

MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION  
Rockville, Maryland

March 12, 2013

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Patricia O'Neill, Chair, Board of Education Policy Committee

Subject: Tentative Action, Policy ABA, *Community Involvement*

The Board of Education Policy Committee, in consultation with staff members, identified Policy ABA, *Community Involvement*, for updating. The updated draft affirms the Board of Education's (Board) commitment to fostering and supporting community interest and involvement in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), because citizen support of the schools is essential to student success.

Recommended updates include increasing public participation through expanded use of technology, especially the MCPS website, and utilizing appropriate methods of input, such as focus groups, task forces, work groups, advisory groups, or public forums. Revisions were developed after careful consideration of past MCPS practices concerning advisory committees and the feasibility of using Policy ABA, *Community Involvement*, as a governing policy concerning obtaining community input.

Members of the Policy Committee discussed draft Policy ABA, *Community Involvement*, on October 18, 2012, and January 15, 2013. A draft copy of the policy is attached.

The following resolution is provided for your consideration:

WHEREAS, Policy ABA, *Community Involvement*, has been updated to affirm the Board's commitment to fostering and supporting community interest and involvement in MCPS, because citizen support of the schools is essential to student success; and

WHEREAS, The Montgomery County Board of Education Policy Committee has considered and recommended revisions to Policy ABA, *Community Involvement*; now therefore be it

Resolved, That the Montgomery County Board of Education take tentative action on Policy ABA, *Community Involvement*; and be it further

Resolved, That Policy ABA, *Community Involvement*, be sent out for public comment.

Present at the Board table for the discussion are Mr. Timothy B. Warner, chief engagement and partnership officer, Office of Community Engagement and Partnerships; and Mrs. Stephanie P. Williams, director, Department of Policy, Records, and Reporting, Office of Shared Accountability.

PO:hp

Attachment

1 Related Entries: ABA-RA, ABA-EA, ABC, ACA, BMA, IOD, IOD-RA  
2 Responsible Office: ~~Department of Communications~~  
3 **Chief Engagement and Partnership Officer**  
4  
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6 Community Involvement  
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8 A. PURPOSE  
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10 The **Montgomery County** Board of Education (**Board**) is committed  
11 to fostering and supporting community interest and involvement  
12 in ~~the~~ Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), because  
13 citizen support of the schools is essential to student  
14 success. The Board ~~of Education~~ will ensure **that** the ideas,  
15 interests, and concerns of its stakeholders are considered and  
16 valued in decision-making processes and that input and  
17 involvement is sought and encouraged from a broad spectrum of  
18 our diverse community. The Board is committed to the  
19 maintenance and monitoring of ongoing collaborative and  
20 productive communication processes with the community.  
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22 B. ISSUE  
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24 Creating processes for community involvement in a large,  
25 diverse community such as Montgomery County presents  
26 challenges and opportunities. Ensuring that the members of  
27 the community are encouraged, supported, and recruited to  
28 contribute time, knowledge, skills, and ideas to the public  
29 school system is both challenging and essential. Commitment

30 and resources are required to design, maintain, and monitor  
31 processes for productive collaboration and communication  
32 between MCPS and the community. These processes must create  
33 an environment where diverse views **may** ~~can~~ be heard and  
34 considered in an atmosphere of respect.

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36 C. DEFINITIONS

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38 1. *Community Involvement* seeks to ensure that the breadth of  
39 interests and values from across the community are heard  
40 and considered by the Board ~~of Education~~, superintendent  
41 **of schools**, principals, and other educational leaders,  
42 thereby enhancing the decision-making process.

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44 2. *Community* is comprised of numerous constituents with a  
45 vested interest in the education of children. Some of  
46 these constituents may include, but are not limited to,  
47 Montgomery County residents, advocacy, nonprofit, parent  
48 or community-based organizations; business, civic and  
49 nongovernment organizations; local postsecondary  
50 educational institutions; state, local, and federal  
51 agencies; and cultural, ethnic, racial, and religious  
52 groups.

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54 D. POSITION

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56 1. As part of its responsibility as a community member, the  
57 Board ~~of Education~~ will:

- 59 a. Develop its role as an advocate, using the best  
60 interest of the students as a guiding principle  
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- 62 b. Engage community members in building an  
63 organizational culture of respect  
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- 65 c. Establish processes **designed to obtain input by**  
66 **engaging in a discussion among a broad variety of**  
67 **stakeholders** ~~for community involvement through the~~  
68 ~~use of Advisory Committees (See Board of Education~~  
69 ~~Policy BMA: Board of Education Advisory Committees)~~
- 70 d. ~~Ensure community involvement by~~ **and** utilizing  
71 opportunities for input **from the public and**  
72 **relevant staff members** ~~such as, but not limited to,~~  
73 ~~hearings, forums, and public comment~~ **through any**  
74 **appropriate method such as, but not limited to:**  
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- 76 (1) **Focus groups**  
77 (2) **Task forces**  
78 (3) **Work groups**  
79 (4) **Technologically facilitated communication**  
80 (5) **Advisory groups**  
81 (6) **Public forums**  
82 (7) **Surveys**  
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- 84 ed. Solicit and consider community comments and  
85 concerns regarding the development of ~~Board of~~  
86 ~~Education~~ **MCPS** policies and other decisions

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- ~~fe.~~ Seek to engage members of our diverse community, particularly organizations representing new or traditionally underrepresented communities, in a committed, productive partnership to support the MCPS strategic plan
- ~~ef.~~ Advocate for the MCPS student population and their families through engagement with local, state, and federal government agencies

2. As part of its responsibility as a community member, the school system offices will:

- a. Integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and development
- b. Seek collaboration with a broad range of community members and organizations that reflect the diverse citizenry and interests of Montgomery County
- c. Seek and support the involvement of local organizations, particularly organizations representing new or traditionally underrepresented communities, in the school system
- d. Provide access and opportunity for broad segments of the community, representing the wide variety of

- 116 interests within the community, to participate in  
117 decision-making processes  
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- 119 e. Provide, to the extent possible, interpretation  
120 services and translations of important information  
121 about school system programs, services, policies,  
122 or issues  
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- 124 3. As part of its responsibility as a community member, each  
125 school will:  
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- 127 a. Seek involvement from the community and provide  
128 opportunities to strengthen the home/school  
129 connection  
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- 131 b. Establish and maintain regular and ongoing two-way  
132 communication with families and the community to  
133 provide information and solicit feedback about  
134 school progress, resources, policies, and issues  
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- 136 c. Provide, to the extent possible, information in the  
137 native languages of members of the school community  
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- 139 d. Access community services to support and foster  
140 academic achievement and positive development for  
141 all students  
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- 143 e. Participate actively and responsibly in the life  
144 and social fabric of the local community

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E. DESIRED OUTCOME

There will be an actively engaged community that is reflective of all residents. The system will benefit from the community's contribution of its skills, knowledge, ideas, and time to support the success of all students in partnership with MCPS.

F. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

1. The superintendent **of schools** will assess the status of community involvement, review existing policies and procedures, revise necessary regulations and procedures to support this policy, and make periodic reports to the Board ~~of Education~~ regarding the status of community involvement.
2. The Board ~~of Education~~ will seek community input on school system policies, including curriculum, facilities, and funding issues from a broad spectrum of our culturally and linguistically diverse community.

G. REVIEW AND REPORTING

This policy will be reviewed in accordance with the Board ~~of Education~~ policy review process.



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176 *Policy History:* Adopted by Resolution No. 287-74, May 28, 1974;  
177 amended by Resolution No. 268-76, May 11, 1976; amended by  
178 Resolution No. 346-06, July 18, 2006.

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