

March 26, 2008

Ms Ebony Langford, Director
Elementary School Instruction and Achievement
Montgomery County Public Schools
850 Hungerford Drive
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Ms Langford:

In response to your request for feedback on “Option Three” for Kindergarten testing at the start of the school year, many local PTAs discussed this issue at their March PTA meetings. I am aware that many of them sent feedback on this option directly to you. Feedback from several additional PTAs is enclosed with this letter.

At the March 19th, 2008, MCCPTA Delegate Assembly the following motion was passed:
MCCPTA supports MCPS conducting their kindergarten assessments on the second, third, and fourth week of the school year.

Many PTAs expressed support for teachers using the first week of school to orient kindergarten students to the routines and expectations of elementary school before the start of the kindergarten assessments. Many PTA members felt that test results would be truer if students had had some time to acclimate themselves to their new environment and teacher. There was also support for kindergarten students beginning school at the same time as their siblings.

To inform the discussions at PTA meetings, many elementary school PTA presidents and delegates went to the kindergarten teachers at their schools to find out how these teachers currently conduct the initial kindergarten assessments. In the course of these discussions, many kindergarten teachers expressed unhappiness that this question was posed to PTAs before teachers had been informed that this change was under consideration. I pass this information along to you so that you are aware of this reaction from the teachers.

MCCPTA and local PTAs are always appreciative of the opportunity to provide feedback before decisions are made.

Sincerely,

Jane de Winter
President

cc. Dr. Frieda Lacey, Deputy Superintendent of Schools