

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HOWARD COUNTY

June 28, 2007

The Board of Education of Howard County held a regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, June 28, 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 B. Mikulis, Chairman
Frank J. Aquino, Vice Chairman
Lawrence H. Cohen
Sandra H. French
Ellen Flynn Giles
Patricia S. Gordon
Janet Siddiqui, M.D. (arrived at 6:25 p.m.)
Wossen Ayele, Student Member (afternoon session only)

Sydney L. Cousin, Superintendent, Secretary/Treasurer
Sandra Erickson, Deputy Superintendent
Anna Gable, Communication Specialist
Florence Jackson, Recording Secretary

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 4:08 p.m., and Mr. Ayele led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Paperless Board Meetings

Mrs. Mikulis announced that the Board has “gone electronic.” Meeting documents will now be available online at www.hcpss.org. Click on Board of Education, then the BoardDocs tree icon. Documents will be posted the Tuesday before each regular meeting.

Public Forum

There was no one present to address the Board.

Approval of Agenda

The following change was made to the agenda:

Delete: Item 2.C. – Student Representative’s Report

Action: Mr. Aquino moved approval of the agenda as amended. The motion was seconded by Mrs. French and approved by the members of the Board (6/0). Mr. Ayele supported the motion.

Approved – August 16, 2007

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Cousin commended the Office of Professional and Organizational Development for the Summer Institute that was recently held. He reported on a new partnership with Monrovia Consolidated School System in Liberia, West Africa. He congratulated Laura Foerster, Howard HS, who recently completed the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association process to earn the title of Certified Athletic Administrator. Dr. Cousin also recognized staff from the Public Information Office and Central Print Shop for their work on the system's 2006 Bridge to Excellence Annual Report, which earned an Award of Merit from the National School Public Relations Association.

Student Member's Report

Mr. Ayele, whose term ends June 30, 2007, gave his final report. He thanked the Board, school system staff, and all those who have lent their support through the past year. He especially noted the support he received from Mr. Roger Plunkett, Business, Community and Government Relations Officer, and thanked him for his continued assistance and hard work on behalf of students.

On behalf of the Board, Mrs. Mikulis expressed appreciation to Mr. Ayele for his efforts and for providing a stronger voice for students.

Board Members' Reports

Mr. Aquino reported on his participation in a panel discussion regarding the Choose Civility in Howard County program. He also reported on a MABE (Maryland Association of Boards of Education) leadership conference he attended with other Board members and the Superintendent.

Mr. Cohen reported on his attendance at the recent District Planning Team meeting and thanked Mrs. Sue Mascaro, Staff Relations Director, for her work in chairing the meeting. In particular, he noted that a taskforce under Dr. Nancy Grasmick, State Superintendent, will be addressing issues related to HSAs (High School Assessments) and graduation requirements. Mr. Cohen also reported that Mr. Robert Glascock, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Technology, shared the HCPSS proposed BTE (Bridge to Excellence) target for 2008 and the goals of accomplishing AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) and AMO (Annual Measurable Objectives) at the meeting.

Signing of Negotiated Agreements

Presenter: Mrs. Sue Mascaro, Director of Staff Relations.

Mrs. Mascaro presented the agreement between the Board of Education and the HCEA (Howard County Education Association) for ratification, dated July 1, 2007, to

June 30, 2010. She noted that these new contracts are the direct result of collaborative efforts between HCEA, the Board of Education, and their respective negotiators. Mrs. Mascaro extended her personal appreciation to the members of both the union and the Board negotiation teams for investing their time and expertise in these important deliberations.

Action: Mr. Aquino moved approval of ratification of the agreement with HCEA. The motion was seconded by Mrs. French and approved by the members of the Board (6/0). Mr. Ayele supported the motion.

Mrs. Mascaro also presented the agreement between the Board of Education and HCEA/ESP (Educational Support Personnel) for ratification, dated July 1, 2007, to June 30, 2010.

Action: Mrs. Giles moved approval of ratification of the agreement between the HCEA/ESP and HCPSS. The motion was seconded by Mr. Aquino and approved by the members of the Board (6/0). Mr. Ayele supported the motion.

Dr. Cousin; Mrs. Mikulis; and Ms. Ann DeLacy, President of HCEA, were invited to sign the new agreements. Mrs. Mascaro expressed confidence that the new agreements will assist the school system in working to recruit and retain highly qualified staff and will provide a supportive work environment for HCPSS employees.

Consent Agenda

Bids and Contracts; Donations; Minutes of May 24 (Regular Meeting), June 13 (Closed - Official and Confidential), and June 19, 2007 (Closed – Official and Confidential); and Recommended Appointment to the Board of Directors of the HCPSS Foundation

Action: Mrs. French moved approval of the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Giles and approved by the members of the Board (6/0). Mr. Ayele supported the motion.

Bids and Contracts – Approved by the Board.

Full Day Kindergarten Additions – Phase 5

<u>Contract Package</u>	<u>Bidder</u>	<u>Total Base Bid</u>
1A – General Construction	MRP Contractors, LLC	\$1,427,900
4A – Masonry	KaRon Masonry of MD, Inc.	796,000
7A – Roofing	Cole Roofing Co., Inc.	142,373
9A – Drywall and Acoustical	Jennings H. Mitchell & Son, Inc.	98,000
10D – Chalk and Tack Boards	Steel Products, Inc.	25,600
12A – Casework	Modular Concepts, Inc.	70,960
15A – Plumbing & Mechanical	G.H. Nitzel, Inc.	729,750
16A – Electrical	Key Systems, Inc.	<u>462,000</u>
TOTAL AWARD AMOUNT		\$3,752,583

Approved – August 16, 2007

Donations – Approved by the Board.

Longfellow Elementary:	AAA of Maryland, office furniture, valued at \$3,850. Prepare for Success Foundation, in the amount of \$1,280, supplies and backpacks for 32 needy students.
Manor Woods Elementary:	Giant Food, in the amount of \$1,274.40, to defray the cost of installing TVs in classroom areas. PTA, in the amount of \$838.75, designated for water bottles for Field Day.
Stevens Forest Elementary:	Rotary Club of Columbia, in the amount of \$1,000, to assist low-income families with field trip expenses.
Swansfield Elementary:	CCS Presentations Systems, a SMART Board interactive whiteboard, cables, pens and floor stand, valued at \$1,200.
Triadelphia Ridge Elementary:	Target, in the amount of \$609.91, to purchase classroom technology materials and key drives. Giant Food, in the amount of \$697.97, designated for the purchase of electric pencil sharpeners.
Burleigh Manor Middle:	Giant Food, in the amount of \$2,091.49, designated for the purchase of technology supplies.
Folly Quarter Middle:	Giant Food, in the amount of \$2,901.43, designated for staff appreciation and teacher supplies.
Atholton High:	Boosters, in the amount of \$3,301.48, designated for the purchase of baseball uniforms. Drama Boosters, in the amount of \$675, designated to assist with expenses associated with the Cappies Gala. Northrop Grumman, in the amount or \$1,000, for a technology education program that promotes interest in the field of engineering.

PTSA, in the amount of \$1,230, to fund the following school support requests: \$500 for Students Against Destructive Decisions, \$300 for the Speech and Debate Team, \$150 for the Academic Life Skills program, \$75 for Spanish Honor Society, \$50 for the band program, \$75 for Human Rights Awareness, \$50 for the Young Republicans program, \$30 for the La Familia program.

Centennial High: HCYP, in the amount of \$1,500, designated to help defray expenses of a new scoreboard.

Glenelg High: Boosters, in the amount of \$20,350, with \$5,000 designated for field hockey and lacrosse uniforms, football and soccer field equipment, and a state championship banner; \$60 designated for tournament entry fees, \$4,100 for athletic clinics, \$840 for golf bags; \$5,350 designated for SAT prep class expenses; and \$5,000 designated for the after-prom party.

Howard High: Lion's Pride, in the amount of \$3,025, with \$2,150 designated for a video editing system for football and \$875 designated for training for field hockey coaches.

Marriotts Ridge High: Boosters, in the amount of \$8,778; \$6,600 designated for a stadium sound system and \$2,178 to defray printing expenses for the Buzz Magazine.

HYCP, in the amount of \$1,500, designated for the purchase of a golf cart.

Mt. Hebron High: Giant Food, in the amount of \$696.48, designated for the purchase of a computer.

Reservoir High: Triumph Fitness Center, weight room equipment, valued at \$1,400.

Minutes of May 24 (Regular Meeting), June 13 (Closed - Official and Confidential), and June 19, 2007 (Closed – Official and Confidential) – Approved by the Board.

Recommended Appointment to the Board of Directors of the HCPSS Foundation – Approved by the Board.

Felicita Sola-Carter – Reappointed to the Board of Directors of the HCPSS Foundation.

Student Information System Report

Presenter: Mr. Jose Stevenson, Director of Information Technology.

Mr. Stevenson reported on the development of a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a new Student Information Management System (SIMS), to replace the systems that have been in operation since the summer of 2006. Currently, the school system is using Pearson Education's Student Management System (SMS) and MacSchool software for enrollment, attendance, and scheduling. Grading and reporting at the high school level are accomplished using locally developed applications. Current applications have worked well, but MacSchool is becoming obsolete.

Recommendations for a new system would be one that is centralized, web-based, integrates with existing and future information systems in the district, and provides a robust and secure environment for data collection and reporting.

Recommendations of user groups include:

- Standardized features for all levels.
- A central data collection system.
- Differentiated functionality for elementary, middle, and high schools.
- Data extraction tools and customized reports.
- Components that can grow as system grows.
- Ease of use.

Mr. Stevenson plans for a rollout in 2008/2009, but acknowledges that the timeline could change. He emphasized the need to thoroughly test the system. Mr. Tom Miller, Executive Director of Instruction and Business Technology, added that the school system's networks and servers have been evaluated to make sure the school system will be ready for the rollout.

Mr. Robert Glascock, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Technology, noted that a wealth of technology expertise exists in the county, and that a Technology Advisory Committee has been lending advice and support for the school system's technology-related initiatives.

Discussion:

Mr. Glascock explained that the plan is to ensure that a repository of historical data is developed and one of the things that is being look at now is the actual transcript card that resides in current files and how that information can be stored in an electronic format.

Mr. Stevenson assured the Board that one of the requirements will be a product that will be long lasting and flexible. Most school systems have a student information management system anywhere from five to ten years. Technology either changes very rapidly or regulations change, which makes the student information system obsolete.

Regarding the rollout of the system, the plan is to start at the elementary level (as recommended by student information vendors), which will allow for testing of the functions of the system. The system will then be expanded to additional schools at the secondary level.

Mr. Stevenson stated that there are many companies offering various products, and the RFP will be written as flexible as possible in order to take advantage of the variety of options available.

Mr. Tom Miller explained that several initiatives have been put in place to improve the school system's network capability. A security engineer has been hired, along with a system administrator to ensure that HCPSS will be ready with the proper security.

Mr. Glascock explained that a Technology Advisory Committee has been convened to help the school system in developing and enhancing technology plans. Another group worked on helping to develop the requirement for the RFP for a student information management system.

Backpack Taskforce Report

Presenters: Backpack Taskforce Chairpersons Ms. Linda Rangos, Curriculum Coordinator for Health, Physical Education and Dance; Ms. Rose Dennison, Chair, Citizen's Advisory Committee; and Ms. Mary Jane Grauso, President, PTA Council.

The taskforce charged with studying backpack safety in October 2006, reported on its findings. Members included central office and school-based staff, students, community organizations, and families.

Recommendations include:

- Utilize a variety of venues to share information on backpack safety with parents, students, and staff.
- Develop and disseminate a Quick Reference Card on Backpack Safety for parents, students, and teachers.
- Integrate backpack safety and organization skills into appropriate curricular areas.
- Explore alternative methods for use and distribution of textbooks.
- Engage parents, families, and community members as full partners in promoting backpack safety.

Next steps include developing an implementation plan to address the recommendations at each school level.

Discussion:

Ms. Gordon and Mr. Aquino commented that electronic “textbooks” would likely be available in the future to help lighten backpacks. Mr. Glascock stated that the school system is aggressively pursuing electronic materials, but there are many issues involved, including a high price tag. Mrs. Giles pointed out that she would be leery of moving too quickly in that direction, because it is difficult to provide Internet access to multiple children in one family, if they have access at all.

Mrs. French asked about educating students on backpack safety, and staff indicated that discussion has taken place about including this topic in the physical education curriculum. Teaching organizational skills at the elementary level may also help students to carry only the essentials in their backpack each day.

Dr. Cousin expressed appreciation to the committee for their work and noted the feasibility of the recommendations. He stated that trying to keep abreast of change will be a real challenge in dealing with technology and backpack issues, but HCPSS will address some immediate issues that will positively affect the health of students.

On behalf of the Board, Mrs. Mikulis also expressed appreciation for everyone involved with this effort.

Board Audit Committee Report

Mr. John Connors, Internal Auditor, provided a recap of audit results since the inception of his position in March 2006. Mr. Connors has completed 12 school fiscal/administrative audits and plans to audit two schools a month during the next year.

Motion: Ms. Gordon moved approval of the Audit Plan for FY 2008 as recommended by the committee. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cohen.

Discussion:

Board members praised Mr. Connors’ work and reported that schools are now volunteering to be audited. Mrs. French pointed out that HCPSS will be undergoing a legislative audit in the future and asked if the school system is working on improvements prior to the audit. Mr. Ray Brown, Chief Operating Officer, stated that staff is being proactive in that area and has established an internal work group to look at findings from other school systems and how improvements can be made.

Action: The motion was approved by the members of the Board (6/0). Mr. Ayele supported the motion.

Mr. Connors expressed appreciation for the support he has received from the Board and the management of the school system. Ms. Gordon stated that it has been a pleasure working with Mr. Connors, who has provided information in a succinct fashion.

Quarterly Agenda – July – September 2007

Board members discussed minor changes to the Quarterly Agenda.

Action: Mr. Cohen moved approval of the Quarterly Agenda as amended. The motion was seconded by Mr. Aquino and approved by the members of the Board (6/0). Mr. Ayele supported the motion.

Scheduling

By consensus, the Board agreed to move scheduling to follow the BTE report.

Bridge to Excellence – BTE Leadership Development and Succession Planning

Presenter: Mr. Earl Slacum, Administrative Director, and Ms. Gail Coffin, Leadership Development Facilitator.

Staff reported on leadership development programs currently in place for teacher leaders, aspiring leaders, new leaders, and current leaders.

The taskforce recommended that the school system continue to align professional development with leadership standards, indicators, and evaluation. They also recommend expanding leadership coaching and mentoring to include Central Office leaders and implementing a leadership succession plan to ensure the training and availability of a substantial number of highly qualified instructional leaders.

Discussion:

Dr. Cousin and Board members acknowledged that the school system's professional development offerings, such as the leadership programs, are of great value to staff and set HCPSS apart from other systems.

Staff provided details on the background of coaches, their qualifications, and how the approach works, in addition to the details of mentoring. Ms. Terri Savage, Special Education Facilitator, shared her positive experience in the Leadership Coaching program.

Mrs. Mikulis pointed out that one of the things that HCPSS does very well is staff development, which is an important part of employment that is not presented in a salary or benefits package. She expressed appreciation for all the efforts in this area.

Scheduling

The Board scheduled meetings and events.

Recess – The meeting was recessed at 6:47 p.m. and reconvened at 7:35 p.m.

Public Forum

Ms. Linda Turner, parent, addressed the Board about alleged discrimination against children with disabilities.

Ms. Mary Jane Grauso, PTA Council President, reported on the results of the Healthy Schools Day school survey results.

Appointment – Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) End-of-Year Report

Ms. Rose Dennison, Chairman of the CAC, gave the end-of-year report for the 2006/2007 school year.

Highlights:

- The group's name will change to Community Advisory Council effective July 1, 2007, to reflect their changing role.
- HCASC (Howard County Association of Student Councils) will be formally asked to assign a liaison to the CAC.
- A new policy coordinator position was created and established as an office of the CAC, ensuring continued focus on school system policy development and implementation.

On behalf of the CAC, Ms. Dennison expressed appreciation to the Board of Education, administration, and staff of HCPSS for its demonstrated commitment to community participation and transparency in the operation of schools. Ms. Dennison also recognized the CAC Executive Board in attendance at the meeting, and Mrs. Mikulis thanked the CAC for their work.

Policy 5100 (4111) – School Health Services

Presenter: Mrs. Donna Heller, Health Services Coordinator.

Mrs. Heller expressed appreciation for the testimony provided by the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and PTA Council of Howard County (PTACHC). She stated that some of the training suggestions they offered will be addressed as office goals for the coming year. Mrs. Heller clarified that current policy provides language for providing health care to staff and visitors, and Health Services staff have been providing routine and emergency care over the past several years. This policy revision attempts to tighten the process by limiting care to emergency care and by including an approval

process for staff to receive emergency care. The revision limits the services to within the scope of certification, licensure, and employment of staff.

Action: Mr. Aquino moved approval of Policy 4111 (5100) – School Health Services, as amended. The motion was seconded by Dr. Siddiqui and approved by the members of the Board (7/0). Mr. Ayele supported the motion.

Policy 3131 - Publications/Communications (10010 – Distribution and Display of Materials and Announcements in Schools)

Presenters: Mr. Mark Blom, General Counsel.

The material covered in Policies 9030 and 10010 was originally combined as Policy 3131 - Publications/Communications. Policy 10010 was originally entitled Distribution and Display of Materials and Announcements in Schools.

Discussion:

Mrs. French requested that “in Schools” be edited to shorten the name of the policy and to allow the policy to apply to locations other than school buildings. Mr. Blom and Board members agreed.

Action: Ms. Gordon moved approval of Policy 3131 (10010) – Distribution and Display of Materials and Announcements. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cohen and approved by the members of the Board (7/0).

Policy 9030 – Student Publications and Productions

Mr. Blom stated that the final report contains recommendations that were the result of Board comments, questions, and suggestions. He also pointed out that the Purpose Statement for Policy 9030 should read as follows: "The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines related to school-sponsored **student** productions and publications."

Highlights of Proposed Changes:

- Policy includes a definition of unprivileged statements.
- Standards now emphasize that instruction related to publications and productions are to promote professional standards and ethics.
- A reference to students being harassed was deleted.

Action: Mr. Cohen moved approval of Policy 9030 – Student Publications and Productions, as amended. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gordon and approved by the members of the Board (7/0).

Facility Needs Assessment (four high schools – Atholton, Centennial, Hammond, & Mt. Hebron)

Presenter: Mr. Ken Roey, Executive Director for Facilities Planning and Management.

Mr. Roey, along with representatives from Gilbert Architects, Inc., and Facility Engineering Associates, reported on a Facilities Condition and Program Assessment of Atholton, Centennial, Hammond, and Mt. Hebron high schools.

The facilities condition assessment reviewed the structural; exterior; interior; and mechanical, electrical, and plumbing (MEP) systems at the schools. The basis for this assessment was to compare current facilities to current educational specifications, state educational standards, and current building and life safety codes. Mr. Roey noted that these specifications, standards, and codes have changed from when each of these facilities were originally designed and constructed or renovated and expanded. He indicated that it is not unusual to find many educational program deficiencies within older facilities due to the constantly changing environment of school facility design standards. A low score is not an indication of an improperly or poorly maintained facility, but merely means that while the school met the educational criteria at the time it was originally designed, upgrades would be necessary to meet current standards.

The assessments revealed that an ongoing visible and effective maintenance program is in effect at all four of the high schools visited. Mechanical equipment is being serviced, and HCPSS facilities personnel are very familiar with the equipment. These maintenance efforts are enabling the old systems to function as well as they are under the circumstances, but replacement programming of the obsolescence is required to head off inevitable increased future equipment failure rates.

Mr. Roey said the remaining portion of the assessment would be completed in two phases. Phase I will include the remaining high schools and all middle schools. Upon completion of Phase I and beginning in March 2008, the remaining elementary and special purpose schools and buildings will be assessed.

Primary concerns include:

Atholton HS conditions

- Condition of roof – near end of life
- Mechanical system – nearing end of life

Centennial HS conditions

- Roof in poor condition
- Needs fire protection upgrades

Hammond HS conditions

- Mechanical system/controls
- Fire protection
- Exterior wall repairs

Mt. Hebron HS conditions

- Aging Mechanical system
- Fire protection
- Interior conditions

Discussion:

Mr. Roey indicated that Mt. Hebron has the greatest need and Centennial has the least. All buildings can continue to serve their present function for about 20 to 30 years. It was noted that safety systems do not currently present a danger as is.

Board members commented on the value of this study and the difficulty in maintaining schools with the new requirements that have resulted from NCLB (No Child Left Behind), BTE (Bridge to Excellence), and special education laws.

Dr. Cousin and Board members expressed concern over the high cost of updating school buildings and the lack of funds available. Dr. Cousin emphasized the need to work with local and state elected officials to identify sources of funds as quickly as possible.

Mrs. Mikulis expressed appreciation for this baseline information in the comparison of facilities and noted that the same type of data will be provided for the rest of the schools in HCPSS.

Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned by the Chairman at 9:25 p.m.