

MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE

February 5, 2003

The meeting was called to order at 12:30 p.m. with the following people present: Sharon Cox (chair), Pat O'Neill, Mihyar Alnifaidy, Charles Haughey, George Margolies, Glenda Rose (recorder), Harriet Potosky, Edye Miller, Robin Confino, Susan Falkenhan, Karen Crawford, Judy Lewis, and Lori-Christina Webb.

Kindergarten Age of Entry Waivers

Staff designed a process for parents to apply for early entrance to kindergarten for children born in the month after the legal cut-off date. Parents will complete an application that includes a parent checklist. The child will be observed by school staff in a classroom-like setting and a decision about readiness will be made at the school level. If it is not apparent from the observation checklist that the child is ready, the parent may request further screening at the school level before a decision is made by the professional team. If the decision is made not to accept the child for early entrance, the parent may follow our standard appeal procedure.

Policy JNA – Student Out-of-Pocket Expenses

It had been brought to the Board's attention that there was a variance of fees in schools, and the practice was inconsistent with Board policy. Through an informal survey, it became clear that there were many variations as well as issues of equity and access to materials. Staff revised the policy and regulations to reflect reasonable and equitable procedures. The revisions were discussed by the committee and the following issues were addressed:

1. Workbooks available as a resource
2. Reasonable lab fees
3. Database to compare fees charged by schools (budget implications)
4. Definition for access to materials
5. No student denied course for inability to pay fees
6. Fees printed in registration materials
7. Appeal process

It was decided that the policy and regulation should be reviewed by the school system's General Counsel. Also, there will be a survey of out-of-pocket expenses of other school systems. The changes in the policy and regulation will be brought back to the Policy Committee in March for discussion, the policy will be sent to the Board in April for tentative approval, and final action will be taken by the Board in June or July.

Policy JFA – Student Rights and Responsibilities

The committee went through the following items that had been repositioned to the draft regulation to determine whether or not the items should remain in the policy:

1. Rights of privacy
2. Student government

3. Freedom of inquiry and expression
4. Freedom of assembly
5. Patriotic exercise
6. Freedom of religion
7. Cocurricular organizations
8. Use of school facilities
9. Dress and grooming
10. Search and seizure
11. Group detention
12. Discipline for actions outside the school day or off school property

It was decided that the policy and regulation (or framework) will be sent out for public comments after tentative approval by the Board in August with final approval in November.

It was pointed out that there should be a review for consistency of school discipline and zero tolerance documents to determine consistency and fairness. All students should be held to the same discipline standards for off campus activities.

Policy IFA-RA

It was decided that there will be updates, but not monthly.

Policy IKA, *Grading and Reporting*

A matrix was distributed with a summary of public comments. The most concerns received from the community pertained to:

1. Weight of the final exam
2. Attendance
3. Credit for high school courses taken in middle school

Since there was a great deal of concern about attendance, the committee agreed that the Loss of Credit practice be maintained in regulations until the Board develops a new attendance policy.

Other Policies

The following lists were distributed:

1. "Regular Policy Regulation Reports for the Board of Education"
2. "Policies by Last Action Date"

The next meeting will be March 5 at 12:30 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m.