

PUBLIC COMMENT BEFORE THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF
EDUCATION: Regarding Proposed Revision of Policy FAA
May 23, 2005

Mark R. Adelman, Chair of the Education Committee of the Montgomery County Civic Federation. I am here tonight to urge you NOT to approve the revised version of Policy FAA that your Policy Committee has brought forward. As we and others, including the MCCPTA, have indicated to you in various communications, we believe that the need for such extensive revision of this policy has NOT been clearly explained to the public and this needs to be done before rushing to approve the revised policy. While your Policy Committee has listened to our concerns, it has not really understood them. It has made some minor changes in the draft revision, apparently in the hope of mollifying us, but it neither resolved the major concerns, nor made substantive changes to indicate a real desire to address those concerns.

Everyone in this room understands the importance of providing a quality education to all of our children. We all understand that this is a communal effort, involving parents, citizens who do not have children in MCPS, and all the teachers and staff of MCPS, as well as the BoE. An essential element of communal effort is trust in the system. You have made some questionable decisions of late. How many more such decisions will it take to erode communal trust? How much erosion of communal trust will it take to weaken the political resolve to fund our schools at the current level? How much of the current County budget can you afford NOT to get? Surely these are calculations you do NOT want to make.

The prudent, the PROPER decision on Policy FAA is clear. Defer action until later this Fall. Send it back to Committee with instructions to broaden the communal dialogue. And to make a compelling case for the proposed revision. Please do us all a favor. Don't make the mistake of approving the version of Policy FAA that is before you tonight.

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