

Summary of the Board of Education Meeting

Thursday, March 9, 2006

ACTION ITEMS

- Approved a consent agenda including staff personnel, bids and contracts, a research project on the status of oral health of school children, donations, and the minutes of Board meetings; and received status reports on the operating budget and the school construction fund.
- Approved a resolution designating March 2006 as *Music in Our Schools Month* in the HCPSS.
- Approved Board positions on education-related legislation under consideration by the 2006 Maryland General Assembly.
- Approved the Design Report for Phase I of the Waverly Elementary Addition.
- Adopted the Resolution and Audit Committee Procedures, and approved the Charter for the Internal Auditing Office, as amended.
- Appointed Diane Mikulis and Patricia Gordon to serve on the audit committee.
- Approved Policy 1931, Undesignated Fund Balance Reserve.

Dayton Oaks Proposed as Name for New Western School

The school naming committee recommended the name Dayton Oaks for the new western elementary school, which will open in August 2006. A public hearing will be held on April 6, with action scheduled for April 27.

Board Receives Recommended School Opening and Closing Times

Most school schedules will remain the same next year based on the tentative school opening and closing times recommended for the 2006-07 school year. The only schedule change is recommended for Phelps Luck Elementary, which would open and close five minutes earlier next year. The proposed schedule for the new Western Elementary School is 9:25 a.m. to 3:55 p.m.

Advocates Testify for Tougher Wellness Policy

The majority of the fourteen speakers, at a second public hearing on the revised Wellness through Nutrition and Physical Activity Policy, asked the Board to set the bar higher. Speakers cited the national epidemic of childhood obesity as a reason for the Board to provide more physical activity during the school day and be even stricter about the types of food that students can access in school. Several persons thanked the Board for changes to the original policy proposal but felt the new policy was weaker in some areas.

The Board is scheduled to take action on the policy on March 23.

In Other Action...

In his report to the Board, Superintendent Sydney Cousin announced that three Howard County high school basketball teams are playing in the state semi-finals this year. Those are the Long Reach High boys' team, the River Hill High girls' team, and the Atholton High girls' team. He also congratulated the Hammond High wrestling team for winning a second consecutive state championship. On a different topic, Dr. Cousin

acknowledged growing concerns with the Student Information Management System (SMS) and assured the Board that staff is working to address those concerns. He will present an update on the short and long range plans related to SMS at the next Board meeting.

At Public Forum, Natalie Woodson of the NAACP Education Committee presented the NAACP's Annual Education Report Card for African American Students. She indicated that the NAACP has awarded "A's" in one or more categories to 45 HCPSS schools. Parent Veronika Carella asked the Board to consider adopting policies similar to the Green Schools policies of the Montgomery County School System.

During an appointment with the Board, PTACHC President Mary Jane Grauso updated the Board on activities of the organization.

The Board reviewed its tentative quarterly agenda for April through June 2006 and the Proposed 2006-07 Board Meeting Schedule. The Board also set dates for other upcoming Board activities and meetings.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Education is scheduled for 4 p.m. on Thursday, March 23, 2006.