

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

**October 10, 2007**

The Board of Education of Howard County and the Howard County Council held a joint quarterly meeting on Wednesday, October 10, 2007, at 8:15 a.m. The meeting was held in the Ellicott Room at the George Howard Building, 3430 Court House Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043.

Present:

Board of Education

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

Howard County Council

Calvin Ball, Chairman  
Courtney Watson, Vice Chairman  
Greg Fox  
Mary Kay Sigaty  
Jennifer Terrasa

Sydney L. Cousin, Superintendent  
Sandra J. Erickson, Deputy Superintendent  
Raymond H. Brown, Chief Operating Officer  
Mamie J. Perkins, Chief of Staff  
Linda Wise, Asst. Supt.-School Administration  
Robert Glascock, Asst. Supt.-Curriculum, Instruction, and Technology  
Susan S. Shown, Executive Assistant

Sheila Tolliver, Administrator  
Jeff Meyers, Legislative Assistant  
Haskell Arnold, County Auditor

Mr. Ball called the meeting to order at 8:25 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

High School Facility Study Status

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

- Initial site visits at all high schools are complete, and the first draft of the report will be completed in mid-November.
- Draft of remaining high school assessments is being finalized, and the results will be shared when they are available about mid-December.
- Findings from initial four assessments have been incorporated into the FY 2009 capital budget, including roof replacement at Atholton HS and increase in other system funding to address deferred maintenance requirements at all schools.
  - Mt. Hebron HS renovation needs were validated.
  - A renovation project for Atholton HS has been included in the FY 2009 capital budget as a result of the assessment.

Approved – November 29, 2007

- Glenelg HS – Significant findings, including the replacement of chillers, are being addressed within the current budget.
- Five million dollars (over 20 years) in capital renewal requirements to maintain building infrastructure at all twelve high schools, excluding system improvements, program or space additions.
- Middle school assessment in progress, and results are anticipated to be available in March 2008.
- Elementary school assessment is expected to commence immediately upon completion of middle schools.
- There is a sufficient balance remaining in project line to complete all schools in 2008.

Mr. Roey stated that the assessment results so far are consistent with what staff expected. In addition to maintenance needs, staff also looks at the efficiency of major systems in the building. Mt. Hebron HS has the lowest energy cost per square foot. Dr. Cousin added that the design and building codes at the time that some of the older schools were built resulted in a “tighter” building (i.e. fewer windows, less air exchange). Mr. Roey noted that renovation projects will include more efficient systems, but they will not necessarily be less costly to operate.

#### FY 2009 Capital Budget Request

Mr. Roey presented a review of the FY 2009 Capital Budget Request.

- More dollars are now being spent to address the maintenance needs of the older schools, instead of providing capacity, although a couple of small additions will be needed to accommodate enrollment increases.
- Administrative space is needed to house employees that are currently located in areas that are needed for program space. Funding has been requested to renovate the former Cedar Lane School to provide office spaces.
- Funding challenges are anticipated. Last year Howard County received \$23 million in state funding, but much less funding is expected this year.
- A dedicated revenue source is needed to provide funding for the school system’s capital needs.

Mrs. Watson noted that enrollment projections indicate that an addition to Waverly ES may not be needed. Mr. Roey responded that the long-range enrollment projections will be discussed and reviewed, and it might be possible to defer the addition to 2010.

Mrs. Watson asked the Board to review each capital project to determine if it is realistic to include it in the capital budget so as not to raise the hopes of each school’s community. Mrs. Mikulis responded that without a funding target, it would be hard to delete any needed project.

Dr. Cousin stated that another option is to redistrict, although the school’s location would make redistricting somewhat difficult. The same would apply to Manor Woods ES.

Dr. Cousin stated that the funding challenges are not just from local sources but also from the state. As a percentage of the decrease suggested by the Governor, the school system could expect \$17 million for FY 2009. Local funding would have to make up the capital budget

request. The excise tax is exhausted, and a sustainable funding source needs to be identified to provide funds for capital projects.

Ms. Sigaty stated that the percentage of state funding has been fairly consistent over time. She asked if the percentage stayed consistent because the focus of the capital program has been to add capacity and, as the focus changes to maintain and renovate existing schools, would that percentage change. Dr. Cousin responded that state funding is based on a formula which gives priority to adding capacity. Mr. Roey added that the highest participation rate included in the formula is 58%, and a wealth factor is also considered. The participation rate is expected to decrease by 2010.

Mrs. Watson noted that the Board determined that the Mt. Hebron HS project will be a renovation and not a replacement school. Mrs. Mikulis responded that as an individual she was not convinced that a new school is needed. Mr. Roey noted that the planning committee for Mt. Hebron HS will begin meeting next week, and it is anticipated that a schematic plan will be presented to the Board before the budget is submitted to the County Executive in February.

Mrs. Mikulis stated that until the planning committee identifies the project's priorities, the scope of the project cannot be defined. A lot of planning work has been completed with the seven options that were already presented to the Board.

Mr. Aquino commented that the option of constructing an annex will provide more flexibility for a renovation project. Mrs. Mikulis added that the construction of an annex will allow the construction to be less invasive during the renovation.

Mr. Aquino stated that considering the needs in the capital improvement program, he would not agree to build a new school unless there were a lot of dollars available for school construction. Mrs. Watson agreed that the needs of the whole county need to be considered.

Mrs. Giles explained that the Option 2B renovation project for Mt. Hebron HS required a fire wall that would cost almost \$15 million. The construction of an annex addresses the code requirements and allows more money for the renovation.

Mrs. Mikulis noted that the community has alleged that the school is in violation of building and life safety codes. Mr. Roey responded that it is not true. The school is in compliance with the codes that were in effect during past construction projects. If a new code is implemented, it does not apply to an existing building. Every attempt is made to bring a building up to existing codes during renovation projects.

Dr. Cousin stated that the focus is whether or not the educational program can be delivered in the building. If there are program deficiencies in the building, the renovation will address those issues. The idea of building an annex will help to expedite the process because it will free up large parts of the building for renovation. It will also protect the occupants from interruptions during the construction.

Dr. Cousin continued that the planning committee will consider how to maximize available resources to address systems, codes, and program needs as well as to make cosmetic

improvements. This is not a unique project; the school system has completed many similar projects.

Mrs. Watson asked if the funding request for the former Cedar Lane School in FY 2009 and 2010 is the entire cost of the project or if additional funding will be provided by the county for the Recreation and Parks spaces. Mr. Roey responded that the funding is for both Recreation and Parks space as well as school system space. Mrs. Watson felt that the Board's budget should be increased by \$12 million since the project includes funding for Recreation and Parks. Mr. Roey noted that several options will be presented to the Board before the budget is submitted.

### Financial Literacy

Mr. Robert Glascock, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction, and Technology, provided an update on the financial literacy curriculum as requested by Mr. Ball.

- American Government (grade 10-required) – Fourth quarter focus on individual economic decision-making. The unit will be updated during the summer of 2008.
- Financial Management using Software Applications (grades 9-12-elective) – A comprehensive, full-year course, for students in accounting and Academy of Finance.
- Consumer Math (grades 11, 12-elective) – A more practical course with more support appropriate for all students.

Mr. Glascock stated that across the state, there is a movement toward embedding components of financial literacy in other courses. Only one county has a specified financial literacy course that is required.

Mr. Glascock said he believes that the Howard County courses will grow in popularity, and the component included in American Government will continue to be enhanced.

Ms. Sigaty pointed out that the Howard County Library is also working on a financial literacy project. Mr. Glascock said that library and school system staff meet on a quarterly basis for the A+ Partnership, and it is the same kind of collaborative effort as the anti-bullying campaign.

Ms. Gordon asked if students learn the philosophical basis for the choices they make; are they being taught how to make life choices, i.e. how to decide what things are really necessary to buy and what things are not necessary. Mr. Glascock explained that principles are throughout the curriculum. The concept of supply and demand is taught. Students should be encouraged early at school and at home to make informed decisions.

In response to Mr. Ball, Mr. Glascock stated that the Financial Management software application will be available in schools in 2008; however, the course will be offered only if enough students enroll in the course.

Mr. Ball asked how students who would benefit from the class are guided into enrolling in the class. Mrs. Watson stated her feeling that all students would benefit from the class, but there is only so much time in the school day. Mr. Glascock added that financial management

principles are embedded in American Government, a required course for all students, because it applies to the country's economic goals.

Mrs. Wise explained that each high school student completes a four-year plan of study which is reviewed annually and is signed off by the parents. Counselors help to identify a student's needs and then direct the students into those courses.

Mrs. Mikulis showed a credit card application which was addressed to her 10-year-old son. Mrs. Giles noted that credit card companies are pushing the need for financial literacy while they keep pushing the use of credit cards. She said that she would like to see the companies take more responsibility for approving the use of credit cards by consumers.

Ms. Terrasa asked if the American Government components of financial literacy are theoretical, and Mr. Glascock responded that it includes more practical aspects.

### School Improvement Strategies (Maryland School Assessments)

Presenter: Dr. Theresa Alban, Executive Director of Strategic Planning, Assessment, and Program Evaluation, presented the report on school improvement mandates and strategies.

### **Understanding Adequate Yearly Progress**

#### No Child Left Behind (NCLB)

- 100 percent of students proficient in reading and mathematics by 2014 plus an additional indicator related to academic performance (Maryland uses attendance for elementary and middle schools and graduation rate for high schools.).
- Monitor progress toward the goal using Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO).
- Consequences for schools that do not reach the AMO for any student group and thus do not meet AYP.

### **AMOs for Maryland Schools**

|                      | 2007           |             | 2008           |             |
|----------------------|----------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|
|                      | <b>Reading</b> | <b>Math</b> | <b>Reading</b> | <b>Math</b> |
| Elementary (K-5)     | 67.2           | 63.9        | 71.8           | 69.1        |
| Middle (6-8)         | 66.3           | 50.0        | 71.1           | 57.2        |
| K-8 Schools          | 66.7           | 57.0        | 71.5           | 63.1        |
| High (9-12)          | 52.2           | 38.6        | 59.0           | 47.3        |
| School System (K-12) | 64.7           | 54.3        | 69.7           | 60.9        |

#### Meeting AYP

- Achieve the AMO and participation rate overall and for every student group in both content areas; achieve the AMO overall for attendance or graduation rate.
- Use the Confidence Interval.
- Use Safe Harbor.
- Be granted an appeal.

#### If AYP is Not Met

- Local Attention.
- School Improvement Year 1.
- School Improvement Year 2.
- Corrective Action.
- Restructuring.

Ms. Sigaty asked if Howard County schools which did not meet AYP still made much higher progress than other schools in the state. Mrs. Erickson responded yes and explained that Howard County's baseline is much higher than other schools. Dr. Alban added that a school may not meet the confidence level by just one student.

Dr. Cousin stated that if a student can be counted in more than one group, i.e. FARMS and special education, the school system cannot appeal that student's results. The perception is that the school is failing, when it was only one or two students who did not pass. Communication is key in the community's understanding of a school's results. For instance, one elementary school missed AYP by just one student and the community rallied around the school and has been very supportive.

This year Howard County has seven schools receiving local attention and two schools in year one of school improvement.

Mr. Ball observed that some schools have a much higher number of FARMS or special education students, and he asked how that is factored in. Dr. Alban responded that Maryland law mandates that when at least five students are in a group, the school is accountable for meeting AYP. Mrs. Erickson added that differentiated staffing is allocated based on the demographics and special needs of an individual school.

#### School Improvement

Mr. Robert Glascock, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction, and Technology, and Mrs. Linda Wise, Assistant Superintendent for School Administration, provided information on school improvement strategies and efforts for Murray Hill and Oakland Mills middle schools which are in year one of school improvement. They expressed confidence that the two schools will make achievement progress.

Mr. Ball noted that Oakland Mills MS is unique in that the revitalization effort for the Oakland Mills community includes an education committee.

Mr. Glascock emphasized that Murray Hill and Oakland Mills middle schools are not failing schools; there are a few students in each school who did not make the standard so the school is labeled as not making AYP. Staff has asked community organizations, such as Conexiones, NAACP, and Council of Elders to help share that information with parents and the community.

Ms. Sigaty noted that the community is concerned about the wellbeing and the perception of their neighborhood in Howard County as a result of the AYP information. Mrs. Wise stated that staff will include the Village Board in the communication efforts.

Mr. Glascock explained that a plan of action is developed for each student who did not meet the standard to determine what skills need to be improved, to provide intervention, and to keep track of progress.

Mrs. Wise described the additional administrative and instructional support provided to the schools to assist efforts to improve student progress, and she reiterated that these are not failing schools. She expressed pride in the staff and their high spirits despite the negative press about not achieving AYP.

#### Approval of Future Meeting Dates

The following quarterly meeting dates were scheduled:

Wednesday, February 20, 2008 – Board of Education  
Wednesday, April 16, 2008 – George Howard Building  
Wednesday, June 11, 2008 – Board of Education  
Wednesday, October 15, 2008 – George Howard Building

#### Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 a.m.

Next meeting: February 20, 2008, 8:15 a.m., Board Room, Department of Education.