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MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Maryland State Board  
FROM: Nancy S. Grasmick   
DATE: October 27, 2009  
SUBJECT: Status Report on Parent Involvement Initiatives

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**Purpose:**

The purpose of this item is to provide the Board with a report on the status of State efforts to promote parent involvement in our public schools and on the progress that has been made by the Department in addressing the recommendations of the Maryland Parent Advisory Council.

**Background:**

The Maryland Parent Advisory Council (M-PAC) was established by the Department in the fall of 2003 to assist the Department in addressing its goal of enhancing parent involvement in our public schools and meeting the parent involvement requirements of the federal *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*.

The Maryland Parent Advisory Council was comprised 120 members representing parents, educators, and community and advocacy organizations. The structure included a Main Council, chaired by former Maryland PTA President, Esther Parker, and three subcommittees (Education Policy, Parent Involvement, and Nontraditional Communication) chaired by parents. Prior to the Maryland Parent Advisory Council's first meeting, an exploratory survey about parent involvement was conducted. Participants in the survey included parents, principals, teachers, and members of the community at-large. Results of the survey were shared with State Board members, and presented at the first Main Council meeting. The results shaped the priority areas of the Maryland Parent Advisory Council, which subsequently defined the subcommittees. The survey and results can be found at:

<http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/familylit/mpac/>

The Maryland Parent Advisory Council developed nearly two dozen recommendations falling under the umbrella of communication, partnership, training, leadership, and accountability. These recommendations were then vetted at public forums in each of the state's 24 local school districts. In August 2005, the Council Chair, Esther Parker, presented the recommendations in its report, *A Shared Responsibility: Recommendations for Increasing Family and Community Involvement in Schools*. The report can be found in its entirety at:

<http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/familylit/mpac/>.

**Executive Summary:**

Since August 2005, the Maryland State Department of Education has made significant progress in its parent involvement efforts. From the establishment of the Superintendent's Family Involvement Council to providing training to school teams on how to build school capacity in the area of parent involvement, to regular meetings between parent involvement coordinators from all local education agencies and internal and external stakeholders to share best practices and learn about new initiatives in the area of parent involvement. Maryland has received national accolades and recognition for its progress in the area of family involvement.

**Action:**

For Information Only

NSG/BRS: lam