

Dear BOE Candidate –

As a concerned MCPS stakeholder, I am calling on Montgomery County Board of Education candidates to sign the below pledge, which offers a path toward bringing back adequate physical education to our schools. Doing so will align MCPS policies closer to what experts, including the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) recommend. MCPS currently [ranks at or near the bottom statewide](#) for time devoted to physical education. Links between physical activity and academic achievement, social-emotional well-being, and increased fitness levels are well-established. Low-income students who often lack recreational and physical activity opportunities away from school [benefit the most](#) from increased physical education.

Moreover, MCPS's Board of Education continues to actively oppose state legislation (HB 393) that would require 150 minutes per week of physical activity at the elementary level, including 90 minutes of physical education. In testifying against the legislation, which pediatricians, MCPS physical education teachers, and public health experts support, MCPS's Board stated: "...teachers have resources to meet their students needs in the current time scheduled for elementary physical education."

It is time to hold the current Board and those who want to serve on the Board accountable for prioritizing kids' health over bureaucratic whims. MCPS is falling behind.

Other considerations:

- Neighboring schools including Frederick and Howard Counties in Maryland mandate at least 90 minutes of PE per week—far more than Montgomery County. Thus calling into question MCPS's claim that the County lacks the facilities and budget for additional physical education.
- The Centers for Disease Control (2018) said:
["There is a growing body of research focused on the association between school-based physical activity, including physical education, and academic performance among school-aged youth."](#)
- More physical education is also a clearly-established way to [fight childhood obesity](#).
- MCPS ranks poorly for time allotted to recess, and [scores a C+ in the latest statewide](#) rankings in the Healthy Food Report Card.

It is time to enact a culture of health at MCPS. Adequate physical education is the first step.

THE KIDS' HEALTH PLEDGE:

As a Board of Education member, I will:

- *Enact policies and budget choices leading to MCPS kids receiving 90 minutes of physical education per week, beginning in 2020.*
- *Vote to reverse MCPS's long-held opposition to legislation (HB 393 in 2018 Maryland General Assembly) setting minimal standards for physical education and recess in Maryland---standards that neighboring counties already meet.*
- *Actively support related efforts focused on a healthier MCPS including, but not limited to:*
 - *Healthier food choices*
 - *Increased recess coupled with more outdoor time*
 - *A MCPS culture that notes health and well-being as complementary to student achievement and well-being.*



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