

October 1, 2007

Ms Nancy Navarro, President
Board of Education
Montgomery County Public Schools
850 Hungerford Drive
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear President Navarro:

The Montgomery County Council of PTA strongly supports Policy DBA: *Budget Preparation and Procedures*. This policy describes a process whereby significant policy or program changes contained within the budget be brought before the Board of Education by September 30 of each year so that there can be adequate discussion on such changes by both the public and the Board of Education.

We find that the circumstances contained in the Whereas' are as relevant today as they were in 1961 when this policy was enacted by the Board. Following the practices outlined in this policy allows the community and the Board ample time to evaluate any programmatic changes that are contained within the MCPS budget.

This policy also gives more authority to the Board of Education than it currently appears to exercise with regard to the budget process. Policy DBA allows the Board to learn of contemplated changes well before budget proposals are fleshed out and for the Board to provide guidance to staff as to the direction the Board wishes to move.

We are aware that the school system recently argued that Policy DBA was de facto rescinded when the policy on Policy Setting was enacted. The court rejected this argument as did our delegates when they unanimously voted to support the continued existence of Policy DBA. We urge the Board not to rescind DBA and to integrate its intent into the current budget development process. We note that Board policies exist to protect the rights of students, staff, and the community and none of these stakeholders is well served when the Board does not follow its own policies.

Sincerely,

Jane de Winter
President