

MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY COMMITTEE

March 16, 2010

The meeting was called to order at 2:30 p.m. with the following Board members and Board staff present: Shirley Brandman (chair), Chris Barclay, Tim Hwang, Pat O'Neill, Suzann King (staff assistant), and Glenda Rose (recorder).

Other staff present: Stephanie Williams, Harriet Potosky, Suzanne Merchlinsky, Brian Edwards, Lori-Christina Webb, Carol Blum, Diane Mohr, Suzanne Maxey, Susanne DeGraba, Steve Bulson, Marty Creel, Kay Williams, and Ginger Corpuz.

Other attendees: Fred Stichnoth,Carolynn Thompson, Vanessa Trinh, Anthony Trinh, Elizabeth Merkel, and Elizabeth Schneider.

COMMITTEE MINUTES

ACTION: The January 26, 2010, meeting minutes were approved as presented.

REVIEW OF RESEARCH ON GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION

Given that the Committee previously asked staff to provide research and background material on gifted and talented education, staff provided the following literature for the Committee's review and discussion:

1. *Gifted Child quarterly*, Volume 53, Number 4
2. Selected Annotated Bibliography
3. Position Papers from the National Association for Gifted Children

The committee reviewed and discussed research on gifted and talented education, including the identification and programming for gifted students; the myths surrounding gifted education; effective programs for talent development; the efficacy of differentiation; and the requirements of the Maryland Code of Regulations (COMAR). Staff addressed the connections between existing research and the MCPS' Student Instructional Program Planning and Implementation (SIPPI) that was presented to the Board of Education on September 8, 2009.

Discussion focused on the changed definition of "gifted", identification practices, trend of some gifted children being underrepresented in public schools, and the need to create a continuum of services that meets the needs of gifted students.

Given that research focuses on services not identification, staff was concerned about reviewing data on each individual child to assure appropriate services were provided with high expectations for success. The SIPPI process focuses on identification, articulation, acceleration, and implementation, and whether the needs of the child can be met at the local school. The SIPPI has a robust interaction with parents.

Committee members were interested in the results from the SIPPI pilot; identification of gifted students using assessments; development of curriculum; differentiation of the instructional materials in the local school; and staff development. Also, there was a question of whether gifted students are denied access to MCPS' Gifted Centers based on capacity of the Center rather than the need of the student.

ACTION: The Committee asked staff to return to a future committee meeting to discuss the SIPPI data and to report on its implementation as well as to report on gifted students access to the MCPS gifted centers. Also, the committee should schedule a joint meeting with the Committee on Special Populations.

UPDATE ON LOSS OF CREDIT WORK GROUP

Staff provided an update on the workgroup's composition, discussed the multiple meetings with stakeholders, and provided a historical context for review of the impact of the loss of credit practice. (This issue had been studied in 1992, 2000 and 2005). Staff shared that there is an emerging consensus among high school principals that the loss of credit practice be discontinued. It was also noted that Fairfax County recently discontinued their loss of credit practice.

The work group offered the following recommendations:

1. Eliminate loss of credit procedures.
2. Unlawful absences should be considered discipline infractions that can result in non-academic consequences as determined by the individual school's discipline committee.
3. Students are expected to make up missed work regardless of the legal status of their absence.
4. Each high school will establish a formal process to promote student attendance.

The Committee asked about the implementation of the recommendations and whether there would be a pilot of this new practice. There was consensus of the principals was not to conduct a pilot, but that the recommendations should be implemented across all high schools.

The workgroup's recommendations will be forwarded to the deputy superintendent of schools who will make a recommendation to the superintendent regarding whether changes should be made to the regulation JEA-RA, *Student Attendance*.

ACTION: The Policy Committee recommended that these recommendations be scheduled for full Board of Education discussion.

RESCISSION OF POLICY GBB, DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE SERVICES

At a previous meeting, committee members had questions about the original rationale for the adoption of Policy GBB and whether certain tenants were included in Policy GAA, *Positive Work Environment in a Self-renewing Organization*. Staff was to review

Policy GAA to ascertain whether the necessary provisions of Policy GBB are fully included, ensure that a strong statement of the commitment and support of employees is included, and review COMAR to determine whether there are any legal requirements regarding establishment of an employee assistance program that should be incorporated into Policy GBB. After a discussion, the committee asked staff to review COMAR regarding any legal requirements and identify whether other existing policies capture the strong commitment to employee well-being expressed in Policy GBB. Staff should email committee members with this information in order to keep the rescission on track.

ACTION: The Policy Committee asked that staff review COMAR and email the results to the Committee members. Provided that there are no COMAR requirements, the Committee recommends the rescission of the policy to the Board of Education.

DISCUSSION OF PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR POLICY EID, TAX DEFERRED ANNUITY PROGRAM AND POLICY GIJ, OPERATING FUND INVESTMENT

These policies were tentatively adopted by the Board and sent out for public comment. No comments were received from the public.

ACTION: The Policy Committee recommends that Policy EID and Policy GIJ be scheduled for Board of Education final action.

UPDATE ON POLICY JNA, CURRICULAR EXPENSES FOR STUDENTS

Staff provided the following update concerning the implementation of Policy JNA. Data has been collected concerning the waivers issued by MCPS middle schools and high schools - high schools issued 340 waivers totaling over \$6,500, middle schools issued 595 waivers totaling over \$1,900, 7 high schools and 15 middle schools did not issue any waivers. After investigating the issue further, staff believes that some schools did not issue waivers because of the decrease in course fees and the money the schools received to offset the fees. Committee members encouraged additional investigation. Staff will be collecting information about the waivers issued for second semester.

ACTION: Staff agreed to collect and provide the additional information regarding the waivers issued for the second semester. Staff also agreed to collect information regarding adjustments, changes or cuts schools had to make based upon the new guidelines on fees and whether the \$1.5 million allocated to schools fit the respective school's needs.

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.