

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION  
COMMITTEE ON SPECIAL POPULATIONS  
February 5, 2013**

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. with the following Board members and Board support staff present: Shirley Brandman (chair), Philip Kauffman, Rebecca Smondrowski (Board member), Laura Steinberg (Staff Assistant), and Glenda Rose (recorder).

Staff members that were present: Chris Garran (Community Superintendent), Beth Schiavino-Narvaez (Deputy Superintendent for School Support and Improvement), and Ira Thomas (Principal, Alternative Programs).

Minutes

The minutes from May 14, 2012, were approved.

**Alternative Program: Current Status Update**

The entire meeting was devoted to an update on the status of Alternative Programs, since its move from the Department of Student Services to the Office of School Support and Improvement nearly 18 months ago. A principal position was created and in April 2012, Mr. Ira Thomas was selected to fill that position and direct supervision was assigned to Dr. Chris Garran.

Staff began the discussion by sharing that the reorganization has provided an opportunity to rethink and redefine the program, including the development of the following mission statement: To serve all students in a supportive learning environment and to further students' capacity for belonging, mastery, generosity, and independence while maximizing their potential for career and college readiness. Staff went on to provide a detailed description of each program as well as the relationship between Alternative 1, Alternative 2 and Alternative 3 programs. Staffing information as well as student demographic data was provided for each program.

Committee members and staff engaged in a dialogue about a range of issues, including program effectiveness, staff training, and the challenges of providing students with access to a full range of course offerings. Staff agreed that there is a need to look at curricular offerings so that educational needs can be met, ranging from Edison offerings to Advanced Placement classes. Both staff and committee members agreed that further discussions will need to be held as MCPS explores whether to hold to the existing Alternatives Program model versus exploring other options for service and instructional delivery.

Followup: Please provide information on staff tenure in the alternative programs.

The meeting ended at 4:30 p.m.