



## Board Meeting

*February 26, 2001*

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

### **OPEN SESSION**

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

The regular business meeting of the Board of Education of Harford County was called to order by Board President **David H. Galbreath** at 7:05 p.m. in the front gymnasium of Bel Air Middle School. Mr. Galbreath directed that a roll call of Board members be taken with all reporting present. Board Member **Karen L. Wolf** moved and Board Member **Terry R. Troy** seconded that the agenda be amended by removing Item D under New Business, "Appointment of Supervisor of Planning & Construction", and, in its place, an update on "Impact of the high school assessments in the spring 2001." The motion was approved unanimously. Mrs. Wolf then moved and Board Vice President **Eugene C. Chandler** seconded that the amended agenda be approved. The Board voted unanimously to support that motion. Mr. Galbreath directed that Board member **Thomas D. Hess** lead those present in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **RECOGNITION**

#### **HCPS EDUCATOR HALL OF FAME**

Director of Public Information **Donald R. Morrison** introduced the two retired Harford County Public School educators who were being inducted into the HCPS Educator Hall of Fame in February, 2000. The two former teachers are

**Sibyl D. Gunther**, former third grade teacher at Edgewood Elementary School who contributed 32 years of service to the school system; and **Robert C. Chance**, who taught Earth Science and Environmental Science for 31 years at Bel Air and C. Milton Wright high schools as well as the Harford Glen Outdoor Education Center and the Anita C. Leight Estuary. Mrs. Gunther was described as combining her unique sense of humor with a firm hand in developing young lives. She began teaching in Harford County in 1942, spent 2 ½ years in the Women's Army Corps during World War II, and then returned to Edgewood Elementary – eventually teaching in three separate buildings which bore the school's name – before retiring in 1976. Mr. Chance, who founded the Susquehannock Environmental Center, the nation's oldest continuously operating recycling center, began a program of providing environmental scholarships to deserving HCPS graduating seniors. He also has been writing an environmental column for a local newspaper for more than a quarter century and appeared for several years on television's "Romper Room" children's show as "Ranger Bob." He has been called the "pied piper" of environmental education in the county, establishing a legacy of good stewardship for the earth. Mrs. Gunther and Mr. Chance become the ninth and tenth retired educators to have been inducted into the Hall of Fame since its beginning in October, 2000. Nominees are selected by the Harford County Retired School Personnel Association based on the former educators' outstanding contributions to the Harford County Public School System for a period of at least 20 years. Two retired educators are selected each month, with the Board presenting each honoree with a plaque and certificate as well as a laminated copy of their full-page feature article which appears in that month's "Harford Schools." In addition, a framed picture of the inductees is added to a wall with the other inductees in the Board Room at the school system's central office in Bel Air. Mrs. Gunther and Mr. Chance each thanked the Board for the honor and discussed briefly their philosophies of teaching that led to their success for a combined total of 63 years in the local system.

#### **"SALUTE" EDUCATOR OF THE MONTH – ANGELA M. BRETON**

Student Representative to the Board of Education **Daniel E. Purcell** told the Board that, last year, a group of businesses and media outlets got together to establish a way to honor outstanding teachers. The "Salute to Education" program recognizes a "Teacher of the Month" in the Baltimore metropolitan area based on nominations submitted by schools and their communities. The nomination includes a letter in which students, faculty members, administration, and others tell why their teacher deserves to be honored. The group's honoree for the month of December, 2000 was Bakerfield Elementary School fourth grade teacher **Angela M. Breton**, who has taught at the school nine years after beginning there as an instructional assistant. The Board presented Mrs. Breton with a plaque recognizing her outstanding accomplishment.

## **TAB TEEN ADVISOR: RACHEL LYONS**

Mr. Purcell told the Board that **Rachel Lyons**, a Southampton Middle School eighth grader has been selected by the Scholastic Books Company as one of only ten teenagers in the country to serve as TAB Teen Advisors to the company, recommending the types of books that will be published by the firm best known for its publishing of the "Harry Potter" series. Ms. Lyons and her family were given an expenses paid trip to New York, a shopping spree in a Manhattan book store, and a 100-volume collection for the school. Ms. Lyons was also interviewed by company officials to determine her likes and dislikes in helping guide their decisions for the kinds of books they would publish in the future. Ms. Lyons was chosen on the basis of an essay she wrote about herself and the farm on which she lives with her parents, siblings, and menagerie of animals. The essay was written as an assignment for **Howard Passe's** English class. Mr. Passe submitted the outstanding work to Scholastic Books for its TAB Teen Advisor contest. The Board presented Ms. Lyons with a certificate honoring her achievement.

## **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Three students **Natis Cifone**, **Ashley York**, and **Ashley Cifone**, addressed the Board, asking that bowling be made a Varsity sport in the county public schools. The students said being on a bowling team gives young people a sense of belonging. That pointed to the popularity of an unofficial league in which teams representing the various schools in the county already participate.

**Sam Fromille**, Student Representative to the Board-Elect and a junior at Fallston High School, and **Heather Kirkwood**, a senior at North Harford High School, addressed the Board about safety and security in the schools. Mr. Fromille said that "at no time" did he feel threatened at school in recent weeks despite reports of a handgun and a pipe bomb being discovered in the possession of a student in school or on school grounds. He said spending large sums of money for walk-through metal detectors would be an "inappropriate spending of funds" which could be more properly used to buy computers or other items to make a direct impact on education. Ms. Kirkwood said the Harford County Regional Association of Students Councils (HCRASC) Safety Committee and the North Harford High School SGA had both come out "very strongly" that something needs to be done about the overcrowding in some schools, a major cause of disruption. She said the groups would also support some use of surveillance cameras if no taxpayer funding was attached to the project as well as identification badges.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

## **PRESENTATIONS**

### **STATE OF THE SYSTEM ADDRESS**

Superintendent **Jacqueline C. Haas** presented the Board with a mid-year report on progress the system has been making on implementation of goals set by the Board for the system last summer. Mrs. Haas presented the Board with a binder containing information on the goals as well as interim efforts in meeting the standards. She said a full report would be given to the Board at the conclusion of this school year on how well she and her staff had done in meeting the assignments directed by the Board. Mrs. Haas said the primary "program goal" established by the Board had been "student achievement." She said the Board had placed a particular emphasis on achievement of "at risk" students. She discussed progress being made in improving professional development, safety and security in the schools, adequate facilities for all students and staff, efforts to address the teacher shortage, communications to both internal and external constituents, fiscal operations, partnerships, and technology. She asked that the benchmarks which had been established by the Board for interscholastic athletics and their impact on student achievement be deferred until next year when a survey could be prepared and administered in the schools. She also asked that the Board define further any problems it had with its program goal involving communications.

### **SAFETY & SECURITY RECOMMENDATIONS**

Mrs. Haas reviewed for the Board efforts which had been made in the area of safety and security for students and school personnel in the wake of the Columbine High School shootings in April, 1999. She said that two separate committees had been empowered and had made several recommendations to the Board. She added that the Superintendent's office had made several other recommendations. In addition, she pointed to visits several Board members and school system staff had made to schools to evaluate walk-through metal detectors, and the presentation of a nationally recognized expert on school safety and security, **Michael Dorn**, on February 1<sup>st</sup>. Mrs. Haas presented ten specific recommendations to the Board:

- Develop and implement a systemwide student dress code;
- Develop and implement a systemwide student backpack policy directing that backpacks remain in lockers during school hours;
- Conduct collaborative Site Safety Evaluations of each school site;
- Develop individual school security procedures based on system safety protocols and individual school needs;
- Conduct interagency collaborative discussions on specific comprehensive roles and responsibilities in various types of safety and security scenarios;
- Develop and conduct several table-top security crisis exercises involving

central office staff, school-based staff, various county agencies, and parents;

- Revise the "Facilities Use" procedures to require that all outside user groups employ a "security officer" during evening and weekend use of school buildings;
- Implement periodic, routine scans for weapons using Garrett Wand metal detectors;
- Define specific task for completion by the Board established Citizens Safety and Security Advisory Committee; and
- Develop a system of badges and access control to restrict building entry.

After considerable discussion, the Board unanimously approved a motion made by Board Member **Robert S. Magee** and seconded by Board Member **Robert B. Thomas, Jr.** and Mr. Hess that a comprehensive safety and security plan be presented to the Board for action at its last meeting in June, 2001. Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler requested that the motion be amended to permit certain parts of the plan to be addressed prior to the end of June and that Board members be prepared to express their opinions on the Superintendent's recommendations as well as any they might have of their own at the March 12, 2001, Board meeting. The motion was passed unanimously.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **ACTION ITEMS**

### **AFFIRMATION OF DECISIONS ON STUDENT APPEAL HEARINGS**

Acting on the motion of Mr. Hess and the second of Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler, the Board voted unanimously to support the decision of its committee on an appeal of a student discipline case.

### **IMPACT OF THE HIGH SCHOOL ASSESSMENTS IN THE SPRING 2001**

Director of Secondary Education **William Ekey** told the Board that the combined impact of the practice High School Assessments and senior activities – including senior exams – during the week of May 21 through 25 have the potential of causing great disruption to the regular school program. He said that those instructors and others who would be involved in proctoring the high school assessments – mostly to freshmen and sophomores – as well as those involved with senior activities would make it nearly impossible to provide an appropriate educational experience for the remaining students. Consequently, Mr. Ekey told the Board that the Superintendent recommends the calendar be modified for the May 21 through 25, 2001 week, allowing that each day during that week, high school students who are not involved in the High School

Assessments and who are not involved in Senior activities report to school at 11:00 a.m. Acting on the motion of Mrs. Wolf and the second of Mr. Hess, the Board voted unanimously to support the proposal. Mrs. Haas said that every effort would be made to communicate to the families of high school students who would not come to school until 11:00 a.m. on those days of the changes.

### **APPROVAL OF REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF BOARD POLICY FOR C. MILTON WRIGHT HIGH SCHOOL SHED**

Mrs. Haas told the Board that a request had been received from the principal of C. Milton Wright High School for the Board to set aside its policy on advertising on school grounds to allow for a sign noting the individual who had contributed funds to erect a shed on one of the school's athletic fields to be placed on the shed. The value of the shed is approximately \$1,600. Acting on the motion of Mr. Thomas and the second of Mrs. Troy, the Board voted unanimously to approve the waiver of its advertising policy.

### **APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MOTION FOR REQUEST TO NAME ABERDEEN HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL STADIUM – "CAL RIPKEN, SR. FIELD"**

Aberdeen Principal **David Volrath** and Varsity Baseball Coach **Charles "Rigor" Mortus** came before the Board to request that it complete the action began on December 18, 2000 to name the newly constructed Aberdeen High School baseball field, "Cal Ripken, Sr. Field," in honor of the late **Cal Ripken, Sr.**, longtime Minor League player, coach, and manager in the Baltimore Oriole system, and former coach and manager of the Major League Orioles. Mr. Ripken, who passed away last year, made many contributions to his alma mater. His son, **Cal Ripken, Jr.**, a 1978 graduate of Aberdeen High and legendary player with the Baltimore Orioles, had been given \$75,000 by Major League baseball on the night he broke the record for consecutive games played in the Big Leagues. The money had originally been intended to create a youth baseball complex. However, after considering the close personal connections of the Ripken family to Aberdeen High School, Mr. Ripken, Jr. chose, instead, to directly support the project with funds from the "Kelly and Cal Foundation." During the intervening two years following that decision, Mr. Ripken, Sr. often visited the site, personally taking a role in the location, planning and construction of the field. Unfortunately, Mr. Ripken, Sr. passed away before the project was completed. The Ripken family has asked that the field be named in honor of their late father, husband, and grandfather. On December 18, 2000, the Board made a motion to accept the recommendation and, according to its policy, set consideration of the motion aside for the required 60-day waiting period to allow for public comment. Acting on the motion of Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler and the second of Mr. Magee, the Board voted unanimously to complete the motion and approve the field being named "Cal Ripken, Sr. Field."

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

Acting on the motion of Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler and the second of Mr. Hess, the Board voted unanimously to accept the items on its Consent Agenda: February 12, 2001 business meeting minutes; and proposed resolutions on National Music in Our Schools and Youth Art Month – March 2001, and Maryland Women’s History Month – March 2001, and International Women’s Day – March 8, 2001.

## **APPROVAL OF APPOINTMENT TO ETHICS PANEL**

The Board agreed to consider one item on the consent agenda – Appointment of a Member to the School System’s Ethics Panel – separate from the other items. Acting on the motion of Mrs. Wolf and the second of Mr. Hess and Mrs. Troy, the Board voted unanimously to appoint **Edward R. Sieracki** to serve a five-year term on the Ethics Panel. Mr. Sieracki joins the five-member panel, taking the place of a former member whose term had expired in November, 2000.

## **SUSPENSION OF BOARD RULES: 10:00 P.M. CURFEW ON CONSIDERATION OF NEW ITEMS**

Because of the approaching 10:00 p.m. hour, the time listed in Board bylaws after which it would not entertain items of business, the Board, acting on the motion of Mr. Hess and the second of Mrs. Wolf, voted 6 to 0 to suspend its rules and continue with several items remaining on the agenda (Mr. Galbreath left the meeting, turning the gavel over to Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler). Due to the lateness of the hour, the Board agreed to postpone consideration of the Superintendent’s Report including the Quarterly Financial Report for the period ending December 31, 2000.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **ACTION ON LEGISLATIVE ISSUES**

In keeping with its practice concerning pieces of legislation pending before the Maryland General Assembly which have a direct impact on the Harford County Public School System, the Board took action to express its stand on several bills due to be considered by the Maryland House and/or Senate.

**SB 435** – The bill would eliminate all advertising in public schools. The Board voted 6 to 0 to oppose the proposal.

**SB 313** – The bill would require that every construction project in which state funds are included would have to include an apprentice position. The Board voted 6 to 0 to oppose the legislation.

**SB 505** – The Board voted unanimously to support the bill which would provide

additional funds for the public school capital improvement program.

**SB 169** – The bill would benefit Harford County by removing school system construction projects from the need to pay union prevailing wages. The Board voted unanimously to support the bill.

**HB 976** –The bill would place speed limits on school buses. The Board voted unanimously to oppose the bill.

The Board took no position on HB 1175, HB 1135, HB 1131, and HB 1072, but noted that they are proposals on which a position would need to be taken at a subsequent meeting.

### **NEW BUSINESS FROM BOARD MEMBERS**

Mr. Hess moved and Mrs. Wolf seconded that the Superintendent pursue with business leaders and with County Executive **James Harkins** continuing discussions on ways the school system could operate more efficiently and effectively. The motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Troy noted that Bel Air Middle School's "Hoops for Heart" success placed them fourth in the nation in 2000 (per pupil contribution) among schools which participated in the event. She said the school completed an even more successful event earlier in the month.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Acting on the motion of Mr. Magee and the second of Mrs. Troy, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn and the meeting was adjourned at 10:18 p.m.

### **FUTURE MEETINGS**

### **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](mailto: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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