

Dr. Pitt commented that the focus had been on black and Hispanic youngsters in terms of achievement. Unfortunately, the focus had been negative. The focus had been on what students hadn't done. At a recent Board meeting Mr. Nix had brought in four young people who graduated from the Blair program with high achievement. At that same meeting there were concerns about test scores. The newspapers covered the test score issue and not the achievement of the black youngsters at Blair. He commended the NAACP and others for their efforts to point up the positive.

Dr. Pitt reported that he was very interested in moving in the early childhood area and exploring some possibilities especially parenting. He believed they had to look at what they were doing. He thought they should have some national experts on minority education to look at what MCPS was doing.

Dr. Vance said that the first part of their plan was achievement of accountability goals and their management planning process. The program focused on monitoring and reporting student progress over time. The process had been initiated during Dr. Cody's time and incorporated their management plans. Now each unit in the school system including the central and area offices had a management plan which incorporated Priority 2. This had provided the school system with consistent planning and monitoring of efforts to achieve greater progress for minority students. Secondly they had the successful practices project, and he was personally excited about this. It was a multiphased program which identified practices and strategies that contributed to the high achievement of minority students. This had also incorporated much of the components of the effective school practices plan. This encouraged principals and staff to create the vision and to work for success.

Dr. Vance stated that the third part was the affirmative action policy. The long-term goals were to increase employment, promotion and retention of minorities and the handicapped and to improve gender balance. They were close to the mark in that area. During the past school year they put in place the management planning process and the accountability goals. They also formulated an affirmative action policy which required annual goal setting and a report to the Board of Education and the community.

Dr. Vance reported that during the 1988-89 their plan evolved from three to six critical areas. These included achievement and accountability, instruction and program development, and special services. He remarked that they had shifted the role of Dr. Paul Scott, director of minority education, from development and implementation to coordinating and monitoring. The other areas of the plan included intensified efforts in planning and monitoring and a major shift in the efforts of the human relations office. At the June 13 meeting the superintendent would share progress made in affirmative action and present objectives for the 1989-90 school year. They had increased minority recruitment efforts by establishing a working relationship with Benedict College and Morgan

State University.

Dr. Carl Smith explained that his part was to discuss the accountability plan that had been developed for MCPS. In July of 1987, they adopted a plan to improve the education of black and Hispanic students that built up efforts started in 1983 when the Board adopted Priority 2. The new plan established criteria focused on the progress of individual students over time using the CAT, Project Basic, and the identification and participation in gifted and talented programs and honors programs. The focus for the first time was on longitudinal progress, not measuring the progress of one third grade class against the past third class classes. For accountability purposes, the focus was on students who had been in Montgomery County for two or more years. Secondly, the plan put into place specific goals for each school. Thirdly, it contained a monitoring component that held individual schools accountable for progress through the management planning process. It provided for an annual report to the Board of Education and the public on student and individual school progress, and the second report would be issued in August, 1989.

Dr. Smith said the plan stressed each school should show progress, and for schools already meeting the goals, they were expected to maintain or exceed the countywide goals. For black and Hispanic students, 50 percent or more of students taking the CAT battery in Grades 3 or 5 and scored in stanines 1 through 3 would score at stanine 4 or above. The second goal was that 15 percent or more of the students in stanines 4 through 6 in Grades 3 or 5 would score in stanine 7 through 9. The third goal was that students scoring in stanines 7 through 9 in Grades 5 and 8 would be equal to or greater than the number of students who scored in stanines 7 through 9 in grades 3 and 5. The second set of goals focused on the Maryland Functional Tests which were required for graduation in the State of Maryland. The ultimate goal was that every student would pass by Grade 12. They had two intermediate goals. The first was that by the end of the ninth grade, 80 percent of the students who had been in MCPS for two or more years would pass each of the tests. The second was by the end of the tenth grade, 90 percent would pass. He reported that they were making progress on the CAT and Project Basic.

Dr. Smith indicated that the third element dealt with the gifted and talented identification and participation in G&T and honors programs. Those goals were recast. For students in Grades 3 through 6, whose CAT scores fell in stanines 6 through 9, the average proportion of black and Hispanic students identified as gifted and talented would continue to be approximately equal to the county average. For students in Grades 6 through 8 in stanines 6 through 9, the average proportion would continue to be approximately equal to the county average. For students in Grades 9 through 12 whose CAT total batteries fall in stanines 6 through 9, the average proportion of black and Hispanic students taking at least one honors course would be approximately equal to that of students countywide. That third goal was being implemented for the first time this year.

Dr. Smith stated that the accountability committee was a standing

committee made up of staff from the central and area offices as well as principals. The committee reviewed the goals and the reporting formats on an annual basis and considered additional goals to be recommended to the superintendent and to the Board of Education. He noted that several MCPS units were contributing to Priority 2 efforts. One of these was the Department of Quality Integrated Education which was headed by Mr. Barron Stroud.

Mr. Stroud pointed out that QIE had a long history of serving the school system in terms of program development. However, following the Priority 2 effort, they had looked at management plans and had successful programs in 71 schools. They worked directly with the central office and area associates. They had a comprehensive program to make sure that all programs were effective using a monitoring process and an evaluation procedure.

Mr. Stroud said that one program was Summer Search which was a compendium of 121 programs to expand the educational horizons of minority youngsters. They had matched youngsters to programs in the field of medicine, art, science, etc. In 1986 they had 18 youngsters in the program, and by 1988 they had 133 youngsters participating. Nineteen youngsters graduated this year, and because of their participation in the programs they had four to five youngsters who received full scholarships to college. They now had a large number of students identified as having the potential for success. They also made direct contact with parents. Last year resulted in \$60,000 to \$70,000 in scholarships.

A second program was the Sage Mentoring Program where they trained teams of teachers, administrators, and counselors to work with youngsters to improve self-concept, to reduce student alienation, to work on increasing attendance, and to improve involvement in extracurricular activities, with the ultimate goal of academic improvement. Currently they had 7,500 trained staff serving over 3,500 students of which 75 percent were minority students.

Mr. Stroud said their third successful program was the family math program. The program came from the University of California and focused on reducing anxiety of parents and youngsters in the area of math and science. A parent and a teacher were trained to teach six two and a half hour sessions to entire families. Eighteen schools were now participating with 247 families participating, and 75 percent of these were black or Hispanic.

The final piece was the mathematics, science, and minorities K-6 project which was a coordinated effort among MCPS, D.C., and Prince George's public schools. It was a four-year project which focused on a team process within the schools. The project looked to peer coaching and reducing anxieties about teaching students across the minority spectrum. They had seen significant progress among the schools participating. They expected to have an evaluation of the project this summer to determine how extensive a project it would be in the future.

Dr. Robert Shekletski, associate superintendent, introduced Mrs. Audrey Leslie, supervisor of secondary instruction, and Ms. Sarah Pinkney-Murkey, principal of Westland Intermediate School. Dr. Shekletski said that a management plan was a guide that enabled managers to improve the performance of students and to be in a better position to monitor progress and make the necessary changes to insure continued progress. The basis for the plan could be found in the planning goals, accountability measures, and affirmative action. It was expected that the local unit would develop specific school objectives related to these goals. They had provided areas of focus to the schools to support this effort. The supervisors of instruction review these with principals to determine whether or not the school or unit needed to develop a particular objective related to these elements.

Dr. Shekletski reported that in June the supervisor and principal reviewed the objectives, the implementation plan, and the attainment for the current school year. Based on the attainment of those objectives, the supervisor and principal determined what objectives should be developed for the ensuing year.

Ms. Pinkney-Murkey explained that the process started at the end of the school year rather than the beginning. Prior to the end of the school year they had a review, and prior to that review the principal worked with the staff and with the community to collect data to show whether or not school objectives were attained. Two of their objectives were student achievement in mathematics and school climate. Prior to their final review they received information from data processing indicating to them how well they had done. She had reviewed this information with the math resource teacher to see whether they had met the goal. School climate was a little different in that it involved an entire school community. In June 1988, the parents sent a survey out, and the survey indicated the need for a school climate objective. This year they did another survey as to whether they had met the goal. While there was much improvement, they decided to continue this objective for next year.

Mrs. Leslie reported that before she went into any school to meet with the principal she reviewed the data for the school. She looked at the CAT scores and passing rates on the Maryland Functional Tests. What she did not have was anything that the principal had done with the community or with staff that would not be included in the data. The principal shared information on areas where he or she felt they needed objectives. She no longer had to tell a principal what objectives were needed. The principals were suggesting objectives to her.

Dr. Shekletski added that the objectives were due in the area office on August 1. At that point the director and the area superintendent reviewed each of the sets of objectives. In many cases the objectives were approved, and in some cases they directed the principal to modify the objectives or to formulate additional objectives. Hopefully, the latter was not done too often. The principal had the responsibility to share the plan with the total

staff during the preservice days at the end of August. In September or October, the objectives were shared with the community, and a midyear progress report was due in February or March.

Ms. Leslie explained that each school each year had either an internal or external review. External reviews occurred every three years. This took place in February/March after the area had received the last data report. The first three items were the same for external and internal reviews and included present conditions, implementation plans for current objectives, and progress toward accountability on Priority 2. If the school was going to have a visiting team, the supervisor would work with the principal to plan for the review team. The review team consisted of parents, a different principal, and other teachers. The supervisor selected the team and chaired the meeting. The supervisor and the team members prepared the summary of progress toward accountability goal two.

Ms. Pinkney-Murkey commented that none of this could happen without the staff and community members and the data they received from the Department of Educational Accountability. All of this was done prior to the midyear review or the end of the year review. Dr. Shekletski stated that the director and the area superintendent became directly involved in monitoring progress. As a result of the review, they might give specific direction to the principal in terms of modifying the objectives. This brought them full cycle to the end of the year review. He felt that the management plan was designed to improve achievement and also had a very strong monitoring component.

Dr. Vance recalled that Mr. Ewing had been a member of a visiting team sponsored by the U. S. Department of Education's efforts to look at exemplary schools. It occurred to him that it might be interesting next year to invite Board members to serve on MCPS external review teams.

Dr. Vance introduced Dr. Scott, Dr. Joy Frechtling, acting director of DEA, Mr. Russell Gordon, principal of Bethesda Elementary, and Ms. Meriam Flam, principal of Greencastle Elementary School. The topic of their presentation was successful practices.

Dr. Scott reported that this year the successful practices project had focused on refinement of the identification process and the dissemination of the 18 practices and strategies identified during the first year to other schools. As part of the second phase, this project had been placed in the office of instruction and program development. It was now coordinated by Dr. Renee Brimfield. Dr. Frechtling and Mrs. Blumsack had been working with Dr. Brimfield on the refinement of the identification process and dissemination process. His role had now shifted from designing the successful practices project to monitoring it.

Dr. Frechtling recalled that last year they had started looking at successful practices at the elementary level and focused on programs that had been successful in increasing the achievement of minority

students. They had visited schools, met with the staff, did observations, and developed descriptions of what it was that seemed to be making a difference. They found this strategy had some limitations. It focused on achievement, and many schools had successful practices that dealt with areas other than CAT scores.

This year they made substantial changes in how they did identification. They were looking beyond achievement scores. Secondly, they were moving to look at programs that were successful not only for minority students but also for majority students. They had expanded the program to mid-level schools. Instead of using some external indicators and going out to schools, they had turned the process around and had asked the schools to do self-nomination. A school submitted an application through the area associate to Dr. Brimfield. The proposal came to DEA, and someone was sent out to work with the school on their proposal and a documentation. A presentation was then made by the principal and staff to a panel of experts. They had been very lucky to put together a panel of experts from around the Washington, D.C. area. If the practice was selected, the school was given a monetary award of \$5,000 and a letter of commendation. The school then participated in on-going dissemination activities. This was similar to the model used by the federal government entitled, "the program effectiveness panel."

Mr. Gordon reported that the superintendent had made it clear he wanted to see strong emphasis on goal two and goal one and that support would be given to schools to help increase minority achievement. He had attended the successful practices workshop with four of his staff leaders. They selected the two programs, the comprehensive school mathematics program and cooperative learning. The workshop helped them to look at their entire instructional program. In addition, they developed a teaching-coaching model which they would implement in September. It put all of their programs under one instructional umbrella. It was a part of his minigrant for 1989-90 and was to help teachers improve their instructional sensitivity when they taught minority students. However, the teaching-coaching model would benefit all students. The key to the model was the high visibility and frequent intervention of language arts, math, social studies, science, and gifted and talented specialists.

Mr. Gordon thanked Dr. Shekletski, Dr. Sweeney, Mr. Abrunzo, and Mr. Stroud for their support in helping his school improve minority achievement. He now had a full time counselor, additional instructional materials, and an activity bus. Mr. Gordon said they had a complete commitment to the minority achievement plan, and now it was up to him to come up with something practical that would be able to be seen by the community and staff to make great strides in the instructional program.

Mr. Gordon explained that the monitoring of his instructional program began with his management plan which was the way the area office monitored whether or not he was achieving what he was supposed to achieve. The management plan included the school's objectives and

the two successful practices programs. With EYE days, certain staff members would develop a monitoring plan and a continuous documentation of skill achievement in reading, language arts, and math.

Mrs. Flam pointed out that Greencastle was a new school which opened in September of 1988 with an enrollment of 450, 51 percent minority, grades K-5. They had to establish goals, objectives, and expectations. It was crucial for them to get to know their students and parents immediately. In the fall they assessed every student in reading and math to determine their instructional needs and strengths. In addition, they decided to do a modified gifted and talented screening, grades 2-5. Through this process, they identified a large number of students with high potential.

Following this, they had an opportunity to apply as a pilot school to implement successful practices. They selected the PADI program because it enhanced and supported the total program plan. They were selected as one of ten schools, and the staff was involved in the selection of the five teachers to be trained. Parents were informed, and the school communicated its expectations for staff and students. Through her training, she was able to develop a plan for staff and students to facilitate higher achievement. After each training, the team shared their ideas with the total staff. The total staff including supporting services began to assure ownership and to get the feeling that they could make the difference.

Mrs. Flam reported that the school mission was that every student at Greencastle would experience success in learning and leave school each day feeling special. They spent staff meetings discussing goals and student achievement, and they analyzed test results. They used this data to target students, and the intense communication gave them insights into the strengths and weaknesses of their students as well as the strengths and needs of their staff.

Mrs. Flam indicated that they now had a banner in the school which read, "You can only do what you can do, but you usually can do a great deal more than you can think." Through the commitment and support of Staff Development, the G/T Office, the area office, and other MCPS departments, they were a team moving into the next school year with a strong commitment to accomplish their goals.

Dr. Vance reported that the next presentation was on the summer institute. He introduced Mrs. Fran Dean, acting associate superintendent; Mr. Ted Schuder, coordinator of the K-8 Reading/Language Arts Program; Ms. Joy Odom, coordinator of secondary mathematics; and Dr. Tom Rowan, coordinator of elementary mathematics. Under the leadership of OIPD, they concentrated on creating a special program of activities which had implications for youngsters in the middle stanine range.

Mrs. Dean reported that last September she and Mr. Clark, the director of the Division of Academic Skills, began to plan for those curricular activities scheduled for the summer of 1989 as a part of

the superintendent's minority achievement plan. Tonight they would present two of those projects. The first was the ninth grade algebra project followed by the overall design for the summer institute, grades 3 to 5. Dr. Rowan would follow that with a math program, and Mrs. Marcia York would address the training plan for teachers.

Ms. Odom reported that they had been looking at enrollment in higher mathematics for the last several years. In 1987, schools had minigrants, the QIE project, and the Middle Start Project. In 1987, they focused on a project in Gaithersburg High School in which they took students from eighth grade algebra through an intensive summer program in geometry and places those students the following year in either Algebra 2 or Algebra 2/Trig. Those students were graduating this year, and 13 of the original 16 students were either in calculus or pre-calculus. In 1988, they had a project in Takoma Park, Sligo, and Eastern. This took seventh grade students through a summer

program and put them in a higher level of mathematics in eighth grade. All these students had been successful this year.

In 1989, Ms. Odom recalled they had gone to the Board and asked for and received a system-wide effort called their pre-algebra preparation. They would have 11 sites, and 176 students had been identified. They were all eighth grade students going into ninth grade who would not have been recommended for algebra. They were certain these students would be successful, and in September they planned to have six more classes of Algebra I. Along with that program would be a tutoring/mentor program at the high school level in ninth grade for those students.

Mr. Schuder commented that the summer institute for achievement was initiated by Dr. Pitt in September when they talked about doing something for the so-called average achieving children. They looked at achievement data over the past three years and did a review of research and programs that worked. They decided to target the 20 mornings of instruction for academic achievement. They chose mathematics as a primary focus and reading as a secondary focus.

They wanted the program to be different and highly motivating. To put together the emphasis on math and reading, they decided to focus on problem-solving in reading and in math. They also decided to focus on actual learning strategies that children were going to have to use in a variety of situations. They wanted retention and transfers to other kinds of learning environments for children. For example, problem solving worked well in reading, math, science, and social studies. They also wanted to work on test taking and assessment as a survival and a thinking activity for students.

Mr. Schuder explained that in regard to problem solving, they wanted students to understand the information presented to them, decide for themselves how well they understood the problem, make a choice about what strategy they were going to use, and then come back and check their solution. They set out to empower children in their problem-solving abilities by giving them some strategies that were

helpful in understanding the data and the problem. They decided to concentrate on three strategies: estimating, visualization, and manipulation. In math, they wanted children to estimate a reasonable solution. In reading, they wanted children to predict what they expected the text to do in its content before they read. In math, students would represent their understanding in some kind of visual format. In reading, elementary children were asked to draw pictures of what they understood. In math, children manipulated concrete objects to help them understand the information and solution. In reading, they called this acting out or role playing.

Mr. Schuder explained that the third focus was to apply problem solving to test taking. They wanted children to know something about time management and help students know what to do when they got into difficulty when taking a test. They would also look at the actual test taking. For example, some children did not know they could look back at a reading passage to answer questions.

Mr. Schuder said that they wanted teachers to take fairly complex strategies and show children how to do them and explain to children the significance of that activity. They would have teachers lead the children through those processes and not let them fail.

Dr. Rowan commented that the program Mr. Schuder had been describing could only take on life as it was implemented by teachers in classrooms. He showed the Board and the audience a sample problem for second and third graders. He noted that a lot of times children didn't even read the problem and just jumped to conclusions about the solution. They wanted the children to understand the information in the problem. Then they had to understand the problem itself. Next the children had to decide on the strategy to attack the problem.

For example, students could act out this particular problem or draw pictures to reflect what was happening in the problem. Children should use the strategy they felt most comfortable with, but they had to recognize they were using a strategy and what it was and how it could be applied. Then the children had to look back and see whether their solution was a reasonable one in the context of the problem. From this problem, they could spin off into a variety of other activities. Children could be taught strategies for gaining facts that would make them more powerful in testing situations. He was convinced that the proposed program would make a difference with these children.

Mrs. York reported that the training plan had two phases. Each phase had two components. They had finished the training of trainers portion of the first phase. They had trained area office staff and Chapter I coordinators so that they could train the extended skills teachers and the teachers for the summer institute. The plan would carry them into the fall. The teachers working with the children in the summer time would become trainers of other teachers in their schools. This would be the last phase of the training plan.

Dr. Cronin reported that it was now time for Board member statements or questions.

In regard to accountability, Mrs. Hobbs asked if Dr. Shekletski could give them an idea of what the consequences were if the objectives were not met and goals were not achieved. For example, what did he do when progress was not being made.

Dr. Shekletski replied that if progress was not being made he got involved personally. He would ask the principal why the goals were not being met. If the principal had a reasonable explanation, he would indicate that the principal was to try alternative strategies for the second semester. This would be checked again at the end of the year review. If the principal had done everything he or she thought possible, it was up to the associate superintendent and staff to suggest some things. This was where the successful practices became so important. If there were some modifications and there did not seem to be any improvement, he would have to deal more directly with the principal. There had been times when this had been tied into the evaluation of the principal.

Mrs. Praisner asked whether there was any comprehensive review to the determination of when schools were under external or internal review. She wondered whether there was any consistency across areas. Dr. Shekletski replied that when they started the process they selected one third of their schools for the first year. If they felt schools were in need of additional support, those schools would probably be in the external review in the second year. It appeared to Mrs. Praisner that there was no attempt to lump a cluster together or to review by some curriculum issue or schools where there was a change in the principal. Dr. Shekletski said that there were some exceptions. He thought Area 1 did some by cluster.

Mrs. Praisner inquired about the support element from the area and central offices that would have their objectives tied to meeting what the local school had identified. Dr. Shekletski said the area office could develop its objectives based on what the majority of the schools were undertaking. The other way was that principals had asked about what objectives the area planned to work on. He and his staff had come up with some things they thought were important to their area. The central office was rather new at this process, and Dr. Vance had set some expectations for those units particularly in terms of the Priority 2 effort. At this point in time, he believed it was critical that there be specific goals set by the Board and the superintendent with these followed by the central office, the areas, and then the schools.

Mrs. Praisner commented that she would start from the focus of the local school. When the local school identified its priorities and needs, the central and area office components would be built on local needs. They might be multiyear priorities, and she could see relationships to budgets. Once a school was identified and was going to work on a successful practice, that school needed the opportunity for staff training. The unit providing that training had to have the delivery of that service on its annual agenda in order to support the local school.

Dr. Pitt remarked that he did not think they had always coordinated the central, area, and school objectives, and they recognized that. He hoped they had seen a difference in tonight's presentation over what they saw a year ago. He had requested the deputy superintendent to coordinate activities of all associates. He hoped to make some changes in the organization to help to do that. He praised the efforts of Fran Dean in the year she had been acting associate superintendent.

Dr. Vance commented that Mrs. Praisner was on target in terms of their planning process. Dr. Shekletski had indicated that for most of the central offices this was the first time around in the management planning process. They were working closely with him, Paul Scott, and Ken Muir. The indicator of how successful they were was going to be next year when all the management plans were coordinated. However, they were still in the planning process, and a lot of people needed to be trained. For example, he had been working with Dr. Fountain in the area of Head Start, Chapter I, and ESOL. He was working with Dr. Smith on Staff Development and Personnel. He hoped to show success in next year's presentation.

Mrs. Praisner thought this had a relationship to one other issue she had raised. That was the whole issue of their budget process and the relationship of budget to the planning process as they moved to more multiyear goals. She asked that they keep this in mind when they discussed the budget process.

Dr. Cronin asked whether each school received for each student a breakdown of the weaknesses on the CAT and the CRTs. Dr. Frechtling replied that schools received test scores in the various domains of the test. They got an idea of how they were doing in math, reading, etc. One of the problems with the tests was that it was very difficult to get down to specifics because of the small number of test items to measure a particular area. They did try and get information back to the schools that would develop a profile. With the summer institute, they would be experimenting with different formats for providing information to teachers and students and families. In this way they could better integrate information from the test with the instructional process.

Dr. Cronin pointed out that by August much of the EYE monies had been committed and staff institutes set up by the time the school went through the end of the year objectives. He asked if they were prepared to rearrange the entire scheduling process so that they could tie the resources to the expectations of the local school. Dr. Vance replied that this was a painful process because people made plans last fall for EYE days; however, they had made great strides in that area and the summer institute was an indication of that. They had to take days from each of the major departments to provide the teacher training. They were closer to doing what Dr. Cronin had suggested. Dr. Cronin was concerned because they were giving principals the assessments after the budget. As principals were doing their planning, there was no certainty that the resources would be there. Dr. Vance remarked that this was an expansion of the point

that Mrs. Praisner was making. Ideally the process should come before the superintendent's recommended budget. Dr. Shekletski added that this meant they would almost have to be doing planning two years down the road. Dr. Pitt agreed that they had to be more flexible with their resources and able to make changes.

Mr. Ewing applauded the perceptiveness, insight, and commitment on the part of staff as evidenced by the presentations. There was a clear recognition there was a need to address the issue of minority achievement, especially for black and Hispanic students, and that there were major efforts underway and being perfected. He thought that the successful practices effort was moving in the right direction with the new validation process. The issue they had not talked much about was the one that brought them here. That issue was the results they were getting with minority young children. Mark Simon, the president of MCEA, had stated in a letter that, "my preliminary assessment is that most teacher representatives do believe that there is a problem that needs attention in MCPS' failure to create the conditions for black and Hispanic students on the one hand and low income students on the other to achieve academic success in MCPS." The other was from the DEA memorandum which stated, "the data suggest that the drop in achievement for this year's third grade black students appears indicative of a more general academic deficit for this particular group of students. Decline is not just limited to the CAT performance but is also found in CRTs and it is also reflected in basic skills. We need to work on improving these skills and look closely at our instructional program to determine why these areas have shown declines."

Mr. Ewing said that for young children test scores fell and fell dramatically. The argument could be made that that was a one year event, and indeed he hoped it was. But it happened, and it wasn't just a minor fall. The NSF study of math and science indicated very clearly that by third grade, minority students were already behind. The gap between minority students and white students was not closed and was not closing. The rate of participation in gifted and talented programs by minority students was still far lower than that for whites. The rate of passage of Maryland Functional Tests was still much lower than that for whites.

Mr. Ewing stated that these were all facts that they knew, but he did not see them addressing those tonight. From the point of view of the superintendent, the purpose of the meeting was to address what they were doing and that was positive. However, there were many things they needed to pursue. They needed to develop a whole set of other measures beyond test scores. They needed to address themselves to how well they educated poor children regardless of race. He disagreed with Dr. Pitt that they ought not call on parents for their advice. They needed to address themselves to the role of the school in the community. The Board and the school system had to think about how they were going to make use of not only social services in the county but what social services the schools needed to provide.

Mr. Ewing said they had a set of goals, a set of processes,

resources, and staff commitment. However, they still had not solved the problem especially for young children. They had described what they were doing, but they had not yet acknowledged that there was a very serious problem that required major inquiry into what it was they were doing and how well they were doing it for young children. He was pleased to learn of Dr. Pitt's emphasis on early childhood. He believed they needed to hear more from the public, and he hoped they could expand the hour now scheduled on June 26. He thought there was a sense in the community that the school system was making much progress and full of people dedicated to solving this problem, but that there were also some issues that the community would like to see addressed and some other problems they would like to see pursued. There were also suggestions for the solutions to those problems.

Dr. Pitt noted that all the data showed they had to start working with young children at a younger age. For that reason, he had raised the issue of early childhood education and parenting. He had attended a national conference as one of two Maryland superintendents where this was pointed out. He agreed they needed to look at Chapter I and Head Start and the programs at Broad Acres and New Hampshire Estates. He did not say there should not be citizen involvement. If they were going to look at the specific things they were doing, he would like to see national experts look at these things. They were now at the stage where it would be helpful to have professional evaluations of their programs.

Dr. Cronin inquired about the CRTs as diagnostic and achievement tools. Dr. Frechtling replied that right now the major strength of the CRTs was as a diagnostic tool, a way of looking at the strengths and weaknesses of a student on an annual basis in reading and mathematics. This did not mean that CRTs in general could not be used for accountability purposes.

It seemed to Mr. Ewing that they could not have it both ways. If they were going to have CRTs and say they were a better measure of student learning than other achievement tests, they had to say this was another measure. He did not understand how they could select things by which they measured, and then when they did not turn out well, say that these were no longer good measures. He saw them doing that with the California Achievement Test. He did not think the CAT was a good measure, and he thought that CRTs had the prospect of becoming a better measure. But they never seemed to get there because they had been working on CRTs for as long as he had been on the Board.

Dr. Pitt explained that the CRTs had been developed in recent times. They had been talked about for a long time, but the actual work started a few years ago. They were prepared in mathematics and would be prepared in reading. CRTs could measure maximum competency. CRTs could be used as evaluation instruments. The state was looking at the possibility of CRTs as a school performance measurement. They would have to modify theirs in a more normative way, and they would have the ability to do that in math and reading. He was looking forward to seeing the state report on school performance.

Mr. Goldensohn said he found the presentations very enlightening. While he was familiar with much of the material, the presentations were very good. He noted that the charts showed black and Hispanic scoring. He felt they had an increasing problem with Asian students. The Asian population in the county school system was growing by leaps and bounds, and in not too many years they would be the majority minority. Many of the new Asian students were refugees, and he suggested that at some point they should think about adding this into their goals. Those children needed to be tracked in the same way. He noted that there were ethnic minorities, recent immigrants, who fell into the category of majority students. He was looking at Indians, Pakistanis, and Iranians. In some schools there was a large sub-Asian continent population, and yet there was no way to track those students.

Mr. Goldensohn pointed out that their goals had been set up to track students from the third to the fifth grade and how they improved through the stanines. This year they compared third graders versus prior third graders. However, he did not know how to rate the current third graders to start with. For example, they did not have test data for kindergarten through second grade. He realized that there were few accurate tests for kindergarten and first graders. Dr. Smith explained that Priority 2 focused on the achievement of black and Hispanic students, but the process focused on all students. They had test data on every single student in the school system. Principals, teachers, and staff were responsible for the achievement of all students in MCPS. They had all the scores, but the difference was in what they reported in terms of established accountability Priority 2 goals. Mr. Goldensohn understood this, but he thought that perhaps it was time to add the Asian students into that overall program and publish that data on an annual basis.

Dr. Frechtling stated that they did not have baseline data when the students entered MCPS. However, she was not sure the solution was any better than the problem that they currently had. Measures at the K-2 level had much more error in them. The further up the grades the more confidence they had in the tests. She was not sure how much they could conclude from those early measures. The other problem was that kindergarten screening contained the danger of labeling students and mislabeling students at an early age because they were not good test takers.

Dr. Shoenberg said he was impressed by the sophistication of the administrative and organizational processes they had for addressing this issue. He was also impressed by the variety of kinds of strategies and by the way in which they were carrying them out. However, it was possible to go through the process and not have the kind of result they wanted. It was also possible to go through a process and not have any measurable result that they could talk about. One of the problems of focusing on test data as achievement measures was that there were many other things that the school system was doing. They used these because they provided data that could be aggregated. They were stuck with this even though they were

beginning to feel that the uses of the CAT data were rather pernicious. He thought they did need to get on with other kinds of measures.

Dr. Shoenberg commented that for all that he was not fond of the CAT data as being a good surrogate for educational achievement, he did like the way they were using it in another respect. They had settled on a kind of value added standard. The longer the students were in the schools, the relatively better they ought to be doing. For example, children in the lower stanines ought to move up to the middle stanines. He wondered whether they had any thoughts about other sorts of measures they could use that lend themselves to that value added component.

Dr. Frechtling agreed with Dr. Shoenberg about the strength of the present system. There were other measures on which they could do value added analyses on. CRTs of a kind were one of them. However, they had to look at the question of whether they were looking for something for a teacher to use to look at an individual child or were they looking for something that could be easily summarized in an aggregated form. If they were looking at individual children with value added, there were some portfolio techniques or other kinds of productions. The problem with that, which was the problem with their current CRTs, was summarizing what they found to a way that was relatively simple to understand. That got them back to the purpose of testing. Once they decided what their purposes were, they might be able to make some more progress in getting some more and enriched and sophisticated measurements.

Dr. Shoenberg wondered how much they were willing to pay to get these measures of achievement. The sorts of things Dr. Frechtling talked about were more expensive. For example, portfolio analysis was expensive. This kind of testing would take money away from the classroom, but you might find out some things that translated back into the classroom. The business of cost of assessment of the kinds of job they were doing was a major issue.

Dr. Pitt commented that this was a national issue. They had state legislators and governors who wanted accountability and measures of school performance. There were a number of assessment measures that a teacher used in the classroom that were very indicative of what was happening to a student. To translate those into information for the state was very difficult. On one hand, they had people saying it was a simple process using simple tests, and on the other hand, they had people saying there had to be a better way of dealing with this. The State of Maryland's Commission on School Performance was working on this. There was one superintendent on that commission, and their purpose was to look for measures of performance going well beyond simple tests.

Dr. Frechtling remarked that testing could be built into instruction so that it was not taking away instructional time. Dr. Shoenberg could see CRTs in that sense, but if they were to get a team of three people in to look at a school for a week they would be talking money.

Portfolio analysis also cost money that did not go into the classroom. He did not think that the assessment measures they used now were at all satisfactory, and he suggested that they needed to think about doing something else if only to increase their own level of certainty.

Mr. Park thanked staff who had provided a very helpful presentation. He was pleased that Mr. Goldensohn had brought up the issue of the Asian students who were not doing so well in school and that tonight was a discussion of minority achievement, not just black and Hispanic achievement. There was a vast number of Asian students who were not doing well in school, and their parents were not there as a resource to help. As a student, he did not find the CAT as a good measure of achievement. He thought they needed to look closely at the CRTs and at the way they were testing student achievement. He agreed with Dr. Pitt about the way in which the media reported what students were doing, how students were achieving and whether they were achieving at all. They needed to tell the whole story about MCPS. It was true that there was a problem about declining test scores, but minority and majority students were making progress.

Mrs. DiFonzo had spoken to some citizens who were aware of this meeting and who had read the newspaper headlines. One parent had asked her two questions. The first question was how many youngsters in absolute numbers were they talking about tonight. The second question was about what was happening to the low achieving white and Asian students while they were focusing so much attention on black and Hispanic youngsters.

Dr. Pitt replied that they were talking about a relatively small number of youngsters, but every youngster was important. They were probably going to have an impact on a good number of those youngsters this summer. He believed that when they focused on achievement, it ought to help all youngsters. He hoped that as they dealt with youngsters who were not achieving well, they would learn methods and approaches that would help all youngsters. They needed to work with any youngster who was not achieving well. Here they were talking about larger groups, and they tended to almost brand students.

Dr. Vance reported that the lighting rod for this evening was the published results of the third grade. There were 1,097 youngsters who took the test. Dr. Frechtling added that 64 percent of the black students were in the middle stanines and were the target population for the summer institute. Dr. Vance said that they did not know whether the data were conveying a message to them yet. They did not know whether it was a one year blip on the screen, but they did have to watch that very carefully. When they looked at the data, there was a noticeable drop with minority youngsters compared to a year ago. There was more of a clustering at the fourth stanine, and more youngsters in stanines 1 through 3. They might not know what this meant until they tested those youngsters in Grade 5. He pointed out that Priority 1 covered the school system including majority youngsters and Asian youngsters. They told principals that minigrants applied to youngsters whose profile was comparable to the

profile of minority youngsters in that school.

Dr. Cronin cautioned that while the numbers involved in the CAT scores were at times small, but the issue could be the same as was the glass half full or half empty. If they approached it from the point of a set of CAT scores damning the entire process, they thrashed their own system. He noted two press releases. The Board established its priorities in 1983, and for example, in the functional writing tests, students passed at a 91 percent rate in the ninth grade. The passing rate for Asians was 91 percent, blacks 87 percent. Therefore, 87 percent of their black students passed at the first crack. In the AP placement qualifying scores, the national increase for black and Hispanic students was 34 percent over 1987.

In Montgomery County, the black students increased 67 percent over 1987, and 79 percent over 1986. Hispanic students showed a 13 percent increase over 1988, and 59 percent over 1986. There did seem to be some longitudinal increase for minority students in this county. He agreed with Mr. Ewing they did not do a good enough job of testing for certain factors and in accommodating for. They were not too sure how they accommodated for socioeconomic factors or minority students hidden under the Caucasian label. Tests could be culture biased. In SATs, they had found gender bias. There were also language difficulties that students faced. If they looked at those in combination with test scores, they could see why in some instances some of those scores were coming in lower. They had to realize that the glass was more than half full or they would be sending the wrong message to their faculty, students, and the general public.

Mrs. Praisner agreed that there was much to be reviewed in what Dr. Cronin had said. The CAT scores for this year supported some of the longitudinal information he had talked about. On the other hand, there were more questions than answers for her in the third grade test scores results. This might be reflective of some of the changes they were experiencing within the county. The Board had discussed programs for secondary students at risk, and she believed they were going to continue that discussion. Perhaps it would be useful for them to focus at the earlier grade levels to identify and review what they defined as programs for at risk students and how they defined at risk within this county.

Mrs. Praisner suggested it would be useful for them to have a review and discussion with the County Council and the Planning Commission on the demographics in the county and the impact those demographics were having on the county government and on the school system. They should discuss how this group of agencies could provide for and meet the needs of the community. It might be time for the Board of Education to review its priorities because they were adopted in 1983 for five years, and it was 1989. They had looked at demographics when she was Board president, but they had not built on that since then.

In regard to parent and community involvement, Mrs. Praisner reported that about a year ago she had had some discussions with the governor's office in her capacity as president of the Maryland Association of Boards of Education about the possibility of building on an initiative in the state of Maryland for expanding parental involvement in their children's education. She had reviewed their policies and there were references to community involvement, but she was not convinced that they were up front and clear enough in their expectations for and commitment to involving parents in education in one specific place and in one specific policy. They knew about ACT-SO, LULAC, and Saturday schools, but perhaps they needed to review this and see how they could more clearly articulate expectations in helping parents play a more active role.

Mr. Ewing said that there was nothing wrong with celebrating their success and their progress, and they had a good deal. However, there was something wrong with ignoring problems. He was not saying they were doing that, but it was important for them to concentrate their attention on problems. There was evidence that if they started with the third grade and measured the achievement of minority students, there was genuine progress. At the same time, they had to consider students arriving in their school system in Grades K-4. The danger was that if those trends continued, they would undermine their ability to be successful in the future. The children would be so far behind that they would not be able to benefit as fully from what was being done. This was his concern, and this was where he thought they should focus their attention.

Dr. Shoenberg asked if there was any evidence that the third grade children who were tested had less time in MCPS than the students of previous years. Dr. Frechtling explained that this was the case, but it was not large enough to explain the test difference.

Dr. Shoenberg asked if a student new to MCPS and a student new to the United States would be tested in October. Dr. Frechtling replied that for the CAT they had a screening test to see whether a student was competent enough in English to be able to take the test.

Dr. Cronin agreed with Mr. Ewing that if the trend were allowed to continue past third grade, they were facing some serious problems. He asked if there was anything in place to arrest a trend of erosion past third grade. Dr. Frechtling explained one indicator was progress on the ISM objectives measured within the classroom. The CRTs were examined at the end of the year for students on an individual basis. Those were the formal mechanisms, and certainly there were many other things that individual teachers in schools had put in place.

Dr. Pitt stated that Mr. Ewing's point was an important one. If some children came from an environment where they were not exposed to a lot of language, reading, and communication, those students came to school with a deficit. They knew this from Head Start. He thought that perhaps day care could help in some way. They had to focus on the parents with at risk children because many times those parents did not have the natural skills needed to work with their children.

Parenting was a very important part of the process. He agreed that they had to involve parents in this process.

Dr. Cronin thanked staff for their excellent report.

Re: ADJOURNMENT

The president adjourned the meeting at 11 p.m.

PRESIDENT

SECRETARY

HP:mlw