



Board Meeting

April 28, 2003

Terry R. Troy, *President*
Robert S. Magee, *Vice President*
Eugene C. Chandler
Ruth R. "Robin" Rich
Robert B. Thomas, Jr.
Karen L. Wolf
Mark M. Wolkow
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 Board President Terry R. Troy at 6:30 p.m. in the cafeteria of Havre de Grace Middle School. Mrs. Troy asked for a quorum call which showed all Board members were present. Board Member Mark M. Wolkow moved and Board Member Karen L. Wolf seconded that the agenda as presented be approved. The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion. Board Vice President Robert S. Magee led those present in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

RECOGNITION

HCPS EDUCATOR HALL OF FAME

Each month, during the school year, the Board of Education of Harford County inducts two former Harford County Public School educators into the HCPS Educator Hall of Fame. The inductees are nominated by the Harford County Retired School Personnel Association based on at least 20 years of extraordinary service to the school system. For April, the inductees were Rachel K. Tobin and Charles P. Marzen. Mrs. Tobin, who passed away in 1997, was inducted posthumously with her two daughters, Susan and Lynne Tobin, and other family members present to accept the induction. Mrs. Tobin taught for 21 years in Harford County,

all at Aberdeen High School, where she was Math department chair and a highly respected leader of students and the faculty. Mrs. Tobin was a pioneer at Aberdeen Proving Ground where she was involved in many essential defense projects during World War II, but fulfilled her life's purpose when she was hired at Aberdeen High School in 1962 after her daughters had progressed into middle and high school. She retired in 1983. Mr. Marzen, who was joined by his wife, former Harford County Public School teacher Jeanette Marzen, and other members of his family in accepting the induction, began teaching English at Edgewood High School in 1958, where he also coached basketball and baseball. He was named a guidance counselor at the school in 1965 and became the system's first Supervisor of Guidance in 1973. He retired in 1987. Mr. Marzen is credited with helping to build a productive guidance program in the school system, particularly at the elementary school level. In addition, he was a much beloved and respected teacher/counselor/coach at Edgewood High.

DI GLOBAL QUALIFIERS

Each year, many schools in Harford County participate in the Destination Imagination creative, problem-solving program in which teams of up to seven students provide solutions to situations through skits, props, and demonstrations. Teams compete in regional tournaments to qualify for the State DI Tournament where qualifiers there go on to the Global Tournament held each year at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. This year, four Harford County Public School teams earned the right to go to the Global event – two teams each from Bel Air Middle and Ring Factory Elementary schools. Bel Air Middle's "Change in Direction" team finished second in the Intermediate Division at the state tournament, earning the trip to Knoxville. Team managers are Eric Bennett, April Bixler, Larry Albert, and Judy Kishaw-Ellis; with team members Stephen Albert, Peter Armillei, Shilpa Das, Shweta Das, Dorothy Ellis, Tim Latavish, and John Misey. Bel Air Middle's "Theater Smarts" team also placed second in the Intermediate Division of the state tourney and will compete in the Global event. The team is managed by Sharon VandenEynden and Jane Wagner and is composed of student members Emily Chell, Katie Rizer, Stephani Smith, Jacki VandenEynden, and Sara Wagner. Ring Factory Elementary School's "Once Improv A Time" team won first place in the Elementary Division of the state tournament to qualify for the Global event. The squad is managed by Mary Kate Keesling and Cindy Mumby, and is composed of student members Lindsay Kasecamp, Emily Keesling, Caroline Keesling, Grace Mumby, Anna Sherman, Harleen Singh, and Kayla Wagner. A second Ring Factory Elementary team, "Theater Smarts," took second place in the Elementary Division to qualify for the Globals. The team is managed by Eileen Gunther and Pam Lucchese, with student members Ben Cordes, Katie Gunther, Gina Lucchese, Ryan Selvy, Carly Smith, and Cameron Wann. Each of the students and their team managers received a certificate signed by all Board Members.

AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION LEADERSHIP AWARD FOR SCHOOL AIR QUALITY

Teri Kranfeld of the American Lung Association presented the Board of Education of Harford County with an award from her organization in connection with the school system's

use of the "Tools for Schools" (TFS) program to improve indoor air quality. Forty-five of Harford's 50 schools have achieved full or partial implementation of the TFS program. Five schools were awarded with early bird incentive prize money in the amount of \$200 each for submitting findings from their checklist and repair and upgrade priorities. The American Lung Association of Maryland has nominated Harford County Public Schools for its Excellence Award. Ms. Kranfeld said the Lung Association and the Environmental Protection Agency has extended the award in recognition of the outstanding work the school system has done in the area of indoor air quality.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ian Hull, outgoing president of the Harford County Regional Association of Student Councils, presented a synopsis of the activities of his group this year. He said HCRASC has lobbied for or against bills in the General Assembly at Annapolis, has reorganized its process to get middle schools more involved, and is co-host of the statewide leadership conference in Ocean City. He also listed the new officers selected for the group that represents all county high schools' and most middle schools' student government associations.

OLD BUSINESS

ACTION ITEMS

CONSENT AGENDA

Acting on the motion of Past President Eugene C. Chandler and the second of Mrs. Wolf, the Board voted unanimously to endorse items on the Consent Agenda, including the minutes from the March 10 Board Business Meeting and the May 17 Board Work Session as well as the Monthly Report on Personnel containing a list of those who had left the system, been placed on leaves of absence, or who are newly employed within the previous month; and Proposed Resolutions on Salute to School Food & Nutrition Service Personnel Day (May 14), National Physical Fitness and Sports Month (May), School Nurses Day (May 7), Teacher Appreciation Week (May 4-10), Pupil Personnel Worker Week (May 5-9), School Psychology Week (April 28-May 2), Home and Hospital Teachers Appreciation Day (May 7), and the 2003 Merit Scholastic Awards (presented to the top 5 percent in each of the school system's nine high school graduating classes). Also, the approved Consent Agenda included the endorsement of an Award of Contract for Network Servers.

APPROVAL OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE 2004-2005 SCHOOL CALENDAR

Acting on the motion of Mr. Wolkow and the second of Board Past President Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler the Board voted 5 to 2 (Mrs. Wolf and Board Member Robert B. Thomas, Jr. dissenting) to approve the proposed 2004-05 school calendar which had been presented to the Board the previous month by its Ad Hoc Calendar Committee. The calendar calls for school to begin for students on Monday, August 30, 2004 (the week prior to Labor Day) and

end for students on Friday, June 17, 2005 (with as many as eight inclement weather days built in, those not being needed as inclement weather makeups being dropped).

REAFFIRM THE HARFORD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS STUDENT DRESS CODE POLICY

Mr. Hull, speaking for HCRASC, told the Board that the group feels the current policy, which went into effect at the outset of this school year, should have a full year's experience before consideration of any changes should be undertaken. He mentioned that at least one high school principal had said he doesn't understand the policy and that backless shoes are not nearly the safety concern as high heels or baggy pants. Superintendent Jacqueline C. Haas said the shoe situation is an "unresolved" issue. She added that "baggy pants" was found to be difficult to define clearly and it was felt a policy on that issue would not be able to be administered. Mrs. Haas said that questions about the Dress Code Policy actually apply, in large part, to the Administrative Guidelines which were reviewed by the Board but not formally approved by the policy making body. She explained that it is her responsibility to construct administrative guidelines to implement policy and that the guidelines defined "flip-flops" as backless shoes. Mrs. Haas suggested consideration of the policy be deferred and referred to the Policy Review Committee. She said she would meet with students by the end of May to discuss the issue. Student Representative to the Board Molly P. Harris agreed with Mrs. Haas that the Board had not approved the guidelines and that consideration of the policy should be deferred until a full year of its existence had passed. Mr. Thomas said the shoe issue is the "sticking point" in the policy. Mrs. Wolf moved and Board Member Robin R. Rich seconded that consideration of the policy be deferred and referred back to the Policy Review Committee with specific instructions to look at the shoe and baggy pants issues.

Mr. Magee said he had identified nine items that are in the policy that should not be there, rather they should be in the guidelines. Mrs. Wolf amended her motion to say that the Board would not consider the policy until Mrs. Haas had addressed the shoe issue in the Administrative Procedures. The motion was passed unanimously by the Board. Mrs. Wolf then moved and Mr. Thomas seconded that the entire policy be sent back to the Policy Review Committee to "clean up" the language and separate policy from procedures. The Board passed that motion unanimously, as well. Mrs. Haas said it could well be late summer or early fall before the Policy Review Committee could complete its work and have the proposal back to the Board. Mrs. Rich added that she does not believe the backless shoes provision is a safety concern.

APPROVAL OF SCHOOL FACILITIES USE POLICY

Elaine Hirsch addressed the Board about a performing group which was holding its event in Hereford because it was not able to use a Harford County Public School venue. She said the "schools belong to the citizens."

Assistant Superintendent for Operations Joseph P. Licata said the changes in the School Facilities Use Board Policy had been reviewed at a stakeholders meeting which he and Mrs. Wolf had co-hosted. Mrs. Wolf said that recognized non-profit groups can and do use HCPS facilities. She added that there is often difficulty in finding custodial support for such

events and that custodians are sometimes called upon to “supervise” those in the user group. Mrs. Wolf noted the increase in the minimum liability insurance that must be carried by the user from \$1 million to \$5 million was questioned by those at the meeting. She said there were questions about any changes that might be brought about by the policy changes in the longstanding partnership between the school system and the Department of Parks and Recreation. Mrs. Wolf said those at the meeting said some buildings were not as “user friendly” as others. Mr. Licata said that proposals for quarterly meetings between school officials and Parks and Recreation officials are ones that could be implemented. Mrs. Troy said the proposed changes to the Facilities Use Policy would be brought back as an agenda item for a May Board meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

ACTION ITEMS

APPROVAL OF PROPOSED AGING SCHOOL PROGRAM PROJECTS FOR FY 04

Acting on the motion of Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler and the second of Mr. Wolkow, the Board voted unanimously to approve items on the Aging Schools Projects list amounting to \$400,000. Projects included the Edgewood Middle School motor control center replacement (\$35,000); Southampton Middle School cooling tower replacement (\$120,000), Fallston High School re-asphalt of bus loop (\$60,000), Edgewood High School re-asphalt student parking area (\$45,000), and Edgewood Middle School fire alarm replacement (\$140,000). The State Interagency Committee on Public School Construction administers the funds which resulted from the passage of Senate Bill 795 in 1997. A total of 32 projects ranging from carpet replacement, to motor control center replacements, to septic system replacements, to fire alarm replacements and many others have been funded through the yearly program which has resulted in the Harford County Public School system receiving \$400,000 annually except in FY 1998 when it received \$180,000.

PRESENTATIONS

USE OF GARRETT WANDS AT ATHLETIC EVENTS

Coordinator of Safety and Security for the school system Robert Benedetto presented the Board with information on the possible use of Garrett (metal detecting) wands at athletic events. He said that three incidents – one involving the discovery of a gun, the second discovery of bullets, and the third the use of a baseball bat in an assault – have occurred at HCPS athletic events within the past year. He said the Citizen’s Advisory Committee for Safety and Security supports the principal’s use of metal detectors in the form of both walk-through and hand held metal detectors. Mr. Benedetto said the use of the detectors could be a deterrent to those who might want to bring weapons in to such events. Edgewood High School Principal Joseph Schmitz called the use of metal detectors “a thorny issue” and said principals would prefer the walk-through model. Mrs. Wolf told Mr. Benedetto and the principals who had worked with him concerning the proposal that she appreciated their

being “pro active” while realizing that metal detectors “are not a panacea” for weapons that could be brought to such events. North Harford High School Principal Michael Thatcher noted that the use of drug detecting dogs had been controversial when it was first introduced, but it is now accepted by schools as a weapon against drugs in schools. He said the same could be true for a program of the use of metal detectors.

SCOPE STUDY – BEL AIR HIGH SCHOOL MODERNIZATION

Supervisor of Planning and Construction Kathleen Sanner introduced members of the Frederick Ward Associates firm which had been contracted in October 2002 to prepare a Preliminary Scope Study for the Bel Air High School modernization project. The study was assigned to determine the construction approach, including the capacity of the project, and to develop preliminary capacity estimates on various options. A 1,600 capacity figure was used for the school and three options were developed by Frederick Ward. Mrs. Sanner said the issue will be discussed more fully at a work session on the capital budget on June 16.

The Ward firm representative, Scott McGovern, project architect, presented three options. The first scenario is a complete modernization – renovation of the existing facility with some additions. The second option would be to build a brand new replacement school on the north portion of the property where the softball field now exists with the existing facility being torn down upon completion of the new building. The third scenario would be a phased project involving a new building constructed on top of the razed current footprint in stages so that a portion of the building would be demolished to make way for a portion of the new building. The preferred option, according to the Ward group, is to build a new building at the north site and then demolish the existing building. Mrs. Sanner said that a decision would be made on the scope of the project by early September. If the preferred option is adopted, Ward would create a feasibility study and the educational specifications process would be started.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

Mrs. Haas told the Board that the hiring/equipment purchase freeze was being lifted after having been in place for 45 days. She said the school system’s financial situation had stabilized to the point the freeze could be eliminated. Mrs. Haas said she is proposing to the Board that it change the wording in Goal 2 of its Board Goals, which form the basis of the master plan. She said the No Child Left Behind/Bridge to Excellence laws require multiple areas in closing gaps – poverty, race/ethnicity/disability/English language learners/gifted education/career education and several others. The current Board Goal 2 calls for the elimination of the achievement gap involving minority students. Mrs. Haas said the goal needs to be expanded to come in line with the Federal and State requirements. Mrs. Haas said the school system made its budget presentation to the County Council on April 17. She also reported on the dedication ceremonies of a log cabin built by volunteer Jack Shagena and a number of his helpers at Harford Glen Outdoor Education Center. She said the April 24 dedication had demonstrated what can be accomplished when someone has a dream and the determination to act on that dream.

BOARD COMMENTS

Mr. Wolkow, a member of the County's Adequate Public Facilities Task Force, said the school system and the county is in a "disaster" situation with runaway enrollment growth and limited capacity. He said all parties must "pull together" to solve the "imminent disaster." He said the "hard facts" are that the current Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance has done little to curb growth and its impact on the schools.

Mrs. Troy said the school system has receive a commendation from the National School Board Association based on how it had responded to situations involving the sniper shootings in the Washington, D.C. area earlier this school year. She added that the County Council will hold its two public budget hearings at Fallston High School (May 1) and Havre de Grace High School (May 8).

CLOSING

Mrs. Troy declared the meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

FUTURE MEETINGS

The Board was to have held a work session on High School Reform Recommendations at its May 6 work session at the HEAT Center in Aberdeen. It will continue its business meetings at Havre de Grace Middle School on May 12 and 19 (7:00 and 6:30 p.m., respectively), while there will be a work session at North Harford Middle School on May 13 (6:30 p.m.) as the Superintendent and members of her staff update the "State of the School System."

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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*Inquiries related to the policies of the Board of Education of Harford County should
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the Director of Public Information at 410-588-5203.*