

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HOWARD COUNTY

October 6, 2005

The Board of Education of Howard County held a regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, October 6, 2005, at 4:00 p.m., in the Board Room of the Department of Education, located at 10910 Route 108, Ellicott City, Maryland. The following were present:

Courtney Watson, Chairman
Patricia S. Gordon, Vice Chairman
Joshua Kaufman
Diane Mikulis
Mary Kay Sigaty
Jeff Lasser, Student Member

Sydney L. Cousin, Superintendent, Secretary/Treasurer
Sandra Erickson, Chief Academic and Administrative Officer
Raymond Brown, Chief Operating Officer
Patti Caplan, Director, Public Relations
Florence Jackson, Recording Secretary

Chairman Courtney Watson called the meeting to order at 4:07 p.m., and Mr. Lasser led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Forum

Mrs. Veronica Carella, parent, expressed dissatisfaction with the Board and school officials. She stated that willful neglect of duties has subjected her children to harm for the past ten years. Dr. Cousin said that Mrs. Carella's statements were inaccurate and inappropriate and that the school system has responded to her concerns and to the needs of her children on numerous occasions in meetings at local schools, in his office, and through various staff.

Ms. Lynn Stiegler expressed concerns with teacher accountability and money collected from students. One concern raised in particular was about an extreme amount of student supplies requested by a teacher.

Approval of Agenda

Delete: XVII. Food and Nutrition Service Financial Report
Add: XVII. Administrative Appointment
Add: XV. B. Scheduling

Approved – October 27, 2005

Action: Mr. Kaufman moved approval of the amended agenda. The motion was seconded by Ms. Sigaty and approved by the members of the Board (5/0).

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Cousin highlighted the following items:

- The Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) was named Company of the Month by the Sheraton Hotel in Columbia.
- The new northeast elementary school is expected to open on time in 2007, despite circumstances related to condemnation.
- A federal grant of \$393,000 for federal emergency response has been received. Part of the funds will be used to purchase radios for improved communication.
- Walk-to-School Day was held at Swansfield ES to promote healthy lifestyles.
- Ms. Kathy Henry, Pupil Personnel Worker and Homeless Liaison, has been named National Award Winner and Lifetime Achievement Award Winner for providing services to homeless individuals and students.
- Ms. Linda Abbott, Northfield ES teacher, has been named Teacher of the Year.

Student Member's Report

Mr. Lasser reported on the following activities:

- Progress reports were distributed to high school students this past week.
- Some system implementation problems were associated with the new grading system.
- Student Government Associations (SGAs) across the county are interested in holding extracurricular activities in addition to other events in the stadiums of the schools.

Student Representatives' Report

Mr. Eugene Obah, Centennial HS, reported on the following activities:

- SGA was pleased with recent delegate elections, and 60 students are representing Centennial HS in the general assembly.
- An additional \$5 was added to the price of the \$15 Homecoming ticket for Hurricane Katrina relief efforts.
- Compliments were extended to school maintenance staff on the upkeep of the building.

Consent Agenda

Bids and Contracts, Minutes of Regular Meeting of September 22, 2005, and Closed Meeting of September 26, 2005 (Official and Confidential)

Board members pulled Bid P-2 (Consultant Services); Regular Minutes of September 22, 2005; and Closed Minutes of September 26, 2005, for discussion.

Action: Mr. Kaufman moved approval of the amended Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Ms. Sigaty and approved by the members of the Board (5/0).

Bids and Contracts – Approved by the Board.

P-1	Health and First Aid Supplies	
	Harrington's Medical	\$1,325.76
	Pyramid School Products	1,998.00
	MacGill First Aid Supplies	2,460.00
	School Health Corp.	2,745.58
	Medco Sports Medicine	2,915.90
	Emergency Medical Products	3,117.40
	Kentron Health Care, Inc.	4,445.00
	McKesson Medical-Surgical	8,118.92
	Moore Medical LLC	<u>22,374.38</u>
	TOTAL	\$49,500.94

Regular Minutes of September 22, 2005

Corrected date for Public Hearing on Policy 3711 from October 6, 2005, to October 27, 2005.

Changed wording for discussion on Policy 2331 to read, "If student input becomes a regular feature of the policy development process, a process for identifying student representatives should be added to Policy 1001."

Action: Mr. Kaufman moved approval of the minutes of the regular meeting of September 22, 2005. The motion was seconded by Ms. Sigaty and approved by the members of the Board (5/0).

Confidential Minutes of September 26, 2005

No changes.

Action: Mrs. Mikulis moved approval of the confidential minutes of September 26, 2005. The motion was seconded by Ms. Sigaty and approved by the members of the Board (4/0), with Mr. Kaufman abstaining.

Bids and Contracts

P-2	Consultant Services	
	CampbellJones & Associates	\$104,400

Dr. Cousin explained that the contract is set for a maximum (not-to-exceed) amount of \$104,400, which includes billable hours if charged.

Action: Ms. Gordon moved approval of P-2 in the amount of \$104,400. The motion was seconded by Ms. Mikulis and approved by the members of the Board (5/0).

Approved – October 27, 2005

Bushy Park ES – Land Exchange with Recreation & Parks

Presenter: Mr. David Drown, Manager of School Planning.

Mr. Drown presented a proposal to exchange 14 acres of Laurel Woods ES land for approximately 20 acres of Recreation and Parks land adjacent to Bushy Park ES. The additional land near Bushy Park would provide for expansion of that school. Recreation and Parks would like to use the land next to Laurel Woods for a community park.

A public hearing will be held on the proposal on November 10 2005, with action scheduled for November 22, 2005.

Mr. Kaufman commented on the importance of having a good partnership with Recreation and Parks and expressed appreciation to Mr. Gary Arthur, Director of Recreation and Parks.

Board of Education Expansion/Board Room Renovations

Dr. Cousin discussed renovations to the Board Room in anticipation of the addition of two members to the Board in 2006. Renovations may include additional lighting, replacement of the sound system, and changes in the placement of communications equipment. Work would take place over the summer months.

A planning committee comprised of staff and Board Members could collaborate in developing ultimate plans for renovations and improvements to the room space.

Restructuring of Board Meetings

Dr. Cousin explained that consideration has been given to restructuring Board of Education meetings to more closely align agendas with the Bridge to Excellence (BTE) initiatives.

To support identified priorities, bimonthly Board meetings could be structured to address administrative issues at one meeting, with BTE-related items scheduled for the remaining meeting. This schedule would provide an opportunity to schedule more work sessions as part of the regularly scheduled meeting calendar rather than having special work sessions as additional meetings. Administrative and regular agendas could be combined on the few occasions when only one monthly meeting is scheduled.

Board members asked Dr. Cousin to reformat some meetings on the quarterly agenda as a pilot to determine the feasibility and effectiveness of this concept.

Bridge To Excellence (BTE) – Master Plan Update/Approval for Submittal to MD State Department of Education

Presenter: Mrs. Erickson.

Mrs. Erickson provided background information on the BTE Master Plan, which combines reporting requirements from the Maryland State Board of Education and the federal No Child Left Behind Act. She presented the annual update, which outlines practices used to support continuous improvement such as data-driven decision-making; high leverage strategies, and targeted professional development, resource alignment, and ongoing monitoring.

Discussion:

Mrs. Erickson noted that the school system plans to implement a BTE initiative each quarter. In addition, staff will collaborate with Mr. Brown regarding an increase in the use of technology in the classroom.

Mr. Kaufman commented on the importance of high school assessments and their relationship to measuring yearly progress.

Action: Mrs. Mikulis moved approval of the 2005 BTE Master Plan Update. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gordon and approved by the members of the Board (5/0).

Policy 10200 – Student Representation

Presenters: Mr. Jeff Lasser, Student Member for the Board, and Mr. Josh Michael, Student Member to the Maryland State Board of Education

Mr. Lasser and Mr. Michael presented a proposal to give the Student Board Member partial voting rights. Students first gained a voice at the Board level in 1988 when the Board approved the position of Student Associate. The Student Associate could comment during Board discussion but did not have voting rights. In 2001, the Board changed the Student Associate position to Student member with an opinion vote.

Students are now requesting that the Student Member be afforded rights similar to those of the Student Member to the Montgomery County Board of Education. The proposal calls for the Student Member to have the same rights as other Board members except that the Student Member would not attend Closed Sessions for hearings held under Section 6-202 or for collective bargaining. In addition, the Student Member would not vote on budget, personnel, school attendance area adjustments, school reopenings, or school closings.

Discussion:

Ms. Gordon noted that counties with full voting rights for student members are all appointed. Their allegiance is not to the citizens of any of those counties but to the person or group that appointed them. This is quite different from Howard County where all the Board members are elected in a very rigorous process. She expressed concern with the level of responsibility to the public. A student member would be on the Board for one year, yet decisions made would be in effect for many years afterward.

Mr. Lasser acknowledged that the Student Member could be a swing vote on an issue. Mrs. Watson also expressed concern with the lack of accountability to the voters of Howard County. She asked about the willingness to have the Student Member elected by the voters, which would require a change in law, and suggested that the students petition to have this issue placed on the ballot. Mr. Kaufman commented on the costs of running a county campaign as opposed to campaigning in schools through HCASC where a process already exists.

Mr. Michael indicated that an elected Student Member could be confirmed through the Board, which would hold more accountability because the Board would choose the most qualified person for the position. Ms. Sigaty noted that the Board could certify the student, endorsing that a fair election process was followed.

Mrs. Watson announced that a public hearing would be held on this issue on October 27, 2005, at 7:30 p.m., and the Board is looking forward to hearing from Howard County voters. She asked that Mr. Lasser and Mr. Michael research various ideas and indicated that Mr. Plunkett, Business, Community, Government Relations Officer, would be available for assistance.

Policy 2121 - Graduation Requirements

Dr. Clarissa Evans, Secondary Curricular Programs Director.

Dr. Evans explained that this policy must be aligned with the change in state board policy where the geometry MSA is no longer being offered.

Action: Mr. Kaufman moved approval of revisions to Policy 2121 - Graduation Requirements. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gordon and approved by the members of the Board (5/0).

Dr. Evans requested that this policy be effective immediately.

Action: Mr. Kaufman moved approval of revisions to Policy 2121- Graduation Requirements, effective October 6, 2005. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gordon and approved by the members of the Board (5/0).

Policy 1000 – School Board Governance - Minor Revisions

This change incorporates the revised mission statement of the Howard County Board of Education into Policy 1000.

Action: Ms. Sigaty moved approval of revised Policy 1000 - School Board Governance. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Mikulis and approved by the members of the Board (5/0).

Scheduling

Board members discussed dates for future meetings.

Recess: The meeting was recessed by the Chairman at 6:15 p.m. and reconvened at 7:35 p.m.

Public Forum

Mrs. Linda Turner, parent, spoke about the importance of collaboration between the school system and parents in the academic development and success of a child. She indicated that this collaboration is not occurring in her child's case and that her child is not receiving a free and appropriate public education and equal access to all services available to children in Howard County.

Dr. Cousin responded to Mrs. Turner and informed the public that numerous meetings have taken place over several years with Mrs. Turner, and staff members have addressed her concerns and issues. He emphasized that the goal of the Superintendent and school system is to provide a safe and nurturing environment for each student, and work will continue to ensure that the needs of individual students are addressed.

Mr. Steven Fine, parent, expressed concern regarding an email he received indicating that HCPSS is sponsoring a workshop promoting full inclusion of disabled students in the normal classroom setting. As the parent of a disabled child, he stated his belief that not all disabled students benefit from inclusive settings, and some need to be educated in specialized settings in order to achieve their academic potential. Mrs. Erickson agreed to review the email to clarify its intent and assured the public that the school system continues to offer a full continuum of services to disabled students.

PTA Council of Howard County

There was no one present to address the Board.

Student Representative Report

Mr. Ali Hussain, Oakland Mills HS, shared information regarding activities of the Student Government Association (SGA), including reconstruction of the SGA,

development of a Code of Honor, and establishment of a constitutional revisions committee. He noted that the school's Homecoming has been changed from October 8, 2005, to November 12, 2005, due to a conflict with SAT testing.

Policy 3201 – Enrollment, Residency, and Tuition Public Hearing

Ms. Ellen Giles, Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC)

- Congratulated staff on their response to questions from the Board and public.
- Expressed support for the following changes in particular:
 - Use of foster parent within general parent definition.
 - Extension of time limit for student reassignment when relocation is in question.
 - Consistency in language with regards to eligibility for participation in interscholastic sports.
 - Tightening of language related to appeals.
 - Designation of students as exception for early admission to kindergarten.
- Expressed support for the amalgamation of Policies 3201 and 3211 (Pupil Assignment), with the possibility of rescinding Policy 10122 (Participation by Students in Interscholastic Athletic Programs).

Policy 3201 – Enrollment, Residency, and Tuition Public Work Session

Mr. Kaufman asked that language be added to further define hardship to allow the Superintendent some leeway for humanitarian purposes. Ms. Sigaty and Ms. Gordon agreed that the school system should be as accommodating as possible to students in need.

Provisions for homeless children are addressed in Section IV. Standards. F. Homeless Students. Children who are abandoned and come to live in Howard County with a friend or relative are referred to Pupil Personnel for assistance.

Staff has recommended that Section IV. Standards – I. Student Reassignment – 6. Early Admission be deleted from the policy. Mr. Kaufman concurred.

The policy review committee did not attempt to make changes in the current procedures for athletic eligibility, which allows the Superintendent to make decisions on a case-by-case basis for student reassignment.

Ms. Sigaty expressed her preference to include language to allow athletic and extracurricular participation for students reassigned to a school based on Open School Designation. Mrs. Watson agreed with Ms. Sigaty's point but preferred to keep the policy as written, with the option of granting waivers as determined necessary in the future.

Ms. Sigaty expressed concern regarding the 60-day housing contract limitation as it relates to Student Relocation, in particular for those students who are already enrolled in Howard County schools. She acknowledged the need to limit potentials for abuse but also noted the need for continuity in a student's education. Ms. Sigaty pointed out that this limitation may prevent a student from enrolling in a particular school for a few weeks at the beginning of the school year. A double standard exists in that students are allowed to remain in their home school until the end of the school year if a parent moves out of district.

Mr. Plunkett spoke about the number of instances where this provision has been abused by people who obtain false contracts. He noted that the policy does allow parents to submit an application for extension of the 60-day time period. Ms. Sigaty reiterated her concern that students were not being allowed to begin the school year in the school they would ultimately attend. She provided an example of a contract for completion of a home on November 15. This would result in the student not being able to attend the school in that district until two weeks after the beginning of the school year due to the 60-day limit.

Mr. Plunkett stated that most people work with their builders to establish contracts that will allow students to begin the school year in the appropriate district. Flexibility is provided for staff to work with families.

Mrs. Watson noted that one option is to keep the child at the current school for the entire year and enroll in the new school the following year.

Ms. Sigaty indicated that a student should be allowed to enroll in the new school district at the beginning of the year, especially if they have a contract within the first half of the school year.

Mr. Lasser agreed with Ms. Sigaty, especially in cases where a student is moving during their junior year. He also agreed that a double standard exists in allowing students to remain at their schools when moving during the school year. He expressed an interest in knowing how documented cases of abuse exist versus those where students have been allowed to enroll in the new school under special circumstances.

Ms. Ellen Miller asked that the Board keep in mind that the 60-day limit not only applies to home building but also to lease agreements. There was a great deal of discussion by the committee about the different issues each presents and the opportunities for abuse.

Mr. Kaufman acknowledged the need for specific rules in order to prevent abuse but also noted the need for allowance of common sense in particular cases. He commented on the potential for abuse with regard to lease agreements because there is often no financial liability for breaking the lease prior to taking up residence, and families could potentially sign different leases without ever actually moving. He asked that language be included in the implementation procedures that would provide flexibility to staff in

dealing with circumstances related to enrollment of a student at the beginning of the school year.

Mr. Plunkett indicated that there are very few cases in which students are enrolling into their new schools just after the beginning of the school year due to buying, building, or leasing a home. The school system has already received 280 requests this school year under the 60-day time period. Mrs. Watson noted that the number could grow exponentially if the time period were increased.

Board members agreed to continue with the 60-day time limit and have staff develop language in the implementation procedures to allow flexibility in certain circumstances. In addition, staff is developing criteria and standards regarding special circumstances for student transfers. These changes will be brought to the Board when completed.

Board members expressed appreciation to staff and the committee for their work on this policy.

FY 2007 Capital Budget and FY 2008-2012 Capital Improvement Program Public Work Session and Approval

Presenter: Mr. Ray Brown.

Mr. Brown explained that the Board must approve a priority listing of capital projects for submission to the Public School Construction Program in order to apply for state funding. In addition, preliminary approval of the FY 2007 Capital Budget Request, FY 2008-2012 Capital Improvement Program Request, FY 2007-2012 Long-Range Systemic Renovation Projects, and FY 2007-2016 Long-Range Master Plan was requested.

Highlights of FY 2007 Capital Budget:

- Total of \$99,975,000 includes:
 - \$1.1 million in planning funds for a combined maintenance/warehouse facility (\$178 million is requested in FY 2008 for construction and equipment).
 - \$300,000 in Systemic Renovations for improvements to the Board Room.
 - An additional \$3 million in site acquisition to address future needs.

Dr. Cousin commented on the long-standing need for a maintenance/warehouse facility. Maintenance offices are located in various Board of Education facilities across the county, including the Harriet Tubman Building, a former African American high school that was closed when the school system integrated high schools in 1965. The Harriet Tubman Foundation has expressed interest in preserving the building as a cultural center for the African American community.

The additional \$300,000 added to systemic renovations would provide for alterations to the Board Room to accommodate two additional members scheduled to join the Board

in 2006. The renovation would include reconfiguring the dais, improving the lighting and sound systems, and enhancing communications equipment.

Discussion:

Maintenance/Warehouse Facility

Ms. Sigaty asked about the use of the old Bushy Park ES as a maintenance/warehouse facility once the replacement school is built. Mr. Brown explained that the groundwater discharge permit at Bushy Park will not permit the use of the building as a maintenance/warehouse facility. In addition, the facility is not suitably located in a central area to serve the entire county. Bushy Park would be better suited for a regional-type facility.

Mr. Brown stated that locating a site appropriate for this type of facility would be a priority if the Board approves funding. Dr. Cousin stated that the school system has already begun to explore possibilities with the county's Department of Public Works.

Mr. Brown indicated that the Harriet Tubman building could be turned over to the county when the new maintenance/warehouse facility is completed, which could be by the end of 2008 or in 2009 if funding is approved.

Board members expressed agreement with the need for a new maintenance/warehouse facility and noted the importance of honoring the request of the Harriet Tubman Foundation. A new facility would also free up space at the ARL (Applications Research Lab) needed for the growing CTE (Career and Technology Education) program.

Mrs. Watson pointed out that the county will determine disposition of the Harriet Tubman facility once it is turned over by the school system.

Dr. Cousin stated that one of the considerations for a new maintenance/warehouse facility could involve the use of some of the old Cedar Lane School grounds, but not the school itself.

Site Acquisition

Mrs. Watson commented on the importance of additional funds for site acquisition due to increased construction costs and future site needs, particularly in the northeast. She pointed out that the Board has discussed the need for a land bank for several years and expressed concern on the future scarcity of land. Dr. Cousin concurred and noted that the school system's previous land bank has been exhausted by the 30 new schools built in the last 17 years. He also explained that a land bank provides flexibility and the opportunity to address unforeseen developments in the future. In addition, the land typically serves an active purpose in the community in the interim. Dr. Cousin acknowledged that although insufficient funds are included for site acquisition, the additional money will put the school system in a better position to acquire sites in light of

accelerating costs of land in the county. Land that is currently owned by the school system consists of small parcels, mostly in residential areas, that could possibly be used for other land trades, etc. These sites are unsuitable for school construction but are finding active use in communities.

Centennial Lane ES Renovation

Phase One of a systemic renovation was approved in FY 2006, with a request for Phase Two in FY 2007. Existing space will be reconfigured for better utilization. An expansion of the cafeteria is included with the 100-seat addition currently planned, and school construction staff have been working with academic and program staff to consider other core facilities that may need enlarging. Expansion of an existing gymnasium is difficult, so typically a new gym is built and the existing gym is utilized for another purpose, such as classroom use. Staff will work with instructors to address facility needs, which may require some budget adjustments. Mr. Brown will be available to the PTA and community to answer questions.

Glenwood MS

Capacity calculations will be reviewed during a visit to the school by staff on October 10, 2005. Mr. Brown will work with Mr. Glascock, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, regarding the number of student computers available at the school. Glenwood MS will be considered a priority with regards to the education modernization program.

Western MS

Mr. Kaufman asked that consideration be given next year to moving up the Western MS by one year if warranted by enrollment projections. This would allow for completion of the middle school in 2010.

Elementary School Additions (Manor Woods, Triadelphia Ridge, and West Friendship)

Feasibility studies for the three additions should be completed by the end of 2005. Mr. Drown stated that a new elementary school will be needed if the addition to Manor Woods ES is not feasible, and a West Friendship ES replacement facility would be the best option.

Redistricting decisions may impact the need for an addition at Triadelphia Ridge ES, and adjustments can be made to the capital budget after feasibility studies and redistricting decisions are complete.

Running Brook ES

Running Brook ES is projected to be over the 110-percent capacity threshold. A 50-seat addition is planned because of the inability to address overcrowding with redistricting options.

Bryant Woods ES

It was possible to eliminate the need for an addition at Bryant Woods ES through redistricting.

Action: Mrs. Mikulis moved approval of the FY 2007 State Capital Budget – Priority Listing of Projects and preliminary approval of the FY 2007 Capital Budget Request of \$99,975,000; FY 2008-2012 Capital Improvement Program Request of \$399,689,000; FY 2007-2012 Long-Range Systemic Renovation Projects totaling \$131,403,000; and FY 2007-2016 Long-Range Master Plan totaling \$715,264,000. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kaufman and approved by the members of the Board (5/0).

Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned by the Chairman at 9:19 p.m.

Attachments

- A – FY 2007 State Capital Budget – Priority Listing of Projects
- B – FY 2007 Capital Budget Request
- C – FY 2008-2012 Capital Improvement Program Request
- D – FY 2007-2012 Long-Range Systemic Renovation Projects
- E – FY 2007-2016 Long-Range Master Plan

Information Items

- Status of School Construction Projects
- Administrative Appointment – Hollifield Station ES, Acting Principal