

## **PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL G-1**

It is the belief of the Mountain Brook Board of Education that one of the tests of a true democracy is the extent to which minority groups, be they religious, racial, or ethnic, are able to maintain their individuality within the broad framework of society-at-large. Basic to both our American type of government and our way of life is the principle that diversity is a strength to be cultivated, not a weakness to be eliminated. It was this premise that led the founders of our nation to formulate the various freedoms set forth in our Constitution.

Our public school system provides not only the initial, but also in many cases the only sustained contact students have with youngsters from a wide range of differing groups. It is vital, therefore, that our school system adhere to this concept of "strength through diversity", and use religious, racial, and ethnic differences as a basis for teaching tolerance. In a like manner, it is essential that personnel at all levels within our school system develop and cultivate respect for, sensitivity toward, and appreciation of the views and feelings of minority students. A conscious and concerted effort must be made to inform, educate and sensitize personnel regarding areas of special concern to minority students.

Unless such sensitivities are successfully cultivated and applied, religious, racial, and ethnic minorities within our school system will experience both prejudice and embarrassment; and our public schools may waste the opportunity which they possess to teach our children, through example, the "universal brotherhood of all mankind".

Adopted: July 2, 1979