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the achievement of students. At the final Board worksession the Board would try to formulate the kind of policies and programs to be included in a work plan, develop a timetable, and create a proposal to send out to the general public.

Mr. Ewing stated that the first half of the evening would be on the assessment of current programs, and the second half would be a discussion of desired outcomes. Dr. Pitt introduced Dr. Joy Frechtling, director of the Department of Educational Accountability, and Mrs. Marie Heck, assistant to Dr. Carl W. Smith, associate superintendent for human services.

Dr. Frechtling said it would be useful to provide the Board and the audience with background on the minority achievement plan. In 1983 the Board adopted five priorities, including Priority 2 which addressed the improvement of the achievement and participation of minority students. After staff meetings, 11 target areas were developed which were divided into goals for reading/language arts/writing, mathematics, participation in gifted and talented and honors programs, and participation in non-athletic extracurricular activities. Ambitious five-year goals were set based in part on the gap in achievement of the California Achievement Tests between Hispanic and black students and majority students. One goal was a gain of three NCE points a year, and another goal was to have 90 percent of all ninth graders pass the Maryland Functional Mathematics Test on the first try. They hoped at the end of five years to have parity among the performance of all students. The plan provided for flexibility for the individual schools to negotiate their own targets. Every year reports were presented on the progress of the system as a whole in reaching the 11 goals.

Dr. Frechtling indicated that in 1987 there was a major examination of the plan, and the results were kind of half full and half empty. In the area of functional math, the black passing rate improved by 33 percent, but the white passing rate improved by 21 percent. Therefore, the gap was not completely closed. While they never achieved the three NCE points on the CAT, all students had some gains which meant the gap was not closed. In 1987 they were moving from Superintendent Cody to Superintendent Pitt, and a consultant was brought in to look at the minority achievement plan. The consultant suggested that MCPS move to a progress model rather than a "closing-the-gap" model. In addition, as staff looked at the data they realized that they were not dealing with a problem of low achievement. Black and Hispanic students were achieving around the average, but white and Asian students were achieving way above the national average. They were looking at students who had by and large acquired the basic skills but needed that extra jump to have parity. At Dr. Pitt's direction, they brought a number of groups together to come up with proposed changes in the plan. Dr. Frechtling pointed out that at this point they were looking at black and Hispanic students because Asian students only became part of the plan in the fall of 1990. The new plan promoted

progress for each group of students. For example, they looked at the progress of average achieving black students over the last few years and found that about 12 percent moved out of the average range into the high range. Therefore, their progress goal was to have 15 percent of these students move up to Stanines 7 to 9. In addition to the progress goals, they cut back on the number of areas they were looking at as a result of recommendations from the minority community. Another change instigated by Dr. Pitt was that individual schools were not asked to adopt the same goals as the school system, and instead of systemwide reporting, the reports included data on each individual school.

Dr. Pitt added that he wanted to show progress school by school, and he thought this would be an incentive for schools to improve.

Dr. Frechtling reported that a series of affirmative action goals were added to the plan, and they had put stress on looking at whether programs worked or not which led to the successful practices component. In addition to the goals of achievement and participation, affirmative action, and successful practices, they developed a management and monitoring process.

Mrs. Heck reported that the management planning process was put in place in July, 1987 for the administrative areas and the central office. The process used had been developed by Dr. Vance in Area 1. It measured the progress toward meeting the accountability goals, and the monitoring components were done by associate superintendents. Accountability goals had been set in reading, mathematics, gifted and talented, and algebra 1 participation. At the school level there were goals for attendance, suspensions, participation in non-athletic extracurricular activities, and parent outreach programs. Support for the process was provided through a series of internal and external reviews, which were conducted by teams composed of parents, community, and staff members. Additional support for monitoring was provided through internal management reports on racial and ethnic groups which reflected achievement of the goals. The management planning process was currently being adapted to support the school improvement component of the Maryland School Performance Program (MSPP).

Dr. Frechtling stated that the second part was what they knew now and what they had done. The Board had received the accountability report last fall, and it was a mixed bag. They had done well on Project Basic and gifted/talented and honors. She thought a lot of them were still disappointed in the area of achievement because the goal for the average achieving minority student had not been firmly met. In regard to affirmative action, those goals had been met.

Dr. Frechtling indicated that Ms. Gutierrez had provided staff with a matrix to present information on what the program was,

whom it served, the target students, the evaluation, etc. Staff had provided the Board with a summary of about 20 projects which were selected because they ran the gamut of activities that had been launched to support minority achievement and participation.

They had staff representatives in the audience who were prepared to answer questions about their programs.

Mrs. Fanconi asked how they were going to use Dr. Gordon's expertise. Mr. Ewing replied that Board members could ask questions of Dr. Gordon or he could join in when he wanted to say something. Ms. Gutierrez said that part of the focus should be on some of the points brought up by Dr. Gordon. For example, Dr. Gordon had stated that there were good efforts going on, but these efforts were not coordinated and were not systemwide.

Dr. Pitt commented that this was a valid criticism. While they had had a systemwide monitoring plan and systemwide goals, they had started with the schools making judgments about their youngsters, adapting programs from other schools, or initiating programs. However, they had decided that if a school was not successful, there was no good in adhering to their selected program. He pointed out that interestingly the same program would be successful in one school and not in another. Therefore, they had set up the successful practices approach and a method of evaluating these practices. Mr. Ewing had criticized this, probably with some validity. Last year Dr. Pitt had told schools that if there hadn't been success, the school must move into one of the successful practices. They did not impose systemwide programs, but allowed some local flexibility with systemwide evaluation goals.

Dr. Frechtling remarked that one of the national trends now was school-based decision making and school-based management. This supported the idea of professionals at the local level making decisions about their own program. She found the idea of having a menu of successful practices for a school to select from to be consistent with the idea of school-based empowerment. She explained that one of the reasons why educational research was inconclusive was that something that worked someplace didn't necessarily work someplace else. She was in favor of the menu approach and having the school system available to assist the schools in adapting a program for their own purpose. She did not think that they could pick four or five things and impose them on every school, and Dr. Gordon agreed.

Dr. Pitt stated that it was his thought that if they had a good reporting system and were able to show a lack of success, they could be more directive and tell the schools they had to do something which had been successful in a school with a similar population.

Mrs. Hobbs inquired about attendance at the most recent worksessions on flexibility pilots. Mrs. Kitty Blumsack, staff

development specialist, reported that at the first session three people showed up from three different groups, and at the second session there were about 15 people. Dr. Pitt explained that he was not talking about the flexibility pilots, but local school efforts on minority student achievement.

Dr. Cheung complimented Dr. Frechtling and Mrs. Heck in preparing the documents for this meeting which gave the Board a concise view of programs. He felt that the grid suggested by Ms. Gutierrez was needed to see the interrelationships of the various programs, and he asked whether staff could provide a grid. Dr. Frechtling commented that the matrix was extremely helpful in preparing their summary and seeing the various levels of coordination as well as who was responsible for management and who was responsible for programmatic development.

In regard to successful practices, Dr. Frechtling stated that this program had an identification component and a dissemination component. The identification part was built on the federal model. DEA provided assistance to principals and school staffs to build a case on how their program was working so that the program could be presented to a panel. Before presentation, there had to be evidence that the program was working. Dr. Frechtling was pleased about the number of schools that had asked DEA to help build evaluations in order to see whether their program was working. Some of these schools were not even involved in the successful practices program. If a practice had enough evidence that it was successful, DEA helped the school assemble the data to present to a validation panel. For the panel they used people from other metropolitan school systems as well as the federal government. The school presented the program and responded to questions from the panel. If a school was validated, they received a \$5,000 grant to be used in any way they wanted. The only stipulation was that the school would make staff members available for training other school staffs.

Mrs. Blumsack agreed that this was a wonderful program. She reported that when she started designing the training she asked principals their views on what made these programs work. All successful practices had a principal with a vision of what the school could be for all students. In elementary schools the principals had a leadership team to look at problems in the schools and to suggest solutions. A third element was that training was provided when needed. The fourth component was monitoring by the principals and the leadership team. The last component was that a successful practice took a lot of time. Staff development was now training principals on vision, culture, and leadership and asking them to look at practices that would best fit their schools. After that they trained the leadership teams in the schools, and these teams usually consisted of four to six individuals who were not necessarily all teachers.

Mrs. Blumsack stated that tomorrow she would be taking the leadership teams out to look at different schools to see practices in action. After those visits, the team would decide what practice to use in their school or what practice to adapt for their school. She reported that 15 of the first 24 schools in the program were using some form of cooperative learning, and other schools were using student recognition, monitoring programs, the PADI program, and the math program.

Mrs. Fanconi commented that while the program is exciting to staff, it seemed to her that the Gordon report suggested they need to work on improved dissemination or not doing as many programs. Dr. Gordon replied that one of the interesting things about MCPS was that it had some excellent people and some excellent programs. However, the problem was that in many instances these programs seemed to exist in isolation and seemed to have relatively little effect on the climate of the entire school. In addition, they did not have data on the outcome in terms of student achievement as a result of the program. Dr. Frechtling had reported that the data were now being collected. Dr. Gordon said he had received reports that many of the people in the schools with the better programs were unaware of these programs. Some of the people involved in the programs were not sufficiently familiar with the programs, and the leadership seemed to be relatively vague with respect to the program.

Dr. Gordon stated that all of this led them to the conclusion that while they had good people and good programs what was lacking was the glue to put these pieces together and make them work. He was not sure that time spent this evening reviewing each of these pieces was going to be too productive because they would hear from people who were knowledgeable about the programs, and a lot of these programs were as good as anything else in the country. He felt that the problem was at another level.

In regard to resources, Dr. Gordon thought that one of the underutilized capacities was the DEA staff. They could be turned loose to provide the kind of data that better informed the Board and the staff, and it would be money well spent. He hoped that the Board would be able to provide Dr. Frechtling with these resources. In looking at the successful practices, he said it was very discouraging to see little information on which to make judgments. He particularly liked the effective schools model although he recognized the limitations of transferring this from school to school. He also liked the idea of using the people who were doing the successful practice to train other staffs, and Dr. Pitt indicated that they were trying to do this although it was a time-consuming and labor-intensive process.

Mrs. Brenneman stated that she liked the narrative presentation rather than a grid. There were educational issues that couldn't be plugged into a grid but which could be described in a

narrative. She would like to hear some discussion on the algebra program because there were at least four programs described in the paper before the Board. She wondered whether the pre-algebra programs were working and whether students were going on to take advanced level mathematics courses.

Dr. Pitt recalled that about a year ago he had said that almost every youngster should have at least algebra and geometry. Mrs. Katheryn Gemberling, associate superintendent for instruction and program development, had picked up on this goal and started moving.

Mrs. Gemberling recounted that last year they brought in all principals, math resource teachers, and counselors for three sessions. They were shown how to interpret the data for their schools in terms of enrollment by race and by gender so that they could compare their school with other schools in the county. Then the clusters got together so that the feeder school and the high school could look at common data, and from that the clusters formed an articulation plan for the coming year. They then invited schools to volunteer to use one of the models presented by the consultant from Berkeley, particularly the double-period model. They ended up with seven schools volunteering, and each school chose how they would implement this goal. Two of the schools made the decision that they were not offering introduction to algebra; therefore, students in ninth grade had to take algebra, but for those identified for introduction to algebra a second period was provided. Schools gave credit for this and worked on reinforcing algebra skills, organizational skills, study skills, and cooperative learning. There were a total of 15 teachers involved across the seven schools.

Mrs. Gemberling said that MCPS provided constant in-service training, reinforcement, and support to the teachers during the year. At the end of the semester, teachers went on a retreat to discuss the program. Mrs. Gemberling indicated that they had just reviewed the data from the program. The goal was that students in the project should have scores close to those of students previously selected for algebra. The reality was that the scores were the same or better by some racial groups. The program was more successful than they had anticipated, and they were working with other schools for the coming year.

Mrs. Brenneman asked whether they had the sense one model was more successful than the others. Mrs. Gemberling replied that she and Ms. Joy Odom, mathematics supervisor, liked the broad base where schools said that ninth graders would take algebra. The teachers were revising their models somewhat for the coming year.

Dr. Gordon said there were several critical elements to this. One was the commitment on the part of staff that they were going

to teach these students and the other was that it worked when groups of teachers decided to do this. This happened to be one of the programs that had data available, and he felt that they were very impressive data.

It seemed to Mrs. Brenneman that in this case they were expecting excellence from their students. She thought that this was a program they should consider as one way to go when they came to their final decisions. They should consider expanding this to other schools because they had data showing this was a successful program not only for the students but for the staff who had expectations that all students would succeed in algebra. Dr. Pitt agreed that they needed to set a system expectation that all youngsters could learn in these subjects. Mrs. Brenneman said this could be a focus because they had the data rather than having one program here and another one there.

Dr. Cheung reported that as he had listened to the discussion he had drafted a grid on the first four programs in the narrative. He shared the results of the grid with the Board describing the targets, the costs, the duration, the evaluation, etc. He pointed out that the development of such a grid would help the Board develop policy. He felt that the staff should take the next step and develop a grid for Board members.

In regard to algebra, Dr. Gordon reported that a couple of people had criticized his report because he did not recommend that MCPS do away with tracking. He assumed that people reading his report would know that he did not think tracking was the way to go. The interesting part about the algebra program was that it picked up students who normally would be tracked out of algebra, and some of these students were now getting A's in algebra. He did not see any evidence that was stronger evidence against tracking.

Mrs. Fanconi said that Dr. Gordon had stated that the way the Board was going about this might not be the best way to do that. She asked what his suggestions would be for changing the format. Dr. Gordon suggested that staff might want to speak to the accuracy of his impression that the glue was missing. If those perceptions were correct, they should speak to what was needed to make these good ideas work better. Mrs. Fanconi said they should also speak to the current budget constraints in offering their suggestions.

It seemed to Dr. Pitt that they were dealing with a moving target. They had evolved somewhat into trying to do exactly what Dr. Gordon was suggesting which was focusing on an issue across the system. He thought that the algebra program would be in every high school shortly because the commitment was to do that.

Ms. Gutierrez suggested that one way of doing this would be to say that next fall there would be no more introduction to

algebra. Dr. Pitt thought they had to pick up on three or four areas and try to go across the system with them. Algebra was relatively easy to evaluate, and others might be more difficult but they needed an evaluation component they could all agree on.

In regard to Dr. Gordon's statement that the glue to keep the programs together and moving was missing, Mr. Ewing asked what it was that the system needed to do to respond to that criticism. Dr. Pitt replied that he could argue with some of the criticism, but essentially he did not disagree with the idea that needed to have components across the board. He again suggested picking up three or four strands and moving with them. He saw them as having a lot of creative people who eventually might come up with results, but that would take a long time and there would be failures along the way. There had to be a faster, more accurate, and more organized way to approach this issue.

Ms. Gutierrez asked how the system could take advantage of the success of the algebra program, particularly in view of the fact that there were students out there who were not benefitting from such a program. She wondered whether there was some way the system could move more quickly to build on this practice and the lesson learned. She asked if they were recommending that next year they would move away from the introduction to algebra course.

Ms. Odom explained that in order to make the program work they had to have commitment on the part of staff. They had 15 teachers who all chose to do this differently. As other schools learned of this success, they would want to be involved. Other schools staffs were afraid to become involved. It was a real time-consuming commitment on the part of teachers, and it came down to the school and the teachers wanting to make this commitment.

Ms. Gutierrez stated that she would have a problem if MCPS did not demand that commitment. She did not see students not having access to algebra because the teachers did not want to give this a try. Ms. Odom recalled the movie, "Stand and Deliver," where the mathematics program started a successful program and other departments became involved after the math program proved itself. She thought they would see that happen in MCPS. She felt that the encouraging part was all the teachers said they would do it again despite the time commitment. Other teachers in these schools and other schools were not interested in the program.

Dr. Pitt did not think they had to wait until the teachers volunteered. They could say they were going to do this and give a lot of support to people. He did not think they could just sit there and say if you didn't want to do it, you didn't have to do it.

Mrs. Fanconi agreed that they had to have high expectations for teachers, but they should not forget that that teacher was in charge of that classroom. If teachers were forced into something, they would get a very different product. She would see content area support as one piece of this as well as staff development in terms of attitudes towards students' learning capabilities and strategies for working with different kinds of students. She was concerned because this was an area they kept cutting into, and when they cut at the central office they were cutting into this very critical area. Therefore, they should keep this in mind when they came to the next series of budget cuts. Dr. Pitt pointed out that all of these people were considered administrators, and not every teacher of the 7,000 was exposed to the services of these people. While Dr. Cheung agreed that teachers had to be provided with support, he felt they should also look to the community and parents about providing tutorial programs.

Mrs. Hobbs inquired about the class size for the double period algebra. Ms. Odom replied that the class sizes ranged from 14 to 30 students. However, teachers believed that the ideal class size should be between 20 to 25 students to enable them to group students. She encouraged Board members to visit the program, and she related that the last time she visited the program, students asked her for help, not even knowing who she was.

Dr. Pitt commented that training was key. Math teachers taught in a certain way, and typically they used a blackboard and a lot of directive work. Teaching the concept of cooperative learning was a very different style for them. Ms. Odom added that teachers had five substitute days and nine evening meetings. It was not just a one-year training program because in the first year teachers had to be taught to believe they could do this. The second year would be to talk about the "how's" of the program.

Mrs. Brenneman inquired about the parent reaction. Ms. Odom replied that part of the program was that the parents would be involved and kept informed. However, they were a little bit disappointed that parents were not visiting the program, but teachers felt that this would happen.

*Mrs. Brenneman left the meeting at this point.

Mr. Ewing announced that the second part of the meeting would focus on what they needed to do to move from where they were to where they wanted to be.

Dr. Vance asked Dr. Gordon to comment on what would be his counsel and his cautions as they moved forward to implement successful or promising practices. Dr. Gordon shared the reservation about imposing ideas on teachers. In general it was

the function of the Board to set policy, and on this issue he thought the Board should state that it was their intent that students be given the opportunity to be exposed to more advanced course work. It would be the spirit of what was happening in algebra applied to the rest of the curriculum. They had to encourage teachers to indicate their readiness to try this and indicated the Board's willingness to support these teachers. As staff realized it was the Board's policy and support was available, it would be embarrassing to the schools that decided they did not want to do this. In addition, families would put pressure on schools when they realized these programs were available in other schools. If over time they continued to have pockets of staff who did not see themselves capable of following Board policy, the Board should find ways to separate these people or give them different assignments.

Dr. Pitt agreed and thought that once policy was established there would be a great incentive to move in this direction. Dr. Gordon added that if this were policy they had to make sure people knew that resources were available to them so they would be more confident about moving in this direction. What they didn't want was students taking algebra and flunking because no one knew how to implement the program or cared about implementing the program.

Mrs. Fanconi asked if Dr. Gordon could provide the Board with some cautions about any of their proposed directives. They needed to be sure that they pulled in all the pieces when they did that planning. She had a particular bias about seeing more teacher-to-teacher support programs similar to what they did in mentoring first year teachers. However, she realized that this was also very costly. Dr. Gordon replied that one of the things was to make sure they had a student data management system that permitted them to quickly identify students for whom the programs were not working. For example, they might see a student with a perfect attendance record who was flunking everything. They had to have a way of moving quickly in this situation to see whether the student was just unable to do the work or whether it was something the learning experience was not providing. Dr. Pitt commented that they were going to have to be very creative in finding ways to do this given their fiscal situation. Part of the potential for doing this involved good supervisory support.

Dr. James Moone, chair of the Board's committee, stated that they were impressed with Dr. Gordon's report. He felt that the report was written in such a way that it was easy to understand what was happening in the school system. It was also clear that they had many outstanding programs that were abandoned before they had a chance to blossom. They had so many educational experts out there who had a hypothesis they wanted to try, and he wondered whether they could go back and look at some of those programs rather than invent new ones. He asked whether they could look at

those programs, talk to the participants, and study the findings of those plans. Dr. Moone pointed out that it used to be that teachers were taught to nurture students so that students felt comfortable in the educational environment. Now there was very little nurturing with students to build that psychological confidence, and minority students needed this, Hispanic students probably more than anyone else.

Dr. Gordon agreed that they probably could go back and look at these programs, but it might be that this was too strong a criticism in his report. It might be that they had to regularly change the model in order to get people enthusiastic about trying new ideas. He hoped that they had enough of an institutional history not to lose the best of the programs because some teachers thought MCPS was giving up interesting ideas too quickly. In the case of algebra, he felt that the leadership and resource support were likely to guarantee its continuance. He was increasingly persuaded that they needed to take some lessons from athletic coaches. Coaches motivated, kept players interested, and raised goals. He had just attended a meeting where it was pointed out that while they could legislate justice, they could not legislate caring. Somehow they had to create conditions for people that facilitated and encouraged caring. They had to create a climate where if a teacher did not demonstrate nurturing and caring the environment would be such that the teacher's colleagues would show disapproval; therefore, the teacher was very likely to bring his or her attitude into line with expected behavior.

In regard to nurturing, Dr. Moone remarked that somehow they had taught students how to fail and how to fear. They had not instilled a "can-do" attitude in students, rather it was "you can't make it." Minority students, in particular, heard "this is too tough for you." He asked how the teacher could be trained to do that nurturing. Business and the federal government brought people in and trained them, and these people were expected to meet certain standards. He asked what it was about education that gave teachers so much liberty that they felt they knew more than the supervisors who were there to help teachers. He believed that until they had that element on track students would continue to have a problem. For example, they had disbanded H.R. 18 and a lot of other programs that would have put them 20 miles down the road.

Dr. Gordon thought it was possible for the Board to make nurturance a part of the expected professional behavior of staff and for supervisors and colleagues to let people know this was expected. It was even possible to show people how to be supportive of young people, but he did not know how they could force staff to do this. Dr. Moone thought the Board could adopt a policy to get at nurturing and teacher expectations.

In regard to nurturing, Ms. Gutierrez pointed out that they now had the algebra program to focus on. They could say they had learned that students had been mistyped and identified as not being capable of doing algebra, but in reality the students were capable. She wondered if they could go back and see how they got to this erroneous conclusion. Dr. Gordon agreed that they could learn from their past experiences if this could be documented. As far as nurturing, it would be his strategy to treat people as humanely as possible, put them in an environment that made humane behavior the expected thing, and have people around them model the humane behavior. However, in the final analysis if teachers did not want to do this and did not understand that their survival depended on it, that teacher would not be a nurturing person. This did not mean they did not adopt policies stating that part of the professional responsibility was supporting and nurturing students no matter who they were.

Mrs. Fanconi agreed that they needed to treat staff as professionals. Next year they were going to have an uphill battle because they were not going to be able to add in incentives, but there were some things they could do that did not cost much. For example, they could no longer require teachers to sign in and out which teachers felt was degrading. They also needed to say they had new requirements and new resources for the professional. She was sure that the staff development people had a half a dozen ways of getting people to evaluate their own biases because teachers had very powerful influences on children. She suggested they needed to look at all the training days they had and do zero-based training days so that they could use these days wisely.

Dr. Gordon commented that a colleague of his had stated that if students were in an environment they perceived to be hostile then learning wasn't going to be as effective. If teachers were teaching in an environment they perceived to be hostile, their teaching would reflect that.

Dr. Pitt remarked that in mathematics there was an attitude that had developed over a number of years, not just toward minority students but majority students as well. It was that not every student could learn mathematics and not every one could learn algebra. He pointed out that in some college classes it was stated that half of the students would not be there at the end of the year because they were going to fail. The attitude was if a student did not learn, it was his or her fault. The attitude should be that everyone could learn. Math was not some strange language that people could not learn. Students could learn this. The second issue was the way students were taught had a lot to do with how they learned, not just in terms of expectations but in the processes used. In this case they had change from a teacher writing a formula on the board to having a group of students working together to solve a problem. Nurturing was

getting the message across that someone believed in the student and expected that student could do the work. The third issue was judging not on how many failed, but on how well people did. Dr. Gordon commented that there was an impression among students that too many teachers conveyed just the opposite message, particularly toward minority students. But he agreed with Dr. Pitt, that minority students were not the only ones receiving this message.

Mr. Ewing pointed out that they had not talked a great deal about how the community perceived the situation and what their expectations were. He also wanted to speak to the point of view of the policy maker. He thought that the school system had caused immense frustration in the community by raising expectations that they could not deliver on. The community felt that the system was now doing a little of this, a little of that, and more of the same. He asked how they made change in an environment like this and made it happen so it was effective. He believed there was a substantial disconnect between the way in which the Board was making change and the environment within which that was occurring. The environment was full of impatience, and the Board was making leisurely change as if such impatience were not even there. While he was bothered by that, he did not think they should issue draconic directives, the consequence of ignoring which would be instant dismissal.

Mr. Ewing thought they needed a different approach to change. The component that could make change take root and live without draconic directives was leadership. Leadership would be compelling without being overwhelmingly directive. It could articulate the necessity for change and lay out the parameters within which people ought to work. He remarked that when people encountered a problem which did not lend itself to easy solutions, they tended to innovate, but at some point people ought to stop doing that as a problem-solving technique. This should be an inquiry technique. Research was learning from a series of steps and building on those, although research also involved unanticipated breakthroughs. He was not sure MCPS learned from what they did, and this was suggested by Dr. Gordon's report. They didn't have the resources and the information to learn from experience. They had to have good evidence of what it was they did and why it worked. They also had to know why they did it and what was the hypothesis.

For example, Mr. Ewing asked why they believed algebra was so important. There was some research that showed taking and passing algebra at an early point in one's high school career was probably the best single indicator of success in college. However, they didn't often address themselves to problems with a clearly stated hypothesis. They just pursued good ideas and made local choices. That was fine, but local choices needed to be informed, and when the choice was made, people needed to be

trained. He hoped the Board would build in training. People needed to know what the hypothesis was, what they were trying to accomplish and why, and what the expectations might be. He had great confidence that MCPS staff could understand this.

Mr. Ewing thought it was time for the Board to begin to sum up what they knew and make some choices. There had been discussion about pursuing only four or five things, and he agreed that they ought to do this and do it well. He felt that they were at a point where the community's level of confidence in MCPS was very low. If they continued to pursue a thousand and one initiatives, this would not change. The algebra initiative had the potential for being one thing they did well which could instill confidence. Another reason for picking only a few things was that they could only afford to evaluate a small number of things really well. It was important to know what was working and why.

Mr. Ewing believed that people would no longer be satisfied to have a few good initiatives going on in a few schools. They wanted their children to have access to good programs to help children in every class in MCPS. He thought it was time to be directive and say what their policies were going to be. They could pursue four or five things and do those well. They had to say to people in the school system, these are the things we are going to do. If there was an implied threat here, then there was. The schools were supported by public funds, and the public had a right to expect that quality and availability for services were there for everyone. It was the job of the Board of Education to give overall direction to the school system. They couldn't change if they were only prepared to do more of the same. They were at a point when they could not afford to do this financially, politically, or morally. If there were people who were not persuaded by the leadership that this change must be made, then these people were going to be uncomfortable in the school system.

Mr. Ewing stated that he was distressed that seven and a half years after the Board adopted priorities in the summer of 1983 they had not made enough progress to overcome the major difficulties. He did not deny that they had many good programs and wonderful staff people, but they did not have a set of programs that worked effectively for all children, and certainly not for all minority children. He thought that the message in the Gordon report was that they needed fundamental changes in the school system.

Ms. Gutierrez still had that sense of a gap between the speed at which MCPS moved and the speed at which the public wanted it to move and was expecting it to move. She agreed that the place to start was at the leadership level, and she sensed that currently they had a bottom-up approach. While this was effective in getting commitment of staff, without top-down leadership they

would end up with some things working and some things not working. She asked Dr. Frechtling to focus on programs that had the highest potential and why she thought they had the highest potential.

Dr. Frechtling replied that she felt inadequate to do this because some of the programs had not been thoroughly evaluated. Ms. Gutierrez asked why they had made a decision to have long-term evaluations. Dr. Frechtling replied that in the first year of a program, people were getting familiar with it. The second year the program got established and the bugs were worked out. In the third and fourth year they got the program delivered that they had envisioned in the first place. About the third year they could begin to collect data in which they had confidence in terms of student outcomes. She believed it was a three-year cycle from the start-up of a program until they could put the dip stick in with confidence and say a program was or wasn't working. However, in the meantime they could be surveying teachers, doing observations, and looking at other indicators. To answer the question of whether a program was going to result in change in students took time.

Dr. Cheung said he was hearing that they evaluated whether a student learned by looking at outcomes and the way to measure outcomes was to develop tests. He asked whether they were saying the concept of testing was wrong or what they were testing was wrong. He asked whether they had tests to measure higher level skills and thinking rather than just the recall of facts. He thought there was nothing wrong with tests, but maybe they had a problem in how they tested. He asked what Dr. Frechtling would do if she had a magic wand to measure outcomes.

Dr. Frechtling believed that they had relied on single tests and single indicators much too much. It has been part of their desire to have a quick and simple answer. She was sure that the Board was aware of the controversy going on in testing right now. The issue was the California type of multiple choice tests versus performance assessments. She thought that the jury was still out because they did not know whether the new tests would fulfill the promise people thought they had. She felt that their best strategy was to look at things in a multi-dimensional viewpoint. They had to look at simplified multiple choice tests, observations by professionals, assessments of products such as a portfolio, etc. She thought they needed to take a richer look which would give them more of a chance of learning their outcomes and which would assist them in getting more of a cause and effect relationship.

Dr. Pitt reported that the State of Maryland had moved into a very strong testing mode using criterion-referenced tests. Montgomery County and other school systems in the state would be judged on how well students did on these new tests. The tests

were supposed to be designed to measure what should be taught. It did not measure how students did in relation to other students. It measured how well a student did in relation to what was being taught. This made a lot of sense to him, but the question was whether the test was a good instrument. It was his opinion that every LEA in the state would have no choice but to make sure teachers did a very good job of teaching whatever the tests measured. The state was going to set some arbitrary standard of what was successful, and all LEAs would be measured against that standard.

Dr. Cheung thought that there was a better way of doing this. He suggested using pre- and post-tests to see what students learned and how students achieved. Dr. Pitt commented that they needed to discuss this further. The criterion-referenced test was trying to make a judgment about how much a youngster had learned at a certain grade level. It did not make the assumption that students came into a grade at different levels. The test just showed the end result. He believed that MCPS would have to use other measures along with this kind of test.

Mrs. Fanconi was concerned about whether the Board was making the best use of Dr. Gordon's time. She proposed changing the format of the meetings and asking Dr. Gordon to run a session drawing out ideas from the Board. Mr. Ewing thought it would be a mistake to ask Dr. Gordon to run any sessions. The Board had before it a set of recommendations, and the Board ought to be making decisions about what those recommendations ought to be. Mrs. Fanconi explained that she had a personal need to gain from Dr. Gordon's expertise and knowledge, and she would like to discuss a way to involve him more. Dr. Gordon explained that he attended these sessions because he wanted to be helpful. If the way he was being used was not helpful to the Board, then the Board should find some other way of using him. He would like to see the Board come to the recommendation session as quickly as it could. He had the sense the community needed to hear from the Board as soon as it could, but he agreed that the Board should not be rushing in such a way as to make an inappropriate response.

Ms. Gutierrez shared Mrs. Fanconi's frustration. She had hoped they would do more sharing of assessments and have a better understanding of what they had and what they needed to change. Dr. Gordon said that while he thought the discussion on algebra 1 was interesting, he did not think the issue was whether the Board was going to mandate algebra 1 across the system. The question was what was it about that program that spoke to what policy issues the Board ought to be considering. They might ask the same question with respect to other programs. Unfortunately they did not have the data to make a judgment about the effectiveness of these programs in terms of student outcomes, but there might be some notions buried in these programs that the Board could use

to distill policy. Dr. Gordon recalled that on several occasions he had said he would prefer not to come up with a program for the Board. He would help the Board come up with a program, but he thought the people living with the problem were the people who ought to be telling the Board what they ought to do.

Mr. Ewing remarked that he was in his fifteenth year as a Board member and making policy was an immensely frustrating activity. It was a very complex, difficult, and confusing arena where there were multiple points of view. There were not two sides to these issues; there were 25 sides to these issues, and the issues were political, fiscal, administrative, organizational, research, evaluation, etc.

Mrs. Fanconi explained that her learning style was very different. She would get a great deal out of watching Dr. Gordon brainstorming with a group of staff and citizens. This would help her see all the possibilities and the pro's and con's. She felt that she did not have the background to do all that was expected. Dr. Pitt did not think this was the Board's job. While Board members needed to have a good information background, they needed to come up with a broad outline of basic things they wanted the staff to do. They needed to state the goals and let people with some expertise come up with the plan for accomplishing those goals. Mrs. Fanconi pointed out that she was a brand new Board member, and she needed to see how the pieces fit together before she as part of the Board could direct the superintendent to come back with a plan. Part of her frustration was not having all the information she needed to do her job to her satisfaction. Dr. Pitt thought that five years from now she would still have that same frustration. He agreed that the Board faced enormous problems, but staff had to help solve the problems at the direction of the Board.

Dr. Cheung felt that Dr. Gordon's report provided the road map for the Board to get to the improvement in minority student achievement. He respected the educational experts on the staff, and he wondered whether they could distill the information in such a way to show the programs that had more of a chance to be successful and those that had a better chance to implement what Dr. Gordon was recommending. If they could provide some reactions to programs, the Board might be able to choose from all the elements and make policy. Staff knew whether resources were available or whether staff expertise was available. They could provide a number of options that the Board could judge in terms of what policy it was going to make. He was frustrated because there seemed to be too many things to consider, and he did not want to have to look at the micro aspects to find the facts. He asked how they could improve the working relationships to get the information he needed to make policy.

Dr. Pitt explained that the Board had to set some goals and say

this was where they wanted the system to be and these were the major focuses the Board wanted to move on. They should list some of the things they expected staff to do such as have a coordinated program. It was the superintendent's responsibility to carry out policy, and it then became the Board's obligation to observe how well the superintendent was doing this and possibly stepping in with more direction. Dr. Cheung asked if he was saying that the five priorities were not clear enough without the directions to implement them. If they said they wanted to improve minority student achievement, did they have to go on to the next step. Dr. Pitt thought the Board had to be more directive than simply making the statement, but the Board did not have to say to staff these are the specific programs to carry out. For example, Dr. Gordon has stated that the focus was too broad. The Board's direction to the superintendent might be narrow the focus, focus in their particular areas, narrow the programs initiated, and recognize that this had to be done within existing resources.

Ms. Gutierrez felt that the Board had done this twice already. They had some very clear goals, clear measures, and very specific instructions. Dr. Pitt explained that as superintendent he had pretty much set those goals. The Board could have a superintendent who would do that again, but he thought the Board had to give a little more direction. With the exception of Mr. Ewing, all he heard from the Board was that they wanted to improve minority student achievement. It seemed to Ms. Gutierrez that whatever the Board had done before was not right. Before they set the next goals, they had an obligation to make sure there was a better chance those would work. They had to ask some real questions here. For example, was the way they were organized now to implement these programs the most effective way? Dr. Gordon had suggested they did need to reorganize and needed more resources. They had to discuss all of this before they came up with a policy.

Dr. Pitt remarked that they could not expect to have a superintendent develop a plan, have the Board approve the plan, and later said they disagreed with the evaluation process or the goals. The Board had to buy the plan. Mr. Ewing said he would like to defend the staff here. In 1983 and in 1987, the Board adopted plans at the recommendation of the superintendents. In both cases, many Board members grew discontented with the plans.

It seemed to him that what Dr. Pitt was saying was this time the Board had to take some of the responsibility for defining what it was that the Board wanted. Therefore, when the Board adopted the plan it would be theirs. If it didn't go well, the Board would have to face up to adopting a policy that did not work very well.

Dr. Pitt agreed and added that in this case the Board would have to sit down with the superintendent, evaluate the situation and change course. They couldn't stick the superintendent out there by himself. They had to have some goals the Board and the superintendent thought they could achieve. The superintendent and the Board had to be in this together and be supportive of one another. He thought they had to have a plan that was

coordinated, focused on a few things, emphasized training, and was clearly spelled out for the public to understand. Finally, everyone should think that it was a good idea. He pointed out that a few years ago they came out with a list of budget improvements and, while people might argue about the speed of implementation, there was still agreement that the focus was right. This was the kind of approach they needed, and if the focus was wrong, they all had to change it.

Mrs. Fanconi explained that in order for her to be specific about goals, she needed to go through a process that allowed her to do what she did best and what she believed she was elected to do. They needed everyone in a room show that she could hear all sides, and after that she could put it all together. For example, when she did police budgets, she knew they would not get additional police officers until they did the planning to add the police cars, the guns, the desks, and the training. If she could have all the people together and see all the pieces, she could set goals.

Mr. Ewing explained that he wanted to hear from everybody, but he wanted to make sure that when he made the decision people understood the task had to get done. If people didn't have the tools, they were going to have to figure out some other way of getting the job done. This was an important perspective of a policy maker. If they lost that, they would be defeated before they started by the objections of people who didn't want to do it in the first place. Mrs. Fanconi thought it had to be a conscious decision not to provide the tools. They should not leave anything out because they forgot to consider it.

Mr. Edgar Gonzalez, a member of the minority student education committee, commented that the new superintendent named by the Board was the key here. It was not just saying that this was what they needed. It was following up on this and giving that message time after time. It had to be clear that what the Board said was what was going to be done by that teacher in Takoma Park, Potomac, Bethesda, or wherever.

Dr. Moone remarked that the committee could be an antenna for the Board of Education. They had monitored the Gordon report, and in listening to the community, it was the community view that they were drifting now. They had heard Mr. Ewing's dissertation that it was better to do it right the first time, but he thought the right signal had to be sent to the community that the Board of Education believed in this document. Unless the Board addressed some of the pertinent issues in the back of the minds of the community and the staff, there would continue to be misunderstandings and the belief that nothing would happen. He thought that the report ought to become the bible of teaching minority children. The committee hoped that the right signals would be sent from the Board that some new directions were taking place and that the leadership was there.

Dr. Moone noted that the report didn't get totally into the issue

of the black male. Prior to integration the black male was nurtured in the segregated school system because he was seen as the leader. After integration, black teachers and administrators in many instances did not even identify with the black male and would expel him before they would expel a majority student. He felt they had to send out the signal that it was okay to say positive things to the black male to make him feel that he was somebody.

Mr. Ewing said that Board members were well aware of the level of impatience in the community. He thought it was also important to recognize that the Board had a schedule for making decisions. The Board would follow that schedule, and the Board would take action. He believed that the Board should not regard Dr. Gordon's report as a bible, but as an extraordinarily valuable set of recommendations by a man of extraordinary wisdom. When the Board began this process, they stated that they were going to address not only the Gordon report but other reports and recommendations that had been before the Board for years and on which the Board had not taken action. While he could support much in the Gordon report, there were recommendations he could not support. The public elected the Board to exercise its judgment, and they would do that in a timely fashion. If the Board made mistakes, the public would let them know about it. He wanted it clear that the monkey was on the Board's back, and they would take all of the advice received and blend it into a recipe for MCPS.

Mrs. Hobbs asked that the Board acknowledge and thank the staff in the audience this evening. Mr. Ewing thanked everyone for being at the meeting and for being so helpful to the Board as it considered these matters.

Re: ADJOURNMENT

The president adjourned the meeting at 11:15 p.m.

PRESIDENT

SECRETARY

HP:mlw