



Board Meeting

October 22, 2001

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

OPEN SESSION

CALL TO ORDER

Board President **Eugene C. Chandler** called the regular business meeting of the Board of Education of Harford County to order on Monday, October 22, 2001, at 6:40 p.m. in the gymnasium of Fallston Middle School. Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler noted the performance of the North Harford High School Madrigals under the student direction of **Amanda Blewitt**. The group had performed several selections for those who had arrived early for the meeting. Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler then requested a quorum call of Board Members with all reporting present except **David H. Galbreath**, who was excused because of another responsibility. Board Member **Karen L. Wolf** moved that the agenda be amended with Items "H," "I," "J," and "K" being eliminated; item "B" be moved from the Consent Agenda to the Action agenda; and item "E" being moved from the Action Items to the Consent Agenda portion of the agenda. Board Member **Robert B. Thomas, Jr.** seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Mrs. Wolf then moved and Board Vice President **Terry R. Troy** seconded that the amended agenda be adopted. The Board voted unanimously to support the motion. Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler asked Student Representative to the Board **Samuel S. Fromille, IV** to lead those present in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler then asked the North Harford Madrigals to sing "God Bless America." Several members of the Madrigals had been among the 41 North Harford High School Touring Choir members who had taken part in a triumphant 14-city, 15-concert performance in Italy and Austria

during the previous summer.

RECOGNITION

North Harford High School Vocal Music Teacher **Martha “Marty” Banghart** accepted a plaque from Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler and Superintendent **Jacqueline C. Haas** in recognition of the NHHS Touring Choir’s performance in Italy and Innsbruck, Austria from June 21 through July 3, 2001. The choir delivered a variety of music from sacred to folk at churches and other locations in Rome, Venice, Milan, and many other Italian cities. The young people represented themselves, their school, their community, the school system, and the county, state and nation in an exemplary manner. The student Madrigals also received certificates from the Superintendent.

Janie A. Robinson and **Thomas R. Baine**, both retired teachers from Aberdeen High School, were officially inducted into the Harford County Public School Educator Hall of Fame. The Board has been inducting two former HCPS educators into the Hall of Fame during each month of the school year since October 2000. The inductees are nominated by the Harford County Retired School Personnel Association (HCRSPA) and are featured in articles published in the *Harford Schools* newspaper. The honorees are chosen based on at least 20 years of outstanding service to students and the school system. Their framed pictures are hung on a wall in the Board Room of the school system’s central office in Bel Air.

Mrs. Robinson, who taught physical education/health at Aberdeen High for 31 years, was also an outstanding coach, her teams having won 300 softball games during her 25 years as head coach, including two state championships. Mrs. Robinson was known as a compassionate friend of students as well as being an outstanding teacher. She also sponsored the Varsity Club and was the school’s Athletic Director. Mrs. Robinson retired in 1999, but has returned to teach physical education in the school system’s alternative education program.

Mr. Baine, who taught 26 years in the system – like Mrs. Robinson all at Aberdeen High School – was a social studies teacher, wrestling coach, Varsity Club sponsor, and founder/leader of the Leo Service Club at Aberdeen High. He was known as an innovative and motivating teacher who used a vast array of personal artifacts, games, and unconventional techniques in gaining and maintaining his students’ interest in his classes. Mr. Baine continues as an active member of the Aberdeen Lions Club. He is director of the Northeast Maryland Technology Council.

Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler and Mrs. Haas presented plaques, certificates, and laminated copies of their *Harford Schools* articles to the Hall of Fame inductees.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Cindy Mumby of Rolling Knoll Drive in Bel Air spoke to the Board about safety at schools. She said the priorities of the Board and the school system must shift to provide

more funds for safety. She said the Board should follow the advice of its consultant a year ago in requiring that all students have their shirts tucked in to avoid the possibility of weapons being concealed in baggy clothing. Mrs. Mumby said requiring photo ID's from visitors is a necessity and added that two-way communications from classrooms to the office must be implemented well ahead of the scheduled 2006 implementation countywide.

Ellen Tracy of Hyden Court in Fallston, principal of Havre de Grace Elementary School, said she was representing the elementary school leadership in proposing a calendar format for the 2002-03 school year. She said the elementary group would like to see staff development days clustered either during November 25 through 27 prior to the Thanksgiving break or February 12 through 14th around President's Day, rather than the April 14 to 16, prior to the spring break, as suggested by the Citizen Advisory Calendar Committee. Mrs. Tracy said the elementary principals support starting the school year prior to Labor Day while providing excused absences for those students who are involved in the annual State Fair the week before Labor Day. She said those students who miss school while showing at the Fair could receive perfect attendance awards if they missed no more days during the year. Mrs. Tracy said the elementary principals would like to see the school year end as early in June as possible since student enthusiasm wanes after Memorial Day and teachers begin summer graduate courses in mid-June.

OLD BUSINESS

ACTION ITEMS

CONSENT AGENDA

Acting on the motion of Mr. Thomas and the second of **Thomas D. Hess** the Board voted unanimously to endorse items on the Consent Agenda including Minutes of the September 19 work session; and the September 24 and October 8 business meetings; the Monthly Report on Personnel; as well as the transfer of five school bus contracts from Level Garage, Inc. to Bel Air Motor Coach.

BID AWARD – CONTRACT FOR BEL AIR HIGH SCHOOL AND HAVRE DE GRACE HIGH SCHOOL TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION LAB RENOVATIONS

Acting on the motion of Mrs. Troy and the second of Mr. Thomas, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Award of Contract for the base bid proposal for Technology Lab Renovations at Bel Air High School and Havre de Grace High School to Power Distribution, Inc. in the amount of \$141,400. Bid documents for the Bel Air and Havre de Grace High Technology Lab Renovations were issued and advertised during the month of September. Construction funding in the amount of \$225,000 has been provided by the County for the project. After construction is complete, the remainder of funds will be used for the Technology Education Program at North Harford, Bel Air and Havre de Grace high schools.

BALANCING ENROLLMENT AND CAPACITIES POLICY PUBLIC COMMENT

Deb Merlock of Hebron Terrace in Abingdon, who has children at Edgewood Middle School, Abingdon Elementary, and a pre-schooler taking part in that program at Bel Air High School, said that school performance is a difficult subject to measure. She said that the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program (MSPAP), being suggested by some as a way to determine whether a receiving school was performing at a high enough level for students to be transferred there, was never intended to be used to compare schools.

Debbie Reisinger of 502 Spring Guide Court near Bel Air, urged the Board to consider using MSPAP as a measurement in redistricting students. She said she hoped the Board would use MSPAP as a way of making sure a sending and receiving school would be as comparable as possible.

PRESENTATION AND VOTE

Joseph P. Licata, the school system's Assistant Superintendent for Operations and coordinator of its in-house Balancing Enrollment committee, presented the Board with the proposed policy on Balancing Enrollment With Capacity, an item which had been before the Board four previous occasions beginning May 7, 2001. The Board had been receiving input from the public and making suggestions to adjust the policy during the six-month period. After a period of discussion on the issue, Mr. Thomas moved that, under school performance, the policy should include a statement that the school system would take into consideration "any and all available county, state, or national test data as part of the process involving any balancing enrollment (redistricting). Mr. Hess seconded the motion. The Board voted 4 to 2 in favor of the motion (Lt. Col. Ret. Chandler and Board Member **Robert S. Magee** dissenting). Mr. Fromille said that test data should not be the final determinant in the decision to move or not move students. Following the adjustment to the proposed policy, Mr. Thomas moved and Mrs. Wolf and Mr. Hess seconded that the amended policy be approved. The Board voted unanimously to approve the policy. (See the Harford County Public School web site at www.co.ha.md.us/harford_schools for a complete copy of the policy). Mr. Thomas said the Board owes a "debt of gratitude" to Mr. Licata for heading up the committee which put the proposed policy together, and to the consultant, **Maurice Kalin**, who provided them with information last fall on the process, as well as to the public which has provided input. He said it is the "first time in the history of the county" that there has been a defined policy for balancing enrollment. He added it would be an "important tool" for the school system and Board to use in solving its problem of over-enrollment at certain schools.

UPDATED PROPOSAL FOR THE USE OF COMPUTER COURSES IN THE ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR 2001-02

William Ekey, Director of Secondary Education, presented the Board with an updated proposal for the use of computer courses in the night Alternative Education Program this school year. Mr. Ekey was joined by **Robert Steinen**, an official with the Plato Learning Incorporated company. Mr. Ekey presented a proposal for the realignment of the \$406,813

set aside for use in the night Alternative Education Program this school year, in which a portion of the funds -- \$94,920 -- would be used to purchase 50 licenses from Plato to be used in providing Internet courses at four different locations in the night Alternative Education Program. Mr. Ekey said the company offers a range of courses in English, Math, Science, U.S. and World History, and Government; in addition to providing course work in Life Skills. He said the program incorporates reading and writing to a high degree, a provision which will be useful to many of the students enrolled in alternative education. Mr. Ekey said the program is offered in "small, measurable chunks." He called the Plato system an "early but important step" toward being able to provide a wide range of viable courses to students in alternative education. He added that the courses, if they prove successful, could be used for day students, a move which would require the purchase of additional licenses. Mr. Ekey explained that the purchase of the 50 licenses as well as the hiring of a secretary, program coordinators and lab coordinators for the Plato program; as well as the continuation of the face-to-face alternative education program for special educators and special subject area teachers (and the purchase of an additional 50 Plato licenses) would cost \$354,510. Mr. Steinen said the ongoing costs for technical support and product upgrade would cost about \$5,000 per year. Mr. Ekey said there are currently about 42 students involved in the night Alternative Education Program, compared to 82 this time last year. He said the system has intentionally restricted the number of voluntary placements and that most of the students involved are there due to long term suspensions or expulsions. Mr. Magee, former principal at Aberdeen High School, had been involved before he was a member on the Board in proposing a wide ranging alternative education program, including a day component, which would provide for those students who "don't fit in the regular school program." Mr. Magee asked why the Plato system better meets the needs of the alternative program than the previous systems Mr. Ekey had recommended. Mr. Ekey said that, while the systems originally recommended have merit, Plato better aligns with the needs of the alternative education student in providing subject material in a way it can be most useful. Acting on the motion of Mr. Hess and the second of Mrs. Troy, the Board voted unanimously to approve the proposed use of funding for the night Alternative Education Program as suggested by the superintendent, including the awarding of the \$94,920 contract to Plato for the 50 licenses, training and equipment. The realignment of the funds must now go to the County Executive and County Council for approval since it involves the reallocation of funds from instructional salaries to contracted services.

PROMOTION

Acting on the motion of Mrs. Troy and the second of Mrs. Wolf, the Board voted unanimously to approve the promotion of **Sharon A. Grose** to be Coordinator of At-Risk Programs, including oversight of the Maryland's Tomorrow anti-dropout program. Mrs. Grose, who had been a counselor at Fallston Middle School since 1995, after having begun her career as an educator in the Harford County Public School System in 1976, will also be one of the superintendent's designees in hearing disciplinary referrals.

PRESENTATIONS AUDIT REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2001

Assistant Superintendent for Business Services **John Markowski** introduced **Malcolm Taylor** and **Mark Gillett**, from the Wooden and Benson firm, which had performed an audit on the school system's 2000-01 receipts and expenditures as required by law. Mr. Taylor said the results of the audit were "terrific" and his firm had issued a "clean opinion" reflecting no non-compliance, nor material weaknesses in the system's financial reporting. He said one reportable area involving the new governmental accounting standards in the depreciation of capital assets portion of the fixed asset management system did exist. However, he certified that the school system's Finance Office concurs with the findings and is in the process of implementing such a system. Mr. xxxx then presented a series of slides, outlining the various funds audited by Wooden and Benson, including General Fund revenues and expenditures (Restricted and Unrestricted) , Food Service revenues and expenditures, and School Construction Fund expenditures. Acting on the motion of Mr. Thomas and the seconds of Mrs. Troy and Mrs. Wolf, the Board voted unanimously to accept the audit results.

ADJOURNMENT

Acting on the motion of Mrs. Wolf and the second of Mrs. Troy, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting which concluded at 8:35 p.m.

FUTURE MEETINGS

In addition to its next regular business meeting (Fallston Middle School gymnasium, Monday, November 12, 2001, 7:00 p.m.), Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler said the Board would hold work sessions at the HEAT Center in Aberdeen on Mondays, October 29, and November 19, 2001 – both beginning at 6:30 p.m. (the November 19th time represents a change from the originally listed 7:00 p.m.). The second regular business meeting of the Board in November will occur on November 26, beginning at 6:30 p.m., at Fallston Middle School.

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.

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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