



Board Meeting

June 23, 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 6:31 p.m. on Monday, June 23, 2003, in the cafeteria of Havre de Grace Middle School. Mrs. Troy asked for a quorum call which established that Board Member Karen L. Wolf was absent due to another commitment for which she was excused and Board Past President Eugene C. Chandler was to arrive later (he arrived at 6:45 p.m.). Acting on the motion of Board Vice President Robert S. Magee and the second of Board Member Robert B. Thomas, Jr. the Board voted 5 to 0 to adopt the agenda as printed. Mrs. Troy then directed that Student Representative to the Board Molly P. Harris lead those present in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

RECOGNITION

HCPS EDUCATOR HALL OF FAME

Since October, 2000, each month during the school year, two nominees are inducted into the Harford County Public School Educator Hall of Fame. The nominees, whose names are brought forth by the Harford County Retired School Personnel Association (HCRSPA) must have provided at least 20 years of exemplary educational services in the Harford County Public Schools. The nominees are featured in an article in the Harford Schools newspaper

and have their picture placed on a wall with other HCPS Educator Hall of Famers at the school system's central office in Bel Air. The nominees also receive a plaque and other awards from the Board of Education as well as certificates from government officials. The June inductees were the late Cornelia L. Archer, an English teacher who spent from 1925 through 1967 in the Harford County Public School System, the final 33 at Bel Air High School where she was known as a Shakespearean scholar and a demanding yet highly respected teacher. Ms. Archer - who hailed from a wealthy and prominent Harford family that traced its lineage back to Dr. John Archer, a doctor during the colonial period - sponsored Bel Air High's yearbook and its May Court for many years. The other inductee was Viola J. Scott, a 43-year public school educator who came to Harford County in 1955 to teach business at Central Consolidated School. She moved to Bel Air High in 1965 when total integration was achieved in Harford County. In 1970 she was named to be a Pupil Personnel Worker and remained in that job for 21 years through her retirement in 1991. Ms. Scott, who continues in her charitable work as a retiree, was known for providing assistance to all students but especially those with economic or social needs. Niece Dora Lee Archer Woelper accepted the plaque and other awards for Ms. Archer while Ms. Scott and members of her family and associates accepted her induction.

DISTINGUISHED BUDGET PRESENTATION AWARD

Budget Director John L. Cox and Budget Analyst Jeannine M. Ravenscraft accepted a Board certificate in recognition of the HCPS Budget Office having received the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) Distinguished Budget Presentation award. The award – the only one of its kind presented in Maryland this year – was presented to the school system in acknowledgment of the system's 2002-03 Operating Budget which was rated as "proficient" as a policy tool, a financial plan, an operations guide, and a communications device.

GREEN SCHOOL DESIGNATION

Outgoing principal of William S. James Elementary School, Deborah Freels, accepted the Board's certificate in recognition of her school having been named as one of 14 schools in Maryland a "Green School" for the 2002-03 school year. The Green School Award program recognizes and celebrates Maryland schools that use the school site, the community, and their curriculum and instruction to prepare students to understand and act on the current and future environmental challenges facing Maryland. WSJ Elementary had qualified to receive its Green School designation based on students there building a rain garden around a storm drain, planting more than 200 trees to create a buffer zone along a stream on the property, and various recycling projects among other efforts. William S. James Elementary is the only HCPS school to have been designated a Green School this past school year in a program that is now five years old.

CUSTODIAL RECOGNITION PROGRAM

Each year, an inspections program is conducted at each HCPS school in connection with the Custodial Training Program conducted by the Facilities Management Department. As part

of the inspections, awards are presented to the top three elementary schools and the top middle and high schools (one each) in recognition of cleanliness and other building maintenance items. This year, first place awards in the elementary division went to Dublin, Darlington, and North Bend schools; with runner-up awards going to John Archer School, Ring Factory, Roye-Williams, Jarrettsville, and Hickory elementaries. In middle school, there was a tie for first place between Southampton and Havre de Grace middle schools.

The runners-up were Bel Air, Fallston, and North Harford middle schools. In high school the winner was Fallston High, and runners-up were Havre de Grace, North Harford, and Joppatowne high schools. Each of the first place teams received a Board certificate from Facilities Management Director Jeffrey Ayers. The crews of all the winning custodial groups and a school administrator were honored in a subsequent assembly the next week.

NURSE OF THE YEAR

Each year, the Harford School Health Services Association (HSHSA) presents an award to one of the 54 nurses who serve in the Harford County Public Schools as Nurse of the Year.

The award considers the contributions of the school nurse to students, staff, and administrators assigned to the school. The 2002-03 Nurse of the Year is Bel Air High School nurse Mary Ann McMahan. Ms. McMahan has been Bel Air High's school nurse for the past 23 years and cares for 1,600 students and 130 staff each day. She is described as an exceptionally caring member of the staff who contributes in many ways beyond providing medical services. In addition to Ms. McMahan, former nurses of the year attended the meeting and received accolades from the Board and others present.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chyrrill Simpson of Havre de Grace asked the Board to reconsider the transfer of a teacher from Havre de Grace High School whose job is being eliminated because of the end of a grant-supported program. Mrs. Simpson said her son had benefited greatly from the "strong and positive" influence of this teacher, who, she said, is the only black male faculty member on the staff. She presented the Board with a petition signed by members of the community seeking that a position be created to have the teacher stay at Havre de Grace High.

Deb Merlock of Abingdon, vice president of legislation for the Harford County Council of PTAs, talked to the Board about the school system's capital needs, saying that the pace under which schools are being renovated is inadequate. She said that the modernization of Bel Air High and Edgewood High will likely be put back because of the building of the new middle/high school south of Bel Air. She said there has "never been a better time" to address the issue since the topic is currently being discussed by community and government leaders. She said it should be the Board which establishes the adequacy of capacity to enrollment.

Arnold Beard of Havre de Grace addressed the issue of the transfer of the teacher from Havre de Grace High School. He said that, since the teacher is the only black male instructor in the school and since there is a large number of black male students in the school, they will have no role model when they look around and "see nobody that looks like

them.” Mr. Beard said, “We live in a racial society,” and implored the Board to “bring that gulf together.”

Larry English of Forest Hill said he has been attending meetings of the county’s Adequate Public Facilities Task Force and said the representative of the state’s construction office who addressed the group painted a “bleak picture” of the amount of money that will be available for school construction during the coming years. He said factoring in the “resale” impact in creating large numbers of students seeking education services would go a long way toward providing more accurate projections of school enrollment.

OLD BUSINESS

ACTION ITEMS

CONSENT AGENDA

Acting on the motion of Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler and the second of Mr. Thomas, the Board voted unanimously to approve items on the Consent Agenda including the Monthly Report on Personnel; Minutes of the April 28, May 6, May 12, and May 13 Board Meetings; and the Approval of the 2003 Educational Facilities Master Plan.

BOARD FINAL APPROVAL OF FY 2004 OPERATING BUDGET

Acting on the motion of Mr. Thomas and the second of Board Member Ruth R. Rich, the Board voted unanimously to reduce the FY 2004 HCPS Operating Budget by \$676,930 to bring it into balance at \$277,829,672. The reductions were realized through a series of revised unrestricted expenditure categories and brought the Board’s FY 04 budget in line with the amount appropriated by the County Council and through other funding sources. In addition, acting on the motion of Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler and the second of Mr. Wolkow, the Board unanimously approved the \$9,984,342 FY 2004 Food and Nutrition Fund budget at \$9,984,342. The Food and Nutrition budget is a self-sustaining, enterprise fund with no money provided from the General Fund operating budget.

APPROVAL OF SCHOOL FACILITIES USE POLICY

Acting on the motion of Mr. Thomas and the second of Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler, the Board voted unanimously to eliminate the Harford County Department of Parks and Recreation from the category under the revised School Facilities Use Policy that would have had the organization pay a fee for the use of school property. Instead, the Board directed that the amount of expendables (paper towels, soap, and other consumables) that would have been covered by the fee, be incorporated into the school system’s operating budget and be requested yearly from County funding authorities under the “cost of doing business.”

Subsequently, the Board unanimously endorsed the motion of Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler and the second of Mr. Thomas to pass the School Facilities Use Board Policy as amended.

Under the direction of Board President Troy, the policy will be reviewed each April. Also, Mr. Wolkow asked that the Board look into establishing a system of interagency transfers

that would be used to cover the cost of other Harford County government agencies using school facilities.

APPROVAL OF REVISED MASTER PLAN

Acting on the motion of Mr. Magee and the seconds of Mr. Thomas and Mrs. Rich, the Board voted unanimously to endorse the revised Master Plan as required by the Maryland State Department of Education. In June, 2002, the requirement as part of the Thornton Commission's 'Bridge to Excellence' legislation that a master plan be developed was presented to the Board. Local school systems were required to develop a five-year comprehensive plan for improvements in student achievement to cut across all segments of the student population. Members of the Superintendent's Senior Staff and the School Improvement Integrated Management System (SIIMS) began the process of creating the Harford County Public School master plan. The plan has been revised many times as additional guidance has been supplied by the Maryland State Department of Education. The plan presented to the Board contained an executive summary, descriptions of programs and initiatives, processes and strategies to manage the Master Plan, budget information and templates, and certification and assurances. The Board directed that the plan be shared with the public in as many ways as possible. The plan will now be presented to the County government by August 1 for information and to the State Department of Education by October 1.

NEW BUSINESS

ACCEPTANCE OF PATTERSON MILL PARK FOR CONSTRUCTION OF NEW BEL AIR AREA MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL

Acting on the motion of Mr. Thomas and the seconds of Mrs. Rich and Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler, the Board voted unanimously to accept the Patterson Mill Park site for the construction of a new Bel Air area middle/high school. Mr. Thomas' motion specified that the school should be built to accommodate 1,600 students (rather than the 1,400 which had been recommended by the Superintendent). Mr. Thomas cited the need to build schools large enough to house more students than are in place at the time of the approval, adding, "I'm sick and tired and disgusted that schools open at or above capacity." Mrs. Haas said that the Harkins Commission on School Construction Planning had recommended in November 2002 that the Patterson Mill site, at the intersection of Route 924 and Patterson Mill Road about two miles south of Bel Air, be used as the place for a new Bel Air area middle/high school. The 79 acre plot (with about 60 acres of land which could be used to support construction) will have a two-bay fire substation on four acres at the most narrow portion of the site immediately adjacent to Rt. 924. Supervisor of Planning and Construction Kathleen Sanner said the Board action will allow the system to ask the County Executive to transfer deed to the property to the school system and will permit a letter to be filed with the State Interagency Committee for School Construction (IAC) detailing the project. Mrs. Sanner has noted that, if all necessary funding is in place in a timely manner, the new school could be ready to open at the beginning of the 2007-08 school year. She told the Board that there is room on the property for a second school, likely to be a middle

school, if future development requires that construction.

BOARD REACTION TO COUNCIL RESOLUTION #8-03

On Tuesday, June 17, the Harford County Council passed by a 5-2 vote Council Resolution #8-03 which would place a six-month moratorium on most home construction in the county (County Executive James Harkins declined to support the Resolution in a press conference held the next day). Mrs. Haas said the same day the Council approved the Resolution, she had been asked to present a formal Board position on the issue, a request she could not fulfill since the Board would have needed to take such action in a public meeting which could not be scheduled and advertised in that short period of time. Mrs. Haas said the current Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance will close down three attendance areas – C. Milton Wright and Bel Air highs, and the Fallston Middle/Fallston High schools – on July 1 and the areas would be closed to the approval of any new preliminary plans for a period of at least one year. Mr. Wolkow said he applauds the Council for recognizing there is a problem with growth and in setting about efforts to slow the process. He also credited the group for setting up the new Adequate Public Facilities Task Force and the County Executive for agreeing to forward fund the Patterson Mill Road facility. Mr. Thomas agreed with the Superintendent that there is nothing to be gained by a six-month moratorium and that the Board has “no legal right” to stop development. Mr. Thomas renewed his call for an educational summit, one he had originally made in June of 2001, to discuss issues impacting education including growth, lack of school capacity, and aging buildings. The Board reached consensus to take no formal position on Resolution #8-03 and to continue the dialogue with government officials on issues surrounding growth and the providing of adequate school facilities.

PRESENTATIONS

ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES AND MISSED CLASS TIME

Supervisor of High School Physical Education and Athletics Forest Wiest presented the Board with a report on class time missed by student-athletics to participate in interscholastic athletics and some possible remedies for the problem. He said it was a “complex matter” with no easy answers. He said a group had been meeting during the previous school year with Director of Secondary Education David Volrath as chair to explore the issue and possible solutions. He said the key problem is that the school system does not have sufficient activity buses to permit a special run for athletics, therefore, students have to either be transported before or after the afternoon regular school runs. Mr. Wiest pointed out that outside activities in the late fall and early spring run into the problem of darkness which would prohibit start times after 4:00 p.m. He said some possible solutions looked at were the adding of more lighted playing fields, but added that keeping students out late in the evening and certain sports (such as cross country and golf) could not use lighted fields. In addition, he noted the expense of constructing such lighted facilities. Mr. Wiest said playing on weekends is another option, but high school rules set by the Maryland Public School Secondary Athletic Association (MPSSAA) might limit that possibility. Also, alternative scheduling where athletes would be provided a study hall at the end of the day

could be used, but, with the need to earn a certain number of credits, most students would not be able to avail themselves of such scheduling. Mr. Wiest said 15 buses would have to be added to the three activity buses now in use at an annual cost of \$300,000 to allow for separate transport of athletes to game sites. Mrs. Haas added that teacher/coaches also have to leave for athletic events, creating the stress of having to cover those classes and taking the regular teacher from the classroom. Mr. Magee, who had asked for the study, said the message being sent to young people has to be clear that academics is the most important function of their school day. He said he would like for the committee to continue to investigate ways of easing the problem of student-athletes missing class time. Mr. Wiest said some things have been done, such as scheduling more night events (including JV football) and rotating schedules that mean student-athletes do not miss the same class each time they are out. Mrs. Haas said the committee will return with a full report in six months.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mrs. Haas provided the Board with an update on the institution of regulations for Charter Schools. Joined by Mrs. Sanner, she also provided an update on proposals to ease the impact of the over capacity situation at Fallston Middle School. She said a stairwell from the second floor, a walkway between "C" and "D" wings, expansion of the cafeteria, and a paved walkway between the Physical Education and academic corridors are possibilities that could be instituted in the short term to ease the traffic flow situation. She said conditions in the classroom, with the use of relocatable classrooms, is not a problem, but that circulation because of the truncating of the building due to financial constraints when it was built, does create a problem with student traffic flow at peak class changing times. Mrs. Sanner said it could take five months to plan and complete any of the improvements, even if money is available immediately. She cited the C. Milton Wright High/Southampton Middle school improvements which were authorized and funded at about the same time in the summer last year with notice to proceed having occurred in January. Mrs. Haas said a request could be made to the county for supplemental FY 04 funds and, if that does not succeed, it could come back as a regular request for FY 05. There is also the possibility of using reserve funds (money left over from other projects) to accomplish at least some of the projects, she said. Acting on the motion of Mrs. Rich and the second of Mr. Wolkow, the Board directed the Superintendent seek funding to proceed on the improvements, in order, a stairwell, connecting hallway, cafeteria expansion, and an enlarged physical education teaching station. The Board unanimously approved the motion and directed the formal proposal be assembled by July 3.

NEW BUSINESS BY BOARD MEMBERS

Mr. Wolkow renewed his call for non-air conditioned school buildings to be air conditioned, noting that he had toured some of the non-air conditioned buildings late in the school year and found conditions to be oppressive. He displayed a seven-page document listing accomplishments during this school year at William Paca/Old Post Road Elementary School. Mrs. Rich expressed her appreciation for the work done by staff from the school system and the Department of Parks and Recreation in working out a compromise for P&R use of school facilities. She said she had been told, in years past, there had been annual

meetings between Parks and Recreation officials and the Board/school system leaders, adding that it might be a good idea to reinstitute such meetings. Mr. Magee noted that the Bakerfield Elementary School musical group had performed the National Anthem at a recent Aberdeen Ironbirds game and had done an outstanding job. He credited the work done by Mark Warfield, music teacher at Bakerfield and Hall's Cross Roads elementary schools. Mrs. Troy expressed the Board's appreciation for the outstanding work having been done by Student Representative Molly P. Harris during the previous year. She also thanked Havre de Grace Middle School Principal Wayne Perry and his staff for their outstanding hospitality in hosting Board business meetings during the previous three months. Mrs. Troy also thanked the Board for its support in allowing her to serve as president of the Board during the past year, adding she had "grown and learned a lot" during the year. She wished all a safe Fourth of July celebration and thanked the Superintendent for her consistent support.

CLOSING

Mrs. Troy declared the meeting adjourned at 9:42 p.m.

FUTURE MEETINGS

The Board will hold two business meetings during the summer months, both at Fallston Middle School which will host the Board during the July through September quarter. The first will be on July 21 and the second on August 11 (both beginning at 7:00 p.m.). The September meetings will be held on September 8 and September 22 (7:00 and 6:30 p.m., respectively).

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: don.morrison@hcps.org; 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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the Director of Public Information at 410-588-5203.*