

MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
POLICY COMMITTEE
September 3, 2003

The meeting was called to order at 12:30 p.m. with the following people present: Sharon Cox (chair), Pat O'Neill, Charles Haughey, Sagar Sanghvi, George Margolies, Glenda Rose (recorder), Harriet Potosky, Robin Confino, Greg Thornton, Lori-Christina Webb, Karen Crawford, Judy Lewis, Betsy Brown, Roger Titus, Don Kress, Carey Wright, Susan Falkenhan, Edey Miller, John Moriarty, Judy Bresler, Karen Harvey, and Dale Fulton.

POLICY JFA – STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Mr. Titus explained his rationale for recommending the retention of systemwide control in the policy with implementation in the regulation, especially in regard to student discipline. There was a discussion on local discipline codes, lack of consistency from school to school, and whether or not those codes should be approved by administration prior to implementation.

Counsel pointed out two categories for Board consideration: (1) the review of local schools' codes to ascertain consistency, and (2) the approval of sanctions that are acceptable to the Board. At the policy level, the Board could give authority or enabling language for local school discipline codes with a list of violations and sanctions, but not necessarily limited to those specific violations.

It was decided that the revised policy should include the authority for each school to develop a local code with discipline standards which would provide the parameters for local codes. Staff will develop language and bring back the policy to the committee in November, with tentative approval by the Board scheduled for December 9.

POLICY CNA – ADVERTISING MATERIALS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Counsel explained the ramifications of open, closed, and limited forums. Over time, the limited forum included items centered on education, community health, day care, government agencies, and community sports/arts. The school system is faced with a couple of choices – leave the forum open with four broad categories or close the forum entirely. It is suggested that the policy could be a hybrid which would close the forum except for materials from MCPS, PTA, and government agencies.

There was a discussion on leaving the forum open until the court case is settled. The committee asked for information on the volume of material distributed, and cost and time for distribution. Staff agreed to survey schools to get that information, and they would develop a plan for ameliorating the burden. The policy will not go to the Board in October, but will be rescheduled for discussion by the committee next month.

POLICY IPD – TRAVEL STUDY PROGRAMS, CLASS AND STUDENT ORGANIZATION TRIPS

Staff led the committee through the policy revisions. The following areas were discussed: (1) school “organization” is too vague a term, (2) trips serve as a motivation and reward, (3) trips must be approved by community superintendents, (4) consistency of trips, (5) level of student participation, (6) student’s ability to pay for trips, (7) importance of students in class, but field trips enhance instruction, (8) grades not adversely affected for lack of participation, and (9) superintendent or designee has authority to cancel trips.

The policy is scheduled for the September 22, 2003, Board meeting for tentative approval.

REGULATION BFA-RA – POLICYSETTING

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

POLICY IKA – GRADING AND REPORTING

Staff presented the transition guidelines for the implementation of the policy. The committee was concerned with the guidelines since prior discussions had focused on accurate reporting to parents in order for them to ascertain how their child was progressing. If a child is working above or below grade level, there should be an indication on the report card. Therefore, the child can be accelerated if he/she is working below grade level. Also, if the child is graded on grade level, they will always be failing and there is no incentive to or ability to achieve a “good” grade.

The transition guideline has caused great confusion in the schools and community with specific details of grades, such as homework, physical education, etc. After an extended discussion, it was decided that the staff will come to the Board on September 9, 2003, with resolution to delay implementation. A timeline and plan should illustrate how teachers, parents, and students will move through the process with adequate communication and training.

FUTURE AGENDAS

Review of Policy FFA and Regulation FFA-RA (*Naming Schools*)
Policy CFB (*Public Charter Schools*)

The next meeting is scheduled for October 8, 2003, at 2:30 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.