



Board Meeting

July 8, 2002

Terry R. Troy, *President*
Robert S. Magee, *Vice President*
Eugene C. Chandler
David H. Galbreath
Thomas D. Hess
Robert B. Thomas, Jr.
Karen L. Wolf
Molly P. Harris,
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 by Superintendent Jacqueline C. Haas at 7:04 p.m. in the auditorium of North Harford High School. Operating under the authority granted the superintendent in Article III, Section D of the Board's bylaws – designating the superintendent to act as presiding officer during the election of a president and a vice president of the Board – Mrs. Haas outlined Section B-1 of Article III in the bylaws which provides direction on the succession of Board leadership at the Board's July meeting. Mrs. Haas asked for nominations for Board President. Immediate Past President Eugene C. Chandler nominated and Board Member Karen L. Wolf seconded Vice President Terry R. Troy to be Board President for the 2002-03 school year. The Board voted unanimously to confirm Mrs. Troy as their president. As her first act, Mrs. Troy asked for nominations for Board Vice President. Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler nominated and Board Member Robert B. Thomas, Jr. seconded that Robert S. Magee serve as vice president of the Board for the 2002-03 school year. The Board voted unanimously to support that motion. Mrs. Troy presented an address to those present, crediting Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler for his dedication and professionalism in leading the Board and the school system during the preceding year. She called the Harford County Public School System "the best in the nation" and noted that "we need to do a better job in communicating" the successes of the system. She promised to work hard in providing the foundation for the school system which is facing many changes wrought by new Federal,

State, and local guidelines. Mrs. Troy said she will seek to promote uniform achievement in all of the county's schools, and added that the school system's new vision and mission will provide a framework citing a "sense of urgency" in accomplishing progress for the system.

Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler presented Mrs. Troy with a ceremonial gavel made by her husband, Steve Troy. Mrs. Troy presented Lt. Col. (Ret.) with a plaque honoring his service. Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler thanked Mrs. Troy, who was vice president during 2001-02, and the remainder of the Board for their support and said he has "never worked with a harder working or more dedicated group of employees" than the Harford County Public School System staff. He said he had a dream when he started his presidency of seeing a more cohesive relationship between the Harford County Education Association (teachers union) and the school system leadership, adding that he hoped that had been accomplished. Mrs. Haas then swore in the Student Representative to the Board of Education of Harford County, Molly P. Harris, a rising senior at C. Milton Wright High School, who declined to make a public statement. Mrs. Wolf moved and Board Member Thomas D. Hess (who continued to serve pending the appointment of the new Board member from Abingdon/Edgewood) seconded that Item F – Approval of Age at Entrance Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, and First Grade - be changed from a presentation to an action item. The Board unanimously supported the motion. At the recommendation of Mrs. Haas, Mrs. Wolf moved and Mr. Hess seconded that Item I – Superintendent's Report – be deleted from the agenda. The Board voted unanimously to support the motion. Mrs. Wolf then moved and Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler seconded that the amended agenda be adopted and the Board unanimously supported that motion. Mr. Galbreath then led those present in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Daniel Purcell, the 2000-01 Student Representative to the Board, welcomed Ms. Harris, Mrs. Troy, and Mr. Magee to their new positions, adding that Ms. Harris would be "putting in a lot of long hours" and would learn much about tolerance and leadership. He said he had been following the progress of the school system online while at college and was disappointed that no movement had been made in attaining partial voting rights for the Student Representative to the Board. Mr. Purcell urged the Board to "take the Harford County Regional Association of Student Council seriously" and called the Harford County Public School System the "crown jewel" of the county.

Ian Hull, rising Fallston High School senior and president of HCRASC, presented the names of the organization's officers, adding that the group was composed of representatives from 18 county secondary schools – all but one of the public schools and the John Carroll School. He mentioned several of the events which will be hosted by HCRASC in the coming school year.

OLD BUSINESS

ACTION ITEMS

CONSENT AGENDA

Acting on the motion of Mrs. Wolf and the second of Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler, the Board voted unanimously to approve items listed on the Consent Agenda, including Affirmation of Monthly Contract Awards, Minutes from the June 10, 2002 business meeting, the Monthly Report on Personnel, and the award of a Contract for Telephone Equipment Upgrades at 23 schools. The telephone upgrade is the first step toward providing two-way classroom to office and classroom to outside numbers communication. Mrs. Haas said approval will be sought for a contract at the August 12, 2002 meeting which will provide for the upgrade of public address systems to complete the communication program. Schools will be brought on line through a schedule that is anticipated to be completed by the end of the 2002-03 school year.

APPROVAL OF CONTRACT ARCHITECTURAL/ENGINEERING SERVICES – NORTH HARFORD HIGH SCHOOL MODERNIZATION/EXPANSION

Acting on the motion of Lt. Col. Chandler and the second of Mrs. Wolf, the Board voted unanimously to approve the award of a contract for \$2,565,970 to the firm of Grimm & Parker Architects, Inc. for architectural and engineering services in the modernization/expansion of North Harford High School. Supervisor of Construction Kathleen Sanner told the Board the amount figures to 6.9 percent of the total (approximately \$35 million) job, well below the 7 to 8 percent normally reserved for such services. She said the Aberdeen High School architectural/engineering contract was 6 percent of that project. In response to a question from Mr. Galbreath, Mrs. Sanner said there will be both internal and external borings done at the North Harford High facility to determine the condition of base soils. The work will be part of a subsequent contract set to be advertised, she said. In response to a question from Mrs. Wolf, Mrs. Sanner said it will be the responsibility of the school system to widen Rt. 165 slightly and perform minor signage, crosswalk, and striping adjacent to the site. Mr. Hess said he is pleased to see that Grimm & Parker was awarded the architectural/engineering contract, citing their excellent performance on previous projects and noting the 6.9 percent cost is a “bargain.” Mrs. Sanner added that there will be samplings of internal wall cavities to determine materials used for insulation and other purposes prior to demolition of the areas to be disturbed.

APPROVAL OF PROMOTIONS/APPOINTMENTS

The Board took action on a series of promotions/appointments as recommended by the superintendent. Appointed as Teacher Specialists were Carolyn Merello and Diana Wehage (Early Childhood); and P. Nancy Beltz, Patricia Mason, Jacqueline Tarbert, and Joyce Stevenson who were confirmed on a motion by Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler, second by Mr. Galbreath, and unanimous vote of the Board. Catherine E. Beers, former Assistant Principal at C. Milton Wright High School, was appointed Supervisor of Transportation on the motion of Lt. Col. Chandler, second of Mr. Galbreath, and unanimous vote of the Board. Acting on the motion of Mr. Galbreath and the seconds of Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler, Mrs. Wolf, and Mr. Hess, the Board unanimously appointed Thomas M. Szerensits, former Assistant Principal at Bel Air High School, to be Principal of Aberdeen High School. Acting on the motion of

Mr. Galbreath and the second of Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler, the Board voted unanimously to add Joseph J. Ciufu, Assistant Principal at Magnolia Middle School; and Glenn A. Jensen, Assistant Principal at Bel Air Middle School, to the Secondary Principal Pool.

APPROVAL OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT FOR THE HARFORD COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICES COUNCIL (HCESC)

Acting on the recommendation of the Superintendent, Mr. Thomas moved and Mr. Hess seconded that the Board ratify the tentative 2002-03 agreement reached between the Board's representatives and representatives of the Harford County Educational Services Council, which represents instructional assistants, secretaries, clerks, nurses, and other employee groups. The Board voted unanimously to support the motion. Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources Donald Harmon noted that the negotiating team of HCESC is in the process of seeking ratification of the tentative agreement with members of the employee association.

APPROVAL OF AGE AT ENTRANCE PRE-KINDERGARTEN, KINDERGARTEN, AND FIRST GRADE

Director of Elementary Education Patricia Skebeck told the Board that the Maryland State Board of Education had adopted a new schedule of ages for entrance into pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and first grade. Mrs. Skebeck said, to be in compliance with Maryland COMAR, local Boards have to take action to amend their policies on the age of entrance. Mrs. Skebeck explained that this coming school year (2002-03), children enrolling in pre-kindergarten must be four by November 30 (rather than the current December 31). She added that next year (2003-04), children must turn four by October 30 to enter pre-kindergarten and children must turn five by November 30 to enter kindergarten. Mrs. Skebeck explained that the process will be phased in a month per year so that by the school year 2005-06, children must turn four by September 1 to be eligible to enter pre-kindergarten. The following school year (2006-07) kindergartners must be five by September 1. She said, in effect, the age for those in successive grades will also be moved a month per year to the September 1 date. Mrs. Skebeck said all the other regulations in the Board Policy involving pre-kindergarten/kindergarten will remain the same with only the change in ages being impacted. Mr. Thomas said local Boards have no choice but to comply since the State Board has made the age change a requirement. Acting on the motion of Mr. Magee and the second of Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler, the Board voted unanimously to approve the changes in Board policy to reflect the phased-in age of entrance requirements. In answer to a question from Mrs. Wolf, Mrs. Skebeck said she would work with the HCPS Office of Information to make sure the changes are communicated to day care operations and others in the public.

PRESENTATIONS

REAFFIRMATION OF BOARD OF EDUCATION SECTIONS OF POLICY MANUAL – FIRST READING

Assistant Superintendent for Education Services Bernard Barnes presented the Board with recommended changes in the 02.01 "Board of Education" section of the Board of Education Policy Manual. The section, which covers the responsibilities of the Board, was reviewed as part of the routine examination of Board policies. Dr. Barnes said the review included policy format, policy language, legal citation, need for reaffirmation/signature update, and other more substantive matters. He said the proposed revisions would be made available for public comment and further Board consideration would take place at the August 12, 2002 Board meeting.

RECOMMENDED 2003-04 HCPS CALENDAR

Mark Wolkow of Abingdon addressed the Board on the issue of the proposed calendar. He called the recommendations to be made to the Board that evening by its ad hoc committee "superlative." Mr. Wolkow, who said he had served on many previous calendar committees, thanked the Board for its support of students and teachers being off from school on the high Jewish holy days of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Mrs. Haas told the Board that the report to be presented to them was a first reading and that the proposal would come back to them at their August 12 meeting for action. The Board of Education adopted a revised policy on the school calendar in May, establishing a revamped ad hoc advisory committee to provide input on the suggested schedule; and directing that a two-year calendar be developed. Director of Public Information Donald Morrison told the Board that the committee, whose membership was approved by the Board on June 10, met on June 13 and reached consensus on the proposed 2003-04 calendar to be presented to the Board by the student member on the committee, Mr. Hull. The HCRASC president went through the schedule as proposed by the calendar committee. The 2003-04 student school year would begin on Monday, August 25, and end on Friday, June 11, 2004 (with three inclement weather days included). Rosh Hashanah (September 26) and Yom Kippur (October 6) would be student/teacher holidays; MSTA day would be October 17, schools would be closed for students on October 30 and 31 for staff development (elementary conference day on October 30). There would be a two-hour early dismissal on the day before Thanksgiving (November 26) followed by a two-day Thanksgiving break. The winter holidays would be from December 24 through January 2. The second block of inservice days would be on January 20 and 21, following observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day on January 19. President's Day would be February 16 and schools and offices would be closed for the primary election day on March 2. The third inservice block would be held on March 26 and March 29, with the spring vacation slated for April 8 through 12. Memorial Day observance would be scheduled for May 31 with commencement exercises from June 1 through June 4. Additional inclement weather makeup days would be scheduled for the March 26/29 last inservice block, the first day of spring break (April 8) and the week after the end of school for students (June 14-18). (For a complete listing of the proposed calendar, see the HCPS web site at www.co.ha.md.us/harford_schools.) Mr. Morrison mentioned that the committee had discussed the difficulties created in attendance by the observance of "Take Your Child to Work Day" and that a sub-committee of the group would come back to the Board with recommendations on how to address the issue.

REVIEW OF CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM PRIORITIES FY 2004-09

Mrs. Sanner and Assistant Superintendent for Operations Joseph Licata reviewed with the Board for a second session the school system's proposed capital improvements priorities through Fiscal Year 2009. The Board is due to act on the proposals in September, which would formalize the requests for FY 2004 and provide a plan for out-year requests. Mr. Licata said the combination of capacity and modernization/renovation projects with an anticipated narrowing of the State of Maryland "pipeline" of available funds for capital projects from its current \$150 million per year statewide to about \$73 to \$75 million will create a "bottleneck" for projects in coming years. He said there are issues, in addition to a possible new middle/high school and the modernizations of North Harford, Bel Air, and Edgewood, including what to do with Aberdeen High North once the replacement school is completed; and the refresh (replenishing) programs in technology and music. He added, the issue with the Aberdeen Math/Science academy, Joppatowne/Deerfield elementaries modernizations, and others make the setting of priorities essential. Mr. Magee said he believes the Board should establish a "needs based" list and leave it up to funding authorities to determine which ones of the projects can be funded. Mr. Licata pointed out that the school system anticipates asking the county for \$15 million per year in capital funding rather than the \$12 million which has become traditional. Mr. Hess said the school system needs to articulate its vision clearly and suggested that \$18 million from local sources would be a more realistic yearly figure to request. Mrs. Haas said that future requests from the state from Harford could be in the range of \$23 million and, with the state anticipating providing no more than \$76 to \$79 million a year, such a request, given similar requests from other school systems in the state, would appear to be out of the realm of possibility. Mr. Licata added that the "Aging Schools" funding stream, providing state money to refurbish infrastructure of older buildings meeting certain guidelines, may "sunset" in the next year. He added that special projects, such as the anticipated need to build more kindergarten space to account for the state-mandated all-day kindergarten, will only complicate the issue. Mr. Thomas urged that school systems not assume that Aging School funds or any other funding stream will change. "Everything is up for grabs," he said. Mr. Hess said getting \$1.5 million for the Aberdeen High Math/Science academy makes sense, as does funds to provide a use for Aberdeen High North. He added the request for qualifications for the school system administration building needs to be taken seriously. Mr. Thomas agreed, saying the administration building has to be a "top priority." Mr. Licata said there is \$50,000 in that account to assist with evaluation of the RFQs when they arrive in late August. He added that the only "fall back" position to a new building is the rental of more space for offices.

DISCUSSION

OPPORTUNITY FOR BOARD MEMBERS TO PRESENT NEW BUSINESS ITEMS

Mr. Hess said he had served with 11 Student Representatives to the Board during his tenure on the Board and each had contributed much to the work of the Board. Mr. Thomas, Mrs. Troy, and Mr. Galbreath commended Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler for his work as Board President. Mrs. Troy announced that the Board would have a closed session on July 23,

2002, beginning at 6:00 p.m. in the Board Room of the school system's central office at 45 E. Gordon Street in Bel Air to discuss personnel matters.

ADJOURNMENT

Acting on the motion of Mr. Thomas and the second of Mr. Hess, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 9: 15 p.m.

FUTURE MEETINGS

The next regular business meeting of the Board will be held on Monday, August 12, 2002 beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the auditorium of North Harford High School. Other business meetings will be held on September 9 and 23, also at North Harford High School, with the former beginning at 7:00 p.m. and the latter at 6:30 p.m. There will also be a Board work session to be held at the HEAT Center in Aberdeen on September 16, 2002 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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