

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HOWARD COUNTY

July 13, 2006

The Board of Education held a public work session to discuss plans for increasing to a seven-member Board at 2:00 p.m. (immediately preceding its regular meeting 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

Sydney L. Cousin, Superintendent, Secretary/Treasurer
Sandra Erickson, Deputy Superintendent (arrived at 8:35 p.m.)
Raymond Brown, Chief Operating Officer
Ken Roey, Executive Director of Facilities Planning and Management
William Brown, Director of School Planning and Construction
Bruce Gist, Construction Program Manager
Susan A. Shown, Recording Secretary

Board Room Renovations

Dr. William Brown, Director of School Planning and Construction, presented a revised renovation plan for the Board Room to provide new technology for the sound system, display monitors, and wireless computer applications in preparation of using *Board Docs* for agenda materials. Due to budget limitations, the physical configuration of the Board Room will not be changed, and only cosmetic (painting, ceiling) work will be provided.

Mrs. Watson expressed concern that the state-of-the-art technology is not needed to run the Board meetings. She stated that the funds could be used instead to accomplish school renovations that are needed. Mr. David Soul, Baltimore Sound, responded that the technology used by the Board is very outdated. The Board is the core of the school system and should have technology that is compatible to what is used by the schools and staff. Mrs. Watson suggested that the only work needed is to upgrade the sound system and provide seats for the additional Board members.

The Board discussed the pros and cons of using monitors recessed in the dais to view presentations.

Ms. Sigaty pointed out that the Board made a commitment to go with paperless Board meetings, and the technology is needed to proceed with that commitment. She asked why data ports are needed in addition to the wireless capability. Mr. Brown

responded that there is concern that the wireless capability may not have enough bandwidth.

Mr. Kaufman asked for a breakdown of the technology costs, sound system, etc.

Ms. Gordon commented that new projection capability is needed so that the Board does not have to rely on the existing awkward projection screen to view presentations. She noted that the plan provides only the minimum, and delaying the work will increase the costs. The Board needs to make a decision so that the contract can be awarded for the work to begin.

Dr. Cousin suggested that the Board take action on the plan, and staff will provide the cost breakdown for the different work elements before the bid awards are recommended.

Action: Ms. Gordon moved to accept the plan, excluding the recessed monitors, based on the information provided at this meeting. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Mikulis and approved by the members of the Board (4-1), with Mrs. Watson voting no.

Committees of the Board of Education

Finance, Audit, and Budget Committee

Dr. Cousin stated that resource and point-of-contact staff would be assigned to assist in the development of the committee parameters, with oversight by Mr. Kaufman and Ms. Sigaty. Mr. Kaufman added that the parameters should be presented at the first Board meeting in October, with action to be taken at the second meeting.

Mrs. Mikulis noted that committees of the Montgomery County Board of Education include both Board members and staff. Dr. Cousin suggested that the committee ask for staff resources as needed.

Mrs. Erickson stated that a new charter needs to be developed for the Finance, Audit, and Budget Committee.

New Board Member Orientation

Mrs. Mikulis and Ms. Sigaty developed a program to provide opportunities for professional development for new Board members. New Board Member Orientation Packets will be provided, and the program will include modules throughout the year. The program is aimed at new Board members, but sitting Board members are encouraged to participate. The program is part of the professional development but is not intended to replace the New Board Member Orientation workshop provided by the Maryland Association of Boards of Education.

Ms. Sigaty stated that the first session will be held on November 17, and the second session is scheduled for December 8, 2006. She added that the program will depend on the Board's commitment to using time before Board meetings for training and to implementing *Board Docs*.

Mr. Kaufman emphasized the importance of the training and noted that the time commitment will result in better informed and prepared Board members.

Mrs. Watson thanked Ms. Gordon for starting the program and Mrs. Mikulis and Ms. Sigaty for finalizing a program for Howard County.

Board members agreed to recommend November 14, 2006, 5:00 p.m., for *Board Doc* training.

The work session was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.