

# Highlights of the New Contract

Between the  
**Montgomery County Education Association**  
And the  
**Montgomery County Board of Education**

## TEACHER QUALITY

**Improved Mentoring for Teachers New to MCPS** – While MCPS provides mentors to all experienced teachers new to Montgomery County, less than half of MCPS mentors have received formal training in mentoring. Under the agreement, there are new incentives to increase the number of trained mentors supporting first year teachers new to MCPS.

**Enhanced Support for National Certification** – MCEA and MCPS jointly run a program to support teachers pursuing national certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). The National Board is widely recognized for defining high standards for teaching excellence. Already more than 300 MCPS teachers have achieved national board certification. Under the agreement, MCPS will expand its financial support to assist teachers with the fees involved in applying for national certification.

**Initiative to Attract More Certified, Highly Qualified Substitute Teachers** – Substitute teachers play an indispensable role in MCPS, yet there is a wide range of experience and skills among the substitute teacher corps. Under the new agreement, MCPS will offer higher pay rates to attract and retain substitute teachers who have achieved state teaching certification.

**Recognition and Rewarding of Excellence in Teaching** – As the final component of the Teacher Professional Growth System, a new “Career Lattice” is designed to both recognize and reward teachers who are exemplary as well as to provide opportunities to help teachers become exemplary. Through a new assessment process, MCPS and MCEA will identify ‘lead teachers’ who will then be eligible for a range of teacher leadership opportunities where they assume greater responsibility for improving student learning beyond their individual classroom.

**Earlier Transfer and Hiring Process** – The earlier MCPS is able to hire for the next school year, the greater the pool of candidates to choose from. Under the agreement, changes in the transfer calendar move the process up earlier in the year, allowing MCPS to complete its staffing earlier in the summer.

**Greater Access to New Teacher Training Courses** – In order to encourage greater participation and provide greater support to new teachers, under the new agreement MCPS will waive the course fees for new teachers enrolling in the three-part, MCPS New Teacher Course series.

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## HIGH NEEDS SCHOOLS

**Retaining and Attracting Exemplary Teachers in High Needs Schools** – For the first time, the new agreement creates a process to encourage the best and brightest teachers to stay and to work in our highest needs schools. Under the new Career Lattice, lead teachers who work in, or who transfer to, high needs schools will be eligible for supplemental school improvement funds to support approved school improvement projects that they design in collaboration with the local school administration and leadership team. By offering the opportunity to play a leadership role in high needs schools, this new initiative aims to encourage more highly skilled teachers to stay in, or transfer to, our neediest schools.

**Improving School Schedules in High Needs Middle Schools** – Agreement was reached on a formal process for nine middle schools to review their master schedules over the next twelve months, through a multi-stakeholder process, in order to affirmatively decide on schedules for the 2008-2009 academic year. The middle schools are among the highest needs middle schools in the county, and most did not meet AYP this year.

## SCHOOL QUALITY

**Expanded Training for Local School Leadership Teams** – Recognizing the importance of high quality, collaborative leadership for meaningful school improvement, MCEA and the Board agree to expand the opportunities for local school leadership teams to actively engage in joint training through the new – and highly acclaimed – School Leadership Teams Institute and the Professional Learning Communities Institute.

**Expanded Support for Elementary Reading Programs** – The contract provides additional time for elementary Reading Specialists to participate in advanced training, analyze student data, and plan enhancements to the schools' reading program.

**Educating the Whole Child** – Amidst all the focus on reading and math test scores, there are growing concerns about the narrowing of the curriculum. The contract sets aside resources that will enhance elementary art, music and physical education instruction. It also increases support for the countywide sixth grade outdoor education program.

**New, Collaborative Procedures for Reviewing and Changing the Structure of the School Day** – The uses of teacher time and student time are increasingly important in school improvement efforts. Agreement was reached on new, clearer procedures by which a local school community can initiate and conduct a multi-stakeholder review of their master schedule.

**Support for Grading and Reporting** – The roll-out of MCPS' new standards-based grading and reporting policies is revamping how we all think about grades and report cards. The new contract provides support for designated teachers in local schools who will be the local experts for their colleagues in using the new Pinnacle grading software and online Edline communications systems in order to ensure that all teachers use the new programs effectively.

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**Improved Implementation of Assessments** – Given the continued expansion of testing within MCPS, the contract establishes a new, ongoing joint implementation review team to oversee and problem-solve the varied issues that come up as new assessments are implemented in schools. The goal is to ensure smooth implementation and to ensure that all our testing programs are efficient, effective and useful in improving instruction.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

**Implementation of the Instructional Leadership Recommendations of the Middle School Reform Steering Committee** – After more than a year of intensive work, the Middle School Reform Steering Committee recommended a host of changes, including the restructuring of the teacher leadership positions in middle schools. The new agreement worked through a myriad of issues involved, and implements the recommendations to separate out the role of content area department heads and grade level team leaders. This separation was a key recommendation of the Steering Committee in order to enhance content area support for middle school teachers.

**Support for ESOL Programs** – As we have seen our ESOL population continue to grow, so have the size and complexity of local school ESOL programs. The new contract provides support for new ESOL team leaders in schools with large programs to enhance coordination and overall operations of ESOL programs for students.

**LENGTH OF AGREEMENT:** The new contract is for three years: July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2010. A three year contract, with no formal re-openers, provides for stability in labor-management relations and predictability in costs.

**SALARIES:** The starting salaries for new teachers would be increased to \$44,200 next year (7/07), to \$46,410 the following year (7/08), and to \$48,870 in the third year (7/09). Overall, the salary schedules are increased by 4.8%, 5%, and 5.3% over the three years of the contract.

[For More Information Contact](#)

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