

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HOWARD COUNTY

February 26, 2009

The Board of Education of Howard County held a regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, February 26, 2009, 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 Member

Sydney L. Cousin, Superintendent, Secretary/Treasurer
Patti Caplan, Director, Public Relations
Barbara Bowers, Recording Secretary

Chairman Frank Aquino called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m., and Ms. Mary Wang, President, HCASC (Howard County Association of Student Councils), 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:

Delete: Item 3.C. Minutes – Closed Meeting
Move: Item 6.C. Renovation Guidelines to Item 6.A.

Action: Dr. Siddiqui moved approval of the agenda as amended. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cohen and approved by the members of the Board (8/0).

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Cousin announced upcoming visits by state officials to Howard County schools. He also congratulated the following individuals:

- Rebecca Pfenninger, Rockburn ES, for her selection as Outstanding Educator Using Technology by the HCPSS Office of Media and Technology.
- Geordie Paulus, Elkridge Landing MS, for his selection as Outstanding Technology Leader in Education by the HCPSS Office of Media and Technology.
- Roy Rosnik, Marriotts Ridge HS, for receiving the High School Teacher of Excellence Award from the Technology Education Association of Maryland.

Student Representative's Report

Ms. Delana McGeachy, Wilde Lake HS, SGA (Student Government Association) Representative, reported on recent and upcoming activities at the school, including day-to-day activities, extracurricular activities and clubs, and fundraising and charitable initiatives.

Ms. Mary Brzezinski, Future Educators Advisor, Atholton HS, presented Atholton's national award-winning video about the school's vision of education for 2020. Board members and the Superintendent expressed appreciation and congratulations to everyone involved in this effort. It was noted that Atholton's Future Educators of America (FEA) has the largest student membership of any school in the nation. Students involved in the presentation spoke about their experiences at the national convention and in making the video.

Board Members' Reports

Mr. Cohen announced that Fox 45 News would be airing a feature story on Reservoir HS and the Choosing Civility theme.

Mrs. Giles and Mrs. French reported on their attendance at the Math and Science Fair.

Mrs. Gordon noted that she attended the kickoff of the Governor's "TELL (Teaching, Empowering, Leading and Learning) Maryland" survey, which is the first ever statewide survey of Maryland educators.

Ms. Bademosi reported on the Maryland Association of Student Councils meeting she attended.

Candidates for 2009/2010 Student Member of the Board of Education (SMOB)

The Board heard presentations by three students who are seeking the position of Student Member of the Board of Education for next year:

- Josh Manley, junior at Howard HS
- Hamza Siddiqui, junior at Wilde Lake HS
- Aamir Zariwala, junior at Glenelg HS

Consent Agenda (Restricted*)

Bids and Contracts and Donations

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

Bids and Contracts – Approved by the Board.

<u>Exhibit</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>
P-1	ADDITIONS AND RENOVATIONS TO MT. HEBRON HIGH SCHOOL	
	Contract 9A – Jennings H. Mitchell & Son, Inc.	\$ 435,930
	Contract 9C – Weyer’s Floor Service, Inc.	179,962
	Contract 9E – JNA Painting + Contracting Company, Inc	301,117
	Contract 11A – TJ Distributors, Inc.	91,250
	TOTAL	<u>\$1,008,259</u>
P-2	APPLE/MACINTOSH COMPUTER PARTS	
	Apple, Inc.	\$250,000 annually
P-3	ON-CALL EVALUATION SERVICES	\$85,000 annually
	Educational Policy Institute	
	Laruium Evaluation Group	
	Macro International, Inc.	
P-4	KITCHEN HOOD RENOVATION AT HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION CENTRAL OFFICE	
	Hot & Cold Corporation	\$45,954

Donations – Approved by the Board.

The following schools have received donations:

Glenwood MS: Box Tops for Education, in the amount of \$1,027.50, designated to cover increased expenses of student activities and fees.

Atholton HS: Boosters, in the amount of \$1,031, designated for the purchase of athletic equipment that includes baseballs, softballs, and lacrosse balls.

Glenelg HS: James Edgerton of Edge Space Systems, in the amount of \$1,000, designated to assist with the purchase of Robotics equipment.

Mt. Hebron HS: HCYP, in the amount of \$2,000, designated to assist with the purchase of baseball and softball scoreboards.

Viking Backers, in the amount of \$3,000, designated for the purchase of boys' lacrosse uniforms and lacrosse equipment.

River Hill HS: Boosters, in the amount of \$1,357, designated to pay tournament fees for the junior varsity and varsity wrestling teams.

John Bolton, a 4 x 5 camera and accessories valued at \$1,765, designated for use by the students in photography classes.

Consent Agenda

Minutes of February 5, 2009 (Public Work Session I on the Superintendent's Proposed FY 2010 Operating Budget) and February 10, 2009 (Public Work Session II on the Superintendent's Proposed FY 2010 Operating Budget).

Motion: Mrs. Gordon moved approval of the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Ms. Bademosi.

Discussion:

Mr. Dyer objected to a proposed modification to the minutes of February 10, 2009, concerning a discussion on renovations and LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification. Board members presented various points of view regarding information presented at meetings and the recording of minutes.

Action: The motion to approve the Consent Agenda was approved by a vote of 6/2, with Mr. Dyer and Dr. Siddiqui voting no.

Bridge to Excellence (BTE): Communication and Public Engagement Plan

Presenters: Mrs. Mamie Perkins, Chief of Staff; Mrs. Patti Caplan, Director of Public Relations; Mrs. Anna Gable, Publication Specialist; and Mrs. Joan Irving, Communication Specialist.

Mrs. Caplan and staff from the Public Information Office presented a BTE Report on the status of the school system's Communication and Public Engagement Strategic Plan, originally presented to the Board in November 2007. The report highlighted recent initiatives related to communications planning; electronic communications, including websites, the HCPSS Intranet, and television services; marketing strategies; and data from recent evaluations of communication strategies.

Mrs. Caplan noted that HCPSS values communication as a function of leadership and considers positive communication every staff member's responsibility. Communication and Public Engagement is one of four cross-functional strategies for the system, and as a result, each division and program included communication activities and processes in their annual plans. She highlighted some of the steps taken by various departments to enhance their communication efforts.

Future plans are to continue to enhance the communication skills of all HCPSS employees, to establish a Public Relations Advisory Committee to assist staff with program direction, to develop and implement website and publication standards, and to continue to assess the effectiveness of communication and public engagement strategies.

Discussion:

Mrs. Caplan stated that guidelines for the dissemination of information through eSchoolnewsletter have been provided to principals. Staff is also giving direction to schools about how frequently newsletters should be sent out and will be more specific about suggestions for best practices and how quality and content can be improved.

Mr. Dyer noted that particularly at the high school level, there are unofficial web pages that parents and clubs keep. He asked if there are any provisions for the standardized HCPSS web pages to contain links to the unofficial sites. Mrs. Caplan indicated that links will be available for Booster Clubs and some of the parent groups that already exist, and staff will look to see what can be done to improve communication and consistency at cross sites.

Mrs. French noted that Board members have indicated a need for information regarding presentations that staff may be giving to schools in their particular cluster assignments. Mrs. Caplan stated that staff will look at ways to collect this information and make it available to the Board. In addition, Mrs. Caplan indicated that electronic information updates with links to various school system guidelines could also be sent out on a periodic basis as reminders and to keep the Board, staff, students, and the public informed.

In response to Ms. Bademosi, Dr. Clarissa Evans, Executive Director for Secondary Curricular Programs, explained that eGuides for Learning are being implemented on a three-year plan. Many of the guides for courses that all students take are being implemented first, with electives and higher-level courses to follow.

Board members expressed appreciation to staff for their work in the communications area.

Renovation Guidelines

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

Mr. Roey presented the Guidelines for Renovation and Modernization of Existing Buildings, which provides standards, guidelines, and procedures for use by school system administrative

staff and Architectural/Engineering (A/E) firms engaged in the planning and design of renovation work for HCPSS.

The standards represent minimum criteria, and every attempt will be made to achieve them on each project. Deviations from the standards will require a waiver. Goals are provided for minimum classroom square footage, and general building considerations are provided in areas ranging from green building principles to technology. The guidelines are the product of an extensive internal staff review and were appraised by the Facility and School Planning Advisory Committee.

Educational Specifications have long existed for the construction of new school buildings, as well as new additions when adding capacity. Up to this point, the school system has had no formal guidelines for renovations to existing buildings. These guidelines are aligned with Policy 6020 (School Construction Program) and allow flexibility to meet the unique needs of each school.

Discussion:

Dr. Siddiqui suggested that the language contained in the first sentence of Section 5.6 Green Building and Sustainable Design Principles also be included in Section 4.2 Design Team Objectives ("The intent of the HCPSS is to incorporate Green Sustainable Design features into both renovation and new construction that is achievable within the proposed project budget and meets long-term conservation and environmental quality goals of the school system.") By consensus, the Board agreed to the suggestion.

Dr. Cousin explained that the waiver process would be involved for either adding to or taking away from the minimum criteria described in the guidelines. It was agreed that the clause "however, this is not mandatory" (contained in the second paragraph of Section 1.0) be stricken from the guidelines.

By consensus, the Board also agreed to various editorial suggestions previously provided to staff by Mrs. French.

Mr. Dyer referred to public testimony where the Board heard recommendations that the school system attempt to achieve LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) for all renovations. A waiver process was also suggested if the school system could not comply with the LEED standard for any reason. Mr. Dyer suggested

that the school system set policy to comply with the State High Performance Building Act. Dr. Cousin pointed out that the state requirement does not apply to school buildings. Under the state requirement, it is necessary to have 80 percent or more of the school subject to the renovation/replacement before it would qualify for LEED certification under the state law.

It was noted that the renovation guidelines being presented for Board approval are not part of policy. Policies take precedence over guidelines, and law takes precedence over policy. The renovation guidelines will be part of the discussion regarding Policy 6020 (School Construction Program).

Mr. Aquino asked staff to provide further information prior to discussion on Policy 6020 to help educate the Board with respect to LEED certifications and the types of projects that are certifiable.

Mr. Dyer asked that the Board postpone final approval of the renovations guidelines until Policy 6020 is in place to ensure that the Guidelines Manual for Renovations and Modernizations complies with the School Construction Program policy. Mr. Aquino noted that the renovation guidelines will be adjusted to comply with policy if any further changes are in conflict with the guidelines. In addition, health and safety considerations presented by the public will be incorporated in the redraft of Policy 6020.

Motion: Mrs. Giles moved approval of the Guidelines Manual for Renovations and Modernizations of existing schools with the changes approved by Board consensus. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cohen.

Discussion:

Mr. Dyer suggested that the final document be presented to the Board before voting. Mr. Aquino stated that the current vote would be contingent upon all changes that have been discussed and agreed upon at this meeting.

Action: The motion was approved by the members of the Board (8/0).

Board members expressed appreciation to the Superintendent and staff for their work on the guidelines.

Proposed Textbooks/Instructional Materials

Presenter: Dr. Clarissa Evans, Executive Director, Secondary Curricular Programs.

The proposed textbook list was presented to the Board on December 11, 2008. In compliance with Policy 8040 – Selection of Instructional Materials, proposed instructional materials were displayed from December 12, 2008, to January 13, 2009, at the Department of Education.

There were no comments or requests for reevaluation for any of the proposed textbooks.

Motion: Mrs. Giles moved approval of the proposed textbook list as submitted. The motion was seconded by Ms. Bademosi.

Discussion:

Staff assured the Board that no negative comments were received through the comment process or by email.

Action: The motion was approved by the members of the Board (8/0).

Recess: The meeting was recessed by the Chairman at 6:40 p.m. and reconvened at 7:30 p.m.

Public Forum

There was no one present to address the Board.

Legislative Report/2009 General Assembly

Presenter: Mr. Ray Brown, Chief Financial Officer, and Dr. Janet Siddiqui, Chairman of the Legislative Committee.

The following bills were presented with recommended positions by the Legislative Committee for discussion/approval by the Board:

HB205 – Public Schools – Mandatory School Uniforms

Recommended Position: **Oppose**

Rationale: Consistent with BOE Legislative Platform position (Authority of Local Board)

HB274/SB315 – Task Force on the Correlation Between Population Size of Middle and High Schools and Achievement

Recommended Position: **Oppose**

Rationale: Consistent with BOE Legislative Platform position (Authority of Local Board)

HB306 – Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

Recommended Position: **Support**

HB505 – High School Assessment Requirement

Recommended Position: **Oppose**

Rationale: Consistent with BOE Legislative Platform position (High School Assessments)

HB587 – Teacher Identification Number

Presented for Information Purposes

Rationale: Monitor

HB588 – Public Schools – Standardized Course Numbering System

Presented for Information Purposes

Rationale: Monitor

HB621 – Prevailing Wage Rate Law

Recommended Position: **Support**

Rationale: Would reduce cost of construction for those projects that are subject to prevailing wage provisions

HB845 – Tween/Teen Dating Violence Education and Awareness

Hearing for this bill has been cancelled. Not yet rescheduled

Recommended Position: **Oppose**

Rationale: Consistent with BOE Legislative Platform position (Legislated Curriculum and Testing)

HB1046/SB710 – State Retirement and Pension System – Local Employer Contributions – Educators and Educational Staff

Recommended Position: **Oppose**

Rationale: Consistent with BOE Legislative Platform position (Adequate Funding for Public School Education – Retirement and Pensions)

HB1094 – Equity in Education Funding Act of 2009

Recommended Position: **Support with Amendments**

Rationale: Consistent with BOE Legislative Platform position (Adequate Funding for Public School Education Proposed Amendment – Provided all school systems are held harmless)

HB 1243/SB673 – Fairness in Negotiations Act

Recommended Position: **Oppose**

Rationale: Consistent with BOE Legislative Platform position (Public School Labor Relations Board)

SB139 – High School Assessment Requirement

Recommended Position: **Oppose**

Rationale: Consistent with BOE Legislative Platform position (High School Assessments)

SB235 – MDK12 Digital Library

Recommended Position: **Support**

SB241/HB660 – Suspension and Expulsion Procedures – Attendance Related Offences

Recommended Position: **Oppose**

Rationale: Consistent with BOE Legislative Platform position (Authority of Local Board)

SB379/HB484 – Task Force to Study the County and Municipal Revenue Structure

Recommended Position: **Support with Amendments**

Rationale: Proposed Amendment – Members from the education community be assigned to the task force

SB404 – Physical Education Facilities

Recommended Position: **Support with Amendments**

Rationale: Proposed Amendment – Adopted regulations would not apply to facilities that otherwise would not require a gymnasium.

SB409 – Office Discipline Referrals – Accountability

Recommended Position: **Oppose**

Rationale: Consistent with BOE Legislative Platform position (Authority of Local Board)

SB462 – Prevailing Wage Law

Recommended Position: **Support**

Rationale: Would reduce cost of construction for those projects that are subject to prevailing wage provisions

Board members agreed to discuss HB621 and HB243/SB673 and cast votes as separate items.

Action: Mrs. Gordon moved acceptance of the committee's recommendations with the exception of HB621 and HB1243/SB673. The motion was seconded by Mrs. French and approved by a vote of 7/0/1, with Ms. Bademosi abstaining.

Discussion:

HB621 – Prevailing Wage Rate Law

Recommended Position: **Support**

Mr. Aquino stated that he is generally in favor of prevailing wage rate legislation and noted that this bill does not impact HCPSS. Dr. Cousin indicated that the state has never provided funding that would make the execution of requirements apply to Howard County. Mrs. French expressed support for this bill and noted the importance of looking at how legislation affects not only Howard County, but all school systems across the state.

Action: Mrs. French moved that the Board support the committee recommendation for HB621. The motion was seconded by Ms. Bademosi and approved by a vote of 6/2, with Mr. Aquino and Mr. Dyer voting no.

HB1243/SB673 – Fairness in Negotiations Act

Recommended Position: **Oppose**

Mr. Dyer expressed concern regarding the current system with the selection of a hearing officer and expressed support for a collective bargaining approach as a replacement. He indicated support for this bill and stated that it would be an improvement over the current process.

Mrs. Gordon stated that this bill would take away the authority of the Maryland State Board of Education to be involved in all matters and concerns, not only hearings concerning staff and students, but also concerns about issues such as class size, hours and wages, basic

policies, etc. She stated that she has not been apprised that the general public objects to the way hearings are currently held and indicated that a great deal of authority of boards of education and administration would be undermined with this bill. Mrs. Gordon expressed strong opposition to this bill and noted that the state board recently voted unanimously (with one abstention) to oppose this bill.

Mr. Aquino, Mr. Cohen, Mrs. Giles, and Mrs. French expressed various concerns with this bill, including fiduciary issues and the loss of authority that would result from passage. It was also noted that this legislation would affect collective bargaining and union negotiations. Dr. Siddiqui commented that this bill would also take parents out of the loop in terms of the whole process as well.

Action: Dr. Siddiqui moved that the Board oppose HB1243/SB673. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cohen and approved by a vote of 7/1, with Mr. Dyer voting no.

Appointment – Community Advisory Council (CAC) Monthly Report

Mr. Chris Wertman, CAC Chairman, reported on his attendance at a recent meeting of the HCPSS Technology Advisory Committee and commended Technology Officer Mike Borkosky on his commitment to work with the greater Howard County community. He also asked the Board for support for the FIRST Robotics Program currently active at Glenelg, Atholton, and Hammond high schools.

Public Hearing – High School Capacity

Nancy McAllister - Parent, Woodmark Subdivision

- Expressed concern that the proposal could allow their existing poor feed to persist without correction.
- Requested that the Board appoint a committee to review the small feed problem, develop a long-term solution, and correct it in a timely manner.

Caryn Lasser - Atholton HS PTSA Executive Board

- Expressed support for calculating high school capacity at the existing state formula.
- Stated that the Gilbert Study count of teaching stations is the most critical component of the capacity formula.

- Supported a utilization percentage of 85 percent to accommodate differences in buildings in important areas such as hallways and cafeterias.
- Stated that the Atholton HS PTSA recommends further consideration of the real difference among the 12 high schools when decisions based on capacity are made.

Howard Johnson – Greater Elkridge Community Association (GECA)

- Indicated that the Elkridge area and Route 1 corridor may receive the bulk of new development in the county.
- Would like to see the first option in the Feasibility Study further reviewed and implemented to have land set aside for a new high school in the northeastern area of the county.
- Stated that the GECA finds the second option of increasing the size of the current three high schools will not ultimately resolve the problem.
- Indicated that the third option compounds the problem with more busing and dislocation of schools from their neighborhoods.
- GECA points out the need for Howard County to act now in the northeastern area of the county to secure land and set aside monies to build the elementary, middle, and high school that is needed.

Cindy Ardinger - Howard County Citizen

- Expressed concern that an 85-percent factor is not sufficient when taking into account limitations of older schools and the quality of student life.
- Asked that additional or alternative factors in distinguishing true capacity of schools be explored.
- Asked that teachers be surveyed with specific questions.
- Asked that additional opportunities for public input be considered as the process evolves.

Chris Wertman – Chairman, Community Advisory Council (CAC)

- Stated that CAC concurs with the basic concept of changing the methodology for calculating high school capacity.
- Indicated that the percent-utilization factor that is being applied to consider factors should not be the same for all schools.
- Asked for recognition that the change in capacity calculation could have a significant impact on future redistricting plans by delaying or even eliminating the need for redistricting in the near future.
- Stated that the primary concern regarding the methodology change has the potential to impact class size.

Susan Arensmeier – Parent

- Stated that high schools actually have higher capacities than previously thought and felt that there is no pressure to move students residing in the Greenbridge area from one school to another because of overcrowding.

Brian Moronay – Parent

- Supported the views of the Greater Elkridge Community Association.
- Concerned that the utilization ratio will create additional overcrowding.
- Suggested that land be set aside now for building new schools (high school in particular).

Mark Darden – Parent

- Supported community continuity, and asked the Board to consider this issue when looking at the impact of class size and school ratio.

Adjournment –The meeting was adjourned by the Chairman at 8:50 p.m.

*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.