

PUBLIC
BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HARFORD COUNTY
MINUTES OF THURSDAY, JANUARY 18, 2024

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 Thursday, January 18, 2024. President Aaron Poynton called the meeting to order at 4:33 PM

Board Members Present

All Board members were present with the exception of Ms. Carol Bruce, Mrs. Diane Alvarez, Mrs. Denise Perry, and Miss Madina Sabirova, who were absent.

In-person attendance: Mrs. Terri Kocher, Dr. Carol Mueller, Ms. Lauren Strauss, Mrs. Melissa Hahn, and Dr. Aaron Poynton

Virtual attendance: Mr. Wade Sewell

Motion, Second and Vote

Mrs. Kocher 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 Mrs. Hahn and approved in a voice vote of 6-0. Ms. Carol Bruce, Mrs. Diane Alvarez, Mrs. Denise Perry, and Miss Madina Sabirova were absent.

Pursuant to Section 3-305(b)(9) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, and upon a motion by Mrs. Hahn, seconded by Mrs. Kocher and approved in a voice vote 6-0, the Board of Education of Harford County met in closed session in a hybrid fashion. Ms. Carol Bruce, Mrs. Diane Alvarez, Mrs. Denise Perry, and Miss Madina Sabirova were absent.

Closed Session

Board Members Present

All Board members were present with the exception of Mrs. Diane Alvarez and Miss Madina Sabirova, who were absent.

In-person attendance: Ms. Carol Bruce, Mrs. Terri Kocher, Dr. Carol Mueller, Mrs. Denise Perry, Ms. Lauren Strauss, Mrs. Melissa Hahn, and Dr. Aaron Poynton

Virtual attendance: Mr. Wade Sewell

Note: Ms. Carol Bruce and Mrs. Denise Perry both joined the meeting in-person after roll call was taken

Staff Present:

Dr. Sean Bulson, Superintendent

Dr. Eric Davis, Chief of Administration

Dr. Mae Alfree, Director of Staff and Labor Relations

Eric Clark, Director of Budget

Deborah Judd, Assistant Superintendent for Business Services

Kimberly H. Neal, General Counsel

Daniel Reimers, Human Resources Staff and Labor Relations Specialist

Ben Richardson, Assistant Director of Human Resources

Yvonne Rallo, Administrative Assistant and Recording Secretary

In-person attendance: Dr. Sean Bulson, Dr. Eric Davis, Dr. Mae Alfree, Mr. Eric Clark, Ms. Deborah Judd, Mr. Daniel Reimers, Mr. Ben Richardson, and Mrs. Yvonne Rallo

Virtual attendance: Kimberly Neal, Esq.

Note: Mr. Ben Richardson joined the meeting in-person after roll call was taken

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

Topic: Discussion and possible decision regarding parameters for negotiations with bargaining units.

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

Dr. Mae Alfree, Director of Staff and Labor Relations discussed proposed bargaining parameters for the Board's consideration. Dr. Alfree, Mr. Ben Richardson, Assistant Director of Human Resources, Ms. Deborah Judd, Assistant Superintendent for Business Services, Mr. Eric Clark, Director of Budget, and Mr. Daniel Reimers, HR Staff & Labor Relations Specialist were available to answer the Board's questions. Dr. Alfree sought the Board's direction and approval to proceed with the proposed parameters as presented and discussed. The following actions were taken.

Motion, Second and Vote – Mrs. Hahn made a motion to accept the proposed recommendations relating to Harford County Education Association (HCEA) bargaining proposals as presented and discussed. The motion was seconded by Ms. Strauss and approved in a voice vote of 7-0. Mrs. Diane Alvarez, Ms. Carol Bruce, and Miss Madina Sabirova were absent.

Note: Ms. Bruce joined the meeting in-person after this vote was taken.

Motion, Second and Vote – Mrs. Kocher made a motion to accept the proposed recommendations relating to the Harford County Education Association – Education Support Professionals (HCEA-ESP) bargaining proposals as presented and discussed. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Hahn and approved in a voice vote of 8-0. Mrs. Diane Alvarez and Miss Madina Sabirova were absent.

Adjournment

With no further business, Mrs. Hahn motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mrs. Kocher, and with Board consensus, the closed session adjourned at 5:41 PM.

Budget Public Input Session

Call to Order / Roll Call

President Aaron Poynton called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM. Roll call was taken. All Board members were present with the exception of Mrs. Diane Alvarez, who was absent.

In-person attendance: Ms. Carol Bruce, Mrs. Terri Kocher, Dr. Carol Mueller, Mrs. Denise Perry, Ms. Lauren Strauss, Mrs. Melissa Hahn, and Dr. Aaron Poynton

Virtual attendance: Miss Madina Sabirova and Mr. Wade Sewell

Pledge of Allegiance

Vice-President Hahn led the Pledge of Allegiance

Public Comments

Speakers were invited to the meeting to provide their comments for the record either in-person or virtually on the topic of "Proposed FY 2025 Budget". President Poynton read a statement regarding protocol for public comments which included a provision that each speaker would have three (3) minutes to speak and speakers representing a group would have five (5) 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 twenty-one (21) people registered and provided in-person public comment: Chrystie

Crawford-Smick, representing the group, Harford County Education Association (HCEA), David Bauer, Cindy Poper, Crystal Rufenacht, Melissa Romano, Josephine Cosgrove, James McVicker, Deanna Burch, Jacob Bennett, Viraj Singh, Suzie Scott, representing the group, Moms for Liberty Harford County, Jackie Johnson, Tracy Papinchock, Whitney Sabine, Kelesy Fonger, Robert Tuck, George Kasnic, Melissa Williams, representing the group, Association of Public School Administrators and Supervisors of Harford County (APSASHC), Doug Rudd, Abigail Bennett, Sasha Pazoki. No virtual speakers registered to provide public comment.

Adjournment

With no further business and with Board consensus the meeting adjourned at 7:07 PM.

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

Aaron S. Poynton, D.P.A.
President, Board of Education of Harford County



BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HARFORD COUNTY
NOTICE OF PUBLIC COMMENT PARTICIPATION
THURSDAY, JANUARY 18, 2024

OPEN SESSION: 4:30 PM – 4:35 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 6:00 PM meeting.

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

CLOSED SESSION: 4:35 PM – 5:45 PM

BUDGET PUBLIC INPUT SESSION: 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM

*The Board will receive public comments related to the topic of ***Budget Only***.

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

DOORS WILL OPEN AT 5:50 PM AND THE MEETING WILL BEGIN AT 6:00 PM

The Board of Education of Harford County will hold a hybrid Business Meeting on Thursday, January 18, 2024, at 6:00 PM in the Board Room of the A.A. Roberty Building with Board Members, staff, and presenters in attendance both virtually and in-person. 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 and In-Person Process

Individuals or groups recognized by Harford County Public Schools (i.e. – PTAs, unions, and other school system stakeholders) wishing to speak on the topic of “Budget” may request to do so by sending an email to publiccomment@hcps.org or calling 410-588-5347.

Call-In Registrations must be received by 12:00 PM on Tuesday, January 16, 2024. All fields on the registration form must be completed.

1. First and Last name / if speaker is a Group Representative, then please state the name of the Group
2. Local Address
3. Email Address
4. Phone Number
5. Will you provide in-person **or** virtual Public Comment
6. Registration forms are limited to one (1) per person

****Failure to provide complete information as required above will void the request to provide Public Comment.***

- Registered virtual 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 6:00 PM on Thursday, January 18, 2024.
- **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.
- "Request to Appear Before the Board" cards will be available for in-person attendees prior to the Board Meeting for sign-up and must be submitted prior to the opening of the meeting.

The Board has authorized public comment in accord with its policy [Public Participation at Board Open Meetings or Public Hearings](#) and as summarized below:

- Each speaker shall be limited to no more than three (3) minutes and five (5) minutes for individuals representing groups. Speakers must state his or her name, and, if representing a group, must identify the group he or she represents. If a speaker identifies themselves as a representative of a group, then only one (1) representative from the group may provide comment for the identified group.
- The Board presiding officer may 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.
- 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, personnel, any person, or group 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. In addition, public comment is an opportunity for members of the community to address the Board of Education. Please direct your comments to the Board and not to other members of the public in the audience.
- 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.