



Board Meeting

April 10, 2000

Karen L. Wolf, *President*
David H. Galbreath, *Vice President*
Eugene C. Chandler
Thomas D. Hess
Robert S. Magee
Robert B. Thomas, Jr.
Terry R. Troy
Catherine L. Brodo,
Student Representative
Jacqueline C. Haas, *Superintendent*
Secretary/Treasurer

OPEN SESSION

CALL TO ORDER

Board President **Karen L. Wolf** called the meeting of the Board of Education of Harford County to order at 6:00 p.m. in order to allow for a special period of public comment on the proposed 2000-2001 school system operating budget. The meeting was held in the theater of Fallston High School. All Board members were present except **Robert B. Thomas, Jr.**, who arrived later in the regular portion of the meeting due to a work commitment. A total of seven speakers addressed the Board.

James Carroll of Green Spring Road in Havre de Grace told the Board that he was opposed to the concept of "pay for play" in interscholastic sports. He said the program costs \$1.5 million which is $\frac{3}{4}$ of one percent of the budget. He added that 6,000 of the 10,500 high school students take part in interscholastic sports and that the Board has an "implied contract" with those students and parents to provide this part of a "quality education." Mr. Carroll added that many of the lessons learned in sports "can't be taught, but must be experienced." He said that cutting sports or forcing parents to pay to have their children participate would negatively impact the "at-risk" student. Mr. Carroll pointed to Anne Arundel and Cecil counties where pay to play had been attempted and asserted the idea did not work in either county.

Paul Schatz, president of HCEA—the teacher’s union, thanked the Board for its actions the previous Saturday morning in voting unanimously to fully implement the five percent across the board raises for all school employees. He requested that the Board keep all employees informed during their work to absorb the shortfall in funding and urged that the Board do what it can not to cut positions. He asked that people read his column which appears in the April issue of "Harford Schools" that discusses the issue of teacher specialists, and he asked that the lines of communication be continued open among all constituents.

Ron Garner, president of the local chapter of AFSCME—which represents support service workers such as custodians, craftspeople, and maintenance workers, thanked the Board on behalf of the union for its actions the previous Saturday involving salaries.

Joe Lafleur of David Court in Bel Air, said he was representing the Bel Air High School Athletic Booster Club and expressed his opposition to "pay for play," or "user fees," as they are sometimes called. He said the proposal cuts at the "very fabric of values" of a public school system and asked where the cutting would stop: band, plays, etc. He said if pay to play were initiated there would have to be more night events to generate funds causing a safety issue. Mr. Lafleur added that such a system would particularly impact women’s sports where it is more difficult to generate funds. He added that the Bel Air Athletic Boosters contributes \$40,000 each year to the sports program and that the local athletic conference would "fall apart" if pay to play is initiated.

Ellie Hoffman of Percheron Court in Fallston thanked the Board on behalf of Food and Nutrition workers for its stance on the salary issue.

Wayne Perry, principal of Havre de Grace High School, who identified himself as the father of five who have or are receiving public education services, praised the Board for its courage in sending to the County Executive a budget based on needs and thanked the members for their unanimous support of the employee salary package. Mr. Perry urged them to maintain their courage during the budget cutting process and to remember that students will be hurt by cuts. He likened the impending cuts to having to choose between a steering wheel and brakes in buying a new car.

Marina Lattanzi of Arabian Way in Fallston and a secretary at Youth’s Benefit Elementary School thanked the Board for its inclusion of secretaries in the five percent salary package.

Mrs. Wolf thanked those who had expressed their opinions on the proposed budget and reminded them that the following night, April 11, at the same location, the Board would continue its process in a public work session, inviting the public to witness the effort. The special portion of the meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER -- Mrs. Wolf called the regular portion of the Board meeting to

order at the same location. The roll call found the same members present, the agenda was adopted unanimously and those present were led by the Board in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

ACTION ITEMS

CONSENT AGENDA

The Board unanimously approved items on the Consent Agenda, including the minutes from its Executive Session of March 27, its Business Meeting of the same day; and minutes from the Executive and Open portions of its Work Session held on March 28. The Board also approved the Monthly Report (as of March 31, 2000) on Personnel, reflecting those who have left the system, been placed on leaves of absence, newly employed by the system, and those certificated staff who have qualified for tenure based on two years of successful contracted probationary employment. The action also approved the proposed Bylaws for the Harford County Citizens Advisory Committee for Gifted Education, and approved the appointments of the following people to two-year terms on the committee beginning with the 2000-2001 school year: **Mary Kate Keesling, Daniel McCoy, Doris Mellor, Cindy J. Sellmayer, Terri M. Shaw, Debra Tannenbaum, Yvonne L. Waters, and Donna Woodfield**. In addition, the Board appointed **Steven B. Fulkrod** to a five year term on the Board's Ethics Panel, replacing **David W. Shrodes**, whose second five year term expired in December 1999.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

The Board divided the public comment it was to hear into two parts: the first on general topics and the second on issues surrounding the proposed naming of the North Harford High School stadium field for **Larry J. Robinson** and the Vietnam Veterans who served in that conflict after having graduated from North Harford High.

Andy Amasia of Oakmont Road in Fallston apologized for being late in commenting on the budget, and expressed his opposition to pay for play, adding that "athletics is more than games and scores" in pointing out that student-athletes are among the best academic students in the school system.

Carson Langenfelder of Amberly Court in Bel Air, and a 15-year-old ninth grader at Fallston High School, described an entry in his Earth Science book, which was published in 1984, looking to the day when the Hubble telescope would be deployed. He added that his Government textbook would be similarly outdated next year, and registered his opposition to pay for play.

Sally Cherry, president of the Joppatowne High School PTA and a resident of Chimney Oak Drive in Joppa, expressed her support of interscholastic athletic programs in the school system and talked about the "socialization" skills it teaches students. She said she took "great offense" to the pay for play proposal pointing out

that it would represent a "direct exclusion" for those who could not afford to pay.

David Glenn of Bern Drive in Havre de Grace and president of the Meadowvale Elementary School PTA said that there has been no information made available on the status of the pending renovations to Meadowvale.

Debbie Heath of Hendrix Court in Bel Air spoke about an issue involving the budget.

Lisa Raab of Oaklyn Drive in Fallston discussed an issue involving the shared use of Youth's Benefit Elementary School stage and cafeteria space by the YMCA day care program and the school's theatre program.

The second group of speakers to address the Board discussed the North Harford Stadium issue. Speaking against the naming of the stadium for Mr. Robinson were **Fran Mathews** of Dooley Road in Whiteford (who is Athletic Director at North Harford High), **Jack Yost** of Heaps School Road in Pylesville (a Vietnam veteran), **Loran R. House** of Round Hill Road in Frederick (a 1965 graduate of North Harford High and former Army nurse in Vietnam), **Frank Stacey** of Mauser Drive in Bel Air (president of the Vietnam Veterans Chapter 588), and **Tom Doyle** of Kreitler Road in Forest Hill (a 1963 graduate of the school). Mr. Staley said the Vietnam Veterans Chapter was maintaining a "neutral" position on the proposal, but that he was personally against the move to name the stadium for one person at the exclusion of others who served. Also, speaking in opposition was **Barbara J. Smith**, a 1958 graduate of North Harford High who lives on Ady Road in Forest Hill; and **John Knopp** of Federal Hill Road in Jarrettsville, a former Marine who served in Desert Storm who said any effort at a memorial should honor all veterans of all U.S. wars since the school was built.

Speaking in favor of naming the stadium for Mr. Robinson were: North Harford High students: **Julie Falkner**, **Amanda Fritz**, **Joe Norowski**, and **David Fentress** (senior class president).

In addition, **Darlene Dorman** of Baltimore, who said she had been Mr. Robinson's girlfriend in high school, reported on the circumstances of his death by drowning, saying that he had been last in line among a group of Marines crossing a river in Vietnam and that his body had been recovered three days later.

Wayne Shapiro, NHHS Social Studies teacher and co-advisor to the senior class, said that the students would respect the process that resolves the issue. Mr. Fentress added that, if the students are not successful in renaming the stadium for Mr. Robinson, they would like to dedicate stones around the flagpole at the school to Mr. Robinson and the other NHHS graduates who died serving their country during the Vietnam War.

Ray Keefer, a graduate of North Harford High, who reported he had been saved on

the Vietnam battlefield by Mr. Robinson, said his soldier comrades were "closer than family." He described how Mr. Robinson, two weeks from the completion of his assignment in Vietnam and, though he was deathly afraid of water, volunteered to take the rear in the river crossing. He said his report to the North Harford High students two years ago had allowed them "to catch a glimpse of Larry's soul."

Matt Kineke, Social Studies teacher and co-advisor to the senior class, told the Board that the students saw the renaming of the field as an opportunity to strike a blow for equality in the community and viewed the effort as their gift to the school.

William Dallam of W. Medical Hall Road in Bel Air, said he supported the students' effort to act on "a story that had reached them" and said some of the opposition to the effort was "jaded and cynical."

INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent **Jacqueline C. Haas** asked Director of Technology and Information Services **H. Andrew "Drew" Moore** and Director of Finance **John "Jay" Staab** to report to the Board on the Lawson conversion process. Mr. Moore said issues had been found with servers. Mr. Staab said the time accrual problem had been corrected in December and that an encumbrance accounting package was being developed by the school system. He added that the issue involving tax deferred annuities (TDAs) and maximum contributions had been corrected. Mr. Moore clarified an issue he had raised at the budget work session the previous Saturday on Lawson's support of its software. He said the system would receive free upgrades of the package for the current software which will be decommissioned in the spring of 2001. Mrs. Haas said the \$3 million which was spent on the conversion from the old main frame system to the Lawson business system was "small potatoes" compared to the normal cost for such a conversion.

Mrs. Haas said the school system is proud of the fact that three teams of its students won State championships at the DestiNation Imagination (DI) Maryland tournament held at UMBC the previous April 8. Teams from William S. James Elementary School (Division I "Eggsploration"), Bel Air Middle School (Division II "Mixing Apples and Oranges") and the Learning Community – a team composed of Fallston High and Middle school students (Division III "Mixing Apples and Oranges") had won state titles and have qualified to compete in the International DI tournament in May at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. DestiNation Imagination (formerly Odyssey of the Mind) is a creative, problem-solving competition where up to seven students are charged with coming up with innovative ways of solving a problem and demonstrating that solution in planned and spontaneous presentation to judges. Twenty-eight Harford teams had qualified for the State DI tournament.

ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

Due to the lateness of the hour, the Board agreed to hold over its consideration of approval of changes to the its policies on school-sponsored dances and metal detectors; as well as its discussion of an update on legislative issues until its April 17, 2000 meeting.

APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR – 1999-2000

Acting on the motion of **Eugene C. Chandler** and the second of **Terry R. Troy**, the Board supported the Superintendent's recommendation to appoint the firm of Wooden and Benson to perform auditing services on the school system's 1999-2000 accounts. (Board Vice President **David H. Galbreath**) was absent when the unanimous 6 to 0 vote was taken. It was reported that the fee for the services would be based on time spent by the firm. A history of the cost of the services was presented, showing a range of from \$41,000 in 1993-94 to \$45,000 for the 1998-99 audit.

APPOINTMENT OF ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT FOR BUSINESS SERVICES

The Board unanimously supported the motion of Lt. Col. (Rtd.) Chandler and the second of **Thomas D. Hess** to accept the Superintendent's recommendation that **John M. Markowski** be appointed as Assistant Superintendent for Business Services. Mr. Markowski, currently the Associate Treasurer, Government of the District of Columbia and formerly the Chief Financial Officer of the Baltimore County Public Schools, succeeds **Robert K. Smith** who is accepting another job in the school system.

ADJOURNMENT

FUTURE MEETINGS

The next regular meeting of the Board of Education of Harford County was scheduled for April 17, 2000 – instead of the normal April 24, 2000, due to the Spring break. The April 17 meeting (and the regular business meetings for May and June) will be held in the theatre of Fallston High School, beginning at 7:00 p.m. The April 17 agenda has been modified to include a discussion of budget issues.

MORE INFORMATION

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 system's Customer Relations Action Line, 410-638-0022 (which can also be used as a 24-hour-a-day tip line for safety concerns).

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