



## Board Meeting

*March 11, 2002*

Terry R. Troy, *President*  
Robert S. Magee, *Vice President*  
Eugene C. Chandler  
David H. Galbreath  
Thomas D. Hess  
Robert B. Thomas, Jr.  
Karen L. Wolf  
Molly P. Harris,  
*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 on Monday, March 11, 2002, by Board President **Eugene C. Chandler** at 7:05 p.m. in the multipurpose room of Magnolia Middle School. Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler directed that a quorum call be conducted, resulting in five Board Members reporting present (Board Member **Karen L. Wolf** arrived at 7:15 p.m. Board Past President **David H. Galbreath** was absent due to a previously scheduled holiday. Board Member **Robert S. Magee** moved and Board Vice President **Terry R. Troy** seconded the motion that consideration of the minutes from the January 3, 2002 Budget Work Session be deleted from the Consent Agenda. The motion was approved by a 5 to 0 vote of the Board. Mrs. Troy then moved and Mr. Magee seconded that the amended agenda be approved and the Board voted 5 to 0 to approve that motion. Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler asked Student Representative **Samuel S. Fromille IV** to lead those present in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**Deb Murlock**, vice president of legislation for the Harford County Council of PTAs, said her organization's number one concern is the safety and security of students in overcrowded schools. She added that large class sizes are a deterrent to learning. Mrs. Merlock said she agrees that community schools are important and feeder systems need to be aligned, but

added that an immediate solution is needed to the problem which may include a new middle and high school.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

## **ACTION ITEMS**

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

Acting on the motion of Board Member **Robert B. Thomas, Jr.** and the second of Mrs. Troy, the Board voted 5 to 0 to approve items on the Consent Agenda including Affirmation of Monthly Contract Awards; Approval of Award of Contract for Chillers at Aberdeen Middle School; and Approval of New Members to the Safety and Security Citizens Advisory Committee.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

## **DISCUSSION**

### **APPROVAL OF POLICY 02.01.135 – POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW POLICY**

**Bernard F. Barnes**, assistant superintendent for education services, presented the Board with a first reading of a pair of proposed Board Policies on development and review of policies. The Policy Review Committee reviewed both 02.01.135 and 02.01.140 and determined they should be combined into one policy. The new policy would prescribe a policy review timeline and establish the Policy Review Committee as a standing Board of Education committee. Mr. Magee said that the MGT Management report recently completed and under review may have different recommendations that should be considered before a policy is enacted. Mr. Fromille said there is not now a student on the review committee and suggested that there should be at least one. Mrs. Wolf said she would like to see the policy presented for reaffirmation annually and that the purpose of the current policy review committee is to review each policy in the Board's Policy Manual on a five year cycle. The proposed policy will be held over for public input with a possible vote at the April 15, 2002 meeting.

## **CALENDAR POLICY**

**Donald R. Morrison**, director of public information, presented the Board with a series of proposals from Superintendent **Jacqueline C. Haas** concerning the process of developing proposed school calendars to be approved by the Board. Mr. Morrison explained that the current committee which recommends a proposed schedule to the Board was formed in 1993 and is largely composed of community members. He said the process was developed when there was a concern expressed by the community that it had little or no input into the proposed schedule, rising out of a move that had school starting a week prior to Labor Day in the 1993-94 school year. Mr. Morrison said a combination of required state testing, staff

development needs, and the belief on the part of education leaders that the schedule should be developed by educators to maximize opportunities for student learning resulted in a committee composed of principals and supervisors bringing an alternative proposed 2002-03 calendar to the Board this past fall, which was eventually approved by the Board. Mr. Morrison said the superintendent is recommending an 18 person calendar committee which would have 11 educators and seven community members in its makeup compared to the current 15 person committee which has just five school employees and 11 community members on it. In addition, Mr. Morrison said the superintendent is recommending changes to Board Policy 02.09.002 (graduation dates); and 02.09.005 (school starting dates). The information director said educational leaders have pointed to a need to start school the week prior to Labor Day so that it would be consistent with the starting date of the vast majority of other school systems in the state. **William Ekey**, director of secondary education, told the Board that its policy of having graduations take place during the week prior to the 180<sup>th</sup> day for underclassmen often works a hardship for high schools involved with senior exams and high school assessments. Acting on the motion of Mr. Thomas and the seconds of Mrs. Troy and Board Member **Thomas D. Hess**, the Board voted 5 to 1 (Mrs. Wolf dissenting) to refer the two calendar issues of starting dates and graduation dates to the Policy Review Committee, and have a proposal on the makeup of the Board's Calendar Committee brought to the Board at its April 15, 2002 meeting. Mrs. Wolf said the committee should have at least one student member on it.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

## **PRESENTATIONS**

## **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

In the absence of the school system's governmental liaison **Kathryn Carmello**, who was ill, Mr. Thomas, who serves on the Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) legislative committee, provided an update on legislation pending before the Maryland General Assembly as the mid-point of the 2002 session passes. Mr. Thomas said the Thornton Commission report is developing into another unfunded mandate with no evidence that the necessary reforms called for in the study will receive state funding support. He said that efforts had been made to "clarify" the intent of the Collective Bargaining Bills pending before the General Assembly, measures which would result in additional items being possible subjects of bargaining with employee unions. Mr. Thomas said the MABE legislative committee had voted 14-1 to oppose HB 1408, a measure which would provide full voting rights to the student member of the Maryland State Board of Education. He said only Anne Arundel's delegate, whose student has full voting rights on that county's local board, voted to support the measure. Mr. Boutin said some bills bear a "close look" including HB 675, sponsored by Harford Delegate **Charles Boutin**, which would require all school systems to certify healthy indoor air quality. Mr. Boutin said all sub-divisions had opposed that proposal, many, including Harford, saying they currently assure indoor air quality in the buildings. Mr. Thomas said HB 412, which would have required mouth guards be used in all interscholastic sports, failed. He said the \$5 million proposed for

textbooks for non-public school, had been reduced to \$4 million. He said, the feeling is, if the Thornton Commission proposals are not funded, the likelihood is the \$4 million for nonpublic school textbooks would also be cut. He said HB 1206, a “down payment” on the Thornton Commission, would provide \$7,843,000, up from the original \$4.2 million proposed. Mr. Thomas said there have been 167 general education bills filed by the Maryland Senate and House of Delegates, 51 impacting local school Boards, including more than a dozen about the Prince George’s Board of Education. He said HB 937, a move to increase the amount of state funding for school construction to 75 percent on school projects where 50 percent or more of the students receive free or reduced priced lunches, is working its way through the legislative process. In many counties – including Harford – the state currently pays 65 percent of the cost of school construction for approved projects. Mr. Thomas said there are three charter school bills before the Legislature – HB 131 on which MABE has taken no position; SB 213 which MABE supports; and SB 401, which MABE opposes. Mrs. Haas said two studies – one on what makes education successful and the other on professional judgment – have been done in connection with the Thornton Commission report. She said the studies have estimated a need for between \$5.3 and over \$7 billion in additional state funding to local school systems.

## **SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT**

Mrs. Haas congratulated Edgewood Elementary School on having been taken off the Title 1 School Choice list based on its 2001 improved MSPAP scores, giving them two out of three years where the scores have improved. Knowing that the superintendent would be providing a recommendation to the Board on whether the eighth grade MSPAP tests should be given in Harford this year, two speakers spoke to the Board.

**Pat Benedict**, president of the Harford County Council of PTAs, said the Winter Maryland PTA meeting had resulted in a motion opposing the administration of MSPAP in 2002 because of concerns over the validity of the results. She said HCCPTA “fully agrees” with that stance.

**Keith Goodell**, member of the Harford County Education Association (HCEA) executive board, said that organization has recommended that eighth graders not take the exam this year. He said MSPAP had brought a “focus” on good teaching and learning practices that has changed for the better the way students are taught, but pointed out that Maryland State Superintendent **Nancy S. Grasmick’s** previous position of allowing local Boards to opt out of the eighth grade test while giving the third and fifth grade exams, would make it all but certain eighth graders would not take the test seriously. He said middle schools are now preparing to get students ready for the high school assessments. Mr. Goodell said that the later information coming from Dr. Grasmick that a “Federal glitch” might force the giving of the eighth grade test could eliminate the local system’s ability to make a choice.

Mrs. Haas said, last Tuesday, Dr. Grasmick had said third and fifth grade MSPAP testing was tied to Federal Title 1 funding, meaning there would be no option in giving that test, but that the eighth grade MSPAP could be an option. But, later word revealed that a large amount of other Federal funding – including special education and SAFE funding – is tied

to the need to give system wide tests. Dr. Grasmick was to meet with the Federal education leaders on the following Thursday to receive clarification on the requirements from the national government insofar as testing is concerned, and Mrs. Haas urged the Board delay in making a decision on the eighth grade testing at least until after that meeting. But, Mr. Thomas urged his fellow Board members either vote the eighth grade test up or down immediately. Mrs. Haas asked the Board to wait until its March 18<sup>th</sup> work session for the vote. She said she has urged the State not to print the local eighth grade scores or make them available on their web site, instead giving them to schools and school systems for diagnostic purposes. Mr. Magee said there is no reason for the Board to vote immediately on the test, only to possibly have to reverse itself later. Mr. Thomas moved and Mrs. Troy seconded that the Board vote at its March 18<sup>th</sup> work session whether to give the eighth grade test or not. The Board approved the proposal 6 to 0.

## **BOARD COMMENTS**

Mr. Thomas said that Magnolia Elementary had been a winner in the Destination Imagination East Central Region contest the preceding Saturday. He asked that the Board be given an accounting of how each of the Harford schools entered in the contest had done at the annual competition held at Bel Air Middle School. Mr. Thomas also asked if any of the local schools had conducted any special ceremonies in connection with the six-month anniversary of the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attacks, which was reached on March 11<sup>th</sup>.

Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler said he and Mrs. Troy had attended the Maryland Association of School Board's Black Caucus meeting Saturday, held in Anne Arundel County and that Harford County was credited with having made strides in narrowing the achievement gap between minority and non-minority students. He said Anne Arundel has made "terrific strides" in closing the gap.

Mr. Thomas said the issue of Havre de Grace High School's decision not to change its logo/mascot from "Warrior" to a symbol not connected with Native Americans was discussed at MABE. He noted that **Richard Regan** had made the Harford County Board of Education's decision to support the Havre de Grace High decision public. He said, if Mr. Regan appeals to the State Board of Education and the State Board supports his appeal, reversing the local Board decision, "it will drive a wedge" between the Maryland State Board and local boards where there is already tension over the issue of whether the locals have the right to fire their superintendents. "This Board gave careful and due consideration (to the Havre de Grace issue) and made the right decision," Mr. Thomas said. He added that Harford could be a test case for the 11 schools which have decided to keep their Native American-connected logos/mascots.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Acting on the motion of Mrs. Troy and the second of Mr. Magee, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 p.m.

## **FUTURE MEETINGS**

Following its regular business meeting of Monday, March 25<sup>th</sup> at Magnolia Middle School (6:30 p.m.), the Board will move its meeting site for the final quarter of the 2001-2002 school year to Aberdeen Middle School where the body will meet in the school's cafeteria. The first regular business meeting of April will take place the third Monday (rather than the traditional second Monday), on April 15<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 7:00 p.m. The second April meeting will take place the following week at 6:30 p.m., April 22<sup>nd</sup>, again in Aberdeen Middle School's cafeteria. There will be a work session to be held at the HEAT Center in Aberdeen on Monday, April 29<sup>th</sup>, starting at 7:00 p.m. The May and June regular business meetings will also be held at Aberdeen Middle School. updated meeting schedules, and minutes of Board work sessions.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Acting on the motion of Mrs. Troy and the second of Mr. Magee, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 p.m.

## **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.

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