

# MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HOWARD COUNTY

March 26, 2009

The Board of Education of Howard County held a regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, March 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.

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

Chairman Frank Aquino called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m., and Felix Nwogbo, Howard HS SGA Student Representative, led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

At the request of the school system's office of Safety, Environment and Risk Management, Mr. Aquino read an announcement regarding the procedures for emergency evacuation of the Board Rooms. This announcement will be presented prior to each Board meeting.

## Public Forum

There was no one present to address the Board.

## Approval of Agenda

The following changes were made to the agenda:

- Item 4.A. – Pull Item P-3 from Bids and Contracts.
- Delete Item 4.C. – Closed Meeting Minutes.
- Add meeting dates to Item 5.C. – Regular Meeting Minutes (Regular Meeting of February 26, 2009; Legislative Committee Minutes of

February 18 and March 18, 2009; and Policy Committee Minutes of March 9, 2009).

- Delete Item 7.G. – Committee Protocols.

*Action:* Mr. Cohen moved approval of the agenda as amended. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Gordon and approved by the members of the Board (7/0).

### **Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Cousin reported on his attendance at a number of recent school system activities. He also introduced and congratulated Michael Duffy, Howard HS Athletics and Activities Manager, for his selection as 2008/2009 Athletic Director of the Year by the Maryland State Athletic Directors' Association. In addition, he congratulated BSAP Specialist Patricia Branner-Pierce and Director of Student Services Pamela Blackwell, who were both honored by the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority for their work with children and families in the community.

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

Felix Nwogbo, Howard HS, spoke about his pride in Howard HS and the improvements that have occurred at the school. He stated that the school's objective is to move from good to great and green. He also reported on various school activities and noted that tests scores have been increasing, and Howard HS is participating in a contest for the greenest school.

### **Board Members' Reports**

Mr. Cohen reminded Board members that nominations for the Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) Board of Directors are due on May 29, 2009.

Board members reported on various school and community events they attended over the past several weeks. Mrs. Gordon presented a report on the Board's "What Counts" forum that was held on November 11, 2008. It was noted that the report that emanated from "What Counts" is available to the public on BoardDocs.

On behalf of the Board, Mr. Aquino thanked Mrs. Gordon, Dr. Cousin, and staff for making the third edition of "What Counts" in education a success.

## NAACP 2008 Report Card

Dr. Rhonda Jones, Education Chair for the NAACP, presented the Board with the NAACP's 2008 Education Report Card for African American Students. Dr. Jones noted that African American children on average are not performing as well as they can and offered several recommendations to address this issue.

Mr. Aquino noted that the NAACP is celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year and expressed appreciation for the partnership the school system has with the NAACP in helping to increase student achievement. Dr. Cousin and Board members also expressed appreciation to Dr. Jones and the NAACP for their work and collaborative efforts with the school system in enhancing student improvement.

Mr. Aquino requested that both consent agendas be combined for voting purposes due to the absence of the Student Member.

### Consent Agendas (Restricted\* and Regular)

*Action:* Mrs. Giles moved approval of the Regular and Restricted Consent Agendas, minus the committee meeting minutes and Item P-3 from Bids and Contracts. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cohen and approved by the members of the Board (7/0).

Bids and Contracts, Donations, and Regular Meeting Minutes of February 26, 2009 – Approved by the Board.

Bids and Contracts – Approved by the Board.

P-1	<b>EMAIL COMMUNICATION SYSTEM</b> MIS Sciences Corporation	\$64,000.00
P-2	<b>EXTERIOR BLEACHER RENOVATIONS – HOWARD HIGH SCHOOL</b> T. J. Distributors	\$85,070.00
P-3	<b>Pulled per Board action.</b>	
P-4	<b>AUDIO VISUAL EQUIPMENT</b> Washington Professional Systems Aves AV Systems GBC	\$ 1,000.00 3,000.00 4,000.00

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Pyramid School Products	4,000.00
Broadcast Supply	6,000.00
System Source	6,000.00
CCS	7,000.00
SW Plastic Binding	8,000.00
APF Industries, Inc.	10,000.00
Dell	10,000.00
CTL	11,000.00
AVI-SPL	18,000.00
Camcor	35,000.00
Kunz	36,000.00
Nicholas P. Pipino	50,000.00
B&H Photo	42,000.00
Peripheral Vision	50,000.00
Long's Electronics	50,000.00
Troxell	<u>90,000.00</u>
<b>TOTAL AWARD AMOUNT</b>	<b>\$441,000.00</b>

### Donations

- Manor Woods ES: PTA, in the amount of \$525, designated for the Cultural Arts Program, *Blue Sky Puppet Theatre - Field Day*.
- Running Brook ES: Judge Alice P. Clark, in the amount of \$500, designated for the purchase of educational books for students and professional development for teachers.
- Folly Quarter MS: Dr. Thuy Nguyen, in the amount of \$800, designated for the purchase of a cello for the Orchestra Program.
- Atholton HS: Atholton Youth Recreation Assn., Inc., in the amount of \$500, designated for the purchase of pitching machine balls, mini baseballs and catching equipment.
- Centennial HS: Boosters, in the amount of \$22,500, designated for the purchase of a scoreboard. The vendor has been approved by the HCPSS.
- Kimco Realty/DSVC Retail, in the amount of \$1,200, designated for the Chem Free After Prom Party.

Glenelg HS: Boosters, in the amount \$5,500, designated to cover salaries and other expenses for the SAT Prep class sponsored by the Boosters.

Meredith Ward, in the amount of \$1,000, designated for the J. M. Ward Scholarship Fund.

Long Reach HS: Boosters, in the amount of \$500, designated for the purchase of goggles for the girls' lacrosse team.

Society of American Military Engineers (Baltimore Post), in the amount of \$2,000, designated to support the engineering students participating in the Botball competition.

Marriotts Ridge HS: Howard County Youth Program, in the amount of \$1,500, designated to support all athletic programs.

Boosters, in the amount of \$510, designated to pay the 2008/2009 FBLA state and national registration fees.

Reservoir HS: Boosters, in the amount of \$750, designated to pay for uniforms for the indoor track team.

#### Legislative Committee Minutes of February 18, 2009

*Action:* Dr. Siddiqui moved approval of the February 18, 2009, Legislative Committee meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Mrs. French and approved by the members of the Legislative Committee (3/0).

#### Legislative Committee Minutes of March 18, 2009

*Motion:* Dr. Siddiqui moved approval of the Legislative Committee meeting minutes of March 18, 2009. The motion was seconded by Mrs. French.

Mrs. French asked that the spelling of an attendee's name be verified for accuracy.

*Action:* The motion was approved by the members of the Legislative Committee (2/0/1), with Mr. Aquino abstaining due to his absence from the meeting.

#### Policy Committee Minutes of March 9, 2009

Mrs. French provided a brief overview of the March 9, 2009, Policy Committee meeting. The Policy Committee will meet again on May 4 and June 15, 2009.

*Action:* Mrs. Giles moved approval of the minutes of the Policy Committee meeting of March 9, 2009. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Gordon and approved by the members of the Policy Committee (3/0).

#### **Bridge to Excellence (BTE): Vision for Central Office Leadership**

*Presenters:* Dr. Terry Alban, Chief Operating Officer, and Ms. Dori Novak, Leadership Facilitator.

Dr. Alban and Ms. Novak reported on the Leadership Development and Performance System for central office leaders. Dr. Alban explained that for a number of years, central office leaders have relied on the performance standards and evaluation system that was designed for school-based leaders. In the spring of 2007, it was determined that standards for job performance, evaluation processes, and professional development opportunities should be strategically designed to fit the unique challenges and responsibilities these leaders face.

A committee of leaders from across all divisions of central office collaborated for two years to establish the leadership development and performance system. Leaders in every division are piloting the resulting product during the 2008/2009 year. Feedback from participants is being used to make revisions and to guide future professional development offerings.

#### *Discussion:*

Mr. Dyer expressed appreciation for the report and suggested that photographs be added to aid in recognition of staff.

Board members commended staff for the report and noted the importance of connecting central office operations with school-based staff in understanding the wide variety of roles of school system staff. It was also noted that the report focuses on the school system's mission and how the schools, students, and teachers can be served in the most effective way with compassion and integrity.

### **Proclamation: School Library Media Month**

*BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HOWARD COUNTY*

**PROCLAMATION**

DESIGNATING APRIL 2009

AS

SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA MONTH

WHEREAS, April 2009 has been proclaimed School Library Media Month in Maryland: and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the library media program is to ensure that students and staff are effective users of ideas and information; and

WHEREAS, the library media specialist's role is to provide the leadership and expertise necessary to ensure that the library media program is an integral part of the instructional program of the school; and

WHEREAS, library media specialists in each school teach the skills of locating and using information through traditional resources and new technologies, provide literature appreciation activities, and guide and encourage content and recreational reading for every student; and

WHEREAS, lifelong learning begins and is systematically developed through the library media curriculum of the elementary and secondary schools; and

WHEREAS, the library media program contributes to the individual growth and development of all students, while fostering both excellence and equity in education; and

WHEREAS, library media centers provide materials to meet individual needs, varied interests, abilities, diverse backgrounds and maturity levels of the students served; and

WHEREAS, the library media specialists of Howard County have dedicated themselves to work for quality library media programs for all students;

THEREFORE BE IT PROCLAIMED, that the Board of Education of Howard County does hereby proclaim April 2009 as School Library Media Month in all of the public schools of Howard County and calls upon school administrators,

Approved – April 30, 2009

teachers, students and citizens of Howard County to recognize and support this action and to participate throughout the month of April in the celebration of School Library Media Month.

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Frank J. Aquino, Chairman  
Board of Education of Howard County

Sydney L. Cousin, Superintendent  
Howard County Public School System

*Action:* Mrs. Giles moved approval of the Proclamation: School Library Media Month. The motion was seconded by Mrs. French and approved by the members of the Board (7/0).

### **Proclamation: National Volunteers/Partnership Recognition**

*BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HOWARD COUNTY*  
**PROCLAMATION**  
HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS  
OF  
EDUCATIONAL PARTNERS AND VOLUNTEERS

**WHEREAS** it is the mission of the Howard County Public School System to ensure excellence in teaching and learning so that each student will participate responsibly in a diverse and changing world; and

**WHEREAS** the Board of Education recognizes that partners in education and volunteers are vital components of a relevant educational experience and provide valuable assistance to professional educators in fulfillment of the mission of the school system; and

**WHEREAS** the Board of Education wishes to express sincere appreciation to all volunteers for their individual efforts in making this school system among the best in the nation; and

**WHEREAS** the Board also wishes to thank the corps of volunteers who serve the Howard County Public School System for their active interest in the children of Howard County, their contributions of time and talent, and their unyielding dedication to the goals of public education; and

**WHEREAS** partnerships with local businesses and organizations are a vital link between the community and its public schools;

**THEREFORE BE IT PROCLAIMED** that the Board of Education designates the week of April 19 – 25, 2009 as Partnerships in Education and Volunteers Week in the Howard County Public School System; and

**BE IT FURTHER PROCLAIMED** that it is the expressed wish of the Board of Education that this proclamation serve to launch meaningful volunteer recognition in all schools and that copies of this proclamation, along with Volunteer Recognition Certificates, be distributed to all schools to be used to express sincere appreciation to volunteers for their outstanding efforts and contributions.

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Frank J. Aquino, Chairman  
Howard County Board of Education

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Sydney L. Cousin, Superintendent  
Howard County Public School System

*Action:* Dr. Siddiqui moved approval of the Proclamation: National Volunteers/Partnership Recognition. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Giles and approved by the members of the Board (7/0).

### **Legislative Report/2009 General Assembly**

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

Mr. Brown provided an update on HB 101/SB 166 – Budget Reconciliation Funding Act (BRFA), which relates to the first step in the process of approving the budget presented by the Governor. In an effort to address an additional \$516 million gap in revenue shortfalls statewide, the House Appropriations Committee took several actions that directly impact Howard County. As a result, HCPSS will need to increase its general fund expenditure and make other adjustments in the budget for a total of \$3.8 million. Next steps involve debate on the House floor, and the Senate is currently making its own recommendations in the cross-file bill SB 166.

#### *Legislative Committee Recommendations:*

Mr. Brown presented the Legislative Committee recommendations for the Board on the following bills:

#### HB 1543 – Education – Public Schools – Virtual Schools

Recommendation: Oppose

Rationale: Consistent with BOE Legislative Platform Position – Unfunded Mandate and Authority of Local Board.

HB 1543 would establish a Virtual School and would be very prescriptive in terms of how local boards establish the school and what resources local boards must provide.

HB 1558 - Student Stigma Act

Recommendation: No Position

This bill would change references from emotional disturbance to behavioral disability in certain acts.

HB 1549 – Education Funding – Thornton Formula – Evaluation

Recommendation: Support with Amendments

Rationale: Consistent with BOE Legislative Platform Position – Adequate Funding for Public School Education

This bill would require the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to examine existing educational funding formulas. The committee recommends that the Board support HB 1549 with the following amendments:

- That the preliminary report be moved back from July 1 to September 1, 2009, and
- That the final report be moved back from October 1 to December 1, 2009.

*Discussion:*

Mr. Brown clarified that current law does not prevent the establishment of a Virtual School, but HB 1543 is very prescriptive in terms of how a Virtual School would be set up. The position to oppose the bill has also been taken by MABE and the Superintendents Association.

Action: Dr. Siddiqui moved approval of the positions stated for HB 1543, HB 1558, and HB 1549. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Gordon and approved by the members of the Board (7/0).

**2009/2010 Board of Education Meeting Schedule**

*Presenter:* Mrs. Patti Caplan, Director of Public Relations.

Based on suggestions from Board members, the following changes have been made to the proposed schedule since the March 12 report:

- The second Board meeting in December 2009 has been moved to Thursday, December 17, 2009.
- The Coffee and Conversation for Saturday, April 17, 2010, has been moved to Saturday, April 24, because of the Board's heavy schedule the week of April 12.

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*Discussion:*

It was noted that the Board could hold additional Coffee and Conversation sessions as desired or needed.

*Action:* Mrs. Giles moved acceptance of the Board's 2009/2010 calendar as presented in the revised report. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cohen and approved by the members of the Board (7/0).

**Quarterly Agenda - April-June 2009**

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

Mrs. Hanks presented proposed changes to the Quarterly Agenda since the previous report.

*Action:* Mrs. Giles moved approval of the Quarterly Agenda for April – June 2009, with the adjustments as indicated by the Board members. The motion was seconded by Dr. Siddiqui and approved by the members of the Board (7/0).

**Recess** – The meeting was recessed by the Chairman at 5:55 p.m. and reconvened at 6:10 p.m.

**Appointment - Community Advisory Council (CAC) Monthly Report**

Mr. Chris Wertman, CAC Chairman, presented information on the following topics for consideration by the Board, as well as the Superintendent and staff:

- Need for compensation for teachers who are involved as advisors in the Chesapeake Regional FIRST Robotics competition.
- Need for public hearing opportunities regarding guidelines presented to the Board, such as the Renovation Guidelines and Activity Fees Guidelines.

In addition, Mr. Wertman commented on the Howard County History Day competition recently held at Reservoir HS and the knowledge and presence demonstrated by students.

## **Appointment - PTA Council of Howard County (PTACHC) Monthly Report**

Mr. John Hannay, PTACHC President, spoke about the following:

- Assignment of council priority issues to various working committees and beginning the process of developing objectives that will guide the council's work over the next couple of years.
- Appreciation to the Board for considering indoor building safety and environmental issues related to Policy 6020 –School Construction Program.
- Work on the talent bank for purposes of policy advisory committee recruitment.
- Appreciation for the opportunity for involvement in the District Planning Team.
- PTA Reflections Competition - Five semi-finalists from Howard County have been selected to move on to the national level. An invitation was extended to the Superintendent and the Board to attend a special exhibition of the works of art that have been advanced from the county to the state level.

### **High School Capacity**

*Presenter:* Mr. Joel Gallihue, Manager of School Planning.

A new formula for determining high school capacities that results in an increase of system capacity of over 900 seats could delay redistricting for most high schools for up to six years.

This report follows one made to the Board on January 22, 2009, in which staff recommended using a formula that accounts for actual teaching stations and the existing state formula for calculating capacity. After visiting each of the high schools, hearing public testimony, and attending a High School Principals' meeting, staff recommends a revised count of the teaching stations and utilizing a varying utilization percentage.

The revised formula recommendation for high school capacity accounts for actual teaching stations, a 25:1 class size ratio, and a varying utilization percentage of 80 percent or 85 percent based upon meeting general educational specifications for space requirements.

Staff recommended that the Board approve the new formula for calculating high school capacity. These new capacities will be used to

drive redistricting recommendations made as part of the June 2009 Feasibility Study.

*Discussion:*

Mr. Gallihue noted that staff was asked to look at past redistricting. He stated that a summary of high school redistricting will be provided to the Board and indicated that most occurrences were associated with the opening of new schools.

Mr. Mike Williams, Athletics Coordinator, provided information on student enrollment and the relation to opportunities for involvement in extracurricular activities. He noted that currently the largest schools in HCPSS are not the schools winning most of the county championships. He indicated that in looking at enrollment projections, there does not appear to be a concern that a large school could possibly become a powerhouse in a particular sport. Mr. Williams also pointed out that in some sports, such as cross-country, the coach decides on the number of students allowed to participate.

Dr. Cousin noted the importance of having a rational process for calculating school capacity on an individual basis, rather than establishing one target population for all high schools.

Mr. Dyer expressed concern regarding equity in terms of access to the same activities in which students participate in each school. He indicated that changing the capacity formula may result in legal ramifications that are unknown at this time.

It was pointed out that the revised recommendation has five schools increasing in capacity, some by as few as 20 students, but the capacity of the other seven schools would be lower than 1,400.

Mrs. French expressed concern about a high school being allowed to exceed a capacity of 1,600 students. She stated her belief that the staff recommendation is a good plan, but she could not accept the percentage utilization of 80 percent for Long Reach and Wilde Lake high schools, which are newer schools, with an 85 percent capacity for an older school like Howard HS. She suggested that the public be given an opportunity to comment on the revised recommendation and postponing the Board's vote until the next meeting.

Mrs. Giles indicated that the recommendation would put the school system on a better track to accurately assess how the educational

program can be delivered at each school. The revised formula would also help the public understand how figures have been determined and how a measure can be consistently applied.

Mrs. Gordon expressed agreement with Mrs. Giles and indicated that a school with 1,600 students would probably not be too unrealistic as far as opportunities for students, although she stated that a school with a population lower than 1,000 students may not allow the same opportunities.

Dr. Siddiqui expressed appreciation to staff for taking on a community perspective in this process, which shows equity throughout the different schools. Mr. Gallihue noted that school principals were also involved in the process. He assured the Board that all studies took into consideration core spaces, number of lockers, etc., and determined that adequate resources are available to meet the needs of each school's recommended capacity.

Mr. Dyer reiterated his concerns about the Board's responsibility to provide the proper environment for students. He expressed his opinion that the change in capacities would give control to the County Council and County Executive, where control over the environment for students is secondary compared to available tax dollars.

Dr. Cousin pointed out that the variation in enrollment and targeted capacity has always existed, and the school system tries to balance those differences. Staff strives to ensure that students have the opportunity to take full advantage of offerings by meeting the goals of the school system and ensuring that every student has the maximum opportunities for participation.

Mrs. French reiterated her concern about not providing an additional opportunity for public input. Mr. Aquino noted that the public provided testimony regarding a more onerous recommendation, and staff has come back with a better scenario based on comments from the public and the Board.

*Motion:* Mrs. Gordon moved that the Board accept the recommendation for the high school capacity calculations. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cohen.

*Amendment to the Motion:* Mrs. French amended the motion to lower the utilization factor for Howard HS to 80 percent and raise the

utilization factor for Long Reach and Wilde Lake high schools from 80 percent to 85 percent.

Mrs. Gordon accepted the amendment to the motion.

*Discussion on the Amendment:*

Mr. Dyer expressed concern that the proposal is too nebulous because of its newness. He stated that Mrs. French's amendment was valid but indicated there may be other amendments that the Board should also consider.

*Action:* The amendment to the motion was approved by the members of the Board (7/0).

*Action:* The amended motion was approved by the members of the Board (6/1), with Mr. Dyer voting no.

**Adjournment** – By consensus, the meeting was adjourned at 8:03 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.