

## **A Summary of the Board of Education Meeting Thursday, August 14, 2008**

### **ACTION ITEMS**

- Approved a consent agenda including donations, a STEM Grant, and minutes of regular Board of Education meetings; received a status report on the School Construction Fund.
- Approved a restricted consent agenda including staff personnel, bids and contracts, and the minutes of Board of Education closed meetings.
- Approved administrative promotions (see: "Administrative promotions approved; transfers announced").
- Approved a Deed of Easement with Howard County Department of Public Works to install underground water-piping improvements for a new fire hydrant connection on the Mt Hebron High School property.
- Approved an Easement agreement with the Columbia Association for construction of a parking lot at Running Brook Elementary School.

### **MSA performance continues to improve; more students score at advanced level**

Terry Alban, Chief Operating Officer, provided the Board with an overview of the school system's 2008 MSA performance. Overall, 91 percent of HCPSS students reached proficiency in reading and 86 percent in mathematics. All elementary schools met the HCPSS standard of 70 percent at proficient or advanced in both reading and mathematics. All middle schools met the 70 percent standard in reading and 15 middle schools met the standard in mathematics.

Of note is the percentage of HCPSS students scoring at the advanced level across grades. In reading, percentages range from 34.0 to 53.3 scoring at advanced. In mathematics percentages range from 31.8 to 51.2 scoring at advanced. Alban congratulated Worthington Elementary School for having 100 percent of all student groups scoring at proficient or advanced in reading.

Principal Cher Jones and several staff members from Dunloggin Middle School reported on strategies used at the school to address Goal 2 and increase student achievement by fostering a safe and nurturing environment.

### **Administrative promotions approved; transfers announced**

The Board approved the promotions of

- Glenn Heisey, from Principal at Hollifield Station Elementary School to Coordinator for Leadership Development
- Sandra Keaton from resource teacher to Language Arts Instructional Facilitator
- Razia Kosi from resource teacher to Cultural Proficiency Specialist
- Troy Todd from Assistant Principal at Waterloo Elementary to Principal at Running Brook Elementary School

- Denise Lancaster from Communications Facilitator to Assistant Principal at Waterloo Elementary
- Meghan Senisi from leadership intern at Wilde Lake High School to Assistant Principal at Long Reach High School
- Elizabeth Coe from Guidance Counselor at Centennial High to Assistant Principal at River Hill High
- Judith Hendricks from teacher to Acting Assistant Principal at Atholton High.

Deputy Superintendent Sandra Erickson announced administrative transfers including the transfers of Principal Lisa Booth from Running Brook Elementary School to Hollifield Station Elementary School and Assistant Principal Karen Russo from Long Reach High School to Glenelg High School. Additionally, William Barnes, resource teacher with Baltimore County Public Schools, was appointed Coordinator of Secondary Mathematics and Corrine Gorzo, Coordinator of Elementary Social Studies, was appointed Coordinator of Teacher Development.

#### **Facilities needs of middle schools assessed**

The Board received a report on the facilities assessment of Howard County middle schools conducted by Gilbert Architects. The assessment covered both maintenance conditions and program issues. Facility Engineering Associates conducted the maintenance assessment based on the Association of Physical Plant Administrator guidelines. The program assessment compared the 18 middle schools against the current Middle School Educational Specifications using the Council of Educational Facilities Planners International (CEFPI) Guide for School Facility Appraisal.

Findings show that the HCPSS maintenance program has been extremely effective and that all middle school buildings can continue to function in their capacity for an extended period of time. All 18 facilities were rated "good" or "excellent" in all assessed areas, except Glenwood Middle and Wilde Lake Middle, which both scored average in the Educational Program Assessment. Maintenance needs at the middle and high school levels are expected to total approximately \$150 million over the next 20 years.

#### **Board hears impact of state funding changes**

Chief Financial Officer Ray Brown presented legislative issues associated with the restructuring of the Thornton Funding. During the 2007 special session, the Maryland General Assembly amended the Thornton Bridge to Excellence Act by eliminating the Implicit Price Deflator for FY09 and FY10 and creating supplemental "hold harmless" grants to ensure one percent growth in state aid.

The General Assembly also increased state revenues by increasing sales and income tax as a short-term budget solution. Legislators also authorized a slots referendum in November 2008. Without slots revenue in FY11 and beyond,

other cuts may be necessary, taxes raised and/or the responsibility for teacher retirement costs shifted from the state to county governments.

Brown also reviewed proposed legislation for a Public Schools Labor Relations Board and the impact it would have on the way education is delivered to students.

### **Economic environment impacts FY10 capital budget**

The Board held a preliminary discussion on capital priorities in preparation for the development of the fiscal year 2010 Capital Budget Request. Executive Director of Facilities Ken Roey noted that projects and priorities would remain consistent; however, the state has increased the cost per square foot to \$251 for new construction, which includes additions. Board members noted that reductions in state construction funding put additional pressure on county governments to fund larger percentages of their capital budgets. Roey added that the School Planning Office staff is seeing turnover in existing housing and that the County is releasing additional allocations for development, which reinforces the importance of acquiring sites for future school facilities while land is still available. The hearing on the capital budget drew no public testimony.

### **In other action...**

In his report, Superintendent Sydney Cousin reported on the annual kickoff meeting for school administrators, the New Teacher Orientation, and the progress of school construction projects. He also announced an administrative restructuring which combines School Administration and Curriculum under the leadership Linda Wise, who has been named Chief Academic Officer. He announced that the school system will be establishing the position of Technology Officer and will begin a national search for candidates.

Staff presented charters for the formation of committees to review and revise the following policies: Policy 6020, School Construction Program; Policy 6070, Closing of Schools; Policy 7080, Transfer of Administrators; and Policy 7090, Administrative Transfer of Teachers.

At Public Forum, Ms. Dotty Moore reported on the work of the Employment Committee of the Continental Societies, Inc., which provided jobs for 13 students this summer. Julie Reybold addressed the Board about the search and seizure policy of the school system and the policy's checks and balances. Kendel Morton, Science Instructional Team Leader at Glenelg High School, asked that the Board consider changes to the grading policy to allow for percentage grades versus letter grades. Gracie Quraishi addressed the Board with concerns about the lack of consistency in the way policies are enforced in schools and her understanding that staff cannot intervene in student altercations. Cindy Haller, vice president of the PTA Council of Howard County, said the Council is looking forward to working collaboratively with the Board in the coming year.

The Board rescheduled its retreat and scheduled appeals and hearings.

**The next regular meeting of the Board of Education is scheduled for 4:00 pm on Thursday, September 4, 2008.**