

PUBLIC
BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HARFORD COUNTY
MINUTES OF MONDAY, JANUARY 22, 2024

The information included here provides a summary of the agenda items presented and actions taken during the above meeting of the Board of Education of Harford County. The video recordings of the Board meetings are the official record of the meetings and can be viewed at: <http://www.hcps.org/boe/livestream/>. Informational reports are located at: <https://www.hcps.org/boe/boardmeetingschedules.aspx>

Business Meeting

Call to Order / Roll Call

President Aaron Poynton called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Roll call was taken. All Board members were present.

In-person attendance: Mrs. Diane Alvarez, Mrs. Terri Kocher, Dr. Carol Mueller, Mrs. Denise Perry, Miss Madina Sabirova, Mr. Wade Sewell, Mrs. Melissa Hahn, and Dr. Aaron Poynton

Virtual attendance: Mrs. Carol Bruce and Ms. Lauren Strauss

Adoption of Agenda

President Poynton called for a motion to adopt the agenda.

Motion, Second and Vote – Mrs. Hahn made a motion to adopt the agenda. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Kocher and adopted in a voice vote of 10-0. (Includes 1 preferential affirmative student member vote).

Pledge of Allegiance

Vice-President Hahn led the Pledge of Allegiance

Board Member Comments

Board member comments were provided.

Public Comments

Speakers were invited to the meeting to provide their comments for the record either in-person or virtually. President Poynton read a statement regarding protocol for public comments which included a provision that each speaker would have three (3) minutes to speak and speakers representing a group would have five (5) minutes to speak. Mrs. Yvonne Rallo, Board of Education Administrative Support Coordinator, called on individual speakers who were in person at the meeting and had registered to speak at the Board meeting. The following seven (7) people registered and provided in-person public comment: David Bauer, Cristina Lanocha, Jacob Bennett, Cindy Poper, Jeannine Cannito, Del Sellers, representing the group, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, Local 2471 (AFSCME), and William Martino. No virtual speakers registered to provide public comment.

Old Business

President Poynton announced no "Old Business" was scheduled for discussion.

Item A. Consent Agenda

President Poynton called for a motion to approve the consent agenda as follows:

1. Minutes of Previous Board Meetings: November 20, 2023, December 4, 2023, and December 18, 2023

Motion, Second and Vote – Mrs. Kocher made a motion to table consent agenda item number one (1). "1. Minutes of Previous Board Meetings: November 20, 2023, December 4, 2023, and December 18, 2023", until the next Board meeting. The motion was seconded by Miss Sabirova. The motion was approved in a voice vote of 10-0. (Includes 1 preferential affirmative student member vote).

Meeting Break

The Board recessed until they were called back to order by President Poynton.

New Business

Item B. Decision to Amend the Charter for the Policy Review Committee Membership Representation

Dr. Poynton introduced the topic of amending the “Charter for the Policy Review Committee” membership for Board discussion and sought Board approval to include the addition of a Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) student representative and school-based educator representative to the charter membership.

Motion, Second and Vote – Dr. Mueller made a motion to approve the change in membership representation to the “Policy Review Committee Charter,” as presented. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Perry and approved in a voice vote of 10-0. (Includes 1 preferential affirmative student member vote).

Item C. Presentation on Proposed Revisions to Board Policy Portable Communication Devices

The Board received a presentation on the proposed revisions to Board policy titled “Portable Communication Devices,” from Mr. Mike O'Brien, Executive Director of Middle & High School Performance, Ms. Katie Ridgway, Director of Strategic Initiatives, and Ms. Erica Harris, Principal of C. Milton Wright High School. This policy was most recently amended in July of 2013. In June of 2023, the office of Strategic Initiatives conducted focus groups regarding student cell phone use in schools with teachers, parents, students and school and community leaders. A writing team of school-based administrators was created to analyze stakeholder feedback, review policies from school districts around the country, and analyze exemplars from our own district. The writing team helped to develop a draft policy and received feedback from all secondary schools, members of Senior Staff, and members of the Instructional Leadership Team. The proposed revised policy will be posted to the HCPS website for thirty (30) days to allow for public comment. Following the 30 days, Board approval of the recommended proposed revised Board policy “06-0005-000 Portable Communication Devices”, will be sought at a subsequent Board Meeting.

No formal action was taken by the Board.

Item D. Presentation on Budget and Blueprint Considerations

The Board received a presentation on the “Budget and Blueprint Consideration,” from Dr. Sean Bulson, Superintendent of Schools, and Ms. Katie Ridgway, Director of Strategic Initiatives. There are two major decision-making drivers facing Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) which include the budget and the 'Blueprint for Maryland's Future Act' (Blueprint). Although both the budget and the Blueprint have details and conceptual factors separate and distinct from each other, both have systemic level considerations for the Board of Education, HCPS administration, and the Harford County community. The presentation addressed the local budget pressures and cost drivers.

No formal action was taken by the Board.

Item E. Superintendent’s Report

Superintendent Bulson’s comments were provided.

Adjournment

With no further business and with Board consensus the meeting adjourned at 9:14 PM.

Sean W. Bulson, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools and Secretary-Treasurer

Aaron S. Poynton, D.P.A.
President, Board of Education of Harford County



BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HARFORD COUNTY
NOTICE OF PUBLIC COMMENT PARTICIPATION
MONDAY, JANUARY 22, 2024

OPEN SESSION: 4:30 PM – 4:35 PM

~~This meeting will be conducted virtually with no public attendance due to the brief nature of this meeting and the logistical issues regarding allowing public attendance in advance of the 6:00 PM meeting.~~

~~*The only item the Board will consider during this open meeting is consideration of meeting in a closed session.~~

CLOSED SESSION: 4:35 PM – 5:45 PM

BUSINESS MEETING: 6:00 PM – ADJOURNMENT

This meeting will be conducted in a hybrid fashion and public attendance will be permitted as explained below:

DOORS WILL OPEN AT 5:50 PM AND THE MEETING WILL BEGIN AT 6:00 PM

The Board of Education of Harford County will hold a hybrid Business Meeting on Monday, January 22, 2024, at 6:00 PM in the Board Room of the A.A. Roberty Building with Board Members, staff, and presenters in attendance both virtually and in-person. Seats will be available on a first come-first served basis. The meeting will be streamed live and archived for later viewing on the HCPS [Website](#).

Public Comment Participation Call-In and In-Person Process

Individuals or groups recognized by Harford County Public Schools (i.e. – PTAs, unions, and other school system stakeholders) wishing to speak on an agenda item or to comment on an education-related matter not on the agenda may request to do so by sending an email to publiccomment@hcps.org or calling 410-588-5347.

Call-In Registrations must be received by 12:00 PM on Monday, January 22, 2024. All fields on the registration form must be completed.

1. First and Last name / if speaker is a Group Representative, then please state the name of the Group
2. Local Address
3. Email Address
4. Phone Number
5. Agenda item or subject your Public Comment pertains to
6. Will you provide in-person **or** virtual Public Comment
7. Registration forms are limited to one (1) per person

****Failure to provide complete information as required above will void the request to provide Public Comment.***

- Registered virtual speakers will receive an email from HCPS with a Call-in Phone # and a Conference ID #.
- Registered speakers are required to call-in and enter the conference ID# at 6:00 PM on Monday, January 22, 2024.
- **Important:** If you are unable to take your phone off mute, you may need to dial *6.
- If you are admitted from the virtual lobby to the meeting, you will be greeted by an HCPS staff member when it is time to begin your public comment. Expected hold time in the virtual lobby may vary based on number of registered speakers. The maximum wait time in the lobby is 30 minutes; should you be disconnected please call back.
- "Request to Appear Before the Board" cards will be available for in-person attendees prior to the Board Meeting for sign-up and must be submitted prior to the opening of the meeting.

The Board has authorized public comment in accord with its policy [Public Participation at Board Open Meetings or Public Hearings](#) and as summarized below:

- Each speaker shall be limited to no more than three (3) minutes and five (5) minutes for individuals representing groups. Speakers must state his or her name, and, if representing a group, must identify the group he or she represents. If a speaker identifies themselves as a representative of a group, then only one (1) representative from the group may provide comment for the identified group.
- The Board presiding officer may reduce the amount of time allocated to each speaker if allocating 3 minutes to each speaker will impede the Board's ability to complete scheduled business.
- The Board will receive in-person public comment first and virtual public comment second. The Board expects that all comments will be submitted with the decorum and respect appropriate to the conduct of public business.
- Topics such as personnel matters, pending appeals, specific student disciplinary matters or which constitute commercial solicitations are not permitted.
- Disparaging comments, personal attacks, and inflammatory remarks about specific schools, personnel, any person, or group are not permitted. Speakers who engage in these comments will be reminded of the rules and the Board reserves the right to remove the speaker. In addition, public comment is an opportunity for members of the community to address the Board of Education. Please direct your comments to the Board and not to other members of the public in the audience.
- All public comments submitted will be part of the records maintained by the Board office.

Speakers are reminded that public comments are considered public information and, as such, are subject to the Maryland Public Information Act.