



## Board Meeting

*October 23, 2000*

David H. Galbreath, *President*  
Eugene C. Chandler, *Vice President*  
Thomas D. Hess  
Robert S. Magee  
Robert B. Thomas, Jr.  
Terry R. Troy  
Karen L. Wolf  
Daniel E. Purcell,  
*Student Representative*  
Jacqueline C. Haas, *Superintendent*  
*Secretary/Treasurer*

### **OPEN SESSION**

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Board of Education President **David H. Galbreath** called the open session of the Board to order on Monday, October 23, 2000, at 7:10 p.m. in the auditorium of Edgewood High School. Mr. Galbreath directed that a roll call be taken with all Board Members present. Board Member **Karen L. Wolf** moved that the agenda be amended to remove the proposed resolutions on American Education Week and National Family Week be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered separately. The motion, seconded by Board Member **Terry R. Troy**, was approved unanimously. Mrs. Wolf moved and Mrs. Troy and Board Vice President **Eugene C. Chandler** seconded that the agenda be approved as amended, and Board Members supported the motion unanimously. Board Member **Thomas D. Hess** led those present in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **RECOGNITION**

#### **HCPS EDUCATOR HALL OF FAME**

Director of Public Information **Donald R. Morrison** introduced Vice President of the Harford County Retired School Personnel Association **Norman Dean**. Mr. Morrison described a new initiative of the Harford County Public Schools: the "HCPS Educator Hall of Fame." He explained that the program will each

month have the HCRSPA select two former HCPS educators who distinguished themselves in a career that spanned at least 20 years in the local system as a teacher and/or administrator. The Information Director said the purpose of the program is to recognize some of those outstanding educators who built the foundation that has helped make the Harford County Public School System what it is today. He said the two who are selected each month by the Retired School Personnel group could be living or deceased and would be honored at a subsequent Board meeting with a plaque being presented to them or to members of their families. Dr. Dean said the HCRSPA is honored to be part of the process that will honor some of the extraordinary individuals who dedicated much of their professional lives to the students and employees of the local public school system. He said a committee, headed by **Paul Bowman** has been established to consider nominations and make the two selections per month. Mr. Morrison added that the two honorees will be featured in the "Harford Schools" newspaper and will have their portraits hung on the "HCPS Educator Hall of Fame" wall in the Board Room at the system's Central Office, 45 E. Gordon Street, Bel Air. Mr. Morrison introduced the two charter members of the HCPS Educator Hall of Fame: **Evelyn R. Walker** and **Mary B. Berry**. Mrs. Walker taught in the Harford Public School System from 1930 through 1978 – 48 years. All but the first two of those years were at Havre de Grace Elementary School, mostly as a third grade teacher. Mrs. Berry was a teacher and librarian/media specialist in the local system for 51 years, starting as a high school English/Social Studies teacher at the Bel Air Colored High School in 1946, moving on to a similar position at Central Consolidated School in 1950 where she eventually became the school librarian, and media specialist at Hickory Elementary School from 1965 through her retirement in 1997. Both Mrs. Walker and Mrs. Berry addressed those present, expressing their appreciation for the award and their love for the children they taught during their combined 99 years in the local school system. Each was presented a plaque by Board President Galbreath and Superintendent **Jacqueline C. Haas**.

#### **HARFORD VOTES –PRESENTATION OF GIFT TO BOARD**

Social Studies Supervisor **Gerald Scarborough** and Assistant Supervisor of Social Studies **Kimberly Schmidt** presented information to the Board about the "Harford Votes—2000" on-line voting initiative which has been instituted by Harford Community College and the public and non-public schools in the county. Dr. Scarborough said the K-12 program provides students with the opportunity to vote on line in a mock vote for President of the United States and other government offices. Mrs. Schmidt noted the work of HCC Technology Director **Gary Webb** who is providing services as programmer in the project. She said students can log on to the web site either at [www.hvotes.harford.cc.md.us](http://www.hvotes.harford.cc.md.us) or through the HCPS web site at [www.co.ha.md.us/harford\\_schools](http://www.co.ha.md.us/harford_schools). Using an access code supplied by their teacher, each student can vote once for the candidates on the ballot provided during the active period of October 16 through November 2, 2000, and watch those votes being tallied on line. "Harford Votes 2000" t-shirts were supplied to

each of the Board members.

**ALBERTA PORTER – MILKEN FAMILY FOUNDATION AWARD WINNER**

**Alberta Porter**, Riverside Elementary School third grade teacher was selected as one of four Maryland educators to receive a \$25,000 award from the Milken Family Foundation National Educator program. Ms. Porter, who received the award from State Superintendent of Schools **Nancy Grasmick** during a surprise ceremony held at her school on October 5, will take part in the annual Milken National Educator Conference next June in Hollywood along with the 150 educators from all over the country selected as 2000 Milken winners. Ms. Porter received a certificate signed by all Board members.

**NAOMI KNIGHT – NATIONAL FFA AGRISCIENCE TEACHER OF THE YEAR FINALIST**

**Naomi Knight**, Harford Technical High School Animal Science and Agri-Business instructor, was selected as one of four national finalists in the National Future Farmers of America (FFA) Agriscience Teacher of the Year award program. Mrs. Knight was to have taken part in the National FFA Conference in Louisville, KY, from October 25 through 28 at which the national winner was to have been announced. She received a certificate signed by all Board members.

**DONNA ZAVACKY – MARYLAND TEACHER OF THE YEAR FINALIST**

**Donna M. Zavacky**, Ring Factory Elementary School third grade teacher and Harford County 2000 Teacher of the Year, was presented a certificate signed by all Board members in recognition of having been selected as one of seven teachers in the state to be Maryland Teacher of the Year finalist. Ms. Zavacky took part in the Maryland Teacher of the Year banquet held at Martin's West on October 13. Ms. Zavacky received a certificate signed by all Board members.

**ANDREW RENZULLI – 2000 MARYLAND CONSERVATION TEACHER OF THE YEAR**

**Andrew Renzulli**, teacher of Environmental Science at Harford Technical High School, is Maryland's 2000 Conservation Teacher of the Year, having been selected during a conference held over the summer at Rocky Gap in Western Maryland. Mr. Renzulli was nominated by county environmental/conservation teachers and by the Harford County Soil District. He received a certificate signed by all Board members.

**PATRICIA WINTER – 1999-2000 HCPS NURSE OF THE YEAR**

**Patricia Winter**, school nurse at North Harford Middle School, was selected as Harford County Public School's 1999-2000 Nurse of the Year by the Harford County School Health Services Association. Mrs. Winter, who saw 3,500 sick or injured students and provided 1,215 health screenings last year, provides care for from 30 to 60 students each day, and is sponsor of the school's STARS

(Students Taking a Responsible Stand) organization. She received a certificate signed by all Board members.

## **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Ian Hull**, vice president of the Harford County Regional Association of Student Councils (HCRASC), said the Board's consideration of a pilot at two high schools testing the use of metal detectors has created considerable interest in the organization. He said HCRASC will hold a countywide session on October 25<sup>th</sup> during which the topic will be discussed and a position will be taken. He said the organization would make a presentation to the Board at its November 13<sup>th</sup> meeting on the stance taken by the students on the issue.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **PRESENTATION**

#### **ANNUAL ENROLLMENT REPORT**

Directors of Elementary and Secondary Education, **Patricia Skebeck** and **William Ekey**, respectively, presented the Board with the annual enrollment report. The report shows official September 30, 2000 enrollment up by 214 students, compared to last September 30<sup>th</sup>. The 39,562 students represents another all-time high for enrollment in the Harford County Public Schools. However, elementary enrollment, which was 18,873 for Sept. 30, 2000, is 188 less than the Sept. 30, 1999 figure. Middle school enrollment was reported as 9,314, up 143 from a year ago; and high school enrollment was listed as 11,166, 209 greater than the Sept. 30, 1999 report. (Alternative education figures are up by 36 compared to a year ago and John Archer School reported 14 more students than the year before). Mrs. Skebeck presented the Board with a report showing the impact of an all-day countywide kindergarten program, as proposed by State Superintendent Grasmick. She also gave the Board information on the requirements if the system were to reduce class size to under 18 students in each of the first, second, and third grades. Mr. Ekey told the Board that, while elementary enrollment is down overall in the county, it is up in the feeder schools for C. Milton Wright and, to a lesser degree, Bel Air high schools. He said that middle school enrollment actually went down slightly at six of the eight middle schools in the county, the exceptions being Edgewood Middle (+49) and Southampton Middle (+128). He pointed to Southampton's enrollment of 1,951, compared to its state rated capacity of 1,598 as being a continuing problem which is projected to get increasingly more severe in the next several years if nothing is done to ease the situation. Mr. Ekey said enrollment at seven of the nine high schools in the public system increased this year, indicating that the "bulge" of enrollment growth is working its way through the elementary and middle schools to the high schools. He said that C. Milton Wright High, which this year has an enrollment of 1,788 compared to a state rated capacity of 1,718, is predicted to increase to 131 percent of its capacity by the 2004-05 school

year, if no changes are made in the enrollment pattern there.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

### **APPROVAL OF MOTION TO HIRE CONSULTANT TO STUDY COUNTYWIDE SCHOOL BOUNDARIES**

Mrs. Haas reminded the Board that Board Member **Robert B. Thomas, Jr.** had made a motion at the September 25, 2000 Board meeting to bring off the table for Board consideration his original recommendation to hire a consultant to study countywide school enrollments and boundaries for the Harford County Public Schools. Mr. Thomas' motion was seconded by Past Board President **Karen L. Wolf** and approved by the Board 6 to 1 (Mr. Galbreath dissenting). Public comment has been received during the almost 30 days between the passing of the motion and the current meeting. Mrs. Haas recommended the Board take formal action to authorize the hiring of the consultant for the purposes indicated. The Board voted 5 to 1 (Mr. Galbreath and Board Member **Robert S. Magee** dissenting) to approve the motion).

### **APPROVAL OF PARAMETERS AND CHARGE FOR CONSULTANT TO STUDY COUNTYWIDE SCHOOL BOUNDARIES**

Following a work session held on Wednesday, October 11<sup>th</sup> at North Harford Middle School to discuss the parameters and a charge for the consultant who was being considered to be hired to examine systemwide school boundaries, the Superintendent compiled a list of seven parameters and a charge which were suggested at the meeting. Mrs. Haas recommended that the Board take formal action on those parameters and charge. The document had been distributed at the October 16<sup>th</sup> Board meeting. Mr. Morrison was asked to read a statement from **Mark Wolkow**, who could not be present at the meeting, in which Mr. Wolkow said the basic question of the County government allowing continuing uneven development must be addressed before a comprehensive redistricting proposal of school boundaries could effectively address the imbalance of school enrollments. Mr. Thomas said that it is not within the Board purview to set standards for county residential development, though the Board can dialogue with the County government about the issue. Mrs. Wolf complimented Mrs. Haas in capturing the essence of what had been discussed at the October 11<sup>th</sup> meeting, making one correction in Item #6 in the parameters which would have the entry read, "Board of Education policy defined class size goals should be considered." Other parameters suggest: in dealing with optimal enrollments at each school, the Board would like some percentage of the state-rated capacity defined as an operational capacity conveyed to the consultant; distance, as well as maintaining the "community" aspect, needs to be taken into consideration when defining the boundaries and feeder systems for individual schools; and consideration should be given to inclusion of the populations within the system that do not fit into the standard patterns used – students close enough to walk to

school should be assigned first, then other areas worked out. Also, recommendations should be developed for phasing in the recommended consultant proposals; efforts should be made to keep student cohorts together throughout their journey through school years, especially at the secondary level; and the consultant should keep in mind that more opportunities for student participation in extracurricular activities are available in smaller sized high schools.

The recommended charge to the consultant is: "The Board of Education of Harford County charges the hired consultant to study school enrollments and projections across the county without regard for the present established boundaries. Upon completion of the study of student enrollment patterns and projections, county growth, and other vital local information and documents, the consultant should develop recommendations for the placement of individual school attendance boundaries based on the filter of the Board specified parameters. Recommendations for school attendance boundaries should strive to achieve a more equitable distribution of students across all areas of the county. The hired consultant should develop parameters and recommendations for the process of regularly reviewing the alignment between established optimum capacity and yearly September 30 enrollment data.

Acting on the motion of Mr. Hess and the second of Vice President **Eugene C. Chandler**, the Board voted 7 to 0 to approve the parameters and charge to the consultant.

#### **AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR PURCHASE OF ELECTRICITY**

Supervisor of Purchasing **John Miller** told the Board that bids had been opened by the Baltimore Regional Cooperative Purchasing Committee's lead agency, the Baltimore City Public Schools, on October 11, 2000 for the purchase of electricity in a pool of several Baltimore Metropolitan area governments and school systems. Mr. Miller said, while the savings were not as great as had been hoped, the collective purchasing agreement would save a total of \$1.3 million for the 447 accounts pooled over a 16 month period. He said the bids, which were evaluated on October 12<sup>th</sup>, showed that, of the 100 Harford Public School electric accounts, only 30 would realize a savings if the accounts were to be moved to the low bidder, First Energy Corporation. The 70 remaining accounts, it was recommended, would remain with either Constellation Energy/BGE or Conectiv Energy, the current providers. Mr. Miller said, by transferring the 30 accounts, a savings of \$117,092 would be realized over the 16 month period by the local school system. Accounts would be shifted to the Akron, Ohio-based company beginning November 1, 2000. Acting on the motion of Mr. Hess and the second of Mrs. Troy, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Superintendent's recommendation in shifting the 30 accounts to First Energy Corporation.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **PROPOSED SHIFTING OF GRADUATION TIMES FOR CMW, FALLSTON, BEL AIR HIGH SCHOOLS**

Mrs. Troy said there had been considerable interest on the part of representatives from the three Harford County Public Schools who currently hold commencement ceremonies for their graduating seniors at the Towson Center, to move those ceremonies to 2:00 p.m. rather than the current 6:30 p.m. Mrs. Troy noted that the Board had taken action on the request last spring, deciding to stay with the 6:30 p.m. time, but there was sufficient interest in the schools for the Board to reconsider the decision. (The Board had agreed to move the ceremonies for the three schools to 2:00 p.m. last year because of a conflict with the graduation times of Baltimore County Public Schools, which have the first priority on use of the facility.) Mrs. Troy said that signatures on petitions are being collected by parents at C. Milton Wright and Bel Air high schools. She said the parents point out that having the ceremonies at 6:30 p.m. makes the time frame for students to return to school in time to board buses for their chemical free post-graduation cruises too constricted. Mrs. Troy said the parents feel the earlier time would allow for families to enjoy the ceremonies, followed by dinner, and then the return to their schools to board buses. Mrs. Haas said the Board had taken action on the item after considering similar discussions. She said the appeal that is open to parents who want the change is to the State Board of Education. Mrs. Haas said the Board had agreed to make the shift last year as a one-time agreement based on the unavailability of the Towson Center at the evening time. She said an afternoon commencement disrupts not only the high school but feeder schools as parents seek to have siblings miss class time to attend the ceremonies. **Frances Miller**, organizer of the Bel Air reconsideration effort, said that the fact the agreement had been a one-time decision does not, necessarily, mean the evening time is the better of the two. She said the family unit is important and the afternoon time works better for the graduates and their families. Mr. Thomas suggested the item be placed on the Board's November 13<sup>th</sup> agenda and Mrs. Wolf agreed that the decision should be taken at a business meeting, rather than at a work session. Student Representative to the Board, **Daniel E. Purcell**, said commencement is the biggest event in the 12 years a student spends in school and granting them and their families dispensation for one day to celebrate and enjoy is not too large an inconvenience to pay. Mr. Galbreath said, if it is the Board's pleasure, the item will be placed on a future Board agenda.

### **C. MILTON WRIGHT SUPPORT**

Mr. Magee said he has become very concerned about some comments that have surrounded the recent incidents which have occurred at C. Milton Wright High School. He said he feels it is important the Board take a firm stand in support of Principal **Ed Saunders**, Assistant Principal **Macon Tucker** and the rest of the

staff at C. Milton Wright High. He said the Board needs to send a "clear message" that schools must be a safe place for students to learn. He said both Mr. Saunders and Mr. Tucker have proven themselves to be "family men who are student centered" and that C. Milton Wright is an excellent school. Mr. Thomas moved and Mrs. Wolf and Mrs. Troy seconded, that a resolution be prepared for Board action to be presented at the next Board meeting capturing the points made by Mr. Magee. The Board unanimously supported the motion and the proposed resolution will be considered at the November 13, 2000 Board meeting.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

### **ANNUAL AUDIT/FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND MANAGEMENT LETTER**

**Malcolm Taylor**, representing the Wooden and Benson auditing firm, presented results of the audit of the Board of Education of Harford County financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2000. Mr. Taylor said his firm's examination of the school system financial statements found them to be in good order and to reflect "another successful audit." However, he reported three "reportable conditions" that he recommended be addressed. First was the discovery that payroll employees have the ability to change employee pay rates and other employee information, an ability which should remain strictly within the purview of the Human Resources office. The school system's response was to agree and pledge the immediate implementation of the recommendation. Second, Wooden and Benson found the Board's "fixed asset system is antiquated and has not been updated on a timely basis to account for new assets as they are acquired." The firm recommended the Board acquire a fixed asset system which provides the updates on a timely basis. The management response was concurrence, but said the weakness presented a "relatively low level" of risk that "errors or fraud" may occur. In addition, the firm made the comment that salaries of several employees were charged to the wrong fund during the year ended June 30, 2000 and failure to assign salary expenses to the correct fund can lead to budgeting errors. The firm suggested the Board assign more resources to position control to correct the situation. Wooden and Benson also commented on "multiple addition or calculation errors" that existed in the Food Service inventory booklets and suggested that each booklet be reviewed by an individual who is not involved in the inventory process prior to submission of the Food Service account. Mrs. Wolf



recommended that an audit committee including a member of the Board of Education be formed. Mr. Taylor said of the five school systems his firm currently audits, one has such a committee and the creation of such a body could be accomplished. Acting on the motion of Mr. Thomas and the second of Mrs. Troy, the Board voted 6 to 0 to accept the audit/financial statement and management letter as presented (Mr. Galbreath was not present at the time of the vote).

## **PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS ON AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK/ NATIONAL FAMILY WEEK**

Following the reading of the proposed resolutions on American Education Week – November 12 through 18 with a theme of "Children-Teachers-Parents Helping Students Achieve – and National Family Week – November 19 through 25 – the Board voted unanimously on separate motions made by Mrs. Wolf and seconded by Mrs. Troy to approve both.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

Acting on the motion of Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler and the second of Mrs. Wolf, the Board voted unanimously to support passage of items on the Consent Agenda, including proposed resolutions on Impact Area Aid Assistance and National Educational Support Personnel Day – November 15, 2000; and the Monthly Contract Awards.

## **PRESENTATION**

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Mrs. Haas presented the Board and the public with a report on the Annual Program Goals which had been previously slated as the areas the Board directed staff to address during the 2000-01 school year. Among those goals was the improved academic achievement for all students; planning for the future, including models for academic intervention for students; professional development; continued emphasis on safe and secure schools; planning for adequate facilities; improved communication from students, schools, emergency information and its dissemination to the public; fiscal operations; partnerships; a quarterly update on the status of technology; and a Human Resources plan for addressing the critical shortage of teachers.

## **BOARD COMMENTS**

Mrs. Troy advised the Board on "action words" and the eight vision areas as

identified by the National School Board Association and the Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE). Mr. Thomas "strongly urged" all citizens to get out and vote on November 7<sup>th</sup>. Mrs. Wolf made note of the most recent Maryland State Department of Education bulletin which noted that Mrs. Grasmick had been presented the McGraw Prize in recognition of her outstanding leadership and reform efforts. Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler expressed his personal appreciation and support for the administration at C. Milton Wright High School and their handling of the recent difficulties at the school. Mr. Galbreath outlined the coming meetings of the Board of Education, including two work sessions, one scheduled for October 30<sup>th</sup> at North Harford Middle School, and the other, site to be announced, on November 21<sup>st</sup>.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Acting on the motion of Mrs. Troy and the second of Mrs. Wolf, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

## **FUTURE MEETINGS**

The next regular meeting of the Board is set for November 13, 2000 in the auditorium of Edgewood High School. Business meetings of the Board will be held at Edgewood High though the December quarter, will be moved to Bel Air Middle School for the January through March quarter, and then to North Harford High School for the April through June quarter. A schedule of all Board meetings, including work sessions, is available on the HCPS web site – [www.co.ha.md.us/harford\\_schools](http://www.co.ha.md.us/harford_schools).

## **MORE INFORMATION**

The school system is attempting to prevent duplications and reduce production/ mailing costs of the printed versions of B-Line. Those who are able to access B-Line on line and who would like their copy of the printed version of the document discontinued should e-mail the Director of Public Information: [Drmorrison.gs@hcps.k12.md.us](mailto:Drmorrison.gs@hcps.k12.md.us); Or call the HCPS Customer Relations Action Line (24-hours-a-day) at 410-638-0022.

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