

## **Statement from the MCPS *Pride ALLiance***

MCPS's *Pride ALLiance* is an LGBTQIA+ Action-Group of MCPS Staff, MoCo Pride Youth students, Parents/Caregivers, and Community Association Representatives.

April 22, 2022 marked the *International (GLSEN) Day of Silence*, protesting the harmful effects of harassment and discrimination of LGBTQ+ people in schools. Now, more than ever, LGBTQ+ students are hit nationwide with a tsunami of anti-LGBTQ+ school-based legislation and a pyre of banning LGBTQ+ related books. Students and school staff take a vow of silence each year on this day to symbolically represent the silencing of an entire community.

The *Pride ALLiance* condemns the hateful bigotry of these actions. The resulting fear does nothing but add to the trauma of a marginalized, oppressed, judged, discouraged, bullied group who do nothing more but exist as their authentic selves. Everyone deserves to feel respected and safe.

The *Pride ALLiance* stands with the vibrant community of MCPS LGBTQ+ Staff, Students as well as Parents/Caregivers who deserve affirmation, celebration, and inclusion just like any other teacher and classmate.

The *Pride ALLiance* joins the many Parents/Caregivers and allies who are scared for their terrified, persecuted children. We affirm that no person should be treated inferior here. We proudly support families of many configurations. We welcome significant-others of any gender.

In the Montgomery County Public School system, we welcome diversity and uniqueness. We don't value one person over another. We support with conversations, protections, resources, and inclusion. We continue to advocate for a school system where no one feels compelled to hide themselves, especially in fear. We affirm identity and orientation of all. And invite you to join us.