

A Summary of the Board of Education Meeting Thursday, June 26, 2008

ACTION ITEMS

- Approved the restricted consent agenda including staff personnel and bids and contracts.
- Approved the regular consent agenda including donations.
- Approved HCAA as the bargaining unit for the Leadership Intern position.
- Approved the Audit Plan for 2008-2009.
- Approved committee assignments for Board members.
- Approved the Quarterly Agenda for Board meetings, July-September 2008.
- Approved dates and times for Board meetings and other activities.

New Student Board Member Takes Office

Clerk of Court Margie Rappaport administered the oath of office to Adejire Bademosi, 2008-09 student member to the Board of Education. Adejire officially takes office on July 1.

Staff Actively Seeking School Sites

Planning Manager Joel Gallihue reported on the school system's ongoing search for appropriate school sites. Although he looks in all regions, Gallihue indicated the current focus is in the east due to the Route 1 Revitalization Project and the resulting development. Executive Director of Operations Ken Roey noted that the current site acquisition fund contains \$10 million, which is not sufficient.

Technology Plan Sets Vision for the 21st Century Learner

Assistant Superintendent Robert Glascock and Executive Director of Instruction and Business Technology Tom Miller reported that over the past few years, programs and initiatives have been developed to begin addressing the 21st Century learner and the educational environment required to engage our "digital natives." Technology skills and literacy have been integrated into the HCPSS curriculum at all grade levels, real-time student data and assessment information is guided by the needs of intervention programs, and attention is given to computer and technology replacement, infrastructure, and equity issues.

They noted that the HCPSS Technology Plan has two major purposes. The first and foremost is to lay the foundation for the establishment of a 21st Century learning environment that engages students and incorporates technology to align with the Howard County Public School System's goals for student achievement and a safe and nurturing educational environment. The Technology Plan is also required as part of the Maryland State Department of Education's Bridge to Excellence Master Plan. Each county is responsible for providing a five-year technology plan, which also ensures eligibility in the federal e-Rate Funding program. The plan focuses on five key areas:

Student Learning

Beginning in August 2008, every curricular program will have an electronic instructional guide for educators accessible via the school system Intranet. Currently, the HCPSS provides in-school and at-home access to a variety of online databases. Discovery Education streaming provides teachers with the tools to incorporate fresh, vibrant digital media into student learning environments quickly and easily.

The HCPSS is a participant in the MSDE Partnership Grant entitled “Technology Literacy by Grade 8.” One of the major goals of this grant is to develop a PreK-8 Educational Technology State Voluntary Curriculum.

Future initiatives will include a virtual 1:1 learning environment, the use of electronic textbooks, a student online learning community, and the use of emerging technologies for alternative instructional delivery methods.

Professional Development

Currently, staff from the Office of Media and Educational Technology present information on integrating technology into instruction during countywide professional development days. Staff also offer a Technology Leadership Academy for Administrators and works directly with administrators and school improvement teams to integrate educational technology into school improvement plans.

A set of relevant, targeted, and job-embedded technology competencies is being developed for all staff. This involves reviewing job descriptions and performing needs assessments to define the technology knowledge and skills staff need to do their jobs. An ongoing technology professional development program will be developed that provides for the technology training needs of all staff and promotes professional growth.

Training and support efforts will be encouraged across administrative and instructional levels to promote sharing of best practices and related tools. Each individual, school, and office/department will be encouraged to include technology training in annual professional development plans.

Administrative Productivity and Efficiency

There will be a focus on increasing access, collaboration, and coordination of instructional resources to aid in the delivery of instruction and to support school improvement planning.

Universal Access

To provide an agile and robust technology infrastructure, staff will employ an industry standard to network security, hardware and applications, intrusion detection/protection capabilities and authentication practices. New staffing ratios for instruction and operations will be created based on increases in technology requirements, new staffing, and new initiatives.

The technology infrastructure will be standardized and refreshed on a regular basis. The HCPSS Replacement Plan incorporates both the equitable distribution of equipment for instruction and operations (based on requirements) and also incrementally improves and standardizes the underlying infrastructure needed to support the technology.

Research and Evaluation

A change-management process with a governing board will be established to evaluate changes that impact the system, schools, or programs. There will also be a continuation of triangulating technology decision-making through the use of internal expertise, external expertise, and the HCPSS Technology Advisory Committee.

The HCPSS will evaluate the Technology Plan on a periodic basis through the Bridge to Excellence Master Plan. The system will monitor the implementation of the plan and the progress towards implementing technology standards for teachers, students, and administrators.

Food and Nutrition Program Called Exceptional

Director of Food and Nutrition Services Mary Klatko presented an update on the implementation of the school system's wellness policy. The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 mandated that each Maryland school system implement a Wellness Policy on the first day of the 2006-07 school year. The mandate required each school system to have a policy that includes the following:Σ Goals for nutrition education, physical activity and other school-based activities

- Nutrition Guidelines for all foods available on each school campus during the day
- Guidelines for reimbursable school meals that cannot be less than USDA standards
- Establishment of a plan for implementation and monitoring of the policy
- Involvement of stakeholders.

In all HCPSS schools, the wellness policy reflects the importance of student healthy decision making on food and beverage choices; the role of nutrition education in the school curriculum, including education about abnormal eating behaviors and the importance of physical activity; and developing and promoting opportunities for physical activity before, during and after the school day. The policy has been operational for two (2) years with great success.

Last year an independent company, InTeam, Inc., was hired to assess the program for the purpose of assuring parents, members of the community and the Board of Education that students are being educated in a healthy environment and receiving nutritious meals with the continuing objective of satisfying student demands for high quality appetizing foods served in sanitary and attractive surroundings. The two representatives of the company, one a registered dietitian and the other a large district director, found the HCPSS program to be exceptional.

Klatko recommends adding G2 and iced tea to the list of beverages available in schools. She also noted that Centennial Lane Elementary School is piloting an organic snack initiative during the 2008-2009 school year.

In Other Action...

In his report to the Board, Superintendent Sydney Cousin congratulated the Howard County recipients of the Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholars for 2008. He also congratulated Business, Community and Government Relations Officer Roger Plunkett, who has accepted a position of Assistant Superintendent with the Harford County Public Schools and thanked Ellen Miller, Policy and Charter Schools Specialist, for her years of service to the school system. Dr. Cousin also thanked everyone who worked to make this year's Summer Institute an overwhelming success, including the staff in the Office of Professional Development, the nearly 200 presenters, and host school Marriotts Ridge High.

Board of Education member Patricia Gordon reported on the most recent State Board Meeting at which the Board discussed the Task Force Report on Middle Schools and plans for a universal method for tracing dropout rates across the state. Board Vice

Chairman Ellen Giles reported on the MABE Summer Workshop.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Education is scheduled for Thursday, July 10, 2008.