

PUBLIC
BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HARFORD COUNTY
MINUTES OF MONDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2021

The information included here provides a summary of the agenda items presented and actions taken during the above meeting of the Board of Education of Harford County. The video recordings of the Board meetings are the official record of the meetings and can be viewed at: <http://www.hcps.org/boe/livestream/>. Informational reports are located at: <https://www.hcps.org/boe/boardmeetingschedules.aspx>

Open Session

The Board of Education of Harford County met in open session in hybrid format in person and via video teleconference on Monday, November 15, 2021. President Rachel Gauthier called the meeting to order at 5:50 PM.

Board Members Present

All Board members were present with the exception of Ms. Kanae Holcomb

In-person attendance: Mrs. Sonja Karwacki, Mrs. Ariane Kelly, Dr. Roy Phillips, Mrs. Patrice Ricciardi, and Mrs. Rachel Gauthier

Virtual attendance: Dr. David Bauer, Dr. Joyce Herold, Mr. Jansen Robinson, and Dr. Carol Mueller

Motion, Second and Vote

Dr. David Bauer made a motion to waive public comment in its entirety in light of the limited nature of the open session. The motion was seconded by Ms. Ricciardi and approved in a voice vote 9-0.

Pursuant to 3-305(b)(1)(9) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, and upon a motion by Dr. Bauer, seconded by Mrs. Karwacki, by unanimous vote of the Board members present, the Board of Education of Harford County met in closed session in a hybrid fashion.

Closed Session

Board Members Present

All Board members were present with the exception of Ms. Kanae Holcomb.

Staff Present:

Dr. Sean Bulson, Superintendent
Eric Davis, Chief of Administration
Mae Alfree, Director of Staff and Labor Relations
John Burke, Esq., Staff Attorney
Eric Clark, Director of Budget
BangTam Miller, Human Resource Staff and Labor Relations Specialist
Ben Richardson, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources
Patrick P. Spicer, Esq., General Counsel
Yvonne Rallo, Administrative Assistant and Recording Secretary

The Board of Education met in closed session for the purposes of discussing:

Topic: Presentation of background/qualifications of persons recommended by the Superintendent for the following position: Coordinator of Supplemental Instruction

Reason for Closed Session: To preserve the privacy and confidentiality of information regarding the nominee.

Mr. Ben Richardson, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources led a discussion and presentation regarding the proposed candidate for the position of Coordinator of Supplemental Instruction. Mr. Richardson stated this is a grant funded position.

No formal action was taken by the Board.

Topic: Discussion and possible decision regarding parameters for negotiations with American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) and Harford County Education Association – Education Support Professionals (HCEA-ESP) bargaining units.

Reason for Closed Session: To maintain confidentiality of potential parameters, if any, of negotiation with AFSCME bargaining units and discussions related thereto

Mr. Ben Richardson, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources led a discussion regarding a Board vote to ratify or not ratify the Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) for American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) and Harford County Education Association – Education Support Professionals (HCEA-ESP). Mr. Richardson reminded the Board that Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) recently entered into negotiations with two of our bargaining units to include AFSCME and HCEA-ESP for the purpose of discussing salary acceleration of the previously negotiated salary increases. Ms. Mae Alfree, Director of Staff and Labor Relations, Mr. Eric Clark, Director of Budget, and Ms. BangTam Miller, Human Resources Staff and Labor Relations Specialist and Mr. Richardson were available to answer the Board questions.

No formal action was taken by the Board.

Adjournment

With no further business, Dr. Bauer motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mrs. Karwacki, and with Board consensus, the closed session adjourned at 6:15 PM.

Business Meeting

Call to Order / Roll Call

President Gauthier called the meeting to order at 6:33 PM. Roll call was taken. All Board members were present.

In-person attendance: Mrs. Sonja Karwacki, Mrs. Ariane Kelly, Dr. Roy Phillips, Ms. Patrice Ricciardi, Mrs. Rachel Gauthier

Virtual attendance: Dr. David Bauer, Dr. Joyce Herold, Mr. Jansen Robinson, Ms. Kanae Holcomb, and Dr. Carol Mueller

Note: Ms. Kanae Holcomb joined the meeting virtually, right after roll call due to connectivity issues

Adoption of Agenda

President Gauthier called for a motion to adopt the agenda.

Motion, Second and Vote - Dr. Bauer made a motion to adopt the agenda. The motion was seconded by Dr. Mueller and adopted in a voice vote 10-0.

Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Ricciardi led the Pledge of Allegiance

Item A. Board Member Comments

Board member comments were provided.

Item B. Public Comments

Speakers were invited to the meeting to provide their comments for the record either in-person or virtually. President Gauthier read a statement regarding protocol for public comments which included a provision that each speaker would have three (3) minutes to speak. Mrs. Yvonne Rallo, Board of Education Administrative Support Coordinator, called on individual speakers who were in person at the meeting and had registered to speak at the

Board meeting. The following thirteen (13) people registered to provide in-person public comment: Benjamin Heiser, Melissa Hahn, Wendy Fisher, Ginny Miller, Joshua Miller, John Fry, Nicole Szewczyk, Michele Kinder, Tina Graf, Michelle Willoughey, Kayla Mariskanish, Jeannine Cannito, and Lisa Stoneham. There were no virtual public speakers at this meeting.

Item C. Consent Agenda

President Gauthier called for a motion to approve the consent agenda as follows:

1. Monthly Personnel Report - October 2021
2. Contract Award: Abingdon Elementary School Central Plant Replacement
3. Contract Award: Homestead/Wakefield Elementary Replacement School Modular Complex
4. Contract Award: Bus GPS Monitoring
5. Contract Award: Speech Language Therapist, EBS Healthcare
6. Contract Award: Speech Language Therapist, Pediatric Development Services
7. School/Organization Sponsored Project - C. Milton Wright High School Storage Container at Stadium

Motion, Second and Vote – Mrs. Karwacki made a motion to approve the consent agenda. The motion was seconded by Dr. Bauer and the consent agenda was approved in a voice vote of 10-0

Item D. Update on Continuity of Learning

Superintendent Bulson introduced members of his leadership staff: Ms. Mary Nasuta, Supervisor of Health Services and Ms. Katie Ridgway, Director of Strategic Initiatives. Ms. Nasuta shared that Harford County is still hovering in a substantial or high range that is designated by the CDC, Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) continues diagnostic testing, and this week HCPS was able to work with the Health Department to have a successful COVID pediatric clinic. Ms. Ridgway and Dr. Bulson both introduced Ms. Lynda Boegner, Director, Clinical Health Bureau of the Harford County Health Department who presented Covid-19 information from the Harford County Health Department. Ms. Boegner shared that she will put a link on the Harford County Health Department's website to the slides that she presented. Superintendent Bulson introduced Dr. David Bauer who led a presentation regarding scientific data related to Covid. Dr. Bauer's presentation responded to some misinformation that has been directed to the board, either in public comments or in emails and direct the Board to "follow the science" which the Board is, with respect to the pandemic.

Item E. Decision on Administrative and Supervisory Appointments

Mr. Ben Richardson, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, sought Board approval of the Superintendent's nominee, Ms. Rebecca L. Pensero for the position of Director of Supplemental Instruction.

Motion, Second and Vote – Dr. Bauer made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to appoint Ms. Rebecca L. Pensero to the position of Coordinator of Supplemental Instruction. The motion was seconded by Ms. Ricciardi. The motion was approved in a roll call vote of 10-0.

Item F. Decision on Proposed Revision of Section V.C.1 of Board Policy 12-0001-000 Ethics

Patrick P. Spicer, Esq., presented background information regarding the proposed revision of Board Policy 12-0001-000 Ethics. This policy is required by Maryland law. The Ethics Policy at section V.C.1., requires Board members and other identified staff to complete a Financial Disclosure Statement which contains certain financial information pertaining to the Board Members and their spouses and dependent children. This statement is generally referred to as the "Long Form". Mr. Spicer shared that, Ms. Deborah Judd, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, Ms. Laura Tucholski, Chief Internal Auditor, and he met to review and reevaluate whether school-based administrators should be required to complete the "Long Form," and to otherwise review the provisions of Section V.C.1. Mr. Spicer sought Board approval for the Harford County Public Schools Board of Education's Ethics policy to be revised as follows:

1. Principals of schools should be required to complete the "Long Form".

2. Assistant Principals and any other school administrators should not be required to complete the “Long Form” but should continue to complete the “Short Form”, which is a three (3) question form.
3. The following positions should be included in Section V.C.1. and required to complete the “long form.”
 - a. Chief Auditor and Internal Auditor
 - b. Staff Attorney
 - c. Supervisor of Purchasing
4. The following positions should be removed from Section V.C.1.
 - a. Facilities Planner
 - b. Purchasing Agent II
 - c. Associate Superintendent
 - d. Facilitator of Governmental Relations
 - e. Director of Purchasing

The above proposed revisions to this policy were posted for public comment, and three (3) comments were received. The Board discussed this proposal and had questions that Mr. Spicer and Ms. Tucholski addressed. Dr. Mueller asked that Mr. Spicer consider modifying the “short form” for principals. Mr. Spicer answered that it is something we can possibly revise for the 2022-2023 school year. HCPS will not have enough time to modify the “short form” for the 2021-2022 school year as the requirements need to be made known by January 1, 2022.

Motion, Second and Vote – Ms. Ricciardi made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to approve the proposed, revised policy entitled 12-0001-000 Ethics change to the Board policy, except that all school-based administration would be required to complete the “Short Form” only. The motion was seconded by Dr. Mueller and approved in a roll call vote of 10-0.

Item G. Decision on Ratification of Memoranda of Understanding with the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) and with the Harford County Education Association – Education Support Professionals (HCEA-ESP)

Mr. Ben Richardson, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, stated the Board of Education recently entered into negotiations with AFSCME and HCEA-ESP employees. Mr. Richardson shared that in order to address current hiring and retention challenges, as well as address some current lower paying positions, HCPS remained aware of inflation increase as well as the minimum wage increases that HCPS is obligated to meet over the next few years. As a result of the recent negotiations, the Board and the HCEA-ESP bargaining unit agree that HCPS will accelerate the previously negotiated salary increases as a market adjustment for the paraprofessionals, inclusion helpers and specified technicians as follows: a one-time 8% increase to all salary steps, effective December 26, 2021, to be reflected in the January 7, 2022 payroll payment. As AFSCME employees to include bus drivers, bus attendants and food and nutrition workers the salary schedules for those employees will receive an 8% market adjustment increased to their respective salary schedules, effective December 26, 2021, to be reflected in the January 7, 2022 payroll payment. Mr. Richardson noted that the Board of Education and AFSCME will enter into full contract negotiations next month and will include salary discussion for both. Mr. Richardson sought Board approval to ratify the Memorandums of Understanding, reflecting the information he shared for both the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees’ Association (AFSCME), and the Harford County Education Association – Education Support Professionals (HCEA-ESP). The Board votes regarding ratification of the presented MOUs were as follows:

AFSCME Motion, Second and Vote – Mrs. Karwacki made a motion to accept the Superintendent’s recommendation to ratify the Memorandum of Understanding with AFSCME. The motion was seconded by Ms. Ricciardi. The motion was approved in a roll call vote of 10-0.

HCEA-ESP Motion, Second and Vote – Ms. Ricciardi made a motion to accept the Superintendent’s recommendation to ratify the Memorandum of Understanding with HCEA-ESP. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Karwacki. The motion was approved in a roll call vote of 10-0.

Item H. Decision on Ratification of Memoranda of Understanding with the Harford County Education Association – Education Support Professionals (HCEA-ESP)

Mr. Ben Richardson, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, discussed this agenda item in combination with the above agenda “Item G”

NOTE: Above Items G and H were discussed as one combined agenda item and each motion was separate and voted on separately by the Board.

Item I. Presentation on the Lucy Calkins Units of Study for Reading and Phonics

Dr. Susan Brown, Executive Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, Ms. Kristine Scarry, Supervisor of Reading, English, and Language Arts, Mr. Marc Hamilton, Principal of Riverside Elementary, and Ms. Audrey Vohs, Principal of Magnolia Elementary shared a presentation that provided an overview of the Lucy Calkins Units of Study for Reading and Phonics. The following points were discussed during the presentation:

- Overview of the Programs
- Classroom Implementation
 - o Units of Study for Phonics, K-2
 - o Units of Study for Reading, K-5
 - o Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Program
 - o Classroom Libraries
- Professional Learning
 - o Teacher’s College Partnership
 - o Teachers and Administrators
- Evaluation of Programs
 - o Data Collection and Analysis
 - o Classroom Walkthroughs

At the end of the presentation some Board members expressed interest in visiting some elementary schools to see the elementary reading program being implemented in the classrooms. The Curriculum Office will follow up with the Board for this opportunity.

No formal action was taken by the Board.

Item J. Presentation of FY 2023 Capital Improvement Program

Mr. Cornell Brown, Assistant Superintendent for Operations, Ms. Patti Jo Beard, Executive Director of Facilities Management, Mr. Chris Morton, Supervisor of Planning and Construction and Ms. Missy Valentino, Facilities Planner shared a sixth presentation for the FY 2023 Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The presentation reviewed the priority scoring results of the funding needs as identified by Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) stakeholders. Ms. Valentino led the presentation which reviewed the locally funded needs and priorities that have been identified and scored appropriately so that they can be placed in priority order. Mr. Brown sought the Board’s acceptance of the informational report and presentation of the FY 2023 Capital Improvement Program. Mr. Brown stated that in December, HCPS will seek Board approval of the FY 2023 CIP for submission to the local government.

No formal action was taken by the Board.

Item K. Superintendent’s Report

Superintendent Bulson’s report was provided as follows:

- Superintendent Bulson shared highlights of current Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) Fall athletics successes across several sports and high school standings. Dr. Bulson congratulated all of the Fall athletes.

- Superintendent Bulson reminded the community that Wednesday, November 17, 2021 is Educational Support Professionals Day and thanked these professionals for everything they do each day.
- Superintendent Bulson made families aware they will receive communication tomorrow, Tuesday, November 16, 2021 via Connect5, announcing the available use of a school bus tracker resource on the HCPS.org website. The bus tracker is another way to let families know if there are any delays or changes on their student's bus route.
- Superintendent Bulson made the community aware of the Harford County Public Library's (HCPL) partnership with Harford County Public Schools (HCPS). Students are able to use their student id to utilize the HCPL's online resources.

Adjournment

With no further business and with Board consensus the meeting adjourned at 10:28 PM.

Sean W. Bulson, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools and Secretary-Treasurer

Rachel Gauthier, Board President
Board of Education of Harford County



BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HARFORD COUNTY
NOTICE OF PUBLIC COMMENT PARTICIPATION
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2021

Attachment

OPEN SESSION: 5:45 PM - 5:50 PM

This meeting will be conducted virtually with no public attendance due to the brief nature of this meeting and the logistical issues regarding allowing public attendance in advance of the 6:30 PM meeting.

**The only item the Board will consider during this open meeting is consideration of meeting in a closed session.*

CLOSED SESSION: 5:50 PM - 6:15 PM

BUSINESS MEETING: 6:30 PM – ADJOURNMENT

This meeting will be conducted in a hybrid fashion and public attendance will be permitted as explained below:

DOORS WILL OPEN AT 6:20 PM AND THE MEETING WILL BEGIN AT 6:30 PM

The Board of Education of Harford County will hold a hybrid Business Meeting on Monday, November 15, 2021, at 6:30 PM in the Board Room of the A.A. Roberty Building with Board Members, staff, and presenters in attendance both virtually and in-person. A 60-seat capacity will be available to the public. Seats will be available on a first come-first served basis. The meeting will be streamed live and archived for later viewing on the HCPS [Website](#).

Public Comment Participation Call-In Process

Community members who wish to provide comments virtually during the Public Comments segment of the Business meeting are required to register by completing this form [Public Comment Registration Form](#).

Registrations must be received by 9:00 AM on Monday, November 15, 2021. All fields on the registration form must be completed.

1. First and Last name
 2. Email Address
 3. Phone Number
 4. Registration forms are limited to one (1) per person
- Registered speakers will receive an email from HCPS with a Call-in Phone # and a Conference ID #.
 - Registered speakers are required to call-in and enter the conference ID# at 6:30 PM on Monday, November 15, 2021.
 - **Important: If you are unable to take your phone off mute, you may need to dial *6.**
 - If you are admitted from the virtual lobby to the meeting, you will be greeted by an HCPS staff member when it is time to begin your public comment. Expected hold time in the virtual lobby may vary based on number of registered speakers. The maximum wait time in the lobby is 30 minutes; should you be disconnected please call back.

Public Comment Participation In-Person Process

Persons who are attending the meeting in person, as provided above, may make in-person public comment. Board Comment cards will be available for Board meeting attendees prior to the Board Meeting for sign-up. Board Comment Registration forms are limited to one (1) per person.

The Board has authorized public comment as follows:

- Board policy permits speaker three (3) minutes to provide comments. **However, Board policy authorizes the Board to reduce the amount of time allocated to each speaker if allocating 3 minutes to each speaker will impede the Board's ability to complete scheduled business.** It is anticipated that in light of the number of speakers at recent Board meetings, the Board will reduce the amount of time allocated to each speaker. Consequently, please be prepared to abbreviate your comments.
- The Board will receive in-person public comment first and virtual public comment second. The Board expects that all comments will be submitted with the decorum and respect appropriate to the conduct of public business.
- Topics such as personnel matters, pending appeals, specific student disciplinary matters or which constitute commercial solicitations are not permitted.
- Disparaging comments, personal attacks, and inflammatory remarks about specific schools or personnel are not permitted. Speakers who engage in these comments will be reminded of the rules and the Board reserves the right to remove the speaker.
- All public comments submitted will be part of the records maintained by the Board office.

Speakers are reminded that public comments are considered public information and, as such, are subject to the Maryland Public Information Act.