



MCCPTA Testimony to the Board of Education on Policy DBA, March 10, 2009

Good Morning, President Brandman, Dr. Weast and Members of the Board. I am Kay Romero, President of the Montgomery County Council of PTAs.

On Tuesday, March 3, the Board of Education's Policy Committee voted 3 to 1 to recommend rescinding Policy DBA-Budget Preparation and Procedure. This policy requires the superintendent to announce any proposals for policy changes having an effect upon the budget, by September 30th.

Policy DBA states in part: It is important that all policy changes having an effect upon the budget, including, for example, changes in education programs, reorganizations and/or expansion of staff, etc., should be decided after full opportunity for consideration and comment by the public and after thorough deliberation by the Board of Education; and be made a part of the budget process;

MCPS had declared that Policy DBA was no longer in effect when parents raised complaints that the policy was not followed in the school system's decision to phase out the Learning Centers. The State Board of Education, in reviewing an appeal involving the Learning Centers in 2007, informed MCPS that Policy DBA was in fact still in effect.

In September 2007, MCCPTA Delegates voted to not support any movement in the future by the Board of Education to rescind this policy. We still support that position.

The move by the policy committee to recommend rescinding Policy DBA appears to support the belief that the school system does not want to hear from parents and school communities before program decisions are made. It appears to place parents and school communities at a disadvantage and relegates them to giving input after specific decisions are made, not allowing them to be involved in the planning phases of changes that impact their children the most.

Proposed changes that impact existing educational programs should be decided after the public has a full opportunity to comment and after a thorough review by the Board of Education.

We ask that the school system enforce Policy DBA and not move to rescind it in the future.

Thank You,
Kay Romero, President, Montgomery County Council of PTAs