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INFORMATION

Office of School Performance
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Rockville, Maryland

December 8, 2009

MEMORANDUM

To: All Principals

From: Frank H. Stetson, Acting Chief School Performance Officer 

Subject: INFORMATION: *Comcast Parent Involvement Matters Award*

Summary

- The third annual *Comcast Parent Involvement Matters Award (PIMA)* program has been launched by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and Comcast (see attachment).
- *PIMA* is an annual award for parents (and others with legal responsibility for a child) whose exemplary contributions to public education have led to improvements for Maryland's public school children, teachers, schools, programs, and/or policies.
- Five areas of parent involvement have been identified for this award: 1) communication, 2) volunteering, 3) learning, 4) community collaboration, and 5) decision making.
- Nominees can demonstrate involvement in one area or multiple areas, but the nominee must have made a significant, positive impact on public education with their involvement project within the last 24 months.
- Completed nomination packages must be postmarked by **Wednesday, January 20, 2010**.
- All nomination packages must be mailed to: Maryland State Department of Education, Office of Academic Policy, 7th Floor, Attn: PIMA, 200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201. Submissions will not be accepted online or via e-mail.
- Nomination forms can be downloaded in English and select foreign languages at <http://marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/audiences/parents/pima.htm>

Questions

- Please contact Ms. Heather Bradbury, MSDE, at hbradbury@msde.state.md.us.

FHS:bmK

Attachment

All Principals

2

December 8, 2009

Copy to:

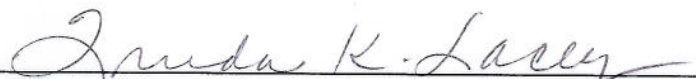
Executive Staff

Mr. Davis

Dr. Newman

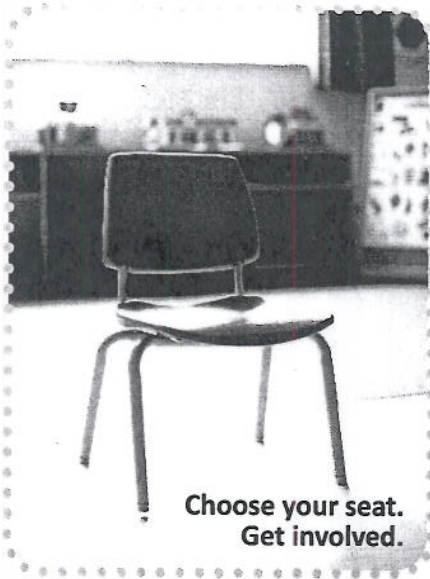
Ms. Romero

Approved:



Frieda K. Lacey, Deputy Superintendent of Schools

The Comcast Parent Involvement Matters Award



**Choose your seat.
Get involved.**

The Comcast Parent Involvement Matters Award is an annual award for parents (and others with legal responsibility for a child) whose exemplary contributions to public education have led to improvements for Maryland's public school children, teachers, schools, programs, and/or policies. Comcast created the award with the Maryland State Department of Education to highlight the positive impact parents have on public schools and to encourage all parents to get involved in whatever way they can.

Areas of Parent Involvement



1. Communication

Fostering communication that impacts the school community



2. Volunteering

Recruiting or organizing volunteers, or supporting school activities, both internal and external



3. Learning

Organizing or coordinating learning activities that reinforce homework or classroom skills



4. Community Collaboration

Coordinating resources and services for the school community, which could include fundraisers that would enhance a school's services or environment, or coordinating resources or services from the school community that may serve an external community



5. Decision Making

Participating on decision-making committees, or in programs that advocate system or policy changes, or serving as a representative for the school or education community

Nomination Deadline

Completed nomination packets must be postmarked by
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2010

To learn more about the program and how previous winners were involved, go to www.MarylandPublicSchools.org/pima/pima.

The Maryland State Department of Education provides leadership and guidance to local school systems in designing parent involvement programs.

After consulting with the Maryland State Department of Education, Comcast decided to use a nationally-recognized framework for family involvement as a springboard to identifying the areas of involvement to be demonstrated by nominees for the Parent Involvement Matters Award.

Five areas of parent involvement have been identified. Nominees can demonstrate involvement in one area or multiple areas, but the nominee must have made a significant, positive impact on public education with their involvement project within the last 24 months.

Eligibility

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To be considered for the Comcast Parent Involvement Matters Award, nominees must:

1. Be a parent, which includes a natural parent, an adoptive parent, a legal guardian, a person acting as a parent of a child such as a relative or a stepparent with whom a child lives, and any other person legally responsible for the child's welfare.
 - If nominating a group, the group must have been organized for the specific purpose of the project(s).
2. Have a child in a Maryland public school.
3. Not be an employee of Comcast, the Maryland State Department of Education, or the Maryland public school system.
 - Any person who is paid by a school or by the school system (i.e. substitute teacher, translator, etc.) is not eligible to be nominated.
4. Have conducted or participated in the project for which he/she is nominated within the last 24 months.
 - If nominating a previous award winner, the nomination must be for a new project or activity.

Criteria

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To qualify for the award, the nominee shall:

1. Be a consistent advocate of public education.
2. Have had a significant, positive impact on public education with his/her creativity, innovation, and/or commitment at the school, district, or state level in one or more of the following areas:
 - Communication
 - Volunteering
 - Learning
 - Decision Making
 - Community Collaboration

Nominations

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Completed nomination packages must be postmarked by
Wednesday, January 20, 2010

All nomination packages must be mailed to:
Maryland State Department of Education
Office of Academic Policy, 7th Floor
ATTN: PIMA
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Submissions will not be accepted online or by e-mail.

Selection Process

After reviewing all completed nomination submissions, judges will select 24 semifinalists—one parent from each of the 23 counties in Maryland and one parent from Baltimore City. A second group of judges will review the 24 semifinalists' nominations and select five finalists for the statewide award. A final group of judges will interview the five finalists and recommend one to be the statewide winner.

Comcast will host an award celebration in early Spring 2010 to recognize all 24 semifinalists. At the celebration, the names of the finalists and the statewide winner will be announced. The statewide winner and finalists will each receive a monetary award to further parent involvement activities.

Opportunities for Winners

After the celebration, semifinalists, finalists, and the statewide winner will have many opportunities to be recognized and to promote parent involvement, such as:

- Participating in a public service announcement to be broadcast on Comcast cable television.
- Speaking at educational events and conferences.
- Appearing at Maryland State Board of Education and/or local board of education meetings.
- Participating on educational task forces and/or committees.
- Participating in a "best practices" publication and/or Web site that will serve to inspire parents as well as give them practical advice.

Comcast's Parent Involvement Matters Award Nomination Form

- Please complete Sections 1, 2, 3, & 4 of this nomination form.
- A complete nomination packet should include an original and two single-sided copies of each section.
- Incomplete nominations will not be considered.
- If you have questions about the nomination process or award program, please contact pima@msde.state.md.us (preferred) or 1-888-246-0016.

Completed nomination packets must be postmarked by

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2010

and mailed to:

Maryland State Department of Education
Office of Academic Policy, 7th Floor
ATTN: PIMA
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

SECTION 1: Contact Information

Responses should be in a type size no smaller than 11 points or printed clearly.

Nominee

Full Name: _____
Last First M.I.

Address: _____
Street Address Apartment/Unit #

City County State ZIP Code

Home Phone: () _____ Alternate Phone: () _____

E-mail: _____

Nominator

Full Name: _____
Last First M.I.

Address: _____
Street Address Apartment/Unit #

City State ZIP Code

Home Phone: () _____ Alternate Phone: () _____

E-mail: _____

SECTION 2: Nominee Statement of Agreement

Please read the following statements carefully and sign your name at the bottom of the section.

I CERTIFY THAT:

- I am aware of and support my nomination for the Comcast Parent Involvement Matters Award.
- I meet the eligibility requirements of the program, including that I am not:
 - paid in any way by a school or school system, including substitute teaching, or
 - an employee of the Maryland State Department of Education, or
 - an employee of Comcast, or an affiliate.
- I have never been convicted of a felony crime, child abuse, or neglect.
 - All semifinalists will be subject to a background investigation which will require providing his/her social security number and fingerprints.

I AGREE THAT:

If I am identified as a semifinalist, finalist, and/or statewide winner, I will participate in:

- the Comcast Parent Involvement Matters Award ceremony.
- a personal interview at the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) or Comcast.
- a taped interview, portions of which may be used for purposes that include, but are not limited to, broadcast on cable television, such as a public service announcement, streaming on the Web, and screening at education-related events.

Nominee Printed Name: _____

Nominee Signature: _____ Date: _____

Comcast's Parent Involvement Matters Award Nomination Form

SECTION 3: Narrative

The narrative is separate from the three letters of recommendation and is limited to two pages with one-inch margins, single spacing, and in a type size no less than 11 points.

The top of each page should include:

- Section 3: Narrative
- Name of Nominee
- Project(s) Name/Location

The information in the narrative should describe the nominee's outstanding contribution(s) to public education. The description should provide sufficient detail about

- the nature of the project(s) the nominee has been involved in; and
- the impact the nominee's involvement has had on students, teachers, the school as a whole, and/or the community.

Please include the names of schools, school systems, and/or organizations who were involved in the project.

Writing a Narrative & Letter of Recommendation

When writing the Narrative, please provide clear, detailed information about the nominee's involvement in the specific project(s), including:

- a clear, concise description of the project(s)
 - when and where the project began
 - why the project was initiated
 - what was the goal of the project
 - how was the project goal achieved
- a description of how the nominee was involved in the project(s)
- a description of how the people/community benefitted from the project(s)

Letters of recommendation should describe the nominee's involvement from the perspective of the writer.

For instance:

- a letter of recommendation from a principal should include information about how the nominee's involvement impacted the school community.
- a letter of recommendation from a parent should include information about how the nominee's involvement impacted the parent community.

Additional information about the nominee can be provided in the narrative and letters of recommendation so long as the information meets the two-page limit.

SECTION 4: Letters of Recommendation

Three original, signed letters of recommendation are required from people in different positions who have direct knowledge of the nominee's accomplishments. The following are examples of different positions: school administrator, teacher, student, parent, school district administrator, school board member, community or faith-based leader, business leader, and legislator.

Letters of recommendation should be limited to no more than two pages and in a type size no less than 11 points. Please provide the name and contact information for the letters' authors below and include the letters in the application.

First Recommendation Letter

Name

Title

Organization

Telephone: ()

Second Recommendation Letter

Name

Title

Organization

Telephone ()

Third Recommendation Letter

Name

Title

Organization

Telephone ()