

BARGAINING PLATFORM

Prince George's County

PGCEA

Educators' Association





Prince George's County Educators' Association (PGCEA) is an advocacy organization that actively represents classroom educators and other instructional personnel to negotiate over wages, terms and conditions of employment. PGCEA supports quality schools through its bargaining efforts to retain and attract teachers of excellence and promote opportunities for ALL students to learn.

FROM PANDEMIC TO PROMISE: RE-IMAGINING OUR SCHOOLS

The last 18 months have revealed many of the flaws and disparities that have long existed within our school system. Our students have educations defined and prioritized by testing over learning, impacting the opportunity for authentic and meaningful experiences in the classroom. And our educators are bogged down with excessive workloads and overstuffed classrooms that don't allow them to teach to the best of their ability and give students the individualized attention that they deserve. As we look at our priorities for the future, we find ourselves at a critical crossroads for education; we can either return to the inadequate system that we had before, or we can create the schools that our students, educators, and communities deserve. As we continue to adjust to this new normal, we must go from 'pandemic to promise' by re-imagining our schools and what's possible to ensure a brighter future for our students.



FAIR COMPENSATION FOR HIGHLY TRAINED EDUCATORS

The Maryland Blueprint for the Future provides additional funds for educator compensation that allows for a new salary schedule. That schedule will help recruit and retain the best educators, keep health care costs reasonable while offering excellent benefits, and guarantee tuition and other continuing education reimbursements to all who qualify.



SMALLER CLASS SIZES, CASE LOADS AND SERVICE PROVIDER RATIOS

Research has proven time and again that children learn better in classes that are not overcrowded. Creating smaller class sizes across the Prince George's County Public School system is a priority for educators and families. Workload for staff who provide student and related services must be based on ratios that allow for intensive and meaningful interventions and support. Parents and educators must be empowered to advocate for changes to class sizes and ratios that negatively impact teaching and learning, and school officials should be receptive to that advocacy.



REDUCE THE UNSUSTAINABLE WORKLOAD ON EDUCATORS

Educators want to spend more time planning their lessons and working with their students, and less time on burdensome and unnecessary paperwork and documentation. To prepare Prince George's County students for college and career, educators need adequate preparation time and instructional support. Unnecessary, duplicative, and time-consuming requirements and non-academic duties must be reduced so educators can focus their time and expertise on their students.



HEALTHY LEARNING ENVIRONMENT/SAFETY & SECURITY

Educators and their students thrive in safe and positive school environments. From mental health support for students and adults to timely maintenance and repair of facilities, we must strive to create a healthy, supportive, and restorative climate in every school. As the success of our community schools demonstrates, all schools must have strong community involvement and provide essential services to students and families.

Too often, intimidation of staff by administrators weakens morale and drives educators to leave the school and system. Accountability must be improved to eliminate retaliatory and intimidating behavior by supervisors.



EVALUATION

The evaluation of educators should be based on a professional growth and development model which serves as a tool to support educators, and not as an excuse for punishment or coercion. The evaluation process should be more meaningful, and less burdensome than the current system.



EXPANSION OF RESTORATIVE PRACTICES, TRAUMA INFORMED INSTRUCTION, AND SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Many of our students bring a significant legacy of trauma and pain with them to school. The pandemic has increased these experiences but there are now additional federal and state funds to support programs to address these issues. Students need – and deserve – a school system that is responsive to their social and emotional needs.



PROFESSIONAL AUTONOMY AND EDUCATOR VOICE

Educators are best positioned to understand how their students learn, and they deserve the trust and respect to employ classroom strategies that work. Educators must be essential partners in the development of a curriculum that is designed to create a lifelong love of learning that will serve our students well beyond graduation. Educator input must also be valued as PGCPs implements changes required by the Maryland Blueprint for the Future. Adequate and appropriate training, professional development, and time are essential to successful curriculum and program implementation.



LESS TESTING AND MORE LEARNING

Testing and other assessments can serve an important role, but only when they provide useful and timely data for educators, students, and families. Instructional time should be prioritized over testing. Accountability should be based on authentic and meaningful student experiences.