

PUBLIC
BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HARFORD COUNTY
MINUTES OF MONDAY, JULY 21, 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>

Business Meeting

Call to Order / Roll Call

Dr. Eric Davis, Deputy Superintendent for Operations, called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Roll call was taken, and a quorum of the Board was confirmed. All Board members were present.

In-person attendance: Mrs. Diane Alvarez, Ms. Carol Bruce, Mr. Mark Korn, Dr. Carol Mueller, Mr. James McVicker, Mrs. Denise Perry, Mr. Wade Sewell, Ms. Lauren Paige, Mrs. Melissa Hahn, and Dr. Aaron Poynton

Election of Board President, Board of Education of Harford County

Dr. Eric Davis, Deputy Superintendent for Operations, opened the floor for nominations for the Presidency of the Board of Education of Harford County.

The following Board President Nomination Motion and Second was made:

Mrs. Diane Alvarez nominated Dr. Aaron Poynton for the office of Board President, with a second from Ms. Lauren Paige. Dr. Poynton accepted the nomination and provided comments.

Dr. Davis closed the nominations and called for the vote.

Vote:

Dr. Aaron Poynton's appointment to the President of the Board of Education of Harford County was approved with nine (9) affirmative roll call votes. Casting the affirmative votes: Mrs. Diane Alvarez, Ms. Carol Bruce, Mr. Mark Korn, Mr. James McVicker, Mrs. Denise Perry, Mr. Wade Sewell, Ms. Lauren Paige, Mrs. Melissa Hahn, and Dr. Aaron Poynton. Casting the negative vote: Dr. Carol Mueller.

Election of Board Vice-President, Board of Education of Harford County

Dr. Eric Davis, Deputy Superintendent for Operations, opened the floor for nominations for the Vice-Presidency of the Board of Education of Harford County.

- Mr. Mark Korn nominated Mrs. Melissa Hahn for the office of Board Vice-President, with a second from Mrs. Diane Alvarez. Mrs. Hahn accepted the nomination and provided comments.
- Ms. Carol Bruce nominated Ms. Lauren Paige for the office of Board Vice-President, with a second from Dr. Carol Mueller. Ms. Paige did not accept the nomination.
- Mr. James McVicker nominated Ms. Lauren Paige for the office of Board Vice-President, with a second from Ms. Diane Alvarez. Ms. Paige accepted the nomination and provided comments.

Dr. Davis closed the nominations and called for the vote.

Vote:

Not enough affirmative votes were made for Mrs. Melissa Hahn for the appointment to the Vice-Presidency of the Board of Education of Harford County. Mrs. Hahn received five (5) affirmative roll call votes from: Mrs. Diane Alvarez, Mr. Mark Korn, Ms. Lauren Paige, Mrs. Melissa Hahn, and Dr. Aaron Poynton. Casting the negative votes: Ms. Carol Bruce, Dr. Carol Mueller, Mr. Trae McVicker, Mrs. Denise Perry, and Mr. Wade Sewell.

Vote:

Ms. Lauren Paige's appointment to the Vice-Presidency of the Board of Education of Harford County was approved with ten (10) affirmative roll call votes. Casting the affirmative votes: Mrs. Diane Alvarez, Ms. Carol Bruce, Mr. Mark Korn, Dr. Carol Mueller, Mr. James McVicker, Mrs. Denise Perry, Mr. Wade Sewell, Ms. Lauren Paige, Mrs. Melissa Hahn, and Dr. Aaron Poynton.

Meeting Break

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

Opening – Call to Order / Roll Call

President Aaron Poynton called the meeting to order at 6:16 PM. Roll call was taken. All Board members were present.

In-person attendance: Mrs. Diane Alvarez, Ms. Carol Bruce, Mr. Mark Korn, Dr. Carol Mueller, Mr. James McVicker, Mrs. Denise Perry, Mr. Wade Sewell, Ms. Lauren Paige, Mrs. Melissa Hahn, and Dr. Aaron Poynton

Adoption of Agenda

President Poynton called for a motion to adopt the agenda.

Motion, Second and Vote – Ms. Bruce 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 Paige led the Pledge of Allegiance

Item A. Public Comments

Speakers were invited to the meeting to provide their comments for the record either in-person or virtually. President Poynton stated that protocol for public comments included a provision that all speakers; both individuals and those representing groups, would have one (1) minute 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 fifty-two (52) people registered and provided in-person public comment: Irmgarde Brown, Anne Hartig, DeLane Lewis, Barbara Tingler, Cristina Lanocha, William Martino, Iris Bauer, David Bauer, Kurt Doan, Megan Fitzgerald, Jennifer Kline, James Ramsey, Cheryl Adams, Andrew Bertoli, Donovan Boyle, Bridgette Crenshaw, Jackie Johnson, Helen Mann, Lisa Nickerson, Katie York, Tarsie Thompson, Ellen Buesgen, Theresa Freligh, Jessica Yurkiewicz, Jessica Fendryk, Leslie Thompson, Erica Bertoli, Neil Thompson, Carmella Fifty, Maggie Conneally, Donna Conneally, Jan Hirschfeld, Lucy Buxton, Fred Durst, Bari Klein, Pam Dehmer, Tracy Papinchock, Linda Bryan, Peter Geoffrey, Mari Santangelo, Rebecca Rommelman, Barbara Pensell, Beth Happick, Ydelke Schrock, Serena Schrock, Debby Stathes, Julie Benbenek Driban, Jennifer Ralston, Rev. Steven Hofmeister, Jean Salvatore, Amanda Lauzau, and Jennifer Forsythe.

Ms. Jillian Lader, Manager of Communications, called on the individual speaker who had pre-registered to provide public comments virtually. The following one (1) person registered to provide virtual public comment: Christopher Providence.

Item B. Board Member Comments

Board member comments were provided.

Old Business

President Poynton announced no "Old Business" was scheduled for discussion.

Item C. Consent Agenda

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

1. Contract Award: Usage for Technology Related Products
2. Contract Award: Annual Maintenance Support for Wireless Components
3. Contract Award: Outside Legal Counsel
4. Contract Award: Stormwater and Drainage Improvements at Joppatowne High School
5. Minutes of Previous Board Meetings: June 16, 2025 and June 23, 2025

Motion, Second and Vote – Mrs. Alvarez 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).

Meeting Break

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

New Business

Item D. Presentation of Proposed Revisions to Board Policy 20-0002-000 School Calendar.

The Board received a presentation from Ms. Katie Ridgway, Chief of Staff, on the proposed revisions to Board policy 20-0002-000 School Calendar. The updated policy reduces the number of designated inclement weather days from six to three and establishes that any changes to an approved calendar due to critical circumstances must be approved by a supermajority vote. The Board policy review committee reviewed the proposed policy via email feedback beginning June 23, 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 revised policy “School Calendar” will be sought at a subsequent Board meeting.

No formal action was taken by the Board.

Adjournment

With no further business and with Board consensus the meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM.

Open Session

The Board of Education of Harford County met in open session in hybrid format in person and via video teleconference on Monday, July 21, 2025. President Aaron Poynton called the meeting to order at 7:53 PM

Board Members Present

All Board members were present with the exception of Mr. James McVicker, who was absent.

In-person attendance: Mrs. Diane Alvarez, Ms. Carol Bruce, Mrs. Melissa Hahn, Mr. Mark Korn, Dr. Carol Mueller, Mrs. Denise Perry, Mr. Wade Sewell, Ms. Lauren Paige, and Dr. Aaron Poynton

Motion, Second and Vote

Ms. Bruce 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 Mr. Sewell and approved in a voice vote of 9-0. Mr. McVicker was absent.

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

Closed Session

Board Members Present

All Board members were present with the exception of Mr. McVicker, who was absent.

In-person attendance: Mrs. Diane Alvarez, Ms. Carol Bruce, Mrs. Melissa Hahn, Mr. Mark Korn, Dr. Carol Mueller, Mrs. Denise Perry, Mr. Wade Sewell, Ms. Lauren Paige, and Dr. Aaron Poynton

Staff Present:

Dr. Eric Davis, Deputy Superintendent for Operations
Lauren R. Driver, Esq., Deputy General Counsel
Deborah Judd, Assistant Superintendent for Business Services
Dr. Mae Alfree, Director of Staff and Labor Relations
Ben Richardson, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources
Yvonne Rallo, Administrative Assistant and Recording Secretary

In-person attendance: Dr. Eric Davis, Mrs. Lauren Driver, and Mrs. Yvonne Rallo
Virtual Attendance: Ms. Deborah Judd, Dr. Mae Alfree, and Mr. Ben Richardson,

The Board of Education met in a closed session for the purpose 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 personnel matters.
Lauren Driver, Esq., Deputy General Counsel, led a discussion and updated the Board on a sensitive personnel matter.

No formal action was taken by the Board.

Topic: Presentation of confidential information regarding recommended employee discipline and to seek Board action.

Reason for Closed Session: To preserve the privacy and confidentiality of information regarding the specific individual employee.

Dr. Mae Alfree, Director of Staff and Labor Relations presented the Board information on an individual employee and sought Board approval of the recommended employee discipline matter.

Motion, Second and Vote – Dr. Mueller made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Perry to approve the recommended employee discipline as presented. The motion was approved in a voice vote of 9-0. Mr. McVicker was absent.

Topic: Presentation of confidential information regarding recommended employee discipline and to seek Board action.

Reason for Closed Session: To preserve the privacy and confidentiality of information regarding the specific individual employee.

Dr. Mae Alfree, Director of Staff and Labor Relations presented the Board information on an individual employee and sought Board approval of the recommended employee discipline matter.

Motion, Second and Vote – Dr. Mueller made a motion, seconded by Ms. Bruce to approve the recommended employee discipline as presented. The motion was approved in a voice vote of 7-1-1. Casting the negative vote: Mr. Mark Korn. Mr. Wade Sewell abstained from voting. Mr. McVicker was absent.

Topic: Discussion and possible decision regarding negotiation updates 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, was joined by Mr. Ben Richardson, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, and led a discussion, answered questions, and updated the Board on the requested approval of the appointment of the 2025-2026 negotiation teams for the 2026-27 contract year to collectively bargain with representatives of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), the Association of

Harford County Administrative, Technical, and Supervisory Professionals (AHCATSP), the Association of Public School Administrators and Supervisors of Harford County (APSASHC), the Harford County Education Association – Certificated Instructional Personnel (HCEA-Certificated Instructional Personnel), and the Harford County Education Association – Education Support Professionals (HCEA-ESP), and also a team dedicated to negotiate matters related to healthcare changes.

Motion, Second and Vote – Mr. Sewell made a motion to approve the 2025-2026 negotiating teams for the 2026- 2027 contract year. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Perry, and the motion was approved in a voice vote of 8-1. Mr. Mark Korn abstained from voting. Mr. McVicker was absent.

Note: Dr. Davis, Dr. Alfree, Mr. Richardson, Mrs. Rallo, and Mr. Mark Korn excused themselves from the following discussion.

Topic: Discussion of the 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 review and discussion.

Adjournment

With no further business, and with Board consensus, the closed session adjourned at 9:33 PM.

Dr. Eric Davis, Deputy Superintendent for Operations
On behalf of: Sean W. Bulson, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools and Secretary-Treasurer

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



BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HARFORD COUNTY
NOTICE OF PUBLIC COMMENT PARTICIPATION
MONDAY, JULY 21, 2025

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

For this business meeting, the President has set the time on the agenda for public comment to 30 minutes total; in order to allow time for the Board to complete scheduled business during the closed session at 8:30 PM. Registered speaker's allotted time shall be limited to no more than three (3) minutes for individuals and individuals representing groups.

OPEN SESSION: 8:30 PM – 8:35 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: 8:35 PM – 9:15 PM

The Board of Education of Harford County will hold a hybrid Business Meeting on Monday, July 21, 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, July 21, 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, July 21, 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 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.

Updated 7/15/2025

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