

APPROVED
15-2008

Rockville, Maryland
July 1, 2008

The Board of Education of Montgomery County met in special session at the Carver Educational Services Center, Rockville, Maryland, on Tuesday, July 1, 2008, at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Ms. Shirley Brandman, Vice President
in the Chair
Mr. Steve Abrams
Mr. Christopher Barclay
Dr. Judy Docca
Ms. Quratul-Ann Malik, Student Board Member-Elect
Mr. Benjamin Moskowitz, Student Board Member
Dr. Jerry D Weast, Secretary/Treasurer

Absent: Ms. Sharon W. Cox
Mrs. Nancy Navarro
Mrs. Patricia O'Neill

Re: **SWEARING IN**

Ms. Loretta Knight, clerk of the circuit court, administered the oath of office to Ms. Malik.

Re: **STATEMENT BY MS. MALIK**

"Thank you so much for coming out today to celebrate my inauguration with me. I am so excited to start this year and I know it will be an extremely rewarding experience. I want to start out by thanking everyone who was involved in helping me get elected to this honorable position. First and foremost I want to thank my family and friends who have been so supportive. Thank you to my parents and teachers who allowed me to skip class to campaign at all the schools, and for staying late with me on the days when I needed to make up the work I missed. Thank you so much to my amazing campaign manager and good friend Tiffany, who spent so much of her time and effort helping me get elected.

Thank you to all of my friends who were so willing to help me campaign: those in my school, and especially those who didn't go to school with me and still helped hang up posters and campaign at their own school. Most importantly though, thank you to all of the students who voted and allowed me the privilege to serve as their student Board member. Even to those who didn't vote for me, I appreciate you taking the time out to hear what I had to say about certain issues. I promise I will do my best to advocate on all of your behalves and represent everyone the best that I can.

Ever since I was elected a few months ago, it has been such an interesting adventure. I have been attending Board meetings, meeting individually with Board members, receiving two more hours of homework on my doorstep every day, eating more than one dinner a

night and trying to learn years' worth of policies in a matter of weeks. It has been a challenge, but it has been extremely eventful, and I can honestly say that I am looking forward to a hectic, but very rewarding year.

With that said, I would also like to thank Ben Moskowitz, who has been an incredible teacher and has showed me the ropes and taught me how to be a successful Student Member of the Board. His expertise at politics and impressive work ethic has impacted the way everyone views this position. I am so grateful that I am getting the chance to serve after someone who has truly increased the integrity of this position.

Although I was only elected a few months ago, I have already learned a lot about each of the Board members and I have really enjoyed meeting up with all of you and gaining your own perspective of the Board. I hope that each of you know how excited I am to learn from you and work with you.

Being on the Board of Education is something I did not expect to happen in my high school career. But now that it has happened, I finally realize how much I owe it to the students, parents, and teachers in this county. I have been in Montgomery County Public Schools for about half of my life, and it is through the decisions that this board of education has made; the teachers and principals that this board has hired; the after-school activities this board has funded, and rigorous curriculum and classes that this board has adopted, that have made me who I am today.

But the success of Montgomery County does not only lie in its government. The success of Montgomery County lies in its students and staff. The relationships I have built with the people around me have supported me and molded me into the person I am. It is through their words of advice and experience that I can honestly say I am ready for this job.

I hope to be an accessible and open minded member who represents students the best that I can. Thank you students, once again, for taking the time out to be informed voters, allowing me to listen to your concerns and for trusting me to represent you.

After 31 I's in this speech, it's finally time for this to be about you. This is the night where I go from being a candidate who represents only myself to a member of the Board of Education who represents 137,000 students.

The past six months have been a rush of nominations, committees, speeches, campaign events, all leading up to the election, a true exaltation of the democratic spirit of this nation and this county. This inauguration is the grand conclusion of a grand process in which the students choose a representative to support and defend them on the Board of Education and I am extremely honored to be the choice of the students of Montgomery County for the position of Student Member on the Board for the 2008–2009 school year. Thank you.”

Re: STATEMENT BY MR. MOSKOWITZ

“Ms. Brandman, Dr. Weast, and, I’m sorry to say, my now former colleagues on the Board of Education, I want to start by telling you that you have a terrific incoming Board member in Q Malik. I have seen her in action for years through the county’s student government, and I have had the privilege of mentoring her these past several months. I saw the way students connected with her and her message during her campaign, and I know she brings a much-needed perspective to the table. I have the utmost confidence that she will serve the students, parents, and staff of MCPS well this next year. I also want to be sure to congratulate Alex Blocker, our other candidate, on running a terrific campaign and to thank him for putting himself and his ideas forward as well.

As I did last year, I want to thank those to whom I owe an enormous debt of gratitude, not only for helping me to achieve this position, but for helping me succeed in it as well. Thank you to my parents, my brother, my entire extended family, and my friends who have provided a never-ending stream of encouragement and support. Thank you once again to the students of MCPS for giving me the chance to represent you as the Student Member of the Montgomery County Board of Education. As I said at my graduation, I am extremely grateful to the students, teachers, administrators, and support staff of our school system not only for giving me the opportunity to serve them in this capacity, but for sharing their opinions and discussing their concerns with me as well. The additional input I received from our student governments, parent teacher associations, and employee organizations has been essential to my ability to do this job.

This experience has truly been incredible, a chance to grow as a person, and an opportunity that I never thought I’d have—to serve as a member of the Board of Education in the 16th largest school district in the nation, representing 137,000 students, 22,000 employees, and nearly 1,000,000 residents. I know that just as this past year has been a learning experience for me, it has been a learning experience for all of you as well. In fact, this past year it feels like I’ve learned an entire foreign language made up entirely of acronyms, the passive voice, and words like operationalize, spending affordability, systemic, and systematic. I am deeply saddened to be leaving this body, but at least I know that having served in 2008, a leap year, I had the chance to serve one more day than my three immediate predecessors.

While I missed out on controversial issues like grading and reporting, sex education, and cell phones, I am proud of what we accomplished together and I am unwaveringly optimistic in the future of our students because of our focus on rigor and engagement. And while at times I’ve felt more like I was still in high school rather than in a Board room, I have seen what can be accomplished when we come together as a team, as a family, to work for the good of our students. Major challenges still remain on issues like eligibility, suspensions and expulsions, grading and reporting, gifted and talented education, and the pervasive issue of the minority achievement gap. We must come together, rise above the petty and personal, and stay focused on the effects that each of our actions has on each student in

our system.

I also want to underscore that I have always seen the role of the student member as the same as that of any other Board member. As such, I knew I must be equally responsive to the concerns of parents, unions, businesses, and community groups as adult members are to the concerns of students. Remember—the student member is not in that position to be a liaison or the mouthpiece for the views of a particular stakeholder group. The role is not that of an *aide* to a decision maker—it is that of a decision maker. Just as many of you came from PTAs and brought that perspective to your decision making, I came from student government and brought that perspective to my decision making. We all know that students rise to high expectations. If the expectation is there that the student member must hold him or herself to the same standards as any adult member, then the student will meet those expectations. And I hope that next year, Q will be the one backing you up when you ask for student representation on advisory committees.

Last year, I bragged about the highest voter turnout ever for the SMOB election. This year we broke that record and set a new one, with over 85% of our students turning out to vote. The turnout is especially impressive, considering it is nearly double the 44% voter turnout of the most recent election of the adult Board members. This massive participation speaks to our students' engagement and political efficacy, but, just as importantly, it lends an enormous amount of credibility their position—the position of student member. And, in filling that role, I hope that I was able to make them proud.

The best part of my year was not a particular meeting, or event, or conference. It was not going to conventions in Ocean City or Orlando, which by the way I enjoyed tremendously. No, the best part of my year was the people whom I had the opportunity to meet and get to know along the way. I may no longer be able to call you my colleagues, but I will always be proud to call you my friends. It has been an absolute pleasure to serve with each and every one of you; that includes the Board staff of Laura, Suzann, Glenda, Martha, Becky, and Kathy, led by Roland, our fearless and ever-helpful Chief of Staff.

Dr. Weast, I've learned an incredible amount from my time with you, and I have loved every minute of it. I can still see you back in the conference room, furiously scribbling on the chalk board and explaining to us the intricacies of the budget process. You and your staff treated me with respect, and you always responded to my questions in a timely manner. Your focus, drive, and skill will continue to be an inspiration for me.

Judy, your perspective as former principal and MCPS staff person has been invaluable to me in helping me form my positions on issues. It has been my pleasure to sit next to you all year, passing notes in French. I will remember not just our working relationship, but the time we marched in the Montgomery Village parade and the evening we served meals at the Community Based Shelter for Adults in Rockville.

Steve, you know how much Pat likes to brag about having two Walter Johnson alumni on

the Board. Now I'm pleased to say that we have two members of the University of Pennsylvania community at the Board table. I truly appreciate your advice on my college selection process among other issues. I have also come to know your sharp legal and business mind, especially as we have adjudicated appeals. You are unafraid to touch topics that others won't and say what isn't always popular, and I respect you for that.

Chris, I've often told people that you and I were the only people on this Board with full time jobs—you at Verizon and me at school, and, consequently, we have faced considerable challenges in managing our time; it is a testament to your immense dedication and talent that you are able to balance the roles of father, husband, employee, and Board member. I will always remember how an hour after every meeting you and I would be in the parking lot, the last ones to leave, talking about our vision for the school system and joking that the parking lot was probably bugged.

Shirley, you have never ceased to impress and amaze me with your attention to detail, ability to ask essential questions, and willingness to meet with anybody about any issue. You were always happy to talk with me on the phone to discuss my concerns, and I continue to trust your judgment and advice immensely. You really saw me as a colleague, a full and equal Board member, and I will always be grateful for that. I hope you'll be here for a long time to come.

I may be leaving you, but you don't get off easy just because I'm not here. Remember, I'll be watching the webcasts of the meetings online from my dorm room and, who knows, maybe I'll show up here one day for public comment.

Tonight, I've focused much on the past, but now it's time to turn our heads toward the future. I think I speak for all the students of Montgomery County when I say: you've got a lot of work ahead of you—get to it!"

Re: **COMMENTS BY BOARD MEMBERS AND THE SUPERINTENDENT**

Board members welcomed Ms. Malik and thanked Mr. Moskowitz for his work on the Board of Education and wished him well in all his future endeavors.

Re: **PRESENTATION TO MR. MOSKOWITZ**

On behalf of the members of the Board, Ms. Brandman presented Mr. Moskowitz with memorabilia of his service on the Board of Education.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m. A reception followed in the auditorium.

PRESIDENT

SECRETARY

JDW:gr