

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
POLICY COMMITTEE**

November 14, 2007

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m. with the following committee members and Board staff present: Sharon Cox (chair), Ben Moskowitz, Pat O'Neill, Suzann King (staff assistant), Glenda Rose (recorder), Roland Ikheloa (chief of staff), and Laura Steinberg (staff assistant). Board members Shirley Brandman and Judy Docca were also present.

Other staff present: Stephanie Williams, Lori-Christina Webb, Holli Swann, Cathy Pevey, Christina Yuknis, Karen Crawford, Harriet Potosky, Mike Cohen, Janine Bacquie, Erick Lang, Robin Confino, Ida Polcari, and Marty Creel.

Others present: Madelyn Hamilton, Wendy Morrias, Kay Romero, Evie Frankl, and Suzanne Weiss.

Committee Minutes

Action: The minutes for the October 10, 2007, meeting were approved as presented.

Policy KMC, Services Provided to Non-Profit Private Organizations

At the previous meeting, the general counsel for the school system stated that the policy was adopted in 1979. Since there seemed to be no compelling reasons for the policy, it was recommended that Policy KMC be rescinded. As requested by the committee, staff checked the Board's minutes and policy history to determine the rationale for Policy KMC. There was no stated need for the policy when it was enacted. Therefore, the committee recommended rescission of the policy at a future Board meeting.

Action: The committee agreed to forward Policy KMC to the full Board with a recommendation for rescission.

Policy Evaluation Work Plan for Policy IPD, Travel Study Programs, Field Trips and Student Organization Trips

On September 12, 2007, staff gave a brief presentation concerning a draft Policy Evaluation Process, and identified that Policy IPD would be the first policy to be evaluated, with an update at the committee's November meeting.

Staff provided an overview of the evaluation of Policy IPD to ascertain whether the desired outcomes are being achieved. The major areas of the evaluation will include:

Scope of the Evaluation

- who is responsible for implementation
- what processes have been implemented as a result of the policy

Standard of Review

definitions
Minimum criteria for success

Methodology

preliminary steps
data collection
sample selection procedures

The committee was pleased with the work plan and planned implementation.

Action: Staff will provide an update or draft of the evaluation at the January committee meeting.

Policy IOA, Gifted and Talented Education

Given that the committee would be reviewing Policy IOA, *Gifted and Talented Education*, the committee was asked to review and report back to the Board concerning the Deputy Superintendent's Advisory Committee on Gifted and Talented Education Report (DSAC Report). In addition to providing a report concerning its efforts to review and revise Policy IOA, staff was asked to address how the DSAC Report related to their work and the review of Policy IOA.

Staff from the Division of Accelerated and Enriched Instruction reported that the Division's strategic plan is aligned with the DSAC Report in four areas: (1) strengthen accountability measures, (2) improve and expand programs, (3) implement systematic collection and analysis of data, and (4) provide equal access to all students in gifted and talented (GT) programs and services. Further, the AEI Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee) ensures follow through on the recommendations made in the DSAC Report.

Staff also reported that the Division is currently working with the Advisory Committee to review and revise Policy IOA. Staff has presented a proposal to the Advisory Committee that would seek to move away from labeling students "gifted and talented" to providing a continuum of service. Consequently, instead of labeling a student "gifted and talent", the school system would quantify the levels of service a student is to receive during his/her education and provide that information to parents. (For example, Student A, who is in the sixth grade, would not be labeled gifted and talented, but would be identified to receive the appropriate advanced math and reading courses.) This proposal would: (1) integrate primary talent development into Grades K - 2, (2) transition to documented services in AEI, and (3) report state required GT identification by level of service students received.

As part of this proposal, MCPS staff is currently working on curriculum development that includes: (1) a focus on primary talent to nurture, reveal, develop, and document strengths and potential, (2) lessons emphasizing instruction in critical and creative thinking and integrated into MCPS curriculum, (3) talent development modules in Grades 3 - 5 to help teachers see students strengths and help students accelerate into more advanced instruction, and (4) in-course acceleration and differentiation

expectations.

Noting that the school system is required to report information to the state, the committee asked how state-mandated information on gifted students is used and how other systems fulfill this reporting requirement.

Staff reported on the work of the Advisory Committee and noted that there was resistance by some members to changing Policy IOA's language due to the fear that gifted and talented instruction would not be provided. Noting the lack of the consensus on the Advisory Committee to-date concerning certain issues, staff asked for the committee's input regarding revising Policy IOA and related regulations. Policy Committee members stated that a policy should not have implementation language, but rather the policy should encompass the vision, purpose, and desired outcomes. The vision should dovetail with other policies on curriculum. The committee supported staff's proposal of providing a continuum of services and the concept of not labeling students.

In reviewing the members of the advisory committee, it was suggested that student(s) should be added to the committee.

Action: By consensus, the committee decided to make a recommendation to the Board that the discussion on the DSCA report take place concurrently with the discussion on the revision of Policy IOA. Further, the committee asked staff to:

1. Add student(s) to the AEI Advisory Committee.
2. Benchmark how other systems fulfill the state GT reporting requirement.
3. Develop draft policy language based on the new concept, eliminating regulatory language, and bring the draft to the committee
4. Provide a timeline for policy development

Policy JEB, Early Entrance to Prekindergarten, Kindergarten, and First Grade

On October 10, 2007, the committee asked staff to come back with information concerning the cost for central office staff in evaluating children whose birth dates fell beyond six weeks of the state's prescribed admission date, potential for redeployment of resources if different operating procedures were utilized, and the impact on children who applied but were not admitted for early entrance into kindergarten.

Staff reported on the revised kindergarten curriculum and expectations, birth dates of students in highly gifted programs, and cost estimates for appeal cases. Based on this information and the fact that the policy and regulation do not call for a process outside the six-week window, staff recommended that the Board maintain the policy as it is written and discontinue accepting applications beyond the six-week window of the state's prescribed admission date.

The committee was pleased with the information provided by staff. However, in reviewing the data about the population of highly gifted centers, one committee member wanted to know what percentage of the general student population is comprised of

students who were granted early entrance to kindergarten.

The committee supported staff's recommendation to discontinue processing applications beyond the six-week window for early entrance to kindergarten; however, the committee reiterated that the application process within the six-week window should be consistent, effective, and understandable by parents. The committee stated that this change in operations should be communicated clearly to the community and parents.

Action: Staff will:

1. Provide information to the committee concerning the percentage of the general student population that is comprised of students who were granted early entrance to kindergarten.
2. Should the superintendent decide to discontinue processing applications beyond the six-week window for early entrance to kindergarten, this change in operations must be clearly communicated to the public.

Board Handbook

Over the past ten years there have been substantial and structural changes in the way the Board operates which has necessitated an update of the Board's operational handbook. A draft copy of the operational handbook was distributed to the committee prior to the meeting. Staff stated that legal counsel will review the handbook before it is published.

Action: Committee members will submit any comments on the handbook to Mr. Ikheloa prior to the committee's review of the handbook at subsequent meeting.

Next Meeting and Adjournment. The next committee meeting is scheduled for December 12, 2007, at 2:30 p.m. in Room 120.

Possible agenda items include:

- Glossary of Policy Terms
- Student Transportation

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.