

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HOWARD COUNTY
AND
HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL**

June 17, 2008

The Board of Education of Howard County and the Howard County Council held a joint quarterly meeting on Tuesday, June 17, 2008, at 8:15 a.m. The meeting was held in Board Room B of the Department of Education located at 10910 Route 108, Ellicott City, Maryland:

Present:

Board of Education

Frank J. Aquino, Chairman
Ellen Flynn Giles, Vice Chairman
Lawrence H. Cohen
Sandra H. French
Patricia S. Gordon
Diane B. Mikulis
Janet Siddiqui, M.D.

Howard County Council

Courtney Watson, Chairperson
Mary Kay Sigaty, Vice Chair
Calvin Ball
Jennifer Terrasa

Sydney L. Cousin, Superintendent
Robert Glascock, Superintendent – School Administration
Linda Wise, Assistant Superintendent - School Administration
Mamie Perkins, Chief of Staff
Ken Roey, Executive Director – Facilities Planning and Management
Joel Gallihue, Manager – School Planning
Pamela Blackwell, Director – Student Services
Donna Heller, Health Services Coordinator
Arlene Conway, Administrative Secretary

Sheila Tolliver, Administrator
Jeff Meyers, Senior Admin. Analyst
Haskel Arnold, County Auditor

Mr. Aquino called the meeting to order at 8:18 a.m.

Feasibility Study Briefing

Mr. Roey noted that the Feasibility Study was recently presented to the Board and explained that it is slightly different than in recent years. Mr. Gallihue spoke about the differences and called attention to the HCPSS website. The Feasibility Study is posted in PDF form, and it

consists of the actual document with a supplement, including many of the charts. The document is designed so the reader will understand the basic concepts within six pages. The findings for this year include evaluation of the goals for the redistricting process. Based upon the findings in the Gilbert Study, some reclassification of capacity is being recommended. Long-term planning is needed for elementary and middle school capacity. There are three scenarios shown in the document, and an approach to scoring the scenarios is also shown.

Mr. Gallihue noted that capacities of schools dictate the calculation of capacity utilization percentage. By Board of Education policy, a school with capacity utilization over 110 percent is referred to as over-utilized, while a school below 90 percent capacity utilization is referred to as under-utilized. A work group studied alternative methods for calculating capacity for schools and recommended a proportional method of allocating classrooms. Part of this document shows new ways of looking at the way different scenarios stand up against the considerations present in the policy.

Dr. Cousin added that at this time there is no decision to change capacities in the schools. For the 2009 school year, staff will start the planning and recommendations for implementation of redistricting by August 2010. He reminded the community that staff will be planning one year prior to implementation.

Discussion included the following:

- How to utilize capacity in the west.
- Special Education designated classrooms were not part of the overall count.
- Other program issues impact capacity.
- Five elementary schools will be considered "closed" in 2011 due to current projections.
- Availability of finding and funding sites is a complex process.
- Balancing schools with high MSA score pass rates with others that have lower scores would cause students to be moved around the county.

Mrs. Watson commented that she was very impressed with the Feasibility Study. She added that it is evolving into a very good planning tool and aid to the Board of Education.

Nurse-to-School Ratio at the Middle and High School Levels

Discussion included the following:

- Current ratio is one nurse to 1400 students for all levels.
- Currently, there is one nurse for two to three schools.
- There is also a health assistant in every school.
- Next year there will be one nurse to 1100 students, with one nurse for two schools at every level.
 - Staffing formula includes the number of nursing treatments, enrollment, mobility, Limited English Proficiency (LEP), Free and Reduced Meal (FARM) students, Special Education students, and Title One students.
- Comparison to other jurisdictions: Maryland Public Schools Annual School Health Services Survey for School Year 2006-2007 identifies that five of Maryland's twenty-four jurisdictions have a registered nurse (RN) in every school; eight jurisdictions provide an RN or licensed practical nurse (LPN) in every school; eleven jurisdictions utilize one RN for every 1-4 schools with a paraprofessional in every school. Information comparing the Howard County and Anne Arundel staffing models was discussed.
- With Board of Nursing approval and criteria met, health assistants are trained to do complex nursing tasks.
- The nurses are involved in a comprehensive delivery of coordinated school health services.
- In next year's staffing, based on staffing formulas, nurses will be paired together with a high needs (focus) or high enrollment school with a lower enrollment school/lower need school.

County Health Department's Role related to School Nurses

Items discussed included the following:

- Role of the Health Department with school nurses.
 - Health Dept. works collaboratively on projects such as asthma education, dental screenings/sealants, flu mist clinics, hearing and vision screening, immunization, and communicable disease surveillance.
 - School system is opposed to the Health Department taking over the nursing program from the schools.
 - Goals of the Health Department are in conflict with the school system's goals.
 - Models are very different. The school system implements a coordinated school health model, with

nurses functioning as part of the overall student support staff, and addresses student health needs as it relates to academic success.

- The Health Department and the school system are governed by different confidentiality laws, e.g., HIPAA (protected/written authorization) and FERPA (“need to know” to assure student safety). There are concerns related to assuring student safety with student health information protected.
- The low immunization exclusion rate last year was cited as an example of the effectiveness of the coordinated school health model. School staff (nurses/health assistants, administrators, student services staff, liaisons, teachers) joined together to inform and assist families to assure student compliance with the new immunization regulations.

Sustainable Funding for Capital Projects

Mr. Roey stated that the Gilbert Study confirmed that there is a need for maintenance funding. There is a need for sustained capital funding into the future to maintain the school system’s 75 buildings. When \$3.5 million is cut from systemic renovations, it has a large impact on maintenance projects. The inflation factors have been increasing rapidly. In 2005, the IAC formula for construction costs per square foot was just over \$150 per square foot. Today it is about \$240 per square foot. While state funding has increased over the last few years, it is still less than 25 percent of the total capital funding. Local bonds have paid for about 50 percent, and the remainder has come from the transfer tax and excise tax. While it is difficult to discuss, possible solutions include increasing taxes.

Items discussed included:

- Funding is going down while needs are increasing.
- Costs of projects are increasing.
- As projects are deferred, the issue is compounded.
- Excise tax is still an option – though sustaining it is a question.
- Funding will drop to \$250 million this year.
- The community may not always be supportive of capital funding for education if other services are neglected.

Upcoming Renovation Guidelines

Mr. Roey discussed the guidelines that Mr. Tom Kierzkowski, Director of School Facilities, has been working on. The Superintendent's School Planning and Facility Advisory Committee is looking at these guidelines and will come to the Board in the fall with recommendations. The goal is to have a set of guidelines in place later this year.

Items discussed:

- Educational specifications are guidelines and are not the standard for all schools.
- Renovations to schools are based on the needs of the school.

The chairman adjourned the meeting at 9:55 a.m.