

MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

POLICY COMMITTEE

March 12, 2008

The meeting was called to order at 2:30 p.m. with the following committee members and Board staff present: Sharon Cox (chair), Shirley Brandman, Ben Moskowitz, Pat O'Neill, Laura Steinberg (staff assistant), and Glenda Rose (recorder).

Other staff present: Stephanie Williams, Christina Yuknis, Harriet Potosky, Brian Edwards, Cathy Pevey, Karen Crawford, Holli Swann, Lori-Christina Webb, Betsy Brown, Robin Confino, Julie Hall, and Mike Perich.

Others present: Suzanne Weiss, Quratul-Ann Malik, Alexander Blocker, Olivia Palmuta, April Estelle, Diane Kelly, Pita Ahrens, and Ferry Stepanic.

Committee Minutes

ACTION: The minutes of the February 13, 2008, meeting were approved, as presented.

Final Report on Evaluation of Policy IPD, Travel Study Programs, Field Trips, and Student Organization Trips

At the request of the Board's Policy Committee, the Department of Reporting and Regulatory Accountability reviewed and evaluated the implementation of Board of Education Policy IPD to determine if the desired outcomes have been achieved. The review determined that the desired outcome is being achieved.

The data collections had three components: document analysis, survey, and focus groups. The findings conclude that a majority of the schools are providing financial options and not denying student participation; however, there are some minor inconsistencies in the implementation of the policy and regulation.

Two recommendations to promote more consistent and effective implementation of Policy IPD are: (1) provide training for teachers who plan school-sponsored trips, and (2) conduct periodic review of approved and non-approved school-sponsored trips. It was also suggested that a glossary of common terms would be helpful given that there is confusion among recipients as well as implementers of the policy.

Finally, the successful practices that were identified as part of the evaluation will be shared with principals by the Office of School Performance (OSP).

The committee liked the presentation of successful practices and recommendations for training and review of implementation of the policy and regulation, and how the work was done and presented. This endeavor demonstrates the Board's commitment to

continuous improvement and to ensure that the system is implementing the policy with

the ability to detect discrepancies, respond appropriately, and analyze the impact on the system's ability to deliver instructional programs. Given that there is a perception in the community about inequity in practices, OSP must be aware of trips that are and are not curriculum based.

It was suggested that the evaluation process should include parents in the focus groups. Furthermore, if student elect to take trips, it would be valuable to know why they made that decision.

ACTION: By consensus, the committee decided to disseminate the report to the Board and to have it placed on the committee's webpage. There will be a response from staff on what will be done to address the recommendations.

Grading and Reporting Update, including Evaluation Process and Loss of Credit

As the quarterly update for the implementation of Policy IKA, *Grading and Reporting*, staff presented a review of the report cards for the elementary school pilot. Online Achievement and Reporting System (OARS) is field tested in 19 schools in Grades 1 and 2. OARS is the new name of standards-based grading which is doing well with intensive feedback for all stakeholders.

Some of the time saving benefits of OARS include: bubble sheets are no longer needed to produce report cards; class lists are automatically populated and maintained; interim reports are generated from the system; teachers may access the Web-based system from any Windows PC machine; parents and students can find answers about student progress and class expectations through Edline; the capability of generating a variety of class and individual student reports. OARS is supported by the Office of Information and Organizational Systems and training support will be available through a variety of training methods.

During the demonstration of Pinnacle, staff reported that it is an electronic grade book in high schools that provides automatic feed to report cards; produces data sheets; calculates grades; is updated nightly; generates interim reports; accessible anytime with an internet connection; and is a secure program that is password protected. However, Pinnacle in elementary schools is different and provides standards-based grading using the concept of learning over a period of time since grade averages are not appropriate at this age. All assignments are linked to the curriculum and after instruction the student should be proficient. The report card makes it clear to parents whether their child is mastering grade level material, working below grade level with exposure to grade level material, or working above grade level.

Finally, the regulation for Policy IKA has been drafted with the input from students, parents, teachers, and principals. Loss of Credit will be looked at beginning with the next school year. Staff will begin to get input from stakeholders and start the conversation with principals about Loss of Credit. Staff reported that they are not ready yet to evaluate Policy IKA given that they need to ensure the consistency of its

ACTION: Staff is to provide an update in June that will include information about evaluation design.

Discussion of Recommendations from Participatory Management Work Group

At the request of the Board's Policy Committee, a work group was convened to review the policies related to parental involvement, especially as it involved the school improvement process. Staff reported that the work group recommended that two policies and one regulation be revised to determine the current state of parental involvement in school improvement teams.

The committee reviewed the documents and recommended the following changes in the policies:

Policy ABC, Parental Involvement

1. delete "when appropriate" from Line 100
2. delete c) since g) has the same language on Page 4
3. h) on page 5 should reflect previous language regarding the whole child

Regulation ABC-RA, Parental Involvement

1. B. and C. should reflect wording in the policy
2. delete G. since it is stated in 2.
3. keep wording consistent between the policy and regulation

Policy AEB, Strategic Planning for Continuous Improvement

1. discussion of Malcolm Baldrige Education Criteria for Performance Excellence
2. change market to community on Page 2
3. Line 114 needs editing for clarity

The chair complimented staff and results of the work group's review and recommendations for participatory management.

ACTION: Staff will continue the process of reviewing the policies and regulation and report back to the committee.

Next Meeting and Adjournment. The next committee meeting is scheduled for April 9, 2008, at 2:00 p.m. in Room 120. Agenda items may include:

1. Library and Media Services
2. Update on Middle School Reform

The³ meeting adjourned at 4:25 p.m.