

PTA/Parent Advocacy

Melwood Elementary School PTA – Feb. 2, 2016

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Many Levels of “Legislative” Issues

- Federal government level
 - State level
 - County/PGCPS level
 - School level
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- All levels are important!

Current “Hot Topics”

■ Federal

- Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

■ State

- School funding
- Charter school expansion (Governor’s priority)
- Standardized testing commission

Current “Hot Topics” (cont’d)

■ County/PGCPS

- Funding/budget
- School construction/renovation needs
- Teacher pay
- Transforming Neighborhoods Initiative (TNI) schools
- International high schools
- Buses, recess, lunches, and many more issues!

■ School level

- Whatever is going on at your school
- This is where you are most likely to have advocacy success!

How to Work with Policy Makers

– Basics

- Let elected officials/decision makers know your views and concerns
 - Email or call – These contacts do matter!
- Build a relationship with decision makers
 - Attend events these officials organize, use other opportunities to talk with them
 - Get on email lists of elected officials, follow them on Facebook and/or Twitter
- Tone: Be courteous, reasonable, and constructive
- Substance: Be knowledgeable and informed about issues (educate yourself)



How to Stay Informed on Issues?

■ Federal

- Media, National PTA (“PTA Takes Action Network”)

■ State

- Media, Maryland PTA communications

■ County

- Local media, PTA Council

■ School

- Your own PTA/PTSA, get to know your principal and other staff



PGCPS Budget

- “Budget shows our priorities”

- Budget timeline

- December: CEO introduces his budget (next year’s budget released Dec. 10)
- January/February: BOE public hearings (Feb. 9)
 - NOTE: Budget Q&A on Feb. 4 at Greenbelt Community Ctr.
- February: BOE adopts its requested budget
- March-May: County Executive/County Council budget process
- June: Reconciliation BOE & County budgets



Where to find the budget

- Online: www.pgcps.org
 - Go to: CEO/School Operating Budget
- Other helpful budget-related resources also available on the site, including archive of old budgets

How to get handle on the budget?

- Budget document is over 300 pages!
- To get oriented to the budget, start with:
 - Systemic organization chart
 - Table of contents
- Other helpful resources (at end of document)
 - Acronyms
 - Glossary



Questions/Comments

- Legislative issues
 - Federal, state, county, school-level
- PGCPS budget
- Anything else?

- Contact: Tommi Makila, PGCPTA Council
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