



## Board Meeting

*October 8, 2001*

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

### **OPEN SESSION**

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Board President **Eugene C. Chandler** called the regular meeting of the Board of Education of Harford County to order on Monday, October 8, 2001, at 7:00 p.m. in the gymnasium of Fallston Middle School. Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler requested a roll call of Board Members with all reporting present. Board Member **Karen L. Wolf** moved and Board Vice President **Terry R. Troy** seconded that the agenda be adjusted with the elimination of Items 1 and 2, Minutes of the September 19 work session and September 24, and the Monthly Report on Personnel, respectively, from the Consent Agenda. The motion was approved unanimously. The Board also voted unanimously to approve the amended agenda. Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler introduced **Bob Bands** and members of Boy Scout Troop 801 who led those present in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Pat Jones** of Furnace Road in Fallston, representing the Fallston Middle School PTA, urged the school system to expand its move toward providing basic Language Arts texts in the elementary schools to middle schools. She said it is time for middle schools to “get back to the basics.”

**Alice Edwards** of Chestnut Hill Road in Forest Hill urged the Board to provide assistance

to C. Milton Wright High School in obtaining bleacher seating for the visiting side of the Mustang stadium. She said having home and visiting fans seated on the same side of the field often creates tense situations and that there is not enough seating for all to have a place to sit.

**Debbie Reisinger** of Country Walk urged the Board to include Maryland School Performance Assessment Program (MSPAP) test results in its criteria for a balancing enrollment policy. She said that she had obtained signatures of 201 citizens in her community –representing 42 percent of the residents there – asking that MSPAP be added to the criteria. She complimented Board Member **Robert B. Thomas, Jr.** for casting the lone dissenting vote in a 6 to 1 Board vote the previous meeting to have more general school performance criteria in the policy and urged that other Board members reconsider their vote.

**Jim Hudson** of Country Ridge Circle said that the MSPAP is the accepted and most widely used method of judging school performance. He said he felt the Board had listened to the public on the issue of balancing enrollment but had chosen to ignore the advice. He said he appreciated the Board's providing 30 days for the public to share its views on the topic prior to voting on the issue.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **ACTION ITEMS**

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Mrs. Wolf asked about change orders amounting to \$60,000 in the Meadowvale Elementary School modernization project, inquiring whether the revised cost was within the budget amount. Superintendent **Jacqueline C. Haas** said the revised amount remains within the amount allocated for the job. She said her office will supply the Board with a report, separate from the Report on Contracts, that would show change orders and their impact on budgeted amounts for projects. Following the explanation, Mrs. Wolf moved and Board Past President **David H. Galbreath** seconded that the contracts signed by the superintendent during September 2001 be approved. The Board unanimously approved the motion.

### **APPROVAL OF COMPREHENSIVE MAINTENANCE PLAN**

Director of Facilities Management **Jeffery C. Ayers** reminded the Board that he had brought the annual Comprehensive Maintenance Plan to them at their previous meeting and asked if they had any questions on the issue. He told them that the document reflects only vehicles assigned to the Facilities Management Department with those assigned to the Office of Technology and Information Services (OTIS) and the Food and Nutrition Office listed under those budgeted areas. The Comprehensive Maintenance Plan is mandated by the Interagency Committee for School Construction (IAC) to be completed each year, showing the anticipated project schedule of the Facilities Management Department. The plan must be approved by the Board and forwarded to the IAC each fall. Acting on the

motion of Mr. Thomas and the second of Mrs. Wolf, the Board voted unanimously to approve the document and have it forwarded to the IAC.

## **NORTH HARFORD HIGH SCHOOL SCOPE STUDY: CONSIDERATION FOR THE BOARD**

North Harford High School, the second of four public high schools in Harford County due to be modernized, will have a Scope Study done on its current condition with recommendations for the extent of any modernization. Director of Secondary Education **William M. Ekey** will lead the citizen/staff Educational Specifications Committee whose job it will be to propose the extent of the project. Mr. Ekey told the Board that five meetings have been set and that his group is in need of the Board's direction in one specific area – the capacity for which the modernized school will be recommended. Mr. Ekey explained that the current enrollment of the school is 1,282. He said, by the time the modernized school is slated to be opened in 2007, enrollment is projected to be 1,255. He added that the capacity of the building is now 1,454. However, as was the case with Aberdeen High School where the pre-modernization capacity was 1,800 but the projected enrollment on completion is approximately 1,200 with the State Interagency Committee for School Construction (IAC) approving a building only for that 1,200 student size, unless an approved re-districting plan is in effect, North Harford High's capacity will be reduced to 1,255. In the document Mr. Ekey presented to the Board, he reminded them that the Board has been in receipt of a proposal to expand enrollment at North Harford Middle and High schools as part of a balancing enrollment staff effort which began 26 months ago. Mrs. Haas said an original submission for the project will be made to the state by October 15<sup>th</sup> with the possibility of amending it through December 15<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Ekey said the Educational Specifications Committee needs direction from the Board whether it can plan for a building with a larger capacity based on the likelihood the Board will approve a redistricting plan for the area. Mr. Thomas said he would not support any movement of students that would circumvent the proposed Board policy on balancing enrollment, which is not due to be enacted until next month, and which would require an extended process lasting several months. Mrs. Wolf agreed. In answer to the Board's inquiry, Assistant Superintendent for Operations, **Joseph C. Licata** said the scope of the project could be amended by July 2002, but the design of the building would be underway and changes could mean additional cost. Mr. Galbreath asked if the impact of housing developments underway and planned for the northern Harford area had been taken into consideration and was told they had not. Mr. Galbreath said it is his belief that, by the time the modernized school is due to open in 2007, there will be enough students in the current North Harford High attendance area to fill a 1,500 capacity school. Board Member **Robert S. Magee** said the Educational Specifications Committee should plan for the 1,255 capacity because the Board has not demonstrated any intention of redistricting students. Student Representative **Samuel S. Fromille, IV** said overcrowding works a hardship on students and that the Board would be "irresponsible" not to direct that the school be designed for a larger capacity. Mr. Licata said the two schools in the county currently impacted the most by overcrowding – C. Milton Wright High and Southampton Middle – will continue to grow and that the system is involved in a "double whammy" of not being able to lessen the number of students at those schools while enrollments increase. Mr. Thomas called redistricting to permit a school

capacity to be greater “the tail wagging the dog.” Mr. Licata said, in the past, the Board has allowed staff the latitude of proposing larger ancillary or core spaces such as cafeterias, gymnasiums, office suites, etc. while building classroom space for the number of students projected to be enrolled at the time the school opens. He said a school can be designed so that a 200 student classroom wing could be added as needed. Mr. Galbreath moved that the Educational Specifications Committee be permitted to plan a school that would have ancillary space for up to 250 students over its projected enrollment at completion. Mrs. Troy seconded the motion and the Board voted 6 to 1 to approve (Mr. Magee dissenting; and Mr. Fromille casting a dissenting preferential vote).

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **NEW BUS ORDER FOR 2002-03 SCHOOL YEAR**

Acting on the motion of Board Member **Thomas D. Hess** and the second of Mrs. Troy, the Board voted unanimously to support the Superintendent’s recommendation that the system be able to order 33 contractor buses and ten Harford County Public School special needs buses for the 2002-03 school year. Board permission was needed because funds have not been identified for the 2002-03 budget. However, orders must be placed early in the previous school year if the buses are to be delivered in time for the beginning of a school year. The 33 contractor buses would add about \$93,000 to next year’s budget; while the ten special needs buses would add \$600,000 to the 2003 account if purchased (less if a lease/purchase agreement is enacted).

### **GOVERNOR’S EARLY EDUCATION INITIATIVE FUNDS**

Maryland Governor **Parris Glendening** has provided \$1,026,815 in additional funds to the school system’s current operating budget to be used in his *Early Education Initiative*. The funds are due to “sunset” (expire) in two years. The funds are unrestricted in terms of how they can be spent, but must be used for pre-kindergarten through third grade education. It has been suggested that the money be used for one-time (non-recurring) expenses such as reading materials, library materials, materials of instruction, furniture and equipment, and to support full day kindergarten programs and smaller class sizes. Director of Elementary Education **Patricia L. Skebeck** presented the Board with a proposed schedule for expending the funds. Acting on the motion of Mrs. Wolf and the second of Mr. Galbreath, the Board voted 4 to 3 (Mr. Magee, Mr. Hess and Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler dissenting) to move \$100,000 from school improvement efforts at three Title 1 schools – Edgewood, Hall’s Cross Roads, and Magnolia elementaries – to providing support for materials of instruction and supplies for reading and math for grades one through three on a school by school basis, doubling the amount the Superintendent had recommended be spent in that area. Acting on the motion of Mr. Magee and the second of Mr. Thomas, the Board voted 7 to 0 to approve the amended program. The program will have \$286,395 spent on hiring 11 teachers to reduce class size in grades kindergarten through third grade at Edgewood, Magnolia, Joppatowne, Riverside, North Bend, North Harford, and Forest Lakes elementary schools. Mrs. Skebeck said the teachers could be absorbed through attrition if and when the Governor’s program is discontinued. Also, \$318,000 would be spent to increase the number

of full day kindergarten programs in Magnolia, Hall's Cross Roads, Edgewood, Havre de Grace, George D. Lisby at Hillsdale, and William Paca/Old Post Road elementary schools. Another \$100,000 will be spent to replace furniture and equipment in early childhood programs at seven local schools. Another \$80,000 will be spent to increase reading, science and social studies materials and supplies for thematic units and reading areas in early childhood education programs. An allocation of \$10,000 will be provided for CD ROM computer and Earobics software for phonemic awareness development for kindergarten classrooms. The remaining \$32,000 would be used to fund staff development for MSDE validation, gap reduction initiatives, mathematics, reading, technology instruction and differentiated instruction.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

### **WIRELESS COMMUNICATION DEVICE POLICY – FIRST READING**

**Danielle Rogers**, a student at Fallston High School, told the Board that students should be allowed to have cell phones in school. She said the communication devices are necessary for students to be in touch with their parents. She said the devices should be turned off during the school day and added schools have the power to block outgoing calls from school buildings. Assistant Superintendent for Education Services **Bernard F. Barnes** presented the Board with the first reading of a proposed policy on Wireless Communication Devices. He told the Board that a new Maryland law, which took effect on October 1, 2001, decriminalized student possession of wireless communication devices while on school property during the school day. Dr. Barnes said the Policy Review Committee, of which he is chair, is currently considering a proposed policy which includes four distinct types of such devices – pagers, cell phones, personal communication devices (such as Palm Pilots) and laptop computers. He said the key issue is how to manage the devices during the school day. The proposed policy would prohibit student possession of pagers on school property at all times. It would permit high school students to possess cell phones during the regular school day, however, students would be prohibited from using the cell phones during the regular school day for any reason. In addition, cell phones should be rendered incapable of sending or receiving signals during the regular school day and should be stored in student lockers. Students would be solely responsible for the security of their cell phones. Mr. Hess asked about the inclusion of middle school aged students in the cell phone portion of the policy. Mrs. Troy commended the Policy Review Committee for its work. The Board will receive comment on the proposed policy which could be enacted at its November 12<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### **2002-03 HARFORD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL CALENDAR**

**Paul Schatz**, president of the Harford County Education Association (HCEA) said that his group had input into the formation of the 2002-03 calendar proposal and that HCEA desires little input into the calendar. However, he said his organization, while supportive of a full spring break, sees little value to the clustering of three staff development days in the formation of a six-day spring break for students. He said HCEA is concerned that the two

half-days of in-school teacher planning be kept in the schedule.

**David Volrath**, principal of Aberdeen High School, accompanied by three other high school principals, told the Board that principals have little impact on the formation of the calendar, yet are bound by it. He said a calendar should be guided by two priorities – increasing student achievement and maximizing the operational efficiency of schools. He said the calendar should provide for maximizing the number of instructional days that precede state testing windows, periodic breaks to reevaluate student progress, chances to reorganize students during the school year, periodic and continuous system staff development and school staff development during the school year, and periodic assessment of student performance. Mr. Volrath said principals realize the impact the calendar has on communities and families, they do not believe it is appropriate to compromise the mission of the schools. He said the Board's provision for student vacation absence is a reasonable alternative.

Director of Public Information **Donald R. Morrison** told the Board that the citizen Calendar Committee had been formed in accordance with a Board directive established in 1993. He said the committee followed Board parameters by starting after Labor Day and ending prior to June 15. He said the group met on September 17 and came up with the proposal outlined in the Board exhibit. Mr. Morrison introduced **Doreen Hochlowski** of Fallston who presented the committee's proposal. She said the group had settled on a recommendation that would include the traditional calendar requirements, including a post Labor Day start (September 3, 2002) and an end for students (without inclement weather days) on June 13, 2003. Mrs. Hochlowski said the group is recommending a six-day spring break for students with the first three days (April 14, 15, and 16) being staff development days for teachers. She said any inclement weather days would be made up beginning with June 16. Mr. Morrison said Superintendent Haas has an alternate proposal which would have the first three inclement weather days made up during the first three days of the spring break with staff development being shifted to the days following the end of the school year.

The proposal – which is listed on the school system's web site ([www.co.ha.md.us/harford\\_schools](http://www.co.ha.md.us/harford_schools)) – is scheduled to be acted upon by the Board at its November 12, 2001 meeting. The Board is seeking input on the proposal. Those interested may e-mail the Director of Public Information ([drmorrisson.gs@hcps.k12.md.us](mailto:drmorrisson.gs@hcps.k12.md.us)) or mail to (45 E. Gordon Street, Bel Air, MD 21014).

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Mrs. Haas called on Mr. Licata who told the Board that there is a need to limit use of schools by community groups after school hours, particularly in response to the current national terrorist situation. He said there must be a protocol developed for non-school groups to provide security for school buildings. Mr. Thomas said, if the state or national government moves to the next level of security alert, user groups must be prepared to realize it "won't be business as usual." Mrs. Haas said school officials have met with Aberdeen Proving Ground leaders and the County Executive concerning the need to coordinate efforts at making schools more safe. She said the County Executive has offered the assistance of

the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in creating more secure situations for schools. She said the upcoming American Education Week observance may be impacted. Homestead-Wakefield Elementary School Principal **Dale Hunsinger** suggested that the November 5<sup>th</sup> parent conferences be spread over a longer period. Forest Hill Elementary School Principal **Belinda Cole** said that schools are open during times of parent visits, creating insecure situations.

## **SUSPENSION OF BOARD CURFEW**

Mr. Thomas moved and Mrs. Wolf seconded that the Board suspend its rules that no new business item be considered after 10:00 p.m. The Board voted 7 to 0 to approve the motion. Mr. Galbreath excused himself because of an early morning meeting. Mr. Magee mentioned that the Board is now meeting four times each month and must do a better job of finishing its business in a reasonable period of time.

## **BOARD COMMENTS**

Mr. Thomas, who is Deputy State Fire Marshal for Maryland, said it is ironic that during the current National Fire Prevention Week, Patterson High School in Baltimore City was damaged by fire. Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler mentioned that the two Board work sessions slated for the HEAT Center on October 15 and 29, will begin at 6:30 p.m. despite the previous listing that showed them due to start at 7:00 p.m.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Acting on the motion of Mr. Thomas and the second of Mrs. Wolf, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 10:24 p.m.

## **FUTURE MEETINGS**

In addition to its work sessions, the Board will hold its next regular business meeting on Monday, October 22, 2001 at Fallston Middle School at 6:30 p.m. A presentation will be made by the North Harford High School Madrigals beginning at 6:15 p.m. that evening. A subsequent Board business meeting will be held at the same location, beginning at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, November 12, 2001.

## **MORE INFORMATION**

The school system is attempting to prevent duplications and reduce production/mailling 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.

**For more information on Board meetings or other matters affecting the Harford County Public Schools, contact the system's Director of Public Information, 410-588-5203; or call**

**the HCPS Customer Relations Action Line (24-hours-a-day) at 410-638-0022.**

*The Harford County Public School System does not discriminate on the basis of race,  
color, sex, age,  
national origin, religion, or disability in matters affecting employment or in  
providing access to programs.  
Inquiries related to the policies of the Board of Education of Harford County should  
be directed to  
the Director of Public Information at 410-588-5203.*