

APPROVED
5-2010

Rockville, Maryland
January 28, 2010

The Board of Education of Montgomery County held a hearing at the Carver Educational Services Center, Rockville, Maryland, on January 28, 2010, at 6:30 p.m.

Present: Mrs. Patricia O'Neill, President
in the Chair
Mr. Christopher Barclay
Ms. Laura Berthiaume
Ms. Shirley Brandman
Dr. Judy Docca
Mr. Michael Durso
Mr. Timothy Hwang
Mr. Philip Kauffman
Dr. Jerry Weast, Secretary/Treasurer

Absent: None

Pledge of Allegiance

ALIGNING THE OPERATING BUDGET WITH THE BOARD'S ACADEMIC PRIORITIES

- What have we done in the past?
- What are we maintaining?
- What are we considering reducing, if anything?

Academic Priority – Use Student, Staff, School, and System Performance Data to Monitor and Improve Student Achievement

1. Shared Accountability
2. Technology
 - Technology Modernization
 - School Support for Technology
 - Technology Support for Assessment

Re: DISCUSSION

Ms. Brandman asked about the work in reading and literacy standards. Staff stated that local assessments are compared to state and national standards for reliability.

Mr. Barclay wanted to know about the evaluation process for programs. What is the timetable for the programs being evaluated? In tight fiscal times, the system must evaluate the effectiveness of programs. How are programs evaluated and what does

that process look like? Staff replied that requests are made for a study and the researchers work with staff setting up guiding questions. Researchers collect data, analyze, and write a report, which is vetted by the Leadership Team.

Mr. Barclay noted that in a budget process for a business, staff would look at a return on its investment. How can and does the Office of Shared Accountability (OSA) help the system in that regard, such as intervention teachers, literacy coaches, and the impact in high-needs schools? How does the system evaluate to ensure quality? Staff replied that OSA looks at the data available to give a quarterly report to determine where schools and students are achieving, specifically related to the Seven Keys.

Mr. Barclay asked if the workforce will be developed to utilize technology, especially the more senior staff. Staff explained there is a partnership across the school system to meet the needs of staff and students. When technology solutions are implemented, it is important to assure that the client's capacity has been measured to understand the need. To accomplish this, staff does three things: (1) communicates effectively, (2) furnishes professional development, and (3) provides technology support. Staff pointed out that instruction is given through webinars, which encourage school staff to participate.

Mr. Hwang asked about disparity in technology literacy among immigrants and lower-income students. Second, what does staff see in the future for online and blended classes? Staff explained that technology is a great equalizer and overcomes language barriers with the introduction of interactive technology. There are benefits for special education, and a positive impact on language acquisition for ESOL students. Second, where learning occurs is going to be different since technology will overcome time and distance.

Mr. Kauffman inquired about how a local teacher's lesson plan can be shared with colleagues. Staff explained that there are lessons on the website that can be shared with other teachers. The portal will be the site for the integrated curriculum, and professional development will allow staff to have a better tool set.

Mr. Kauffman asked about the experience and cost of breakage and loss with Promethean Boards and accessories. Staff stated that there was not an exact cost, but there is a dramatic decrease in schools ordering LCD projectors. The student response systems are sturdy. In short, staff is tracking and learning about maintenance and replacements, such as bulbs.

Ms. Berthiaume asked what staff envisioned in the future, such as an MCPS "drive" where students could save papers, and a fourth grader electronically doing sixth grade math with peers around the county. In other words, students would be working independently with other students and instructors to accelerate their learning. Staff replied that teachers already are working with other students in an online environment. Also, there are different options for online portfolios where student work could be stored. Mrs. O'Neill thought technology in the schools would make a good work session topic

since there is a lot of interest by Board members.

Academic Priority – Strengthen Family–School Relationships and Continue to Expand Civic, Business, and Community Partnerships that Support Improved Student Achievement

3. Strengthen Family–School Partnerships
 - Parent Engagement Service

Re: **DISCUSSION**

Dr. Docca commented that it is important that staff goes into the community to help parents, especially with computer skills to access Edline. Also, Copy Plus is a great help to schools and staff.

Mr. Hwang asked how many parents are reached by Family and Community Partnerships. Staff replied that it was a significant number.

Ms. Brandman noted that the system is relying more and more on technology tools. As that demand increases, how is the system going to meet demands at the school and central office level for web-based support? There will never be a replacement for face-to-face communication, but there are other ways to communicate to the community through media and technology. Staff replied that media and technology are formats, but content still needs to be produced by staff for outreach.

Ms. Brandman inquired about community outreach and meeting parents where they are, such as computers in libraries. Staff explained that MCPS works across agencies and partners to let them know what resources are available through MCPS.

Mr. Hwang noted that most teachers have been hired in the past 10 years. How is MCPS using new media such as Twitter and Facebook? Montgomery College recruits professors through Facebook. Staff stated that a work group will recommend guidelines for social media.

Academic Priority – Foster and Sustain Systems that Support and Improve Employee Effectiveness, in Partnerships with MCPS Employee Organizations

4. Building Capacity of Staff
 - Job-Embedded Staff Development
 - Equity Training
 - Professional Growth System (PGS)
5. Employee Salaries and Benefits
 - Continuing Salaries
 - Employee Benefit Plan (EBP)
 - Retirement Fund

- Retiree Health Benefits Trust Fund

Re: **DISCUSSION**

Dr. Docca pointed out that there is a need to look at equity and [move toward a future where] academic success will not be predicated by race. Furthermore, MCPS is building cultural knowledge for its staff. How does MCPS pull together the diverse elements? Staff replied that implementation of the Framework for Equity and Excellence has necessitated a cross-system team to develop system coordination.

Mr. Kauffman wanted to know the total amount spent on professional development as a school system as compared with other systems. Staff responded that corporations spend 3 to 5 percent of their budget; MCPS is closer to 2 ½ percent.

Mr. Barclay noted that Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) has always been the first area reduced. The total liability for MCPS is \$1.25 billion. How long can MCPS underfund OPEB? Staff stated that OPEB is prefunded, and there is a commitment to have OPEB full funded. The amount must go on the books as a liability, but funding OPEB is not mandatory. This budget has \$32 million dedicated to OPEB.

Academic Priority – Organize and Optimize Resources for Improved Academic Results

6. Operational Efficiency and Excellence
 - Update on Operational Efficiencies and Excellence

Re: **DISCUSSION**

Ms. Berthiaume noted that under entrepreneurial activities there is a description of students' e-learning with online courses and web-enhanced experiences. What is the cost to develop courses for students? Why is there a charge? Staff explained that the vision for the future is to be able to offer distant learning or online courses. Charges are related to an extended day program at the present time.

Mr. Kauffman asked for a description of grant writing in the school system. Staff explained that there is a grant specialist in the Budget Office. Also, staff is reviewing all grants that MCPS is eligible for and could profit from.

Other Issues and Concerns by Board Members

Re: **DISCUSSION**

Ms. Brandman asked about the realignment in one of the testimonies about two counselor positions from the middle school budget. Were those two positions transferred from the middle school to elementary school or realigned to fund the instructional music program? Staff explained that there were two transfers from the middle schools: (1) two middle school

counselor positions based on enrollment and reassigned to large elementary schools, and (2) \$50,000 more for instrumental music.

Ms. Brandman inquired about prekindergarten services, especially MPAC. Staff outlined the proposed program for prekindergarten students, highlighting the following: (1) MCPS is prepared to educate students in a public school; (2) MCPS serves children from birth to age 3 through the Infants and Toddlers Program; (3) the Preschool Education Program (PEP) has a nationally recognized curriculum; (4) PEP staff is knowledgeable about strategies to modify or adapt curriculum; (5) the curriculum is aligned with the kindergarten curriculum; (6) the classes are located throughout the county; (7) IEPs will be developed for each child; (8) there will be comprehensive parent outreach; (9) students will have the advantages of school-based programs, such as art, music, and PE; (10) there is assistive technology, behavior supports, and occupational and physical therapy; (11) there will be five hours a day with six other students; and (12) MCPS has professional development for staff.

Mr. Kauffman noted that MPAC serves 70 students, and MCPS is planning on serving 36 children. Is the plan to do 36 now and then add another 36 students? Staff stated that the plan is to have classes for 36 children. Mr. Kauffman asked about the IEP process, and will the parents' or teams' decisions rule? Staff explained that the federal process will be followed, looking at the students' needs with a review every year. The IEP follows a team decision.

Mr. Durso thought the system has the right and responsibility to house as many programs as possible. However, within the special education community, MCPS has some credibility issues, such as the learning centers. How does MCPS regain that trust? Staff thought the key is communication and work with special education organizations.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

PRESIDENT

SECRETARY