

APPROVED  
54-1991

Rockville, Maryland  
October 29, 1991

The Board of Education of Montgomery County met in special session at the Carver Educational Services Center, Rockville, Maryland, on Tuesday, October 29, 1991, at 7:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL      Present: Mr. Blair G. Ewing, President

in the Chair

Mrs. Frances Brenneman

Dr. Alan Cheung

Mrs. Sharon DiFonzo

Mrs. Carol Fanconi

Ms. Ana Sol Gutierrez

Mrs. Catherine E. Hobbs

Mr. Shervin Pishevar\*

Absent: None

Others Present: Dr. Paul L. Vance, Superintendent  
Mrs. Katheryn W. Gemberling, Deputy  
Dr. H. Philip Rohr, Deputy  
Mr. Thomas S. Fess, Parliamentarian

#indicates student vote does not count. Four votes are needed for adoption.

Re: ANNOUNCEMENT

Mr. Ewing announced that the Board had been meeting in executive session on legal and contractual issues. Mr. Pishevar would join the Board shortly.

RESOLUTION NO. 901-91      Re: BOARD AGENDA - OCTOBER 29, 1991

On recommendation of the superintendent and on motion of Mrs. DiFonzo seconded by Mrs. Brenneman, the following resolution was adopted unanimously:

Resolved, That the Board of Education adopt its agenda for October 29, 1991.

RESOLUTION NO. 902-91      Re: COMMENDATION OF LILLIAN M. GALLUPE

On recommendation of the superintendent and on motion of Mrs. DiFonzo seconded by Ms. Gutierrez, the following resolution was adopted unanimously:

WHEREAS, Almost 20 years ago the Office of the Members of the Board of Education sought part-time secretarial help to assist in the preparation of the minutes of its meetings; and

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WHEREAS, Fortune smiled on the Board and brought Lillian M. Gallupe back into the work force when her son and daughter entered the Montgomery County Public Schools; and

WHEREAS, Through her years of experience in the British Embassy, Lillian learned about diplomacy, intergovernmental relations, tea parties, treaties, and state secrecy--all of which prepared her for the Office of the Members of the Board of Education; and

WHEREAS, Seeing Lillian's rare abilities, the ombudsman/staff assistant to the Board of Education soon promoted her to be his personal and confidential secretary; and

WHEREAS, Lillian's finely honed secretarial skills, sympathetic ear, no-nonsense style, sense of humor, candor, and professionalism are unique and will be greatly missed by Board, staff, and parents; now therefore be it

Resolved, That the members of the Montgomery County Board of Education extend deep appreciation to Lillian M. Gallupe for her assistance, advice, and counsel; and be it further

Resolved, That on behalf of the superintendents of schools (past and present), members of the Boards of Education (past and present), the staff, the students, and the parents, best wishes be offered to Lillian M. Gallupe on her retirement and for her future endeavors.

RESOLUTION NO. 903-91      Re: MC 229-92 MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION - STUDENT MEMBER

On recommendation of the superintendent and on motion of Mrs. DiFonzo seconded by Dr. Cheung, the following resolution was adopted unanimously:

Resolved, That the Board of Education support MC 229-92 Montgomery County Board of Education - Student Member.

RESOLUTION NO. 904-91      Re: MC 225-92 - MONTGOMERY COUNTY REVENUE AUTHORITY

On recommendation of the superintendent and on motion of Mrs. DiFonzo seconded by Mrs. Brenneman, the following resolution was adopted with Mrs. Brenneman, Dr. Cheung, Mrs. DiFonzo, Mr. Ewing, and Mrs. Hobbs voting in the affirmative; Ms. Gutierrez voting in the negative; Mrs. Fanconi abstaining:

Resolved, That the Board of Education support MC 225-92 - Montgomery County Revenue Authority.

\*Mr. Pishevar joined the meeting at this point.

Re: VISION STATEMENT AND GOALS

Mrs. Hobbs moved and Mrs. Brenneman seconded the following:

Resolved, That the Board of Education tentatively approve the following Vision and Goals for MCPS:

**THE MCPS VISION FOR THE 90s**

We, the people of Montgomery County, believe that a quality education is a fundamental right of every child. All children will receive the respect, encouragement and opportunities they need to build the knowledge, skills and attitudes to be successful, contributing members of a changing global society.

**GOALS TO ACHIEVE THE VISION**

Goal 1 - ENSURE SUCCESS FOR EACH STUDENT

Provide the services and environment each student needs for intellectual challenge and social and emotional development. Each student will be able to communicate effectively, obtain and use information, solve problems, and engage in active, life-long learning.

Goal 2 - PROVIDE AN EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Teach all students a curriculum that describes what they should know and be able to do, includes the many perspectives of a pluralistic society, and establishes learning standards. Instruction must include a variety of teaching strategies and technologies, actively involve students, and result in their mastery of learning objectives.

Goal 3 - STRENGTHEN PRODUCTIVE PARTNERSHIPS FOR EDUCATION

Secure the commitment of the entire community to maintain quality education in Montgomery County by building partnerships of families, community, business and staff that promote and support initiatives to help all children succeed.

Goal 4 - CREATE A POSITIVE WORK ENVIRONMENT

Develop a climate in which staff effectiveness and creativity are respected, valued and supported to promote productivity and ownership for student success.

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RESOLUTION NO. 905-91      Re: AN AMENDMENT TO THE PROPOSED  
RESOLUTION ON VISION AND GOALS

On motion of Ms. Gutierrez seconded by Mrs. Brenneman, the following resolution was adopted unanimously:

Resolved, That the Vision and Goals be distributed for public comment as soon as possible, that a public hearing be held on November 26, that a deadline of December 2 be established for comment, and that as many means of distribution as possible be used to invite input; and be it further

Resolved, That after receiving the public input, the Board would take final action on the Vision and Goals.

Re: VISION AND GOALS

It was agreed that Mrs. Fanconi's suggestion for a fourth goal be sent out as well. The goal read as follows:

CREATE AND SUSTAIN A SELF-RENEWING ORGANIZATION  
Develop staff, encourage their creativity and accountability, assess and plan for the future, and provide efficient and effective support to the instructional program.

It was also agreed that the following suggestion by Mr. Ewing would be sent out as well:

VISION FOR THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The Montgomery County Public School system must be transformed into an organization relentlessly committed to the success of every student. This success will be the result of a commitment to excellence, creativity, a willingness to innovate, hard work and high performance on the part of every person involved in student education: teachers, staff members, administrators, students, parents, and the larger community. The product that will be expected and achieved will be skilled graduates who have well-developed minds, a continued willingness to learn, and who are prepared to live full lives in their communities and in the changing global society, who have learned how to enjoy the leisure that is the result of their work, and who have the ability and will to put knowledge to work for themselves and others. Students have a right to an education that prepares them for the 21st century in this way and an obligation to themselves and their society to obtain and use it.

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Mrs. Hobbs pointed out that Goal 4 should be corrected to add "encouraged" before "respected." Mrs. Gemberling noted that in Goal 1 "every" should be substituted for "each."

RESOLUTION NO. 906-91      Re: TENTATIVE ADOPTION OF MCPS VISION FOR THE 90s

On recommendation of the superintendent and on motion of Mrs. Hobbs seconded by Mrs. Brenneman, the following resolution was adopted unanimously:

Resolved, That the Vision and Goals be distributed for public comment as soon as possible, that a public hearing be held on November 26, that a deadline of December 2 be established for comment, and that as many means of distribution as possible be used to invite input; and be it further

Resolved, That after receiving the public input, the Board would take final action on the Vision and Goals; and be it further

Resolved, That the Board of Education tentatively approve the following Vision and Goals for MCPS:

### **THE MCPS VISION FOR THE 90s**

We, the people of Montgomery County, believe that a quality education is a fundamental right of every child. All children will receive the respect, encouragement and opportunities they need to build the knowledge, skills and attitudes to be successful, contributing members of a changing global society.

### **GOALS TO ACHIEVE THE VISION**

#### Goal 1 - ENSURE SUCCESS FOR EVERY STUDENT

Provide the services and environment every student needs for intellectual challenge and social and emotional development. Every student will be able to communicate effectively, obtain and use information, solve problems, and engage in active, life-long learning.

#### Goal 2 - PROVIDE AN EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Teach all students a curriculum that describes what they should know and be able to do, includes the many perspectives of a pluralistic society, and establishes learning standards. Instruction must include a variety of teaching strategies and technologies, actively involve students, and result in their mastery of learning objectives.

Goal 3 - STRENGTHEN PRODUCTIVE PARTNERSHIPS FOR EDUCATION

Secure the commitment of the entire community to maintain quality education in Montgomery County by building partnerships of families, community, business and staff that promote and support initiatives to help all children succeed.

Goal 4 - CREATE A POSITIVE WORK ENVIRONMENT

Develop a climate in which staff effectiveness and creativity are encouraged, respected, valued and supported to promote productivity and ownership for student success.

Re: SUCCESS FOR EVERY STUDENT

Mr. Ewing reported that in February the Board had adopted 12 areas in which the Board expected to make some progress over the next 18 months. This was one of the areas.

Dr. Vance explained that this was the superintendent's proposal to improve the achievement of low to average achieving students with special and critical emphasis on the needs of low to average achieving African American and Hispanic students. He was both relieved and proud of the moment they had reached this evening in the history of MCPS. They had been perplexed by a seemingly illusive dream of educational equity and opportunity for all students. They had said that while they had equality of opportunity for all students, in their hearts they had known that the results had not been satisfactory. Parents, students, advocates, and employees had told them, and finally statistics had proved it so. The results had not justified their efforts and good intentions. Yet their school system remained one of the finest public school systems in the country with academic achievement among all racial groups towering over school systems elsewhere.

As Dr. Vance had talked with superintendents and Board members from around the country, they marvelled at what MCPS had achieved. However, this was not important or significant. They knew that such comparisons were at best a diversion from the truth. They knew there existed a disparity of educational achievement that belied all other measures of success. Over the last two decades they had commissioned study after study, plan after plan, and they had collected pile after pile of notebooks-- all in the name of fulfilling great educational idealism of racial integration and equality of educational opportunity and equal achievement among all students. Over the past 14 years he had participated in many of these efforts. He had a summary collection of documents, plans, proposals, recommendations, and resolutions. While this was not complete, it was highly

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suggestive of what they had attempted to do in MCPS since 1969. He had provided the Board of Education with a chronology of minority education initiatives in MCPS. He did not intend to belittle these efforts because these efforts were landmark initiatives and commitments on the part of the school system. He wanted to emphasize the extent to which they had made serious efforts and initiatives to address the issue.

Dr. Vance stated that it was not possible to create anything new or different or exotic or innovative that over the past 22 years they had not said or suggested. He had thought it would be significant to share the list of 70 initiatives that the school system had been involved in since 1969.

Dr. Vance commented that they had been down this road many times and to do so again would strain their credibility. All too often they had found themselves mired in the muck of trying to do something new, exotic, innovative, and different. They had tried so often to create a model that they had forgotten on occasion what they were building. In the end they were left with great ambitions and humbled repeatedly by unfulfilled expectations. He knew that all too well because he had been a part of many of these proposals and plans. The elusive goal of bringing equality of educational opportunity and therefore uniformity of educational achievement had remained as distant in 1991 as it did 22 years ago in 1969. Montgomery County was not alone in this quest, but certainly it had recognized that it was among very few school systems that had the opportunity and resources to address one of the glaring discrepancies of public education in America. He thought it was time in the history of the school system to pay the piper.

Dr. Vance pointed out that African American and Hispanic children achieved less than their white and Asian counterparts. Each of the prior studies made an effort to define the problem and offer a solution, usually a new program or a new reorganization. A new something or other that not so much addressed the problem as perhaps on occasion continued it. After so many attempts, they finally heard last year from Dr. Edmund W. Gordon of Yale University. He placed their problem in the proper perspective. His 300-page report had many fine recommendations and observations. He came down to one unmistakable conclusion: the basis of the problem in MCPS rested in their own attitudes. Unless they believed that all children could learn, unless they believed that they must have the highest expectations, then all children will not learn, and those children who suffered the worst of their expectations would ultimately fulfill them. The cycle would continue, and the cycle would remain unbroken.

Last July they began insisting on the theme, "Success for All Children." The truth of Dr. Gordon's observation underscored the

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recommendations that he and the executive staff would make this evening. Dr. Gordon found in Montgomery County an incredibly successful school system. He found for the most part the highest calibre of participants--teachers, principals, students, parents, and community representatives--of any school system he had ever visited or worked in. Dr. Gordon found immense resources of materials, programs, associations, and intellect. He found great ambitions and good intentions, but he also saw this as lost amid a mangled collection of some good ideas and a lot of half-baked notions. Dr. Gordon found discouragement, hopelessness, disillusionment and, in some instances, latent racism. He found idealism undermined by apathy, unresponsiveness, and ignorance. He found a great many people who had simply lost their way and many who no longer cared.

Hence, Dr. Gordon had made the following statement, "If not here in Montgomery County, where? If not now, when?" Dr. Vance stated that they wanted to change this. They wanted Dr. Gordon to come back in a few years and find a school system that had pulled itself up and channeled energy, pride, and hard work into the notion that all children could not only learn, but would learn well. They wanted Dr. Gordon to come back and say, "Why of course in Montgomery County, where else could it happen." Dr. Vance believed that Dr. Gordon would find the turning point in their reform effort started with this evening's meeting. He had come to this moment with great excitement and anticipation.

Dr. Vance stated that he would not permit himself to be discouraged or turned back from this initiative. Over the past several months as their plan took shape, a number of things began to change in the outlook of the leadership of the school system. He was proud of where they had come from and the path they had chosen to pursue. He said this with a great deal of professional respect and admiration for the people with him this evening, the members of the Board of Education who had the courage to set forth seven goals for the improvement of minority educational achievement, and the senior staff who had the creativity and resourcefulness to translate those goals into workable strategies and tasks. He also cited the parents, students, and advocates who had kept the faith.

Dr. Vance reported that the plan was amazingly simple and concise. It was brief to the point of understatement. Their assignment was direct and purposeful. It was to bring a complex problem into crystal clear focus and find a workable, measurable solution. Their problem was certainly complex. They saw the plan to improve the achievement of low to average achieving students with a special emphasis on low to average achieving African American and Hispanic students as well as students with limited English proficiency. This was not to say that they would not be preoccupied with low achieving Asian, white, and native

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American students. They saw the problem more clearly defined in the simple idealism of ensuring success for every student. Their solution, therefore, was based on an equally simple ideal--"success is dependent upon our collective will." In MCPS they had to really want success, deep down in their own hearts and at every level of their being before they could achieve success for all children.

Dr. Vance said that this had been missing all these years. They had had programs, the services, and the ideas, but they lacked the collective institutional will to succeed. Dr. Asa Hillyard, a professor at Georgia State University, saw it another way in a recent article in Educational Leadership. Dr. Vance quoted the following:

"The risk for our children in school is not a risk associated with their intelligence. Our failures have nothing to do with I.Q., nothing to do with poverty, nothing to do with race, nothing to do with language, nothing to do with style, nothing to do with the need to discover new pedagogy, nothing to do with the development of unique and differentiated special pedagogues, nothing to do with their families. All of these are red herrings. A study of them may lead to some greater insight into the instructional process, but at present they serve to distract attention from the fundamental problem facing us today. We have one and only one problem. Do we truly will to seek each and every child in this nation to develop to the peak of his or her capacities regardless of race, ethnicity, and land of national origin?"

Dr. Vance observed that the issue to him was, "Did they truly will to see each child in this county develop to the peak of his or her capacities?" That was the question that faced them. He believed they had begun to answer with a resounding, "yes." They believed that with the proper leadership and support, the men and women of the Montgomery County Public Schools would provide the commitment necessary to be successful. They believed that the school system would focus its energy, creativity, and determination to the goal of ending the academic disparity that existed in MCPS.

Dr. Vance remarked that there were those who would question the inclusiveness of this plan. There were those who would question the need for a number of red herrings. He submitted that they might be as tolerant of the red herrings as they had been in the past.

The plan they presented was a leadership plan that provided the broad strategies and specific tasks for schools, area offices, central administration, parents, and communities. It identified

specific outcomes for student achievement among all racial groups, and it provided a systemwide focus and direction. It contained accountability elements to ensure the full and successful completion of each responsibility. It was not a final plan and would continue to be developed.

Dr. Vance commented that the straight-forward approach might unnerve some people who were expecting a "heavy" report; however, this was not his style. They thought it was time for simplicity, honesty, and a direct approach. The problem had been staring them in the face for a long time, and it was appropriate now for those in MCPS not to blink. The description of the strategies and tasks would be presented by members of the executive staff who shared in the commitment to the success of this plan.

Mrs. Gemberling stated that Dr. Vance had spoken about the institutional will. If there was one thing that the executive staff had come to realize in the months they had been putting the plan together, it was that the institutional will began with them. They wanted to say to the Board that it was their plan. They put it together, they owned it, and they planned to see it through. Members of the executive staff expressed their support for the plan.

Mrs. Gemberling commented that when they were developing the report they heard from people that when they were effective, it was never an add-on. It was a total commitment and involvement. This meant that whatever they were going to do they had to do for every student and make it work for every student. They had to focus on the individual student, have clear outcomes for the student, and monitor that individual student progress. As early as possible, they had to provide the intervention when the student was missing the outcomes.

In regard to "Success for Every Student," Mrs. Gemberling pointed out that it was hard to get people to agree on a definition of success. They found they could get consensus on a definition of failure; therefore, they set out to eliminate failure. They were going for a zero-defect model in their clientele. The plan began with the outcomes rather than ending with them. They looked at the "givens" within which they had to function and for which they had no control. The first factor was the Maryland School Performance Plan which was mandated by the state. The staff decided to use these outcomes and the instructional approach, and they were saying that those outcomes applied to all students and to each school. Using MSPP permitted MCPS to add in its own outcomes. The second constraint was the fact they could not add resources. They had to work within the existing resources. They had to have a different way of doing things and operate within the resources that they had. This meant some shifting of focuses.

Mrs. Gemberling stated that there was agreement they should not try to do everything all at once. They had to set some priorities, pick some things, and do those right. They decided initially to focus on mathematics. Everything they saw in terms of the research and the literature showed that math was a gateway issue for students. For students in MCPS, it was the largest separating factor in terms of achievement. In addition, they had more data in place to begin monitoring. They felt if they could do this in mathematics, they could do it anywhere else.

Mrs. Gemberling said that the process would be used at each unit level. They did not prescribe plans for each school or unit. Different units would have different goals and different ways of getting there. This was their plan for the system, but they would encourage each school and unit to set their own targets and strategies.

Dr. Phinnize Fisher, area associate superintendent, reported that the outcomes and the standards were in the front of the document rather than in the back. They wanted clear standards for every student, clear standards for measuring student achievement, and clear standards for measuring school success. While they were using MSPP, they also had extended, local standards. There were other things to consider such as attitudes, expectations, student suspensions, and the inappropriate rate in special education. She said that these were important to achievement because students must be in the classroom in order to achieve.

Dr. Fisher stressed that all MCPS staff must be involved in this plan. In looking at outcomes, they wanted to be sure they could see themselves in the plan. Every member of the staff had to be included to realize how vital they were to the achievement of youngsters. They also looked at early intervention starting with pre-kindergarten. Their outcomes included success for students beginning at the earliest level. In addition to summative data, they were looking at formative data, information from day to day. They did not want to wait until grade 9 to say a child could not be successful in algebra. The next stage would include the successful completion of algebra 1 for all students in MCPS by the ninth grade.

Dr. Fisher reported that they were also looking at a continuing method of assessment. They expected to succeed. They intended to meet the standards they had set. They planned to improve their standards, and they also planned to add to their outcomes. They had expectations in outcomes in terms of attitudes, modeling, and mentoring. They needed the help of all MCPS employees, and they would require the individual commitment of everyone. They had standards that were clear, and they were not setting up rolling averages or talking about stanines. They were talking about removing disparities and increasing achievement.

They were moving to clear standards for the success of all children as individual children. They were not measuring their students based on the academic success of another. They would be giving the Board individual achievement data.

Mrs. Fran Dean, acting associate superintendent, indicated that in all the meetings she had attended there was a determination and collective will that this time they must develop a plan that was focused and doable. They accepted the challenge of the Gordon report. The first goal was a simple statement, "Ensure success for every student." It was a powerful statement that informed parents and the community that this plan was student-centered, and that the developers of the plan cared about children. The first strategy was to "expect every MCPS employee to be a role model." The first task was that all staff must demonstrate the respect for individuals that was to be modeled for students throughout the school system. This task, unlike others, had no beginning or implementation date. Having respect for others was the expectation of all employees. The assurance for parents was that their child would be respected as an individual and taught in an educational environment conducive to learning.

Mrs. Dean said the second strategy was to "promote staff behaviors and attitudes that positively affect the academic achievement and aspirations of all students." This was to be implemented in part by two major tasks to begin in January. Staff training that recognized and provided for different learning styles of students was one part, and the second was an examination and restructuring of the mission of the Department of Human Relations in order to provide resources to schools that would assist them in being proactive in promoting mutual understanding among students, staff, and community. The next task addressed the issue of student suspensions which was of great concern to the community and to MCPS. Human Relations and Pupil Services staff would develop intervention strategies to be used at the schools. The message was that they were proactive and not reactive.

Mrs. Dean explained that student academic achievement was at the heart of this plan, and tasks had been developed to emphasize the relationship between academic achievement and the real world after high school. Strategies 1.2 and 1.5 recognized the referral of African American students for special education services. The tasks addressed this problem: "the elimination of a disproportional representation of African American students in special education."

Mrs. Dean commented that the last strategy under this goal was deceptively difficult. It dealt with the unmotivated student. Dr. Gordon's report stated that parents believed motivation was

the most important school-related behavior their children needed to acquire. The challenge for all of them was to convey to students and their parents that staff cared about them and was there to help students be successful.

Dr. Joseph Villani, area associate superintendent, stated that the second goal spoke to the central mission of the schools which was the use of instruction to deliver a curriculum. In goal two, they had presented an instructional plan to set standards and to implement a curriculum to meet those standards. The core guiding light of their entire plan was to ensure student success in the quantitative skills that they needed to be successful in whatever they did after high school. They called that mathematics, and a dimension of mathematics was science. They also recognized that literacy--the ability to express what one knew and felt--was as essential as the ability to quantify it. Therefore, they had also developed a plan to establish standards for performance in language arts.

Dr. Villani pointed out that they now had a curriculum that set learning objectives for every grade level, for every unit, and they had performance tasks. They had volumes on what students should know. What was different was that the Department of Academic Skills would begin work on setting out performance standards in both mathematics and language arts that they expected every child to achieve by the end of each grade level, starting pre-kindergarten. The ultimate goal of the mathematics dimension of the standard was that every child would come to grade 9 prepared to be successful in algebra 1. They knew that the ability to solve for unknowns and the ability to abstract was essential if people were to be successful in the highly competitive global economy. They wanted to make sure that every child was prepared to deal with that, and that every child succeeded in passing algebra in grade 9. If they did not get students into algebra, the rest of the mathematics program would fall flat. The plan had at its heart "solving for unknowns."

Dr. Villani said that in their strategies they talked about the kind of instructional practices that had to occur not only to teach children but to motivate them. They knew from the research that certain kinds of instructional practices were effective not only because they conveyed information but also because they motivated people to continue learning. Many schools were using those instructional practices. They had to use these practices throughout the program. Teaching teachers new strategies and getting principals to recognize what programs could be most effective for their children would require lots of training. There was no question that they must put in place an extensive training exercise and make training part of their ongoing developmental process to get everyone to be aware of these instructional practices.

Dr. Villani stated that whether a child was successful was not the question at this point. The question was what they had to do to make sure the child was successful. They wanted to make sure that their curriculum taught all students an appreciation for cultural diversity. It was essential for understanding the world in which they lived and making sure they sent students out into that world who were truly "students of the world." Students had to be able to appreciate many perspectives on a particular issue and they had to have a multicultural perspective. They would ensure that all curriculum coming through the Council on Instruction had both perspectives.

Dr. Villani explained that another dimension of motivation was to provide guidance and direction to students. Students had to be prepared to taking the challenging courses in high school. Every student should leave MCPS prepared for success after high school. The job of MCPS was not to finish education for children, it was to give them choices so that students could do whatever they needed and wanted to do with their lives. They needed guidance programs and had to develop attitudes in students through guidance and from the treatment students received in schools. They had to make sure that education opened doors for these students.

Dr. Villani said they had to look at the structures they had in place. For example, what were their placement practices? Grouping practices? They had to come up with a plan to eliminate the practices that limited expectations and opportunities for all students. This would be a systemwide effort because choices children made were made in kindergarten with the grouping practices that teachers used in classrooms.

Dr. Hiawatha Fountain, associate superintendent, stated that goal 3 was to strengthen productive partnerships for education. Educators could be much more successful if they were in partnership with the family, community, and business. Their first strategy was to get an informed parent. They had several successful models. For many children, the early childhood education programs had been very successful. The Adult Education parenting program, the Head Start program, Chapter 1, and ESOL had demonstrated the concern of parents for being involved in the education of their children. However, something happened once parents left these programs. It was their commitment to learn from these programs to maintain a commitment for partnership in education. They would use these approaches and establish child development training in day care centers. They would carry their campaign to the community, to churches, to temples, social clubs, recreation centers, and metro stops.

Dr. Fountain reported that they intended to work with parents to make them advocates for their children. MCPS would have a

variety of training programs. For example, if a parent had to attend a meeting, someone would make contact with that parent prior to the meeting to assist the parent in preparing for that meeting. It had been pointed out that parents came to meetings and faced 10 or 12 people who were unknown to them and who were speaking in educational jargon. MCPS intended to minimize that concern.

Dr. Fountain observed that they could not do these things without the business community. They had already begun to develop partnerships with the business community, and they were currently working with a couple of large agencies within the county. They wanted to make sure that students had the skills to gain meaningful employment.

As an African American parent of students in MCPS for the past 13 years, Dr. Fountain stated that the plan was a plan that committed the school system to doing something that every parent in the county could be proud of. Some parents knew how to negotiate the school system, but there were many parents who did not know how to do this.

Ms. Ann Meyer, area associate superintendent, stated that in order to accomplish the first three goals they needed goal 4 which was to create a positive work environment. The goal had three pieces to it. The first was the staff development piece, the second was the expectation that staff would actualize the plan and be accountable, and the third piece was recruiting, hiring, and retaining competent staff who reflected the multicultural composition of the community.

The staff development component required MCPS to provide the training, professional development, and assistance to every staff member, and that each unit and school have a training plan as part of their management plan. They expected that every unit and school would know their progress. Units would be provided incentives including an endowment fund through which units and schools could be given an award for instructional purposes. If the unit was not meeting the standards, staff would provide interventions and actions would be taken when progress was not made. Ultimately sanctions could be imposed.

The third piece of the plan was hiring, recruiting, and assigning staff. Personnel would develop a plan using non-traditional recruitment strategies, and the plan would include promotional and career opportunities. There would be a tracking of all applicants so that MCPS would have more complete information to make decisions regarding recruitment for future years.

In regard to implementation and budgets, Dr. Rohr reported that there were timelines in the back of the document. The timelines

were based on current resources and budgets. They were based on maintaining existing budget resources rather than holding out for major increases in the budget in order to achieve the goals of the plan. The executive staff was working together to examine priorities and focus the budget on implementing the plan. This was true for the supportive services units as it was for the instructional units. It was likely that they would be deferring some items they were working on in other areas in order to support the plan.

Dr. Rohr commented that SIMS had proved very successful as a vehicle for principals to develop their own data base and monitor student progress. At the current pace it would take quite a few years for all schools to have SIMS. Staff would be looking at accelerating SIMS to get it into all schools more rapidly. Various offices would have to work together to assure that the data needs of staff were met. This was critical to the monitoring process, and it was critical for early intervention.

In regard to implementation, Dr. Rohr said they needed to broaden the leadership commitment for the plan. They would be doing this through the budget process, through A&S meetings, and through worksessions. They wanted to have unit managers and principals commit to this plan and develop their own outcome objectives. All of this assumed that staff would be monitoring the plan as they went along. They would know what was going on while it was going on, and intervention could occur as early as possible.

Dr. Vance thanked the staff for their presentation and the Board members for their attention.

Dr. Cheung was concerned that the plan did not specifically mention Asian Americans and pointed out that a large percentage of ESOL students were Asians. There was a stereotype that the Asian American student did not need help, and he did not want to see these students neglected. He pointed out that the Gordon report spoke to the need to modify behavior and attitude of staff. The key was how to modify behavior and attitude to assure success. Children knew better than anyone else whether the adult really cared or not. Therefore, they had to emphasize attitude and behavior of staff and have proper accountability. They also had to change the attitude and behavior of students themselves. He felt that they needed to look at the total needs of the child, not just test scores, and he was concerned that the plan did not consider other indicators of success. While SIMS would be used by the principal to monitor the plan, he did not see any use of the data base by the teacher. The teacher was the most important factor in the success or failure of this plan, and there was no mention of expanding the data base for the use of the teacher. He was impressed by the commitment of the executive staff and

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congratulated them on their willingness to be held accountable for the results of the plan.

Dr. Cheung felt that the implementation plans were very general because he would like to see something with more meat on it. He agreed that rewards were critical in terms of positive encouragement to staff to do this. He also liked the idea of selecting math as an indicator because math taught logic and analytical skills. He was concerned about looking at the role of language minority parents and their involvement. He hoped that staff would be addressing his concerns at the next discussion of the plan.

Mrs. Hobbs expressed her appreciation to staff for a very powerful and well thought-out plan. While she had not been part of the 70 plus previous plans, she knew the frustration of the community in trying to deal with the issue of minority student achievement. In the plan she saw critical issues that had been brought up time and time again in hearings, committees, reports, and by Dr. Gordon. She reminded the Board of a goals statement they had received in November from the previous Board. This was a result of a previous meeting where several issues were tackled including what should all students know by the time they graduated and how could the Board know what they knew, how should the system provide for the learning needs of the special population, and how could they improve the teaching/learning process. The report spoke to eliminating terms such as "majority" and "minority" student, eliminating student and program labeling, and eliminating academic restrictions that tended to track of students. Labels tended to promote the idea of students as winners and losers. The goal of the school system should be to concentrate on the strengths and needs of individual students and not lumping students together based on race and ethnicity. They also thought that labelling programs for the learning disabled or the gifted promoted separateness. There had to be accountability for success at each school. Mrs. Hobbs suggested that it was time the Board revisited this document.

Mrs. DiFonzo stated that when she read the document she had the sense of having seen it before. She recalled a police/student task force on drug abuse in the 1970's which contained a statement: "Nothing in this report is new. Everything has been said before. What is needed is the will to act." While she had pages of questions and comments, she was not going to ask them. From the report and remarks made, one could conclude that a student at Stephen Knolls would graduate with the same skills, knowledge and SAT scores as a student in the Blair magnet. She asked whether the superintendent believed this was true. Dr. Vance replied that the children at Stephen Knolls like the students in the Blair magnet had talents, skills, and abilities which were God-given. It was the responsibility of the school

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system to give them an education which maximized and developed those abilities.

Mrs. DiFonzo pointed out that nowhere was there a definition of "success." She believed it would be different for every child. For one child, success might be living in a group home and holding a job. For another child, success might not be realized even by acceptance into a prestigious university. She said that this document would require a major commitment on the part of Board members as well as staff. To implement the plan it might be necessary to end sacred cow programs and to redeploy resources. The Board in its upcoming budget decisions would have to be willing to make these choices.

Having read the plan, Mrs. Brenneman agreed about the beauty in its brevity. It was good education for all children. She thought that the key was the following statement:

"We believe that quality education is a fundamental right of every child. We expect that all children can learn. We do not accept the excuse that students have a right to fail. The right of all students is to succeed. All of us have the responsibility to preserve that right and to promote success for every student."

Mrs. Brenneman said each student would experience success at his or her own capacity. They had to have high expectations for all students and spell out these expectations.

Ms. Gutierrez agreed that commitment from the top was essential. She was hearing a consensus and a team approach which was very encouraging; however, this did not come through by reading the plan. She liked the plan because it was clear and precise. The staff had done what the Board requested. She recalled that after reviewing the Gordon report, the Board tried to capture all the different aspects including students, staff, accountability, and school climate.

Ms. Gutierrez pointed out that the Board seemed to be missing from the plan. There was little mention of Board policy, and in reviewing the staff proposal she did see impacts on Board policy. In regard to a team approach in the plan, it appeared to her that the teacher was missing. A lot of the plan was a top-down approach, and she thought the teacher had to be on the team and be empowered because, for all their good intentions, the plan would not work without the teacher. She also believed they had to address the management issue and change the way they did business. They had to break down the bureaucracy and the hierarchy. She thought that the earlier plans were not successful because of implementation. She thought they needed

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more information on implementation because there was a lot of "trust me" in the plan.

Ms. Gutierrez said they needed to discuss next steps and indicated that she would like to participate in this. They needed some novel approaches to bring in cross-functional and vertical teams and advisory groups. The final aspect of the plan she would like to address was monitoring because, while they had identified some tasks and goals, she would like to see a little more precision in them.

Mrs. Fanconi was impressed by the heart-felt commitment that had gone into the plan. She wished that the Board could start working on it right away and looked forward to holding a work session on this so the Board could receive more explanations about the workings of the plan. She pointed out that sometimes short sentences entailed a great deal of staff work. She was concerned about the data system, for example, because they had an SED coordinator working on a data system, they had SIMS, and they had minority student education. She hoped that they would have compatible data and an integrated system.

Mrs. Fanconi said that the second part was staff development. Throughout the Gordon report, there was mention of the need to change attitudes and behaviors. Society had changed attitudes and behaviors. They did it on smoking, but it took ten years. She wanted to discuss what the staff development would look like and whether they were talking about staff development training from the Department of Staff Development or the special education teacher working with the regular education teacher. She wondered whether they were looking at existing resources and what was successful. She was bothered about the mention of new pilots because the Gordon report had stated that MCPS had lots of pilots, and she wondered why they weren't looking to successful pilots and disseminating them. She pointed out that DEA was mentioned on every page, but DEA was run and built on part-time staffing. In the current budget they had cut part-time funds, and they had to look at how DEA was being affected by budget cuts and at its current workload.

Mrs. Fanconi said they had talked about this plan having no costs, but they would have to choose not to do something in order to support the plan. She agreed with Ms. Gutierrez that the one person making the difference to the individual child was the individual classroom teacher. She cited Deming's statement on teamwork and using resources differently: "Teamwork is the key. It will require considerable commitment and skills on the part of the school's leadership to nurture its effectiveness. We must plan to have teachers work in a variety of positions. We must utilize the strategy of teamwork that had had to be adopted in special education to be used for all students. When deciding if

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a child has special needs, a study group of those staff members who know the child and his problems meet to discuss the child. The group is usually made up of classroom teachers, special teachers, administrators, and when appropriate the student. The group collects data, observes the child, discusses the problem. Parents, members of social services agencies, who know the child are invited to add their input. Recommendations for improvement are made after careful study, and everyone on the staff is involved in deciding which new strategies are going to be used." Deming went on to say that teamwork should be fostered within the school as well as between schools and with the central office. She said that they had to take existing staff but work in a different way. Everyone had to be part of the team concerned with a child, from the teacher to the secretary.

In regard to the workload of DEA, Mrs. Hobbs reported that the research and evaluation committee would be discussing their current workload and just how much additional work might be possible.

Mr. Ewing observed that they had been through this process over and over. This was the point where they had to make it happen. He was prepared to support the staff plan; however, history suggested that a healthy dose of skepticism was in order. Plans had not been successful for the 15 years he had been on the Board. Now they had one more chance to say to the public with some conviction that they wanted to make this happen and would make it happen. He pointed out that there were a lot of people in Montgomery County who were ambivalent about this enterprise, and the Board had to be committed and articulate about what it planned to do as well as prove that the plan was working. This was their Achilles heel in the past because they could never say that what they did made a difference.

Mr. Ewing said that the Board ought to take the posture of saying that this was a good plan, but it was up to the Board and the community to ask the hard questions. The community needed to know that the Board was committed to opening the dialogue. He was not convinced they had a plan to assure their ability to monitor and bring about full accountability. They needed answers to some questions. For example, one section spoke to the Department of Personnel and role models. They did not know what those models were and how they would know what those were. Another example was the proposed restructuring of the Department of Human Relations. They had to know how they were going to do that. He felt that the "how" questions cropped up throughout the plan.

Based on his 15 years on the Board, he knew they had tried some things in a very aggressive way from 1974 to 1978 and ran into a storm of criticism. The 1978 elections produced a Board that was

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racist in reaction to the proposals of the previous Board. Therefore, there were four years when the system went backwards. In 1983 they had a new start, and another new start in 1987. He believed they might run into the same opposition in 1992. He applauded the staff efforts, but he was concerned about unanswered questions.

Mr. Pishevar called attention to the section on recruitment. He noted that he had been a student in MCPS for 12 years, and only three of his 48 teachers had been minority. All three were in elementary school. At his school, Montgomery Blair, which was the most diverse high school in the county, there was not one African American, Hispanic, or Asian teacher in English, science, and mathematics.

Mr. Ewing stated that the Board officers would set up a worksession so that Board members could explore their questions more fully with staff. He urged Board members to put their questions in writing before the worksession. He thanked staff for their plan and presentation.

Re: ADJOURNMENT

The president adjourned the meeting at 11 p.m.

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PRESIDENT

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SECRETARY

PLV:mlw