

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HOWARD COUNTY
AND THE
COUNTY COUNCIL OF HOWARD COUNTY**

The members of the Board of Education of Howard County and the County Council of Howard County met on Tuesday, October 12, 2005, at 8:15 a.m. The meeting was held in the Board Room at 10910 Route 108, Ellicott City, Maryland 21042.

Board of Education

Courtney Watson, Chairman
James P. O'Donnell, Vice Chairman
Sandra H. French
Patricia S. Gordon
Joshua M. Kaufman

County Council of Howard County

Guy Guzzone, Chairman
Charles Feaga
Chris Merdon
David Rakes
Ken Ulman

Sydney L. Cousin, Superintendent of Schools
Raymond Brown, Chief Operating Officer
Sandra Erickson, Chief Academic and Administrative Officer
Mamie Perkins, Chief of Staff
Patti P. Caplan, Public Relations Officer
Susan A. Shown, Recording Secretary

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Watson at 8:20 a.m..

Members of the Board of Education and the County Council discussed the following topics.

CLARKSVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Mrs. Linda Wise, Assistant Superintendent for School Administration, introduced Mr. Brad Herling, Principal of Clarksville ES, and announced that the school was named a National Blue Ribbon School.

Dr. Cousin added that Clarksville ES was named a state Blue Ribbon School last year, and is one of only 295 schools in the country to achieve the national recognition.

Members of the Board of Education and the County Council extended congratulations to the students, teachers, and parents of Clarksville ES.

WHAT COUNTS

Ms. Gordon and Mr. Roger Plunkett, Business, Community, and Government Officer, explained that the public forum, *What Counts*, will be held on Tuesday, November 1, 2005, 7:00 p.m., at the Homewood Center. *What Counts* was developed by the Maryland Association of

Boards of Education and is a forum for parents, community leaders, and staff to discuss their expectations for Howard County schools. County Council members thanked the Board for inviting them to attend the forum.

SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT TEST – 2005

Mrs. Wise stated that the 2005 administration of the SAT resulted in outstanding performance by Howard County students. A 16-point gain was achieved from 2004 to 2005. Compared to the 2003 SAT administration, all student groups achieved a significant increase.

Dr. Cousin noted that Howard County students had the highest scores in the state. Students are allowed to take a pretest (PSAT) which predicts how students will perform on the SAT. Mrs. Watson added that the Board of Education approved funding so that all students can take the PSAT.

ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS

Mr. David Drown, Geographical Information Systems Coordinator, explained that error rates for organizational-level enrollment projections are important because the budget is built in accordance with organizational enrollment. Building-level enrollment projections are critical to staffing and per-student funding allotments. Mr. Drown noted that the error rates are absolute and being low at one school does not cancel out being high at another school.

Mrs. Watson stated that the trend indicates that the enrollment projection model is getting better and going in the right direction. The building-level error rate also shows much improvement.

Mr. Drown also pointed out that a lot of program changes were implemented last year, which affects the high school projections.

Mr. Merdon stated that he did not see a trend in improved enrollment projections. Mr. Guzzone agreed and noted that there was a 5% error in the enrollment at Mt. Hebron HS for the 30-day count. He noted that there might have to be acceptance that staff is doing a good job and that there is going to be some level of uncertainty. Ms. Gordon commented that perhaps the enrollment projections are the best they can be without a crystal ball. Mr. Merdon agreed that staff is doing a good job.

Mr. Feaga asked if the general public has higher expectations for more accurate enrollment projections. Dr. Cousin responded yes. He pointed out that the smaller the projection area, i.e. school-by-school, the more difficult it is to make an absolute projection. An error in a projection for an individual school could mean increasing or decreasing the number of teachers at that school. The enrollment projections take into account new housing developments and the generation of students from those developments. Staff works closely with the Department of Planning and Zoning to look at housing projections, housing types, and pupil yields. Developing enrollment projections is an art rather than a science.

Ms. Sigaty stated that enrollment projections are a concern to the public, but they are a best guess. She was pleased to hear the County Council members' comments and enlisted their help in helping their community understand.

Mr. Ulman observed that the elementary enrollment has been declining. Mr. Drown responded that a decline in the enrollment growth is predicted and by 2009-2010, that growth should end. Some of that decline can be attributed to the change in kindergarten eligibility.

Mrs. Watson cautioned that the expansion of Fort Meade could generate an increase in the enrollment, and there is a possibility that the enrollment will not level off as soon as expected.

Mr. Plunkett added that as of last week, 48 students from the Gulf Coast have enrolled in Howard County schools as a result of Hurricane Katrina, and many of those families are making plans to permanently relocate to the county.

Mr. Robert Glascock, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, pointed out that 30 Hispanic children just "appeared" as new students this year and there is no way to predict that kind of influx of students.

NORTHEASTERN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL – CONDEMNATION OF PROPERTY

Mr. Brown pointed out on a site plan the property that is proposed for condemnation to provide access from Montgomery Road to the school site.

Mr. Feaga stated that he agrees with condemnation only as a last effort to acquire needed property, and he did not envy the Board having to make the decision to seek condemnation. Mr. Merdon agreed with Mr. Feaga, but noted that he believed the school system staff had taken all steps possible before going to condemnation. Mr. Merdon continued that many different site plans were developed for the new school, and all stakeholders had input throughout the process. He agreed that the school system had to move forward.

Dr. Cousin stated the last time property was acquired through condemnation was in 1984, and there was one other time that the Board was requested by the property owner to proceed to condemnation.

Mr. Guzzone noted that when the County Council rezoned the area, it was its intention to minimize the number of access points along Montgomery Road. He urged the Board to continue to work with the Department of Public Works and the State Highway Administration to keep access points to a minimum. Dr. Cousin stated that the SHA has insisted on improvements to Montgomery Road, and those improvements are a factor in the process.

Mr. Ulman asked why the school system should condemn property in order to provide a driveway for a private entity, i.e. the YMCA. Mr. Kaufman responded that it is about getting the school open and not to give the YMCA a driveway. Dr. Cousin added that the dispute to purchase the property is about price only.

Mrs. Mikulis asked if the school system will have access to its own school site without the acquisition of the property. Dr. Cousin responded no; however, the school system does have temporary access to the property for construction only.

SITE ACQUISITION/SCHOOL SITE BANK

Mr. Brown explained that the school system needs to acquire land to provide appropriate school sites for future facility needs. Dr. Cousin stated that \$5 million has been included in the capital budget to acquire land for future needs. Many of the reserved school sites were provided by the Rouse Company many years ago, and those sites are too small and are not located in the areas of need.

Dr. Cousin pointed out that the school system still needs to settle on the property for the Northeastern ES access and that the same account serves as a contingency for unexpected expenses during construction projects.

SECURITY AT NIGHTTIME ATHLETIC EVENTS

Dr. Cousin stated that in the wake of recent unfortunate violent events that occurred in Montgomery County, he met with Chief of Police Wayne Livesay to discuss security at nighttime athletic events at Howard County schools. In cooperation with the police department, a plan was developed to have a minimum of five uniformed police officers at each event who will be assigned particular duties during and after the games.

Mr. Steve Drummond, School Security Coordinator, stated that attendance has significantly increased for athletic events held at nighttime, which increases the school system's exposure for inappropriate behavior to occur. Normally, the school system engages off-duty police officers, private security guards, and teachers to provide security. Uniformed officers will more routinely patrol the parking lots and the community during and after games.

Mr. Michael Williams, Athletic Coordinator, noted that athletic security plans have been in place for both outdoor and indoor events since the sniper incidents several years ago. Security plans for all high schools have been reviewed, refined, and filed with the police department.

Mr. Feaga expressed concern with the need to have uniformed police officers present in order to prevent trouble at school events. Dr. Cousin responded that Chief Livesay believed that the more police presence at the events, the less likely trouble will start.

Ms. Sigaty stated that there are different needs at different schools. For some schools, a lot of spectators come on foot and there is a greater opportunity for "hanging out" in the community after the game.

Mr. Merdon asked how the police officers are reimbursed. Mr. Drummond responded that the school system pays the police department, and does not pay the police officers directly.

Dr. Cousin noted that he and Chief Livesay also discussed gang activity in the schools and in the community.

Mr. Ulman said that he was glad to see the planning and cooperation between the school system and the police department to ensure the safety of the students.

MEETING SCHEDULE

Members of the Board of Education and County Council approved the following dates for the 2006 quarterly meetings: February 1, April 5, June 7, and October 11, 2006.

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 9:40 a.m.