



they would look at were called a "diversity profile" and "educational load." Staff had recognized the value of reducing their dependency on the term "minority" because they had to recognize the inherent cultural and social differences in Montgomery County, and "minority" prevented them from understanding the true issues facing the county and affected their ability to use data to ensure the success of every student in MCPS.

Dr. Mary Helen Smith, acting associate superintendent, reviewed the proposed agenda and introduced Mr. Barron Stroud, director of the Division of Quality Integrated Education, and Dr. John Larson, quality assurance specialist.

Mr. Stroud reviewed the current QIE policy and described how his division functioned under the minority student guidelines imposed by the present policy. The QIE policy now addressed granting transfers between school facilities, school attendance boundaries, and resource allocations for students based on a school's racial balance. QIE staff looked at schools whose racial balance was 20 percent above or below the county's minority balance which was then at 39.5. In reality, staff looked only at schools that were above the 59.5 percent guideline. Originally QIE had served 29 schools, and now that number is 63. When the 20 percent factor occurred, staff then looked at the ESOL population, free and reduced meals, the mobility rate, transfer decisions, and achievement in those schools. Schools developed annual assessment plans which were monitored by the area offices and assessed twice each year. At the end of each year they looked at needs again and defined the allocation for those schools for the following year.

Dr. Smith presented census data from 1980 and 1990 showing how Montgomery County was changing in relation to the state's minority population. She pointed out the minority populations in Montgomery County as compared to neighboring counties.

Dr. Smith stated that there were two things to note. The first thing to note was Montgomery County's "market share" of these populations. For example, while Montgomery County had 15.8 percent of the total state population in 1990, their market share of Asians was 44 percent and of Hispanics was 44 percent.

The second notable fact was housing wealth indicators. The median house value in the state was \$116,500, while in Montgomery County it was \$223,782. A related issue was home ownership by race. In every racial and ethnic group, there were more home owners in Montgomery County than in the rest of the state. The message was that Montgomery County was very different from the state and from its neighboring counties.

Dr. Smith pointed out that in 1980 the white population in MCPS was 78 percent, and it was now 62 percent. The African American population in Montgomery County had grown by 87 percent, the Asian population by 123 percent, the Hispanic population by 144 percent, and the white population by 17 percent.

Dr. Smith also noted that if they looked at housing ownership by race and compared 1980 with 1990, the percent of African Americans, Asians, and Hispanics who owned houses had dropped by 13, 8, and 42 percent respectively. The figures for whites did not change.

Dr. Smith emphasized that because of the differences between counties, as noted in this data, Montgomery County could not look to their neighboring jurisdictions for solutions. Further, because of the changes in population within Montgomery County, what MCPS did in 1980 would not address the needs of Montgomery County's 1990 population.

Dr. Smith then introduced Dr. John Larson. Dr. Larson would present information on a diversity profile which was a new approach to looking at racial and ethnic groups.

Dr. Larson pointed out that the present QIE policy only addressed minority/majority issues and not the full range of diversity within the school system. He walked the Board through a proposed diversity profile for MCPS which approached the issue in terms of the four major racial/ethnic groups as opposed to minority/majority. Staff had looked at the changes in school populations to examine schools whose rate of change was greater than the average change in MCPS.

Then Dr. Larson described a scoring system that could be used to determine schools needing the most attention. He explained that while this system resembled the old "20 percent" rule, they would now look at schools in terms of the four major racial/ethnic groups, putting emphasis on examining schools above or below a standard deviation for each group. For example, rather than examining schools that are high in composition of a given racial group, they would examine schools where this group's population was increasing rapidly. They would also look at schools that are very not very diverse and are becoming increasingly less diverse. He showed how looking at the schools in this way might mean more opportunity for transfers from one school to another rather than "closing" schools to transfers merely because of racial balance.

Dr. Smith said that during the next presentation they would like to talk about whether resource allocations should be part of the policy and if it remained, what should be the criteria for allocating or reallocating resources. She stated that Dr. Larson would describe a way of analyzing the needs of a school by means other than just minority population numbers.

Dr. Larson said that in the past when a school had a high minority population, it was considered for extra resources. Conversely, a low minority population implied a school did not need extra resources. Staff had separated the issue of racial composition from educational needs. Dr. Larson explained that what they had done was to organize "intuition." All educators were intuitively aware of features about a school which made learning easier or more difficult. Staff was characterizing the school and not the students. The more a school had particular features, the greater its "educational load."

Dr. Larson reported that to determine educational load staff had looked at a number of factors and found four that were highly correlated with student achievement. These four factors were the percentage of students older than grade age, numbers of students receiving free and reduced meals, the percentage of students new to MCPS, and percentage of students new to a school cluster. Schools ranking high on some combination of these indicators might need extra resources.

As staff examined these factors, they found that all factors were not equally reliable at all levels. For example, in elementary schools the percentage of students on free and reduced meals (FARMS) could predict the school's test scores. At the high school level, since many students at this level refuse to apply for FARMS, they placed more reliance on numbers of students older than grade age.

Dr. Larson then demonstrated educational load through the use of charts. These charts show that MCPS may have to define and redefine their indicators of student achievement, perhaps yearly, by using indicators such as systemwide CRT results. He pointed out one school with an educational load of 25 percent where the achievement was 48 NCE points and another school with the same load that was 18 points higher on achievement. Staff would want to examine both schools.

Another issue is giving schools extra resources and then taking these resources away when achievement goes up. Staff would have to make a determination as to which resources are there to support achievement and keep those resources in a school as long as the "load" exists. This could be monitored on a yearly basis.

Dr. Vance indicated that he would be providing the Board with a paper describing all of the issues and charts raised during the worksession.

Re: CLOSED SESSION

Mrs. Hobbs announced that the Board had met in closed session as authorized by Board resolution on June 22. The session was held

from 12:15 to 2:20 p.m. and involved receiving advice from legal counsel and making personnel decisions.

Re: LONG-RANGE EDUCATIONAL FACILITY  
PLANNING POLICY

Dr. Mary Helen Smith introduced Ms. Ann Briggs, director of the Department of Educational Facilities Planning, and Mr. Bruce Crispell, demographic planner. Dr. Smith explained that these staff would review student composition, how the facilities policy was implemented, and how they might use the diversity profile to make decisions.

Ms. Briggs described how the current long-range educational facilities planning policy operated. She then explained how the policy had evolved from the original small schools policy for closing underenrolled schools.

Ms. Briggs pointed out that there were several issues the Board had to consider: (1) should MCPS continue to incorporate QIE criteria in boundary changes, (2) should MCPS incorporate student achievement as a component in balancing school service areas, (3) should program offerings be part of boundary studies, (4) should MCPS continue using type of housing as an indicator of socioeconomic level, (5) should the geographic scope of boundary studies be expanded; and (6) can changes to boundary analyses be accommodated in a time of reduced resources. Ms. Briggs then demonstrated how current factors were used in making a specific boundary decision.

Ms. Briggs described the whole issue of community involvement. The current community involvement practice which had started with a tremendous amount of community involvement and community suggestions associated with school closures. By 1981, MCPS had moved into recommendations from the superintendent, with community hearings; and by 1986, MCPS was in a proactive stance, with clusters making recommendations. However, in the 1990's staff was finding that, with working parents, there was a limited amount of time for community involvement. Board members then offered and briefly discussed suggestions for community, staff, and Board involvement.

Ms. Briggs reviewed the capital budget planning process and the timetables for that process. Another issue she addressed was whether school capacity calculations should be changed to better reflect program and to simplify interpretation of planning data.

Dr. Vance requested comments from Dr. Maree Sneed and Ms. Judy Bresler, Board attorneys. Dr. Sneed thought that legally they might be on a lot safer ground if they were to use the suggestions made by staff during the worksession. Ms. Bresler felt that the staff had done a good job of suggesting ways to

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revise the policy which would tailor the policy to the demographics of Montgomery County. Once the Board approved a policy goal and had a way of measuring that goal, then they could ask what to do with that information and how to apply these tools. All of this had implications for facilities, student transfers, and the allocation of resources. It seemed to her that there was enthusiasm for moving toward the goal of racial and ethnic diversity.

Dr. Smith reported that at the September 9 Board meeting they would have a summary of this worksession. At that point, the Board could decide whether to request policy changes. It seemed to Dr. Vance that the Board wanted to reaffirm its commitment to racially integrated education. He thought that the Board wanted to see timetables and recommendations for policy changes. He agreed the Board and staff needed to have information sessions with the broader community and needed to share with the community the information presented to the Board. Staff would study the comments made by Board members during the worksession and present proposals on September 9.

On behalf of the members of the Board, Mrs. Hobbs thanked staff for their excellent presentations.

Re: ADJOURNMENT

The president adjourned the meeting at 5:40 p.m.

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PRESIDENT

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SECRETARY

PLV:mlw