

# MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HOWARD COUNTY

September 6, 2007

The Board of Education of Howard County held a regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, September 6, 2007, 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:

Diane Mikulis, Chairman (left at 6:05 p.m.)  
Frank Aquino, Vice Chairman  
Lawrence Cohen  
Sandra H. French  
Ellen Flynn Giles  
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

Mrs. Mikulis called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m., and Ms. Caitlan Downing, Glenelg HS student, led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

## Public Forum

There was no one present to address the Board.

## Approval of Agenda

The following changes were made to the agenda:

- Add: Item IX.B. Proclamation Recognizing Harriet Tubman Day – Action.
- Delete: Item XIII. Appointment – PTA Council of Howard County (to be rescheduled).

*Action:* Mr. Aquino moved approval of the agenda as amended. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Giles and approved by the members of the Board (8/0).

## Superintendent's Report

Dr. Cousin thanked staff for a smooth opening to the school year. He introduced Mr. Michael Duffy, Athletics and Activities Manager at Howard HS, and congratulated

Approved – September 20, 2007

him on earning his certification as a Master Athletic Administrator. He also reported on visits to Howard County schools by Reverend Dr. Jesse Jackson and Governor Martin O'Malley and on the school system's latest High School Assessment (HSA) pass rates and SAT scores.

### **Student Representative's Report**

Ms. Caitlan Downing, Glenelg HS SGA (Student Government Association) President reported on recent events, including the new addition and renovations to the school. She also reported the following:

- Class of 2009 was ranked number one in Howard County for the percentage of students passing each of the HSAs.
- 15 GT Independent Research Mentorship students gave presentations at the County Student Learning Conference Center, sponsored by Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Lab.
- The 2007 fall musical, True Colors, was ranked as the number one high school musical in the state of Maryland by USA Today and was selected to be performed at the Columbia Festival of the Arts 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration.
- Glenelg is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with a football game on September 15 and a rededication ceremony on September 16 at 2:00 p.m. All are welcome to attend.

### **Board Members' Reports**

No reports were presented.

### **Consent Agenda – General**

Financial Reports/School Construction Reports – Accepted by the Board.

Minutes of August 16, 2007 (Regular Meeting) – Approved by the Board.

*Action:* Mr. Cohen moved approval of the General Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gordon and approved by the members of the Board (8/0).

### **Consent Agenda – Restricted**

Staff Personnel; Donations; and Closed Meeting Minutes of August 22 and 29, 2007 (Official and Confidential).

*Action:* Mrs. Giles moved approval of the Restricted Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Mr. Aquino and approved by the members of the Board (7/0).

Staff Personnel – Approved by the Board.

*Resignations-Violation of Contract:*

Name	School	Grade or Subject	Reason	Howard County	Years in Effective Date
Bound, Joshua	HOHS	Soc. Studies	Other Employment	7.0	06/14/07
Christophe, Jody	RHHS	Foreign Lang.	Other Employment	9.0	06/14/07
Frazier, Terralyn	PMS	Reading Spec.	Family Obligations	1.0	06/14/07
Gallagher, Julia	DMS	Special Ed.	Personal	1.0	06/14/07
Grueter, Kathy	SJES	Pre-K	Dissatisfied	1.0	06/14/07
Lane, Kerry	BMMS	Reading	Relocation	4.0	06/14/07

*Resignations:*

Name	School	Grade or Subject	Reason	Howard County	Years in Effective Date
Booker, Barbara	LRHS	Special Ed.	Relocation	2.0	06/14/07
Coyne, Maria	MHHS	World Lang.	Personal	1.0	06/14/07
Culver, Debra	Fr. Leave	Occ. Therapist	Relocation	14.0	06/30/07
Dennis, Franka	HWS	Reading	Promotion Other Co.	2.0	06/14/07
Hernandez, Jennifer	GHS	Foreign Lang.	Promotion Other Co.	11.0	06/14/07
Jamil, Usman	WLHS	Computer	Relocation	1.0	06/14/07
Jones, Linda	BBES	Kindergarten	Personal	3.0	06/14/07
Mench, Mark	HoHS	Social Studies	Other Employment	2.0	06/14/07
Mennefee, Susan	GES	Reading	Personal	9.0	06/14/07
Myles, Vernetta	ReHS	Soc. Studies	Promotion Other Co.	6.0	06/14/07
Peirce, LrLee	RHS	Business Ed.	Relocation	2.0	06/14/07
Roberts, Linda	ReHS	Foreign Lang.	Personal	3.0	06/14/07
Yokel, Mary Jean	CRS	Occ. Therapist	Personal	9.0	06/14/07

*Contracts:*

Name	Grade or School	Subject	Place of Last Teaching Assignment	Grade/ Step	Effective/ Date
Allen-Wallace, Ashana	CRS-U	RDG/ENG	Wilmington, DE	A-04	08/21/07
Amrani, Helayne	WVES	SPE	Granada Hills, CA	B-18	08/21/07
Arnold, Stephanie	GCES/WE	ART	--	A-01	08/21/07
Ashton, Cynthia	SES	ELE	--	C-01	08/21/07
Auld, Patricia	DOES	ELE	Private School	A-04	08/21/07
Bailey, Tracey	CRS-U	SPE	Baltimore County	B-15	08/21/07
Baird, Karen	HCMS	SPE	Private School	C-04	08/21/07
Bell, Andrew	CRS-U	WLA (Spanish)	--	A-01	08/21/07
Bell, Terry	TRES	ELE	Norfolk, VA	A-13	08/21/07
Boyle, Karen	PLES	ELE	Haltom City, TX	C-08	08/21/07
Burnett, Judy	RES	ECE	Private School	C-05	08/21/07
Bridgett, Leslie	CO		Baltimore County	C-18	07/01/07
Carlson, Carolyn	MWES	SPE		C-01	08/21/07
Casey, Erin	ELMS	SPAN/FRENCH	Private Industry	C-03	08/21/07
Cavendish, B. Sue	HaHS	CRD	MSDE	C-02	08/21/07
Cecil, Jacob	RHHS	ART	--	C-01	08/21/07

Chick, Lisa	PLES	ELE	Hollywood, SC	A-06	08/21/07
Chopyk, Nicole	WES	SPE	--	A-01	08/21/07
Dellinger, Karen	CRS-U	ESOL/FRENCH	Montgomery Co.	B-09	08/21/07
DePola, Reagan	GMS	SST	--	C-01	08/21/07
DeVaney, Melinda	GHS	SST/LATIN	Private School	B-17	08/21/07
DeVuono, Laura	BBES	ELE	--	A-01	08/21/07
Deweese, Thomas	FES	ELE	Wilmington, DE	A-08	08/21/07
Dingle, Marian	GES	ELE	Decatur, GA	D-09	08/21/07
Disotelle, Shelly	RHS	MAT	Mohonasen, NY	C-15	08/21/07
Edwards, Kimberly	OMHS	SCI	Tuskegee, AL	C-04	08/21/07
Felske, Candice	WaES	SPE	Private School	C-04	08/21/07
Fleming, Steven	OMHS	DRAMA/ENG	--	A-01	08/21/07
Frazier, Lindsey	LWES	ELE	--	A-01	08/21/07
Fyhr, Christoffer	LRHS	MUS	--	A-01	08/21/07
Gayle, Nicolene	PLES	ELE	Baltimore City	C-05	08/21/07
Hay, Matthew	WaES/GCES	MUS	--	A-01	08/21/07
Johnson, Douglas	LRHS	SPE	HCPSS – IA	C-11	08/21/07
Johnson, Lisa	AHS	ELE	--	C-01	08/21/07
Joholske, Lindsey	FRES	SPE	--	C-01	08/21/07
Karbanssi, Jessica	PLES	ECE	--	A-01	08/21/07
Karunakaran, Rohini	HoHS	WLA(French)	Private School	A-05	08/21/07
Katzen, Jennifer	BBMS	ALT ED	Balt Co DSS	C-08	08/21/07
Kim, Jennifer	CRS-L	ECE	--	C-01	08/21/07
Kolnich, Justin	BBES	PE	--	A-01	08/21/07
Koelsch, Stacey	AES	ELE	Houston, TX	A-08	08/21/07
Kraig, Robin	ReHS	GUI	--	C-01	07/02/07
Kramvi, Marina	MRHS/MHHS	ART	Baltimore City	C-08	08/21/07
Laycock, Jennifer	VES	SPE	--	C-01	08/21/07
Lee, Dianna	LWES	ELE	--	A-01	08/21/07
Ledgard, Christina	PLES	SPE	--	C-01	08/21/07
Lewis, Helen	GCES	SPE	--	C-01	08/21/07
Lloyde, Olga	LWES	ELE	Prince George's Co.	B-09	08/21/07
Loretto, Shannon	GCES/HES	TECH ED	Private School	C-06	08/21/07
Macek, Teresa	VES	SPE	Sharpsville, PA	B-15	08/21/07
Macfarland, Kaitlin	FES	PE	--	A-01	08/21/07
McGuire, Sarah	LWES	ELE	--	A-01	08/21/07
McMullen, Jill	MHMS	ENG/SST/RDG	Mayfield City, OH	C-09	08/21/07
Morsberger, Erin	GES	ELE	--	A01	08/21/07
Morabito, Christina	TSES	ELE	--	A-01	08/21/07
Myers, Nancy	PVMS	SPE	Montgomery Co.	B-18	08/21/07
Nalli, Gina	RHS	SPE	Butler, PA	C-08	08/21/07
Norgart, Laura	BPES	ELE	Ashburn, VA	A-08	08/21/07
O'Conner, Elizabeth	TSES	ELE	--	A-01	08/21/07
O'Neill, Laura	HES	ELE	--	A-01	08/21/07
Petry, Kimberly	EES	ECE	--	A-01	08/21/07
Piluk, Jason	CHS	SCI	Queen Anne's Co.	D-06	08/21/07

Raines, Nicole	MHMS	HEA	Old Bridge, NJ	A-05	08/21/07
Reed, Simon	HCMS	SPE	Private School	B-05	08/21/07
Richards, Robert	GES/VES	PE	--	A-01	08/21/07
Rieben, Carolyn	WaES	ECE	Montgomery Co.	A-03	08/21/07
Roberson, Maureen	GHS	SPE	HCPSS – IA	A-03	08/21/07
Rosen, Carol	LRHS	CSC	Private Industry	C-06	08/21/07
Salvatore, Hannah	WLMS/AHS	MUS	--	A-01	08/21/07
Schurman, Casey	BBES	ELE	--	A-01	08/21/07
Sedin, Daleth	CHS/HaHS	TECH ED	Naples, FL	A-10	08/21/07
Sharpmack, Kimberly	MRHS	SPE	HCPSS – IA	A-07	08/21/07
Sherman, Jennifer	MHHS	ART	--	A-01	08/21/07
Shucosky, Laura	PLES	ELE	--	A-01	08/21/07
Sivak, Jeffrey	RHS	SCI	Private Industry	E-11	08/21/07
Smith, Cynthia	GHS	SLP	Griffin, GA	C-18	08/21/07
Smith, Heather	LES	ELE	--	A-01	08/21/07
Stohlman, Christine	BMMS	SST	--	A-01	08/21/07
Tittsworth, Thomas	MHHS	SPE	HCPSS – IA	A-02	08/21/07
Tierney, Stacey	BMMS	SPE	Huntington Station, NYC	NYC-06	08/21/07
Toth, Michelle	BMMS	ENG	--	C-01	08/21/07
Wade, Cynthia	WVES	DHH	Tallahassee, FL	D-09	08/21/07
Wells, Kerri	MRHS	SPE	Private School	A-07	08/21/07
Yoon, Christine	MWES	ELE	--	C-01	08/21/07
Zielinski, Mariah	MRHS	MAT	--	A-01	08/21/07

*Leaves of Absence:*

Name	Grade or School	Subject	Reason	Years in Howard County	Effective Date
Sellers, Elizabeth	HCMS	Special Ed.		2.0	8/21/07

*Retirements:*

Name	Grade or School	Subject	Years in Howard County	Effective Date
Gilson, Marilyn	SWES	Reading	9.0	07/01/07
Scott, Linda	Fr. Leave	Foreign Lang.	17.0	06/01/07
Sneider, Jane	DGES	Special Ed.	11.0	07/01/07
Williams, Lestine	CLES	Elem. Ed.	33.0	07/10/07

Donations: Approved by the Board.

Clemens Crossing ES: Giant Food, in the amount of \$4,522.01; designated for educational supplies and schoolwide programs.

Northrop Grumman Foundation, in the amount of \$1,000; designated for math and science educational supplies.

- Guilford ES: AHA Process, in the amount of \$1,000; designated for classroom supplies and schoolwide student incentives.
- Hollifield Station ES: PTA, in the amount of \$1,000; designated for teacher support and classroom materials.
- Target, in the amount of \$1,393.83; designated for classroom materials and teacher support.
- Lisbon ES: Ray Everett, in the amount of \$1,000; designated for supplies and materials for students
- PTA, in the amount of \$8,000; designated for a series of reading books.
- Longfellow ES: Giant Food, in the amount of \$577; designated for student incentives.
- Phelps Luck ES: Giant Food, in the amount of \$1,298.53, designated for schoolwide student activities.
- Waterloo ES: Giant Food, in the amount of \$1,202.14; designated for supplies for teachers.
- Target, in the amount of \$510; designated for behavior incentives for students.
- Waverly ES: General Mills (Box Tops for Education), in the amount of \$720.70; designated for computer speakers for each pod.
- Giant Food, in the amount of \$711.56; designated to purchase supplies for the schoolwide Positive Incentive Program.
- Northrop Grumman Foundation, in the amount of \$1,000; designated for student incentives and science fair boards for students.
- Bonnie Branch MS: Giant Food, in the amount of \$1,865.88; designated for teacher support and classroom supplies and materials.
- Northrop Grumman Foundation, in the amount of \$1,000; designated for a projector for the science program and math program supplies.

- Ellicott Mills MS: PTA, in the amount of \$2,687.51; designated for student planners to assist students in organizing their academic activities.
- Folly Quarter MS: Northrop Grumman Foundation, in the amount of \$1,000; designated for equipment, materials and supplies for the math and science programs.
- Glenwood MS: General Mills (Box Tops for Education), in the amount of \$507.74; designated for the purchase of pens, portable hand sanitizers and other student supplies.
- Martins Food, in the amount of \$664.94; designated to purchase water bottles, pens, and stickers for students.
- Mayfield Woods MS: PTA, in the amount of \$500; designated to fund scholarships for student field trips.
- Wilde Lake MS: PTSA, in the amount of \$1,017.08; designated for the PBIS/PAR program.
- Atholton HS: Giant Food, in the amount of \$8,668.71; designated for the purchase of computers for the yearbook and newspaper programs, English textbooks, and LCD projectors for science and math.
- Kimco Realty Corporation, in the amount of \$2,000; designated to fund the Hickory Ridge Merchants' Scholarship.
- Glenelg HS: LGB Associates, Inc., in the amount of \$1,500; designated for the Principal's Scholarship Fund.
- Oakland Mills HS: Northrop Grumman in the amount of \$1,000; designated for supplies for the forensic science, AP environmental science and biology programs.

Donation to the Department of Special Education – Approved by the Board.

The Department of Special Education has received an anonymous donation of \$256,300.00 to enhance the Designing Quality Inclusive Education Project.

**Proclamation: National Hispanic Heritage Month**

*BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HOWARD COUNTY*  
**PROCLAMATION**  
DESIGNATING  
SEPTEMBER 15 THROUGH OCTOBER 15, 2007  
AS  
NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

**WHEREAS** National Hispanic Heritage Month is a celebration of the people from twenty Spanish-speaking nations of Mexico, Spain, South and Central America, and the Caribbean; and

**WHEREAS** more than 44.3 million Americans are Hispanic, representing the nation's largest ethnic or race minority, Hispanics constituted 15 percent of the nation's total population; and

**WHEREAS** Hispanic Americans are at once, the oldest and newest immigrants to the United States, who trace their roots to the indigenous cultures of their homeland and the Spanish influence; and

**WHEREAS** Hispanic Americans have played an integral role in our nation's history and our country has benefited from their many contributions to the military, business, artistic, political, academic and scientific communities; and

**WHEREAS** all Americans, regardless of national origin, celebrate the vibrant Hispanic American spirit that influences our nation's art, music, food and faiths; and

**WHEREAS** the Howard County Public School System enjoys a beneficial relationship with Conexiones, a Hispanic community organization committed to making education more meaningful to our Hispanic community; and

**WHEREAS** National Hispanic Heritage Month provides an opportunity to express deep appreciation to the county's growing population of Hispanic Americans for their contributions to the Howard County Public School System; and

**WHEREAS** the theme for the National Hispanic Heritage Month for 2007 is "Hispanic Americans: Making a Positive Impact on American Society;"

**THEREFORE BE IT PROCLAIMED** that the Board of Education declares September 15 through October 15, 2007, as National Hispanic Heritage Month in the Howard County Public School System; and

**BE IT FURTHER PROCLAIMED** that it is the intention of the Board that meaningful activities take place in all schools to acknowledge the achievements of Hispanic Americans and pay tribute to the diversity of the Howard County community.

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Diane Mikulis, Chairman  
Board of Education of Howard County

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Sydney L. Cousin, Superintendent  
Howard County Public School System

*Action:* Ms. Gordon moved approval of the proclamation. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gavelek and approved by the members of the Board (8/0).

**Proclamation Recognizing Harriet Tubman Day**

*BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HOWARD COUNTY*  
**PROCLAMATION**  
RECOGNIZING SEPTEMBER 15, 2007  
*AS*  
HARRIET TUBMAN DAY

WHEREAS, the Harriet Tubman Foundation of Howard County has designated September 15, 2007, as Harriet Tubman Day; and

WHEREAS, the Foundation established Harriet Tubman Day to honor the enduring legacy, which began at Harriet Tubman High School in 1949 and continues even today; and

WHEREAS, the events of the day are designed to pay homage to the outstanding educators of Harriet Tubman High School, who provided an educational environment that fostered scholarship and cultivated leadership; and

WHEREAS, the Harriet Tubman Building serves as both a monument to the pride and perseverance of Howard County's African American community and as a vestige of that community's fight for equality; and

WHEREAS, the Howard County Public School System is committed to providing an educational environment in which diversity and commonality are truly valued; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education wishes to acknowledge the enduring significance of the Harriet Tubman High School to the entire Howard County community;

**THEREFORE BE IT PROCLAIMED** that the Board of Education supports the efforts of the Harriet Tubman Foundation to preserve this historically important facility and ensure its legacy lives on through future generations; and

BE IT FURTHER PROCLAIMED that this document be approved by the Board of Education of Howard County on this date and presented to the Board of Directors of the Harriet Tubman Foundation in recognition of and appreciation for their efforts to preserve the heritage and spirit of Harriet Tubman High School.

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Diane Mikulis, Chairman  
Board of Education of Howard County

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Sydney L. Cousin, Superintendent  
Howard County Public School System

*Action:* Dr. Siddiqui moved approval of the proclamation. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Giles and approved by the members of the Board (8/0).

### **Staff Response to Transportation Study**

*Presenter:* Mr. David Drown, Student Transportation Director.

Mr. Drown recommended that the school system pursue purchase of a limited number of school buses to supplement the services provided by private contractors. He stated that the needs of students are not being met by the current delivery system. Shortage of drivers, higher costs, and restrictive zoning related to parking and storing buses are among the factors leading to the recommendation.

Funds would be needed to provide three drivers and two buses in the FY 2009 Operating Budget. The recommendation is to buy two long/large buses that will be equipped to handle special education, regular, and pre-school students interchangeably. Funds will also be needed in the FY 2010 Capital Budget and future operating budgets for both personnel and buses.

Mr. Drown proposed that the school system begin by purchasing two buses for next year and grow the fleet to a maximum of 10 buses by 2010/2011 based on need. The school system currently contracts for the services of 450 buses.

#### *Discussion:*

Mr. Drown explained that a maintenance facility and office space would also be associated with a bus depot to house the fleet. Staff is studying various property options for the depot, including the use of current HCPSS property, purchasing additional property, and/or cooperatively utilizing county-owned property. HCPSS would be subject to the same zoning requirements as private contractors.

Mr. Ray Brown, Chief Operating Officer, indicated that part of the search for a new maintenance warehouse facility would include considering options for a bus depot to combine the needs at a single site.

Staff provided the following information in answer to Board members' questions:

- The shortage of bus drivers is a national phenomenon, whether buses are publicly or privately owned. It is difficult to attract and retain an adequate number of certified drivers, but the school system may have some competitive advantages over private contractors.
- One substitute for two drivers is excellent coverage, but the school system will most likely have two or three substitute drivers when the fleet is increased to ten buses.
- HCPSS goes above some COMAR requirements regarding school bus transportation, e.g., providing air conditioned buses, requiring an additional two hours of training for special education bus assistants, and more frequent drug testing of drivers.
- Commercial establishments could be used to contract out maintenance, fueling, and other services; but once the fleet reaches ten buses, it may be more cost effective for the school system to provide these services.
- Capital costs are unknown at this time, but consideration is being given to include this in the project that is currently in the capital budget for a new maintenance and warehouse facility.

Mrs. French expressed concern about the lack of data regarding costs associated with this proposal. She indicated the need to consider offering additional funding to bus contractors to help them retain and attract drivers. She also asked if attempts have been made to work with contractors to determine solutions to improve routes that are difficult and expensive. Mr. Drown stated that written feedback on the consultant's recommendation was received and addressed and provided to the Board. He acknowledged the need for increased pay for bus drivers and noted that the school system added funds to this year's budget for the contractors with the assumption that the money would go towards driver salaries. As far as obtaining contractors, it is still believed that the competitive bid process is the best avenue to assure a market value price.

Mr. Aquino pointed out that although additional funds were provided to contractors, there is no guarantee that the money will go towards increased salaries for drivers. Dr. Cousin noted that there are legal ramifications and prohibitions regarding private contractors. The objective in providing public-owned buses is to fill in gaps that private contractors cannot fill. The school system cannot continue to use other contractors to provide services when primary contractors have situations when buses cannot be run. Providing a solution to this issue is just one of many needs of the school system.

### **Deed of Easement with Howard County at Centennial Lane ES**

*Presenters:* Mr. Bruce Gist, Director of School Construction.

The pending addition to Centennial Lane ES requires a new fire hydrant connection. Underground water-piping improvements will be run on Board of Education property and installed in conjunction with the new construction. Howard County will be responsible for servicing and maintaining the underground piping. This easement will not affect the

operation of Centennial Lane ES and will result in two fire hydrants to serve the building. The new hydrant will be located approximately 300 lineal feet from Centennial Lane.

*Action:* Mrs. French moved approval of the Easement at Centennial Lane ES for a new fire department fire hydrant connection. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gordon and approved by the members of the Board (8/0).

### **Quarterly Agenda, October-December 2007**

The Board reviewed the Quarterly Agenda for October through December 2007. Approval of the agenda is scheduled for September 20, 2007.

### **Policy 3000 – Religious Observances**

*Presenters:* Mrs. Sue Mascaro, Director of Staff Relations, and Mrs. Min Kim, Equity Assurance Coordinator.

According to revisions to the policy on religious observances proposed by staff, students are to be accorded reasonable accommodations to class schedules and attendance policies to meet religious obligations. Students with an approved, documented religious obligation that cannot be fulfilled at any other time may receive a reasonable accommodation to fulfill that obligation.

Parents must make a written request to the principal/designee for such accommodation. The Equity Assurance Coordinator will review requests and make a determination regarding accommodations. Students whose absences are excused under this provision are required to make up work missed during their absence from class in accordance with Policies 8010, 8020, and 9010.

The Board is scheduled to take action on Policy 3000 on September 20, 2007.

#### *Discussion:*

The following information was provided in response to Board Members' questions:

- Requests for dismissal for a religious holiday would be handled at the school level.
- Policy Standards will include COMAR regulations for religious holidays, as well as an inclusion for religious obligations.
- The Office of Equity Assurance will review the context of each individual request and situation to ensure adherence to religious obligations.
- Parents continue to have the option of using up to three discretionary days of absence for a child.
- The school system has an obligation to make a reasonable accommodation for requests, but the responsibility lies with parents to present the event or other activity to show that it is a religious obligation.

Mrs. French expressed concern that the accommodation for religious observances may result in absences exceeding the three-day restriction for parental discretion. She indicated the need to consider determining a specific number of days that would be legal. Mr. Blom stated that the most equitable thing to do in the area of religion is to allow reasonable accommodation on a case-by-case basis. Mrs. Giles noted that provisions currently exist in policy for consideration of absences beyond three days on an individual basis.

Mr. Blom stated that the policy could be reformatted to have information in Item V of the Implementation Procedures included as part of the Policy Standards.

Mrs. French asked about including a list of religious holidays in the policy when tests would not be scheduled. Mrs. Kim stated that the overwhelming consensus of the policy review committee was that it would be appropriate to advise teachers to be mindful of the range of religious observances and for the school system to publicize significant religious events for teachers to use in their planning. Mrs. Mascaro noted that any student with a legal absence will be allowed to make up tests and/or assignments. Dr. Cousin noted the diversity of the Howard County community and acknowledged the difficulty in developing a list that would include all observances. Mr. Gavelek stated that in his experience teachers do accommodate legal absences by allowing students an extra day to prepare for or make up tests and assignments.

Ms. Gordon asked about the impact of the Supreme Court's decision prohibiting prayer during the school day. Mr. Blom stated that HCPSS policy would allow students to pray on an individual basis, which would be allowed by the court. Individual schools would also be permitted to provide space for students to carry out their religious obligations, in addition to making adjustments in the student's schedule to accommodate those practices without impacting instruction.

Dr. Siddiqui asked if any kind of professional development or education is provided to school staff regarding various religions and types of obligations students may have. Mr. Robert Glascock, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Technology, stated that polices are reviewed with teachers, and speakers are brought in periodically on professional development days to address cultural aspects of religion as it relates to a particular course content.

Mr. Gavelek expressed concern with wording in the Accommodations for Religious Observances by Students pamphlet which states that students could not be discriminated against for following religious tenets in the denial of credit or attendance certificates. He suggested that these issues be addressed through Central Office staff to ensure equity. Staff noted that attendance certificates and denial of credit are two separate issues and agreed to review the language and procedures.

Mrs. French expressed concerns regarding consistency, neutrality, and uniformity in the policy. Mr. Blom stated that language could be added in the Implementation

Procedures for the benefit of principals and parents that would state that any request for accommodation, including in-school prayer, would be made to the Office of Equity Assurance.

Board members pointed out that it would be illegal to write a policy aimed at one religion and that the school system should be proactive in its policies.

Policy revisions will be provided to the Board prior to approval, which is scheduled for September 20, 2007.

### **Policy 5000 – Food and Nutrition Service – Report of Review Committee**

*Presenters:* Mrs. Mary Klatko, Food and Nutrition Services Administrator, and Mrs. Ellen Miller, Policy Specialist.

Staff recommended that the Board rescind Policy 5000 - Food and Nutrition Services. This policy is no longer needed because it is superseded by Policy 9090 - Wellness Through Nutrition and Physical Activity.

Board members indicated the need to publicize information regarding this recommendation. Comments may be addressed to the Board during the Public Forum sessions of each regular Board meeting or via the HCPSS website. Staff was asked to ensure that information was posted on the school system's website.

Action to rescind Policy 9090 is scheduled for October 11, 2007, with an immediate effective date.

**Recess:** The meeting was recessed by the Chairman at 6:05 p.m. and reconvened by the Vice Chairman at 7:30 p.m.

### **Public Forum**

Ms. Jacqueline Harrington spoke in favor of a strategic capital plan process and suggested that if the school board is moving too slowly that community members launch a capital campaign to raise private dollars to fund capital projects.

### **Presentation of the Superintendent's Proposed FY 2009 Capital Budget and FY 2010-2014 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and FY 2009-2017 Long-Range Master Plan**

*Presenter:* Mr. Ken Roey, Director of Facilities Planning and Management.

Mr. Roey expressed concern with the county's ability to fund the Superintendent's Proposed Capital Budget for FY 2009 in the amount of \$118 million. He noted that last year the Board requested \$100 million in capital funding and only received \$81 million.

Of that amount, \$23 million was state funding. Mr. Roey stated that school officials have been informed that state capital funding will be less than last year.

Mr. Roey provided a brief overview of the entire capital budget process, which includes the Annual Feasibility Study and an overview of the Capital Improvement Program. A Facility Assessment Survey is beginning to shape budget priorities, and a renovation guide is under development, which is expected to be brought to the Board for approval in the spring of 2008.

- Budget Focus Areas:
  - Addressing maintenance needs of existing schools.
  - Addressing administrative space needs.
  - Capacity increases.
- Will future funding streams support known requirements?
- Less than 50 percent increase in costs vs. declining CIP funding.
- Infrastructure renewal requirements challenge.

*Highlights of FY 2009 Capital Budget:*

- Funding increased for Mt. Hebron HS major renovation.
  - Funding increased in roofing and other systemic lines to begin to address deferred maintenance requirements identified in Gilbert study.
- Atholton HS major renovation appears in FY 2012.
- Northfield ES addition/renovation.
  - Build addition first, followed by a year-long renovation project.
  - Continued population growth in the Centennial area.
- Facility Modernization replaces Education Specification Modernization line.
  - Offsets identified for specific projects (e.g., Atholton HS in FY 2012).
- Systemic Renovations:
  - Will be reordered in FY 2010 budget based on results of facility assessment survey.
  - Placeholders inserted for FY 2013/2014.
- Technology line increased to continue and expand technology replacement plan.
  - Data center relocation to Old Bushy Park in FY 2011.
- Maintenance facility replacement and Old Cedar Lane renovation projects.
  - Over 300 Central Office employees now being housed in other locations, including the ARL and Faulkner Ridge complex.
- High School Tech Ed program expansion.
  - Renovates existing space to comply with COMAR changes.
- Triadelphia Ridge/Folly Quarter SBR (sequencing batch reactor):
  - Have committed to MDE to place in operation by FY 2012.

**Reductions:**

- Fully-day kindergarten request reduced by \$3.4 million from FY 2008 due to changes in program and efficiencies gained.

- Site acquisition/construction reserve reduced by \$1 million from FY 2008 due to sufficient account balance.
- Facility Modernization request reduced by \$2.8 million in FY 2009; remaining dollars will be used to plan FY 2010 systemic renovations.
- Central Office renovation delayed one year to follow Old Cedar Lane renovations.

**Concerns:**

- Where does additional funding come from?
  - Absent funding, hard choices are required.
- Nine-week summer renovations becoming increasingly difficult to execute.
  - Change in maintenance philosophy may be required.
- Failure to address deferred maintenance will result in lowered service standards over time.

**Next Steps:**

- Public Hearing – Thursday, September 20 - 7:30 p.m.
- Work Session – Friday, September 21 - 9:00 a.m.
- BOE Approval – Monday, October 1 - 7:30 p.m.
- Submit CIP to State – Friday, October 5.
- County Council votes on Resolution to Approve BOE Proposed Budget – Monday, November 5 - 7:30 p.m.

*Discussion:*

Mrs. French requested a list of playground equipment projects completed this year and those planned for next year's budget. Mr. Roey agreed to the request.

Dr. Cousin noted that the Northfield ES renovation will be similar to the one that was recently completed for Centennial Lane ES. The renovation will address facility needs such as creating corridors and self-contained classrooms, as well as redoing the HVAC and plumbing systems and providing additional windows in the school. Attempts will also be made to address storage issues.

Dr. Cousin and Mr. Roey explained the difficulties associated with completing renovations over the nine-week summer period. The school system is looking at various options to address these issues.

Mr. Roey confirmed that the sequencing batch reactor (SBR) at Triadelphia Ridge ES/Folly Quarter MS is required by MDE.

Mr. Roey noted that the state formula for construction costs between 2008 and 2009 has remained the same at \$240.80 per square foot.

Dr. Cousin emphasized the need for an identifiable, sustainable funding source for capital budget needs now and in the future. He noted the importance of working with state and local elected officials to remedy this problem, not just for the school system, but for the county as well. He also indicated that safety issues take priority over all other needs of the school system, and everything possible will be done to make sure that buildings are clean, safe, and conducive to a learning environment.

Mr. Aquino reminded the public that a public hearing on the capital budget will be held on September 20, 2007, at 7:30 pm. Anyone wishing to testify should call the Board's office. A work session is also scheduled for September 21 at 9:00 a.m., with approval set for October 1, 2007.

### **Development of FY 2009 Budget Line Items for Board of Education Office**

Board members discussed Board of Education line items for the FY 2009 Operating Budget. Board members asked for information on the following items:

- Actual reports on legal fees.
- Registration costs for MABE (Maryland Association of Boards of Education).

Board members questioned the source and amounts for some items and agreed to continue discussion of the Board's budget at the retreat scheduled for Friday, September 7, 2007.

**Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned by the Vice Chairman at 8:35 p.m.

### **Information Item**

Research Proposal: Testing the Impact of PBIS Plus