



Board Meeting

April 22, 2002

Eugene C. Chandler, *President*
Terry R. Troy, *Vice President*
David H. Galbreath
Thomas D. Hess
Robert S. Magee
Robert B. Thomas, Jr.
Karen L. Wolf
Samuel S. Fromille,
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, April 22, 2002, by Board President **Eugene C. Chandler** at 6:40 p.m. in the cafeteria of Aberdeen Middle School. Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler directed that a quorum call be conducted, resulting in all Board Members and the Student Representative to the Board reporting as present. Board Vice President **Terry R. Troy** moved and Board Member **Robert S. Magee** seconded that Item G, a report on Secondary School Reform Work, be deleted from the agenda. The Board voted unanimously to support the motion, leading to a motion by Board Member **Karen L. Wolf** and a second by Board Member **Thomas D. Hess** that the agenda as modified be approved. The Board voted unanimously to support that motion. Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler led those present in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

RECOGNITION

Each month since October 2000, during the school year, the Board of Education has inducted two former Harford County Public School educators into the HCPS Educator Hall of Fame. The former educators are selected by the Harford County Retired School Personnel Association (HCRSPA) based on the former teacher/administrator's contributions to students and the school system over a period of at least 20 years (exceptions are made in

the case of educators who passed away prior to reaching the 20 year minimum). Former educators recognized may be living or deceased. Those selected are featured in an article in *Harford Schools*, have their pictures placed on a wall of the school system's central office in Bel Air, and are honored at a subsequent Board of Education meeting. During the April 22, 2002 meeting, the family of **Helen G. Dove**, 17 year English/Reading teacher at Aberdeen High School, received a plaque and certificate from Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler and Superintendent **Jacqueline C. Haas**, recognizing the extraordinary contributions of Mrs. Dove. The late educator was honored for having made a difference in the lives of many ninth grade students at the school by helping them improve their reading skills and influencing them to stay in school to pursue their diplomas. Members of her family and former colleagues were present to honor Mrs. Dove. Also honored was **Marjorie E. Markley**, former Bel Air High School and North Harford High School Social Studies and English teacher. Mrs. Markley was described as a meticulous teacher who insisted that all her students perform to the maximum of their potential. Retiring in 1995, Mrs. Markley looks back on a career in which she played a key role in the lives of thousands of county students. The former teacher's family and former colleagues were on hand to honor Mrs. Markley who continues as a volunteer at Jarrettsville Elementary School.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS <![endif]>

Dorina Strickland, a teacher at Aberdeen Middle School, told the Board she is concerned about the "junk food" that is being served to students at lunch. She said the school system should reevaluate the food it serves to students with an eye toward providing "healthy food options" that would be part of a wholesome diet.

Forest Wiest, supervisor of high school physical education and athletics, said he was concerned about a portion of the proposed Student Dress Policy which was to be reviewed by the Board later in the meeting. Mr. Wiest said that proposed revisions to the policy which would call for not only "dangling earrings" being banned from physical education but ear studs and all other jewelry be similarly banned. He said liability for student injuries are a major concern.

Nathaniel Dean, Fallston High School student, commented on the proposed book bag policy which would cause students to store their back packs and similar book carriers in lockers. Mr. Dean said, at Fallston where there is a seven period day with four minutes between classes, it is impossible to get to lockers between classes, meaning students would have to carry their books and other school material loosely, leading to problems with the material falling and causing difficulties in the crowded halls. He said, if the concern is for safety and the ability to conceal weapons, they could be hidden in student clothing, adding, "you could hide an arsenal in a bass saxophone case." He said a five-period day with eight minutes between classes or a classroom set of textbooks in each class would be needed if backpacks are banned.

OLD BUSINESS

ACTION ITEMS

CONSENT AGENDA

Acting on the motion of Mrs. Troy and the second of Past President **David H. Galbreath**, the Board voted unanimously to endorse items listed on the Consent Agenda including the minutes from the March 11, 2002, Board Business Meeting; as well as the Monthly Report on Personnel, listing those who had left the school system, were placed on leaves of absence, or who are newly employed as of the March 31, 2002 period. Also, the Consent Agenda contained proposed resolutions on the 2002 Merit Scholastic Awards; Salute to School Food & Nutrition Service Personnel; Teacher Appreciation Week; School Psychology Week; Pupil Personnel Worker Week; National Physical Fitness and Sports Month; and Home and Hospital Teachers Appreciation Day. Also, the Consent Agenda action approved the Special Education Staffing Plan for FY 03 (which must be submitted to the Maryland State Department of Education), Appointment of a new member to the Safety and Security Committee (**James MacNeill**), Appointments of Members to the Family Life and Human Development Citizen Advisory Committee (**Lori Antinozzi, JoAnn DeBorja**, and **Jean Hruz** – reappointments; and **Lisa Chenoweth, Ashleigh Bryant** (Joppatowne High School student), and a student from North Harford High School to be announced – new appointments).

OLD BUSINESS

ACTIONS

APPROVAL OF POLICY ON DRESS CODE AND BACKPACK USE

Mrs. Haas told the Board that, originally, the Board had directed that the matter of student dress codes be deferred to the individual schools. But, she said, when an expert on school safety and security, **Michael Dorn**, made a presentation to the Board on how student dress can have an impact on school security, the Board directed that a countywide dress code policy be developed. Mrs. Haas introduced Director of Student Services **Stephen Lentowski** who presented the proposed policy. He said the policy is a careful balance between students' right to express themselves through their choice in clothing and school safety. Mr. Hess said there is the issue of one student's choice in dress infringing on the rights of other students to safety and security. He expressed his support of Mr. Wiest's earlier comments on a total prohibition of jewelry in physical education classes. Mr. Hess said that headwear can be worn by student athletes during games and the policy needs to be clear on what is allowed, not what is inappropriate. Mr. Lentowski said that Board Attorney **Patrick Spicer** had crafted much of the language in the proposed policy with an eye toward balancing prohibitions on certain dress with constitutional rights of students. Mr. Hess pointed out that there be a "quicksand" issue with the proposed policy's statement that "No student shall be considered in violation of this policy," listing several areas that fit that description. The Board member said a more prudent introduction may be "Consideration shall be taken," in reference to the exceptions to the policy. Board Member **Robert B. Thomas, Jr.** said the issue of tattoos is not included in the proposed student dress policy

but there are issues that might need to be addressed in the policy. Mr. Lentowski said he had checked with Mr. Dorn on the dress code policy issue and had been referred to Westside High School in Georgia where the principal had instituted a “no tolerance” dress policy which outlaws baggy pants, shirts that are not tucked in, and other issues of dress. Mr. Lentowski said the principal had said there was resistance at first, but acceptance has occurred and student behavior has improved markedly. He added that, whatever action the Board takes, should be accomplished before the summer break so that it can be publicized appropriately to students. He added that teachers play a major role in the enforcement of any dress code. It was noted that there is no countywide teacher dress code policy. Mr. Magee suggested a better reference might be nearby counties to see what they are doing in reference to student attire. Mr. Galbreath noted that the issue of jewelry worn in physical education classes is contained in the administrative guidelines which put Board Policy into effect, but are not voted upon by the Board. Acting on the motion of Mr. Magee and the second of Mrs. Troy, the Board voted unanimously to put off action on the proposal to its May 6, 2002 meeting, pending more public input (specifically from the Board’s Safety and Security Advisory Committee) and more information. Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler urged those Board members who have ideas about what should or should not be included in the policy submit those to him in writing prior to the May 6th meeting.

Addressing the proposed Student Backpack Use policy, Mr. Lentowski said the Georgia principal, Mrs. Coxey, said no backpacks were permitted in classrooms at her school resulting in hallways and classrooms being less cluttered. Mrs. Troy suggested the proposed policy be referred back to the Safety/Security Committee for a more complete review. **Steven Weeks**, chair of the committee, said a sub-committee of the group had addressed the issue, but the full committee had not reviewed the document as yet. Mr. Weeks said the committee would meet on April 27th and asked for a delay until the next Board meeting. Mr. Thomas said he had two issues, the first involving the sizes of backpacks/briefcases/duffel bags which might exceed the size of student lockers; and what are the “designated storage areas” mentioned in the policy. Mrs. Haas reminded the Board that if it delays making a decision, there might not be time to include the information in communications that go to parents. Student Representative to the Board **Samuel S. Fromille IV** said the Harford County Regional Association of Student Councils (HCRASC) will meet on April 25th and the backpack issue would be one of the matters to be discussed. Acting on the motion of Mrs. Troy and the second of Mr. Galbreath, the Board voted unanimously to holdover consideration of the policy until its May 6, 2002 meeting.

APPROVAL OF STUDENT LOCKER POLICY AND STUDENT PARKING PRIVILEGES POLICY

Without comment, the Board unanimously supported the motion of Mr. Thomas and second of Mr. Galbreath that the proposed Student Locker Policy be adopted. The policy calls for the provision of lockers where available to students for the repository of books, clothing, school materials, etc. Each school will establish procedures for the assigning of lockers and students will be personally and solely responsible for the contents, cleanliness, and condition of assigned lockers. The school system will not assume responsibility for the theft, loss, or damage of items in a student locker. In addition, students are required to

cooperate fully with any lawful investigation by authorized school administrators or law enforcement officials. The right of school officials to search lockers will be announced or published in school or school system publications.

Meanwhile, the Board voted unanimously to support the proposed Student Parking Privileges policy as written, with the exception of the listing of reasons which would lead a school to develop priorities of needs for the issuance of parking permits. Mrs. Wolf's motion, seconded by Mr. Galbreath, requires students to comply with conditions set forth by schools for the granting and retention of student parking privileges. The policy provides a provision for the notification of students that their vehicles parked on school property may be subject to search in accordance to applicable search and seizure laws and regulations. Mr. Fromille said he would like to see the policy include direction that written notice be given students on their rights prior to any search of their assigned vehicle. Mr. Thomas said he feels that notice has been accomplished through Board policy, but Mr. Fromille said students may not be aware of their rights and requirements if they are contained only in Board policy. Mrs. Haas said that a compromise in the two views could be reached by placing the reference to Board Policy number on the parking permit application filled out by students and their parents.

APPROVAL OF REAFFIRMATION OF SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION SECTIONS OF POLICY MANUAL

Acting on the motion of Mr. Thomas and the second of Mr. Hess, the Board voted unanimously to approve/reaffirm Section 02.02 – Superintendent of Schools – of the Board Policy Manual. Acting on the motion of Mrs. Troy and Mr. Hess, the Board voted unanimously to approve/affirm Section 02.08—School Administration – section of the Board Policy Manual.

APPROVAL OF APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR – 2001-2002

Acting on the motion of Mr. Thomas and the second of Mr. Galbreath, the Board voted unanimously to appoint Wooden and Benson as auditor of the 2001-02 Harford County Public School accounts. The fee for the service in auditing the current expense and food service accounts last year was \$49,000. The actual fee paid to Wooden and Benson will be based on time spent on the engagement. Mr. Galbreath thanked the Superintendent and her staff for providing a timeline on major dates involving the audit, including a commitment to supply financial statements to the Board during the week of September 12-19, 2002, at least one day prior to those statements being faxed to the County government. September 30, 2002 is the date by which the financial statements must be submitted to the Maryland State Department of Education. The audited financial statements are due to be presented to the Board at a public meeting on October 22, 2002.

NEW BUSINESS

APPROVAL OF APPOINTMENT OF COORDINATOR OF INTERNAL

INVESTIGATIONS

Acting on the motion of Mr. Hess and the second of Mr. Thomas, the Board voted unanimously to approve the appointment of **Wayne Boyer** as Coordinator of Internal Investigations. Mr. Boyer was one of 27 candidates to apply for the position. Until his appointment, he had been National Director of Loss Prevention for Nationwide Warehouse in Georgia.

PRESENTATIONS

PICTURE IDENTIFICATION BADGES – FIELD PILOT

The Board discussed the possibility of doing a field pilot test of student identification badges. Bel Air High School Principal **Kevin Fleming** reported that, as part of a sub-committee of the Board's Policy Review Committee, discussion had taken place on the advisability of using the identification badges for safety/security reasons and extending their use for purchases of food in cafeterias, access to the media center, and other uses through a bar code on the badge. However, Mr. Fleming said the cost (about \$12,000 per school) and the difficulties in obtaining compliance influenced the sub-committee to recommend against the pilot. Superintendent Haas concurred with the recommendation to forgo the policy on Student Picture Identification Badges. Mr. Fleming said the potential for students losing their badges or forgetting to bring them would make it an administrative burden. Mr. Thomas said he was "disappointed" at the superintendent and the Policy Review sub-committee's recommendation. He said the requirement to have teachers and other adults wear badges but not requiring students to do the same represents a "double standard." He said he would rather not dismiss the proposal, instead finding a way to "work it out." Mrs. Troy added that she, too, was "disappointed" by the recommendation, but said she is concerned about the cost of the project. Mr. Galbreath said he can't see how students wearing a badge would make schools any safer. Mr. Fromille predicted that there would be lines of 30 to 50 students each day in school administrative offices, sent there because they did not have their badges with them that day. Mr. Magee reminded Board members that the report was a "first reader," adding that student identification badges is a "show thing," not really impacting the school safety issue. He said, if the Board really wants to make a difference, they need to lower the number of students in schools. Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler agreed, in part, but said anything that would provide enhancement of school safety even moderately was worth exploring. Mr. Fromille said at his school – Fallston High – teachers do not routinely stop students who are in the hallways without passes. Mr. Thomas said, if the school system does enter a field test, it should be with an objective view. "If we go into this thinking it will be a failure, it will be a self-fulfilling prophecy," said Mr. Thomas.

REAFFIRMATION OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND STUDENT POLICIES SECTIONS OF POLICY MANUAL – FIRST READER

The Board's Policy Review Committee has undertaken a comprehensive review of the most up-to-date manual available. The review includes policy format, policy language, legal citation, need for reaffirmation/signature update. Sections 06.01 – Human Resources; and

07.01 – Student Policies – were presented to the Board as a first reader. The Superintendent recommended that the Board withhold action on the policy manual sections for 30 days to allow time for study and citizen input. Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources **Donald Harmon** said Section .007 – Family and Medical Leave – will be updated prior to the Human Resources portion coming to the Board in May. Mrs. Haas said several of the sections presented do not have legal citations and those citations will be provided prior to the section returning to the Board for its action.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

MGT STUDY REPORT – SECTIONS 6 AND 7

Dr. Harmon (Section 6) and Assistant Superintendent for Business Services **John Markowski** (Section 7) provided information to the Board on work groups they coordinated to look at recommendations made by the MGT of America Management and Performance Review of the school system’s operation. The Board had been presented with summary evaluations of all sections of the report and, during a series of Board business meetings, each section is being reviewed in more detail. The Board will be asked to take official action on any items requiring policy approval or budgetary resources.

DISCUSSION

OPPORTUNITY FOR BOARD MEMBERS TO PRESENT NEW BUSINESS ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Mrs. Troy said that she and Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler attended a very beneficial multicultural meeting the previous Saturday in Waldorf, Maryland. Mr. Thomas asked when the Board would be called upon to act on the MGT recommendations and was told by the Superintendent it would be at the time of implementation. Mr. Hess said the major money-saving recommendation of MGT – that \$16 million could be saved in the area of employee health benefits – “just doesn’t exist – it’s just not there.” He said the information was based on numbers and data that the local school system cannot duplicate. Mrs. Troy said that she and Mr. Hess would be working on the school system’s Mission Statement during a meeting on May 3rd from 7:30 until 9:30 a.m. Lt. Col. (Ret.) Chandler said the Maryland Board of Education’s Black Caucus would meet on Saturday, May 11th in Frederick. He added that the Board would hold two meetings in June – June 10th and 24th; and one each in July – July 8th – and August – August 12th; and two in September – September 9th and 23rd. He added that the County Council will hold budget hearings at C. Milton Wright High School (May 2nd) and Havre de Grace High School (May 9th), both meetings starting at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Acting on the motion of Mrs. Troy and the second of Mrs. Wolf, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

FUTURE MEETINGS

The Board will hold its May and June business meetings at Aberdeen Middle School, meeting on May 6th (7:00 p.m.) and May 20th (6:30 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; Or call the HCPS Customer Relations Action Line (24-hours-a-day) at 410-638-0022.

In addition, for those who would like to receive emergency or other important school announcements automatically at their e-mail address(es), check the schools-out.com initiative on the home page of the HCPS web site.

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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