

Summary of the Board of Education Meeting

Thursday, April 26, 2007

ACTION ITEMS

- Certified the election of Andrew Gavelek of Reservoir High School as the 2007- 08 Student Member to the Board of Education.
- Approved a consent agenda including bids and contracts, non-tenured teachers, termination of school bus contracts, donations and the amended minutes of the Board of Education meetings.
- Approved the promotion of Assistant Principal Paul Owens, Hollifield Station Elementary School, to Principal at Cedar Lane School.
- Approved the appointment of Gavin West and Rick Robb as Principals of K-8 summer school and comprehensive high school summer school, respectively.
- Approved a proclamation designating May 7-11, 2007 as Pupil Personnel Worker Week in the HCPSS.
- Approved a proclamation designating May 2007 as Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month in the HCPSS.
- Approved the staff recommendation for the placement of relocatable classrooms for the 2007-08 school year (see: "Board Approves Moving Relocatable Classrooms").

Superintendent Reviews Status of Operating and Capital Budgets

Superintendent Sydney Cousin presented a status report on the FY 08 Operating and Capital budgets. The County Executive's budget provides \$427,176,316 in county funds for fiscal year 2008. This represents an 8.5 percent increase in funding over the current year and is \$2.4 million short of the Board of Education's request.

The Executive proposed \$57.4 million in capital funds for the school system which represents funding for all requested projects except for \$18.9 million for the Mt. Hebron renovation project. The Board of Education, the Superintendent and staff will work with the County Council during May to review both budget requests. The Council's public hearing on the education budgets is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, May 5.

Board Receives BTE Status Report on ESOL Services

The school system enrolls students from 77 different countries, speaking 67 different languages, according to Deborah Espitia, Coordinator of World Languages and ESOL Services. In a *Bridge to Excellence* Status report on English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programming, Espitia called on administrators and staff from four schools to showcase various aspects of the program.

Reports featured the ESOL Newcomers Program at River Hill High School, content-based ESOL instruction at Patapsco Middle School, co-teaching at Hollifield Station Elementary School and community outreach at Bollman Bridge Elementary School. Specialist Young-Chan Han reported on the services provided through the Office of International Student and Family Services, including translation and interpreting services, the International Student Registration Center, bilingual community liaisons, education seminars for families and staff and the International Parent Leadership Program.

Board Approves Moving Relocatable Classrooms

The Board approved the reassignment of relocatable classrooms for the coming school year. Two units will be moved to Centennial Lane ES, one will be placed at Phelps Luck ES, two units will be removed from St. John's Lane ES, five will be removed from the old Busy Park ES site, and one will be moved to a different location on the Ilchester ES site. Reservoir High will receive three relocatable units, Howard High will lose two units, Hammond High will gain one unit, and Long Reach High will gain two units.

Pupil Transportation Study Looks at Private/Public Ownership

Consultant Glenn Johnson reported on the contents of a Transportation Study he recently completed for the school system. The report includes a history of bus contracting in Maryland and Howard County, a survey of neighboring school systems, current operation of HCPSS transportation, and a comparison of public versus private school bus operations.

Pupil Transportation officials are finding it more difficult to secure bus contracts and have seen a decline in the availability of certified bus drivers. The study was contracted to explore viable options for maintaining service in the future.

Recommendations stemming from the report suggest that the Board continue to contract bus services using the competitive bidding process, but consider implementing a limited form of public ownership to supplement the contracted operation. Johnson proposed a phase-in, with a focus on special needs contracts, beginning with the 2008-2009 school year. He suggested that the Board wait until after the second round of bidding in February to get a better picture of need.

In Other Action...

Chairman Diane Mikulis held a moment of silence for those who lost their lives at Virginia Tech and for kindergartener Connor Smith, who died suddenly last weekend.

In his report to the Board, Superintendent Sydney Cousin reported on his recommendation to allow early dismissal or late opening for seven high schools on the days of their respective commencement ceremonies. He also reported on a visit by members of the World Bank to Centennial Lane Elementary School. He also congratulated the following staff members;

- Richard Malt, Marriotts Ridge HS, who received the First Year Educator Award
- Kathy Hanks, Wilde Lake HS, who received the Office Professionals Award
- Laura Weir, Fulton ES, recipient of the Distinguished Assistant Award
- Stewart Custis, West Friendship ES, who received the Custodial and Grounds Service Award

Members of the NAACP Education Committee recognized 52 Howard County schools that rated an "A" based on the performance of their African American students in at least one of the categories of attendance, suspension, MSA Math and Reading, HSAs, dropout rate and graduation rate. The following nine schools received awards for Distinguished

Performance, with “A”s or “B”s in all categories: Bushy Park ES, Clarksville ES, Fulton ES, Hollifield Station ES, lchester ES, Northfield ES, Thunder Hill ES, West Friendship ES and Lime Kiln MS. Four elementary schools received awards for Exemplary Performance with “A”s in all categories: Bellows Spring, Clemens Crossing, Triadelphia Ridge and Waverly.

At Public Forum, HCEA President Ann De Lacy reported on the lack of cleanliness at Mt. Hebron high school and cited examples. Parent Diane Goodridge testified on lessons learned as a result of the Worthington Elementary asbestos abatement project. Parent Kimberly Bronow asked the Board to ensure immediate, full and complete disclosure of all data, results and reports related to the air tests conducted at Worthington Elementary. Parent Linda Dewberry reported on the illegal storage of school buses and resulting traffic issues caused by a bus contractor in the Mt. Airy area.

The Board discussed the Charter for the formation of the Television Services Task Force.

Rose Dennison, Chairman of the Citizen’s Advisory Committee, reported on the recent activities of the committee.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Education is scheduled for 4:00 p.m. on May 10, 2007.