

APPROVED  
36-1995

Rockville, Maryland  
October 5, 1995

The Board of Education of Montgomery County met in special session at the Carver Educational Services Center, Rockville, Maryland, on October 5, 1995 at 7:45 p.m.

ROLL CALL      Present: Mrs. Beatrice Gordon, President  
                  Dr. Alan Cheung  
                  Ms. Ana Sol Gutierrez, Vice President  
                       in the chair  
                  Mr. Blair G. Ewing  
                  Mr. Reginald Felton  
                  Mrs. Nancy King  
                  Mr. Charles McCullough

Absent: Mr. Steve Abrams

Others Present: Dr. Paul L. Vance, Superintendent  
                  Mr. Larry A. Bowers, Acting Deputy

Re: MEETING WITH THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY  
COUNCIL OF SUPPORTING SERVICES  
EMPLOYEES (MCCSSE)

The meeting was called to order at 7:45 p.m. by Ms. Gutierrez. She welcomed members of the MCCSSE executive board. She noted that Mrs. Gordon and Mrs. King were at a County Council spending affordability meeting and would join the meeting in progress.

Ms. Marty Strombotne, president of MCCSSE, introduced the following MCCSSE executive board members and invited them to the table: Marty Strombotne, president; Merle Cuttitta, vice-president; Diane Burke, educational assistants; Jessica Dunkley, office employees; Nancy Bernard, media and technology; Catherine Sadler, transportation; Evelyn Gaston, building services; Joyce Schoeppach, maintenance; Mary Belin, food services; and Hampton Johnson, security.

Ms. Burke expressed her concerns regarding inclusion of special education and that impact upon the school system as well as regular education children. She stated that non-special education instructional assistants who have not been trained are being used to work with special education students who have been placed in a regular classroom. Another concern was taking non-pay time to call for substitutes when instructional assistants will be on leave.

\* Dr. Cheung joined the meeting.

Ms. Dunkley referred the Board to the problem of secretaries calling for supporting services substitutes.

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Ms. Bernard stated that the role of the media assistant has increased over the years due to more students, more equipment, and more kinds of materials to store and repair. She also pointed out that there is no substitute roster for media assistants. She suggested a roving media assistant within the cluster who is familiar with the school and the equipment.

Ms. Sadler stated that the bus lots are owned by MCPS and should be operated under a standard procedure. For safety, there is a need for lighted lots as well as other security needs. Another issue is the need for parking for personal cars.

Ms. Gaston spoke about privatization of building services. She pointed out that children know the building service workers and feel safe. Another concern is that building service workers are people who live and work in the community and with the loss of revenue they could lose their homes.

Ms. Schoeppach added that contracting out has a lot of problems. MCPS maintenance workers must fix what contractors have not properly done. She opined that well maintained schools have a bearing on the quality of education, i.e., poor conditions creates poor morale.

Ms. Belin pointed out that the central production facility is efficient and cost effective. This is an example of what can be done when staff works together in an effort to save money as well as the delivery of quality service throughout the school system.

Mr. Johnson reported that MCPS is in the vanguard of security systems within the school systems. He pointed out that public schools must be safe. He added that juvenile crime and violence will double in the next ten years. Mr. Johnson was concerned about shifting hours in order to work six days a week.

Ms. Cuttitta stated that supporting services are an integral part of the success for every student.

Mr. Felton pointed out that contracting out is a budgetary concern. He asked if there were statistics on restructuring to show that MCPS is efficient. Ms. Strombotne stated that there was a pilot at two middle schools, and she offered to supply the results to the Board. Mr. Stukes in plant operations has asked employees how they can work smarter and more efficiently. Ms. Strombotne added that the union is willing to strive for efficiencies and the employees are in a position to make positive suggestions. Ms. Cuttitta added that it was her experience that contracting out does not produce consistency or the care factor on the part of those employees.

\* Mrs. Gordon, Mrs. King and Mr. Bowers joined the meeting.

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Mr. Ewing expressed his concern over contracting out even though it has become the model in the federal government as well as the private sector. He added that those taking the position against contracting out need to have facts and arguments ready for fighting this trend.

Dr. Cheung commented that contracting out and privatization is a reflection of the lack of understanding of management in the private sector versus the nonprofit. The nonprofit organization must get the most performance for its fixed resources. Ms. Cuttitta replied that supporting services employees could meet with administration and offer money-saving suggestions. The union has people with good ideas that should not be lost and some of the ideas could be implemented immediately.

Ms. Gutierrez related that the thrust of privatization comes from the private sector and the Board has been resistant to the concept as the Board examined the benefits and consequences. A team effort might prove to be helpful and productive.

Mrs. Gordon remarked that it is important to see supporting services employees on the job and understand exactly what they do for the school system. Another important aspect is training and this area needs improvement. She also requested that MCCSSE bring to the Board's attention to areas of concern as well as areas where money can be saved. She added that contracting out is for cost savings. If MCCSSE or individuals have cost-saving ideas, the Board is willing to listen to those options.

Ms. Gutierrez requested that MCCSSE compile a list of what was discussed this evening and share it with the Board.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

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President

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Secretary

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