

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HOWARD COUNTY

February 22, 2007

The Board of Education of Howard County held a regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, February 22, 2007, 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:

Diane Mikulis, Chairman
Frank Aquino, Vice Chairman
Lawrence Cohen
Sandra H. French
Ellen Flynn Giles
Patricia Gordon
Wossen Ayele, Student Member

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

Chairman Diane Mikulis called the meeting to order at 4:09 p.m., and Mr. Ayele led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Forum

There was no one present to address the Board.

Approval of Agenda

Dr. Cousin noted the following changes to the agenda:

Defer: XIII. B. Veterans ES Easement.

Add: Information Items:

- A. TIENET Software Agreement for Special Education
- B. NSPRA Communication Audit

Action: Mrs. French moved approval of the amended agenda. The motion was seconded by Mr. Aquino and approved by the Board 6-0. The student member supported the motion.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Cousin noted the following items in his report:

Approved – April 12, 2007

- Commended the community volunteers on the Technology Advisory Committee for their expertise and commitment.
- Assistant Superintendent, Robert Glascock, has been selected to receive the 2007 Outstanding Technology Leader in Education Award from the Maryland Instructional Computer Coordinator's Association.
- Congratulated Brian Duvall, Web Master, for his work in making the HCPSS website a national model. The website has been named one of the nation's best public school websites for 2007 by WantToTeach.com.
- Congratulated Jeannie Prevosto, Athletics and Activities Manager at Mt. Hebron HS, for earning certification as a Master Athletic Administrator.
- Congratulated Elaine Heilman, chef instructor, and her team from the Applications and Research Lab, for taking first place in the 2007 Maryland Hospitality Education Foundation's ProStart Student Invitational.
- Commended students and advisors for taking first place in the 2007 Howard County Black Saga Competition.
- Commented on the recent arrests of three HCPSS teachers for sexual offenses and asked that the school system and its 7000 employees not be judged by the actions of three individuals.

Mrs. Susan Mascaro, Director, Staff Relations, reported that tentative agreements have been reached with all four of the school system's bargaining units – HCEA, HCAA, HCEA-ESP, and AFSCME. These agreements are the direct results of collaboration with the individual unions and board negotiation teams.

Student Member's Report

Mr. Ayele reported on the following activities:

- Howard County Association of Student Councils (HCASC) recently met, and prior to the meeting student leaders joined with representatives from the Horizon Foundation and Recreation and Parks, in order to plan for the Youth Summit.
- Two student leaders from St. Mary's County joined the meeting to observe the organizational structure.
- Student leaders from Harford County and Carroll County are also interested in learning how HCASC works.
- On February 28 several student leaders will go to Annapolis to meet with the Howard County delegation.

Mr. Ayele introduced Ms. Amy Butler, student, Wilde Lake HS, special elections coordinator, who explained the election process for the position of student member to the Board of Education. Ms. Butler then introduced three candidates who were running for the student member to the Board of Education for the 2007-2008 school year.

Student Representatives' Reports

Ms. Lakesha Manning, Reservoir HS, gave the following update on activities:

- Reservoir HS offers many programs for all students.
- Each student has the same advisor for all four years, which provides consistency for students.
- Project Community bridges the gap between social classes.
- Student Government Association is working hard to form a strong SGA and to be known on a county level.
- Students are working on a dress code video.

Appointments – Citizens Advisory Committee Report

Mrs. Rose Dennison, Chairman, CAC, noted the following items in her report:

- A general meeting was held and testimony concerning the superintendent's budget was approved.
- Ms. Elizabeth Mahler, Coordinator, Planning and Program Enhancement, gave an excellent Bridge-to-Excellence presentation to members.
 - CAC is hoping to make this an annual event.
- Mrs. Joanne Heckman, Secretary, resigned her position but will remain a member.
- A special election was held, and Mr. Larry Walker was elected to take the position of Secretary.
- The process of nominating officers for next year has begun.
- Reviewed the school instructional calendar in conjunction with the PTA Council.

Appointments - PTA Council

Mrs. Mary Jane Grauso, President, PTA Council.

- Thanked staff for putting together the first annual luncheon for principals and PTA presidents.
- Thanked Dr. Cousin for endorsing the HCPSS participation in the National PTA sponsored Healthy-School Day scheduled for April 30, 2007.
- Noted involvement in Policy 4111 – School Health Services policy, which is under revision.
 - With a better appreciation of what cluster nurses do every day, urged support of the cluster nurses in the budget.
- Will be working with CAC on the school system calendar.

Consent Agenda

Bids and Contracts; Minutes of Closed Meetings of February 8, 2007 #1, Confidential and Official; February 8, 2007 #2, Confidential and Official; February 15, 2007, Confidential and Official.

Mrs. Mikulis asked that Information Item, TIENET Software Agreement for Special Education, be pulled.

Approved – April 12, 2007

Action: Mr. Aquino moved approval of the Consent Agenda (less the Information Item TIENET Software Agreement for Special Education). The motion was seconded by Ms. Gordon and approved by the Board 6-0. The student member supported the motion.

Mrs. Mikulis said the TIENET Software Agreement looks very positive. HCPSS would not have to pay for the development but would pay maintenance fees.

Action: Mrs. Giles moved approval of the acceptance of TIENET Software Agreement for Special Education. The motion was seconded by Mr. Aquino and approved by the Board 6-0. The student member supported the motion.

Bids and Contracts – Approved by the Board.

	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>
P-1	Student Transportation	
	SDS Bus Service	\$48,551.40
	JFC Bus Tours	54,918.72
	JC Bus Co.	55,440.00
	HOB Enterprises, Inc.	59,832.00
	Sameh R. Labib LLC	64,686.15
	Mellor's Bus Service	109,305.00
	Trans-White, Inc.	113,931.00
	MBG Enterprises	132,750.00
	K.A.M. Enterprises, Inc.	146,970.00
	ABC Transportation LLC	170,028.00
	Y & L Transportation Co., Inc.	183,096.00
	Skinner Transportation, Inc.	192,600.00
	Bowen's Bus Service	206,706.06
	Woodlawn Motor Coach, Inc.	<u>451,789.20</u>
	Total	\$1,990,603.53
P-2	Content Filtering System	
	Planet Technologies, Inc.	\$97,985

Minutes of Closed Meetings of February 8, 2007 (#1), Confidential and Official; February 8, 2007 (#2), Confidential and Official; February 15, 2007, Confidential and Official. – Approved by the Board.

Legislative Report/2007 General Assembly

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

Mr. Plunkett noted in his report that he attended the hearing in Annapolis on the Student Voting Rights Bill. Positive feedback was received from the House Ways and

Means Committee. As the bill progresses to the full house, the Board will be kept informed.

There are four bills to be reviewed. In each of these, the recommendations are aligned with the recommendations from the Maryland Association of Boards of Education.

SB 57 Education-Teachers-State and Local Aid Program for Certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

Recommended Position: **Support**

This bill allows the state to have 1,000 National Board Certified Teachers compared to 750. With 24 school districts, HCPSS could be entitled to another 10.

SB 58 Study Commission to Explore the Expanded Application of State Stipends for National Certification of Teachers

Recommended Position: **Support**

This bill allows HCPSS to offer similar stipends to speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, psychologists, physical therapists, school counselors, and others to determine how these national certifications compare to national teacher certification and make recommendations based on the comparison.

Discussion:

- The bills allow but do not require.
- Currently the stipend is half from local and half from the state.

SB 133 Education-Student Suspension-In-School Requirement

This bill would mandate that all suspended students would report to an in-school suspension program. It would preclude their removal from school grounds for any period of time unless they were placed in an alternative education environment. This bill is being opposed because HCPSS has a Code of Conduct that has received the support of staff members, community members, and students.

Recommended Position: **Oppose**

SB 116 Education-Special Education Services-Children in a Home-School Setting

This bill would require providing special education services to all home-schooled students who qualify. Home-schooled students are not counted as part of the per-pupil enrollment numbers. In alignment with MABE, this bill is being opposed. Some

services are provided to home-schooled students and will continue. It should not be mandated by the state.

Recommended Position: Oppose

Action: Mr. Aquino moved that we accept the recommendations as stated. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cohen and approved by the Board 6-0. The student member supported the motion.

Proposed Instructional Materials

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

The proposed textbook list for 2007-2008 was presented to the Board of Education on December 14, 2006. In compliance with Policy 2211 – Policy and Procedures for Selection of Instructional Materials, proposed instructional materials were displayed from December 18, 2006, to January 16, 2007, at the Department of Education.

The advisory committee for social studies met and reviewed proposed books in question and advised the coordinators for elementary and secondary social studies to eliminate both books from the proposed textbook list. Staff is recommending approval to remove the books, Social Studies Alive! Me and My World, and World Cultures and Geography; and that the Board approve the existing textbook list as stated.

Discussion:

- The books were eliminated after a process was followed, and upon examination of the feedback, staff decided these books were not critical at this time.
- More books are being used with the full-day kindergarten program. Books are assigned as a classroom set not individually.
- There is an eight-year replacement cycle.
 - A system is in place to replace and/or refresh instructional materials every year.
 - Approximately \$2.6 million is spent every year on replacement of books.
- Textbooks are not the single source for information.
 - Database services are a more economical approach.
- There are sufficient textbook resources in the schools for all students.
 - Staff works with schools that have special needs and schools that have unexpected growth in the student population.

Action: Mr. Cohen moved that we accept the Proposed Instructional Materials as recommended by the superintendent. The motion was seconded by Mr. Aquino and approved by the Board 6-0. The student member supported the motion.

Hiring and Separation Report 2006

Presenters: Mr. Kirk Thompson, Director, Office of Human Resources; Mr. Ernesto Diaz, Manager, Teacher Recruitment and Retention, Office of Human Resources; and Ms. Suzanne Zilber, Manager, Support/Temporary Services, Office of Human Resources.

- Seven hundred eighty-eight teacher assignments were made including:
 - 499 new hires.
 - 111 voluntary transfers.
 - 92 involuntary transfers.
 - 43 returns from leave.
 - 43 increases in assignments.
- Shortage of teaching candidates throughout Maryland continues.
 - 42% of our new teachers were recruited outside of the state.
 - Teacher salaries were re-indexed in 2006 and are now the fourth highest starting salary in the state.
 - Signing bonuses for teachers in critical content areas continue to be an effective incentive.
- Total number of separations was 441.
- Recruiting efforts continue to have a diverse staff.
- Three hundred sixty-one support services employees were hired.
 - 63 support services employees were transferred.
 - There were 238 separations.
- Separation Data includes:
 - 38% of the professional resignations were due to relocation
 - 26% of professional resignations occurred after the optimal hiring season.
 - 4% increase in support services separations.
 - Retirement numbers were consistent with previous years.
- Resident teacher is someone who had a previous career and becomes certified to teach in a specific content area.
- 566 teaching contracts were offered, and 67 contracts were declined.
 - Shows that human resources is doing an outstanding job.
- 58% of the applicants were seeking positions in non-critical shortage areas.
- Need to put in place a strategy to reach college students before they declare their major to consider teaching careers in critical need areas.
- 60 custodians were hired, and this is fairly typical especially with the opening of a new school.
- Suggestion was made to disaggregate the category on which teachers are being surplused.
 - Board members could benefit from this information when recommendations are made about boundary lines.
- Human Resources goal is to have a large pool of qualified candidates.
 - The recruiting schedule is on the website.

Student Enrollment Projections

Presenter: Mr. Joel Gallihue, Manager, School Planning.

Mr. Gallihue reported on ten years of actual and projected student enrollment data by organizational and county levels. He noted that the error rates by level for this year were no higher than 0.6 percent. At the school level, error rates for 61 of 70 schools were below 5 percent and only one exceeded 10 percent. Error rates for 2006 compare favorably with those of the past decade and demonstrate that the current projection methodology is a stable model. Enrollment projections are used in developing the capital budget, planning for staffing needs, determining attendance area adjustments, and for compliance with the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance.

Discussion:

- Staff gave an explanation of the projection methodology and the variables involved in recommendations.
 - Each individual school can have a variation in the deviation.
- The greatest margin of error is at the elementary school level.
- This is not indicative of a growing trend.
 - It is more variable at the elementary level, and kindergarten is hardest to project.
 - A number of children attend private kindergarten, which makes the numbers harder to predict for first grade.

Proposal for Policy Reorganization

Presenter: Mrs. Ellen Miller, Specialist, Policy and Charter Schools.

Mrs. Miller said the proposal was brought to the Board on February 8, 2007, to reorganize, renumber, and reformat school system policies. As a result of Board input, the proposal has been revised and is brought for Board approval. Mrs. Miller noted various revisions. The index will continue to be revised.

Action: Ms. Gordon moved approval of the Proposal for Policy Reorganization as amended by Mrs. Miller. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cohen and approved by the Board 6-0. The student member supported the motion.

Academic Initiatives for Middle School Special Education Students Report

Presenters: Dr. James Walsh, Director, Special Education; Mr. Daniel Michaels, Director, Secondary Administration; Ms. Patricia Daley, Coordinator, Special Education; Ms. Cynthia Dillon, Principal, Oakland Mills MS; Mr. Scott Conroy, Principal, Wilde Lake MS; Mr. Thomas Saunders, Principal, Elkridge Landing MS; Ms. Joyce Agness, Instructional Facilitator, Special Education.

Dr. Walsh and staff reported on initiatives implemented in several middle schools to raise the academic achievement of special education students. A detailed analysis of HCPSS student performance data suggests that, although all student groups have made progress since the first administration of the Maryland School Assessment in 2003, targeted support is needed for the special education group at each instructional level. A comparison between results for elementary and middle school special education students reveals that intensive support and intervention is particularly needed at the middle school level.

Targeted support began at several middle schools in December 2006 with the following initiatives:

- A new Special Education Instructional Support Teacher position.
- Additional instructional time through a Core Plus Class.
- Scheduling of common planning time.
- Professional development for co-teaching teams.

Another initiative involves a computer-based assessment tool used with middle school special education students. The Scantron Performance Series efficiently assesses the learning needs of students functioning below grade level and prescribes instruction targeted to the identified needs. The tool provides reliable testing information that is aligned to the Voluntary State Curriculum. It provides valuable data for parents and general educators and has proven useful in developing Individual Education Plan (IEP) objectives.

School officials will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of these initiatives through the remainder of this year and into next year.

Discussion:

A recent workshop overview gave an indication that teachers were motivated and excited about the initiatives.

Scheduling

Board members discussed dates for scheduling items.

Adjournment: The chairman adjourned the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Information Items

- A. TIENET Software Agreement for Special Education
- B. NSPRA Communication Audit

