

Minutes of the Board of Education

February 7, 2008

The Board of Education of Howard County held a regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, February 7, 2008, 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:

Frank Aquino, Chairman
Ellen Flynn Giles, Vice Chairman (arrived 6:10 p.m.)
Lawrence Cohen
Sandra H. French
Patricia Gordon
Janet Siddiqui, M.D.
Andrew Gavelek, Student Member

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

Chairman Aquino called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.; and Ms. Julie Morse, Atholton HS, led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Forum

Ms. Nancy Smith, parent, reviewed a proposed reconstruction plan for Mt. Hebron HS, and noted that there are still issues to be resolved including more square footage.

Ms. Cindy Ardinger, parent, Mt. Hebron HS, noted that the Mt. Hebron HS PTSA and Patapsco MS PTA recognizes the January 22, 2008 design plan though more progress is still necessary.

Ms. Mahila Amjab, student, Mt. Hebron HS, spoke about the need for expansion of Mt. Hebron HS and expressed concern about losing four classrooms as a result of the renovation. She also noted that security could be a problem in the event of an emergency.

Approval of Agenda

Dr. Cousin made the following change to the agenda:

VII. C. Appointment of Ethics Panel Members – make a separate item.

Mr. Aquino requested the following change:

Add under IX. H. Scheduling - superintendent contract discussion.

Action: Mr. Gavelek moved approval of the agenda as amended. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gordon and approved by the Board 7-0.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Cousin noted that February 4-8 is Employee Appreciation Week and thanked all HCPSS employees for their hard work and dedication. He also recognized the following schools and staff:

- Rockburn ES first grade teacher, Amy Ashmore, for her selection as Howard County's 2007 Outstanding Technology Using Educator.
- Elkridge Landing MS, Principal Tom Saunders, for receiving Howard County's 2007 Outstanding Technology Leader in Education Award.
- Maryland Music Educators Association award winners:
 - River Hill HS Music Department, Exemplary Music Program.
 - Centennial HS Principal, Scott Pfeifer, Outstanding Administrator.
 - Band director at Folly Quarter MS, Andy Spang, 2008 Outstanding Music Teacher.

Student Representative's Report

Ms. Julie Morse, junior, Atholton HS, reviewed the timeline of the election process for the student member to the Board of Education for 2008-2009. She also reviewed procedures for the election of all Student Government Association officers at each middle and high school.

Board Members' Reports

Mr. Gavelek reported that he recently attended a meeting with several County Council members. He also attended the Maryland Association of Student Councils legislative session in St. Mary's county.

Ms. Gordon spoke about her attendance at the National School Boards Association Leadership Conference in Washington, D.C. as a representative of the Maryland Association of Boards of Education. She noted that there was common ground in the concerns and problems as other jurisdictions specifically budget constraints and student learning. The focus was on student achievement, which is one of the main goals of any Board of Education.

Consent Agenda (Restricted)

Staff Personnel; Bids and Contracts; Appointment of Ethics Panel Members; Columbia Bridges-21st Century Community Learning Program; Minutes of Closed Meeting of January 24, 2008 both confidential and official.

Action: Mr. Cohen moved approval of the Consent Agenda (Restricted) with the amendment that item number VII. C. Appointment of Ethics Panel Members change to a separate item. The motion was seconded by Dr. Siddiqui and approved by the Board 6-0.

Appointment of Ethics Panel Members

Presenter: Mr. Mark Blom, General Counsel, presented Mr. Dennis Biennas and Dr. Caroline Dale Rothfield for appointment to the Ethics Panel for a five-year term. Mr. Blom spoke about their backgrounds and qualifications and asked for Board approval.

Action: Ms. Gordon moved approval of Mr. Dennis Biennas and Dr. Caroline Dale Rothfield for appointment to the Ethics Panel Committee. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Giles and approved by the Board 6-0.

Staff Personnel – Approved by the Board.

Resignations-Violation of Contract

| <u>Name</u> | <u>School</u> | <u>Grade or Subject</u> | <u>Reason</u> | <u>Years in Howard County</u> | <u>Effective Date</u> |
|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Vasey, Monkia | BBES | Music | Other Employment | 2.5 | 01/24/08 |
| Whalen, Tonia | HOHS | Math | Other Employment | 2.5 | 01/25/08 |

Resignations

| <u>Name</u> | <u>School</u> | <u>Grade or Subject</u> | <u>Reason</u> | <u>Years in Howard County</u> | <u>Effective Date</u> |
|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Evans, Evan | Fr. Leave | Math | Other Employment | 4.5 | 01/31/08 |
| Hopson, Ann | Fr. Leave | Math | Personal | 10.0 | 06/30/07 |
| Jannetti, Patricia | Fr. Leave | Elem. Ed. | Family Obligations | 8.0 | 01/31/08 |

Approved – March 13, 2008

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|----------------|-----------|---------------|--------------------|------|----------|
| Kowitz, Amy | Fr. Leave | Elem. Ed. | Leave Expired | 11.0 | 06/30/07 |
| Nathan, Carole | OMMS | Rdg/S.Studies | Family Obligations | 1.5 | 02/04/08 |
| Thorpe, Marvin | HOHS | Ind. Arts | Personal | 7.5 | 01/25/08 |

Contracts

| Name | Grade or Effective School | Subject | Place of Last Teaching Assignment | Grade/Step | Effective Date |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|--|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Bradley, Susan | LRHS | GUI | -- | C-01 | 01/22/08 |
| Cho, Young | BBES | ESOL | AmeriCorps | C-02 | 01/18/08 |
| Cromer, Jeremy | HaHS | TE | Military | A-03 | 01/16/08 |
| Gelzer, Lisa | HWS | ENG | MSDE | C-15 | 02/04/08 |
| McNeal, David | RHHS | ESOL | Baltimore City | D-07 | 12/03/07 |
| Pearce, Jeffrey | HoHS | TE | Private Industry | A-11 | 02/11/08 |
| Plunkett, Dolores | DRES | ELE | Private School | C-02 | 12/03/07 |
| Repsher, Michael | LRHS | GUI | Private School | C-03 | 01/07/08 |
| Quinn, Kathleen | OMMS | RDG/SST | -- | C-01 | 01/24/08 |
| Smith, Lisa | ELMS | SPE | HCPSS – IA | C-11 | 01/02/08 |
| Stielper, Kelly | PMS | RDG | -- | C-01 | 01/17/08 |

Leaves of Absence

| Name | Grade or School | Subject | Years in Howard County | Effective Date |
|---------------------|------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Middleton, Kimberly | OMMS | S. Studies | 14.5 | 01/28/08 |
| Mott, Lori | WLMS | Rdg. Specialist | 4.6 | 02/15/08 |

Retirement

| Name | School | Grade or Subject | Years in Howard County | Effective Date |
|--------------|---------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Slacum, Earl | C.O. | Instructional Director | 24.6 | 03/01/08 |

Bids and Contracts – Approved by the Board.

| Exhibit | Description | Amount |
|----------------|------------------------------|---------------|
| P-1 | AUDIO VISUAL EQUIPMENT | |
| | DEMCO | \$ 3,000 |
| | Long's Electronics, Inc. | 4,000 |
| | Scott Electric | 4,000 |
| | Camcor, Inc. | 6,000 |
| | Troxell Communications, Inc. | 6,000 |
| | Southwest Plastic Binding | 8,000 |
| | APF Industries, Inc. | 10,000 |
| | B & H Photo Video Pro-Audio | 10,000 |
| | Kunz, Inc. | 10,000 |
| | Valiant, Inc. | 10,000 |
| | HPI International, Inc. | 11,000 |
| | CCS Presentation Systems | 12,000 |
| | Aves Audio Visual Systems | 20,000 |
| | Pyramid School Products | 30,000 |
| | Gov Connection, Inc. | 35,000 |
| | Peripheral Vision, LLC | 36,000 |

Approved – March 13, 2008

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|----------------------------|---------------|
| Nicholas Pipino Associates | <u>50,000</u> |
| TOTAL AWARD | \$265,000 |

Columbia Bridges-21st Century Community Learning Centers Programs
– Approved by the Board.

Minutes of Closed Meeting (both Confidential and Official) of January 24, 2008 – Approved by the Board.

Consent Agenda

Donations; Minutes of January 10 (Regular Meeting), January 22 (Operating Budget Public Hearing), and January 25, 2008 (Board Retreat); Operating Budget Monthly Report; School Construction Monthly Reports.

Mrs. French requested the minutes of January 10, 2008 be removed from the Consent Agenda.

Action: Mr. Gavelek moved approval of the Consent Agenda as amended. The motion was seconded by Dr. Siddiqui and approved by the Board 7-0.

Donations – Approved by the Board.

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Clemens Crossing ES | General Mills in the amount of \$1135.60, designated for the purchase of math materials and Reading Center games and books. |
| Howard HS | KLM Youth Foundation, in the amount of \$2700, designated for the purchase of uniforms and sneakers for the varsity and JV basketball teams. |
| Long Reach HS: | Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association (AFCEA), in the amount of \$1000, designated to purchase Smart Board technology. |

Operating Budget Monthly Report – Accepted by the Board.

School Construction Monthly Reports – Accepted by the Board.

Proclamation: Youth Art Month

Presenters: Mr. Mark Coates, Instructional Facilitator; and Ms. Linda Newton, Resource Teacher.

Approved – March 13, 2008

Mr. Coates and Ms. Newton introduced three students who presented their artwork for the permanent collection of the HCPSS.

Mrs. Giles read the following proclamation:

PROCLAMATION

DESIGNATING MARCH 2008
AS
YOUTH ART MONTH

WHEREAS Youth Art Month has been observed nationwide since 1961 and has gained acceptance; and

WHEREAS youth is our most priceless asset; and

WHEREAS childhood is the time to develop interests, skills, and aptitudes that will last a lifetime; and

WHEREAS the importance of art in education is recognized as being necessary for the full development of all children;

THEREFORE BE IT PROCLAIMED that each March be observed as Youth Art Month. All citizens are urged to become interested in and give full support to quality school art programs for children and youth.

BE IT ALSO PROCLAIMED that March 2008 be designated as Youth Art Month in the Howard County Public School System.

Frank J. Aquino, Chairman
Superintendent
Board of Education of Howard County
School System

Sydney L. Cousin,
Howard County Public

Action: Mrs. Giles moved acceptance of the proclamation designating March 2008 as Youth Art Month. The motion was seconded by Mrs. French and approved by the Board 7-0.

Proclamation: National Women's History Month

Dr. Siddiqui read the following proclamation:

**PROCLAMATION
DESIGNATING
MARCH 2008 AS
WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH**

WHEREAS, women's history in America has been the story of the struggle of women of all racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds to be included in the Preamble to the Constitution, "We, the people"; and

WHEREAS, women of every race, class, and ethnic background served as early leaders in the forefront of every major progressive social change movement and have continued to work tirelessly to create a more fair and just society for all; and

WHEREAS, women now serve at the highest levels of government as Secretary of State, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and in increasing numbers in the Cabinet and the United States Congress; and

WHEREAS, we recognize the role of women, who play a critical economic, cultural, and social role in every sphere of life of the Nation by constituting a significant portion of the labor force, working both inside and outside of the home; transforming culture, history and politics as leaders, writers, scientists, educators, politicians, artists, historians, and social reformers; and

WHEREAS, the Howard County Commission for Women, established in 1980 to promote the economic, social and political equality of women, organized the Women's Hall of Fame in 1996 to recognize the accomplishments of Howard County women who have made significant and lasting contributions to the county, the state, and the nation; and

WHEREAS, the school system partners with the Commission for Women to promote an essay contest for all secondary Howard County students in celebration of Women's History Month each March; and

WHEREAS, the theme for Women's History Month in 2008, "**Women's Art – Women's Vision**";

THEREFORE BE IT PROCLAIMED that the Board of Education declares March 2008 as Women's History Month in The Howard County Public School System; and

BE IT FURTHER PROCLAIMED that the Board of Education encourages the community to join in celebration by expanding their knowledge of women who shaped history and their appreciation for the many contributions that women make to our community.

Frank J. Aquino, Chairman
Board of Education of Howard
County

Sydney L. Cousin, Superintendent
Howard County Public School
System

Action: Dr. Siddiqui moved acceptance of the proclamation designating March 2008 as National Women's History Month. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gordon and approved by the Board 7-0.

Legislative Report/2008 General Assembly

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

Mr. Plunkett presented legislation currently under consideration by the 2008 Maryland General Assembly and gave a brief description of each.

House Bill 38 – Heroes' Housing Fund of 2008

Helps with affordable housing for teachers by providing affordable loans.

House Bill 49 – Education – Maryland High School Assessment Test Results

Staff has called for a quicker turn around for High School Assessments and Maryland School Assessment data. This bill would accomplish that.

House Bill 119 – Education – Reporting Requirement – Class Size

The belief is that class size is best mandated by the local board of education, and there is no clear rationale for this bill.

House Bill 139 Education – Multiple Suspensions

This bill deals with multiple suspensions. Howard County has a code of conduct, which outlines procedures for suspensions. These decisions should be left to the local board of education.

House Bill 161 – Criminal and Juvenile Law – Malicious Destruction to Property by Act of Graffiti – Additional Penalty

Approved – March 13, 2008

This bill allows Howard County to work closely with the court system for any students who maliciously destruct school property, in particular graffiti, and it provides, as an additional penalty, that students could lose their drivers licenses if they were to destroy school property. This is seen as a very proactive bill.

House Bill 206 – Education – Student Bullying
State and School Policy – This policy is aligned with Goal 2 and simply defines bullying and requires consequences for bullying.

House Bill 285 – Education – Truancy Rates
Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support Programs and Behavior Modification Programs – HCPSS has a very promising PBIS program. The belief is that the PBIS program should not be mandated by the state. This bill also links PBIS with truancy, and it is not certain that the two are related as the bill states.

Senate Bill 77 - Education – Children in Informal Kinship Care Relationships
School districts currently have procedures in place to handle hardship cases. The HCPSS reviews each case based upon individual situations. This bill would take hardship decisions out of local control.

Discussion:

Ms. Gordon asked why House Bill 161 was only concerned with graffiti, and are there any other bills that would suspend the child's license for other infractions. Mr. Plunkett said he was not aware of any other.

Ms. Gordon commented on House Bill 285 saying she understands that HCPSS does not want any more unfunded mandates, and she voiced her support for the PBIS program as it is in place.

Mr. Cohen questioned if it is the same people who keep reintroducing the same bills and eventually they get supported. Mr. Plunkett said that is often the case.

Mrs. French said that Senator James Robey has been very collaborative with Mr. Plunkett and the Board. These are local decisions, and funding is needed to support the programs rather than having programs mandated.

Mr. Aquino asked Mr. Plunket for more explanation on House Bill 119. Mr. Plunkett said there are major ambiguities with this bill. If class size is to be directly reported to MSDE, based upon this bill, it does not include classroom teachers, guidance counselors, librarians, media specialists, social workers, psychologists, etc. As an example, Mr. Plunkett stated that in many high schools, media specialists may have a class or two, and those students would go unreported. Additionally, this bill has some reverse financial implications based upon discussion with the bill's author. If schools do not have the numbers as originally reported, then school systems may have to return some funds. For this reason House Bill 119 is strongly opposed.

Action: Mrs. French moved that we support all of the recommended positions for House Bill 38, House Bill 49, House Bill 119 (oppose), House Bill 139 (oppose), House Bill 161, House Bill 206, House Bill 285 (oppose), and Senate Bill 77 (oppose). The motion was seconded by Mr. Cohen and approved by the Board 7-0.

Mr. Plunkett noted the changes to COMAR 13A.03.02 – Graduation Requirements for Public High Schools in Maryland.

Mr. Plunkett said a draft response to MSDE to share the Board's concerns has been prepared. In summary the response emphasizes that while the Board supports the bridge plan, it is a labor-intense program, and there are concerns about the appeal process. In the appeal process there should be no exceptions above or beyond what a regular student should be afforded.

Mrs. French noted that teachers will be providing all the guidance possible to help a student pass the project. If the project does not pass the panel, why should students, who are not allowed to appeal in other situations, be allowed to appeal this decision up to the state superintendent. Mrs. French added that she feels this is an inequitable situation.

Ms. Gordon noted that students are in the bridges program because they have failed. This is a labor-intensive program on the part of staff and students.

Action: Mr. Cohen moved to accept the recommendations of the superintendent with amended language regarding the changes to Comar 13A.03.02. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Giles and approved by the Board 7-0.

Enrollment Projections Report

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

Mr. Gallihue recommended that the school system continue using existing methodology for projecting student enrollments given the acceptable error rates over the past decade. Of the 70 schools, for which we provide annual projections, 59 had error rates below five percent and only one exceeded 10 percent.

The per school mean absolute percentage error (MAPE) is 2.9 percent. Mr. Gallihue added that the key finding is that error rates for the 2007 projection compare favorably with the experience of the past decade and demonstrate the model is providing consistent estimates.

Ms. Gordon remarked that as far as the elementary school level, there has been over projecting on average, but under projecting at the high school level. Mr. Gallihue responded that, in projecting a school, staff is looking at from two to five years of data. It depends upon where the trends are going. This process has shifted in that the tendency is to slightly over project compared to the past and the earlier projection methodology.

Mr. Cohen commented that he was impressed by the accuracy considering there are 48,000 students in the school system. Positive communication with the county officials is helpful also.

Mrs. Giles noted that there are many unknowns in the lowering enrollment numbers at the elementary school level, and this is an area where there is always difficulty.

Dr. Siddiqui said, in looking at the trend overall from 1998 to 2007, the projection rate has decreased. Kindergarten is a little off this year, but that may be due to the incorporation of full-day kindergarten. Mr. Gallihue responded that capturing the data from birth to five years has been difficult, but the state has been working very well with us.

Dr. Siddiqui asked how the numbers in the elementary and middle schools are used in terms of making projections for high school. Mr. Gallihue explained that a fairly standard methodology called Cohort Component Methodology Projection is used.

Dr. Cousin commented that the number for kindergarten is always an issue. This is where there is the greatest variation in the projections. Overall projections are very good for high school. They were off by 14 students out of 16,000 students. School enrollments have become much more stable than in the past. While the growth is still increasing, it is increasing at a decreasing rate, and that statistic is reflected in the capital budget.

Mrs. Giles said that the models used in the projections are more sophisticated now than in the past. While there may be some national trending, HCPSS is lucky that factors can be localized to apply in looking at the cohort survival rate. Coordination at the state and county level has improved the ability to pinpoint these projections over time, but there are still things that cannot be predicted.

Status of Mt. Hebron HS Design

Presenters: Mr. Ken Roey, Executive Director, Facilities Planning and Management; Mr. Jim Emr, President, Smolen-Emir + Associates.

Mr. Roey and Mr. Emr presented the new design concept for the Mt. Hebron HS renovation project. The new plan calls for demolition of a portion of the building and reconstruction of a two-story addition. The concept grew out of discussions of the Mt. Hebron HS Planning Advisory Committee.

The new design incorporates general classroom improvements and the addition of space and improvements to support services as well as major programmatic improvements throughout the building including the fine arts, athletics, special education, and administrative areas. The new design results in a gain of one teaching space. The project also includes totally renovated HVAC and electrical systems and an upgrade of the entire building to meet current fire safety codes. Mr. Roey indicated that the project is on a tight timeline if work is to begin in FY 09. He anticipates that the schematic design will be brought to the Board within the next 60 days.

Mr. Roey extended his appreciation to all the members of the planning committee. Ms. Gail Coffin, Facilitator for the Planning Committee, spoke about the process. The goal of the committee was to go and get a wide variety of perspectives from staff, community members, and school administration.

Discussion:

Approved – March 13, 2008

Dr. Siddiqui asked for detailed information about the modulars. Mr. Roey said at the present time 18 may be needed, and they come in all different shapes and sizes. Modulars can be purchased or leased. They would be brought on site by the company who supplies them, and taken away when no longer needed. A 14-unit modular for a two-year lease would cost about \$2 million.

Dr. Cousin said there are modulars at a number of schools. The ones that are integrated into the building are at Pointers Run ES and Triadelphia Ridge ES. Rather than have separate relocatable classrooms, these are under one roof. They have lavatory facilities within the unit. Dr. Cousin recommended going to Pointers Run ES to see the concept and the layout which will be close. Both leasing and ownership have advantages, but there would have to be some other use if the school system were to own them. The modular concept has great advantages over having separate relocatable units. Right now there are over 150 separate relocatable classroom units, and soon there will be a surplus.

Dr. Siddiqui asked about the traffic within the modular unit. Mr. Roey said the small units are sized appropriately to allow the normal flow of traffic, and larger units are also sized for larger amount of traffic.

Mr. Gavelek noted that if 18 classrooms were needed and a 14-unit modular was purchased the four portable classrooms would be kept as well. Dr. Cousin said units will not be taken away and there will be more than enough capacity to handle the swing space for students.

Mr. Cohen asked about classrooms for world language. Mr. Roey said the high school educational specifications call for four. Dr. Cousin noted that there was not anything unique about a world language classroom from an English classroom so the classroom space could overlap.

Mrs. French questioned if the 13 classrooms that were less than 700 square feet would be brought up to the target size. Mr. Emr responded that depending upon construction specifics and budget considerations there might be 5 classrooms that are under 700 square feet when the project is finished.

Mr. Gavelek asked for an explanation of leasing versus buying a modular. Mr. Roey said buying a modular is about twice as much but there are other considerations such as the logistics of moving. Dr. Cousin said the cost of providing a unit is about \$1.5M.

Mr. Aquino noted that the current plan is more expensive than the annex plans, and the community has continued concerns about the cafeteria and the area in the front of the building.

Full-Day Kindergarten Additions, Phase VI

Presenters: Mr. Ken Roey, Mr. Michael Lahowin, Principal, TCA Architects.

Mr. Roey noted the following schools in Phase VI for full-day kindergarten:

Bellows Spring
Deep Run
Elkridge
Forest Ridge
Hollifield Station
St. John's Lane
West Friendship

There will be limited disruption to the buildings, and the construction will be isolated to fairly limited areas. Daylight has been improved with the inclusion of skylights in some areas. He reviewed the summary of the Phase VI additions. West Friendship ES actually prefers not to have the project done as they feel they are fine within the existing school. However, to continue the methodology for full-day kindergarten throughout the system, a conversion is consistent with the other schools. At Bellows Spring there are future capacity problems. The principal prefers additional classrooms be added. Eventually, redistricting may need to be considered.

Mr. Lahowin said that the purpose of this report is to review the last phase of the long- term process to provide full-day kindergarten at all the elementary schools. This project is being completed without any portable classrooms. By the summer of 2009 26 schools will have been completed. This additional space will provide 56 new kindergarten classes. Phases III and IV opened on time and under budget. Phase V was bid under budget and is under construction now. Mr. Lahowin then reviewed the typical kindergarten classroom.

Discussion:

Dr. Siddiqui said she was pleased to see the skylights. Mrs. Giles noted that she was impressed that by 2009 there will be the space for all the students in full-day kindergarten.

Mrs. French remarked that West Friendship ES is under capacity but has a life skills class. She asked if that was under consideration for how the building is utilized. The regular capacity says West Friendship has 315 students. When you take away the two classes and make it into one, will it still have a capacity of 368, and how is that impacting on the life skills class. The area being considered for renovation is an area that was just renovated. Is the main reason a health issue due to a bathroom in the kindergarten room.

Mr. Roey responded that to be consistent with other school renovations adding a bathroom is the correct way to go. He said he would recommend against any addition. In looking at the projections, in order to institute the program it should be done this way. Dr. Cousin added that schools are mandated to have this program. This is a systemic issue not an individual school issue.

Action: Dr. Siddiqui moved approval of the Design Report for Phase VI Additions and Conversions for Full-Day Kindergarten as submitted. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Giles and approved by the Board 5-1 with Mrs. French voting against the motion.

Hiring and Separation Report

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

Mr. Thompson, Mr. Diaz, and Ms. Zilber presented the annual report on employee hiring, employee resignations, and retirements. In the one-year period ending September 30, 2007, there were 573 new teachers hired to accommodate the growth of 350 new students, as well as to replace 420 teachers who resigned, retired, took leaves of absence, or were promoted. Additionally, 28 teachers returned from leaves of absence.

During this same period, 392 support services employees were hired, which represents a slight increase from the previous year's total of 361. Eighty-five support services employees were transferred during the reporting period. There were 220 separations during the period, which is a decrease from the previous year's total of 239.

Mr. Thompson reported that there continues to be a shortage of teaching candidates throughout Maryland. As a result, 41 percent of the system's new teachers were recruited from outside of the state.

Starting teacher salaries in the HCPSS are the fourth highest in the state. In addition, signing bonuses for teachers in critical content areas continue to be an effective recruiting incentive. Howard County, one of the first local school systems in Maryland to use this incentive, continues to see signing bonuses as an asset in filling vacancies in critical content areas. Efforts continue to be made to diversify staff according to experience, age, race, and gender.

Discussion:

Mrs. French said this is a very impressive report and thanked the Human Resources staff. She asked if the Integrated Financial and Administrative Solutions (IFAS) will allow someone to apply on line. Mr. Thompson said this phase is planned to be introduced this spring or summer.

Dr. Siddiqui asked what process a teacher would follow who has come from another country. Mr. Thompson said the certification process would be explained and how their certification compares to what is expected here.

Mr. Cohen asked if there were any vacancies now. Mr. Thompson said yes, but principals were most likely using long-term substitutes. Mr. Cohen then asked how many states have reciprocity with HCPSS. Mr. Thompson responded that MSDE has worked closely with local districts, and that is enabling HCPSS to work with a majority of the states.

Ms. Gordon asked if there are incentives for paraeducators to become teachers. Mr. Thompson said there are reimbursement and scholarships available.

Mrs. Giles said it is encouraging to see how staff has worked to retain teachers. Mr. Aquino commented that the report was very impressive.

Scheduling Board Meetings and Other Activities

Board members agreed to combine the next two budget work sessions into one session on February 13, 2008.

Mr. Aquino reported that Superintendent Cousin has indicated his interest in renewing his contract. Board members expressed support for his leadership and voted unanimously to enter into contract negotiations with Dr. Cousin.

Action: Mrs. Giles moved that the Board proceed with contract negotiations with Dr. Cousin. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cohen and approved by the Board 6-0.

Recess

The Chairman recessed the meeting at 6:55 p.m. and reconvened at 7:45 p.m.

Public Forum

There was no one present to address Public Forum.

Appointment – PTA Council of Howard County Monthly Report

Mrs. Grauso, President, thanked Mr. Aquino, the other Board members, and staff for their responses to the questions posed regarding the Superintendent's Proposed FY09 Operating Budget. Mrs. Grauso reported that the PTA Council will again be conducting a Healthy School Walk during the last week in February. Last year the survey was conducted in April, and council felt that an earlier time frame would be better making it less prone to conflicts.

Public Hearing – Policy 6000 – School Site Selection and Acquisition

Mr. Chris Wertman, Chairman, Community Advisory Council

- Thanked staff for the opportunity to be a part of the process.
- CAC concurs with the changes and the rationale for the changes.

Policy 1010 – Discrimination and Policy 1020 - Sexual Harassment

Presenters: Mrs. Susan Mascaro, Director, Staff Relations; Mrs. Min Kim, Coordinator, Equity Assurance.

Mrs. Kim said Board members had previously suggested modification to language. These changes have been reflected in the revised policy.

This policy standard regarding notification was revised to be consistent with similar policies. The revised policy also provides clear pathways for students, employees, and third parties to file complaints and clarifies which complaints must be reported to the Equity Assurance Coordinator.

Mrs. Mascaro noted in regard to policy announcements and dissemination, the language is not changed but this can be addressed in another manner. Staff is working with Public Information to create a poster highlighting parts of the policy. These posters can be displayed prominently throughout the schools. Staff recommends July 1, 2008, as the effective date of this policy.

Discussion:

Mrs. French said she appreciated staff considering her concerns and is very pleased with the new language.

Action: Mr. Gavelek moved adoption of revised Policy 1010 Discrimination as recommended effective July 1, 2008. The motion was seconded by Mrs. French and approved by the Board 7-0.

Action: Mr. Gavelek moved adoption of revised Policy 1020 Sexual Harassment as recommended effective July 1, 2008. The motion was seconded by Mrs. French and approved by the Board 7-0.

Policy 7010 – Confidentiality of Personnel Records

Mr. Kirk Thompson noted that one change was made to the language as suggested by the Board.

Action: Mrs. Giles moved to accept the recommendation of the superintendent including a change in title to revision of Policy 7010 Confidentiality of Personnel Records and Files, effective July 1, 2008.

The motion was seconded by Ms. Gordon and approved by the Board 7-0.

Policy 7070 – Promotion of Certificated Personnel to Administrative and Supervisory positions

Presenter: Mr. Kirk Thompson

Mr. Thompson thanked all the staff who contributed to the revision of this policy and noted the following proposed changes:

- Policy has been refocused on appointment rather than promotion. It addresses both promotion from within and appointments from outside the system.
- Adds/modifies definitions for certificated, certificated administrative and supervisory positions.
- Addresses professional development.
- Implementation procedures have been modified.
- Announcements of vacancies has been updated.
- Requires announcements to comply with negotiated agreements.
- Screening can proceed pending receiving written documentation.
- Applicants remain in the assistant principal pool for three years instead of five.
- The superintendent may make exceptions to procedures according to a situation of unique needs.

Discussion:

Mr. Aquino asked why the pool has been reduced from five to three years. Mr. Thompson explained that there is a large qualified pool. Applicants can be reassessed after three years. Someone could be in the pool for five years and not know if they were going to be selected or not. After three years they can reapply and be reassessed.

Mrs. Erickson added that staff felt it was to the candidates benefit to go through another interview process with more credentials so everyone could see the most current types of activities they have been involved in.

Ms. Gordon agreed that it was a positive experience to go through the interview process again. Mrs. Giles concurred that five years is too long and three years is more beneficial. Mr. Aquino asked

if people are passed over in the pool, do they leave the system. Mr. Thompson responded not necessarily.

Mr. Thompson reviewed the time line as follows:

Public Hearing on March 13, 2008

Action on April 10, 2008

Effective date of July 1, 2008

Policy 4090 – Debt Management

Policy 4100 – Investments

Presenter: Mrs. Beverly Davis, Director, Finance.

Mrs. Davis reported that a committee of stakeholders was convened to make recommendations. The committee considered how current policies might be revised/realigned to incorporate the areas under consideration. After a review of existing HCPSS fiscal policies as well as those of other school districts, the committee agreed that the policy language for debt management and investment management should be incorporated in individual policies within the HCPSS 4000 Fiscal Policies Series.

Mrs. Davis added that a public hearing is scheduled for March 13, 2008, and action is scheduled for April 10, 2008.

Discussion:

Board members did not have any questions.

Policy 5220 – Criteria for Selecting School Bus Contractors

Policy 5230 – School Bus Contractors, Bus Operators, and Assistants

Presenter: Mr. David Drown, Director, Transportation.

Mr. Drown noted that he chaired a committee of stakeholders to make recommendations for revisions to both policies. He then reviewed the following highlights of the proposed revisions.

- Review all parts of the policies to update legal references as needed and to ensure compliance with legal mandates including recent revisions to COMAR.

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- Review the policies for consistency with other school system policies.
- Consider whether the parameters for number of buses owned by a contractor under Policy 5230 should remain the same or be revised.
- Consider recommendations from the Contractors' Association.
- Update position titles as needed.

Mr. Drown added that there is a Public Hearing on March 13, 2008, with Action on April 10, 2008, and an effective date of July 1, 2008.

Discussion:

Mrs. French asked when Mr. Drown meets with the contractors. Mr. Drown said in the spring and fall. Bus drivers are invited to the contractors meeting as well.

Policy 10040 – Charter Schools

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

Mrs. Miller noted the following highlights to the policy:

- Revise the purpose statement to reflect the policy's purpose rather than the charter school's.
- Allows designee to handle applications.
- Modifies language related to determination of per pupil amounts.
- Clarifies Superintendent's authority to assign/transfer employees.
- Aligns admission/tuition with Policy 9000.
- Clarifies procedures for renewal/closing of charter schools.
- Removes procedural language regarding evaluation of proposals from policy.

Discussion:

Mrs. French suggested a notation on deadline. Mr. Cohen suggested changes to the wording.

Adjournment

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 9 p.m.

Information

- A. Food and Nutrition Services Financial Report
- B. Safety, Environment, and Risk Management Report (formerly Vandalism Report)