

Strategic Planning Committee Minutes
July 22, 2008
3:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 3:12 p.m. with the following committee members and Board staff present: Dr. Judy Docca (Chair), Mr. Christopher Barclay, Ms. Nancy Navarro, Ms. Shirley Brandman, Mr. Roland Ikheloa, (Chief of Staff), Ms. Laura Steinberg (Staff Assistant for Legislative and Inter-Governmental Relations), and Mrs. Kathy Yorro (Recorder).

The following Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) staff members were present: Ms. Aggie Alvez, director, Department of Communications; Mr. Larry Bowers, chief operating officer; Mr. Brian Edwards, chief of staff, Office of the Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Marlene Hartzman, acting executive assistant to the chief operating officer; Dr. Frieda Lacey, deputy superintendent of schools; Mr. Joseph Lavorgna, acting director, Department of Facilities Management; and Dr. Marshall Spatz, director, Department of Management, Budget and Planning.

Approval of Agenda and Minutes – The committee approved the meeting agenda and unanimously approved the minutes for the Strategic Planning Committee meeting of June 17, 2008.

Legislative Platform 2009

Ms. Steinberg reviewed the 2008 legislative platform asking for feedback on possible changes/additions for 2009. Ms. Steinberg indicated that she has been meeting with the delegation to review the past year and get feedback on the Board's 2008 Legislative Platform—most members of the delegation have indicated they would prefer a document with more bulleted items. Ms. Steinberg shared examples of platforms from other counties (Harford County Legislative Platform 2008 and Eastern Shore Superintendents' Position Papers for 2007-2008).

The committee discussed:

- Prioritization of platform items, starting with construction dollars
- Challenge of including HSAs, given that they fall within the jurisdiction of the Maryland State Board of Education.
- Including in the platform funding for school breakfasts, commitment to green schools, dual enrollment, statements about unfunded mandates
- Stating priorities in the affirmative rather than the negative.
- Using a "Support and oppose" format as does Harford County
- Including Board members' names in the front of the platform document—rather than back of document.

Follow ups/Action:

1. Ms. Steinberg is currently meeting with members of the delegation, especially the Ways and Means Committee members, to inform them of our interests/concerns.
2. Ms. Steinberg will produce a draft of the 2009 Legislative Platform (using a new format and feedback from committee and staff).

Fall Meeting with Delegation

Ms. Steinberg discussed with committee members the Montgomery County Council Education Committee meeting during which committee members shared their frustration that the delegation doesn't understand the challenges faced by MCPS. She asked for thoughts regarding the Board's fall meeting with the delegation.

Discussion with committee included:

- Producing a video – putting faces to the issues. Interviews with teachers – talking about student population—how great the students are doing, complicated issues with families.
- Highlighting demographic changes and the need to make the delegation more aware of the new face (demographics) and the unprecedented results.
- Ensuring that the meeting have an interactive element. Members of the delegation have indicated that last year's meeting with the Board was really good because they were actively involved, not just being spoken to. Possibly include "role play" in this year's meeting—here is something we are trying to make people understand—what would you do—how would you convey this information?

Follow ups/Action:

Ms. Steinberg to work with Department of Communications on presentation to the delegation at the fall meeting.

Operating Budget Forums

The committee discussed the upcoming strategic planning forums in September and October 2008. Strategic forums will be held on September 18, 7–9:30 p.m. at Watkins Mill High School and on October 16, 7-9:30 p.m. at Albert Einstein High School.

Discussion with committee included:

- Proposed language for forums. Do we want to change this year? Discussed proposed question to community—tied to student success.
- Same type of format, three minutes, trying to focus on the strategic plan and the long term, middle school initiatives, and the Board's narrowed-down focus of the strategic plan.
- Encouraging people to attend the forums—"who are we talking to". Important for us to really talk to organizations to make sure that their voices are heard.
- Build on last year; lots of folks we hadn't seen before. Need to get folks to stand behind our efforts.
- Need to get Interages involved for advocating. They want to be involved. When it comes time for the County Council process, they need to be there to support.
- The message for the forums is to "preserve what we have."
- BOE needs to set the tone in their statement at the front of the meeting.
- Include a projection on screen of what our initiatives have been.
- Explore the possibility of the Department of Communications preparing a very short video on our initiatives.
- Staff suggested sending thank you letters to those who came last year and that we will need your help again.

Mr. Bowers presented a proposed plan (including proposed question, questions asked during the FY 2009 community forums, and tip cards). The committee approved the proposed plan.

Follow ups/Action:

1. Department of Communications to work on initiatives to be projected on screen at forums.
2. Department of Communications to develop video for opening of forums.
3. Thank you letters to be sent to participants at last year's forums.
4. Communication with organizations and communities to attend the forums.

Suspension Follow-up

Committee appreciated the recent update to the Board on suspensions.

Discussion on suspensions included:

- Use of M-Stat.
- Implementing the workgroup recommendations
- Vetting recommendations
- Needed tools for supporting the schools.
- Ongoing conversations with principals
- The first School Safety Report will include suspension data.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:16 p.m.