

APPROVED
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Rockville, Maryland
April 15, 1982

The Board of Education of Montgomery County met in special session at the Educational Services Center, Rockville, Maryland, on Thursday, April 15, 1982, at 8 p.m.

ROLL CALL Present Mrs. Eleanor D. Zappone, President in the Chair
Mr. Joseph R. Barse
Dr. Marian L. Greenblatt
Mr. Jonathan Lipson
Mrs. Suzanne K. Peyser
Mrs. Carol F. Wallace

Absent: Mr. Blair G. Ewing
Mrs. Elizabeth W. Spencer

Others Present: Dr. Harry Pitt, Deputy Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Thomas S. Fess, Parliamentarian

Re: Announcements

Mrs. Zappone announced that Dr. Andrews was having dinner with Mr. Bush, the vice president, who was honoring Larry Shulman. Mrs. Spencer was away on personal business, and Mr. Ewing had a business trip.

Re: Montgomery County Association of
Administrative and Supervisory Personnel

Mr. Anson Wilcox said that MCAASP had several questions of mutual concern. He pointed out that in negotiations the Board's group had many people on it who were precluded from membership in MCAASP and wondered why they needed so many people on their team. Dr. Pitt replied that they had to make sure they had the support they needed for negotiations, and this had never been a problem before. He agreed that they could discuss this further.

Mrs. Kitty Derby stated that they had concerns about the article on unit member responsibilities because they did not know how strongly the Board felt about that kind of authority in the schools to run the schools. Dr. Greenblatt replied that there was no doubt that the Board gave with open hearts and full conviction the authority to run a school. She said that in other negotiations they were being careful not to undercut the authority of the principal. Dr. Pitt remarked that basically there was not much point in putting something in writing when the authority was there and was clear in state law. Mrs. Derby commented that the negotiations process was one of the most professional and friendly kinds of experience. She felt that everything was very open and they were quite satisfied with the process.

Dr. Walter Ray commented that over the last few years the Board had been very busy with policy-making decisions. They had revised the

student rights document, adopted a senior high school policy, and were working on a K-8 Policy. He wondered whether in policy-making decisions the Board gave consideration to staffing implications because many administrators felt inundated by all the changes. Mrs. Zappone replied that normally they did try to be informed about the fiscal implications. Dr. Pitt added that this was a Problem; however, this Board had had many discussions about staffing and had done more than previous Boards to provide additional staff. u- said that the ideal way of doing staffing was on a needs basis, but the problem was how to weight staffing.

Mrs. Peyser inquired about particular policies that had impacted them in the schools. Dr. Ray replied that primarily it was P. L. 94-142 at this time. The policy on the high school and the K-8 policy would impact' on a number of areas of teacher time. Mrs. Peyser remarked that she had taught in a high school after the senior high school policy had been adopted and she recalled some things that could only be done by the high school teacher.

Mrs. Wallace reported that she had been talking with a sixth grade teacher who had mentioned the lack of time to do all the things she was supposed to do and to teach all the things she was supposed to teach. She wondered how many people asked what was going to be taken out of the school. Mr. Wilcox replied that in their daily routine principals did have to make these decisions; however, what he took out at his school might not be what another principal would take out. Mrs. Wallace said that she was thinking more in terms of course content because everyone always said "add" and not "delete." Mrs. Derby commented that was one of the reasons why the K-8 policy committee spoke to the need to put things together because this was a concern in the elementary school. She said that if they looked at the state guidelines on times for the various subjects there were not enough hours in the day.

Dr. Ray commented that in the middle school their units were designed to integrate the knowledge of the four major subject areas into a unit of study. Mrs. Mary Boehm said that this had been a concern of elementary school principals for years. She said that not only did the new curriculum bring more demands on the teacher, it also brought the need for in-servicing for teachers to work together and plan.

Dr. Greenblatt said that as part of the K-8 policy they were talking about moving in the direction of all-day kindergarten which was a commitment in staffing. Another example was the expansion of the school monitor program which was a budget issue that had to be defended. However, when they talked about P.L. 94-142 that was a little more subtle. She guessed that their problems came when they did the IEPs. Dr. Ray explained that additional staffing was required for mainstreaming. Mrs. Derby said it was now a proposed Board policy that a Level 3 resource teacher does the testing for children in private placement. She said that the resource teacher at Travilah might be pulled for three hours to do this testing.

Mr. Barse commented that the Board depended on the superintendent to

recommend staffing additions or subtractions. He said that if they didn't hear from the superintendent that additional staffing was perceived as needed at the school level there was a breakdown in communications between the school and the superintendent. He asked whether they felt their needs were being listened to with enough sympathy at the superintendent's level and being filtered to the Board. Mrs. Derby said that in the elementary principals regular meetings with the superintendent there was a strong commitment to his listening to their needs. If there were differences of opinion they might be in the nature of the help needed. Mr. Barse remarked that he was thinking in terms of the larger picture. The Board might recommend a larger allocation of staffing, but the superintendent had the authority to shift that staff. He said it was their task to convince the superintendent and the Board of their staffing needs, and it was his concern that the Board was able to get their unvarnished views.

Dr. Frank Carricato felt that as a new organization they had some unique opportunities to work out relationships regarding policies and with sub-parts of their unit. He said that they should search together to bring a unified opinion and share it with the top administrators and the Board of Education. Dr. Ray commented that they had the same problems the Board had of obtaining hard-line data. He felt they had to work with the Board to get their views to the County Council.

Mrs. Wallace asked whether the secondary school people felt they were getting adequate services in special education, for example, speech therapists. Dr. Frank Bready replied that this varied from school to school. At his school they had one resource room teacher with 22 students. They did have itinerant and ESOL teachers. However, next year they would have an increase in the number of youngsters being mainstreamed and the question was whether they would have the additional resources to handle this. Mr. Wilcox said that he would like to compliment the junior high schools because by the time these students got to high school they had itinerant teachers and their backgrounds were known and they were pretty well diagnosed. He felt that the ESOL program had been more efficient in recent years.

Mrs. Zappone asked whether there was communication among the three levels about all children. Dr. Ray thought that there was and pointed out that a lot of decisions were made at the area level. Dr. Pitt said that one of the superintendent's goals was to improve articulation K-12, and he thought that it was improving. Mrs. Derby said that more and more attention had been given to this in the last few years. She explained that the elementary school principals did meet with the junior high school principals, and teachers visited back and forth. Mrs. Boehm said that in her area there was a great effort to have more direct communication between the elementary school, junior high school, and senior high school. However, finding the time to do this was a problem. Dr. Vance indicated that they needed more funds in the substitute account to enable them to do more of this.

Dr. Greenblatt pointed out that one of the major objectives of the school consolidation program was to establish a clear articulation pattern so that would facilitate communication. She said that when students from an elementary school went in three different directions it was difficult to coordinate the communication.

Mr. Lipson said that a few months ago the Board had adopted a resolution regarding the return of tests. He asked whether this had become the nightmare that teachers had predicted it would become or whether it was helping students be better prepared. Dr. Bready replied that the difficulty youngsters had was because of differences with individual teachers. He thought that implementing this had not been a terrible imposition on teachers. Mr. Wilcox said that he had discussed this with the teachers and a lot of them did have problems with returning the tests because they reused them. Dr. Mary Curry indicated that it had not been a problem at Blair because teachers had been doing this. She said that their students were more concerned about the loss of credit policy. She said that this was a lot of work for her school because the appeal process involved teachers, counselors, and administrators. She said that some of their students had gotten themselves into loss of credit before the school year had rightly begun.

Mrs. Helen Holston felt that the articulation sessions with the consolidated schools were going extremely well. She also said that there was a lot of communication regarding curriculum. Mr. Wilcox said that his resource teachers visit the other schools and come back and meet with their teachers to coordinate programs.

Mrs. Wallace commented that right now the Board was concerned about the Somerset case, and she wondered whether they had given serious thought to what would happen if Montgomery County lost. Mr. Wilcox replied that their organization had not discussed this although the secondary principals had.

Mrs. Peyser remarked that it was her opinion that probably the most key people in the school system were the principals because they hired teachers and weeded out teachers. She asked whether the Board could do anything in this area. Dr. Curry suggested that perhaps some teachers close to retirement could be eased out with a bonus. Mrs. Peyser asked whether the principals were successful in weeding out weak teachers. Mr. Wilcox felt that they were except that it did take time. He said that he saw some old timers who were tired, and he worried because MCPS was not hiring any young people and a balance was needed to teach children. He said that they had to let these older teachers leave with dignity, and he felt that the one thing that MCPS had never lost was the humane touch.

Mrs. Zappone inquired about the younger group of teachers. Dr. Bready replied that they were looking at the staffing for schools. One area they had discussed was to have someone in the area office who could deal with curriculum and instruction and the supervision of teachers. He explained that the time of the principal in dealing with the supervision of teachers was limited. Mrs. Zappone asked whether

duties could be shared with the assistant principals, and Dr. Bready replied that they were but the duties of principals had been increasing. He said that supervision of teachers was a priority item, but they did not give it as much time as they would like.

Mrs. Peyser asked whether they focused in on an individual thought to be a weak teacher. Dr. Bready replied that they did, but in order to document this they did need a lot of attention. Mrs. Wallace suggested that they look at other options such as changing the ratio for assistant principals. She asked whether they could document the duties that were increasing.

Dr. Curry reported that this year they had redesigned their administrative assignments. They were experimenting with having one assistant principal do the observations and evaluations which would create a uniformity which had not been achieved in the past. In discipline they were assigning grade levels to the assistant principals except for classroom disturbances. She felt that this provided an evenness of approach.

In regard to the elementary schools, Mrs. Holston reported that one of their major efforts this year had been supporting the principals. She said that there were a number of teachers needing support, and some had improved and others had not. Dr. Vance added that this year there were more teachers on the midyear report than in the five years he had been in MCPS. Mrs. Boehm said that one of the most time-consuming things was getting rid of an incompetent teacher, and it was wonderful to have the supervisory support at the area level.

Mr. Barse commented that the Board might or might not be moving into asking the superintendent to develop a methodology for assessing school effectiveness. It was in a similar form in one of the Board's priority. Dr. Frank Carricato said that from his experience in evaluating schools for effectiveness in vocational education it was important to communicate priorities. However, the way they had approached this evaluation had been time-consuming. In a large high school with a number of vocational programs a group of 15 people spent two to three days evaluating these programs. He felt that they really had to get into the schools and work with the teachers. He said that the Middle States model would be another way of evaluating schools. Dr. Ray commented that their school did go through the evaluation with Dr. Carricato's staff and their teachers were very positive about it.

Dr. Greenblatt said that the Board would appreciate their comments about Board items up for action or discussion before the Board meetings. In regard to evaluation, she said the public rated schools through the test scores. The other way was through the teacher, because if a school had a bad teacher the whole image of the school was changed. She suggested that when they found weak teachers they should be counseled out or improved. She asked whether there was any way the Board could support them and whether there might be a way to shorten the process of getting rid of a bad teacher. She noted that the superintendent was on a state commission dealing with teacher

quality, and that commission was talking about extending tenure to the third year.

Mrs. Wallace said that through MCAASP the message had to get out that the Board and administration were supportive regarding teacher evaluation. Mrs. Derby reported that the area office placed tremendous emphasis on the teacher evaluation system as part of the evaluation of principals. Mrs. Peyser suggested that perhaps the supervisors could help principals in the evaluation of teachers who had had good evaluations previously by reminding them that people do change.

Mrs. Zappone hoped that MCAASP had a way of getting materials from the Maryland State Board of Education and Department of Education. She pointed out that there was a task force to look at the high school, and Dr. Lois Martin was on the steering committee. She thanked the members of MCAASP for a very productive meeting. Mr. Wilcox hoped that this would be an annual meeting with the Board of Education. Dr. Pitt explained that it would be their plan to meet with them on a regular basis.

Re: Adjournment

The president adjourned the meeting at 9:50 p.m.

President

Secretary

HP:ml