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Contact: Kate Hardwicke, 240-337-2121, [mceapress@mceanea.org](mailto:mceapress@mceanea.org)

**For Immediate Release**

**MCEA Announces Support for Local Legislative Priorities**

Rockville, MD – The Montgomery County Education Association (MCEA) supports specific local legislation proposed by Montgomery County delegates affecting Montgomery County Public Schools to expand the number of mandatory school holidays (MC 6-25), increase compensation for Board of Education members (MC 7-25), limit students' use of cell phones in schools (MC 13-25), and cap MCPS superintendents' contract payouts upon termination (MC 12-25).

"We believe that the proposed local legislation is sensible and helps address a diverse set of issues we face in Montgomery County," said MCEA President David Stein.

A bill that fairly compensates Board of Education members recognizes the importance of their roles and that of public education in the County. "Delegates Charkoudian and Vogel's bill remedies the longstanding concern that MCEA Board of Directors have long held: that overseeing MCPS's \$3 billion budget, 160,000 students, and nearly 26,000 employees, is a full-time job and deserves full-time pay. We want our elected board members to be able to dedicate 100% of their time and attention to the school district and helping students and educators succeed," President Stein stated.

MCEA also appreciates Delegate Wu's bill, which prevents excessive payouts to superintendents if their contracts are terminated. "During a time when we are likely going to have to tighten our belts, it makes no sense for the district to lose precious resources to cover the cost of million-dollar golden parachutes," President Stein said, "Those are dollars we can ill afford to lose."

Two pieces of proposed legislation are specifically centered on students and address students' lives at school and at home.

“We want to support students’ academic success at school and believe that a thoughtful policy limiting cell phone usage during instructional time does just that,” said Dustin Jeter, MCEA’s secretary. “As a high school social studies teacher, I see how cell phones distract and discourage students from focusing on what’s most important: learning. Delegate Fraser-Hidalgo's bill supports students and educators by helping to remove unwanted distractions from the classroom while ensuring that personal mobile devices can still be used for instructional purposes and as part of an approved Individualized Education Plan.”

A bill expanding the number of holidays MCPS observes recognizes that Montgomery County is home to a rich diversity of religious traditions. “Passing the bill proposed by Delegates Wu, Mireku-North, Qi, Spiegel, Vogel, Wims, and Wole, ensures that faith traditions of Montgomery County students and staff are recognized and can be celebrated without requiring that students lose out on valuable instructional time,” said MCEA Vice President Danillya Wilson.

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*MCEA represents more than 14,000 classroom teachers, school counselors, speech pathologists, media specialists and other educators in the Montgomery County Public Schools system; MCEA is one of the largest local affiliates of the National Education Association (NEA) and is a leader in building a new kind of educators’ union that responds to the needs of today’s educators and students. For more information, visit [www.mceanea.org](http://www.mceanea.org)*