

Summary of the Board of Education Meeting Thursday, January 26, 2006

ACTION ITEMS

- Approved a consent agenda including bids and contracts, license agreement with the Grassroots Intervention Center at Atholton High, donations, and minutes of Board of Education meetings.
- Approved Board positions on education-related legislation under consideration by the 2006 Maryland General Assembly.
- Approved the 2006-07 instructional calendar (see: “Board Sets Dates for 2006-07 School Year”).
- Approved the administrative appointments of Kenneth Roey as Director of Facilities Planning and Management and John Connors as Internal Auditor.
- Approved revised Policy 3711, Child Abuse and Neglect, with amendments (see: “Board Acts on Abuse Policy, Receives Proposed Fund Balance Policy”).

Board Sets Dates for 2006-07 School Year

The Board unanimously approved the Instructional Calendar for the 2006-07 school year. Next year, 10-month employees are scheduled to report on August 22. The school year begins for students on August 28. Winter break begins on December 25 and runs through January 1. Spring break is scheduled for April 2 through April 9. The last day of school is set for June 14.

In response to Board questions, Chairman of the Calendar Committee Patti 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 to discuss the amount of time they feel will be needed to prepare report cards given the implementation of the new student management system.

Fund Raising, Donations Report

Director of Finance Beverly Jones presented the annual report on fund raising and donations for the fiscal year 2004-05. Net proceeds from all fundraisers last year totaled \$776,145. Donations topped the \$1 million mark.

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.

Board Acts on Abuse Policy, Receives Proposed Fund Balance Policy

The Board approved revisions to Policy 3711, Child Abuse and Neglect. The approved 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 are effective as of July 1, 2006.

Beverly Jones presented a proposed policy to provide a target range for the general fund undesignated fund balance reserve. The Board will hold a public hearing on the proposed policy on February 23.

Math Initiatives Yield Results

Mathematics Coordinators Scott Ruehl and Kay Sammons presented a report on the Action Plan for Prekindergarten-Grade 12 Mathematics Alignment. They presented information on Exemplary Program Documents, the Electronic Mathematics Instruction Guide (eMIG), the work of Elementary Math Support Teachers and Middle School Math Instructional Support Teachers.

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 Co-Teaching Intervention Model. It was noted that the FY07 Proposed Operating Budget support the Action Plan for Mathematics and that analysis of student achievement data will guide the allocation of resources.

In Other Action...

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

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

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.

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.

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

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

The next regular meeting of the Board of Education is scheduled for 4 p.m. on Thursday, February 9, 2006.