

# MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HOWARD COUNTY

December 11, 2008

The Board of Education of Howard County held a regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, December 11, 2008, 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:

Frank J. Aquino, Esq., Chairman  
Ellen Flynn Giles, Vice Chairman  
Lawrence H. Cohen  
Allen Dyer, Esq.  
Sandra H. French  
Patricia S. Gordon  
Janet Siddiqui, M.D.  
Adejire Bademosi, Student Representative

Sydney L. Cousin, Superintendent, Secretary/Treasurer  
Sandra Erickson, Deputy Superintendent  
Patti Caplan, Director, Public Relations  
Florence Jackson, Recording Secretary

Chairman Aquino called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m., and, Ms. Morgan Culler, student, Mt. Hebron High School, led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

## Public Forum

There was no one present to address Public Forum.

## Approval of Agenda

Dr. Cousin said he had no changes to the agenda.

*Action:* Mrs. Giles moved approval of the Agenda. The motion was seconded by Dr. Siddiqui and approved by the Board 8-0.

## Superintendent's Report

Dr. Cousin noted the following items in his report:

- An additional allocation of \$14 million has been received from the Interagency Committee on School Construction (IAC), which will help to partially fund the Northfield ES project.

- All of our high schools ranked in the top 7 percent of U.S. high schools in The Washington Post's most recent Challenge Index.
- Centennial and River Hill High Schools were among 8 Maryland schools that received silver awards from US News and World Report in their 2009 Best High Schools article.
- Congratulated Mr. Daniel Bresson, Reservoir High School, who was selected to prepare food for the Presidential Inaugural Ball. Daniel is an advanced Culinary Science student.

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

Ms. Morgan Culler, Mt. Hebron High School, reported on the following activities:

- Congratulated Advanced Placement students and teachers noting that they had the highest percentage in the county of scores of both 3 and 4 and above.
- The Boys' Cross-Country team won the state championship.
- Renovations to the school have begun.
- Student Government Association is currently holding their annual Canned Food Drive.

### **Board Members' Reports**

- Mr. Cohen noted that he enjoyed participating in the Leadership U - Howard County's graduation ceremony.
- Mr. Dyer attended the Raising The Bar Event at Guilford ES. Parents ran and organized the program to prepare students to enter Cradlerock School and beyond.
- Mrs. Giles and Dr. Siddiqui congratulated student musicians and teachers.
- Mrs. French said students at Glenelg High School did a wonderful job performing in the play *12 Angry Men* in the newly renovated auditorium.
- Ms. Bademosi said she attended a Howard County Association of Student Councils meeting. She noted that HCASC will be having a student meeting on December 17, 2008 at the ARL, and she invited other students to attend this festive get together.

### **Consent Agenda (Restricted)**

Staff Personnel, Donations, State Discretionary Grant to Address the Provision of Services for Students with Emotional Disturbance in School Settings, High School Assessment Intervention Grant, School Bus Contract Terminations, Bids and Contracts, Closed Meeting Minutes of November 6, 2008.

*Action:* Ms. Giles moved approval of Items A-F in the Consent Agenda (Restricted). The motion was seconded Mr. Cohen and approved by the Board 7-0.

*Action:* Ms. Gordon moved approval of Item G, Closed Meeting Minutes of November 6, 2008. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Giles and approved by the Board 6-0, with Mr. Dyer abstaining.

Staff Personnel – Approved by the Board.

**Resignations**

<b>Name</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Grade or Subject</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Years in Howard County</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>
Arnal, Courtney	MRHS	Foreign Lang.	Relocation	3.0	1/2/09
Quinn, Raymond	C.O	Director	Personal	20 Days	11/4/08
Rhine, Luke	RHS	Technology	Other Employment	2.0	1/7/09

**Contracts**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Grade or School</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Place of Last Teaching Assignment</b>	<b>Grade/Step</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>
Bell, Michael	WaES	SPE	Private School	C-08	10/13/08
Bracken, Ann	RHS	ENG	Montgomery County	C-13	10/16/08
Krug, Elisabeth	OMHS	ENG	--	A-01	10/16/08
Kettyne, Michel	OMMS/CRS	ESOL/FRE	HCPSS – IA	A-04	11/20/08
Rosas, Christopher	GHS	SPE	HCPSS – IA	A-04	08/18/08

**Leaves of Absence**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Grade or School</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Grade or</b>	<b>Years in Howard County</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>
Berger, Denise	Fr. Leave	Science		2.0	11/14/08
Eng, Rebecca	Fr. Leave	Psychologist		3.0	11/14/08
Greene, Stephanie	Fr. Leave	Media		4.0	11/14/08
Ritter, Michele	Fr. Leave	Elem. Ed		12.0	11/14/08

**Retirement**

<b>Name</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Grade or Subject</b>	<b>Years in Howard County</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>
Pesce, Dorothy	EMMS	Science	34.4	1/1/2009

Donations – Approved by the Board

Running Brook ES: Joan A. Noto, in the amount of \$1,000, designated to be used as a special education student award.

Glenwood MS: PTSA Cobra Club, in the amount of \$11,713.34, designated for the purchase of eight iMac computers.

Atholton HS: PTSA, in the amount of \$4,916, designated for various student clubs and activities.

Boosters, in the amount of \$1,500, designated to assist with the cost to purchase new letters for the outside of the building.

Glenelg HS: Boosters, in the amount of \$8,888, (\$3,888) designated for staff jackets and bags, and (\$5,000) designated for the After Prom party.

Reservoir HS: Boosters, in the amount of \$9,000, designated for various athletic teams.

PTSA, in the amount of \$3,000, designated for the purchase of student agenda books.

River Hill HS: PTSA, in the amount of \$4,000, (\$1,000) designated for the Safe School Ambassador Program, and (\$3,000) designated for the purchase of Teacher Ease, a web-based software program.

State Discretionary Grant to Address the Provision of Services for Students with Emotional Disturbance in School Settings. – Approved by the Board.

High School Assessment Intervention Grant – Approved by the Board.

School Bus Contract Terminations – Approved by the Board.

Bids and Contracts – Approved by the Board.

P-1	Employee Assistance Program	
	Business Health Services	\$50,000 annually

### **Consent Agenda**

Minutes of Regular Meetings of November 20, 2008 and December 1, 2008.

*Action:* Mrs. Giles moved approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes of November 20, 2008. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gordon and approved by the Board 6-0, with Dr. Siddiqui and Mr. Dyer abstaining.

*Action:* Mrs. Giles moved approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes of December 1, 2008. The motion was seconded by Dr. Siddiqui and approved by the Board 8-0.

### **Bridge to Excellence Report: Annual Goal 1 Progress Report**

*Presenter:* Dr. Terry Alban, Chief Operating Officer.

The performance of HPCSS students on the Goal 1 standards is remarkably strong and demonstrates the effectiveness of many of the strategies implemented across the system, according to a BTE Goal 1 Status Report. Dr. Alban noted that the vast majority of schools showed improvement over last year and that system wide all student groups have made academic gains in the core subjects of mathematics and reading since the Maryland School Assessments began in 2003.

While the results are very encouraging, they also indicate a number of areas that need attention. One of these areas is increasing the participation of African American and Hispanic students in Gifted and Talented programs at the elementary and middle school levels. Another is continuing targeted initiatives to help students who are struggling to meet the High School Assessment graduation requirement. Students receiving special services appear to be most at risk.

Mrs. Linda Wise, Chief Academic Officer, reported that as part of the continuous improvement cycle, instructional strategies are constantly reviewed and refined based on the data related to the Goal 1 standards. These strategies include, but are not limited to:

- Establishment of professional learning communities of administrators, teachers, and central office staff members with a focus on developing effective school improvement plans and using data to guide instructional decisions.
- Provision of differentiated resources based on need.
- Expansion of the co-teaching intervention model.
- Provision of academic support programs.
- Addition of High School Assessment (HSA) mastery courses.
- Alignment of curriculum and locally developed assessments with state standards, the Voluntary State Curriculum, and state tests.
- Training of system leaders and classroom teachers in cultural proficiency.

Mr. Sean Martin, Principal, Bryant Woods Elementary School, and members of the Bryant Woods staff reported on the strategies

they have used to attain dramatic gains in student achievement and an improved school climate.

*Discussion:*

Ms. Gordon noted that so much time, effort, and planning is put into staff development, and this is the basis for achievement. She questioned how the time is arranged.

Mr. Martin said meetings are held bimonthly during planning time. A sign-up sheet is kept for teachers who feel they would benefit from having more materials and receive advice. Staff allows time to meet with new teachers regularly often before or after school.

Ms. Bademosi noted the positive drop in suspension rates.

Dr. Siddiqui congratulated Mr. Martin and staff with these results noting that Bryant Woods ES is a model for other schools.

Ms. Gordon asked for a description of the Professional Learning Communities. Dr. Alban described PLC as bringing people together to have a common dialog. This looks at what works and what does not, and this can be the guide of a conversation.

Mrs. Marie DeAngelis, Director, Elementary Curricular Programs, and Dr. Clarissa Evans, Executive Director, Secondary Curricular Programs, explained that principals could see the needs of schools including:

Best practices.

Developing leadership capacity.

Intervention strategies.

How to recruit and retain staff.

How to bring people together to collaborate as each school does what is best for them.

Mr. Cohen asked staff to provide data on students who have been in the HCPSS from pre-kindergarten through high school versus students who transferred in later during their school years. Dr. Alban agreed to provide the data.

Mrs. French noted a decline in SAT participation by student group. Dr. Alban said she would check with staff to confirm, but it is usually data from the class that has just graduated. Mrs. French questioned the GT participation rate. It is the hope that all schools

have a 20% participation rate in one or more of the GT classes. Of those students, the goal is that 98% of that 20% or more succeed and are scoring at the proficient or advanced level. Mrs. French noted that there are fewer Hispanic students in this group and the number appears to be declining.

Ms. Bademosi asked if the downturn in the economy had an impact on Hispanic participation in taking the SATs. Dr. Alban said staff would check with guidance counselors.

Mrs. Giles brought up the fact that some colleges are not using the SAT as a qualification for admittance and that may contribute to the decline in participation.

Mr. Dyer said he was impressed that teachers work extra hours. He asked if that could be avoided or are there other resources that could be used without going outside the negotiated contract. Mr. Martin said that all avenues had been explored. Mrs. Erickson said that elementary principals have asked for more resources for the extra time. There are limited workshop wages, and teachers can attend the summer institute with pay.

### **New Federal Guidelines for Collecting and Reporting Race and Ethnicity**

*Presenters:* Mrs. Pamela Blackwell, Director for Student Services; Mrs. Patti Caplan, Director, Public Information Office.

Mrs. Blackwell said that the federal government and the U.S. Department of Education require all states to collect information on the race and ethnicity of public school students and staff. Recently, the federal government announced the establishment of new guidelines reporting the collecting of this data. The new guidelines allow individuals to be identified in ethnic and racial classifications and in more than one racial category.

For example:

- There is now a two-part question on ethnicity and race. This allows individuals to report their heritage more accurately.
- The term "Hispanic" has been changed to "Hispanic or Latino."
- The racial category "Asian or Pacific Islander" has been separated into two new categories – "Asian" and "Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander."
- Individuals will be able to select one or more races from the seven racial groups.

- Another change is the use of an observer to identify students. This is a last resort if parents refuse to choose one or more racial categories.

Mrs. Caplan noted that MSDE is requiring local school systems to collect data using both the existing race codes and the new race codes for the 2009-2010 school year. This requirement is one year prior to the federal deadline for implementation.

*Discussion:*

Mr. Dyer asked if this is being disputed anywhere and noted that he is not comfortable with administrators determining ethnicity. Mrs. Blackwell said she was not aware of any problem and added that HCPSS does not have a choice. She noted that often people do not participate now because they can only choose one box. Staff will be making phone calls to encourage parents to respond. Dr. Cousin said it is the law, and there are penalties if the law is not followed. He agreed that it is an imposition on families.

Mr. Dyer said he would like the Attorney General's opinion on this before the Board mandates this to administrators. Mr. Aquino said it is the state law which has been forced upon us. Ms. Gordon commented that achievement reports are based on race and ethnicity to give the statistical proof. It is important to know who is not achieving. Dr. Cousin agreed that the format is questionable, but there is no choice.

Dr. Siddiqui asked if the federal government provides guidelines on the accountability. Mrs. Blackwell said not to her knowledge. Dr. Siddiqui also asked if parents will be informed of what category their child will be chosen for. Mrs. Blackwell said yes, but every opportunity will be given to the parent or guardian to make the decision including phone calls and letters home.

### **Deed of Easement with Howard County at Mt. Hebron High School**

*Presenter:* Mr. Bruce Gist, Director, School Construction.

Mr. Gist explained that the pending renovations and additions to Mt. Hebron High School require a new water service connection. These underground water-piping improvements will be run on Board of Education property and installed in conjunction with the new construction.

*Action:* Mrs. Giles moved approval of the Deed of Easement with Howard County at Mt. Hebron High School. The motion was seconded by Dr. Siddiqui and approved by the Board 7-0.

### **Quarterly Agenda**

*Presenter:* Mrs. Kathleen Hanks, Administrative Specialist to the Board of Education.

Board members noted one change to the Quarterly Agenda, which is to change the time of Work Session #2 on the Superintendent's Proposed FY 2010 Operating Budget from 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. to 2:00 – 6:00 p.m. on February 10, 2009.

*Action:* Mrs. French moved approval of the Quarterly Agenda as amended. The motion was seconded by Ms. Bademosi and approved by the Board 8-0.

**Recess:** The chairman recessed the meeting at 6:10 p.m. and reconvened at 7:30 p.m.

### **Public Forum**

Ms. Joanne Dolphin, retired teacher, noted a discrepancy in the high salary of top level staff versus that of teachers.

### **Community Advisory Council Monthly Report**

Mr. Chris Wertman, Chairman, CAC, noted the following items in his report:

- CAC representatives do not always receive notification of scheduled changes for policy and review committee meetings.
- Volunteers are being recruited to work on bus driver policies and training materials.
- Several members are interested in working and participating in the Technology Advisory Committee.

### **PTA Council of Howard County Monthly Report**

Mr. John Hannay, President, PTA Council, reported on the following activities of the council:

- Proposed calendar change for 2009-2010 – was discussed extensively, and council members were unable to come to a conclusion.
- Priorities are being developed for 2009 and beyond.

### **Bullying/Intimidation/Harassment – Charter**

*Presenter:* Mrs. Arlene Harrison, Administrative Director, Elementary Schools.

Mrs. Harrison presented to the Board the Charter for the Policy Committee on Bullying, Harassment, and Intimidation. The policy will become effective July 1, 2009. The Superintendent's recommendation is scheduled to be presented to the Board on April 16, 2009 with action anticipated on June 11, 2009.

Mrs. Giles asked about MSDE's position with the model policy. The original legislation called for it to be ready in December, and now the documentation says March. Mrs. Harrison said staff has just received the first draft. Mrs. Giles also asked if the committee is looking at a new policy. Mrs. Harrison responded that it will be a new policy.

Dr. Siddiqui commented that the committee members were very qualified but suggested a representative from the health council would be appropriate.

Ms. Bademosi asked when the committee meets. Mrs. Harrison said at 2:30, and there are two student members on the committee.

### **Policy 7100 – Family and Medical Leave**

*Presenters:* Mr. Kirk Thompson, Director, Human Resources; Ms. Rebecca Salerno, Manager, Instructional Support/Employee Services.

Mr. Thompson and Ms. Salerno gave an overview of Policy 7100 reviewing highlights and implementation procedures. The Public Hearing on the policy will be on January 8, 2009 and action taken on February 12, 2009. The policy will be effective on July 1, 2009.

#### *Discussion:*

Mr. Dyer said he was concerned about the effective date of July 1, 2009 in a situation arising where the leave would be needed before that date. Mr. Thompson said the biggest change to this policy was

the addition of taking leave to care for a family member who is in the military and has been injured. Mr. Thompson added that each circumstance would be looked at on an individual basis.

Dr. Siddiqui asked what the typical leave is that staff requests under the Family and Medical Leave Act. Mr. Thompson responded that under FMLA it is typically illness or taking care of a family member.

### **Policy 7130 – Substitute Teachers**

*Presenters:* Mr. Kirk Thompson; Mr. Robert Bruno, Specialist, Human Resources.

Mr. Thompson and Mr. Bruno gave an update and review of Policy 7130. The committee members concurred with the recommended changes. Mr. Bruno noted that the Public Hearing will be on January 8, 2009 and action taken on February 12, 2009. The policy will take effect on July 1, 2009.

#### *Discussion:*

Mrs. French asked if there was any discussion on the responsibilities of the substitute teacher. What is the role and what are substitutes expected to fulfill in their day's assignment. Mrs. French added that she would like a statement that says the substitute must attend the child abuse indication seminar.

Mr. Thompson said there was no comprehensive discussion. Mr. Thompson said this was something that could be considered.

Mrs. French said she would like to see more detail on exactly the role of the substitute when they begin a job such as lesson plans, procedures, and administrative duties. Mr. Bruno said the committee felt that this was addressed in the section dealing with Implementation Procedures. Mrs. Erickson asked if there was a job description for substitutes. Mr. Thompson said there was no job description. It was agreed that this description was needed, and Mr. Thompson will develop the job description.

Mr. Dyer was in agreement with Mrs. French in that guidance for substitute teachers was needed.

Mrs. Giles asked how the automated system is working. Mr. Thompson said the automated system is working very well, and

communication is also working very well. The school system is gearing toward a total on-line system. The current fill rate is 95 percent, which is a percentage that staff is pleased with.

### **Public Hearing - Policy 4060 Third Party Billing**

Mr. Chris Wertman, Chairman, CAC.

- Suggested clarification on the title "Third Party Billing".
- No mention of a role for the Board of Education.
- Change wording regarding reimbursement.
- Improve explanation of "cooperative effort" under Implementation Procedures.
- Clarify and add specifics of "aspects" under Implementation Procedures.
- Add a specific titled position to eliminate ambiguity regarding who has responsibility to fulfill the assignment under Implementation Procedures.

### **Policy 7080 - Transfer of Administrators**

Mr. Chris Wertman, Chairman, CAC.

- "Voluntary Transfer" needs to be defined.
- "Building administrators" is not clear and needs to be defined or eliminated.
- Add a notification section for Activities and Athletics Managers.
- Add a statement identifying salary implications when an administrator is transferred for performance and/or disciplinary reasons to a lower position.
- CAC cannot endorse this policy and recommends another cycle of public comment.

### **Policy 7090 – Administrative Transfer of Teachers**

Mr. Chris Wertman, Chairman CAC.

- Reference to the union agreement should be noted.
- Voluntary transfers need to be added.
- In addition to teachers - assistants, guidance counselors, nurses need to be added.
- "Teacher" should be defined as a "person" not a "position".
- CAC cannot endorse this policy and recommends another cycle of public comment.

**Proposed School Calendar, 2009-2010**Emily Long, student Howard HS.

- Against eliminating a week-long spring break.
- Both teachers and students need the break to recuperate from the long hours put in for school work and other activities.

Jean Shroeder, parent.

- Opposes reducing the length of the annual spring break.
- Students need the break from a grueling and demanding schedule.
- Visiting colleges and universities during this time is important.

Shana Barehan, parent.

- Does not feel that shortening the spring break is the answer.
- Spoke about the challenges facing blended families during a holiday time.
- Day care providers often plan vacation during the spring break.

Debra Jung, parent.

- Concerned about the number of half days in the calendar.
- Half days are disruptive to families and the curriculum.

Johnnie Nussbaum, parent.

- Concurs with returning the first professional development day to the Friday before Labor Day.
- The additional day and a half proposal should be sufficient to meet staff development needs.
- Does not agree with shortening spring break.

Dwight Carr, parent.

- Concerned that there are too many days taken off in this proposed calendar.
- National results in international comparisons show that the U.S. is below the average of developed countries.
- The proposal to shorten spring break is a change in the right direction.
- Would like to see a study to extend the school year.

Joanna Mellert, parent.

- Opposes decision to shorten spring break. This results in students being in school during Passover.
- A week-long spring break provides families the opportunity to travel for the Passover holiday.

Lisa Feinberg, parent.

- Supports the week-long spring break.
- Certain professions prevent the opportunity to vacation in the summer.

Chris Wertman, Chairman, CAC.

- Members are concerned about the numbers of half days.
- Consensus was not reached concerning shortening spring break.
- Would like to see the community surveyed on the topic.
- When a decision is reached, the community needs to be made aware of the decision and the rationale.

Karin Hanger, parent.

- Against the proposed change to spring break.
- Suggested scheduling incentives after Memorial Day.
- Children need the time off to relax after a stressful period.

Anna Gannon, teacher.

- Disagrees with the reduction of days allocated for spring break.
- Sees an increase in challenging behaviors prior to spring break.
- Spring break provides an opportunity for students and teachers to reenergize themselves.

Derrick Robertson, parent.

- Objected to the shortening of spring break.
- Parents, students, and teachers all need the break time.

**Adjournment:** The chairman adjourned the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

**Information Items**

- A. Annual Grants Report
- B. Class Size Report
- C. Food and Nutrition Service Financial Report
- D. IFAS Update
- E. Proposed Instructional Materials and Review Schedule

\*Under Section 3-701 of the Education Article of the *Annotated Code of Maryland*, the Student Member may not vote on these matters. Passage of a motion by the Board on these matters requires the affirmative vote of four (4) Board members.