



Board Meeting

June 12, 2000

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

OPEN SESSION

CALL TO ORDER

Board of Education of Harford County President **Karen L. Wolf** called the open session of the Board of Education of June 12, 2000, held in the theater of Fallston High School, to order at 7:08 p.m. All Board members were present, with the exception of Student Representative **Catherine L. Brodo**. Board member **Eugene C. Chandler** arrived shortly after the roll call. Board Member **Terry R. Troy**'s motion that the agenda be adopted with the amendment that Issues on the Budget be added, one item for discussion and two items for action. Board Member **Robert S. Magee** led those present in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

RECOGNITION

The Board conducted a series of recognitions of students and staff who had earned significant honors recently. First to be recognized with Board certificates was Bel Air Middle School which had been named a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence on May 23, 2000. Principal **Nancy Owen** and an entourage from the school accepted the Board's certificate which noted that only 198 of the 65,000 secondary public and private schools in the nation were so recognized this year. Blue Ribbon status is reserved for those schools which demonstrate extraordinary service to their communities. Since 1982, when the program began, about 2,000 schools have been recognized, alternating on two-

year cycles with elementary and secondary schools. In Harford, North Harford Middle (1996) and Havre de Grace High (1990) earned National Blue Ribbon status; while Jarrettsville Elementary and Joppatowne High have been honored as State Blue Ribbon Schools. In addition, the Board provided certificates to the members and team managers of the Bel Air Middle School "Apples and Oranges" Division II (middle schools) DestiNation Imagination team which followed up its regional and state championships with a third place finish in the World Tournament held May 27 and 28 at Iowa State University. Managers of the team were BAMS Social Studies teacher **Eric Bennett** and parent **Linda Althouse**. Student members of the team were **Chad Althouse, Stacy Mikanowicz, Adam Berry, Andrew Berry, Lauren Althouse, Archana Varma, and Cancha Igari**. Chad was an eighth grader while all the other students were seventh graders. The team used the parody of penguins and parrots learning to get along and care for each other in relating to diverse groups of people working together. The third recognition went to Bel Air High School's mixed doubles tennis tandem of **Danielle Hess** and **Tim Rohrbaugh** which won the MPSSAA state championship at Essex Community College on May 26/27, 2000. The remainder of HCPS team and individual state and regional champions were to have been recognized at its June 26, 2000 meeting.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Keith Lupton, representing the Aberdeen Arsenal minor league baseball team, appeared with **Nancy Spence**, the school system's coordinator of business partnerships, to present a proposal offering free tickets to students who complete reading assignments. Mr. Lupton, whose company, Maryland Minor League Baseball, also operates the DelMarVa Shorebirds, Bowie Baysox and Frederick Keys, described the firm's "Hit the Books Bookmark" contest. **Sue Pritt**, a parent from the Meadowvale Elementary School community, appeared to urge the Board to rescind the transfer of the current assistant principal at the school. Mrs. Wolf told Mrs. Pritt that the discussion involved personnel action and, as such, could not be discussed in public. She recommended Mrs. Pritt address her issues to the Board in writing. **Deb Merlock**, president of the Abingdon Elementary PTA, thanked the Board and school system for its support in obtaining the necessary funding to complete the planned 250 student addition at the school. She particularly cited the work of Assistant Superintendent for Operations **Joe Licata**, Director of Elementary Education **Pat Skebeck**, Supervisor of Planning and Construction **Mike Reid**, Abingdon Board representative **Tom Hess**, and Mrs. Wolf. **Cindy Mumby**, mother of two at Ring Factory Elementary School, asked that the Board change its mind in its decision not to reassign teacher specialists to the classroom. Mrs. Mumby cited fifth grade classes at Ring Factory Elementary which she said would be between 31 and 35 students next year. She said she represented 65 concerned parents at the school. **Thomas Kartachak**, also representing Ring Factory Elementary's PTA, urged the Board to "think outside the box" in solving the impending class size problem at the school by identifying goals and working to achieve them. **Pat Benedict**, speaking as a parent, urged the Board to find a way to keep the

three middle school swimming pools open. She said, when the six swimming technicians were cut from the budget, it was not clear that the action would mean the closing of the pools. Superintendent **Jacqueline C. Haas** told Mrs. Benedict that ways were being devised to ensure the pools would remain open and that discussions with the Department of Parks and Recreation to achieve that goal were underway. Mrs. Wolf said the Board's action was intended only to cut the physical education instructional swimming programs at Edgewood, Magnolia and North Harford middle schools only, since the system has identified as a goal the serving of its core mission and believes that funds should be used to benefit all students rather than those at selected schools. Board Member **Robert B. Thomas, Jr.** told Mrs. Benedict that he would have a motion later in the evening to address the issue.

ACTION ITEMS

CONSENT AGENDA

By unanimous vote, the Board approved items on the Consent Agenda including minutes from the May 22, 2000 Board meeting. Also, the Board approved the Monthly Report on Personnel from May 31, 2000 which contained the names of those employees who had left the system, been placed on leaves of absence or who had been newly employed during the month. In the same action, the Board also approved a series of promotions, including: Raymond F. Schmalzer III as elementary assistant principal assigned to Forest Lakes Elementary School (currently serving as speech/language pathologist at William S. James Elementary School); Richard J. Nyankori, secondary assistant principal assigned to Magnolia Middle School (currently assistant principal at Southeast Middle School #255, Baltimore City Public Schools); members of the elementary assistant principal pool, Mary Jane Mayo (currently teacher at Jarrettsville Elementary School) and Cheryl Steeg (counselor of Fountain Green Elementary School); and members of the secondary assistant principal pool Sean William Abel (currently assigned as a teacher specialist in Social Studies), Andrew Philip Cassilly (teacher, substitute assistant principal at Bel Air Middle School), and Valerie L. Cooper (teacher, Bel Air High School).

Also part of the Consent Agenda passed by the Board was approval of the Baltimore Clayworks-sponsored mural on the exterior wall of Magnolia Middle School, and approval of the proposed revision in elementary planning time dates for the 2000-2001 school year. The change moves the ninth of ten elementary teacher planning times from May 3, 2001 to May 17, 2001. The May 3rd day occurs during the MPASP testing week.

APPROVAL OF BOARD PROPOSED POLICIES

The Board voted 5 to 2 in favor of a motion made by Mr. Galbreath to adopt proposed changes in the Board's policy on school sponsored dances, restricting the age of guests attending the dances to 21 years of age or younger. Mr. Magee

and Lt. Col. (Rtd.) Chandler dissented on the vote. The Board voted 5 to 2 against a motion which would have established a Board policy on the use of metal detectors by police agencies in the schools if the principal has a reasonable suspicion to believe that a student is in possession of a weapon on school property. Mrs. Wolf and Mr. Thomas voted in favor of the policy. Mr. Magee said the policy would be redundant since the principal already has the right to request police to come to school and use any means appropriate to address issues involving school security. **Steven Weeks**, who identified himself as co-chair of the Board's Safety and Security committee, agreed that the proposed policy would be redundant and irrelevant.

APPROVAL OF CONSTRUCTION MANAGER CONTRACTS FOR ABERDEEN HIGH SCHOOL AND MEADOWVALE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Acting on the motion of Mr. Galbreath and the seconds of Mr. Hess and Lt. Col. (Rtd.) Chandler, the Board unanimously approved the awarding of Construction Manager contracts for the Aberdeen High School (Oak Contracting Corporation -- \$1,438,400) and Meadowvale Elementary School (J. Vinton Schafer & Sons, Inc. -- \$518,000).

APPROVAL OF CONTRACT TO MOVE RELOCATABLE CLASSROOMS

Acting on the motion of Lt. Col. (Rtd.) Chandler and the second of Mrs. Troy, the Board voted unanimously to approve the award of a contract to move relocatable classrooms to the "lowest responsible bidder," to EMH Environmental, Inc. at a cost of \$318,410.

BUDGET TRANSFERS

The Board provided the transfer from the current year fund balance funds to cover the restoration of Gifted/Talented teachers, summer school, and health benefits. In addition, Mr. Thomas moved and Mr. Galbreath seconded that \$50,000 be transferred from the fund balance to restore funds for library materials. The Board voted 6 to 1 (Lt. Col. Rtd. Chandler dissenting). Mr. Thomas moved and Mrs. Troy seconded that up to \$188,000 (Mr. Hess amended the motion to allow the cost to be determined) be restored to next year's budget from the fund balance to restore the six swim technicians to the budget. Lt. Col. Chandler said he does not feel it is proper to restore items to the budget in a piecemeal manner. He and Mrs. Wolf voted against the motion which was carried 4 to 2 (Mr. Galbreath had left the meeting prior to the vote).

INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mrs. Haas asked Director of Secondary Education **William Ekey** to explain a proposed change in the 2000-01 calendar to the Board. The change would have

five secondary schools -- Fall-on, Bel Air, North Harford, and Edgewood high schools and North Harford Middle School – open schools on September 5 only for their freshman classes, with school to start for other students on September 6th. Students at those schools identified would attend classes during what is now scheduled as a staff development day on November 6th. An alternative proposal had the freshmen students at the identified schools reporting for classes on Friday, September 1, 2000. Mr. Ekey said the reason for the proposed change is to provide a more adequate orientation of the first-year students in middle and high schools. He said principals feel the move would have a positive influence on learning and behavior. Mrs. Troy asked about transportation costs and was told it would mean an extra \$18,000. Director of Transportation **Norman Seidel** said availability of drivers could be another issue. Fallston High School Principal **Robert Pfau** said the proposal had been three years in the making. He said that college has for years conducted freshman orientation and kindergarten has gradual entry. Mr. Pfau said freshmen – both sixth graders and ninth graders – come from smaller buildings. He said having them in a building without upper classmen would permit them to find lockers, get textbooks and meet teachers without competing with other students. He said his parent executive board voted 16 to 1 in favor of the plan. Mr. Magee said he was in 100 percent agreement with the plan, though he would not favor some students coming back to school before Labor Day. Mrs. Haas said, if the plan is adopted, it would require Board action to change the calendar. She said there are five schools involved now in what had originally been a proposal from Fallston High. Mrs. Haas said, if the November 6th staff development day was taken for classes, the schools involved would find other ways to provide the training, likely at after-school faculty meetings. Mr. Pfau said Baltimore County Public Schools has been using the model and that six of his teachers went to observe the day last year (Baltimore County started classes before Labor Day). Mrs. Wolf said the proposal is "school-based decision making at its best."

On another issue, Mrs. Haas asked that Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources **Kathleen Eng** present the Board a report on the school system's guidelines for hiring retired teachers under authority of a law passed by the Maryland Legislature in 1999. She said, SB 15, which went into effect July 1, 1999 (with a sunset of five years) was intended to help meet the impending teacher shortage and was expanded from its original target of "reconstitution-eligible schools" to those with a potential "geographic shortage," including Harford County. Among the guidelines are that teachers must be retired from full service (those who retire early must wait one year to be eligible); retired teachers will be hired after July 15; they will be hired on a temporary basis with no fringe benefits; they will be hired on one-year renewable basis; their pay will not exceed the 15th step and they will not be eligible for longevity increases; they will be hired in "critical areas" such as secondary math/science, foreign language and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Tech Education, secondary language arts, and special education; they will receive no personal leave; they will be evaluated after each semester; and they must be

finger printed if they have not been already. Mr. Hess said if the system waits until after July 15th to hire retired teachers it may run the risk of not being able to hire them since they may have committed to other systems. Action is to be taken on the guidelines at the June 26, 2000 Board meeting.

FIRST READING – FY 2002 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM PRIORITIES

Mr. Licata presented the proposed Capital Improvements Program (CIP) to the Board. Mr. Licata said his presentation was the first of a two-part presentation, this one concentrating on the proposed request for FY 2002. He said the second portion will center on the five-year long range program of prospective projects. The proposed FY 2002 spending would call for a \$19.6 million program – including \$8 million from the state and \$11.6 million from the County. The program calls for the following projects: Relocatable Classrooms; Abingdon Elementary Addition; Church Creek Elementary Addition; Meadowvale Elementary Modernization; Aberdeen High Modernization; Joppatowne Elementary Modernization; Technology; HVAC Replacement; Roofing Replacement; Fire Alarm & ER Communications; Environmental Compliance, Equipment and Furniture, Havre de Grace High Track/Football Field; and Administration Building. Action on the proposed FY 2002 Capital Improvements Plan is to be taken in August.

SUSPENSION OF BOARD BY-LAW ON 10:00 P.M. CURFEW

Acting on the motion of Mr. Thomas, the Board voted 5 to 2 (Mr. Hess and Vice President **David H. Galbreath** dissenting), to suspend its bylaw limiting the introduction of new items to prior to 10:00 p.m. The action called for consideration of all items remaining on the agenda with the exception of the proposed by-law amendment on elections/terms of office for Board of Education members.

FIRST READING – 2000 EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES MASTER PLAN

Mr. Reid presented the Board with a first reading of the proposed Educational Facilities Master Plan. Each school system is required to submit its amended plan to the State Department of Education before July 1 each year. The 2000 Educational Facilities Master Plan has been reviewed and revised by school system personnel. The Board is due to take action on the proposal at its June 26, 2000 meeting.

REVENUE UPDATE

Budget Director **John Cox** presented the Board with an update on the FY 2001 operating budget as it relates to an expected "funding gap" involving actions taken by the County Council and recommended ways to balance the budget. Mr. Cox said there is a prospective \$791,837 deficit caused by Council cuts as well as the restoration by the Board of 19.5 new teachers (instead of the redeployment of Gifted/Talented teachers to the classroom) and the reinstatement of elementary summer school, along with capital outlay for Bel Air High School

bleachers, and expenditures for administrative services reduction of auditors and furniture, Maintenance of Plant reduction for Fleet Study, and Fixed Charges associated with auditors. Mr. Cox said the deficit could be balanced by increasing revenue projections for fees/building use (\$200,000), interscholastic gate receipts (\$7,000), interest income (\$93,510), reduction from student transportation (\$200,000), and reduction from instructional salaries (\$291,327). Mr. Hess moved and Mr. Magee seconded that the plan for meeting the projected shortfall (excluding the use of gate receipts) be approved. The Board voted 5 to 2 to endorse the motion (Mr. Thomas and Mr. Galbreath dissenting). The Board was due to finalize the FY 2001 operating budget on June 19, 2000.

BOARD COMMENTS

Mr. Magee asked Mr. Licata about the Riverside Parking Lot project and was told the project is being rebid. Mr. Hess said that it is important the public know that the Board has provided significant resources to fund health care benefits for school system employees. He said the cost of health care escalated 15.4 percent this year to a cost of \$22.4 million. He said, by joining the County consortium, there was a cost avoidance of \$1.2 million, leaving the cost of the program at \$24.1 million. That means there is a \$1.7 million shortfall. He said that the health care advisory group will be reconstituted to recommend ways the \$1.7 million can be absorbed in changes to the health care program without negatively impacting employees. Mrs. Troy told the Board that she had attended the presentation that afternoon to County authorities of the Mars Millennium project, created by nine Emmorton Elementary School fourth graders, adding it had been a magnificent project.

ADJOURNMENT

Acting on the motion of Mr. Thomas and the second of Mr. Hess, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 11:45 p.m.

FUTURE MEETINGS

The next regular meeting of the Board of Education of Harford County is slated for Monday, June 26, 2000 at Fallston High School, beginning at 7:00 p.m. One meeting will be held in both July and August –July 10, 2000 and August 14, 2000 – both at Havre de Grace High School, starting at 7:00 p.m. During the coming year, Board meetings will be held at Havre de Grace High (July, August, and September); Edgewood High School (October, November, and December); Bel Air Middle School (January, February and March); and North Harford High School (April, May and June).

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: Dr Morrison.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 system's Customer Relations Action Line, 410-638-0022 (which can also be used as a 24-hour-a-day tip line for safety concerns).

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