

NUMBER: 21-1990
STATUS: APPROVED
PLACE: ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND
DATE: APRIL 4, 1990
TEXT:

While they were accustomed to hard bargaining in negotiating a contract, Mr. Foo said they were not prepared for the indifferent, non-communicative and demeaning attitude from the Board's team. MCCSSE's approach to negotiations had always been to address problems in the workplace or areas in the contract that needed changes. They hoped that if they made their case some kind of agreement could be reached to address the problem and that some kind of compromise language could be worked out.

Mr. Foo knew that three Board members would not be on the Board next year, and they did not expect any change in attitude from those remaining on the Board. They had experienced tolerance without acceptance for too long to indulge in fantasies. He felt that the attitude of indifference and disinterest permeated MCPS from the top down. He showed Board members a video on carpal tunnel syndrome and other physical problems resulting from repetitive arm motions.

Mr. Foo indicated that it was clear from the video that short rest breaks for auditory interpreters would do much to prevent employees from these physical impairments. They proposed that interpreters be allowed a short break following continuous interpreting of 45 minutes to one hour and for activities requiring two or more hours of consecutive interpreting that two interpreters be assigned. They did not understand why the Board would not agree to some accommodation for these employees and asked the Board to prevent a problem before it occurred. They were now filing Workmen's Compensation claims and winning. This reinforced their conviction that MCCSSE employees were treated differently by the Board and the superintendent.

Mr. Foo pointed out that there were employees working less than four hours a day who were not entitled to benefits. To try to make ends meet, some of these employees worked a second job in MCPS. They had proposed that if an employee had two jobs totalling four or more hours that employee would be entitled to benefits.

Mr. Foo explained that the Board had made much of the recommendations from a labor/management committee on health and safety standards for users of video display terminals. A joint committee had unanimously agreed to these recommendations, but the Board would not agree to putting this language in the contract. In addition, there was a similar situation with a transportation committee, and the Board would not agree to continue procedures that MCCSSE felt were fair and equitable to all bus operators and attendants and which had been in place for four years.

Mr. Foo reported that there were four classes of employees wearing uniforms. Three of them were provided uniforms at no

expense to the employee. In the case of food service employees, the cost came out of individual cafeteria receipts. They asked that the cost of the uniforms not be charged to individual cafeterias.

Mr. Foo stated that they wanted the Board to know that they were aware of the discriminatory attitude that permeated the school system in its treatment of supporting services employees, whether in the day-to-day operation of the schools or at the negotiating table. They intended to do a better job of making the public aware of the problems that existed in MCPS, and they would step up their political efforts to elect the right people to the Board of Education.

Mr. Goldensohn commented that he was not pleased that Mr. Foo felt he had to make this statement, but he understood why. In response to Dr. Pitt's question about transportation, Mr. Foo explained that the mediator had kept jurisdiction in this matter and a committee was meeting, but so far no movement had been made. Mr. Goldensohn asked where the money for the uniforms should come from, and Mr. Foo suggested it should be the general budget or the food services budget, but not the individual schools. While the \$30,000 or \$40,000 for uniforms was a small amount in the total MCPS budget, it would take some slight burden off individual schools.

Mr. Ewing requested information on the number of people working less than four hours a day and the number of people working two jobs of less than four hours each. He also inquired about the status of the recommendations on video display terminals. Dr. Pitt said that as far as he knew the guidelines were being followed. Mr. Foo explained that people did not know how to get problems corrected. Mr. Ewing suggested that the school system might issue the guidelines and asked that Board members be provided with copies of the final recommendations. Mrs. Praisner suggested an item in the BULLETIN.

In regard to transportation, Mr. Foo explained that the mediator had given them 60 days from the time of his recommendations. He understood that if the committee did not reach agreement that the mediator would step back in. Mr. Ewing asked that the Board be informed of the status of those meetings.

Mr. Goldensohn asked that a response be prepared to the issues raised by Mr. Foo. Mr. Ewing requested a cost estimate on the issue of the interpreters. Dr. Pitt agreed to look into the issues raised by MCCSSE and prepare a response.

Re: ADJOURNMENT

The vice president adjourned the meeting at 8:55 p.m.

VICE PRESIDENT

SECRETARY

HP:mlw