

MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY COMMITTEE

June 4, 2003

The meeting was called to order at 9:35 a.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, Susan Falkenhan, Greg Thornton, Lori-Christina Webb, Don Kress, Karen Crawford, Laura Steinberg, Judy Lewis, Edye Miller, Ed Clarke, Dustin Jeter, and Billie-Jean Benson.

WORKGROUP ON ATTENDANCE POLICY

Ms. Steinberg outlined the selection process for the workgroup. The group will be made up of community, student, and parent members. Since the policy will have the greatest impact on high school students, it was suggested that this level be well represented.

REGULATION COG-RA – *Portable Communication Devices*

Staff reported on the survey that had been conducted among middle school principals to ascertain if the regulation should be maintained or modified. All middle school administrators reported that there were 410 requested waivers with an overall approval rate of 94 percent. The number of waiver requests ranged from zero to fifty. The general reasons for the requests were medical, safety, after-school activities, and emergency communication with parents. The students were disciplined for violation of the waiver with (1) parent notification, (2) conferences, (3) confiscation of the cell phone, (4) in-school suspension, and (5) suspension for repeated violations. The consensus of middle school administrators was to maintain the regulation as written.

The discussion centered on the following:

1. Parents do not know about the waiver option
2. There are more cell phones used than there are waivers
3. How a chaperone knows whether or not the student has a waiver
4. Regulation does not serve the purpose since there are no controls
5. Parents will not seek a waiver for emergencies, i.e., sniper
6. Maturity level of middle school students

A majority of committee members decided that the regulation should be modified to allow after-school use of cell phones without a waiver, but a waiver must be granted for a cell phone to be on school property during the instructional day. Also, the waiver conference could include communication with parents other than through a personal conference. The committee asked staff to prepare language for next month's meeting. Regulation COG-RA is scheduled for Board discussion on July 8, 2003.

POLICY IPD AND REGULATION IPD-RA – *Travel Study Programs, Class and Student Organization Trips*

Staff guided the committee through the draft policy. The focus of the policy was to state the guiding principles and stress that travel study must be related to instruction and a specific course. There should be a clear understanding that “school-sponsored” does not refer to extracurricular trips, such as a ski club or French class going to Paris. The statement – no student maybe denied participation in a school-sponsored trip due to financial circumstances – must not place an impossible financial burden on the school. The regulation should address the impact of travel on the instructional program, trips must be limited strictly to instruction, and sports should fall into a totally different category. All travel must be approved by the principal and community superintendent. There should be language in the policy that authorizes the regulation. The policy will be brought to the Board for tentative approval in September. In the interim, the principals will receive information from the community superintendents with revised guidelines for field trips. Policy IPB, *Out-of-Classroom Enrichment Program*, will be brought to the Board to be rescinded.

POLICY JNA – Curricular Expenses for Students

Staff reviewed the draft policy and a matrix of public comments. It was noted that voluntary expenses were excluded from the policy. It was pointed out that the exact expenses will be more explicit in the regulation. Several suggestions were made in the language to clarify the meaning and intent of the draft policy.

The draft policy will be sent to Board members for their review prior to the July 8, 2003, meeting. This will allow staff to respond and contemplate legal ramifications for any major changes. If there are any modifications, those changes will be brought to the Policy Committee prior to the Board meeting.

FUTURE AGENDAS

There was a reminder for committee members to review the material distributed on operational and governance policies.

Policies to be discussed are Policy FFA, *Naming Schools*, and Policy CFB, *Public Charter Schools*.

The next meeting is scheduled for July 2, 2003, at 9:30 a.m.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.