

# **MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION COMMITTEE ON SPECIAL POPULATIONS**

May 11, 2009

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. with the following Board members and Board support staff present: Shirley Brandman (chair), Laura Berthiaume, Phil Kauffman, Laura Steinberg, and Glenda Rose (recorder).

Staff members: Frieda Lacey, Brian Bartels, Gwen Mason, Holli Swann, Judy Pattik, Maureen Ryan, Lori-Christina Webb, Brian Edwards, Steve Zagami, and Carey Wright.

Guests: Kay Romero and Marcus Moore.

## **Minutes**

The minutes from March 31, 2009, were approved as presented.

## **Disproportionality Report**

Disproportionality has become a key monitoring priority for the federal government and in turn for MSDE. The paper reports the work of the Disproportionality Steering Committee, convened in response and charged to review policies and practices that may be contributing to the disproportionate identification of students with disabilities based on race and ethnicity; placement within particular educational settings; and incidence, duration, and type of disciplinary actions, including suspension and expulsion.

Information was provided about systemwide strategies and processes that have been implemented to close the achievement gap that fosters disproportionality, including differentiated instruction, formative assessment and data monitoring, equity training, centralized monitoring of newly identified students, focused professional development for teachers, suspension monitoring, and collaborative problem solving for student success.

The report presents three broad recommendations: provide enhanced professional development in cultural competence and evidence-based practices; implement tiered instructional supports using research-based and evidence-based instructional and behavioral practices in the general education setting; and improve local school and systemwide accountability for implementation of recommended actions. Additionally, the report provides a detailed and comprehensive action plan with specific steps to support each recommendation.

Committee members several times asked about whether adequate resources have been identified to accomplish the report's recommendations. They agreed that the report's recommendations will need to be addressed during next year's budget review process. Additionally, the committee was interested in those schools that have evidenced effective collaborative problem solving and best

practices. A project team will be assembled to implement the action plan and the committee asked that they be provided with an update at an appropriate time.

**ACTION: Staff will develop recommendations for the role of the Board.**

The meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.