MSAAC School Board Address
November 14, 2017
Administration Building

Good evening Chairman, Madame Vice Chairman and members of the Loudoun County School Board,

As an advisory committee to the Loudoun County School Board, it is incumbent upon the Minority Student Achievement Advisory committee to bring to your attention a concern regarding equitable, digital access and usage within schools, between schools and outside of school. We understand that overall, the BrightBytes results for this past school year shows either advanced or exemplary results for access, skills and environment however we are still seeing emerging scores as far as classroom usage. At the October 18th MSAAC General Membership meeting we invited families from elementary schools, middle schools and high school to share with us their digital experiences in LCPS. We also invited the Department of Digital Innovation to provide us with their perspective. Although we are getting better there is still room for improvement. Based on feedback from families at our meeting, parents are concerned that there are pockets of inequitable technological learning experiences. Families are specifically concerned about:

- Technological expertise of teachers
- Availability of technology in the classroom and students being asked to bring their own technology
- Students missing out on lessons because they don’t have technology to bring to school, the technology they have brought is inadequate (differences in personal data plans or device capability) or teachers don’t have it signed out for their use
- Bandwidth – instructional time lost getting students logged on and internet being dropped; disruptive during a test
- Different levels of technology available at LCPS schools; schools with lower socioeconomic families don’t have the PTA budgets to make up for what the schools can’t buy
- Not enough iPads and chrome books for each student; one set of laptops or iPads per grade level which means technology it is not always available to all the students

MSAAC recognizes that information and communication technology has the potential for evening the playing field for all our students. Based on the BrightBytes results and oral and written feedback from LCPS families that we still have work to do. It is our recommendation that the LCPS budget take into account the development for teachers so they know how and when to use technology to augment student learning. We also recommend that the budget account for the additional purchase of technology so that each elementary school, middle school and high school classroom has a full set of iPads or chrome books. All students have the right to an equitable education and yet technology is
hampering that right for some LCPS students. MSAAC is especially concerned about the access to technology for:

• Children with special needs or a physical disability
• The socially and economically disadvantaged
• Linguistic and ethnic minorities
• Groups suffering social exclusion
• The geographically remote
• Children of older citizens, for whom new technology has arrived late in life

MSAAC strongly encourages the LC School Board to talk to families about technology use in the classroom and scrutinize the technology line item in the 2018/2019 budget. We are not doing right by our children if we don’t invest in technology and ensure equitable access and use for all students.