

## **Proposed MCCPTA Resolution: Healthy Sleep for Adolescents**

**Whereas**, as children grow into teens, their natural sleep patterns change. Teens need more sleep, often can't fall asleep before 11:00 PM, and do best when they can sleep for at least 8 hours; and

**Whereas**, teens need 8.5 to 9.5 hours of sleep each night, research shows that most U.S. teens get fewer than 8 hours on school nights caused by too early school start times relative to their biologically driven sleep cycles; and

**Whereas**, studies show that teens who get enough sleep do better in school, but things like homework, busy schedules, poor sleep habits, and early school start times can interfere with bed time and make it hard for them to get the sleep they need, thereby interfering with their ability to learn and perform in school and elsewhere; and

**Whereas**, teaching parents, students, and schools about healthy sleep habits and creating supportive school policies can help reduce problems caused by sleep deprivation, such as being late, missing school, or having trouble focusing. This awareness and supportive policy change can improve student school performance; and

**Whereas**, research from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Academy of Pediatrics shows that not getting enough sleep puts teens at risk for car accidents from drowsy driving, depression and thoughts of self-harm, risky behaviors like unsafe sexual activity, and substance use, and long-term health problems like obesity, heart disease, and diabetes that occur later in life; and

**Whereas**, evidence shows that early school start times make it harder for teens to get enough sleep, this problem can be fixed by starting school later; and

**Whereas**, starting school later has been shown to help teens get enough sleep, improving their physical and mental health, safety, school success, and quality of life, without taking away time for sports, activities, or homework; and

**Whereas**, the National PTA adopted a "Healthy Sleep for Adolescents" resolution in 2017, calling for PTAs around the country to educate families, work together on solutions, include sleep education in school lessons, and encourage later school start times, so therefore be it,; and be it further

**Resolved**, the Montgomery County Council of PTAs (MCCPTA) will host a community town hall in 2025 to educate students, parents, teachers, coaches, school staff, and others about the

importance of good sleep for teens' health, safety, and success in school and life; and be it further

**Resolved,** the MCCPTA will advocate for the Montgomery County Board of Education and Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) to create policies that give teens the chance to get enough sleep; and be it further

**Resolved,** the MCCPTA will advocate for MCPS to include information about sleep needs and patterns, the risks of not getting enough sleep, signs of sleep related difficulties and healthy sleep habits in existing health, science, physical education, and other school subjects currently being taught; and be it further

**Resolved,** the MCCPTA will ask MCPS to study and share information about the transportation needs, costs, and solutions for starting middle and high schools at 8:30 AM or later, while keeping elementary school start times consistent with Maryland's Orange Ribbon for Healthy Bell Times, which says no student should start school before 8:00 AM; and be it further

**Resolved,** the MCCPTA will advocate to MCPS and the Board of Education that they ensure that schedule changes don't reduce time for sports, extracurricular activities, and homework after the schedule change and childcare and other related services are included in ways that allow for continued support services to students and families; and be it further

**Resolved,** the MCCPTA urges MCPS to set middle and high school start times no earlier than 8:30 AM, so teens can get the sleep they need to improve their physical and mental health, safety, school success, and quality of life.