



MONTGOMERY COUNTY REGION
OF THE MARYLAND ASSOCIATION OF STUDENT COUNCILS
www.montgomerycountyregion.org



PLATFORM

I. Fully Funded Budget

MCR supports a fully funded operating budget for MCPS. To follow the MCPS Guiding Tenets, MCR vehemently opposes the denial of funding for educational programs, particularly special academic programs and their busing, extracurricular activities, and classroom instruction. MCR further opposes the inflexibility in the minimum maintenance of effort requirement.

II. Student Member of the Board of Education

MCR supports the position of the Student Member of the Montgomery County Board of Education (SMOB), and believes that the SMOB, as a representative of the students and residents of Montgomery County, should have full voting rights on the Board of Education.

III. Weighted Grading

MCR supports weighted grading for advanced level courses and calls for the formalized use of weighted grading (i.e. on report cards, for eligibility). In addition, MCR believes grade weighting should reflect a course's level of difficulty. MCR believes Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and all other advanced level courses should receive a higher weighting than regular classes.

IV. Advanced Level Courses

MCR supports advanced level courses. We feel that every student should have the opportunity to take advanced level courses. MCR believes the decision to register for such classes should be made by the student with his or her parents and not by a teacher, counselor, or administrator. Additionally, MCR strongly supports a student's right to decide whether to take or not take Advanced Placement (AP) exams and other optional exams, and opposes administrative pressure on a student to do so. We support financial assistance for students taking AP tests based on the number of exams taken and/or financial need.

V. Alternative Education

MCR supports MCPS providing students with a means for alternative education, including career, night, and online courses.

VI. Extra-Curricular Activities

MCR supports the maintaining of after school and extracurricular activities, and believes that school administrations should be open to working with students in creating new clubs and organizations to better the student body and the relationship with local communities.

VII. Environmental Issues

MCR supports the use of environmentally friendly technology in schools and other county owned properties. MCR support recycling programs within Montgomery County as well as additional funding for the improvement of such programs. MCR encourages the establishment of environmental clubs within schools to raise student awareness. We oppose the use of pesticides and other harmful chemicals on school property. MCR also supports the construction of Green Schools.

VIII. Pledge of Allegiance

In accordance with MCPS Regulation JFA-RA: Student Rights and Responsibility MCR recognizes that students have the right to not participate in the pledge of allegiance (this includes being able to sit during the pledge, however students are encouraged to stand), as long as this right does not infringe upon another student's right to recite the pledge.

IX. Diversity

MCR opposes all forms of discrimination against any persons or groups based on their race, gender, socio-economic status, creed, physical or mental condition, culture, religion, sexual orientation or any other basis of discrimination. MCR supports character education programs in every school for both students and faculty. MCR also supports the integration of diversity into course curriculum. Students should have the opportunity to discuss (through the use of study circles or other similar programs) issues of race, ethnicity, culture, and other relevant issues.

X. In-School Discipline

MCR feels that no student or group of students should be punished in school for behavior occurring outside school jurisdiction, regardless of the activities in which the student or group of students may be involved. MCR wholeheartedly opposes all forms of bullying and harassment and believes that MCPS administrators should take appropriate action to intervene.

XI. Open Lunch

MCR supports the establishment of open lunch in those schools that fit the criteria outlined in MCPS Regulation JEF-RA: Open Lunch in Senior High Schools. MCR also supports the process for which open lunch is granted.

XII. Drivers' Education

MCR supports the reinstatement of the in-class portion of the drivers' education course as a semester-long elective into the MCPS curriculum.

XIII. Funding for Students with Special Needs

MCR believes that lawmakers should recognize the need for additional resources for students who have limited English proficiency, or who have disabilities, or economic disadvantages.

XIV. Mental Health

MCR recognizes the need for mental health resources in Montgomery County schools and supports ensuring adequate and accessible mental health professionals for all schools.

XV. Shared Accountability

MCR supports the concept of shared accountability for learning between students, teachers, and

administrators. MCR supports the institution of a system for evaluating school performance.

XVI. Students' Rights

MCR supports all efforts to inform students of their rights and responsibilities in the school system. MCR endorses every student's right to advocate, and supports their efforts to do so.

XVII. Honor Codes

MCR opposes any Honor Code or other similar document that forces a student to enter into a binding contract without a parent signature. In compliance with MCPS Policy IKA: Grading and Reporting, MCR opposes any such document that is collected for a grade.

XVIII. Student Representation

MCR supports the inclusion of MCPS students in all municipal, county, and state committees that review policies and regulations regarding student's rights and responsibilities and all policies and regulations that pertain to the improvement of MCPS.

XIX. Healthy Lifestyle

MCR opposes the use of harmful controlled substances by students. We applaud all efforts to educate students about potential dangers of drinking and driving, smoking, and illegal drug use. We support current County and State regulations forbidding illicit drug use and smoking on school grounds, and recommend stronger enforcement of these laws.

XX. MCR Busing

In order to ensure the diversity and continued existence and success of MCR, we strongly support the continued use of bus transportation to and from MCR General Assembly meetings.

XXI. Differentiating Absences

MCR opposes combining excused and unexcused absences on a student's report card.

XXII. HSA Testing

MCR recognizes the need for MCPS to hold its students to the highest standard of academic excellence, and understands the role HSAs serve to this end. However, MCR recognizes the concurrent need to support those with lingual, mental, or other obstacles to passing HSAs through academic intervention and the Bridge Plan.

Amended: 3/11/11