



Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Barbara P. Canavan Named Superintendent of Harford County Public Schools

The Board of Education of Harford County (Board) appointed Barbara P. Canavan to a four-year term as Superintendent of Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) today, February 24, 2014, during its regularly scheduled business meeting. Mrs. Canavan has been serving as Interim Superintendent of Schools since July 1, 2013, when former Superintendent Robert Tomback's contract expired. She will remain in this capacity until the start of her new term on July 1, 2014.

In November of 2013, the Board contracted with Ray and Associates, a firm that has been conducting executive education searches since 1975, to help facilitate the first phase of a Superintendent Search process. Phase one encompassed the development of ideal criteria for the next superintendent of schools and 10 focus group sessions with key stakeholder groups, including elected/government officials, business/community leaders, HCPS leadership team members, support staff, central office staff, principals, teachers, parents, students and employee association leadership.

Feedback gathered from the focus groups, as well as an online public survey, indicated resounding support for Mrs. Canavan, and the Board agreed there was no need to continue an expensive and time consuming search for outside candidates.

"Mrs. Canavan has proven her commitment to the students, staff and community of Harford County Public Schools," said Board of Education President Nancy Reynolds. "She has dedicated more than 40 years of exemplary service to our school system and the Board and I are completely confident in her ability to move our school system forward. We look forward to continuing to work with her as our Superintendent of Schools."

The Board and Mrs. Canavan will hold a press conference tomorrow, Tuesday, February 25, at 9:00 a.m. at the A. A. Roberty Building in Bel Air. All are invited to attend.

"I am deeply honored to be presented with the privilege of serving the students and the Harford County Public School community," said Mrs. Canavan. "I will work diligently to foster a culture of mutual trust and respect among all constituents and community leaders. I vow never to lose sight of the fact that each and every decision, no matter how small, is integral to creating a legacy of opportunity for our children."

Mrs. Canavan's career in the field of education began in 1970 as an elementary school teacher at the Sacred Heart School in Brooklyn, New York. In 1973, she made the move to the Harford County Public School System, serving as a teacher at Aberdeen Middle School before accepting a position as assistant principal at Edgewood Middle School in

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1978. She was promoted to assistant principal at Magnolia Middle School in 1983. After serving six years at Magnolia Middle, in 1989, Mrs. Canavan accepted an assistant principal position at Southampton Middle School where she became principal in 1991 and remained there for the next 19 years. As the principal of Southampton Middle School, Mrs. Canavan encouraged open-ended dialogue in order to assess the needs of the students, the staff and the community.

Her active leadership and good judgment in working with all stakeholders allowed her to develop positive relationships and conduct ongoing programs to support student achievement. Upon being named the executive director of middle school performance in 2010, Mrs. Canavan assumed the responsibility of the direction of curriculum development and instructional programming. While serving in this role, she gained a global perspective of school system management, which served the needs of students and staff throughout the county. She was named Interim Superintendent of Schools in May 2013.

Mrs. Canavan has served on and chaired many committees and task forces in Harford County that have been instrumental in determining policy and procedure as well as the vision and mission of HCPS. She has presented key education topics at the local, state and national levels.

Mrs. Canavan is a graduate of Mount Saint Mary's College with a Bachelor of Arts in English Literature and a minor in secondary education and French. She received her Master of Arts in Middle School Education from Columbia University Teachers College and a Master of Arts Equivalency in Administration and Supervision from Loyola College in Baltimore, Maryland.

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