



RESOLUTION NO. 249-92      Re:    PROCUREMENT CONTRACTS MORE THAN  
\$25,000

On recommendation of the superintendent and on motion of Mrs. Fanconi seconded by Mrs. Brenneman, the following resolution was adopted unanimously#:

WHEREAS, Funds have been budgeted for the purchase of equipment, supplies, and contractual services; now therefore be it

Resolved, That having been duly advertised, the following contracts be awarded to the low bidders meeting specifications as shown for the bids as follows:

114-91	Athletic, Cheerleader, and Pom Pon Uniforms - Extension	
	<u>Awardees</u>	
	Champion Products, Inc.	\$ 26,666
	Longstreth Sporting Goods	10,000*
	Marlow Sports, Inc.	26,667
	Team Distributors	<u>26,667</u>
	Total	\$ 90,000
61-92	Hand Held Calculators for Instructional Materials	
	<u>Awardees</u>	
	D & H Distributing Company	\$ 97,267
	Delta Education, Inc.	<u>1,200</u>
	Total	\$ 98,467
77-92	Industrial and Technology Education Automotive Supplies	
	<u>Awardees</u>	
	Abrasive Accessories	\$ 850
	Ferguson Corporation	653
	Graves-Humphreys, Inc.	547
	KS & B Enterprises, Inc.	1,398*
	Mattos, Inc.	8,705
	MSF County Services Company	6,103
	Myco Service and Supply	1,168
	Rite-Off, Inc.	94
	Satco of Indiana/DBA Satco	766
	Wareheim-Air Brakes, Inc.	<u>7,468</u>
	Total	\$ 27,752
	TOTAL MORE THAN \$25,000	\$216,219

\* Denotes MFD vendors

March 23, 1992

RESOLUTION NO. 250-92      Re:    BID NO. 83-92, ART AND SCHOOL PAPERS, (VIRGIN AND RECYCLED), AND RFP NO. 92-08, SYSTEM CONTRACT FOR ART AND SCHOOL PAPERS (VIRGIN AND RECYCLED)

On recommendation of the superintendent and on motion of Mrs. Fanconi seconded by Mrs. Brenneman, the following resolution was adopted unanimously#:

WHEREAS, Funds have been budgeted for the purchase of art and school papers; now therefore be it

Resolved, That having been duly advertised, the following contract be awarded to the low bidder meeting specifications as shown for the bid as follows:

83-92	Art and School Papers (Virgin and Recycled)	
	<u>Awardees</u>	
	Chaselle, Inc.	\$372,773

RESOLUTION NO. 251-92      Re:    CHANGE ORDERS OVER \$25,000

On recommendation of the superintendent and on motion of Mrs. Brenneman seconded by Mr. Pishevar, the following resolution was adopted unanimously#:

WHEREAS, The Department of School Facilities has received change order proposals for various capital projects that exceed \$25,000; and

WHEREAS, Staff and the project architects have reviewed these change orders and found them to be equitable; now therefore be it

Resolved, That the Board of Education approve the following change orders for the amounts and contracts indicated:

ACTIVITY 1

Product:                    Seneca Valley Middle School #1

Description:              Seneca Valley MS #1 will be used as an elementary-level facility until Seneca Valley ES #8 is opened. This change order is for the minor modifications to the middle school building that are needed to use it for an elementary school program. This change order was submitted originally to the Board on January 14, 1992. Action was deferred pending staff responses to several questions raised by Board members that were addressed

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in a February 26, 1992, memorandum to Board members.

Contractor: Merando, Inc.

Amount: \$73,927

ACTIVITY 2

Project: Thomas W. Pyle Middle School

Description: Subsequent to the general demolition work for the modernization, asbestos-containing material was discovered in areas that were not accessible. This change order is to remove this material as part of the current asbestos abatement contract.

Contractor: Dustin Construction Co., Inc.

Amount: \$175,000

RESOLUTION NO. 252-92 Re: AWARD OF CONTRACT - GALWAY  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

On recommendation of the superintendent and on motion of Mrs. Brenneman seconded by Mr. Pishevar, the following resolution was adopted unanimously#:

WHEREAS, The following bids were received on February 27, 1992, for an addition to Galway Elementary School, with work to begin immediately and be completed by March 26, 1993:

<u>Bidder</u>	<u>Amount</u>
1. Tri-M Construction, Inc.	\$1,081,329
2. Northwood Contractors, Inc.	1,111,000
3. Smith & Haines, Inc.	1,116,596
4. The R. R. Gregory Corporation	1,117,800
5. Columbia Construction Company, Inc.	1,131,700
6. The McAlister-Schwartz Company, Inc.	1,134,177
7. Kimmel & Kimmel, Inc.	1,136,900
8. Dustin Construction, Inc.	1,165,600
9. Henley Construction Co., Inc.	1,176,400
10. Hess Construction Company, Inc.	1,180,000
11. Pioneer Builders, Inc.	1,183,000
12. Triangle General Contractors, Inc.	1,203,400

and

WHEREAS, The apparent low bidder, Tri-M Construction, Inc., failed to meet the bonding submission requirements of the







<u>Category</u>	<u>Amount</u>
2 Instructional Salaries	\$3,520
3 Other Instructional Costs	1,725
10 Fixed Charges	<u>283</u>
Total	\$5,528

and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this resolution be sent to the county executive and the County Council.

RESOLUTION NO. 257-92      Re:    UTILIZATION OF FY 1992 FUTURE  
SUPPORTED PROJECT FUNDS FOR  
SPECIALIZED MATERIALS FOR TEACHING  
JAPANESE AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL

On recommendation of the superintendent and on motion of Mrs. Brenneman seconded by Dr. Cheung, the following resolution was adopted unanimously#:

Resolved, That the superintendent of schools be authorized to receive and expend within the FY 1992 Provision for Future Supported Projects a grant award of \$8,500 from the Critical Language and Area Studies Consortium, Inc. (CLASC) for specialized materials for teaching Japanese at the secondary level, in the following categories:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Amount</u>
1 Administration	\$7,867
10 Fixed Charges	<u>633</u>
Total	\$8,500

and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this resolution be sent to the county executive and the County Council.

RESOLUTION NO. 258-92      Re:    UTILIZATION OF FY 1992 FUTURE  
SUPPORTED PROJECT FUNDS TO DEVELOP  
A DATABASE FOR THE LOCAL GRANTS  
INITIATIVES OF THE HOWARD HUGHES  
MEDICAL INSTITUTE

On recommendation of the superintendent and on motion of Mrs. Brenneman seconded by Dr. Cheung, the following resolution was adopted unanimously#:

Resolved, That the superintendent of schools be authorized to receive and expend within the FY 1992 Provision for Future Supported Projects a grant award of \$13,500 from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute to develop a database for the Local Grants Initiatives; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the county executive and the County Council.

RESOLUTION NO. 259-92      Re:    FY 1992 SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION  
FOR IMPROVEMENT OF THE MATHEMATICAL  
POWER OF ALL CHILDREN AND TEACHERS  
(IMPACT) PROJECT

On recommendation of the superintendent and on motion of Mrs. Brenneman seconded by Dr. Cheung, the following resolution was adopted unanimously:

Resolved, That the superintendent of schools be authorized, subject to County Council approval, to receive and expend an FY 1992 supplemental appropriation of \$181,863 from the National Science Foundation through the University of Maryland, in the following categories:

	<u>Category</u>	<u>Positions*</u>	<u>Amount</u>
2	Instructional Salaries	2.5	\$135,208
3	Other Instructional Costs		15,097
7	Student Transportation		3,710
10	Fixed Charges	—	<u>27,848</u>
	Total	2.5	\$181,863

\* 2.0 Teacher, A-D (10 month)  
.5 Secretary, Grade 11

and be it further

Resolved, That the county executive be requested to recommend approval of this resolution to the County Council and a copy be transmitted to the county executive and the County Council.

RESOLUTION NO. 260-92      Re:    SUBMISSION OF AN FY 1992 GRANT  
PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A TRAINING  
PROGRAM FOR ESOL TEACHERS ABOUT THE  
U.S. BILL OF RIGHTS

On recommendation of the superintendent and on motion of Mr. Ewing seconded by Mrs. Brenneman, the following resolution was adopted unanimously:

Resolved, That the superintendent of schools be authorized to



Re: LOSS OF CREDIT

Mr. Pishevar read the following into the record:

"Changing the current Loss of Credit policy is one of my major goals during my term. I have done extensive research on the topic and have struggled to formulate a new alternative that is fairer and even more effective in keeping students in the schools learning. I have held several meetings with students and spoken with countless school officials including deputy superintendents, principals, teachers, teacher assistants, media specialists and secretaries to find the kinks in my ideas. After almost every meeting and conversation I worked to modify my proposal to make it better. Now, after originally making this proposal back in August, the final product is before you, and I welcome even more modifications. Below you will find a short outline of the problems with the LC policy that served as a guide to the modifications I have made.

"The current model for the LC policy is as follows: ***When a student misses five or more sessions of one class during a semester due to truancy or indifference, an LC (Loss of Credit) and failing grade (E2) will be given for all the semester regardless of how well that student is doing academically.***

"The first and most obvious problem with this policy is that the LC policy is in direct violation of Article XIV, Section D of the MCPS Student Rights Handbook which states that ...'*Downgrading shall not be used as a disciplinary action.*'

"The second problem is that it is a very tedious process for teachers, administrators, and students and generates a lot of paperwork and extra responsibilities. Most teachers and administrators believe the policy is a "pain in the neck" and welcome any changes that will both stimulate the attendance rate and decrease the administrative hassles that come with the current LC policy.

The third problem is that the LC policy really hurts the at-risk student and, in my opinion, stimulates the dropout rate. Why stay in class when you already know you have lost credit in the class in the fourth week of school and when you know you will receive an "E" in it for the semester regardless of how much work you do? It only serves as another class to skip and adds to the truancy rate. What happens to the student who LC's three, four, or five classes? They drop out. That's what happens. There is no motivating force for them, and the "E" feeds their resentment of school, teachers, administrators, and society in general.

"Another reason for a review of our LC policy is that with the

new Maryland School Performance Program (MSPP or Ms. PP) standards for attendance, which holds schools accountable for attendance problems, we need to try to modify and better our policy to help increase student attendance. Last year the average daily attendance in our school system was 93.7%, not even matching the state's satisfactory level of attendance. Also, the attendance rate has remained fairly steady since the installment of the LC policy in 1977. The LC policy worked, but it has reached its peak, its high-water mark, and has shown no sign of going any higher.

"In searching for an alternative, I tried to weigh in factors that have been proven to attract students to stay in school. The first and most obvious fact I found in my research is the ever-growing use of incentives. Incentives work!!! Some school systems have actually paid students money for good attendance and grades, others have given tee shirts, and some cancel classes for a day and have special social activities in school as a reward. These systems have seen remarkable increases in attendance and academic success, even from the at-risk students who no one thought would care for the rewards. Most of the students who are at risk come from broken families where they receive no encouragement or recognition for good deeds. They are crying out from their souls to be recognized and to be appreciated. That is why these incentives work because they show appreciation and use a carrot-and-stick approach to attendance rather than just a stick.

"The main objection to incentives come from those who believe that what is rewarded should be being done already. They say, "Listen, I go to work every day. I have maybe two sick days a year. Make those kids get used to the real world." Well, welcome to the real world. More and more the science of management has pointed out that for a business to be successful, it needs to reward the worker for good work and good attendance.

The more you recognize good work, the more clear you make known the standards to which all workers should strive. Without this recognition, those standards are blurred and lost in a fog of miscommunication and bureaucracy. In the real world, salaries take the place of grades and workers with good performances *and good attendance* receive bonuses as appreciation and recognition.

Again, good performance and good attendance are merged in receiving such bonuses. But in the schools, only good performance is rewarded with good grades. Attendance is treated as a separate entity. If the student has good attendance, nothing happens; but, if they have bad attendance, they are punished. If we are to make the students get used to the real world, we must merge good performance and good attendance in receiving rewards.

"I have formulated the following alternatives. They are in order of their creation. On Monday, March 23, I will propose these

alternatives in this same order.

**ALTERNATIVE 1**

- 1) Revise current policy to have three unexcused absences allowed every marking period
- 2) If a student has no unexcused absences in a class during the marking period, then the student's marking period grade in the class shall be increased by 2%
- 3) If the student has one, two, or three unexcused absences, he/she shall receive a verbal warning from the teacher, a telephone call to parents, and a letter home, respectively
- 4) Beginning with the fourth unexcused absence, the grade of the student shall decrease by 10% for every additional unexcused absence

"The opportunity for increasing one's grade by staying in school will serve as the incentive. This will be the motivating force.

The majority of students have had classes where they missed a better grade by one or two percent. By staying in school under this policy, they could change that from happening. This policy would reward those students who do not make the mistake of skipping class, and punishes the student who does make the mistake by decreasing the grade by 10%. For the student who has a grade decreased, he/she could still save the grade by staying in class and not having any more unexcused absences. A hard lesson would be learned, and ideally the student would be forced to do something positive about his/her grade. With the current policy, the student would receive an "E" and nothing can be done except to appeal. (Most principals will tell you that the appeal process does not force the student to learn a value, but rather forces them to write a short essay, and when the appeal is approved, the student thinks that he/she beat the system. The same students come back again with LC's the next semester because they have not learned a value, except that they can always work around the system.) This policy rewards, motivates, punishes, and forces the students to learn certain values that are not taught with the current policy.

**ALTERNATIVE II**

- 1) If a student has perfect or near-perfect attendance, he/she may waive one final exam
- 2) Keep the current model of the LC policy
- 3) Abolish the appeals process and in its place put the following:

If a student receives the LC, he/she will be told that by staying in school the following marking period and having no unexcused absences, the LC will be taken away, and the grade that would have been granted will be posted without an LC.

"At Crestline High School in Ohio the exam waiver policy was installed and attendance skyrocketed from 91.6 percent in 1985-86 to 96% two years later. It would only be one of the exams out of seven. Also, most students would choose a class where there was a grade of a "B" and a "B" or a "C" and a "C" and they could not raise the semester grade, no matter how well they did on the exam.

"The LC policy will be kept as is except for the installment of the incentive and the abolishment of the appeal process. The former will come as a great relief to all principals and faculty.

What is being put in place of the appeal process, I believe, is ideal. It gets rid of the notion many students have that they can beat the system after they get their appeals approved.

Again, the appeal process does not teach the student any real values except to force them to write a short essay. This idea will force them to do something about their mistakes and will also make them realize how much of a difference it really makes in performance when they stay in school. Again, it forces them **to learn a lesson** and not just how to beat the system.

### ALTERNATIVE III

- 1) Allow the student 10 days of sick leave, five per semester, and three days of personal leave

"You cannot get more "real world" than this. It is exactly what is expected of teachers and of most employees in businesses. You would be forcing students to get used to exactly what will be expected of them when they are adults.

"Those are all my ideas. I hope you have liked at least some of them. On Monday, please remember that this would only be tentative approval so that the public can comment before we take final action."

Re: A MOTION BY MR. PISHEVAR ON LOSS OF CREDIT (FAILED)

The following motion by Mr. Pishevar failed for lack of a second:

Resolved, That the following proposal be tentatively adopted as a pilot program in three high schools for two years:

- 1) Revise current policy to have three unexcused absences allowed every marking period

- 2) If a student has no unexcused absences in a class during the marking period, then the student's marking period grade in the class shall be increased by 2%
- 3) If the student has one, two, or three unexcused absences, he/she shall receive a verbal warning from the teacher, a telephone call to parents, and a letter home, respectively
- 4) Beginning with the fourth unexcused absence, the grade of the student shall decrease by 10% for every additional unexcused absence

Re: A MOTION BY MR. PISHEVAR ON LOSS OF CREDIT (FAILED)

The following motion by Mr. Pishevar failed for lack of a second:

Resolved, That the following proposal be tentatively adopted as a pilot program in three high schools for two years:

- 1) If a student has perfect or near-perfect attendance, he/she may waive one final exam
- 2) Keep the current model of the LC policy
- 3) Abolish the appeals process and in its place put the following:

If a student receives the LC, he/she will be told that by staying in school the following marking period and having no unexcused absences, the LC will be taken away, and the grade that would have been granted will be posted without an LC.

Re: A MOTION BY MR. PISHEVAR ON LOSS OF CREDIT (FAILED)

The following motion by Mr. Pishevar failed for lack of a second:

Resolved, That the following proposal be tentatively adopted as a pilot program in three high schools for two years:

- 1) Revised the current policy to allow three unexcused absences per semester
- 2) If a student has no unexcused absences, he/she may waive one final exam
- 3) Abolish the appeals process and in its place put the following:

If a student receives the LC, he/she will be told that by

staying in school the following marking period and having no unexcused absences, the LC will be taken away, and the grade that would have been granted will be posted without an LC.  
 RESOLUTION NO. 263-92 Re: LOSS OF CREDIT

On motion of Mrs. DiFonzo seconded by Dr. Cheung, the following resolution was adopted unanimously:

Resolved, That the Board of Education ask the superintendent to establish a work group whose charge would be to study the Loss of Credit policy and other relevant policies with an eye toward improving school attendance; and be it further

Resolved, That Mr. Pischevar's paper should be used as a framework but not the only information papers or other data that the group could rely on to formulate their discussion and come forward with recommendations in a timely fashion.

Mr. Ewing made the following statement for the record:

"I think that is the right way to go. I think that is what we ought to be doing. I hope that it is clear that the Board's intent here is, indeed, to explore the proposition among others that the LC policy may or may not be contributing effectively to improving attendance and also to explore the question, 'what is it that causes some students with certain characteristics continuously to fail to attend regularly and then what can we do with regard to those students as well as with regard to policy.'

I read the motion as including those considerations, but I would hope that for the record it could be clear."

Re: A MOTION BY MR. PISCHEVAR ON THE  
 LOSS OF CREDIT APPEALS PROCESS  
 (FAILED)

The following motion by Mr. Pischevar on the loss of credit appeals process failed for lack of a second:

Resolved, That the Board of Education give tentative approval to the following:

Abolish the appeals process and in its place put the following:

If a student receives the LC, he/she will be told that by staying in school the following marking period and having no unexcused absences, the LC will be taken away, and the grade that would have been granted will be posted without an LC.

Re: REPORT OF THE TASK FORCE ON GRADING  
 AND REPORTING

Dr. Vance introduced Dr. Mary Helen Smith, director of Curriculum

and Instruction, who served as chair of the task force.

Dr. Smith said that many members of the task force were in the audience, and she would be calling on the following individuals to participate in the discussion: Mr. Jason Romano, student, Seneca Valley HS; Ms. Patricia Bendler, teacher, McAuliffe ES; Dr. Russell Wright, teacher specialist; Mr. James Deligianis, teacher, Tilden MS; Ms. Carole Brown, MCCPTA; Ms. Karen Rabin, MCCPTA; Mr. David McNairy, student, Quince Orchard HS; and Ms. Mimi Doores, Principal, Beall ES.

Dr. Smith indicated that this was one of the best groups she had worked with because they were hard working and willing to listen to ideas. When they began meeting, they heard from various people about grading and reporting and read articles recommended by members of the task force and others. They spent time talking about what grades should do and the purpose for grading. Everyone felt very strongly that report cards should be a means of communicating but that there were other means of communicating as well. Students needed to work with teachers in terms of understanding what grades meant and also in terms of being able to share information. Parents should have as much information as possible.

Dr. Smith said they had four points on grading:

1. Awareness and knowledge about a student's progress is a shared responsibility of the home and the school.
2. Multiple and varied assessments should be used in determining a student's grades and progress.
3. Grades should be derived from what a student has been taught.
4. Teachers are each responsible for the implementation of an equitable evaluation system which reflects the progress of each student for the appropriate objectives.

Dr. Smith stated that their first recommendation was that report card conferences should be a part of both the elementary and middle school grading process. At the elementary level, these conferences should be held twice each year rather than the current practice of a conference in November at the end of the first report card period. Ms. Bendler stated that as a teacher she felt that conferences were a good way to communicate with parents. Sometimes parents did not get all the information that was sent home, and it was often difficult to get parents on the phone. Dr. Smith commented that the task force recognized that having two parent conferences during the school year would require more release time or a different use of release time.

Dr. Smith said that their second recommendation was that at the senior high level, conferences should be encouraged and held when needed. Teacher/student conferences as well as parent/teacher conferences are encouraged. Mr. Romano explained that when they looked at the current policy there was nothing on student/teacher conferences, and this should be included in the policy.

Their third recommendation was that secondary students should receive report cards every six weeks and elementary students should receive report cards every nine weeks. Mr. Deligianis explained that the guiding force for the whole project was to increase communication with parents. They were finding that the interim report became an additional report card for a lot of students. He thought that a six-week report would give them better performance from students and give students a clearer point of view about their efforts. This notion was tied to the idea that interim reports should be optional. Mr. Romano added that in his conversations with students he heard support for the six week report cards and the abolition of the interims.

Dr. Smith said their fourth recommendation was that students should be graded on the attainment of the objectives assigned to them in Pre-kindergarten - Grade 8. In Grades 9-12, grades are based on the attainment of the course objectives. The degree to which the student has attained these objectives will be determined by performance on appropriate assessment measures. Grade 8 is a transition year for students because grading practices differ from middle school to high school. Teachers, counselors, and administrators should help students and parents understand the basis on which grades are determined.

As a parent and a middle school teacher, Ms. Brown was concerned about the middle school because students were not prepared for the change in grading at the high school level. In some ways, the junior high school had a better phasing in of the grading system. Ms. Rabin thought that the eighth grade teachers had an obligation to prepare students for high school and inform them about high school grading.

The fifth recommendation was that parents need to be informed by the school of the availability of information on general objectives for each subject/course and explanations of teachers' grading systems. Dr. Wright explained that unless students and parents were aware of what the grade was based on, it was meaningless to send a letter home. He pointed out that teachers had many ways of calculating grades, and most teachers were willing to share their method. Ms. Brown thought this could be included in a newsletter or shared during "Back to School" night.

The sixth recommendation was that in Grades 1-8, students will be informed about how teachers determine students' grades. In Grades 9-12, students will be given course objectives as well as

the teacher's grading system for each course. Mr. Romano commented that in high school he had seven different teachers with seven different grading policies, and it got confusing as to what was expected by each teacher. Mr. McNairy added that in some cases teachers put more weight on certain assignments, but if students were not informed they couldn't make that extra effort.

The seventh recommendation was that teachers must be provided with training designed to coordinate objectives/outcomes with assessment techniques. Dr. Smith explained that this supported Success for Every Student and kept teachers trained. Dr. Wright pointed out that few schools of education required courses in grading or courses in tests and measurement. Many teachers did not know what an "equitable evaluation system" meant, and training must be provided for them.

The eighth recommendation was that in addition to the reporting symbols in Grades 1-2, teachers will complete a written comment sheet to accompany report cards. Ms. Bendler commented that this was another way to communicate with parents. It was a way of explaining the strengths and the weaknesses of the student to parents.

The ninth recommendation was that in Grades 1-6, handwriting will be graded the same as art, music and physical education. Dr. Smith pointed out that the small motor skills of children developed at different rates, and they felt handwriting should be graded the same as other courses depending on motor development.

The tenth recommendation was that letter grades should reflect the following evaluation codes:

- A Outstanding level of performance
- B High level of performance
- C Acceptable level of performance
- D Minimal level of performance
- E Unacceptable level of performance

Dr. Smith explained that C used to mean "satisfactory level of performance" and E used to mean "unsatisfactory level of performance." Mr. Romano said that "satisfactory" meant that it was okay to get C and that a C was average. In the real world, a C would not get a student into college.

Recommendation 11 stated that homework should reinforce the objectives presented to the student. Ms. Brown noted that too often students did not see the need for homework. If homework reinforced the objectives and gave them the practice they needed, students would see the value of homework.

Dr. Smith said that their last recommendation was that any report

card with the reporting symbols of O, S, and N should be reviewed in light of the Parental Involvement Policy, the Early Childhood Policy, and the Success for Every Student Plan. The task force believed these symbols should be redefined. The task force did not have enough time to come to agreement on this issue, but they wanted to include this as a recommendation. Ms. Bendler pointed out that the Early Childhood Policy called for teachers to nurture the children; however, parents equated an O to an A, an S to a C, and an N to an E. She believed they needed to redefine how they were going to grade these primary children. Years ago, they had used a totally narrative report card, and parents understood where the children were.

Mrs. Brenneman commented that she had read the report as a parent, and she understood their recommendations on O, S, and N.

In regard to the two conferences at the elementary level, she thought this had been part of the flexibility pilot at Rosemary Hills. She asked whether the committee had discussed numerical grades at all because the Board had received a letter from MCCPTA about the report. Dr. Smith replied that they had just found out about the letter from MCCPTA; therefore, they had had no opportunity to react to it. They had not discussed numerical grades at all.

Mr. Pishevar asked for an explanation of their recommendation on the six-week grading period. Dr. Smith explained that each grading period in the semester would be 25 percent and the final examination would be 25 percent of the grade.

Mrs. Fanconi asked whether they were referring to portfolios when they talked about multiple and varied assessments. Dr. Smith replied that portfolios might be an option, but they were talking about homework, quizzes, tests, papers, essays, and projects in place of having just one test each of the six weeks and then a unit test. Students not doing well on tests did not do well in the class. Mrs. Fanconi asked about flexibility for report card conferences. Did conferences have to be done through release time? Dr. Smith replied that it was done through release time which was why this might be difficult to implement. However, in some schools teachers scheduled conferences during the day, took a break, and came back in the evening. Some teachers had conferences early in the morning. Schools tried to adjust the conference schedules so that all parents could get there. Ms. Bendler added that at her school they had found that most parents could not attend in the afternoons. Therefore, they would schedule conferences up until 10 p.m., and the next day they would have an abbreviated conference schedule.

Ms. Doores pointed out that a classroom teacher might have to deal with 25 sets of parents, and there was no way they could schedule all these people in two half-days. Most staff met with parents in the morning or in the evening. She pointed out that

when they looked at second semester, it might take several months for the teacher to meet with parents. They also had to be concerned about the timeliness of information to parents. They had to make sure that staff did have time to meet with parents promptly when there was an important issue to discuss.

Dr. Cheung commented that he correlated grading with achievement and performance. He asked whether they had thought about ways to make it easier for teachers to enter grades, get a report, and retrieve this information including previous grades for conferencing with parents. Dr. Smith replied that they had not discussed this.

Mr. Ewing thought that the committee had done an excellent job in providing a thoughtful and helpful report. He said that the focus on communication was excellent, and he was pleased with the suggestion for going to a six-week reporting pattern. He also liked the notion of referring to performance as acceptable and unacceptable. He congratulated the task force on a first rate job.

Mrs. Fanconi commented that one of the articles attached to the report talked about teachers deciding the standards as one of the most valuable ways of doing staff development. She asked whether they were talking about this with their recommendation on more training for teachers. Dr. Wright replied that this was part of the recommendation -- writing tests and learning how to score tests.

Mrs. Fanconi stated that her main concern was the cost associated with the recommendations. For example, when they changed from nine to six weeks, would it require an extra day for teachers to do grades? Dr. Smith replied that this was a contractual question, but they did not have the time when they had six-week grading previously. Mrs. Gemberling noted that since that time teachers had been granted a half-day to work on report cards.

Mrs. Hobbs stated that the Board had received the report, and the next step would be for the superintendent to respond to these recommendations. She thanked the task force for their efforts and presentation.

Re: A MOTION BY MR. PISHEVAR ON GRADING  
(FAILED)

The following motion by Mr. Pischevar failed of adoption with Mr. Ewing, Mrs. Hobbs, and Mr. Pischevar voting in the affirmative; Mrs. Brenneman, Dr. Cheung, and Mrs. Fanconi voting in the negative; Mrs. DiFonzo abstaining:

WHEREAS, Our grading system should strive to represent the academic work of the student accurately; and

WHEREAS, The current grading scale is too broad in representing the students' work (i.e. a student who earns an 89% in a class and a student who earns an 80% receive the same grade of B); and

WHEREAS, A system of +/- better reflects the amount of work that a student does in class; and

WHEREAS, This system will not affect the GPA calculation (i.e. a D-, D, and D+ will still have the same weight of 1.0) and is only a better visual representation of the level of a student's performance; now therefore be it

Resolved, That the Board of Education take tentative action to amend the grading and reporting policy so that students may receive +/- letter grades.

Re: BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

1. Mr. Ewing reported that the Research and Evaluation Committee had met and talked about the development of a plan to put into place the evaluation components of the Success for Every Student Plan. They were told that a detailed plan should be available in three to six weeks, and the committee would review the plan when it became available.
2. Dr. Cheung stated that on behalf of Mrs. Hobbs he had attended the executive board meeting of the Maryland Association of Boards of Education. He had been asked to raise the issue of the arbitration process and unnecessary delays. MABE would be looking at this and writing to the arbitration association.
3. Mrs. Hobbs reported that she had attended the seventh annual Teen Summer Job Fair at Seneca Valley High School on Saturday. It was well attended, and they had a workshop for teens on how to start a summer neighborhood business. There would be a similar workshop on Saturday, April 11, at the Executive Office Building in Rockville. She suggested to the superintendent that perhaps it was time to look at holding a career fair, modeled after the college fair.
4. In regard to Annapolis, Mr. Ewing said that Board members knew what the stakes were, and he hoped that the public was aware of the critical nature of the decisions that the Legislature was going to make on the budget and tax packages. He noted that several bills had May 1 effective dates and would generate revenues to help pay the costs of government including public schools in this fiscal year. In addition, there were bills to authorize local government to expand the piggy back tax. He hoped that citizens would let the Legislature know that they supported these bills and increases that were critical to education.

RESOLUTION NO. 264-92 Re: EXECUTIVE SESSION - MARCH 30, 1992

On recommendation of the superintendent and on motion of Mrs. Fanconi seconded by Dr. Cheung, the following resolution was adopted unanimously:

WHEREAS, The Board of Education of Montgomery County is authorized by Section 10-508, State Government Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland to conduct certain of its meetings in executive closed session; now therefore be it

Resolved, That the Board of Education of Montgomery County hereby conduct its meeting in executive closed session beginning on March 30, 1992, at 7:30 p.m. to discuss, consider, deliberate, and/or otherwise decide the employment, assignment, appointment, promotion, demotion, compensation, discipline, removal, or resignation of employees, appointees, or officials over whom it has jurisdiction, or any other personnel matter affecting one or more particular individuals and to comply with a specific constitutional, statutory or judicially imposed requirement that prevents public disclosures about a particular proceeding or matter as permitted under the State Government Article, Section 10-508; and that such meeting shall continue in executive closed session until the completion of business.

RESOLUTION NO. 265-92 Re: EXECUTIVE SESSION - APRIL 14, 1992

On recommendation of the superintendent and on motion of Mrs. Fanconi seconded by Dr. Cheung, the following resolution was adopted unanimously:

WHEREAS, The Board of Education of Montgomery County is authorized by Section 10-508, State Government Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland to conduct certain of its meetings in executive closed session; now therefore be it

Resolved, That the Board of Education of Montgomery County hereby conduct its meeting in executive closed session beginning on April 14, 1992, at 9 a.m. to discuss, consider, deliberate, and/or otherwise decide the employment, assignment, appointment, promotion, demotion, compensation, discipline, removal, or resignation of employees, appointees, or officials over whom it has jurisdiction, or any other personnel matter affecting one or more particular individuals and to comply with a specific constitutional, statutory or judicially imposed requirement that prevents public disclosures about a particular proceeding or matter as permitted under the State Government Article, Section 10-508; and that such meeting shall continue in executive closed session until the completion of business; and be it further

Resolved, That such meeting continue in executive closed session

at noon to discuss the matters listed above as permitted under Article 76A, Section 11(a) and that such meeting shall continue in executive closed session until the completion of business.

RESOLUTION NO. 266-92      Re:    MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 14, 1992

On recommendation of the superintendent and on motion of Mrs. DiFonzo seconded by Mr. Pishevar, the following resolution was adopted unanimously:

Resolved, That the minutes of February 14, 1992, be approved as corrected.

Re:    ITEMS OF INFORMATION

Board members received the following items of information:

1. Board Office Annual Report
2. Staff Response for Task Force on the Arts

Re:    ADJOURNMENT

The president adjourned the meeting at 11 p.m. to an executive session on appeals.

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PRESIDENT

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SECRETARY

PLV:mlw