



The Board of Education of Harford County met in an open business session on Monday, December 17th, and took the following actions, received the following presentations, or took part in the following discussions:

- Conducted Recognition ceremonies including:
 - Presented a certificate in honor of retiring State Senator J. Robert Hooper to his family honoring the legislator for his support of the school system, students, staff, and the school community over more than five decades of private and public life;
 - Inducted posthumously 34-year HCPS teacher/administrator Paul R. Skarzenski who spent the final 22 years of his career as principal of Bel Air High School;
 - Honored Deerfield Elementary School third grader Wilbur Catud for his artwork which was used as the cover design for the 2007 HCPS holiday greeting card;
 - Recognized the fall Maryland Public Secondary School Athletic Association (MPSSAA) state and regional champions and the winners of the Upper Chesapeake Bay Athletic Association (UCBAC) Sportsmanship Award winners.
- Provided the following Board Comments:
 - Board member Lee Merrell praised Superintendent Jacqueline C. Haas for providing a letter of recognition to each Eagle Scout inductee who is a student in the school system, noting that he had attended recent ceremonies, adding that earning Eagle Scout status stands the recipient in good stead for the rest of his life.
 - Past President Mark M. Wolkow reported that he had attended the recent Harford County Education Association (HCEA) legislative breakfast, praising HCEA President John Jones for his work in the program; reported that he had recently read to a third grade class at William Paca/Old Post Road Elementary School, noting their skill in predicting outcomes in the story.
 - Board President Thomas L. Fidler, Jr. noted that six HCPS teachers – Christine Baker of Hall’s Cross Roads Elementary; Robert Bruce of Joppatowne High; Lori McNeill of Magnolia Elementary; Mary Beth O’Donnell of Harford Technical High, Michael Schul of Church Creek Elementary, and Karla Weinhold of Patterson Mill Middle School – had recently been notified that they have received National Board Certification as a result of an intense personal staff development program. He also noted that the Homeland Security/Emergency Preparedness program at Joppatowne High School has been receiving national news coverage as a program unique in the country.
- Approved items on the Consent Agenda including the Monthly Report on Personnel; Citizen Advisory Committee Charges and Member Changes/Appointments; Relocation of Relocatable Classroom for Wakefield Elementary School; and Resolutions including January – National Mentoring Month; Maryland Reading Month; and African American History Month/Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.
- Approved the reduction of unrestricted funds in the amount of \$1,054,956 matching the amount of reduced revenue from the State of Maryland in FY 2008.
- Authorized the Superintendent to create the Harford County Public Schools Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) Trust Fund and to participate in the Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) Investment Trust upon its creation; authorized the Superintendent to execute any legal documents pertaining to establishment and participation in the Trusts; and authorized monies in

excess of funding requirements in the Harford County Health Care Consortium Rate Stabilization accounts, Medicare Part D reimbursements, and unspent funds from the HCPS flexible spending plan to be transferred to the MABE OPEB Investment Trust as they become available and to be designated for that purpose in the future.

- Received a report from the Committee on School Uniforms including a summary of a recent survey showing 58.4 percent of parents approved of mandatory uniforms for students; 74.5 percent of teachers approved; 80.1 percent of school administrators approved; and 22.1 percent of students approved. The report also recommended the Board continue exploring the concept of requiring students in the HCPS schools to wear uniforms, asking that the item appear on a future Board agenda during which the Board would provide guidance on the direction it would like the committee to pursue.
- Received a report on the work of the Middle School Ad Hoc Committee.
- Received a report on the First Quarter Student Eligibility for 2007-08 indicating a slight improvement (two percent) in the number of students being eligible (having no 'E's' on their report card) from the first quarter of the 2006-07 school year to the current school year.
- Received an overview of the Superintendent's Proposed FY 2008-09 Operating Budget reflecting a proposed 7.2 percent (\$28.99 million) increase over the current budgeted amount in the HCPS Unrestricted Fund Budget. A series of hearings will be held on the proposed budget on January 3 (7:00 p.m., HCPS/A.A. Roberty Building), January 7 (5:00 p.m., HCPS/A.A. Roberty Building), January 12 (9:00 a.m., HCPS/A.A. Roberty Building).
- Received Superintendent's Report during which Dr. Haas:
 - Reported on having attended the recent concert at North Harford High School in the newly opened auditorium;
 - Discussed the implementation of new race codes by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) in the fall of 2009
 - Reported on the task force established by the Maryland General Assembly exploring the raising of the compulsory age of attendance to 18;
 - Reported that HCPS employees had contributed more than \$53,000 to the recent United Way campaign;
 - Noted that Harford HCPS will get no additional funding from the geographical formula, will receive slightly more than \$800,000 in additional revenue next year from the State, and there remains a \$230 million to \$240 million deficit which may result in further reductions in State funds;
 - Reported that recent icy conditions, particularly in the northern Harford area, resulted in issues with decisions to delay or not delay the opening of school, leading to discussions about a possible northern Harford zone similar to the Hereford zone in Baltimore County. Dr. Haas noted that the issue had come up before but had not been explored for six to eight years and, with the changes in attendance areas in which all of Forest Hill Elementary and all of Dublin Elementary students now attend North Harford Middle or High schools as a change in the situation that had been examined before. She said she will appoint Transportation Director Charlie Taibi and Chief of Administration Joseph Licata to examine the issue.
 - Reported that both she and President Fidler had received a letter from the Montgomery County Board of Education asking the Harford Board and school system to endorse a position that would increase the rigor of the High School Assessments (HSA's), a proposal Dr. Haas said she would recommend opposing since HSA's had never been intended as a college entrance indicator;
 - Reported on discussions she and Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Gerald Scarborough had had recently referring to accommodations and modifications for students with disabilities on HSA and Maryland School Assessment (MSA) tests.

- Congratulated the HCPS Public Information office on the publication of the 2007 HCPS Annual Report;
- Noted the receipt of Governor's Citations by C. Milton Wright High and Dublin Elementary; and
- Provided an alert that the Maryland State Board of Education was to have announced the following Wednesday (December 19th) its Blue Ribbon Schools for 2007, adding that one of those schools is a Harford County Public School.

With no further business to be conducted, the meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.