

NUMBER: 27-1991
STATUS: APPROVED
PLACE: ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND
DATE: APRIL 11, 1991
TEXT:

Re: WORKSESSION ON MINORITY STUDENT
ACHIEVEMENT

Mrs. Hobbs introduced Ms. Gutierrez, as chair of the Board's subcommittee on minority student achievement.

Ms. Gutierrez stated that this was the fourth and final worksession in the Board's efforts to review the Gordon report. The focus this evening would be on the ESOL/bilingual program and multicultural curriculum development. They had also asked Dr. Edmund Gordon to dedicate some time this evening to discuss his recommendations that were not covered previously as well as policy making. The Board would spend all day on Saturday, April 27, coming up with policy proposals. The Board would also conduct a public hearing on these proposals. By mid-May they would know the status of the budget and would be able to join program and policy issues with the budget.

Mrs. Hobbs suggested that they start with the staff presentations, followed by remarks by Dr. Gordon, and ending with Board discussion.

Mrs. Katheryn Gemberling, associate superintendent, indicated that they would start with ESOL and then discuss the multicultural curriculum development work. She introduced Ms. Maria Schaub, director of the Division of ESOL/Bilingual Programs. Mrs. Gemberling pointed out that they had provided Board members with a matrix on ESOL services.

Ms. Schaub reported that they had a very diverse and changing population in the ESOL program. They had an instructional program, parent services, bilingual assessment, counseling services, and testing. The instructional program varied significantly from the elementary level to the high school level. At the elementary level it was a pull-out program. They were now getting schools with large numbers of children, and they had a school with over 200 ESOL students. They were trying to start teaching Hispanic children to read in Spanish, and they were evaluating this program before the program was expanded. They hoped to have a similar program for Cambodian youngsters at New Hampshire Estates.

Ms. Schaub said that at the mid-level they were able to increase services to six schools that were highly impacted. The beginning students were receiving two periods of ESOL, plus instruction in science and social studies with a lot of language development. At the high school level they were continuing with the intensive English language centers which they felt was a very successful model. They were pleased that next year they would be able to increase the number of centers which would reduce the size of some of their larger centers.

Ms. Schaub reported that the METS program continued at the elementary level. They had 13 elementary and mid-level classes; however, they did have some students on a waiting list. As the skills of students increased, they were mainstreamed and openings became available to those on the waiting list. The METS program used to be the Mobile Education Team because the idea was that teachers would move around to where the children were. However, they started getting so many children that teachers did not meet.

The new title was Multi-disciplinary Educational Training and Support Program. This program was designed for students in Grades 3 through 9 who had little or no previous schooling. At the elementary level, these students were in a self-contained classroom with a maximum of 15 students. At the mid-level, the students were with the METS teacher for three periods, ESOL for two periods, and mainstreamed for two periods. They also provided weekly counseling to those students as a group and individually as needed.

In regard to the ESOL testing center, Ms. Schaub said that they assessed youngsters for English proficiency. It was not to test their academic skills. This year they had modified the elementary testing program. Now they were giving reading and writing tests to K-6 students. The bilingual assessment team was an interdisciplinary unit containing diagnostic-prescriptive teachers, a bilingual psychologist, and a bilingual speech-language pathologist. They assessed youngsters who were suspected of having a handicapping condition. This was done in the native language.

Ms. Schaub reported that the parent services program provided help to parents by providing interpreters and translations of school forms. Staff was also present at AARD meetings, and they did workshops for parents to help them understand the school system. They provided orientation sessions for the parents when they first came into the county. They also provided a referral service to other county agencies because the school system was often the first point of contact. They published a newsletter to parents in the nine largest languages. They had developed a series of video tapes which had been made available to libraries and which had been aired on the cable network. These dealt with how to enroll students, how to help children with homework, and the meaning of grades. They had a storytime to teach parents how to tell stories to their children. They also worked with teachers to make sure there were parent involvement activities at the school level. The staff served as a resource to teachers by making phone calls, organizing meetings, and driving parents to meetings.

The counseling service staff worked in large groups with students. They now had eight bilingual counselors representing five language groups, and they went to the largest schools on a regular basis. They spent a lot of time in crisis intervention.

Ms. Schaub hoped that next year there would be an indicator on the mainframe to let them know whether a student was ESOL or former ESOL. This should make it easier for them to track the progress of these students and to monitor how they were doing in ESOL and in all of their other courses.

Mrs. Gemberling pointed out that the packet contained a working draft definition of multicultural education which was the basis on which they had developed their work in the last two years. This was one of their three goals for the Office of Instruction and Program Development. They now called it a multicultural, multiperspective learning process. They had formed cross-content working groups and had had to admit that for them they were using the term, "minority education," for multicultural education, and for most of them minority education was translated as "black education."

Mrs. Gemberling said they probably had the best multicultural media references and resources in the State of Maryland. Dr. Gordon's team had cited the system they had for evaluation and selection, their attention to stereotyping, and their availability of multicultural resources. They had black, Asian and Hispanic references as well as subcultures within those groups. They had recently gone through their external review process, and Dr. James Moone had been a member of the team that reviewed the media department.

They had decided if they were to create multicultural education, a notebook, it would be put on the shelf to collect dust. They decided the only way to bring multicultural and multiple perspective education into their program was to do it within the program of studies and within the objectives and courses themselves. Mrs. Gemberling reported that this had turned out to be an overwhelming task. They did not expect to have this completed in the near future. In the packet they had tried to include for the Board's information some examples of revisions that existed now in the current program of studies. They had early childhood activities, elementary, history, and art. The team visiting also noticed that most of their multicultural material had been along African-American lines. The staff had broadened this material. The coordinators were in the audience if Board members had questions.

Mrs. Gemberling stated that they were using an infusion approach, not an add-on. Although there was a tendency to think that some courses were more cultural than others, the staff had included all curricula in their approach to infusion. The Council on Instruction had voted that all formal curriculum documents would have been examined for a multicultural and multiple perspective approach. If the objectives were not clearly stated, the curriculum documents would have to show instructional activities

or strategies that promoted this. If the issue was who enrolled in the course, they would have to have recruitment strategies.

Mrs. Gemberling commented that when they were trying to present multiple perspectives in their program, it was important that the people involved in the writing of that program also have multiple perspectives. Another part of their external review was the review of their own staff allocations, and they were pleased that in the last two years they had had more than a doubling of minority staff representation in OIPD. In order to make sure this occurred when they did curriculum development, all of their writing teams had cross-cultural representation.

Mrs. Gemberling indicated that when they could not find textbooks to give the approach that they wanted, they had to go out and do research. They sent teachers to New York, the Archives, and colleges. She felt that Dr. Gordon had been very generous in his time and commitment. He had attended an OIPD staff meeting to give them feedback about the materials that staff had developed.

Mrs. Hobbs asked if Mrs. Gemberling wanted a staff member to come to the table to give specific examples. Mrs. Gemberling invited Dr. Rich Wilson to speak about U.S. History.

Dr. Wilson commented that the past 18 months had been the most exciting ones he had spent in his 17 years as social studies coordinator. He had worked with Dr. Moone about 16 years ago on the sixth grade unit about Africa. U.S. History had been a concern because of poor achievement especially on the part of minority youngsters. Research had shown that when youngsters saw themselves in history they were more likely to become part of history. They had been working on the ninth grade program and found they could not depend on traditional materials such as textbooks or films or what teachers brought into the classrooms.

They began to look for original sources for ethnic and gender history and found them in archives from Boston to Maryland. Teachers participating in the summer project were enthusiastic and continued their work during the year. They had run into some difficulties because some materials were inappropriate or were copyrighted. While they had found many materials on African Americans, they had to write to California for materials on Hispanics and Asian Americans. They had done a little bit with Chinese Americans and were now beginning to locate materials on Japanese Americans.

Mrs. Gemberling reported that Dr. Wilson had been invited to California to conduct a workshop with the National Social Studies Teachers on multicultural infusion in American History. At that point, they realized how far MCPS had moved in this area. Dr. Pitt pointed out that this was an area at the public school level that had had hardly any impact in textbooks. He was impressed by the tremendous efforts by a lot of people. He thought that MCPS

might be able to develop this material and sell it.

Mrs. DiFonzo said that someone had stated that American education through the idea of multicultural education was turning students into nothing more than cultural tourists. The students were given a unit on Japan or a unit on Egypt and learned little more than a tourist would in a six-week visit. They were not being taught an understanding, an appreciation, and an acceptance of other cultures. She asked how MCPS would respond to that in terms of what they were doing.

Mrs. Gemberling commented that if all they did was to have separate and isolated units, it would be a valid criticism. If they looked at the materials provided to the Board, they had tried to go from a variety of perspectives in each and every content. For example, the early childhood materials showed a very natural appreciation of diversity and individuality. They were trying to promote an understanding and appreciation of both the uniqueness and commonalities that occurred among different groups. She indicated that she had just seen a lesson plan on civil rights developed by one teacher. The students were doing projects where they had to do research, read about, and interview people who had been active in the civil rights movement.

Mrs. Fanconi asked Dr. Gordon for his views on what he had heard this evening. She also asked about budget cuts which might affect the curriculum workshops.

Dr. Gordon replied that he was not only supportive of the direction in which the work was going, he was rather enthusiastic about it. He believed they were not only moving in the right direction but were ahead of a lot of other places in the country.

The Board needed to be prepared to support this work more vigorously. It was an area of some potential conflict. As they began to be much more successful in doing it, they were likely to hear people complain that they were creating cultural tourists or that children were not learning enough about American culture. The concept of infusing these different views into the basic content of the curriculum was also controversial. However, the importance of multi-perspectivism was enough to justify this. Some of them were beginning to recognize that education wasn't just about transferring knowledge, but it was about the development of intellect. Some of them thought that the highest form of intellectual function involved this capacity to see things from the perspectives of other people and then to make wise judgments.

Mrs. Fanconi said that the Board was supportive of this direction which was the reason for the second half of her question. She thought it was important for people to understand the kinds of things that would make a difference in the next week in terms of talking to the Council about the cuts that were not quite as well

understood. They had to have the time and the people in the central office in order to make these systemwide changes in curriculum.

Dr. Pitt stated that they needed coordinators like Rich Wilson, but he need people to help him. During the summer they brought in skilled teachers to help central office people do the job. Those people were paid extended year employment, and the Board had cut almost 1,600 days. The Council had tentatively cut another 5,000 days which brought them down to about 36,000 days.

They needed about 13,000 days for summer school and used about 18,000 for specific negotiated people such as resource teachers.

That left about 5,000 days, and out of that about 1,000 days would be left for curriculum work. They were going to have to find creative ways to move in this area, but it would be much harder. People did not see these kinds of cuts as impacting the classroom, but these cuts had an enormous impact on the classroom in the long run.

Mrs. Fanconi said that the education committee had not made a final vote on these cuts. She hoped that people would call the members and explain to them why EYE days were absolutely essential. This also affected ESOL/bilingual education. Dr. Pitt said that there had to be an effort on the part of the Council to find more funds because he did not think the Council members wanted to make these cuts.

It seemed to Ms. Gutierrez that they were doing quite a bit of original research. She asked if there were other school systems trying to do the same thing that they might be able to borrow from. Mrs. Gemberling replied that they were aware of some materials being developed; however, when they looked at the materials, they found more of the additive approach and notebooks. MCPS had been able to use these materials as a bibliography, but they wanted their activities to be a natural integration into the existing program so that they would be used.

She did not know of any other school system using infusion, but they did share materials with school systems that were working on infusion.

To Ms. Gutierrez, part of the multicultural perspective was getting people into OIPD who already had a multicultural perspective. Some of this seemed to be geographically limited to what had happened in the United States. She had received a note from Dr. Wilson, and she hoped that she would help him out by directing him to some of her colleagues. Her multicultural views came from her background, the people she knew, and from travel. This information came from fables, fiction, and textbooks. It seemed to her that an obvious source would be through the people bringing this multicultural perspective. She felt that this was something they could not give to someone who hadn't had it.

Mrs. Gemberling agreed with Ms. Gutierrez. As a staff, they were meeting on a regular basis and brought in other speakers. They had been bringing in people with different perspectives. For example, people have spoken to what it was like to be in school as a black male. They now looked at all data along racial and gender breakouts, and in their groups they had cross-content and cross-cultural representation.

Dr. Pitt pointed out that the Board had heard from only one coordinator who talked about U.S. History. They had other areas such as English where similar efforts were going on.

Ms. Gutierrez asked about responses from teachers as far as accepting the curriculum changes. Mrs. Gemberling replied that they had received requests from the field for activities and materials to help them with multicultural education. They had had really good responses; however, they wished they had more time for training. U.S. History was in draft, and they had conducted training sessions. For each unit there was a feedback form, and the Council on Instruction had reviewed those forms.

Dr. Cheung thought that their approach to multicultural education using infusion was very exciting. He complimented staff on their efforts. He inquired about attempts to provide a continuum of this infusion from elementary to mid-level to high school. Mrs. Gemberling replied that they had discussed this, and it was not realistic to think that it would all happen at the same time. In terms of a timeline, they had looked at the commitments they had made for major curriculum revisions. For example, they had made commitments on elementary science, U.S. History, and the mid-level world studies, and multicultural education would be more effective in these major revisions. Their long-term vision of curriculum development was that they would never have a final curriculum. They wanted to get away from printed documents which became outdated by the time it was approved. They were looking to using the new technology and using the professional library and the media centers as a network and to keeping curriculum in a form that could always be updated. Ideally a teacher should be able to go into the media center and dial up a particular objective and find all the various resources available to him in various media. They brought teachers in during the summer for curriculum development, and they returned to the schools. Teachers were very creative and got involved in the development of curriculum. They would like teachers to submit activities to the network that could be field tested and added to the curriculum. The teacher would get credit for the idea, and they would have a professional teacher network and a living curriculum. If they could do this, they would start with the mid-level where they had both elementary and secondary teachers.

Dr. Moone said the committee had been asked to give their opinion about the selection of the new superintendent. He complimented

the Board on its decision to select Dr. Vance as the next superintendent.

Dr. Moone expressed his appreciation to Dr. Pitt and Dr. Vance for their efforts to restore the committee. Montgomery County had lost two or three years of valuable time when a former Board had dismissed the minority committee headed up by Jim Robinson. He also thanked Dr. Pitt and Dr. Vance for encouraging him to serve on the new committee because 20 years ago it was the Montgomery County Black Coalition that started the ball rolling.

The hard struggle of pushing for equal opportunity had reached a point now where he thought they could try to be as color blind as possible.

Dr. Moone reported that the advisory committee had recommended that native Americans be included in the study. He had been impressed with the media work done by Mrs. Frances Dean and her staff. He thought that Mrs. DiFonzo was right, tourist education was here. He did not think they were getting in-depth education, but they had to do it to bring the multicultural groups together.

Now they came to the lost group, the native American. He had been impressed by a New York TIMES headline that stated that the native American was coming out of the closet and had checked off native American on the census form. Dr. Moone said there were 10 million native Americans here when Columbus came here, and there were less than one million now. He asked that the Board hear from Mr. Vaughn Arkie, chairman of the parent advisory committee of the Title V American Indian Education Program, Mrs. Aletha Arkie, and Mrs. Richanda Bears Ghost.

Mr. Arkie stated that being the first Americans they had also been identified as the vanishing Americans. Society and institutions had not taken them seriously over the years. American Indians were now in a period of self determination. As a minority group, they were unique because they had a direct government-to-government relationship because of the Constitution and treaties. The Title V program was a federally funded program, and MCPS was the local education agency. The program was mandated to provide cultural, educational, and parent involvement activities for the children and for parents. The parent group met monthly to discuss activities for students. They were probably less than 1 percent of the student population in Montgomery County.

Mr. Arkie said that they provided tutorial services for their students two nights a week, and they also provided cultural and arts activities on Fridays. They were trying to maintain academic excellence, but they also wanted their children to maintain their cultural identity.

Mr. Arkie commented that the Title V program had been around for 12 years or more, and MCPS had been the LEA for this program.

However, whenever they appeared, they were the invisible people.

They wanted to work with the Board's committee. They had been left out of the Gordon report because the native American group was not mandated to be studied. They could not understand that because their children were in the schools, and they were supposed to have an equal educational opportunity. This told them that MCPS was not committed to their children and to them, but they hoped to change that.

Mr. Arkie said they did respond to the narrative portion of the Gordon report that addressed the assessment of the native American community and their perceptions of MCPS. In their meeting with the Board's committee they had discussed eight recommendations. They had found they had shared the same interests of a lot of other minority groups. They were looking for the overall improvement and strengthening of the school system and how it related to their children.

Their first recommendation was that if there were more studies of this magnitude that their students and the Indian people be included. They also wanted to serve on the Board's committee. Their second recommendation was for MCPS to assign a representative to serve on the Title V Parent Education Committee. The third recommendation was for MCPS to recognize that Indian parents and communities were the most qualified groups to identify Indian educational needs and what programs were most necessary to meeting their children's educational objectives. They wanted children to come out of MCPS with an understanding of their cultural heritage. The fourth recommendation was to encourage the state educational leadership to develop programs which improved the educational advantage of Indian studies to preserve their Indian heritage and cultural identity.

Mr. Arkie stated that their fifth recommendation was to educate teachers and administrators through pre- and in-service programs, perhaps through H.R. 17, to prepare them to work with Indian students and families. The sixth was the recruitment of Indian teachers, counselors, and mental health professionals to work with Indian students and parents. They needed these people to serve as role models for their students. Now they had 0.2 Indian teachers in MCPS. The seventh recommendation was for the school system to provide a community outreach program for new incoming native American families to provide support and orientation. MCPS should look into the possibility of expanding the Title V American Indian Education Program to carry out this function which would require additional staff and resources. At present they had a part-time coordinator. Their final recommendation was their participation in the development of curriculum to review information about native Americans. Many of their students learned about Indians in the past, but they were still here and part of the American culture.

Mrs. Hobbs thanked Mr. Arkie for his presentation and commented that they were very anxious to serve the needs of all students. She asked that he leave his address so that he could be contacted by staff. Dr. Pitt remarked that MCPS did have some liaison and had been involved in getting the grant to start the program. The grant was much larger a few years ago, and in the past he had visited the program. The fact that Mr. Arkie was here this evening would be very helpful to MCPS, and he assured Mr. Arkie that he would welcome his involvement.

Ms. Diane Jones wanted to know about the practical application of the overall definition of multicultural education. She wondered how it was being implemented. She could appreciate that curriculum revision was a long-reaching activity, but she wanted to know how much of this was in place and was it going to be mandated in all schools. Mrs. Gemberling replied that all curriculum was not redone. U.S. History was in a draft state, and it needed two more units. However, they were on schedule in terms of doing the drafts. If adopted by the Council on Instruction, it would be the prescribed program in all schools.

Mrs. Gemberling said that in developing the definition, they also put together a checklist of indicators that they could use in examining their own programs. Some of the indicators were curricular documents but others were what they would expect to see in the classroom setting. However, she was concerned about moving immediately into some kind of a classroom checklist until she felt they really had the program, activities, and resources that were adequately in place. Therefore, they had not used the checklist. Their goal this summer would be to move again at an introductory level toward that kind of a checklist. They were doing training with gender and sex equity, and they had examined an observation instrument that they might use to record student and teacher behaviors and interactions.

Ms. Jones asked if all of this might be in place in a year or two. Mrs. Gemberling replied that it would depend on the time and resources available. The same people working on this were also working on the MSPP. They would have a better idea when they knew the status of the budget and knew the priorities they would be able to put in place. She pointed out that the concept of the double period algebra really spoke to the equity issue. She wanted to point out that multicultural education was not just around cultural or historical issues. It was around opportunities and encouragement.

Ms. Jones asked if Mrs. Gemberling saw the algebra initiative being mandated for all secondary schools. Mrs. Gemberling replied that at this point it was voluntary, but it would be expanded to additional schools. Next year they hoped to have 50 percent of the schools involved. Dr. Pitt added that it was his

goal to have it in every school, but it had to be done right.

Dr. Moone stated that he was not satisfied with the answer given to Mrs. DiFonzo on tourists in education. He asked how much they had lost since they had gone to multicultural education as opposed to Spanish History, African-American History, Asian History, etc. Mrs. Gemberling replied that they were discussing a different approach to U.S. History. The other in-depth histories were still being offered. She explained that the traditional approach to history had been to study white male heroes, and what they were trying to do was to provide a history of a people, pluralistic and diverse. She did not consider this to be a tourist view, but rather a multiple perspective of their own history, and she reassured Dr. Moone that the other history courses were still there.

Dr. Pitt commented that they had the in-depth courses that would remain. Then they had a curriculum that encompassed history, geography, English, and other areas that every youngster took. The real issue was what kind of exposure within those areas did young people get, and the effort here was to broaden that exposure. It did not mean that they did not study a variety of subjects in depth. The idea was to infuse this throughout the curriculum. He said that this could not be done very easily if they were going to do it well. The real problem was whether they could get it moving once the task had been accomplished, and one of the reasons that Mrs. Gemberling was in her job was her success in moving programs.

Mrs. Hobbs suggested that they turn to Dr. Gordon for his comments and suggestions for policy changes.

Dr. Gordon remarked that he kept a very busy schedule, and he was currently working on a National Science Foundation commission on the nature of the National Assessment of Educational Progress examination that would be given nationally in 1992. He was also on the National Commission on Social Studies and on a New York State committee on their social studies curriculum. It was interesting that in the natural sciences and the social sciences what they heard people saying was, "less is more." They were talking about the possibility of beginning to think about the variety of things in the curriculum and identifying some core concepts that were treated in depth and with great variety. He believed this was very relevant to what they were doing in multicultural education. It was not going to be possible to do in-depth instruction for everyone in all the groups that wanted to be represented in the curriculum. While they might have begun with a very heavy emphasis on the African-American experience, those of them who had pushed this would have to step back because there were other experiences that had to be in the curriculum. The notion of "less is more" suggested that if they could ever agree on the fundamental concepts to be represented in the

curriculum, they would want to sample the experiences of many cultures in dealing with these concepts. For each concept, one would not necessarily have to represent all of the cultures. One would hope that in the course of a youngster's experience in school, he/she would not have the experience of never seeing anything that was referable to him/her in relation to any of the basic concepts that were studied in school. The complaint now was that students could go through 12 years of schooling and not see anything that related to them.

Dr. Gordon hoped that the Board would begin to think about the appropriateness of their curriculum in general in trying to cover fewer specific contents. They should identify the central concepts that needed to be understood and insist that these be approached from a variety of ways, but in depth. This would enable them to avoid the argument that they were doing cultural touristic teaching. There were two functions they wanted to serve in pedagogy. One was to create an awareness, and the other was to create understanding. Dr. Pitt and Mrs. Gemberling had indicated that current plans did not call for eliminating the in-depth courses, but they did want to ensure that students received this broad exposure. At some point, if they took "less is more" seriously, they would have to go back to the curriculum and worry about the variety of the in-depth offerings.

Dr. Gordon said that another general policy he would recommend they give priority to was the building of their capacity for staff development into the professional responsibility and time of staff. If staff development were to be taken seriously by the system, it could not be an add-on. He suggested that they consider reducing the time that youngsters were in school to increase the time for staff development. He said they could reduce instructional time by one-fifth and devote that time to staff development. He believed that the only way to adequately prepare youngsters for 21st century competencies was to take seriously the upgrading of their present staff. If they could not increase the amount of time these staff were responsible to the system because they were in a budget crunch, perhaps the Board could decrease the amount of time they were responsible for delivering service. He pointed out that good physicians never stop studying, and if they looked into the day of a physician in a teaching hospital they would find some portion of every day was spent in staff development.

Dr. Gordon stated that another recommendation would be to give priority to the implementation of their site-based data management to all schools having as many as 25 percent minority students. If they did not know who these students were and what their needs were, they could not address their needs adequately.

The next priority had to do with learning task specific grouping which involved the elimination of tracking and designing the

patterns by which they grouped students in relation to the specific task that had to be mastered. There was no necessity for constantly putting youngsters in the same group for all of their learning experiences when the task did not require it. He believed that there were few tasks that required homogeneous grouping. One way to deal with that was to shift from a program of tracking to a program of learning task specific grouping.

Dr. Gordon said he would propose that they target some small groups of schools because the budget situation would not let them implement a plan across the board. They could have comprehensive program development targeted on minority students in these schools. If they could concentrate resources and attention on a small number of units, they could develop a comprehensive approach to the improvement of academic development for youngsters. He suggested three possible patterns. There were some issues that related to ethnicity, and there were others that related to language. He would select some schools because of their pattern of ethnic participation and others because of the high proportion of youngsters with limited proficiency in English. He would also consider selecting a few schools which were K-5 intensive and try to implement those services that were required to ensure that no youngster in that school fell between the cracks. Johns Hopkins had a model for implementing that. The notion there was that it was cost efficient to prevent the problem rather than try to correct it. He believed that if they made a policy decision to target some small groups and try out some things, they could justify their plan on those grounds.

Dr. Gordon commented that if they set up this as an experiment, they had to follow another of his recommendations which was to create a research and development evaluation unit. He thought this unit should be under the supervision of the DEA group. In two to four years, they could make decisions about what was working and what was not working and why. The investment of those dollars in that kind of effort should pay off for the Board.

His final policy recommendation was targeting academic socialization. This grew out of his impression that a part of the problem was that low status populations came from families that did not have a long history of success in the academic area.

That meant there was no one at home to help these students, and there were few resources in the community to provide this help. Therefore, the school had to do it. A program of student academic development ought to focus on psycho-educational assessment, and they ought to have an understanding of who the youngster was, what she was doing, what her needs were, what her strengths and weaknesses were, and what she knew or did not know in order to plan effectively for that youngster. He had just about given up on remediation except in the case of targeted remediation which was based on a very sophisticated diagnosis of

what was missing. Too often students missed critical pieces of the learning experience and fell behind. Therefore, they wanted to target the remediation. The next was the development of simple academic skills. If a student came out of a family situation where few people were successful in school, the chances were the student was deficient in ordinary academic skills. He called this the "personalization of the learning experience." If schooling was going well, the most powerful thing a teacher had going was the personal relationship with a student. Schools had to personalize the learning experience in ways that permitted the subtle adaptations that were needed if the youngster were to learn.

Dr. Gordon commented that the last component was a new kind of guidance system. He was not prepared to advise against the heavy emphasis on counseling in the MCPS guidance program, but it was his experience that this was frequently the least effective thing a guidance counselor could do. Although a lot of students needed the psychological support a counselor could give, there was not time for that support. However, there were other things that could be done that required less time. One of them was insuring that the youngster had expanded options for learning. This required the counselor to talk to teachers, to principals, and to supervisors about the richness of the programs available to the youngster. His first criterion for an effective guidance program was one that expanded the options for youngsters. The second was to make youngsters aware of those options, and the third involved helping the youngster in the decision-making process. The fourth piece of that program was the enablement of the implementation of that choice. If the youngster wanted to turn to mathematics late in her career, the guidance person had to help to get the youngster into the appropriate courses and to identify and make available the kinds of supports that were required.

Dr. Gordon said that youngsters had to understand the relationship between job opportunities and investment in learning. If a guidance person were to enable the implementation of that choice, he or she had to work with employers to help them understand the appropriateness of the youngster's preparation for the job. These did not eliminate the counselor's responsibility to talking to students, but it took them out of the consultation room into the daily life of the youngster and into influencing what was happening with that life.

In relation to multiculturalism, Dr. Gordon observed that some people got a little bit troubled when they began to talk about general concepts. If they were trying to help youngsters understand the sources of social conflict and their reconciliation or the causes of individual and group behavior, they would have to go to a wide variety of curricular materials to help the youngster understand the concept. In the National Assessment of Educational Progress committee, they were talking

about trying to define the course of species development through evolution. If the goal was to have that kind of understanding, one could study that from any variety of species. They did not have to study every specie that existed in order to have that basic understanding. At the level of testing, they were trying to come up with test probes that gave youngsters some freedom of choice with respect to how they demonstrated they understood the principle of evolution. He was suggesting that the decisions they made with respect to curriculum get played out in the context of a lot of other operational decisions that had to be made. The Board needed to be prepared to state the directions they wanted to go to and to turn to staff to make the decisions with respect to how these were implemented. He noted that each of these policy decisions had implications for assessment, deployment of resources, and for the nature of the organization of the school.

Dr. Gordon said he had visited Blair High School and was pleased to learn that several students were taking a semester to study the Gordon report. He had been told that Blair High School was to be expanded to serve 3,000 students which was just too big. However, if the Board had to do this, they had to think about ways of creating smaller units within that school.

Mrs. Hobbs thanked Dr. Gordon for his comments. The Board looked forward to April 27 which would be the Board's final worksession. She reminded the Board that they should be submitting draft policy statements to Ms. Gutierrez prior to that date. Ms. Gutierrez said they had to begin to identify key areas they wanted to focus on. Mrs. Hobbs reported that on May 23 the Board would hold a public hearing, and on May 28 they would take final action. Ms. Gutierrez thanked Dr. Vance and staff for putting together reports and materials for these worksessions. Mrs. Hobbs thanked Dr. Moone and the committee for their participation. She assured the committee that they would continue to have a strong working relationship with the Board.

Re: ADJOURNMENT

The vice president adjourned the meeting at 10:05 p.m.

VICE PRESIDENT

SECRETARY

HP:mlw