



## MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

850 Hungerford Drive ♦ Rockville, Maryland 20850  
August, 2008

Dear Friends of Education:

In 2001 the Montgomery County Board of Education established a Policy Committee to facilitate the work of the full board on this important aspect of its governance responsibilities. Attached for your information is the committee's annual report to the Board of Education, which summarizes committee activity over the past year and provides an update on the work plan of the committee.

An important highlight of the report is the completion of the first systematic review of the administration's implementation of selected policies. In addition, the committee worked with staff to systematize the periodic review of the policy for relevance, enabling consistent identification of policies needing revision or rescission. Staff is using the improved process to scrutinize policies, some of which have not been substantively reviewed for more than 20 years.

The report includes a listing of policies created or revised, with a brief description of the rationale for action, as well as a summary of other items the committee addressed. Those items range from revising the Board's operations handbook to defining policy language. Finally, the committee's work plan includes those items already in process for the next year. The committee will amend this list by adding or deleting items at the direction of the Board, or agreeing to requests from staff or members of the committee, that align with its charge from the Board.

The committee appreciates the thoughtful contributions of those who have responded to calls for comment on new and revised policies. As is evidenced by the inclusion of diverse stakeholders on advisory and workgroups, our Board and school system recognize the importance of public participation in the process of policy development and adoption. We hope that involved community members like you will encourage others to comment and contribute through whatever means is most convenient. Information on Board policies and opportunity for comment and participation is available at [www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org).

Please do not hesitate to be in touch if you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions you wish to share. (Board of Education office 301-279-3617.)

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Sharon W. Cox in black ink.

Sharon W. Cox  
Policy Committee Chair

Handwritten signature of Shirley Brandman in black ink.

Shirley Brandman  
Committee Member

Handwritten signature of Patricia O'Neill in black ink.

Patricia O'Neill  
Committee Member

Handwritten signature of Quratul-Ann Malik in black ink.

Quratul-Ann Malik  
Committee Member

MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION  
Rockville, Maryland

August 21, 2008

**MEMORANDUM**

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Sharon W. Cox, Chair, Board of Education Policy Committee

Subject: Annual Report from the Policy Committee

The members serving on the committee the past year, Mr. Abrams, Ms. Brandman, Mrs. O'Neill, and Mr. Moskowitz, actively pursued its charge in the conscientious performance of their responsibilities. The committee welcomes Ms. Quratul-Ann Malik, student member of the Board, and looks forward to working with her. The following, which covers the period since the committee's last Annual Report through June 30, 2008, is a synopsis of the committee's activity in our three focus areas: reviewing and revising policy; evaluation of policy implementation and achievement of desired outcomes; and monitoring the implementation of major policy revisions.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Policy Committee utilized the resources provided by the Board for evaluating the implementation of policies to assure that the desired outcomes as stated in each policy are being achieved. The first review, completed and provided to the full Board at the beginning of this reporting period, was on the implementation of Policy FAA, *Long-Range Educational Facilities Planning*. The Board, in response to constituent concerns, planned that review to gauge the effect of the policy revision on public participation in planning processes. The extensive review found no change in the practices that provide for public participation and no complaints from the public about opportunities for involvement.

The committee, in collaboration with staff, used that experience to develop a template for a policy evaluation process. We thank Ms. Stephanie Williams and Ms. Christina Yuknis from the Department of Reporting and Regulatory Accountability, and Ms. Suzann King from the Board Office, for their help in creating the process. This work requires staff to identify the policy's guiding principles, examine the scope, establish the standard of review, determine the evaluation methodology, analyze the effectiveness of the policy's implementation, evaluate whether the policy's desired outcomes have been achieved, and provide any relevant recommendations. Staff consults with stakeholders and presents their work to the Policy Committee, providing the opportunity to give guidance or seek clarification. Completed reports are provided to all Board members for review and comment.

The evaluation of Policy IPD, *Travel Study Programs, Field Trips, and Student Organization Trips*, has been completed and shared with all Board members. The committee is pleased to inform the Board that staff from the Offices of School Performance (OSP), Curriculum and Instructional Programs (OCIP), and Organizational Development (OOD) will be working on implementing the report's recommendations. They will ensure that periodic reviews of approved

and non-approved trips are conducted to support consistent policy implementation, and that training on policy and regulation requirements is available to staff who plan trips.

The recently completed (June) report on the evaluation of Policy CNA, *Informational Material and Announcements*, will soon be available to all Board members. Please know that OSP is already identifying ways to achieve the recommended improvements in consistency of implementation, and clearly communicated requirements for staff and community users.

The next policy to be evaluated is Policy JPG, *Wellness: Physical and Nutritional Health*. The committee decided to amend our original queue and add this item due to the interest of the County Council's Health and Human Services (HHS) and Education (ED) committees and to align with the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) review of wellness policies.

In light of several community complaints about required textbook purchases, the committee discussed Policy JNA, *Curricular Expenses for Students*, its implementation systemwide, and the associated monitoring process. The Office of School Performance will continue to monitor this issue to ensure that the policy is being appropriately and consistently implemented systemwide.

As a part of its focus on the evaluation of policy implementation, the committee receives regular reports on the ongoing implementation of revised policies that are foundational to the strategic plan. Staff provides status reports regarding curriculum and instruction, staff development, technology, and accountability for Policy IKA, *Grading and Reporting*, and Policy IEB, *Middle School Education*. Since both policy rollouts will take several years, the focus of our review has been on fidelity of implementation. It is too soon to evaluate desired outcomes.

### **New Policies**

- Policy HDD, *Designation of the Montgomery County Association of Administrative and Supervisory Personnel as Exclusive Representative of Noncertified Supervisory Employees*. This policy memorializes the designation of the Montgomery County Association of Administrative and Supervisory Personnel as the exclusive representative of noncertificated supervisory employees (March 11, 2008).

### **Revised Policies**

- Policy EEA, *Student Transportation*, reinforces MCPS' commitment to the safe, responsive, and accountable operation of the student transportation system, in partnership with parents and students (June 10, 2008).
- Policy IEA, *Framework and Structure of Early Childhood and Elementary Education*, affirms the Board of Education's commitment to producing a challenging and comprehensive educational program for students in early childhood and elementary programs that will prepare them for middle and high school (May 21, 2007).
- Policy JFA, *Student Rights and Responsibilities*, sets forth an expectation that a student's conduct, prior to election or appointment to the student government, or other leadership position, meet a higher standard in order for the student to be eligible to attain, or retain, such leadership positions (April 19, 2007).

**Non-Substantive Changes to Clarify Language or Intent**

- Policy BCB: *Student Board Member Election* (April 9, 2008)
- Policy KEA: *Political Campaigns and Political Materials* (November 13, 2007)
- Policy JHC: *Child Abuse and Neglect* (October 10, 2007)
- Policy JFC: *Registration and Voting for Students* (October 10, 2007)

**Rescinded Policies**

- Policy KMC, *Services Provided to Non-Profit Private Organizations*, was adopted in 1969 and was no longer reflective of relationships that MCPS has or intends to have in the near future (January 8, 2008).
- Policies ISE, *Summer School Graduation*; COA, *Visitors to School During the School Day*; and Policy DJC, *Newspaper Advertising*, involved operational matters that do not rise to the level of a policy (November 13, 2007).
- Policy GGA, *Duty Hours and Days*, was repetitive of the requirements contained in the *Education Article* of the *Annotated Code of Maryland*, as well the negotiated agreements with the respective unions (November 13, 2007).
- Policy CGA, *Summer School*, was no longer necessary because Policy IEA, *Framework and Structure of Early Childhood and Elementary Education*; Policy IEB, *Middle School Education*; and Policy IED, *Framework and Structure of High School Education*, provide operational and instructional mandates for the regular school year that also apply to instructional opportunities provided during the summer months (November 13, 2007).
- Policy GFB, *Temporary Reassignment of Administrative and Supervisory Personnel*, was subsumed by the enactment of Policy GAA, *Positive Work Environment in a Self-Renewing Organization* (November 13, 2007).

**Additional Review Items**

- Board of Education Handbook - To ensure efficient operations for the Board of Education, the committee has identified updates to the handbook that will be presented to the full Board for discussion and adoption in the fall.
- Guidelines - The committee examined the policy implications regarding the use of religious venues for public school events. After a presentation from legal counsel and additional discussion, the committee determined that this was not an issue for a policy; rather, the superintendent should promulgate guidelines for principals governing the use of religious venues for school events. The committee reviewed and modified a draft of the guidelines provided by MCPS staff.
- Policy Audit Procedures - At the committee's request, staff assessed procedures to identify policies that should be revised or rescinded and developed enhancements to the three-year review process. As the improvements are implemented, the committee will consider how to evaluate the efficacy of the process.
- Definitions - At the committee's request, staff is providing links to existing glossaries for policy language that has a common definition within MCPS. They are working to create

the ability to provide individual explanations for words or phrases, the definitions of which derive from the context of a specific policy.

- Regulations - The committee asked staff to create a category within the current index system to identify regulations that are not associated with a policy.

### **The Committee's Workplan**

- Policy CFA, *Site-Based Participatory Management* - In response to a staff recommendation for rescission, the committee requested a review of policies to ensure that the components of CFA remain applicable to the management of MCPS and stakeholder involvement in school improvement planning is maintained. Two other policies were identified as appropriate for the integration of these elements. Upon completion of those revisions, staff will recommend the rescission of Policy CFA.
- Policies ABC, *Parental Involvement*, and AEB, *Strategic Planning for Continuous Improvement* - Staff identified these policies as needing revisions to update content and ensure policy reflects the Board's commitment to stakeholder involvement in school-based continuous improvement processes. Staff is conducting worksessions with staff and community members to propose revisions in fall/winter of SY 2008-09.
- Policy BBB, *Ethics* - Board staff and members of the Ethics Panel will be reviewing the policy for updates that may be necessary to continue to promote the highest level of ethical conduct on the part of all persons associated with MCPS. The review of this policy has been delayed.
- Policy BLB, *Rules of Procedure in Appeals and Hearings* - Board staff and counsel will be reviewing the policy for updates that may be necessary to improve the appeals process and/or to comply with laws and regulations. The review of this policy has been delayed.
- Policy IGA, *High School Core Courses* - Staff will audit the core course designations and develop a well-defined process for identification of categories under current policy(ies). In addition, staff will identify policies they believe should be revised, and provide a timeline for that process.
- Policy IOA, *Gifted and Talented Education* - Staff is currently researching best practices with respect to gifted and talented education for policy revision. The review of this policy has been delayed.
- Policy Reporting Requirements - The committee asked staff to review system compliance with policy reporting requirements, advise on potential issues, and recommend methods for addressing those issues.

The committee very much appreciates the time, effort and dedicated support of all staff who have worked with us this past year. In particular, we wish to commend those who are regular participants at our monthly meetings for the consistently high quality of their contributions.