

A COMPACT BETWEEN

Montgomery County Educational Association (MCEA)
Montgomery County Association of Administrative and Supervisory Personnel (MCAASP)
Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 500
Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools

SEPTEMBER 2005

R.E.S.P.E.C.T.
Make it Real

MCEA □ MCAASP □ SEIU □ MCPS

Organizational Culture of Respect

The Board of Education, the superintendent and the executive staff, and the organizations representing employees recognize and value the role of all employees as contributors to a learning community which sets high standards of performance for staff and students. By working together through continuous improvement, effective communication, and meaningful involvement in the decision-making processes, we provide a high quality education to every student. We are committed to shared responsibility and a collaborative partnership integrated into an organizational culture of respect.

The commitment to foster an organizational culture of respect that is embedded throughout the school system is a priority of the employee organizations, the Board of Education, and the superintendent and executive staff. This culture is built on the belief that all employees, both school-based and nonschool-based, are essential to a successful learning environment. Inherent to this belief is the recognition that there is strength in diversity, which is inclusive of all groups and individuals. We are committed to:

- Trust in each other
- Use of collaborative and interest-based processes
- Recognizing the collective bargaining relationships as opportunities to enhance this culture
- Recognition of every employee's contributions
- High expectations for all staff and students that are reasonable, clear, and transparent
- Open, honest contributions without fear of retribution
- Open and effective communication
- Respect for various points of view
- Civility in all of our interactions
- Team building and working together as teams

There is a commitment to fostering and sustaining a culture of respect through supports and structures. In order to be effective, these supports and structures should be embedded throughout the system, visible and accessible to everyone, and seen as fair and equitable. In order to make certain that this culture is promoted throughout the school system, time is needed for collaboration, training, and professional development and resources are needed to accomplish this.

Examples of supports and structures include, but are not limited to:

- Board of Education policies, such as the Creating A Positive Work Environment in A Self-renewing Organization and Human Relations policies.
- Professional growth systems, which include professional development, employee orientation, mentoring, training, recognition, support for new and under-performing employees, and professional development plans
- Collaborative processes, such as labor/management collaboration committees, Councils on Teaching and Learning, principal leadership groups, cross functional teams, advisory committees, and Study Circles
- Diversity training and development initiatives
- Continuous improvement processes, including the Baldrige-guided school improvement process
- Communication processes, including satisfaction and climate surveys, focus groups, budget forums, and various feedback reports
- Dispute resolution activities

In an organizational culture of respect, individuals are aware and understand the impact of their behavior and decisions on others. We expect that the actions and behaviors of all individuals and groups are consistent with and reflect this organizational culture. The actions listed below represent expected behaviors:

- Model civility in daily interactions
- Use collaborative and interest-based strategies rather than positional or adversarial approaches
- Be clear about the level of involvement in the decision making process
- Seek to solve the problem, not apply blame
- Utilize active listening skills
- Encourage creativity and risk-taking
- Seek and respect the opinion of others
- Respect the time and the time commitments of others
- Seek to resolve issues at the level where they occur
- Seek to understand before making judgments
- Acknowledge the professional judgment of individuals in their roles
- Be aware of non-verbal communication
- Use power and authority appropriately and positively
- Be an active and responsible member of the team
- Be responsible for accepting and giving feedback
- Provide and receive feedback constructively and respectfully
- Communicate openly and respectfully

In order to sustain an organizational culture of respect it is critical that all employees have an awareness, understanding, and tolerance of others' interests, viewpoints, culture, and background. This culture promotes a positive work environment that ensures the success of each employee, high student achievement, and continuous improvement in a self-renewing organization.

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and Supervisory Personnel

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Montgomery County Board of Education

Superintendent of Schools

Resolving differences
Enhancing collaboration
Supporting our coworkers
Promoting civility
Encouraging creativity
Communicating openly
Team building through trust

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