)** The development and implementation of ground rules for the meeting
- **2)** Identified roles and responsibilities for each person
- **3)** Agendas jointly developed by the team (best practice to develop at the end of each meeting for the next meeting)
- **4)** A safe environment in which each member expresses their thoughts

- **5)** Assignment of work prior to the next meeting, and the allocation of time to accomplish such identified work on an individual basis
- **6)** Evaluation of the meeting, and revision of practice, based on evaluation.

c) **Dynamics~~YNAMICS~~** — **Mutual trust and respec**t, which should take into account the following characteristics:

- **1)** The expected behaviors identified in the School Climate Compact
- **2)** The expected behaviors identified in the Organizational Culture of Respect Compact
- **3)** A commitment to address issues and not personalize concerns
- **4)** Active listening in order to retain an open mind to others' ideas
- **5)** A commitment to each other that it is alright to make mistakes and to learn from them to be empathetic to the feelings of others.

Groups that meet should evaluate their operations in relation to the above-referenced characteristics on an ongoing basis. If assistance is needed, it is expected that ILTs will work with the team to supply that assistance.

Given that time is a finite resource, it is expected that the ILT will seek to make efficient use of all collaborative time within the building, taking advantage of technology when appropriate. Examining what might be communicated electronically through e-mail, web video, shared documents, or social media is the responsibility of the ILTs.

C. Shared Responsibility for Student Achievement and Student Improvement

1. The parties agree on the following assumptions:

a) **At the district level,** the Board of Education and Executive Leadership Team are responsible for encouraging, modeling, and sustaining a culture necessary to support the shared responsibility for student achievement. They must continually articulate core values, reinforce the vision, and demonstrate their commitment to a new way of doing business. The continuous improvement process requires that the central administration of the school system supports the needs of students and those who work in classrooms and ~~schools~~**worksites**. They are responsible for providing the resources that are needed at the ~~school~~**worksite** and classroom levels, and also the resources required for the planning, critiquing, and assessment of the work of teaching and learning.

b) **At the ~~school~~worksite level**, administrators and the staff as a whole are accountable for establishing a learning community conducive to the best teaching practices and success for every student. They have a responsibility for managing time and creating opportunities that allow for collaborative problem solving and for using a wide range of data so that an environment conducive to analysis and improvement is created.

      c) **At the classroom level**, educators are accountable for the instruction they deliver and the classroom environment they create within which every student can succeed. Educators implement the curriculum aligned with established measures of performance and international, national, state, and local standards. The individual educator receives training in obtaining and interpreting student data and will have the responsibility to use this data to examine their classroom strategies and systems.

2. The Board of Education, administrative and supervisory staff, and educators are ultimately held accountable by the public for student performance.
3. Standardized test scores provide data that are useful as measures of progress or indicators of deficiencies in a school or a classroom. However, test scores alone cannot constitute a judgment, in and of themselves, about the performance of a teacher or the success of a school. The most important use of test data is to contribute to analysis and problem solving for school, teacher, and student improvement.
4. MCPS administration and the Board of Education have a responsibility to work collaboratively with MCEA, and vice versa, to ensure that standardized test scores and other assessment measures are used as tools for the improvement of teaching and learning, not simply as ends in themselves

D. Staff Involvement in District Interventions to Improve Performance.

When MCPS intervenes in a school to provide intensive assistance to improve performance, school staff will participate in the intervention and improvement process.

1. The deputy superintendent will notify MCEA when an intensive intervention is needed.
2. MCEA will collaborate with MCPS in developing intervention plans for individual schools to ensure staff ownership of the improvement process.
3. MCPS will provide a reasonable opportunity for all unit members to participate in developing an improvement plan that addresses the problems identified by the profile data.
4. The principal, ILT, staff development teacher, and OTLS will work to ensure that the school's plan for professional development is integrated with and driven by the improvement plan and is communicated to all staff.
5. OTLS will facilitate ongoing communication with MCEA and with the entire staff throughout the process of developing a new direction/improvement plan for the school.
6. Schools identified for comprehensive or targeted support and improvement shall have unit members on required school-based teams who are elected by the unit members at the school.

E. Effective Human Relations Program

~~Schools~~**Worksites** and ~~school~~ staff must take proactive steps to advance an environment of high expectations and mutual respect. The Board and MCEA affirm our commitment to preparing all students to live and work in a global multicultural world and to fostering an atmosphere where all members of the community feel they are an integral part of the educational process.

1. The Board and MCEA shall work collaboratively to establish, maintain, and support productive and harmonious working and learning environments for staff and students. The parties agree that acts of disrespect, insensitivity, bias, harassment, verbal abuse, physical violence, or illegal discrimination toward any person will not be condoned.
2. The board shall not discriminate based on race, ethnicity, color, ancestry, national origin, religion, immigration status, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, family/parental status, marital status, age, physical or mental disability, poverty and socioeconomic status, language, or other legally or constitutionally protected attributes or affiliations.
3. Each unit member shall be responsible for establishing and maintaining an educational atmosphere that is inclusive, bias-free, and welcoming, and one in which students can develop attitudes and skills for effective, cooperative living, including—
    a) respect for the individual regardless of race, ethnicity, color, ancestry, national origin, religion, immigration status, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, family/ parental status, marital status, age, physical or mental disability, poverty and socioeconomic status, language, or other legally or constitutionally protected attributes or affiliations;
    b) respect for cultural and language differences;
    c) respect for personal rights of others; and
    d) respect for the right of others to seek and maintain their own identities with dignity.

F. **Strengthening School-Home Engagement**
1. MCPS will ensure that available systems, including but not limited to the ~~new~~ Student Information System, will be available to strengthen both school-to-home and home-to-school engagement and communication.
2. MCPS will ensure that the Student Information System and associated systems have embedded automated translation services to support communication between home and school.
3. MCPS will continue to provide translation services for both print materials and Language Line Services or a comparable system for staff.
4. Support and support materials for using translation services (e.g., emailing, messaging, Language Line) will be available.

5. Home Visits
   a) The MCEA LMCC will either collaborate on new systemwide home visit initiatives or delegate this responsibility per Article 6–Collaboration.
   b) ILTs will collaborate on new school-based home visit initiatives.
   c) MCPS will offer professional development best practices for home visits.