

August 13, 2015

10:30 AM –
12:30 PM

CMGC
5th Floor
Room 528

Upcoming
Meetings

September 10, 2015
October 8, 2015
November 12, 2015
December 10, 2015

Board of Education

Policy Committee

Tom Tate, Chair

Paul Bailey

Thelma Byers-Bailey

Eric Davis

Ruby Jones

Ericka Ellis-Stewart

Agenda

1. Student Assignment Policies

Continue discussion of current student assignment policies

Staff: Scott McCully

Materials:

- "Thoughts/Assumptions Regarding a Student Assignment Plan," by Tom Tate
- Email from Ruby Jones, 8/12/15

Materials previously included with Agenda (in Red folder):

- Policy JCA
- Regulation JCA-R
- Exhibit JCA-E, Policy JFAC
- Regulation JFAC-R
- Previous Exhibit JCA-E2, "Student Assignment Priorities – Magnet Programs," (2004 version, amended in 2005, 2010 & 2013)

2. Anticipated Policy Work

- Nondiscrimination Statement/policy
- Policy CFDA, "School Leadership Teams" (*Pending further work by staff*)
- Policy BA, "Theory of Action," and Exhibit BA-E2, "Theory of Action for Improved Student Achievement: Managed Performance/ Empowerment"
- Policy KLG, "Relations with Law Enforcement Agencies"
- Policy IJ, "Instructional Resources and Materials"
- Attendance Policies
- Housing Policy

Some Thoughts/Assumptions Regarding a Student Assignment Plan
Prepared by Tom Tate for Discussion by the Policy Committee
on August 13, 2015

1. I think the Board wants every school to be one that the parents of children assigned to it want their child/children to attend.
 - a. We do not presently have that reality across CMS.
 - b. I do not see how we can come up with a feasible Student Assignment Plan as long as geography plays the primary role.
 - c. For the long-term we will need to work with the City and Town Councils regarding zoning for mixed income/affordable housing throughout the county.
 - d. Housing patterns are part of the long-term solution. For the short-term I think the Board needs to hire an outside consultant who specializes in these matters to help us see what mechanisms or demographics we can use in the short-term to accomplish as much as we can toward our Board Vision (to provide all students the best education available anywhere, preparing every child to lead a rich and productive life) and Mission (to maximize academic achievement by every student in every school).

2. I think a majority of the Board wants to see every school – as fully as possible – reflect the diversity of our district overall so every student will receive the education we want for him or her based on our Vision, Mission, Core Beliefs and Commitments.
 - a. Unfortunately, we have too many hyper-segregated geographical areas and thus too many hyper-segregated schools, whether by race and ethnicity or poverty and wealth, or a combination.
 - b. To deal with this we probably need an outside consultant.
 - c. From what I have read diversity in individual schools helps all students rise to their level of success academically and will provide students with skills they will need to live and work in our diverse world.

3. I think a majority of the Board wants to change a system that currently privileges those who have the time, the resources, the knowledge, and/or the experience to find the best education for their individual child. Every parent wants this, but not every parent has the capacity to make it happen. This phenomenon has resulted in pockets throughout CMS where parents have found ways to opt out of their Home Schools in large numbers.
 - a. I don't see how we can relieve this except through a Student Assignment Plan.
 - b. To deal with this issue we may need an outside consultant.

4. I think a majority of the Board wants us to talk with a consultant who may be able to demonstrate how a Student Assignment Plan (given our demographics and realities) could be designed that will make a difference in student achievement and prepare every child to lead a rich and productive life.

5. I think some (maybe a minority) of the Board are concerned with the cost of continuing to use programs, projects, and initiatives (which basically means more resources) as the primary way for increasing student achievement in certain schools. And are concerned because it costs so much and, in the long run, has not worked.
6. At least three Board members have said that we need to take a critical/intentional look at every school, or do a root cause analysis of every school, to understand what needs to be done to make them more successful in educating every child. I wonder how that plays into the development of a Student Assignment Plan.
7. We also have at least one member who wants us to offer at least two school options to every student, another member who wants more data on how concentrated-poverty in schools affects student achievement. I wonder if we need to look more carefully at this before we move forward.
8. Another Board member wants us to look at JROTC at every school that has it, and Marie G. Davis to see why so many students in those programs graduate. Is this something we do before we move forward with student assignment?
9. We also have at least one member who says that predictive links cannot be cured on a school bus, that six or seven hours a day is not enough to make the changes we want, that without the whole community involved in the fix (town, city, county, neighborhoods, etc.) all we will be doing is covering up the wounds.
10. And maybe we need to wait until we have more information from Project L.I.F.T. and the Beacon Initiative.
11. And there is the concern about what constitutes a "bad" school (in part because of the State's school grading system) and how we deal with that reality no matter where kids are assigned.
12. A couple of members think we should look at different grade level configurations (K-2, 4-6, for example) along with student assignment.
13. I also recall someone talking about assigning students to schools based on "expected student outcomes." I don't know how that works, especially beginning with preK or Kindergarten, but maybe we should consider it.
14. What is missing?

Subject:

FW: Document for Policy Committee Meeting: Thursday, August 13, 2015

-----Original Message-----

From: Jones, Ruby M.

Sent: Wednesday, August 12, 2015 8:56 PM

To: Sarah Crowder; Ann B. Clark; Bailey, Thelma B.; Eric C. Davis; Ericka Ellis-Stewart; George E. Battle; Julie R. Beck; Mary T. McCray; Bailey, Paul; Tom Tate

Cc: Andre F. Mayes; Jonathan I. Sink; Tim Morgan; Rhonda Lennon; Nancy J. Daughtridge

Subject: RE: Document for Policy Committee Meeting: Thursday, August 13, 2015

Tom, [Please see that each person above gets a copy of this e-mail.] As a relatively new member to this policy committee, I appreciate the overview that you have provided. However, I do want to respond tomorrow to #14 "What else is missing?" Too, I am glad that the idea of an outside consultant is a consideration because my impression of these meetings is that they are focused on how hard the job is and not focused on any tangible outcome(s), however difficult it may be. Probably someone that can focus the committee on this is necessary. I feel that we are losing the respect of our constituents by not doing so. There is an abundance of research out there on this issue, and some pretty conclusive thoughts about it, but taking that research and utilizing it to come up with an assignment plan that is better than and workable requires some deep commitment and toughness. I think that is the void that Ann Doss Helm's request was trying to fulfill. Pontification and vacillation can become numbing to listen to. Of the 13 points that you reiterated for members' review, I did not see what I deem to be a major point. I ask you to oblige me as I have worked hard and given this task a huge amount of thought since becoming a board member and before as a person who has spent the last 45 years deeply rooted in education.

Ruby
