

# MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HOWARD COUNTY

February 23, 2006

The Board of Education of Howard County held a regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, February 23, 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  
Pat Gordon  
Mary Kay Sigaty  
Courtney Watson  
Jeff Lasser, Student Member, arrived at 4:05 p.m.

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

Chairman Joshua Kaufman called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m., and Ms. Jennifer Green, Student Representative, led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

## Public Forum

There was no one present to address Public Forum.

## Approval of Agenda

Dr. Cousin noted the following changes:

Delete: VII. A. Staff Personnel

Add: IX. D. Scheduling

*Action:* Mrs. Mikulis moved approval of the amended agenda. The motion was seconded by Ms. Sigaty and approved by the Board 5-0. Mr. Lasser supported the motion.

## Superintendent's Report

Dr. Cousin mentioned the following announcements and activities:

- Ms. Mary Brzezinski, Atholton HS, was named by The Washington Post to receive The Agnes Meyer Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award.

- Ms. Consuelo Petro, Running Brook ES, was named Teaching Assistant of the Year.
- Met with a group of African-American male students at Atholton HS who were celebrating African-American History Month and joined with them in activities.
- Addressed the Howard County Association of Realtors and talked about a number of issues including how realtors can help recruit and retain teachers for the county.
- Superintendents met from around the region to talk about emergency planning.
- Dr. Nancy Grasmick, State Superintendent, notified Howard County that all schools met Annual Yearly Progress as measured by the state.

### **Student Member's Report**

Mr. Lasser reported that the Howard County Association of Student Councils met with most of the high schools' representatives to plan for next week's lobbying day in Annapolis for bills relevant to youth.

### **Student Representatives' Reports**

Ms. Jennifer Green, Hammond HS, spoke about Hammond excelling in academics and athletics. Dr. Patillo hosts a principal's breakfast once a month for parents, and parents are very involved in the success of the school. Students would like to eliminate smoking in the bathrooms and are looking for a permanent solution to this problem.

### **Consent Agenda**

Bids and Contracts, Donations, Minutes of February 7, 2006, Budget Work Session; February 9, 2006, Regular Meeting; Closed Meeting of February 16, 2006, Confidential and Official.

Ms. Gordon requested the February 7, 2006, minutes be pulled.

Ms. Sigaty requested Donations be pulled.

*Action:* Mrs. Watson moved approval of the Consent Agenda minus the February 7, 2006 minutes, and Donations. The motion was seconded by Ms. Mikulis and approved by the Board 5-0. Mr. Lasser supported the motion.

Ms. Gordon requested the wording in the minutes for Program 3401, Saturday Evening School be revised. Mr. Kaufman asked staff to determine if the wording is correct.

*Action:* Mrs. Mikulis requested the minutes of February 7, 2006, be tabled. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Watson and approved by the Board 5-0. Mr. Lasser supported the motion.

Ms. Sigaty questioned the \$3,000 from the Guilford PTA for closed circuit TV. Mrs. Linda Wise, Assistant Superintendent, School Administration, said that not all classrooms are equipped with televisions. This was to purchase televisions to be mounted for classroom use.

Ms. Sigaty questioned the large amount of money for the ARL instructional equipment for the Construction and Manufacturing Academy. She asked if this equipment is essential for this academy and what type of equipment it is. Mrs. Wise said she would come back to the Board with that information.

*Action:* Mrs. Watson moved approval of Donations. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gordon and approved by the Board 4-0. Ms. Sigaty abstained until more information was received regarding donation to the ARL. Mr. Lasser supported the motion.

Donations – Approved by the Board.

Guilford Elementary:	PTA, \$3000 to purchase TVs for closed circuit viewing.
Hollifield Station ES:	PTA, \$1700 for a cultural arts program by an author.
Longfellow ES:	Loring, Wolcott, and Coolidge, \$1000 for cultural proficiency.
Burleigh Manor MS:	PTA, \$4900 for classroom supplies and materials. Music Parents, \$2500 for the strings program.
Mayfield Woods MS:	PTA, \$2290; \$790 for a cultural arts program entitled “Jazz Interactions;” \$1500 for a cultural arts performance entitled “All About A Cappella.”
ARL:	Howard Vocational Construction Company, \$24,575 for instructional equipment for the Construction and Manufacturing Academy.
Atholton HS:	PTSA, \$1327; \$177 for the math department; \$200 for JROTC; \$150 for the music department; \$450 for the Newspaper Club; \$200 for the Computer Club; \$150 for Best Buddies.
Centennial HS:	Boosters, \$10,101; \$1500 for the Robotics Club; \$700 for the girls’ lacrosse team; \$3175 for the baseball team; \$2126 for the track team; \$2500 for athletic equipment.
Reservoir HS:	Mr. William Kramer, General Chair of the Supercomputing 2005 Conference, designated a refurbished laptop computer

valued at \$1000 for Kevin Miller, a teacher, as part of the SC/05 Education Program.

River Hill HS: PTSA, \$1500 for academic recognition.

Bids and Contracts – Approved by the Board.

	Science Equipment and Supplies	Amount
P-1	Edvotek	\$1,000 est.
	Nebraska Scientific	1,000 est.
	Vernier Software & Technology	1,000 est.
	Benz Microscope Optics Center, Inc.	2,000 est.
	Para Scientific Co.	2,000 est.
	PASCO	3,000 est.
	Ward's Natural Science, LLC	5,000 est.
	Frey Scientific	10,000 est.
	Science Kit	10,000 est.
	Flinn Scientific	20,000 est.
	Sargent-Welch	70,000 est.
	Fisher Science Education	<u>125,000 est.</u>
	TOTAL	\$250,000 est.
P-2	Print Shop Paper	
	Ricoh Corporation	\$ 6,672.00
	White Rose Paper Co.	12,048.00
	Xpedx	32,135.65
	Diamond Paper	<u>57,677.64</u>
	TOTAL	\$108,533.29
P-3	Emergency Planning Consultant	
	The Center for Emergency Education And Disaster Research	\$140,000
P-4	Glass Repair Services	
	Reject all bids.	

**Charter School Application**

Board members commended the staff on the thorough review by experts in education, and found the recommendations to be very credible.

Areas of the application that staff found deficient were:

- No indication was given as to how they would measure their objectives.
- Proposal does not meet the intention of the law.
- Lack of strong instructional approach.
- Lack of demonstrated knowledge of federal and state laws.
- Lack of qualifications of the founders.
- Lack of clear management facilities and financial planning.

*Action:* Ms. Gordon moved approval of the Superintendent's recommendation that the application for the Columbia Public Charter School be denied based on the fact that the proposal does not meet the intent of the law to develop an alternative means to provide innovative learning opportunities and creative educational approaches to improve the education of students. The application has not demonstrated the applicant's capacity to establish and operate the charter school. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Watson and approved by the Board 5-0. Mr. Lasser supported the motion.

### **Legislative Report/2006 General Assembly**

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

Mr. Plunkett presented the following bills for Board action:

HB 179 Public Schools Registration – oppose.

*Action:* Mrs. Mikulis moved approval of staff recommendation to oppose HB 179. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gordon and approved by the Board 5-0. Mr. Lasser supported the motion.

HB 613 Public Schools-School Health Services Program Coordinator – oppose.

*Action:* Mrs. Watson moved approval of staff recommendation to oppose HB 613. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gordon and approved by the Board 5-0. Mr. Lasser supported the motion.

HB 569 County Boards of Education-Competitive Bidding – support.

*Action:* Mrs. Mikulis moved approval of staff recommendation to support HB 569. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gordon and approved by the Board 4-0 with Mrs. Watson abstaining. Mr. Lasser supported the motion.

HB 652, SB 293 Public Charter Schools Clarification – asks that this be tabled until all the amendments are reviewed.

HB 530 Crimes-Sexual Offense Against Minor Committed on School Grounds or in a Recreation Area-Penalties – support.

*Action:* Mrs. Watson moved approval of staff recommendation to support HB 530. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gordon and approved by the Board 5-0. Mr. Lasser supported the motion.

SB 457 Public Schools-Student-Health-Diabetes and Body Mass Index Screening and Nutrition Standards – oppose.

*Action:* Mrs. Mikulis moved approval of staff recommendation to oppose SB 457. The motion was seconded by Ms. Sigaty and approved by the Board 5-0. Mr. Lasser supported the motion.

HB 745 Student Discipline-Conferring in Face-to-Face Meeting – oppose.

*Action:* Ms. Gordon moved approval of staff recommendation to oppose HB 745. The motion was seconded by Ms. Mikulis and approved by the Board 5-0. Mr. Lasser supported the motion.

SB 432, HB 705 School Facilities-Aging Schools Program-Grant Calculation – support.

*Action:* Mrs. Watson moved approval of staff recommendation to support SB 432. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Mikulis and approved by the Board 5-0. Mr. Lasser supported the motion.

### **Proposed Textbooks/Instructional Materials**

*Presenter:* Mr. Robert Glascock, Assistant Superintendent, Curriculum and Instruction.

Mr. Glascock noted that the proposed textbook list was presented to the Board on December 8, 2005. At that time there was a request for reevaluation of the Algebra 2 textbook. Staff has reviewed the request in detail, and recommends that the textbook be approved.

*Action:* Ms. Sigaty moved approval of the Proposed Textbooks/Instructional Materials. The motion was seconded by Ms. Watson and approved by the Board 5-0. Mr. Lasser supported the motion.

### **Internal Auditor – Next Steps**

Mr. Brown introduced Mr. John Connors, who was recently hired as the Board of Education's first Internal Auditor. The Board discussed the establishment of an Audit Committee and the Charter for the Internal Auditing Office. The committee will be responsible for reviewing internal audit reports, meeting with the external auditors to discuss the scope of their work and their audit findings, and reviewing reports generated by the Department of Finance.

Board members and staff made minor revisions to the Resolution to Establish Audit Committee and Procedures and the Charter for the Internal Auditing Office. Board members agreed to take action at the next Board meeting on March 9, 2006.

### **Policy 2211 – Selection of Instructional Materials**

*Presenter:* Ms. Carol Fritts, Coordinator, Media Educational Technology.

Ms. Fritts reported that among revisions to this policy include the addition of definitions to reflect new technologies, clarification regarding the use of videos in the classroom, and procedures for evaluation of digital video-on-demand and online resources. Additionally, the revised policy includes modifications to language to ensure that the membership of the Instructional Criteria Review Committee is representative of the county's population.

*Discussion:*

Ms. Gordon asked if an instructor chooses to show special films or other materials that are not on the approved list for a special lesson plan would he/she need permission. Ms. Fritts said you need to be in compliance with copyright regulations. If the intention is to use the video instructionally, then you would use a selection criteria evaluation form for audio visual materials, which the teacher can obtain through the media center.

Ms. Sigaty noted the policy statement contains many things other than a policy statement and questioned if these statements should be moved. Mrs. Ellen Miller, Specialist, Policy, agreed that they should be moved. Ms. Sigaty then questioned what *media purchasing sources* refer to. Ms. Fritts responded that there are a variety of items purchased. If staff finds a positive review of an item, it may then be purchased.

Mr. Kaufman thanked Ms. Fritts and the committee for their report and said there will be a Public Hearing on March 23, 2006; and the Board will take Action on April 6, 2006.

### **Policy 3412 – Trespassing or Willful Disturbance**

*Presenters:* Mr. Steve Drummond, Coordinator, School Security, and Mrs. Linda Wise.

Mrs. Wise highlighted some of the significant changes of the policy which include:

- Empowering administrators with options for handling instances of trespassing.
- Willful disturbance - which defines one basis for denying access.
- Recognizes the need to maintain a collaborative relationship with families when a parent violates this policy.
- It requires that a denial of access letter be included and define a period of time for the denial.
- The denial of access letter ensures a consistent format that meets legal requirements of the trespass law.

*Discussion:*

Ms. Gordon asked if parent or student is denied access to the school during the day, can he or she be allowed to attend after-school activities. Mr. Drummond responded that if a student is suspended, and they are prohibited from going to any activities during

the day or after-school activities, the trespassing policy would apply. If a student or parent goes to the school for a non school-related activity such as scouts or church services, that would be at the discretion of the person holding that event.

Mr. Kaufman asked for clarification of the wording relating to appeals. Mr. Drummond explained that the law and past policy do not normally allow for an appeal process (after a denial of access). Staff has added that provision to the proposed policy to be as user friendly as possible to our population.

Ms. Gordon questioned if a no-trespassing sign is sufficient notice. Mr. Drummond responded that it is sufficient notice. He added that staff is looking at the following possibilities:

- Oral warnings.
- Verbal warnings.
- Signage.
- Specific hours buildings are open.

Mr. Kaufman noted that this was a very well-written policy and a large improvement. He said there will be a Public Hearing on March 23, 2006, and take action on April 6, 2006.

### **Policy 9521 Wellness Through Nutrition and Physical Activity**

*Presenter:* Mrs. Mary Klatko, Administrator, Food and Nutrition Services.

Mrs. Klatko noted that this policy was developed to meet the requirements of the Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act of 2004, Public Law 108265, Section 204. The policy was first presented to the Board in a report on November 10, 2005. A Public Hearing was held on December 8, 2005, and the Board held a public Work Session on January 12, 2006, to further study the policy. At the direction of the Board the committee chairman and the subcommittee chairs have revised the proposed policy based on feedback.

#### *Discussion:*

Mr. Kaufman brought up the question of food allergies. There seems to be a gap in the policy related to allergies and would like to see some language in the policy to give parents an awareness.

Mrs. Mikulis noted that under this revised policy principals would not be allowed to have donut breakfasts for achievement celebrations. Mrs. Klatko stated that this would be handled through the Food and Nutrition Service Program, and the breakfast would be something other than donuts. Ms. Sigaty said she would also like to see some flexibility to bring families in to honor students' achievement.

Ms. Gordon noted the issue of food that is used for educational purposes - primarily in the elementary schools. Teachers feel it is a very valuable tool that they will not be able to use in the future. Mrs. Miller noted food is also used in experiments at the secondary level.

Ms. Sigaty asked for clarification of physical activity at the middle school level. Physical education has been reduced due to foreign language. There is an intramural program but not all students have access to it.

Ms. Jackie French, Instructional Facilitator, Physical Education/Dance, said there is an intramural program and money allotted for each school. More funds would be needed for buses to increase the program. When lunch is finished, including cleaning up, students are allowed about 15 minutes for recess.

Mr. Kaufman said, as a direct result of this policy, he would like to see more physical activity. Ms. French said more activities will be put together such as family fitness at home and teachers and administrators will also be given information to add innovative activities to the school day.

Mrs. Watson noted that staff has done the best they can do - understanding that the school system is mandated by the state for assessments.

Dr. Cousin commented that when foreign language was introduced to middle schools, one of the compromises was to get it into the schedule. Through this current budget process more teachers have been added for the foreign language program, and physical activity went down as one of the choices.

Mrs. Erickson pointed out that in the budget 10 physical education teachers for elementary schools were added in order to ensure that all students get their full 90 minutes. Mrs. Watson pointed out that the Educational Foundation may be a possibility to help with after-school activities, transportation, etc.

Due to much public interest in the changes to this policy, Board members decided to have a Public Hearing at the Board meeting on March 9, 2006.

**Recess:** The Chairman recessed the meeting at 6:22 p.m. and reconvened at 7:32 p.m.

### **Scheduling**

Board members discussed several items to schedule.

### **Public Forum**

Mr. Louis Rose, parent, addressed the Board with issues regarding the wellness policy. He asked that the Board recognize children with food allergies and noted that strict avoidance is the only way for children with food allergies to be safe.

Mrs. Veronika Carella, parent, asked the Board to show its level of commitment to the Integrated Pest Management program by complying with minimum COMAR requirements. She questioned why an IPM policy was not in place. Additionally, Mrs. Carella provided the Board with two forms from the Montgomery County website dealing with indoor air quality and a checklist for building air quality.

Mrs. Linda Turner, parent, spoke on behalf of her child and all children with disabilities in Howard County. She noted the need for specific guidelines and implementation of parent guidelines. She also said she felt that children with learning disabilities are the most underserved in the county.

### **Appointment**

Mrs. Ellen Giles, Chairman, Citizen's Advisory Committee.

Mrs. Giles reported that CAC is looking forward to completing the policies under review. CAC has had a representative on every policy review this year.

### **Public Hearing**

#### **Policy 1931 – Fund Balance Reserve**

Mrs. Ellen Giles, Chairman CAC

- Spoke of her support for this policy.
- Suggested some language clarification.

#### **Bridge To Excellence – Advanced Programs**

*Presenter:* Mr. Thomas Payne, Coordinator, Advanced Program and Fine Arts.

Mr. Payne was joined by parents, administrators, teachers, and students. He stated that investing in the school system is paying off. The Gifted and Talented Program is paying off in the form of student opportunities, achievements, and accomplishments. To meet G/T Program goals, staff has increased collaboration with all elementary and secondary curricular offices as well as with the Offices of Student, Family and Community Services; Special Education; Early Childhood Programs, and Student Assessment and Program Evaluation. Talent spotting by teachers is ongoing and talent development opportunities for students have been increased. Mr. Payne also noted that one area that needed particular attention was to increase participation of high-ability students from underrepresented populations.

Several students from elementary, middle, and high school spoke about their very positive experiences and the opportunities that opened up for them by participating in the G/T Program.

*Discussion:*

Mr. Kaufman expressed to participants that this was a wonderful presentation.

Mrs. Mikulis questioned how students are reached who do not test into a G/T class. Staff responded that other than mathematics testing at the elementary level, identification is through informational identification.

Mrs. Watson asked how students from diverse backgrounds are being reached. Mr. Payne responded that there are a number of program offerings, and data is collected twice a year on student participation in each specific offering. Data is disseminated and is showing movement in terms of students who are participating. Mrs. Watson asked if other schools call their program something other than G/T. Mr. Payne said that other systems use different terminology such as Advanced Programs. School systems are moving away from the selective programming model toward a more inclusive program.

Ms. Sigaty voiced her support in making the program accessible to a number of students. She agreed with Mrs. Watson and added that the term G/T may turn people away. The program remains open to all hard-working students. Mr. Payne said that staff makes an effort to communicate the philosophy of the program, which does not label children but labels offerings.

Mr. Kaufman asked what is being done to identify individuals that have learning disabilities but are also gifted and talented students. Mr. Payne said that a community organization called Different Learners is helping to address this issue. Often the talents these students have are masked by their disabilities. There is no formal identification process for that.

Mrs. Mikulis asked how many high schools have the AP Scholars Program. Mr. Payne said there were 5 or 6. Administrators of each school provide guidance in the development of the program. Mrs. Wise, said the idea of the program was to encourage students at an early age to take a number of AP classes. She added that it was not just the ability level of the student but also the organizational skills and willingness to want to do the program. There are parent programs that accompany the AP scholars.

Mr. Lasser noted that, from his experience, students thrive when they find an area they are interested in.

Ms. Sigaty asked if there was participation data available regarding the intern mentorship program from the high schools, and how the programs are being utilized. Mr. Payne said he can provide that data.

Mrs. Erickson commented that it is not just the AP students who participate in the internship program. It is open to all students. Any student with an intense interest can participate.

### **Adjournment**

The chairman adjourned the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

