

APPROVED
37-2010

Rockville, Maryland
December 1, 2010

The Board of Education of Montgomery County met in special session at the Carver Educational Services Center, Rockville, Maryland, on Wednesday, December 1, 2010, at 7:00 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. Philip Kauffman
 Mr. Alan Xie
 Dr. Jerry Weast, Secretary/Treasurer

Absent: None

Ms. Loretta Knight, Clerk of the Montgomery County Circuit Court, administered the oath of office to Ms. Brandman, Dr. Docca, Mr. Durso, and Mrs. O'Neill.

Re: **STATEMENT BY DR. DOCCA**

"I would like to begin by thanking my many supporters in Montgomery County, but principally to thank those who endorsed me and my running mates: the Montgomery County Education Association, Montgomery County Association of Administrators and Principals, Service Employees International Union, the Montgomery County Retirees Association, and also the *Washington Post*, the *Gazette* Newspapers, and the Montgomery Women. Special thanks go to my advisory committee, who met with me quarterly during my first term to guide me in thinking about decisions affecting all of our students. I also thank the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Theta Omega Omega Chapter, for their warm support and the Silver Spring Links, Inc. for their assistance.

I am grateful for the support of many friends and former students that I had in the District of Columbia, Gaithersburg High School, Montgomery Blair High School, and Argyle Middle School, as well as coworkers in Montgomery County. For the friendship and encouragement of the members of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority in Montgomery County, the members of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity. I mention all of these because the societies and fraternities, the Links, and Branch of the NAACP and the National Conference of Puerto Rican Women—all have programs that are tutoring students or providing scholarships and for mentoring students in Montgomery County Public Schools.

A special thanks to Delegate Susan Lee and Judge Chung Pak for their support in their communities. Finally, thanks to my church, St. Bartholomew's of Laytonsville.

I thank my fellow candidates for sharing their supporters and the information about events, which were very helpful during the campaign. It has been wonderful to work with them, and I am glad that they are back.

As everyone knows, we are embarking on a search for a superintendent who will carry on in a determined, focused, and forceful tradition of Dr. Jerry Weast in providing excellent programs, qualified staff members, and the many academic choices and opportunities which have made MCPS an excellent school system. We meet the needs of most, if not all, students. The accomplishments by staff members and Dr. Weast include the highest graduation rate among the 50 largest and most diverse school systems in the nation. The highest SAT scores overall in the state and the nation. The highest percentage of students taking at least one Advanced Placement course. MCPS has more International Baccalaureate programs than any other school system in the state and the nation. MCPS outscores the state and the nation in African American and Hispanic students scoring 3 or better on the Advanced Placement exams. MCPS was the runner-up for the Eli and Edith Broad Award for Academic Achievement for diverse and large school systems. Last week, MCPS did win the coveted Baldrige Award; only one of six school systems in the nation to do so, as well as the largest and most diverse school system.

I cannot leave out our spectacular staff who caused us to be able to receive these accolades, but they have continued to labor even harder under the economic conditions under which we find ourselves. They have given up their COLAs for two years in a row on their own volition, recognizing the dire needs of the state and local economy. They did all of this despite the fact that enrollment increased by 6,200 and this year—2,200 more students not projected for enrollment. These addition students are receiving excellent services despite the fact that we are operating at a financial deficit.

I will continue to be dedicated to excellent programs for students and financial need for students in special education populations who deserve our enlightened programming. I strongly support our programs that require academic and intellectual growth—the magnets, the language immersions programs, International Baccalaureate, communication programs, the career and technology programs. We must continue meet the needs of all students who are sent to us to the best of our ability. We will continue to work cooperatively with state and local elected officials, but with the goal of the best we can secure for our students. If MCPS falters, the future of the county is in jeopardy because the schools have been a draw for residents and businesses to locate here in the best, most diverse, and progressive county in the United States.”

Re: STATEMENT BY MR. DURSO

"I first want to thank all of those who supported me in my Board of Education campaign. I would especially would like to thank my Campaign Manager Dr. Carol Dahlberg, and Campaign Treasurer Mr. John Bell, both of whom are longtime friends and colleagues. I also want to acknowledge the support given by fellow Board member Shirley Brandman, who informed me that "we will drag you across the finish line on Election Day, " and Mr. David Fishback for his advice and support during the campaign.

In this era of incumbents being removed from office, it is interesting to note that all [4] members of the previous Board were returned to office. I hope that is a signal that the community trusts us, and has belief that we will and can carry on our important work for the next four years. I look forward to working on the FY 12 budget as well as participating in the Superintendent Search, and again thank all of those who supported me on November 2."

Re: STATEMENT BY MRS. BRANDMAN

"Tonight, I am both honored and humbled. I am grateful for the confidence you have shown in entrusting me with this important responsibility for four more years. My experience over the past four years has only heightened my sense of obligation to all our students. It is with sincere passion and dedication that I reaffirm my commitment to the fight for equity and excellence for all.

These are interesting times. In the midst of a national debate about education reform that often questions the effectiveness of public education, we at MCPS are seeing rays of hope and success. With an incredibly diverse student body that reflects the challenges and opportunities of school district with suburban, urban and rural areas, we are working with increasing effectiveness on simultaneously closing the achievement gap and raising the bar for all. We have been recognized by the Broad Foundation as well as the Baldrige National Quality Award. It is the talent and dedication of our teachers, principals, administrators, and support staff that has made our achievement soar. And yet difficult times continue to require more from them.

I am grateful for the chance to continue the unfinished business because we have not met our goals in all areas. To fulfill our promise we must redouble our efforts for students of color, limited English speakers, and special education students.

We face great challenges. After 12 years of stability and success under Dr. Weast's able leadership, we must transition to a new superintendent. The fiscal realities are daunting and will force us to confront limitations on our resources and to make difficult choices among worthy competing priorities. What we cannot afford to do is to lower our expectations or lose faith in our ability to reach all students. As some of you know, I am a first generation American whose immigrant parents came to the United States and relied on the public schools of New York to give me opportunity. My unshakable faith in public education is very

deep and very personal: that public school can be a stepping stone for all children, as it was for me. It is with great pride and enormous humility that I resume my place on this Board of Education eager to dedicate my skills and energy to serving our students.

I believe strongly that to be effective, a Board member must be grounded in the community and continue to reach out and listen. Campaigns are wonderful opportunities to participate in additional community conversations and hear community members' concerns. I want to continue to have my decision-making informed by your input, and for that I ask you to continue to be my partners.

It also requires collaboration and a good faith partnership among the players involved. I am fortunate to serve with talented and dedicated fellow members of this Board. We each bring a unique perspective to this work, and it is our task to listen and learn from each other so that we can make the best decisions on behalf of the students of MCPS. I look forward to working with them, along with our elected officials on the county and state level, in our efforts to maximize available resources and maintain the excellence of an MCPS education.

Tonight, as I close the final page on the 2010 campaign, I want to express my gratitude to those whose dedication and effort allow me to stand before you again today. First and foremost I am eternally indebted to my most dedicated campaign manager, Marli Pasternak, who punctuated my thoughts and kept me focused. I also want to acknowledge the perfect treasurer, Kim Schifrin, who managed the details with grace and diligence. There are many more incredibly talented women who sat at my dining room table, and to you I say thanks for your calm and wisdom. Helping keep us real were a cadre of amazing MCPS students. I want to acknowledge Hal Zeitlin and Alex Abdun-Abi, our student co-captains, for their dependability and enthusiasm. And, last but not least, I want to thank my inspiration: the home team—my sons Zack and Sam and my husband Howard.

None of us can imagine all the challenges that lie ahead. What I do know is that I will approach each of these challenges with a fundamental belief in public education and a commitment to work collaboratively with my colleagues in the best interests of all our children. Thank you.”

Re: STATEMENT BY MRS. O'NEILL

“It is hard for me to believe that this is the fourth time that I have participated in the Board of Education swearing-in ritual. If you had asked me in 1998 if I would still be a Board member in 2010, I could not have possibly imagined that I would be here today.

I do know that at the 1998 swearing in ceremony, the superintendent search lay ahead of me, just as I know that a superintendent search looms before me now. One of my most important votes as a Board member was to hire Jerry Weast. I am proud of all that we have accomplished in these past 12 years. I wish him well in his upcoming retirement. I wish my colleagues luck as we search to fill his big shoes.

A lot has changed in my life during these past 12 years. Twelve years ago my daughter, Jenny, was a junior in high school. She is now married and a practicing attorney. My daughter, Melissa, was a bubbly third grader. She is now a junior in college. One person who is missing tonight is my mother. She passed away one year ago this month. She encouraged me and helped with my daughters during my early years on the Board. My sister is not here tonight. She is being elected an officer of the medical staff at Shady Grove Hospital.

To my husband Rick, I have to say thank you. He has been my secret campaign weapon. He has made it his personal mission to get prime sign coverage each campaign. Who could have imagined that when we met graduation day in 1968 that the Board of Education would be in our future. Rick, my sister Carolyn, and my sister-in-law Jo Ann are all proud Walter Johnson graduates.

There are many people I would like to thank tonight—the voters of Montgomery County who have now elected me four times; my incredible campaign team of Carol Jarvis, Lafe Solomon, and Tom Murphy.

I also want to thank the wonderful Board staff, Roland, Suzann, Laura, Kathy, Glenda, Becky and Martha. Thanks for all you do everyday to support us and make us look good.

Every year that I have served on the Board has been different; it is somewhat like reading an adventure novel, with each chapter filled with twists and turns. Every chapter has been filled with challenges, successes, highs, and lows. I look forward to four more years of this adventure called MCPS. I can't wait to see the next chapter."

Re: COMMENTS BY BOARD MEMBERS AND THE SUPERINTENDENT

Board members welcomed the newly elected members as well as their work on the Board of Education and wished them well in the upcoming work of the Board.

Re: ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m. and was followed by a reception.

PRESIDENT

SECRETARY