



Board Meeting

May 20, 2002

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

The regular business meeting of the Board of Education of Harford County was called to order on Monday, May 20, 2002 at 6:30 p.m. by Board President Eugene C. Chandler in the cafeteria of Aberdeen Middle School. Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler requested a quorum call with all Board Members reporting present. Acting on the motion of Past President David H. Galbreath and the second of Board Vice President Terry R. Troy, the Board voted unanimously to adopt the agenda as printed. Board member Thomas D. Hess led those present in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

RECOGNITION

HALL OF FAME

The Board of Education officially inducted two members into the HCPS Educator Hall of Fame. Inducted was William M. Clark, Sr. and Lida E. Dalton. Mr. Clark spent 31 years as a teacher, coach and assistant principal in the Harford County Public Schools, starting at the all-black Havre de Grace Consolidated School in 1956 where he was the school's physical education teacher and coach of their highly successful athletic teams which won three state titles. Mr. Clark moved to Edgewood Middle School as a physical education teacher following total desegregation in 1965 and spent his final 17 years in the school system as an

assistant principal at Edgewood High School. Mrs. Dalton, who passed away last year, began her teaching career in 1922 shortly after graduating high school by passing a teaching examination and teaching at several one and two room school houses. She completed her bachelors degree in 1929 and taught at the old Youth's Benefit Elementary School until she married in 1942. She returned to the new Youth's Benefit Elementary School in 1956 following the death of her husband and retired in 1972, completing 35 years in the classroom spanning six decades. Mr. Clark and his family accepted the induction from Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler and Superintendent Jacqueline C. Haas; while the family of Mrs. Dalton accepted her induction. Portraits of the two Hall of Fame educators have been added to the Wall of Fame in the Board Room of the school system's central office on E. Gordon Street in Bel Air.

HCPS TEACHER OF THE YEAR/

2002-03 TEACHER OF THE YEAR FINALISTS

The Board of Education presented a plaque to the 2002-03 HCPS Teacher of the Year Howard E. Eakes, fifth grade teacher at Fountain Green Elementary. The Board and Superintendent also gave Mr. Eakes an engraved watch (Talles Jewelers) and school bell which had been presented to him without having been engraved at the April 25, 2002 Teacher of the Year banquet (the identity of the honoree is kept secret until after the announcement is made). In addition, the Board presented certificates to the nine Teacher of the Year finalists: David J. Barczak, Aberdeen Middle School; Elizabeth L. Buecker, Dublin Elementary School; Deborah S. Chatham, Dublin Elementary School; Heather O. Drenning, Havre de Grace Elementary School; Mary M. "Sue" Fox, Joppatowne High School; Jane F. Gross, Bel Air Middle School; Beth A. Moore, Homestead-Wakefield Elementary School; L. Joyce "Joy" Richardson, George D. Lisby Elementary School at Hillsdale; and Christopher S. Schall, Bel Air High School.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler and Mrs. Haas presented a certificate to the 2001-02 Student Representative to the Board Samuel S. Fromille IV, recognizing the outstanding manner in which Mr. Fromille, a graduating senior at Fallston High School, represented the students of the Harford County Public Schools on the Board during the current school year.

FBLA NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE

The Board and Superintendent presented a certificate to North Harford High School sophomore Emily Bostic who will represent the county in the National Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) Leadership Conference to be held in Nashville, Tennessee in late June. Ms. Bostic qualified for the trip to the National conference by finishing second in the Introduction to Business category of the State FBLA Conference held in Hagerstown in April.

2002 MERIT SCHOLASTIC AWARDS

Two names were added to the list of Merit Scholastic Awards announced at the April 22, 2002 meeting. The names of Mark C. Kiebler, Jr. and Cynthia M. Parks, both of Harford Technical High School, had been omitted from the April 22nd report.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Stu Chapman, Harford Technical High School teacher, expressed his "deep concern" about a portion of the proposed dress code which refers to exceptions possibly being made where "religious practice" is involved. Mr. Chapman said he feels it could set a dangerous precedent and create problems with interpretation for such a statement to be included in the document.

Emma Little, a student at Harford Tech, said that less than two percent of the students at her school do not comply with the current dress code in effect there and that instituting a dress code consistent throughout the county does not take into consideration differences at the various schools.

Christine Snyder of Havre de Grace, chair of the school system's Citizen Advisory Committee on Special Education, said she was concerned about the staffing ratio of students to instructors providing itinerate services to special needs students.

Brian Maddox, a student at Harford Technical High School, said that there are particular requirements at each school that make a countywide dress code unworkable. He said the imposition of a rule against "flip-flops" will be hard to enforce.

Maggie Valentine, a junior at Harford Tech, said that she has no problems with the dress code currently in effect, but the one proposed, including a prohibition on "open-toed shoes" would create problems.

Shane Ryan Brinegar, a member of the Bel Air High School student government, expressed reservations about the proposed dress code. He said calling dress a safety issue begs the question of how much further will the system go in restricting student rights. He said current rules prohibit inappropriate clothing and there is no need to change. He added that the backpack policy forcing the book carriers to be stowed in lockers does not take into consideration that there are not enough lockers at his school for backpacks. In addition, a junior at C. Milton Wright High School (who did not sign the comment card) said "flip-flops are a major part of my wardrobe." The junior said she had a petition with 274 signatures of her fellow students calling the proposed dress code rules a "violation of the freedom of expression."

Natalie Jackson, a student at Bel Air High, said she is concerned about what type of punishment would be used for students who do not meet the new dress code regulations. She said restrictions on tank tops do not take into consideration parts of her building which are very warm. She added that backpacks are necessary in school and that weapons can be

hidden in many other ways. She added that "flip-flops" are not a safety issue, in her opinion.

Ian Hull, president of the Harford County Regional Association of Student Councils, said his organization wanted to express its thanks to the Board for taking on the issue of a countywide dress code. He went through the policy, saying that HCRASC supports most of its provisions, but does not support the ban on tank tops, adding that the wording on "gang attire" is vague, and that the group agrees with the banning of slippers but the procedures should allow sandals. He said HCRASC does not support the ban on bookbags.

Katelyn Aziz, North Harford High School SGA President, said that students risk losing jewelry if they are required to take it off as prescribed by the proposed policy for physical education classes.

Jan McDonald, a parent who has students at Bel Air Middle and High schools, said that students have the right to choose their own attire and the specifics of the dress code policy dismantle those rights. She said choosing their clothing is a way to learn to make appropriate choices and find their individuality through progressive responsibility. Mrs. McDonald said the policies are aimed at the five percent who dress inappropriately but penalize the other 95 percent. She said the new rules will turn administrators and teachers into "fashion police" and that it will be difficult to define the new regulations.

David Galbreath, a student at North Harford High, said backpacks in schools are not a threat and that someone intent on bringing a gun into school can find a way without use of the backpack. He said lightweight jackets are sometimes a necessity and exempting students who are wearing team clothing is unfair.

Steve Williams, principal at Havre de Grace High School, said he wanted to clarify his quote used in a recent newspaper. He said he respects the Board's right to set policy, but, as a principal he will be called upon to enforce the rules and he said he has some concerns in that area. He said that clothing often relates to culture. He said that students want to be safe in school more than anyone and that, as principal, he takes action immediately to ensure their safety. Mr. Williams complimented the Board on its work to secure two-way communications to classrooms and pointed to the relationship developed by the school with an officer from the Havre de Grace Police Department as enhancing safety.

Theresa M. Burrell, who said she is a military wife, complained that children of military parents are not treated fairly. She said that military children are "singled out" and negative comments made by school officials about the military are harmful.

OLD BUSINESS

ACTION ITEMS

CONSENT AGENDA

Acting on the motion of Mrs. Troy and the second of Past President David H. Galbreath, the Board voted unanimously to endorse items on the Consent Agenda, including the Monthly Report on Personnel, the Proposed Resolution on Mr. Fromille, the Proposed Resolution adding the two names to the Resolution on the 2002 Merit Scholastic Awards, the Award of School Bus Contracts; and the Award of a Contract Extension - Food Service Prepackaged Snack Cakes.

APPROVAL OF REAFFIRMATION OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND STUDENT POLICIES SECTIONS OF POLICY MANUAL

Acting on the motion of Board Member Karen L. Wolf and the second of Mr. Galbreath, the Board acted to add the wording "who has standing" to the provision of Policy 07.01.162 determining who may appeal a decision of the Board. Then, acting on the motion of Mrs. Troy and the second of Board Member Robert B. Thomas, Jr., the Board voted unanimously to reaffirm the Human Resources (.06.01) and Student Policies (.07.01) sections of the Board Policy Manual as presented to them at their April 22nd meeting. The policies will be posted on the school system's web site. Mrs. Haas reported that 07.01.005, age of entry into school, will be changed as a result of the Maryland State Board of Education action the previous week.

FY 03 OPERATING BUDGET - COUNTY CONTINGENCY RESERVES

Acting on the motion of Mr. Galbreath and the second of Board member Thomas D. Hess, the Board voted unanimously to approve three of the six Contingency Reserve accounts established by the County Executive's budget for use by the school system. The motion called for use of the other three funds to be deferred until after the MGT of America sub-groups have finished their reports on those areas. Areas the Board authorized to be used include \$201,500 for wage increase for substitutes (\$5 per day), \$170,038 for upgrade of instructional software; and \$6,000 for use of the Ag Mobile Teaching Lab. Mrs. Haas told the Board that the County Council was expected to approve the entire County operating budget the following evening, including the reserve accounts.

APPROVAL OF POLICY ON DRESS CODE AND BACKPACK USE

Mrs. Haas told the Board that the shootings at Columbine High School on April 20, 1999 had a profound impact on school systems around the country as they were forced to take a closer look at their safety procedures. She said on June 11, 2001, the Board passed a dress code and backpack policy that deferred decisions to the schools. Subsequently, Georgia school safety expert Michael Dorn came to the county at the invitation of the Board to present a report on safety. Mr. Dorn said that delegating such responsibilities to individual schools is not a good idea. He said the result would be an inconsistent policy that would provide mixed messages. Mrs. Haas said she is aware that the proposals will not be popular with many students. But, Mrs. Haas urged the Board to put the student dress and backpack policies into effect and set up a mechanism to assess their effectiveness as trends in fashion

change. Mr. Fromille said he has several issues with the dress code proposals, calling many of them "pretty vague." He added that the proposed backpack policy would necessitate longer breaks between classes to allow students to visit their lockers, cutting down on instructional time. But, Mr. Thomas said the policies are appropriate and are in keeping with the recommendations of Mr. Dorn as well as the recommendations of the Board's Policy Review Committee. Board Member Robert S. Magee said he does not see the policies as having an impact on school safety. He said approval of the Board Policy is tantamount to approving the proposed guidelines which many school-based administrators have expressed concern about being able to enforce. Mr. Hess said the policies are "reasonable and enforceable" and urged they be passed as presented. He added the Administrative Procedures are not reasonable and that they are a work in progress which need to be reflective of the policy. He added that some procedures need to be reviewed and reworked.

Acting on the motion of Mrs. Troy and the second of Mr. Galbreath, the Board voted to remove the words "right and" from the opening line of the dress code policy, leaving the policy to read, "Students have the responsibility..." The Board voted unanimously to support the amendment (with Mr. Fromille casting a dissenting preferential vote). Mrs. Troy moved that the portion of the policy cited earlier by Mr. Chapman (see public comment section) concerning exceptions to be made in case clothing is related to religious practice be removed. The motion died for lack of a second. Then, acting on the motion of Mr. Thomas and the second of Mrs. Wolf, the Board voted 6 to 1 (Mr. Magee dissenting) to approve the dress code policy as amended (the Administrative Procedures, which are subject to Board approval, will be reworked by the staff and presented at a later time). Mrs. Troy then moved and Mr. Thomas seconded, that the dress code policy be brought back for review annually by the Board. The motion passed by 4 to 3 with Mr. Magee, Mr. Galbreath and Mr. Hess casting dissenting votes (Mr. Fromille cast a dissenting preferential vote).

Mr. Hess said, if the backpack policy is to be passed, the Board would have to buy each secondary student classroom a set of textbooks to be handed out for use of students in class. He said the proposal is an "overreaction" that is not warranted. Mr. Magee said there is no need for all the provisions listed in the policy and that most of what is there is procedures. Mr. Thomas' motion to delete all but the first and last paragraph of the document died for lack of a second. Mr. Thomas then moved and Mrs. Wolf seconded that the backpack policy be approved as submitted with the deletion of "briefcases, duffel bags" from the opening line. The Board passed the motion by a 4 to 3 vote with Mr. Magee, Mr. Galbreath, and Mr. Hess dissenting (Mr. Fromille cast a dissenting preferential vote).

APPROVAL OF CALENDAR POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Acting on the motion of Mr. Hess and the second of Mrs. Troy, the Board approved the proposed School Calendar policy by a 5 to 2 vote (Mrs. Wolf and Mr. Galbreath dissenting). The policy provides the Board with flexibility on the start date for the student school year, eliminating the current policy which prescribes the start date depending on when Labor Day falls. Mr. Galbreath said he was "not happy" with the abridging of the compromise which had been worked out by a Board sub-committee on the school start date. He said there

should also be a provision on the end date of school. The new policy also removes the provision requiring that graduation ceremonies take place in the week prior to the 180th student school day.

PRESENTATIONS

NORTH HARFORD HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL SPECIFICATIONS

Director of Secondary Education William Ekey presented information on the Educational Specifications developed for the modernization project at North Harford High School. Mr. Ekey said the plan had been done concurrently with the recently completed balancing enrollment effort that will send about 400 additional students to the school beginning in 2005. He said the plan takes into consideration a new wastewater treatment plant at the school and realizes that the project will be a renovation, not a replacement as in the Aberdeen High School project. He said the renovation will require a phased development. Mr. Ekey pointed out that the Educational Specifications committee had pointed to the historical context of the existing building. He said the tradition at the school extends to the retention of the courtyards and oak trees in front of the building. And, he said, the agricultural base of the school is to be preserved, noting that the school is the center of the community. Mr. Ekey said the expanded building will contain 241,000 square feet, 1/3 larger than the current structure and that there will be 76 teaching stations.

POLICY ON PRIVACY RIGHTS OF PARENTS AND STUDENTS - STUDENT RECORDS

Director of Student Services Steve Lentowski reported to the Board on proposed changes to its policy on student records, in place since 1980. The policy provides parents and eligible students the opportunity to access and inspect a student's records and protects the confidentiality and privacy of student records. The Board's current policy was last amended on August 23, 1999, Mr. Lentowski said. The Policy Review Committee has undertaken a comprehensive review of the student record policy to ensure conformity with Federal and State law, particularly the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the recently enacted "No Child Left Behind Education Act" of 2001. The proposed new policy will be held over for 30 days to receive input and will be brought back to the Board for action at its June 24, 2002 meeting.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Due to time constraints, the scheduled report on MGT Section 10 (Administrative & Instructional Technology) and Section 11 (Transportation) was postponed.

OPPORTUNITY FOR BOARD MEMBERS TO PRESENT NEW BUSINESS

Acting on the motion of Mr. Thomas and the second of Mr. Wolf to pilot the use of student identification badges at two high schools and two middle schools next school year with a

report to be made to the Board in June 2003, the Board voted 3 to 4 to defeat the initiative. Dissenting votes were cast by Mr. Magee, Mr. Galbreath, Mr. Hess, and Mrs. Troy (Mr. Fromille cast a dissenting preferential vote).

ADJOURNMENT

Acting on the motion of Mr. Galbreath and the second of Mr. Hess, the Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:56 p.m.

FUTURE MEETINGS

The two June Board of Education business meetings will be held at Aberdeen Middle School - June 10th and June 24th - both beginning at 6:30 p.m. A work session will be held on Monday, June 17th starting at 7:00 p.m. at the HEAT Center in Aberdeen. The topic will be the first reading of the Capital Improvements Program Priorities for FY 2004 to FY 2009 and Board Operating Protocol. In July, the Board business meetings will shift to North Harford High School with meetings to be held Monday, July 8th and Monday, August 12th, both beginning at 7:00 p.m.

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

In addition, for those who would like to receive emergency or other important school announcements automatically at their e-mail address(es), check the schools-out.com initiative on the home page of the HCPS web site.

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.

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