



Board Meeting

December 18, 2000

David H. Galbreath, *President*
Eugene C. Chandler, *Vice President*
Thomas D. Hess
Robert S. Magee
Robert B. Thomas, Jr.
Terry R. Troy
Karen L. Wolf
Daniel E. Purcell,
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 on December 18, 2000 at 7:00 p.m. in the cafeteria of Edgewood High School by Board President **David H. Galbreath**. Mr. Galbreath directed that a roll call be taken with Board Members **Thomas D. Hess** and **Robert B. Thomas, Jr.**, along with Superintendent **Jacqueline C. Haas** being absent due to personal reasons, illness or family illness. All other Board members were present. The agenda was adopted as presented and Mr. Galbreath led those present in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

RECOGNITION

Director of Public Information **Donald R. Morrison** introduced to the Board the two inductees into the Harford County Public School Educator Hall of Fame for December. Mr. Morrison reminded the Board that two educators who spent at least 20 years in the Harford County Public Schools are selected each month by the Harford County Retired School Personnel Association for induction into the Hall of Fame. The honorees are featured in that month's issue of "Harford Schools" and their picture is placed on a wall in the Board Room of the school system's central office in Bel Air. In addition, the inductees are presented a plaque at the Board meeting during which they are honored. Mr. Morrison introduced **Earle B. "Pop" Wagner**, 83, who was a teacher, truant officer,

assistant principal, supervisor of outdoor education, and supervisor of science during a 37-year career with the school system. Mr. Wagner reflected on his years with the school system. Mr. Morrison then introduced **Ethel L. Sellman**, 82, who was a French and Math teacher at Aberdeen High School for 29 years. Mrs. Sellman is credited with being a pioneer in the use of foreign language labs and in developing foreign exchange programs. She also reflected on her career with the county schools. Both Mr. Wagner and Mrs. Sellman were accompanied by members of their families. **Deborah J. Heiberger**, assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction, representing the Superintendent, joined with Mr. Galbreath in presenting Board plaques to the December Educator Hall of Fame inductees.

Student Representative to the Board, **Daniel E. Purcell**, introduced **Rev. Ric McNally**, Executive Director of the Harford Food Bank, and representatives from Fallston Middle School, Bel Air Middle School, and Youth's Benefit Elementary School. Mr. Purcell explained that each year most Harford public schools and many county private schools participate in the "Kids Helping Kids" initiative of the Harvest for the Hungry campaign, collecting canned food and other staples to be distributed to the needy at the holiday season. Mr. Purcell said that, this year, the Harford campaign had resulted in a record 31,662 pounds of food being contributed – 47 percent more than the previous record amount which had been donated last year. Mr. Galbreath presented Board certificates to Fallston Middle representatives in recognition of the 5,511 pounds of food students there contributed, to Bel Air Middle School representatives in honor of the 4,391 pounds of food they brought in, and to Youth's Benefit Elementary representatives in acknowledgment of the 4,275 pounds of food they contributed. Rev. McNally introduced Second District Rep. **Robert Ehrlich** (R-2nd/MD) and State Senator **Nancy Jacobs** (R-34) who presented the school representatives with proclamations and certificates. In addition, Board Vice President **Eugene C. Chandler** thanked Rep. Ehrlich for his role in securing funding for the planning of a math/science magnet at Aberdeen High School.

Mr. Purcell introduced **Sharon K. Grove** and **Joel M. Leff**, two Harford Public School teachers who received National Teacher Certification through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards organization. The rigorous process requires teachers to demonstrate their professionalism through a year-long process involving the creation of portfolios and video-taped classroom instruction. Mrs. Grove, a fifth grade teacher at Forest Hill Elementary School, and Mr. Leff, a math teacher at Aberdeen High School, become the third and fourth Harford teachers to have received National Certification since the program began in 1987. This year, 4,690 teachers nationwide – 42 of them in Maryland, received the national certification. Mr. Galbreath and Assistant Superintendent for Education Services **Bernard F. Barnes** presented the teachers with Board certificates.

OLD BUSINESS

PRESENTATIONS

REPORT ON STUDY CIRCLES

William Ekey, director of secondary education, and **Richard Bock**, director of the Huntington Learning Center in Abingdon and coordinator of the Study Circles initiative, presented a report on the effort which has brought together about 100 people during the past six months to explore ways of narrowing the achievement gap between minority students and the majority student population. **John Lanceman** and **Sally Campbell** of the Topsfield Foundation, were recognized for their support and training of the Study Circles group. The members of the Core Planning Group were recognized and cited for their planning, attendance at meetings and "tremendous number of hours" given to the program. Mr. Bock reviewed the goal of the Study Circles project as well as the objectives. He used Havre de Grace Elementary School as an example of a minority/low socio-economic school which can succeed despite factors which are cited as holding the achievement of students at other similar schools down. Sixty-five community leaders participated in the recruitment meeting with 145 total participants in the process. Performance of African Americans has risen in the last several years, but the gap between Caucasian students and African American students has not closed. A list of recommendations from the Study Circle participants was reviewed. Board Member **Robert S. Magee** thanked the group for its recommendations as did Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler, stating that the committee had done an outstanding job and they should be applauded.

NEW BUSINESS

OPPORTUNITY FOR BOARD MEMBERS TO PRESENT NEW BUSINESS ITEMS

Mr. Magee again recognized Mrs. Sellman on her Hall of Fame award. He reported that the SMILES group from Havre de Grace High School collected canned goods and money for those less fortunate in the community and that many students in the school system were reaching out to communities during the holiday season.

Mr. Purcell reported that on the previous Wednesday, the 2001-02 Student Representative to the Board had been selected. He said that **Sam Fromille**, a junior at Fallston High School, was tabbed by the Representative Assembly of the Harford County Regional Association of Student Councils to be next year's Student Representative. Mr. Purcell asked Mr. Fromille to speak. Mr. Fromille said he is looking forward to working with the Board of Education and that he is interested in the opinions of both the students and the Board. He added that he is looking forward to the challenge next year.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM

Joseph P. Licata, assistant superintendent for operations, provided an informational report to the Board on progress since the 1990s in the area of capital improvements and the future needs which are faced by the school system. He said the county has traditionally provided \$12 million each year for school capital improvements and that the system needs to find a way to stretch those dollars. He said there are concerns in the long term. He reported that the Superintendent recommends that the Board of Education and the Harford County Government reconvene to discuss capital priorities and review funding implications.

ACTION ITEMS

CONSENT AGENDA

The Board approved items on the Consent Agenda with one exception – the elimination of the second sentence under the subtopic of Future Meetings. Mr. Magee made the motion to change and the motion was seconded by Board Member **Karen L. Wolf**. The motion passed unanimously. Mrs. Wolf, seconded by Board Member **Terry R. Troy**, moved that the Consent Agenda be approved. That motion passed unanimously. Included on the Consent Agenda were minutes from the December 4, 2000 Work Session; a Proposed Resolution on Maryland Reading Month – January 2001; Monthly Contract Awards; and Appointment of Members to the Advisory Committee on Special Education. Appointed to the committee were **Robert Lindloff** (reappointment for three years); and **Diane McKelvey, Michael Watkins, O'Melia James, Christine Snyder, Bruce Amrein, Denise Parker** and **Paul Scordato**. All were appointed to three year terms. Appointed as alternates were **Dawn Branch, June Bond, and Robert Molinaro**.

AFFIRMATION OF DECISIONS ON APPEAL CASES

Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler moved and Mrs. Troy seconded that the Board confirm the decision of its committee on a student discipline appeal case.

TECHNOLOGY: STUDENT DATA-BASE CONTRACT APPROVAL

Director of the Office of Information Systems **Andrew Moore** and Supervisor of Purchasing **John Miller** reported to the Board on situations surrounding technology as it applies to a student data-base. They said, the management of student information in the Harford County Public Schools has been through the TESS/TSS system, which has been used since the mid 1990s. A central repository also existed on a non-Y2K-compliant mainframe computing platform.

The school officials reported that antiquated hardware and software technologies has necessitated the research for a new student information system. The lack of a comprehensive Student Information System has caused delays in meeting the Maryland State Department of Education's reporting milestones, state reporting requirements go unmet, continuous incidents of data loss, and the inability to provide a high integrity to the data, Mr. Moore said. He added that the existing architecture (hardware/software) creates an environment in which each school operates as an "island" of information. This configuration makes real-time reporting of district-wide information impossible, he said. Mr. Moore added that the current system is DOS-based, and incompatible with the current computing platform used by the school system. He enumerated a number of other limitations with the current system, adding that, with the removal of HCPS' mainframe, numerous reporting programs were lost as well as a database for warehousing the data. Mr. Moore said an interim solution was obtained with a temporary data-base created with minimal functionality by a consultant firm. He added that, in the spring of 2000, a committee was formed to begin researching viable commercial off-the-shelf alternatives that would meet the needs of the system's student data management. The Pentamation product was determined by the committee to be the best product to fit current HCPS needs and has the flexibility through emerging technologies to meet future requirements, Mr. Moore said. Mr. Miller determined that HCPS could "piggyback" on Frederick County's bid with SunGard Pentamation

extending the same pricing. The Superintendent recommended that the Board approve the local school system's joining with Frederick County in purchasing the SunGard Pentamation Student Information System.

Mr. Galbreath asked if the Board would need to take action at the current meeting. Dr. Barnes reminded the Board of the antiquated system presently in place and said the school system needs to move forward with a new student information system. He said that the item is of the utmost importance to the school system. Mrs. Wolf asked if the new system is presently in operation in any other school system in the nation. A representative of the Pentamation firm confirmed that it is used in several school systems in numerous states in the country. Mr. Moore reminded the Board that there are a number of issues driving the project including time frames, training, and escalating costs. Mr. Galbreath said he was not comfortable with taking action on the item, citing that there was not enough time to comprehend the spending of almost \$1 million for the project. Mr. Moore said the vendor needs, at the very minimum, a letter of intent by the end of the calendar year. The Board made no decision regarding the contract or the letter of intent.

REQUEST TO NAME ABERDEEN HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL STADIUM

Mr. Ekey, along with Aberdeen High School Principal **David Volrath** and

Aberdeen High School baseball coach **Charles "Rigor" Mortus**, presented the Superintendent's recommendation that the baseball field being constructed on the Aberdeen High School complex be named "Cal Ripken Sr. Field," in recognition of the late former Baltimore Oriole Manager and Coach who is a native of the area. Prior to 1998, the Aberdeeen community, in a joint effort, mobilized its combined resources to construct a new athletic stadium. Plans were also being developed to create a complementary baseball facility. In 1998, a combined group of citizens approached the Board of Education with a request to name the emerging complex "Aberdeen Eagle Memorial Complex." The Board approved the request. Mr. Ekey told the Board that, two years before that initiative, **Cal Ripken, Jr.** broke the Major League Baseball record for consecutive games played. In recognition of the accomplishment, Major League Baseball presented him with a \$75,000 check for the creation of a youth baseball complex. The high school was seen as an appropriate location for such a facility and plans were begun for a lighted baseball field at the Paradise Road site, Mr. Ekey said. After considering the close personal connections of the Ripken family to Aberdeen High School, Cal, Jr. chose to personally support the project directly with funds from the "Kelly and Cal Foundation." The plan was to name the facility "Ripken Field." During the next two years, Cal, Sr., long an advocate of positive programs for youth in the Aberdeen area, took a personal interest in locating, planning, and constructing the field. Unfortunately, Mr. Ripken passed away before the completion of the project. Mr. Ekey said, that with respect to the Ripken family's financial generosity and sincere contributions to the children of the Aberdeen community, Cal, Jr. and the Ripken family have asked that the field be named "Cal Ripken, Sr. Field" to honor their late father/husband/uncle. Mr. Ekey and Mr. Volrath said they felt such a move would be a fitting tribute to a remarkable family which has significantly impacted so many elements of life in the city of Aberdeen. Mr. Magee moved and Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler seconded the motion that the field be named Cal Ripken, Sr. Field. In accordance with Board policy, Mrs. Wolf moved and Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler seconded that the motion be tabled for 60 days to provide for public comment. That motion passed unanimously. Mr. Magee suggested that the Ripken family be invited to the meeting when the Board votes to name the field.

PRESENTATIONS

OFFICIAL PRESENTATION OF SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDED OPERATING BUDGET

John Markowski, assistant superintendent for business services, reviewed the refinement of the school system's 2001-02 operating budget. He said that Superintendent Haas will speak on the budget on January 3, 2001 during a work session at Bel Air Middle School, during which public comment will also be received on the proposal. No action or discussion would be required at the time of his presentation during the current Board meeting, Mr. Markowski said. The

budget request is for \$9.946 million more than the current year's operating figure, he said.

TIMELINE AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WORK WITH REDISTRICTING CONSULTANT

Mr. Licata reported to the Board that the system has been investigating possible solutions to the overcrowded conditions that exist in some of the local schools for more than a year. The Board had declined to act on "band-aid" fixes to the problem, instead seeking a redistricting plan that would include comparisons of enrollments and school boundaries for the entire county. Mr. Licata reviewed that, on December 4, the Board had heard a presentation/discussion led by **Maurice Kalin** of Howard County Public Schools, who has provided leadership for that county's redistricting efforts for the past 28 years. Following the work session, the Superintendent had expressed her desire to work with Dr. Kalin in the continuing policy and procedural development process for redistricting in Harford County. Mr. Licata presented the Board with the Superintendent's recommendation for a timeline that would see the system begin to develop a policy for redistricting in January 2001, followed by a first reading of the proposed policy on February 26, 2001 and the Board's approval of the policy on March 26, 2001. The process would then have the staff and consultant work on a redistricting plan from April 2001 through January 2002. A Board hearing would be held in February 2002, with a decision by the Board in March 2002 providing a holdover of 30 days for final action in April 2002. The system would begin transition in April 2002 with implementation in the fall of 2002. Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler moved that the suggested timeline be approved and Mrs. Troy seconded the motion. The motion passed with Mr. Galbreath's comment that he did not feel a timeline motion was necessary.

BOARD COMMENTS

Mr. Magee wished everyone a safe and happy holiday. Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler thanked Mr. Fromille for his comments. Mr. Galbreath thanked Edgewood High School and its staff for the hospitality extended to the Board during the three months the Board had been meeting at the school.

ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Troy moved and Mrs. Wolf seconded that the meeting be adjourned. The Board voted unanimously to adjourn and the meeting ended at 9:15 p.m.

FUTURE MEETINGS

The Board of Education will shift its meeting site to Bel Air Middle School for regular business meetings during the January, February, and March 2001 period. The next meeting of the Board was scheduled to have taken place on January 3,

2001 in the Bel Air Middle School gymnasium for the purpose of receiving public comment on the budget and for a budget work session. Other budget work sessions are scheduled for January 9 (HEAT Center, Room 130), at 7:00 p.m.; January 11 (HEAT Center, Room 130), 7:00 p.m.; January 13, Norrisville Elementary School (media center), 9:00 a.m. until noon; and (if needed), January 16, Forest Hill Elementary School (media center), 7:00 p.m. In addition, the next regular meeting of the Board of Education will be held January 8, at Bel Air Middle School, 7:00 p.m.; and on January 22, at Bel Air Middle School, 7:00 p.m. Both meetings will be held in the school gymnasium. A Board work session is scheduled for January 29, 7:00 p.m., at Bel Air Middle School in the media center during which time a discussion on school safety & security/metal detectors will take place. A schedule of all Board meetings, including work sessions, is available on the HCPS web site – www.co.ha.md.us/harford_schools.

MORE INFORMATION

The school system is attempting to prevent duplications and reduce production/mailling 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.

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-hous-a-day) at 410-638-0022.

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