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but at every turn the Board seemed to want to narrow the discussion to salary and benefits. When the Board was forced by Council action to renegotiate the contract, the Board stuck to a hard-line position and did not look at non-salary ways of resolving the issue. It seemed to them that the sum total of negotiations and renegotiations was to squeeze MCEA out of having an impact on working conditions, the work day structure, and potential reforms in the school system. This was ironic because MCEA had championed the educational reform initiative from the beginning and had tried to grapple with the quality of education in the county. They felt the Board was trying to push them back to a narrow concern with salary and benefits.

Dr. Shoenberg replied that he could provide a personal response to this issue. It seemed to him that the problems MCEA talked about and the solutions were not without cost. For example, it cost something to relieve teachers of non-instructional duties. The Board had to take into consideration the impact of those costs on the money available to carry out programs. In his view it was not possible to do everything, particularly when the County Council did not fund the budget. The Board could have taken what the Council allocated, but it did not do that, and they knew the consequences of the budget cuts to accommodate salary increases beyond what the Council allocated. It did not seem to him to be reasonable to accuse the Board of being hard-nosed and unwilling to discuss issues when the Board was struggling to find cuts that would not be damaging to the instructional program. The vast majority of people communicating with Board members were more interested in money for programs than additional salaries for teachers.

Mr. Simon agreed that non-instructional duties did have a cost. However, if what Dr. Shoenberg said was true, they would have been faced with a choice of six percent and no non-instructional duties or seven percent and the duties. However, they were never presented with this option.

Mr. Goldensohn stated that he had been reasonably satisfied with the salary portion of the original contract, but he would have liked more for MCCSSE because of his concern about their members at the bottom of the scale. However, as a candidate for the County Council, he was now faced with questions about his support for teacher salaries and the overall county budget. He had told people he supported the salaries because they were a product of the collective bargaining process. The reality had set in when the Board was forced to cut positions to fund the contract.

Mr. Goldensohn explained that the Board had worked behind the scenes to support the budget, and he had heard criticism about that. In the early fall, they did not know what the fiscal picture would be. By December when they were at impasse with the

unions, the tax revolt had hit its peak. He did not think the Board had as much leeway as it had hoped. The Board attempted to spread out the impact and some of the instructional issues MCEA was interested in were lost as a result of compromise. He wanted to see the educational budget process change so that the Board had more control over finances to fund contracts that it had negotiated. He shared MCEA's frustration over the negotiations and funding processes. He, too, had an agenda of issues for negotiations which did not work out. He thought that in the future the Board should have a closer relationship with MCEA leadership during the negotiations process.

Mrs. Hobbs suggested establishing a buddy system between Board members and members of the Executive Board of MCEA. This could be an informal but frequent line of communication between the two groups. She was angered by some statements in the press that the Board did not do all it could to get the contract funded. She felt that this was an unfair charge because MCEA was not aware of all the things the Board did do. Mr. Seth Goldberg understood what she said about being angered, but there was a widespread position on the part of teachers that the Board did not support the contract.

Dr. Cronin stated that the Board had supported the Community Coalition and the efforts of MCEA to support the budget. He, too, was angered to read in the newspaper that the Board had not supported the budget when they had worked to get as much out of the process as they could. Dr. Shoenberg remarked that during this period he had started a consulting business and, although being a Board member was not supposed to be full-time, during the negotiations and budget process he was working full-time defending the budget at Council meetings and being in touch with Council members, all of which was to the detriment of his own income.

Mr. Ewing was glad they could talk about issues and seek cooperative approaches. He hoped that in the future the Board would see it as its job to propose and to fund actions designed to make teaching a truly professional career. They should find ways to utilize the training and ability of teachers in teaching and working with children rather than spending time supervising the lunch room. They needed professional development for teachers and time for teachers to work with other teachers and to plan activities. While they had done some of those things over time, he felt that the job was half done. He believed the Board did do what members felt was appropriate, but in the course of budget deliberations there were major disagreements over the scope of the budget. He hoped that in the future there would be a different focus and that they would make teaching a professional occupation.

Mr. Ewing thought the Board needed to take the initiative to reach out to MCEA and the teacher community and become advocates for what it believed. The Board also needed to examine the negotiations process. Although they were bound by law to negotiate, he was not satisfied with the process and did not believe it served the interests of the Board and MCEA. While the negotiations process was adversarial, it did not have to be antagonistic and bitter. Last year the process was bitter and highly personal. He hoped they could focus on the future and find a way to make teaching a better profession.

Mr. David Kahn commented that as he listened to the Board he was struck by the emphasis on finances. No one was happy with the process or the results of the budget, but MCEA was not here this evening because of the difference between four percent and seven percent. They were looking at the fundamental relationship between MCEA and the Board. MCEA represented the collective expertise of teachers, and they believed that teachers had a legitimate role in education and in changing the direction of education. When the recommendations of the Commission on Excellence started being implemented four years ago, he felt that things were beginning to happen. However, when they went into this round of bargaining, they were disillusioned because it was apparent that the only issue to be resolved was money. MCEA was going to continue to play a role in the issue of educational quality, but they would prefer to play this role in conjunction with MCPS and the Board of Education.

Dr. Cronin recalled that he and Mr. Simon had talked about a whole series of things. He saw a distinction between MCEA in bargaining versus the ways in which MCEA could be a force in educational issues. He and Mr. Simon had talked about going out to high school faculties and asking for views on what teachers thought students should know by the time they graduated. He had told Mr. Simon that there would be a role for MCEA in this process. This did not have to be at the bargaining table. For example, Mr. Goldberg had appeared before the Board on numerous occasions. However, when they got to bargaining the focus narrowed into dollars.

Mr. Kahn explained that when the Board refused to negotiate on certain issues teachers perceived the Board as paying only lip service to the involvement of teachers. Ms. Karen Craney reported that she had given of her own time to work on the staff development and professional development issues. The Board had put funds into the pilot programs, but in bargaining the Board refused to change the language in the contract to let teachers choose their courses for their own professional development.

Dr. Shoenberg noted that the Board got very little in the contract that was in furtherance of the Board's goals. Three

years ago one of the Board's issues was to encourage teachers to do graduate work in subject matter as opposed to work in skills development. Therefore, the Board was willing to put money in the contract with the limitation to which MCEA was objecting. The Board has not abandoned that goal and insisted on those limitations. He did not see this as being hypocritical. They had one situation where they had a pilot which was not the same as the purpose for the article in the MCEA contract.

Mr. Goldberg said the rule of thumb was to put down agreements on paper and have both sides sign off. However, they felt that when it came to certain issues, the Board pulled up short. One implication was that while the Board was willing to go along with some things, they wanted to retain control. He had been spending his time convincing teachers that the Board was sincere about school-based management, and he believed they were moving toward a partnership. Now it appeared to him that the Board had backed away from a commitment, and it was difficult for him to convince teachers of the Board's support.

Mr. Rick Bank reported that a lot of practical issues came out of the rank and file. They had focused on non-instructional duties during negotiations. He hoped that one thing would result from this evening's meeting which was that the Board would take their concerns seriously because they came from real people out in the classrooms. He was not offended by tough bargaining, but he did think there was a perception that MCEA came in with demands on a range of issues but was really only concerned with salary. The perception was that the other issues were only bargaining chips that would drop off the table for a chance at dollars. He was worried that the pressures for educational reform were not being dealt with in the bargaining area as they should be. He agreed that there were costs associated with these issues, but there should be tradeoffs. The issues were real to them, and negotiations was an important forum to get issues resolved.

Mr. Bank said that while the MCPS negotiators were top flight people, there was a difference between the negotiations process and renegotiations. During renegotiations there was an absolute refusal to discuss any issues other than salary. When they took the combination of an unwillingness to deal with these issues and the stylistics of the process, this damaged their ability to believe in the process. He indicated that many times they saw the cost issue as a facade for not dealing with other issues, and they felt that the real issue was control. They could not back off these issues because they were real issues. They had a good record of moving in positive directions, but they felt that this year was an unfortunate set-back. If they did not re-establish a sense of trust, they were all going to be in big trouble.

Ms. Phyllis Robinson pointed out that over the years the Board and MCEA had changed. The present Board of Directors of MCEA had made real efforts to work cooperatively; however, next year the composition of the MCEA Board was going to change and their leadership would change. Mr. Simon agreed that MCEA should be able to work with the present Board of Education and the Board should be able to work with MCEA, but the situation had to improve. He thought they needed publicity about joint efforts for educational reform and about the positive cooperation between MCEA and MCPS.

Dr. Shoenberg said that concern had been expressed that some of the Board's unwillingness to put things in the contract might be an issue of control, and he thought they were right. There was a limit to how much control a Board of Education could give up and still exercise its responsibilities. For example, decentralization of the decision-making process was an exercise in giving up authority. Therefore, they did these things tentatively and slowly. There was another aspect to this issue. MCEA was not the only group with which the Board was in partnership. While they did not have a contract with MCCPTA, they did have a working relationship. Therefore there were some issues they were unwilling to put in a contract with MCEA because they were matters of concern to other segments of the school community.

Mr. Charles Barkley agreed that the Board had some limits to the amount of control it gave up, but the perception was that the Board had not given up any control. One issue was the local school budget. He saw no reason why teachers could not know the amount of money the principal had to run the school, but no one was willing to share that information. Mr. Simon said this issue was raised in negotiations and was rejected by the Board. Dr. Pitt reported that no one had ever brought this to his attention. When he had been a principal, he had shared this information with his staff. Dr. Cronin commented that this wasn't something that needed to be in a contract because this was basic information that should be available. Dr. Pitt suggested that this should have been brought to his attention during his monthly meetings with MCEA.

Mr. Simon explained that they were meeting with the Board this evening because they perceived the Board was unwilling to work with MCEA and wanted to retain control. If this was not so, they needed to work out some avenues of cooperation. They felt that the recommendations of the Commission on Excellence had not been accepted by the Board. There were issues that had not been addressed, and they would like to see them addressed by task forces. They suggested groups on non-instructional duties and on educational reform, particularly school-based decision making.

Dr. Shoenberg remarked that he would be willing to consider ways in which the Board could be responsive to their request; however, they had to be conscious about how far they could go with these discussions without getting into an awkward situation. He was willing to make a commitment to have the Board consider ways to discuss this. He would also like to add a task force. While they had some good progress on the recommendations of the Commission, they had come to a stalemate on the issue of teacher evaluation.

Mr. Richard Jaworski pointed out that as far as site-based management was concerned, Montgomery County was probably the only major school system that had moved this far based on good faith. Time was moving along, and there would be new leadership and they were the only ones with nothing in writing. Teachers had volunteered hundreds of hours of their personal time to work on these programs, and if the program failed teachers would be unwilling to extend themselves in the future. Dr. Cronin thanked MCEA for Seth Goldberg's leadership in this area.

Dr. Shoenberg thanked MCEA for their straightforward presentation and hoped that the discussion had met their goals. Mr. Simon said the meeting had met their objectives because they did not expect it to lead to resolution. He hoped the Board would commit to the idea of setting up task forces to consider these issues. Dr. Cronin suggested that the Board officers consider this request at their next agenda-setting meeting.

Re: ADJOURNMENT

The president adjourned the meeting at 9:55 p.m.

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PRESIDENT

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SECRETARY

HP:mlw