

Summary of the Board of Education Meeting

Thursday, January 25, 2007

ACTION ITEMS

- Approved a consent agenda including bids and contracts, the termination and transfer of school bus contracts, donations and minutes of Board of Education meetings.

- Approved proclamations honoring Joshua Kaufman, Mary Kay Sigaty, and Courtney Watson for their service on the Board of Education.

- Approved the Board's position on legislation under consideration by the 2007 Maryland General Assembly.

- Rescinded the full Board approval of the minutes of the November 16 and November 20 Board meetings.

- Mrs. Mikulis and Mrs. Gordon approved the minutes of the November 16 and November 20 Board meetings.

Technology Plan Sets Vision for 21st Century Learning

Assistant Superintendent Robert Glascock introduced a report on the school system's Technology Plan, noting that today's education system faces irrelevance, unless we bridge the gap between how students live and how students learn. Members of the technology staff reported on the use of technology for student learning and professional development to help staff use technology effectively and efficiently.

First grade teacher Elaine Stengel reported on how she uses technology in her Waterloo Elementary classroom to support instruction and accelerate learning. Technology Support Teacher Elizabeth DeFrances explained her role at Atholton High School to help teachers integrate technology into their lessons and use technology to communicate with students and parents.

Executive Director of Instructional and Business Technology Tom Miller reported that the goal of his department is to align integration of technology operations with instructional and administrative goals and objectives. Technical services, network support, information management, print services, telecommunication, and cable and TV services have been restructured and reorganized to maximize staff's ability to provide resources and expertise, and to support day-to-day operation and technology initiatives.

Board Views Plan for Mt. Hebron Renovation Project

The Board received a report on the schematic design concepts for the Mt. Hebron High School renovation. Executive Director of Facilities Planning and Management Ken Roey explained the alternatives, which range from a systemic renovation to the construction of a new building.

The concept recommended by staff offers a combination of specific demolitions, additions and renovations to address concerns and bring selected program areas up to the current educational specifications. Program improvements include expanded and modernized Fine Arts, Athletic and Administration Suites, and improved interior corridor and exterior site circulation. The recommended plan also includes modernizing the heating, ventilation and air conditioning, electrical, lighting and fire protection systems.

The Mt. Hebron community will be invited to an information session in early February and the final details of the schematic design will be completed by mid-March. Detailed design work will begin following Board approval of the schematic design.

HCASC Provides Structured Leadership Opportunities

Business, Community, and Government Relations Officer Roger Plunkett introduced advisors and student members of the Howard County Association of Student Councils (HCASC), who provided the Board with information about the structure of the Association of Student Councils at the school, county, state and national levels. HCASC President Debbie Schub reviewed the HCASC goals, which are to:

- develop leadership capacity of high schools and the Homewood Center.
- promote opportunities for all students to be involved in student government.
- ensure equity and consistency in the implementation of student government across all high schools and the Homewood Center.

Board of Directors Selected for Education Foundation

Partnerships Manager Mary Schiller reported that the Education Foundation has received its non-profit status and that five members have been added to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors now includes Doug Hostetler, President; Felicia Sola-Carter, Secretary; Cathy Bell, Treasurer; Richard Talkin, Nominating Committee Chairman; Victor Broccolina, Bernie Dancel, Sheran Wilkins, J.P. Grant and Jermaine Leftridge. The Board is in the process of developing Foundation policies and procedures and discussing fundraising strategies and issues.

Board Hears from Public on Land Exchange

At a public hearing on a proposed land swap between the school system and St. John Evangelist Baptist Church, Marc Norman addressed the Board with his concerns regarding the timeline of the process and issues with the safety of the property. Clinton Sellers and C. Vernon Gray, members of St. John Church, thanked the Board for considering the exchange and referred to it as a win-win situation.

Preceding the hearing, Manager of School Planning Joel Gallihue provided information on the process used for site acquisition.

In Other Action...

In his report to the Board, Superintendent Sydney Cousin announced that all but 35 HCPSS students have met the new state immunization requirements and he congratulated the Health Services staff for a job well done. He also introduced teachers Carol Carter of

Dayton Oaks Elementary, Sara Hancock of West Friendship Elementary, and Mica Kerley of Hammond Middle, who recently achieved National Board Certification.

At Public Forum Natalie Woodson, Chairman of the NAACP Education Committee, presented the Board with the 2007 Education Report Card for African American Students. Mrs. Woodson noted that 55 of the 68 schools assessed in the report card received a grade of "A" in one or more of the assessed areas. Progress has been made in the areas of elementary attendance, graduation rates, dropout rates and Grade 4 reading.

Also at Public Forum, Joshua Kaufman presented the Board with information about "Project Citizen," which teaches political efficacy to middle school students. Lynn Mean expressed her concern with the school system's prohibition of non-students shadowing students in school and how this negatively impacts exchange programs sponsored by the Rotary. Linda Turner addressed the Board with her concern about not being able to view her daughter's quarterly assessments.

Rose Dennison, Chairman of the Citizen's Advisory Committee to the Board, reported on recent activities of the committee during an appointment with the Board.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Education is scheduled for 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 8, 2007.