

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HOWARD COUNTY

January 26, 2006

The Board of Education of Howard County held a regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, January 26, 2006, 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:

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

Sydney L. Cousin, Superintendent, Secretary/Treasurer
Sandra Erickson, Deputy Superintendent
Raymond Brown, Chief Operating Officer
Patti Caplan, Director, Public Relations
Arlene Conway, Recording Secretary

Chairman Joshua Kaufman called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m., and Mr. Lasser led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Forum

Mr. Matt Lavine, parent, suggested that redistricting presents an opportunity to leverage the advantages at higher performing schools and lessen the impact of poverty on student performance.

Mr. Tom Snyder testified that the Board should have earlier input into the county's planning process. He also expressed concern that older schools can become threats to student and staff health.

Mr. Mark Norman asked that the Board alert county officials to the impact on school enrollment that will result from the exception to the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance that has been granted for development in Turf Valley.

Ms. Linda Turner, parent, spoke to the Board about the importance of parental collaboration and accountability related to a free and appropriate education for all children.

Approval of Agenda

Add: Item VIII.D. - Administrative Appointments.

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

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Cousin announced that the school system's appeal to the state on the AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) status of Hammond HS was granted and that all elementary, middle, and high schools have met AYP. He also reported on his attendance at the Anti-Bullying Task Force, his visit to the Wilde Lake MS classroom of Mr. Bob Kedell, and the school system's appeal to the Maryland Board of Public Works. He congratulated River Hill HS teacher Rick Robb on his selection as Howard County's 2006 Outstanding Technology-Using Educator.

Student Member's Report

Mr. Lasser reported that the committee on Voting Rights for the Student Member has been making significant progress in developing and implementing a procedure for voting rights in addition to the voting procedures for future student members of the Board. This year's goal is to test some changes in hopes of implementing them in final policy next year. These include reviewing a number of standards and ensuring that each school follow the same procedure for voting for the Student Member in addition to making sure that materials are available equally to all students and to the greater community. More instruction has been provided for candidates and details to ensure a fair election have been included.

Consent Agenda

Bids and Contracts, Howard County Board of Education License Agreement with the Grassroots Intervention Center at Atholton HS, Donations, Closed Official and Confidential Minutes of January 17, 2006, and Minutes of Regular Meeting of January 12, 2006.

The following items were pulled for discussion:

- Bid packages for Northeastern ES, Western Elementary at Ten Oaks Road, and Howard HS Addition.
- Donations.

Action: Mrs. Watson moved approval of the Consent Agenda as amended. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Mikulis and approved by the members of the Board (5/0). Mr. Lasser supported the motion.

Bids and Contracts – Approved by the Board.

P-1	Site to Site Connectivity Verizon Maryland, Inc.	\$631,800
P-2	Internet Service to Central Office Reject all bids	
P-3	Long Distance Telephone Service Verizon Select Services, Inc.	\$35,000
P-4	Grounds Equipment Turf Equipment & Supply Company, Inc. Wolbert & Master, Inc. Chesapeake Supply & Equipment Company	\$16,165 35,485 <u>46,270</u>
	TOTAL	\$97,920
P-5	Home Economics Equipment Calico Industries Sam Tell & Son, Inc. The Stiller Appliance Co. Longo's	\$ 2,320.00 17,949.93 35,967.00 <u>39,688.00</u>
	TOTAL	\$95,924.93

Howard County Board of Education License Agreement with the Grassroots Intervention Center at Atholton HS – Approved by the Board.Minutes - Closed Official and Confidential of January 17, 2006, and Regular Meeting of January 12, 2006 – Approved by the Board.Donations:

Clarksville MS:	School Pictures, Inc., in the amount of \$4,846 designated for classroom materials.
	PTA, in the amount of \$1000 designated for the purchase of landscaping materials.
Mayfield Woods MS:	PTA, in the amount of \$1,879.95; \$880 designated for teacher websites for parental access to class and homework information; \$999.95 designated for the purchase of student recognition incentives.
Howard HS:	Boosters, in the amount of \$2,620; \$1,000 designated for cheerleading uniforms; \$1,620 designated for wrestling warm-up suits.

Long Reach HS: Heritage Foundation, in the amount of \$1,000 designated for the football program.

Honeywell Technology Solutions, Inc., in the amount of \$3,000 designated to support the Rocketry Club.

Mr. Lasser questioned the use of PTA funds to provide teacher websites for parental access. Mrs. Linda Wise, Assistant Superintendent for School Administration, explained that HCPSS operating budget funds will be provided for this in the future as part of the Technology Standardization Plan. Until then, schools are permitted to use funds from other sources for this purpose.

Action: Mrs. Watson moved approval of Donations. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Mikulis and approved by the members of the Board (5/0). Mr. Lasser supported the motion.

Bid Packages for Howard HS Addition and Western ES at Ten Oaks Road

Mr. Doug Pindell, Purchasing Officer, noted that the bidding has concluded for these projects, and both came in under budget. Approximately \$2.5 million will now be available for other projects. Board members commended staff for their work, and Dr. Cousin pointed out that it is extraordinary to come in under budget in circumstances where costs have increased by over 20 percent since these projects were originally funded.

Action: Mrs. Watson moved approval of the bid packages for the Howard HS Addition and the Western ES at Ten Oaks Road. The motion was seconded by Ms. Sigaty and approved by the members of the Board (5/0). Mr. Lasser supported the motion.

Bid Package for Northeastern ES

Mr. Pindell provided a summary of the bid process and explained the circumstances involved with the electrical bid protest for this project. He noted that the lowest bidder failed to adhere to the bid requirements by choosing a generator manufacturer outside the specifications and one that HCPSS has had performance issues with in the past. Mr. Pindell explained that there is a mechanism by which the bidder may choose a manufacturer outside the specifications by offering the item as a substitute, which would then be subject to Board evaluation and approval. Allowing this bidder to deviate from their original submission would be considered a negotiation, which is not allowed by the state.

Action: Ms. Gordon moved approval of the bid packages for Northeastern ES. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Watson and approved by the members of the Board (5/0). Mr. Lasser supported the motion.

Dr. Cousin pointed out that this bid also came in considerably lower than the estimate and also lower than the bid for the western elementary school.

Legislative Report – 2006 General Assembly

Presenter: Mr. Roger Plunkett, Business, Community, and Government Relations Officer.

Mr. Plunkett presented information on the following bills related to education that have been introduced, along with recommended positions on behalf of the Superintendent and MABE (Maryland Association of Boards of Education). Board positions will be shared with MABE and sponsors of the bills. He noted that the pension reform bill is generating great interest and stated that he would share the discussion/testimony transcript with the Board.

As a result of his attendance at the recent MABE legislative session, Mr. Plunkett also presented some changes to the original recommendations.

<u>Bill</u>	<u>Recommended Position</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HB 15 – Juvenile Court Jurisdiction <p>This bill is aligned with the school system’s Bridge to Excellence Master Plan, in particular, Goal 2. Mr. Plunkett noted the importance of reporting specific violations of criminal law and the need to align this bill with changes in the law concerning when a particular young person can be designated as an adult offender or a youth offender.</p>	Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HB 21 – Crimes – Assault on an Educator – Penalties 	Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HB 30 – Vehicle Laws – Distracted Driving and Use of Wireless Communication Devices While Driving 	MABE - Support HCPSS – No Position

Transportation staff has indicated that some bus drivers receive emergency phone calls related to transported students; however, this bill is designed to prevent bus drivers from making phone calls. Staff has raised some concerns and has asked that an amendment be made to allow bus drivers to receive phone calls.

Ms. Gordon stated that it may be important to reach bus drivers in an emergency situation, and drivers should be allowed to receive calls in certain circumstances. Mr. Plunkett recommended that the Board take no position until further information is available.

Mrs. Mikulis questioned the ability to monitor whether incoming calls were actual emergencies or not. Mr. Plunkett stated that Transportation staff has indicated their

desire to provide testimony to the Environmental Matters Committee on this issue, which will be shared with the Board. If testimony is given on behalf of HCPSS, it will be consistent with the Board's position.

- HB 40 – Education – Public Schools – Parent or Guardian Contact Information No Position

This bill requires that school systems update parent/guardian information and imposes a penalty for parents who do not comply. The original recommendation was to support this bill, but MABE is now asking that the Board take no position at this time because each school district can handle this by implementing its own procedures.

Mr. Lasser asked why the school system would not support this, as the burden appears to be on the parents/guardians. Mr. Plunkett explained that the bill is punitive, and the school system believes it can obtain the information from parents in a nonpunitive manner. There is no indication that HCPSS or other counties have experienced problems in this area.

- HB 43 – Higher Education – Tuition Charges – Maryland High School Students MABE – Support
HCPSS – No Position

This bill would affect Howard Community College (HCC) by allowing any student who receives a high school diploma in Howard County to attend HCC under resident tuition even in circumstances where the one-year residency requirement has not been met.

Mrs. Mikulis asked about the intent and rationale behind this bill. Mr. Plunkett stated that there are fiscal implications for colleges, and additional data is needed on the number of students whom this would affect.

- HB 70 – Public Schools – Size of Classes – Limitation Oppose

Recommendation is to oppose because of the belief that this should be a local school board's decision. This bill is also an unfunded mandate that would have a significant financial impact on HCPSS.

- HB 71/SB 59 – Public Schools – Graduation Rate Formula - Collecting, Maintaining, Analyzing, and Reporting Oppose

This bill gives ethnic designations that are not aligned with what the state currently requires that the school system report. This would require that two separate data reports be maintained.

Mrs. Mikulis indicated the need for additional information on the implications of this bill before agreeing to oppose it.

- HB 72 – Public Schools – Summer Learning Pilot Program Support

As a result of No Child Left Behind, there is a need in Maryland to develop model extended-year programs. This bill would require that the state identify three model programs to share around the state, and the state would provide 50 percent of the funds for that program.

- HB 74 – Education – Compulsory Attendance – Age MABE – Oppose
HCPSS – No Position

This requires that the compulsory attendance age change from age 16 to age 18. Until definitive data for the High School Assessments is available, it is recommended that the Board oppose this bill.

Board members questioned the recommendation to oppose this bill. Ms. Gordon pointed out that there would be fiscal implications related to this requirement. As a result of the MABE discussion, Mr. Plunkett indicated the need for additional data in order to support this bill.

It was noted that there may be few financial implications for HCPSS due to the county's high graduation rate, but this bill may have more of an effect on other counties. Mrs. Erickson pointed out that curricular issues would also result from this bill.

Ms. Sigaty questioned why any board of education would condone allowing students to drop out of school when school systems want to ensure that all students are prepared for the future. Board members indicated the need for additional information on this bill.

- SB 21 – Restrictions on Sex Offenders – Residential Proximity To and Entering School and Park Property No Position

MABE originally recommended support of this bill but has changed that to oppose due to the one-mile limitation and the recordkeeping responsibilities. One of the concerns dealt with Baltimore City where the one-mile radius could affect the entire city. Additionally, concerns were raised regarding parents who might fall into this particular category, and whether it would be possible to restrict them from living within a one-mile radius of the properties indicated. Mr. Kaufman noted that some of the same issues could also occur in the city of Columbia.

- SB 27 – Procurement – Prevailing Wage – School Construction Support

This bill would not affect Howard County, but support would benefit those school districts where this is not in place.

Board Positions:

Action: Mrs. Watson moved that the Board support HB 15. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gordon and approved by the members of the Board (5/0). Mr. Lasser supported the motion.

Action: Mrs. Watson moved that the Board take no position on HB 21. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Mikulis and approved by the members of the Board (5/0). Mr. Lasser supported the motion.

Action: Mrs. Watson moved that the Board take no position on HB 30. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gordon and approved by the members of the Board (5/0). Mr. Lasser supported the motion.

Action: Mrs. Watson moved that the Board take no position on HB 40. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gordon and approved by the members of the Board (5/0). Mr. Lasser supported the motion.

Action: Mrs. Watson moved that the Board take no position on HB 43. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Mikulis and approved by the members of the Board (5/0). Mr. Lasser supported the motion.

Action: Mrs. Watson moved that the Board oppose HB 70. The motion was seconded by Ms. Sigaty and approved by the members of the Board (5/0). Mr. Lasser supported the motion.

Action: Mrs. Watson moved that the Board take no position on HB 71/SB 59. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Mikulis and approved by the members of the Board (5/0). Mr. Lasser supported the motion.

Action: Mrs. Watson moved that the Board support HB 72. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gordon and approved by the members of the Board (5/0). Mr. Lasser supported the motion.

Action: Mrs. Watson moved that the Board take no position on HB 74. The motion was seconded by Ms. Sigaty and approved by the members of the Board (5/0). Mr. Lasser supported the motion.

Action: Mrs. Watson moved that the Board take no position on SB 21. The motion was seconded by Ms. Sigaty and approved by the members of the Board (5/0). Mr. Lasser supported the motion.

Action: Mrs. Watson moved that the Board support SB 27. The motion was seconded by and approved by the members of the Board (5/0). Mr. Lasser supported the motion.

Fund Raising/Donations Annual Report

Presenter: Ms. Beverly Jones, Director of Finance, presented the annual report on fund raising and donations for the fiscal year 2004/2005. Net proceeds from all fundraisers last year totaled \$776,145. Donations topped the \$1 million mark.

Ms. Jones expressed confidence that the data reported are more accurate than in past years. She indicated that future reports would be even more accurate as a result of revisions to the fundraising policy that went into effect on July 1, 2005.

Discussion:

Mrs. Watson noted that almost \$800,000 has been raised by schools, and an additional \$1 million has been raised by outside organizations. The community is raising a huge amount of money for the schools, which represents a great opportunity for the Educational Foundation. She noted the difficulty of accurate reporting with funds being raised by 72 different school communities and organizations.

Ms. Jones noted that only one correction was needed in the report on specific school data. Ms. Gordon indicated that the individual school data is better aligned than in the past.

Schools have received a preliminary copy of the detailed schedules and have been given the opportunity to provide corrections if necessary. Mrs. Mikulis noted that one of the priorities for the new Internal Auditor will be school accounts, which should also result in additional improvements in fund raising reporting.

Mr. Kaufman expressed concern with both equity issues and the accuracy of reporting. He noted that one school made up over 25 percent of fund raising for all schools at that particular level.

Ms. Jones noted that funds raised from school pictures are reported as business activity, and Ms. Sigaty suggested that consideration be given to incorporating this information in the report.

School Calendar 2006/2007

Presenter: Ms. Patti Caplan, Calendar Committee Chairman.

In response to Board questions, Ms. Caplan explained that the dates for issuing report cards are set administratively after the Board approves the end-of-quarter dates. She indicated that she and Linda Wise will meet with principals from each level after report cards are issued on February 1, 2006, to discuss the amount of time they feel will be needed to prepare report cards given the implementation of the new student management system.

Next year, 10-month employees are scheduled to report on August 22, 2006. The school year begins for students on August 28. Winter break begins on December 25 and runs through January 1, 2007. Spring break is scheduled for April 2 through April 9, and the last day of school is set for June 14, 2007.

Action: Ms. Sigaty moved approval of the 2006/2007 School Calendar. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gordon and approved by the members of the Board (5/0). Mr. Lasser supported the motion.

Administrative Appointments

Presenter: Mr. Ray Brown recommended approval of the following administrative appointments, effective March 1, 2006.

<u>Name</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
Kenneth Roey	Vice President/CEO PMMM	Executive Director of Facilities Planning and Management
John Connors	Chief Auditor, Maryland Aviation Administration	Internal Auditor

Action: Ms. Gordon moved approval of the administrative appointments. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Watson and approved by the members of the Board (5/0). Mr. Lasser supported the motion.

Policy 1931 - Undesignated Fund Balance Reserve Policy

Presenter: Ms. Beverly Jones presented a proposed policy to provide procedures and a target range for the general fund undesignated fund balance reserve.

The committee recommends a public hearing on the policy on February 23, 2006, with adoption on March 9, 2006.

Discussion:

Ms. Jones explained that this fund is primarily to provide a small cushion to ensure that the Board does not have its undesignated fund balance fall to a deficit in a year of down revenues.

Policy 3711 – Child Abuse and Neglect

Presenter: Ms. Pamela Blackwell, Director of Student Services.

This policy reflects changes recommended by a broad-based committee, which met for nearly a year to thoroughly revise the policy and update the Memorandum of

Understanding between the school system, the Howard County State's Attorney's Office, the county Police Department, and the county Department of Social Services. The changes will be effective as of July 1, 2006.

Ms. Blackwell noted that changes have also been made in response to concerns raised at the public hearing on October 27, 2005. The policy now spells out more specifically what steps need to be taken by the Department of Social Services and the school system with regard to the process for addressing allegations against an employee or service provider for child abuse and neglect. A compliance statement has also been added for the Superintendent to designate a specific staff member to conduct internal investigations. In addition, a requirement for notification by the Superintendent to the Board of Education on the status and disposition of cases and for knowing failure to report has been included. This centralizes the investigation and provides more consistency with regard to investigations and reporting.

Discussion:

Mr. Kaufman commented on the exhaustive work of staff and the committee and commended them for their time and effort.

Ms. Sigaty asked for clarification regarding the term "charges." Ms. Ellen Miller, Policy Specialist, suggested that a reference to COMAR regulation 13A.12.05 regarding charges be included in the definitions portion of the policy for clarification.

Ms. Blackwell stated that a child abuse liaison has been designated for each school, with the responsibility of providing information to service providers as they come into the schools. These liaisons are Student Services staff members who have substantial background knowledge on reporting incidents and supporting students. Additional training is also being provided.

Action: Mrs. Watson moved approval of Policy 3711 – Child Abuse and Neglect with one revision to page 16 of 20 in the yellow section (2.c.) to insert the words "under COMAR 13A.12.05" after the word "charges." The motion was seconded by Mrs. Mikulis and approved by the members of the Board (5/0). Mr. Lasser supported the motion.

Mr. Kaufman recognized Mrs. Sandie French, former Board of Education member, for her contributions to the development of this policy. Mrs. Erickson also commended Ms. Blackwell and Ms. Miller for their work, and Board members expressed appreciation to the committee members.

Bridge to Excellence – Mathematics

Presenters: Mr. Scott Ruehl and Ms. Kay Sammons, Mathematics Coordinators.

Mr. Ruehl and Ms. Sammons presented the report on the Action Plan for Prekindergarten - Grade 12 Mathematics Alignment. Information was presented on Exemplary Program Documents, the Electronic Mathematics Instruction Guide (eMIG), the work of Elementary Math Support Teachers, and Middle School Math Instructional Support Teachers (MIST).

The report also highlighted the success of extended-day tutoring programs, the use of intervention software such as Boxer Math and Cognitive Tutor, seminar classes, and the Mathematics Coteaching Intervention Model. It was noted that the FY 2007 Proposed Operating Budget supports the Action Plan for Mathematics and that analysis of student achievement data will guide the allocation of resources.

Next Steps:

- Collaboration between Elementary and Secondary Mathematics Offices.
- Implementation of the Action Plan for Prekindergarten – Grade 12 Alignment.
- Analysis of student achievement data to guide the allocation of resources.
- Budget requests to support the Action Plan for Prekindergarten – Grade 12 Alignment.
- Energize the Howard County community about the importance, value, and excitement of knowing and doing mathematics.

Discussion:

Ms. Sammons explained that students rotate in and out of the elementary math tutoring program, depending on their progress.

Mr. Ruehl explained that Boxer Math is intervention software that middle school students can access at school, from home, or at the public library. He indicated that providing after-school intervention time and also providing in-school intervention time for those students who cannot access software outside of the school day would help ensure equity for all students.

Mr. Ruehl explained that the number of coteaching sections offered per school varies at this time. One goal is to move all algebra seminars into the coteaching intervention models to continue the success of the program. Teachers involved in coteaching receive an additional planning period for professional development to learn various teaching strategies.

Mrs. Erickson expressed the need for additional classes within a school in order to adequately assess the overall impact of this program. Budget initiatives also include expanding the program to more schools.

Mr. Ruehl stated that no specific data is available, but the combination of coteaching along with additional time for professional development appears to contribute to the program's success. Dr. Cousin noted that the proposed budget includes funds for additional teaching positions as well as other activities designed to affect the instruction of math. Budget limitations preclude the school system from being able to offer all levels of service to all students at this time. Mrs. Erickson stated that some efficiencies will be found as more students become involved in the program.

Mr. Kaufman asked about the possibility of sharing strategies for success to help raise scores in other assessed courses. Mr. Ruehl provided information on methods that are being introduced as part of professional development and in-service learning. Mrs. Erickson also commented on the affective component of coteaching, which provides empowerment, study skills, and a sense of efficacy that impacts a student's learning situation in other classes without having to change strategies.

Ms. Gordon emphasized the importance of implementing instructional strategies early on and noted that improvement is already being realized at the elementary level. She indicated that coteaching may not be as necessary in high school in the future if extra help is provided in the elementary years. Ms. Sammons stated that part of the alignment plan is to provide articulation between the elementary and middle school levels to ensure that instructional strategies follow the students. Ms. Sigaty pointed out that the data shows that the coteaching pilot students did as well as the county overall.

Ms. Sammons stated that one of the goals of the alignment plan is to determine the success of family and community outreach programs and their impact on student achievement. She offered to provide data on the different events taking place at various schools.

Board members and staff discussed various ways in which to provide information to parents on learning opportunities available to math students, including the use of electronic school newsletters.

Mr. Ruehl explained that the Algebra HSA Mastery Course will be geared towards students who have demonstrated a mastery of the content for Howard County but who did not pass the assessment. They will be allowed to move on to geometry and retake the algebra assessment. Mr. Ruehl noted that students sometimes perform poorly on tests even though the content has been mastered.

Mr. Ruehl stated that an electronic Mathematics Instructional Guide (eMIG) was developed by the elementary office to deliver essential curriculum to all elementary teachers. Last summer a middle school eMIG was created, and the eventual goal is to develop both a student and a parent version as is currently available at the elementary level.

Board members expressed appreciation to staff for their extraordinary presentation and for all that is being done for students. Dr. Cousin thanked staff, students, and parents

for their participation and commented on the importance of allowing time for informing the Board and the public of the many programs being provided in the school system.

Citizens' Advisory Committee

Ms. Ellen Giles, Chairman of the Citizen's Advisory Committee, reported on recent activities of the committee

Closed Session

Action: Mrs. Watson moved that the Board move into Closed Session to discuss a specific employee grievance and a specific employee appeal, according to State Government Article 10-508(a); to discuss the appointment of employment assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation rule, resignation, and performance evaluation of appointees or employees or officials over which the Board has jurisdiction; any other personnel matter; to protect the privacy and reputation of individuals with respect to a matter of public business; to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice; to consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation, and to conduct collective bargaining negotiations or consider matters that relate to negotiations. The reason for closing is to discuss personnel issues related to specific employees, to discuss potential litigation, and to obtain legal advice from counsel. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Mikulis and approved by the members of the Board (5/0).

Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned by the Chairman at 6:35 p.m.