

MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
Communications and Public Engagement Committee
September 27, 2012

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. with the following committee members and Board staff present: Dr. Judy Docca, chair; Ms. Shirley Brandman, member; Mr. Michael Durso, member; Mr. Ikhide Roland Ikheloa, Board chief of staff; Ms. Suzann King, staff assistant; and Ms. Martha Sequeira, reporter.

MCPS staff present: Mr. Brian Edwards, chief of staff, Office of the Superintendent of Schools; Ms. Lori-Christina Webb, executive director, Office of Deputy Superintendent of Teaching, Learning; and Programs; Mr. Dana Tofig, director, Department of Public Information and Web Services; and Ms. Marcia Vogel, supervisor, Office of Communications.

Ms. Carol Walsh, executive director, Montgomery County Collaboration Council for Children, Youth and Families, Inc. was also present

Committee Minutes

The minutes of the June 25, 2012, committee meeting were unanimously approved.

Discussion with Ms. Carol Walsh: The Montgomery County Collaboration Council for Children, Youth and Families (Collaboration Council) Ms. Walsh briefly presented highlights of the Collaboration Council's activities and emphasized that everything they do has a collaborative aspect. Ms. Walsh discussed the mission of the Council and provided a brief description of some of their wonderful programs and collaborations with MCPS in the attached handout, such as InfoMontgomery, Excel Beyond the Bell, Credentialed by 26 Challenge, and Pathway to Services.

Additional discussion focused on the details of the programs; other ways that MCPS and the Collaboration Council may be able to collaborate for the benefit of our students; the desire to see how *InfoMontgomery* could be used on a daily basis in the school system; how the schools were selected that participate in *Excel Beyond the Bell* and the number of students on the waitlist to participate in that program; the inability to expand programs to other middle schools, even though about twelve to fifteen additional schools fit the profile; the desire to make parents aware of the *Pathway to Services* program; ways for different entities to share information about services; how to capitalize on existing meetings and technology to make connections with other organizations that have different ways of disseminating information to the community; and ways to reach out to other cultures in different languages.

Update Concerning Community Conversations:

Staff noted that the work group is in process of planning for the Community Conversation event on November 14, 2012, at Richard Montgomery High School. The 4 A's protocol will be used and will be adapted for a larger audience. Participants will be able to register for the event on-line. Discussion focused on the need to provide the proper context the event's discussion, the

desire to have the participants feel they are contributing to the development of the strategic plan, and the need to have some unstructured time during the event for parents to provide their comments.

Update from Office of Communication. Updates were provided about the following programs:

Neighbor to Neighbor: This is a new strategy that will allow the community to engage in small group conversations on designated topics. The first topic will be the operating budget. An on-line tool kit will be provided containing resources to help frame the conversation, including a few questions to start the conversation, among other items. The community will be asked to hold Neighbor to Neighbor meetings from October 8 to November 30 and supply their notes/feedback, which will be compiled. The Public Information Office will set up a drop-in box for questions and the web page containing the toolkit also will have a link to the budget FAQ's. Discussion focused on the desire/need to produce materials that are user friendly and understandable, the possibility of marketing this to various groups, and the need to emphasize to people that they do not need to understand the whole budget in order to participate.

- **Fall public events:** Updates were provided concerning the following events:

Student Town Hall: Scheduled for October 15 at Northwest High School. The goal is to do six town halls this year in different parts of the county, including a middle school. These town halls will be recorded and broadcast, and hopefully co-hosted with the student member of the Board.

Book Club: The first one is scheduled for December 10, with Paul Tough's book "*How Children Succeed*"

State of the Schools Address: Will be held on November 12 at Strathmore. Principals are expected to attend to the extent they are able. The event will start with a breakfast and will showcase students' talents.

Community Days/Cluster Days: The superintendent will spend a day with the community in each of the quad/quint clusters. The superintendent will: begin with coffee in elementary schools, visit schools throughout the day, provide an opportunity for middle school and high school faculty to come and speak to the superintendent, include a dessert reception for parent leadership of the quad/quint cluster, and end with the town hall meeting with parents at 7:30 to 9:00 p.m.

Update from the Division of Family Community Partnership: Staff noted that during the Back-to-School-Fair there were more than 10,000 people in attendance, more than 8,000 backpacks distributed, and \$48,700 received in cash donations. Staff is also in the process of obtaining feedback from volunteers about the event, as well as discussing ways to improve the distribution of the backpacks during the fair. It was also noted that DFCP staff attended 38 Back-to-School Nights, held 18 parent school workshops (many in Spanish), and have managed more than 259 individual cases since July 1.

It was noted The Latino Dance Competition will be held on November 5 at Strathmore and MCPS will be providing bus transportation for the participants (dancers).

The meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.