

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL EDUCATION AD HOC COMMITTEE**

March 20, 2007

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m. with the following Board members and support staff present: Shirley Brandman (chair), Steve Abrams, Sharon Cox, Roland Ikheloa, and Glenda Rose (recorder).

Others present: Gwen Mason, Vickie Strange-Moscoso, Mary Lee Phelps, Kathleen Whitmire, and Anne Turner.

Update on Web-based IEP Training

Staff provided an update on the Maryland IEP/Encore Project and professional development (copies attached). In essence, staff reported that the Maryland State IEP, which is in Adobe Acrobat format has been implemented from January 2007 and will be continued to January 2008; the Maryland State IEP using Encore will be implemented beginning January 2008. To date, professional development for super users and end users had 2,356 participants; teacher training had 913 participants; resource teacher training had 74 participants; community information sessions had 301 participants; and administrator training had 106 participants.

Ms. Cox asked about exit interviews for teachers leaving special education for regular education. Of those trained for the web-based IEP, Mr. Abrams asked about the technological experience level of teachers and the system's expectations. Ms. Cox thought the chair should write a memo to Dr. Lacey raising systemwide questions about the adequacy of staff's technological skills and/or the training being provided to assist staff to meet changing demands, such as the Encore Project. Ms. Brandman asked how parent feedback is obtained, especially for transition and IEP formation and implementation. Ms. Brandman raised the possibility of an IEP feedback form. It was discussed and agreed that a survey tool should be developed to capture parent feedback at the conclusion of IEP meetings. Ms. Cox suggested that it also be made available on the website. Follow up will be needed.

Update on Secondary Learning Centers

Staff briefed the committee on the presentation made before the County Council's Education Committee. A state representative reported on federal and state laws and the state's expectations and where Maryland/Montgomery County fit into those parameters. MCPS staff produced data on the learning centers, student performance, disproportionality, placements, professional development, case managers for each student, parents contacted, annual reviews, supplementary services, and principals contacted. At the end of the presentation, the Education Committee was not fully satisfied and requested more

information, especially financial data. (MCPS staff agreed to provide copies of the documents discussed by the Education Committee.)

Staff stated that the implementation plan has been communicated to MCCPTA, principals, and parents. There has been a series of meetings to assure that everyone is current on the plan and its implementation. Parents of identified rising 6th graders have been contacted by the case managers to assure that the IEPs will be implemented and the necessary resources provided to each school. Forty seven of 49 identified elementary learning center students who would have been referred to a secondary learning center will be accommodated at their home schools. The other two will be referred to LFI programs. Staff will continue to update the committee and will provide an update to the full Board in June.

The importance of adequate training for providing services to coded students in their home school was discussed. The committee agreed that as services are provided in the home schools, data must be collected on the academic outcomes and satisfaction by parents and students. After an established period, the information can be assessed to determine how the plan is working and how it can be improved.

Workload Analysis

Dr. Kathleen Whitmire, director of school services of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Institute, presented on the topic, *Caseload as Workload: Redefining Roles in the School*. The main point of the presentation was that caseload (number of cases) is not the same as workload (the work required to adequately serve the child). There were several different models exhibited regarding best practices for identifying the actual time needed for staff to work effectively with students. Discussion ensued regarding the importance of accurate workload staffing for attracting and retaining staff as well as deriving maximum benefit from professional staff's skills. A copy of the PowerPoint and other materials are available in the Board office.

Possible Town Hall Meetings

The committee had a discussion on how to hear the concerns of the community including the possibility of a town hall meeting. After a give-and-take among committee members, it was decided that the Special Education Ad Hoc Committee will meet with the Communications and Public Engagement Committee to develop a recommendation for Board adoption regarding possible town hall meetings.

Next Steps and Future Meeting Dates

The committee will meet every month on the third Tuesday. Dates will be changed as needed. Agenda items for upcoming meetings may include:

1. Continuum of services in special education
2. Vision of services (Dr. Lacey)

3. Transition
4. Array of services (OCIP involvement)
5. GT/LD referrals
6. Annual reviews

The meeting adjourned at 11:20 a.m.