

PUBLIC  
BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HARFORD COUNTY  
MINUTES OF MONDAY, JUNE 10, 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>*

Open Session

The Board of Education of Harford County met in open session in hybrid format in person and via video teleconference on Monday, June 10, 2024. President Aaron Poynton called the meeting to order at 4:34 PM

Board Members Present

All Board members were present with the exception of Miss Madina Sabirova and Mr. Wade Sewell, who were absent.

In-person attendance: Mrs. Terri Kocher, Dr. Carol Mueller, Mrs. Denise Perry, Ms. Lauren Strauss, Mrs. Melissa Hahn, and Dr. Aaron Poynton

Virtual attendance: Mrs. Diane Alvarez and Ms. Carol Bruce

Motion, Second and Vote

Mrs. Hahn made a motion to waive public comment in its entirety in light of the limited nature of the open session. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Kocher and approved in a voice vote of 8-0. Mr. Sewell and Miss Sabirova were absent.

Pursuant to Section 3-305(b)(1)(7) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, and upon a motion by Mrs. Hahn, seconded by Mrs. Kocher and approved in a voice vote 8-0, the Board of Education of Harford County met in closed session in a hybrid fashion. Mr. Sewell and Miss Sabirova were absent.

Closed Session

Board Members Present

All Board members were present with the exception of Miss Sabirova, who was absent.

In-person attendance: Mrs. Terri Kocher, Dr. Carol Mueller, Mrs. Denise Perry, Mr. Wade Sewell, Ms. Lauren Strauss, Mrs. Melissa Hahn, and Dr. Aaron Poynton

Virtual attendance: Mrs. Diane Alvarez and Ms. Carol Bruce

Staff Present:

Kimberly H. Neal, General Counsel

Yvonne Rallo, Administrative Assistant and Recording Secretary

In-person attendance: Kimberly Neal, Esq., and Mrs. Yvonne Rallo

The Board of Education met in closed session for the purposes of discussing:

Topic: Board discussion to request MABE file an Amicus brief.

Reason for Closed Session: To consult with counsel to obtain legal advice

Kimberly Neal, General Counsel, presented the Board information regarding a proposed request for an amicus brief to be filed by the Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) and affiliated Legal Services Association (LSA) for a pending matter for consideration by the Maryland Supreme Court.

Motion, Second and Vote – Dr. Mueller made a motion to request MABE file an amicus brief on behalf of the Board of Education of Harford County. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Perry and adopted in a voice vote of 9-0. Miss Sabirova was absent.

Note: Kimberly Neal, Esq., General Counsel and Mrs. Yvonne Rallo, Administrative Assistant and Recording Secretary, were excused from the following discussion

Topic: Discuss Superintendent's annual performance assessment

Reason for Closed Session: To preserve the privacy and confidentiality of information regarding the Superintendent's performance.

President Poynton introduced the annual performance assessment to the Board and sought their input for discussion

#### Adjournment

With no further business and with Board consensus, President Aaron Poynton adjourned the meeting at 5:30 PM.

#### Business Meeting

##### Call to Order / Roll Call

President Aaron Poynton called the meeting to order at 6:02 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, Mr. Wade Sewell, Ms. Lauren Strauss, Miss Madina Sabirova, Mrs. Melissa Hahn, and Dr. Aaron Poynton

Virtual attendance: Ms. Carol Bruce

\*Note: Ms. Bruce joined the meeting virtually after roll-call was taken.

##### Adoption of Agenda

President Poynton called for a motion to adopt the agenda.

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

##### Pledge of Allegiance

Miss Madina Sabirova, Student Member of the Board, led the Pledge of Allegiance

##### Special Recognition of Student Member of the Board

President Poynton joined by the Board members, recognized the 2023-24 Student Member to the Board of Education of Harford County, Madina A, Sabirova, with a resolution for her contributions as the student representative to the Board of Education. Miss Sabirova is a graduate of Harford Technical High School.

##### Item A. Presentation on the 2024 Harford County Public Schools Survey on Racism, Implicit Bias, and Other Forms of Discrimination

Mr. Yakoubou Ousmanou, Manager of Research and Program Evaluation, Dr. Paula Stanton, Supervisor of Equity and Cultural Proficiency, and Miss Madina Sabirova, Student Board Member, presented the Board the final research report of the 2024 survey on racism, implicit bias, and other forms of discrimination. Background of the survey was provided, and the presentation outlined the results, key findings, and recommendations of the 2024 Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) "Survey on Racism, Implicit Bias and Other Forms of Discrimination". The presentation included testimonies from current HCPS students, sharing their voices and experiences about the impact of language, racism, implicit bias, discrimination, sexism, and the importance of celebrating multiple perspectives, identities, and cultures.

No formal action was taken by the Board.

##### 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 thirteen (13) people registered and provided in-person public comment: David Bauer, James McVicker representing the group “Harford County Regional Association of Student Councils (HCRASC)”, Lauren Miranda, Viraj Singh, Solika Phan, Gary Johnson, William Martino, Thomas Piddington representing the group “Black Robe Regiment”, Suzie Scott representing the group “Moms for Liberty Harford County”, Christine Bowers, Kareem Wallace, Bonny Knudsen representing the group “NAACP”, and Shreeya Shah. No virtual speakers registered to provide public comment.

#### Board Member Comments

Board member comments were provided.

#### Old Business

President Poynton announced no “Old Business” was scheduled for discussion.

#### Item B. Consent Agenda

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

1. Resolution on Miss Madina A. Sabirova, Harford Technical High School, 2023-2024 Student Member to the Board of Education of Harford County
2. Contract Award: Hershey Creamery Company
3. Contract Award: Discovery Education Experience District License Renewal
4. Contract Award: Annual Network Switch Maintenance Support
5. Contract Award: Bel Air High School Classroom Support Program and Southampton Middle School STRIVE project

Motion, Second and Vote – Mrs. Kocher made a motion to approve the consent agenda items with the exception of item number three (3), which was removed for discussion. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Hahn. The consent agenda was approved with all items, except item: “3. Contract Award: Discovery Education Experience District License Renewal” in a voice vote of 10-0. (Includes 1 preferential affirmative student member vote).

#### Consent Item #3 Contract Award: Discovery Education Experience District License Renewal

Motion, Second and Vote – Mrs. Kocher made a motion to table consent agenda item #3 Contract Award: Discovery Education Experience District License Renewal, until the next scheduled Board meeting on June 24, 2024. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Alvarez. The motion was approved in a roll call vote of 6-2. Casting the negative votes: Dr. Mueller and Mr. Sewell (Includes 1 preferential affirmative student member vote). Mrs. Perry and Ms. Bruce abstained from providing a vote.

#### New Business

#### Item C. Presentation on Susquehanna Rail Bridge Project at Havre de Grace Middle/High School (Amtrak)

Mr. Cornell Brown, Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Mr. Kevin Poad, Project Representative from Amtrak, presented to the Board an update on the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) plan to improve the Susquehanna Rail Bridge between the City of Havre de Grace in Harford County, Maryland and the Town of Perryville in Cecil County, Maryland. As owner and operator of the Susquehanna Rail Bridge, Amtrak submitted a School-Organization Sponsored Project request for the improvements at Harris Field, which was approved by the Board on April 29, 2024. Modifications need to be made to the existing track and field facilities located at Havre de Grace Middle/ High School, also known as Harris Field, to accommodate this project. In line with their public outreach and community engagement strategy for this project, Amtrak representatives were present to inform and to address Board questions on the plans for the railroad improvement project. The information provided included the following:

- Project Overview
- Project Status

- Proposed Harris Field Improvements
  - Board approved School/Organization Sponsored Project April 29, 2024
- Public Outreach & Community Engagement

No formal action was taken by the Board.

Item D. Presentation on National Board Certification Recognition

Ms. Rebecca Spencer, Supervisor of Teacher Preparation & Professional Development, Ms. Crystal Rufenacht, Music Teacher at Halls Cross Roads Elementary School, Ms. Kathleen Thompson, Gifted and Talented Teacher at Joppatowne & Ring Factory Elementary Schools, and Ms. Meghan Sweeney-Doyle, RTI Consulting, presented to the Board an update of the National Board Certification for teachers. Highlights of the presentation included the purpose of the program, certification process, background history, recruitment of teachers, support system, recognition, and goals for supporting the National Board Certification. Teachers who have achieved and/or maintained the accomplished teacher status certification were recognized during the presentation.

No formal action was taken by the Board.

Meeting Break

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

Item E. Presentation of Board of Education's Proposed FY2025 Budget Overview

Dr. Aaron Poynton, Board President and Ms. Deborah Judd, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, provided a high-level overview of the Board's proposed budgets for FY 2025. Highlights provided included the Board's priorities for SY 2025, proposed additions and reductions to budget, and a final reconciliation review.

No formal action was taken by the Board.

Item F. Presentation of the 2024 Educational Facilities Master Plan and Comprehensive Maintenance Plan

Dr. Sean Bulson, Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Cornell Brown, Assistant Superintendent for Operations, Ms. Patti Jo Beard, Executive Director of Facilities Management, Mr. Chris Morton, Supervisor of Planning and Construction, and Ms. Missy Valentino, Facilities Planner, were prepared to provide the Board an overview of the 2024 Educational Facilities Master Plan and Comprehensive Maintenance Plan. Superintendent Bulson shared that the presentation would provide information on making the capital plan sustainable. Due to time this presentation will now be shared at the next scheduled Board meeting on June 24, 2024.

No formal action was taken by the Board.

Item G. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent's report was provided.

Adjournment

With no further business and with Board consensus the meeting adjourned at 9:52 PM.

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

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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, JUNE 10, 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 – 5:30 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, June 10, 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](mailto:publiccomment@hcps.org) or calling 410-588-5347.

Call-In Registrations must be received by 12:00 PM on Monday, June 10, 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, June 10, 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.**