

PUBLIC
BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HARFORD COUNTY
MINUTES OF MONDAY, JUNE 23, 2025

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, June 23, 2025. President Aaron Poynton called the meeting to order at 5:01 PM

Board Members Present

All Board members were present with the exception of Miss Sasha Pazoki, who was absent.

In-person attendance: Mrs. Diane Alvarez, Ms. Carol Bruce, Mrs. Terri Kocher, Dr. Carol Mueller, Mr. Wade Sewell, Ms. Lauren Strauss, and Dr. Aaron Poynton

Virtual attendance: Mrs. Denise Perry and Mrs. Melissa Hahn

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 9-0. Miss Pazoki was absent.

Pursuant to Section 3-305(b)(1)(2) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, and upon a motion by Mrs. Kocher, seconded by Mrs. Hahn and approved in a voice vote 9-0, the Board of Education of Harford County met in closed session in a hybrid fashion. Miss Pazoki was absent.

Closed Session

Board Members Present

All Board members were present with the exception of Miss Pazoki, who was absent.

In-person attendance: Mrs. Diane Alvarez, Ms. Carol Bruce, Mrs. Terri Kocher, Dr. Carol Mueller, Mr. Wade Sewell, Ms. Lauren Strauss, and Dr. Aaron Poynton

Virtual attendance: Mrs. Denise Perry and Mrs. Melissa Hahn

Staff Present:

Kimberly H. Neal, Esquire, General Counsel

Yvonne Rallo, Administrative Assistant and Recording Secretary

In-person attendance: Kimberly Neal, Esq., and Mrs. Yvonne Rallo

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

Topic: To protect the privacy or reputation of individuals concerning matters not related to public business.

Reason for Closed Session: To obtain a legal update on sensitive matters.

Kimberly Neal, Esq., General Counsel, led a discussion and updated the Board on sensitive legal matters.

No formal action was taken by the Board.

Note: Kimberly Neal, Esq. and Mrs. Yvonne Rallo, were excused from the following discussion.

Topic: Discuss Superintendent's annual performance assessment

Reason for Closed Session: To preserve the privacy and confidentiality of information regarding the Superintendent's performance.

President Poynton introduced the annual performance assessment to the Board and sought their input for discussion.

No formal action was taken by the Board.

Adjournment

With no further business and with Board consensus, President Aaron Poynton adjourned the meeting at 5:55 PM.

Business Meeting

Call to Order / Roll Call

President Aaron Poynton called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM. Roll call was taken. All Board members were present.

In-person attendance: Mrs. Diane Alvarez, Ms. Carol Bruce, Mrs. Terri Kocher, Dr. Carol Mueller, Ms. Sasha Pazoki, Mr. Wade Sewell, Ms. Lauren Strauss, Mrs. Melissa Hahn, and Dr. Aaron Poynton

Virtual attendance: Mrs. Denise Perry

Note: Mrs Perry attended the meeting virtually but was unable to unmute during roll call.

Adoption of Agenda

President Poynton called for a motion to adopt the agenda.

Motion, Second and Vote – Mrs. Kocher made a motion to adopt the agenda. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Alvarez and adopted in a voice vote of 10-0.

Pledge of Allegiance

Vice-President Hahn led the Pledge of Allegiance

Item A. Special Recognition of Harford County Board of Education Members

- Miss Sasha Z. Pazoki, Aberdeen High School, 2024-2025 Student Member
- Mrs. Terri Kocher, Appointed Member-at-Large

Mr. Larry Richardson, Harford County Liaison, on behalf of Bob Cassilly, Harford County Executive, presented Miss Pazoki and Mrs. Kocher with citations from the Harford County Executive's Office, in recognition of their dedicated service on the Harford County Board of Education.

Item B. 2025-2026 Harford County Regional Association of Student Councils – Student Officers Swearing In Ceremony

Dr. Aaron Poynton, Board President introduced James (Trae) McVicker, current Harford County Regional Association of Student Councils (HCRASC) President. Trae McVicker conducted the oath to swear in the following HCRASC officers for the 2025-2026 school year: Chief of Staff – Viraj Singh, Second Vice President – Kelvin Nwachukwu, and President – Shreeya Shah. Shreeya Shah, current HCRASC First Vice President, conducted the oath to swear in the following HCRASC officer for the 2025-2026 school year: First Vice President - Vibha Nanduri. Viraj Singh, current HCRASC Treasurer, conducted the oath to swear in the following HCRASC officer for the 2025-2026 school year: Treasurer - Abby Lin.

Public Comments

Speakers were invited to the meeting to provide their comments for the record either in-person or virtually. 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: Christopher Providence, Tarsie Thompson representing the group "Together We Will", Rev. Steven Hofmeister representing the group "LifeWise Academy – Harford County Steering Committee", William Martino representing the group "Moms for Liberty", David Bauer, Megan Fitzgerald, Cassandra Beverley representing the group "Harford County Caucus of African American Leaders", Gary Johnson, Jackie Johnson, Alissa Wallace, Kay Flowe, Jessica Fendryk, Cristina Lanocho, Chrystie Crawford-Smick representing the group "HCEA", Judy Ramsey, Reverend Michele Love representing the group "Voice of Truth Center", Noa Myers, Michael David Klijanowicz, Elizabeth Jones representing the group "Maryland State Education Association", Colleen Bianco, and Aravinda Pillalamarri. No virtual speakers registered to provide public comment.

Board Member Comments

Board member comments were provided.

Old Business

President Poynton introduced Ms. Heather Kutcher, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment, and Ms. Erin Lange, Supervisor of Social Studies for their presentation. Ms. Kutcher and Ms. Lange presented the changes that were made to the Social Studies Curriculum based on Board feedback provided at the June 9, 2025 Board business meeting. After Board discussion, approval was sought for the previously tabled Social Studies Curriculum update. President Poynton called for a motion to approve the following old business item:

1. Decision on Previously Tabled: Social Studies Curriculum Update: Human Geography 7

Motion, Second and Vote – Ms. Bruce made a motion to approve old business item one (1) "Decision on Previously Tabled: Social Studies Curriculum Update: Human Geography 7", as presented. The motion was seconded by Dr. Mueller. The motion was approved in a voice vote of 8-1. Mrs. Kocher cast a negative vote (Includes 1 preferential only affirmative student member vote). Mrs. Hahn abstained from voting.

Item C. Consent Agenda

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

1. Resolution: Miss Sasha Z. Pazoki, Aberdeen High School, 2024-2025 Student Member to the Board of Education of Harford County
2. Board Informational Report FY2025 Audit Update
3. Board Informational Report FY2026 Audit Plan
4. Appointment of Audit Committee Member
5. 2025 Educational Facilities Master Plan and Comprehensive Maintenance Plan
6. Minutes of Previous Board Meetings: May 5, May 19, and June 9, 2025

Motion, Second and Vote – Dr. Mueller made a motion to approve the consent agenda. The motion was seconded by Ms. Bruce and the consent agenda was approved in a voice vote of 10-0 (Includes 1 preferential affirmative student member vote).

Item D. Decision on Contract Renewal: In-Person Early Literacy Tutoring

Ms. Heather Kutcher, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction and Ms. Kristine Scarry, Supervisor of Reading, English, and Language Arts addressed questions from the Board and sought approval of the contract renewal.

Motion, Second and Vote – Mrs. Bruce made a motion to approve the contract renewal for "In-Person Early Literacy Tutoring." The motion was seconded by Dr. Mueller. The motion was approved in a voice vote of 10-0 (Includes 1 preferential affirmative student member vote).

Item E. Presentation of Mentorship Programs: "First Ladies of Edgewood" and "Young Men on Tour"

Ms. Chiwy Webster, Director of "First Ladies of Edgewood" and Mr. Zeno Jones, President of "Young Men on Tour," presented the Board a summary of their respective mentorship programs that they provide for Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) students. These mentorship programs are not new, they are currently provided at certain HCPS schools, and they have an interest in expanding the programs to reach more students.

No formal action was taken by the Board.

Meeting Break

The Board recessed until they were called back to order by President Poynton.

New Business

Item F. Decision on Board Policy: Student Telehealth Access

Mr. Bernard Hennigan, Assistant Superintendent for Student Support Services presented the Board background information regarding the proposed new Board policy "Student Telehealth Access." It was first presented to the Board at a previous Board meeting and then posted for 30 days on HCPS.org for public comment. Based on feedback received, substantive changes were made, and the changes were presented to the Board at the May 19, 2025, Board business meeting. The proposed policy was then posted for a second time on HCPS.org for an additional thirty (30) days to allow for public comment. After Board discussion, Mr. Hennigan sought Board approval of the proposed new policy.

Motion, Second and Vote – Dr. Mueller made a motion to approve the proposed new Board Policy entitled, Student Telehealth Access. The motion was seconded by Ms. Bruce. The motion was approved in a roll call vote of 7-1. Ms. Strauss cast a negative vote (Includes 1 affirmative student member vote). Mrs. Hahn abstained from voting. Mrs. Perry did not provide a vote.

Item G. Presentation of Proposed New Board Policy: Student Elopement

The Board received a presentation from Mr. Bernard Hennigan, Assistant Superintendent for Student Support Services, on the proposed new Board policy titled "Student Elopement." Mr. Hennigan provided background information on House Bill 1204 - Public and Nonpublic Schools - Student Elopement - Notice and Reporting Requirements (Ace's Law), which was passed during the 2025 legislative session. This bill requires school systems to document student elopements, contact parents/guardians in the event of a student elopement, provide professional development to decrease elopements, and report to their Boards of Education and the state on the number of elopements and professional development conducted annually. Each school district in Maryland is required to develop a policy and accompanying procedures to be in compliance with this law by July 1, 2025. The proposed policy will be posted on HCPS.org for thirty (30) days to allow for public comment. Following the 30 days, Board approval of the proposed new policy "Student Elopement" will be sought at a subsequent Board meeting.

No formal action was taken by the Board.

Item H. Presentation of Proposed Changes and Renaming of Board Policy 04-0023 000 Final Examinations, Report Cards, and Calculation of Final Grades

The Board received a presentation from Dr. Dyann Mack, Deputy Superintendent for Academics and Ms. Natalie Holloway, Director of Secondary Schools, on the proposed changes and renaming of Board policy titled "04-0023 000 Final Examinations, Report Cards, and Calculation of Final Grades". Dr. Mack and Ms. Holloway provided information for the proposed changes to this policy. The Board discussed the updates and provided feedback on further changes to the proposed policy. The policy will be posted on HCPS.org for thirty (30) days to allow for public comment. Following the 30 days, Board approval of the proposed changes to policy "Final Examinations, Report Cards, and Calculation of Final Grades" will be sought at a subsequent Board meeting.

No formal action was taken by the Board.

Item I. Superintendent's Report

The Superintendent's report was provided.

Adjournment

With no further business and with Board consensus the meeting adjourned at 9:58 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
MONDAY, JUNE 23, 2025

OPEN SESSION: 5:00 PM – 5:05 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: 5:05 PM – 5:50 PM

BUSINESS MEETING: 6:00 PM – ADJOURNMENT

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

DOORS WILL OPEN AT 5:55 PM AND THE MEETING WILL BEGIN AT 6:00 PM

The Board of Education of Harford County will hold a hybrid Business Meeting on Monday, June 23, 2025, 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 an agenda item or to comment on an education-related matter not on the agenda 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 Monday, June 23, 2025. 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. Agenda item or subject your Public Comment pertains to
6. Will you provide in-person **or** virtual Public Comment
7. 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 Monday, June 23, 2025.
- 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 for individuals 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.