

eCURRENT

A Summary of the Board of Education Meeting Thursday, November 3, 2011

ACTION ITEMS

- A motion to add a discussion item on the flu vaccine to the agenda failed.
- Approved a restricted consent agenda including staff personnel, bids and contracts and minutes of closed Board meetings; and received status reports on the operating budget and the school construction fund.
- Approved a general consent agenda including donations and the ombudsman charter.
- Approved a proclamation in honor of Veterans Day.
- Approved revisions to Policy 1000 Civility and Policy 1040 Safe School Environments to align the definition of bullying with Policy 1060 Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment or Intimidation.
- Approved the selection of Ray & Associates, Inc. to conduct the search for the school system's next Superintendent, subject to finalizing an acceptable negotiated best and final price and agreement (see below).

Board Selects Firm for Superintendent Search

The Board approved the selection of Ray & Associates, Inc. of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, to conduct the search for the school system's next Superintendent. The Board evaluated proposals on both a technical and a cost basis and conducted interviews with the three highest ranked firms: Ray & Associates, Inc; Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates; and Proact Search.

Once an acceptable agreement and price have been determined, the Board will begin the process to develop a candidate profile that will involve the staff, parents and community.

Committee Recommends Minor Changes to School Calendar

If approved as presented, the 2012-2013 academic calendar would provide school administrators with more flexibility in how they use the "articulation day" in May and would build five inclement weather makeup days into the school year.

According to Director of Public Relations Patti Caplan, who chairs the committee, the decision to broaden the use of the articulation day was based on feedback from school administrators and responses to a staff survey. Staff indicated that the day falls too late in the year for most articulation activities at the secondary level but is used for that purpose at the elementary level. Next year, the day will be designated as a professional

development/work day, which can be used for school-based needs including but not limited to articulation.

The second proposed change involves how makeup days are “built into” the calendar. The committee recommends adding five days to the school year, for a total of 185 student days and 197 teacher days. If less than five days are used during the year for school closings, the additional days will be removed. This differs from the current practice of adding a day to the end of the school year for each day that schools are closed for inclement weather or other emergencies.

The proposed 2012-2013 academic calendar can be viewed at www.hcpss.org. The Board will hold a public hearing on the calendar on December 8, 2011, and is scheduled to take action on January 12, 2012.

Report Recommends Against Use of Open Enrollment

Open enrollment should not be used as a method to balance school enrollments, according to a report on the subject presented by Administrative Director David Bruzga and School Planning Manager Joel Gallihue. The report was developed in response to a request made during the Board of Education’s review of the 2011 Feasibility Study, to re-evaluate the use of open enrollment. Some members saw open enrollment as an alternative way to balance capacity without redistricting.

In accordance with Policy 9000 Enrollment, Residency, Student Assignment and Admission to Pre-K and Kindergarten, the Board of Education may choose to identify schools that, because they have available space, are open to enrollment by students not living in the schools’ attendance areas. A team of staff associated with staffing, student reassignments, facilities and research was assembled to evaluate this matter.

The report concludes that open enrollment is more a matter of school choice than a precise tool that can help balance school enrollment. There are many complications that must be considered prior to allowing even limited open enrollment options. Open enrollment can actually work at cross-purposes with redistricting; therefore staff does not recommend the use of open enrollment to balance capacity for 2012.

Board Discusses Attendance Area Adjustments

The Board discussed redistricting proposed for elementary schools in the southeast corner of the county. School Planning Manager Joel Gallihue discussed various options that were considered in developing the recommendation and addressed questions posed by community members via email. The Board will hold public hearings on the redistricting proposal on Tuesday, November 8 and Tuesday, November 15. Additional work sessions are scheduled for Thursday, November 10 and Tuesday, November 15.

Board Considers Changes to Policy on Policy Development

Chief of Staff Sue Mascaro presented proposed revisions to Policy 2020 Policy Development and Adoption. She noted that the revised policy adds definitions, adds a standard to clarify responsibilities of the Superintendent’s Standing Policy Committee,

and adds language to clarify responsibilities of a Policy Development/Revision Committee.

In addition, the revised policy replaces the terms “compliance” and “delegation of authority” with the term “responsibilities,” adds a History section, and moves language regarding implementation procedures from Compliance to Standards. A public hearing on the policy is scheduled for December 8, 2011, with action scheduled for January 12, 2012.

In Other Action...

On behalf of Superintendent Sydney Cousin, Deputy Superintendent Mamie Perkins congratulated the following individuals:

- Bollman Bridge Elementary School ESOL Teacher Laurel Conran and Lisa Chertok, a Bollman Bridge parent and manager at Coastal Sundbelt, who received the Community Builder Award from Howard County Government.
- Bridges Program Manager Marty Cifrese, who was honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award, and Patricia Branner-Pierce, BSAP Elementary Specialist, who was honored for her exemplary work with the Community-based Learning Centers by the Maryland State Department of Education
- Four Howard County art educators were honored at the Maryland Art Education Association's fall conference on October 21. Those recognized were:
 - Matt Blanch, Hammond High School, who was named Howard County High School Art Teacher of the Year.
 - Ben Schmitt, Clemens Crossing Elementary School, named Howard County Elementary Art Educator of the Year.
 - Susan Ameigh, Patuxent Valley Middle School, named Howard County Middle School Art Educator of the Year.
 - Linda Newton, who was honored as the Retired Howard County Art Educator of the Year.
- Karen Stiller, Wilde Lake Middle School, was recognized as the Outstanding Maryland Middle School Mathematics Teacher and Holly Cheung, Elkridge Landing Middle School, was recognized as the Outstanding Maryland Mathematics Teacher Leader.
- Oakland Mills Middle School Principal Shiney John will be honored on Saturday with the Radha Pathak Humanitarian Award from Counselors Helping (South) Asians/Indians, Inc. or CHAI.

Mrs. Perkins concluded her remarks by thanking the Columbia Delta Foundation Inc. of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority for their donation of \$1000 to the Students Services Program in support of homeless children in the Howard County Public School System.

At Public Forum, parent Gene Ryan shared concerns about security in his child's school.

Board members reported on their attendance at recent school and community events.

During the PTA Appointment with the Board, Chaun Hightower, president of the PTA Council of Howard County, invited Board members to visit local PTAs with members of the PTACHC Executive Board. In addition, she announced that PTA Council is supporting the League of Women Voters' seminar on November 19 for individuals who are interested in running for the Board of Education.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Education is scheduled for 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 17, 2011.