

TENTATIVE MINUTES

BOARD OF EDUCATION OF BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND

Wednesday, May 30, 2001

The Board of Education of Baltimore County, Maryland, met in open session at 5:03 p.m. at Greenwood. President Donald L. Arnold and the following Board members were present: Mr. H. J. Jack Barnhart, Ms. Phyllis E. Ettinger, Mr. John A. Hayden, III, Dr. Warren C. Hayman, Ms. Jean M. H. Jung, Mr. Michael P. Kennedy, Ms. Carolyn Ross-Holmes, Mr. James R. Sasiadek, and Mr. James E. Walker. In addition, Dr. Joe A. Hairston, Superintendent of Schools, was present.

At 5:52 p.m., Mr. Walker moved the Board go into closed session to discuss matters relative to negotiations pursuant to the Annotated Code of Maryland, State Government Article, §10-508 (a)(9). The motion was seconded by Mr. Barnhart and unanimously approved by the Board.

CLOSED SESSION MINUTES

Mr. Grimsley reviewed salary issues for a particular group of employees.

At 6:28 p.m., Mr. Barnhart moved to end the closed session for a brief dinner recess. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kennedy and approved by the Board.

OPEN SESSION MINUTES

The Board of Education of Baltimore County, Maryland, reconvened in open session at 7:30 p.m. at Greenwood. President Donald L. Arnold and the following Board members were present: Mr. H. J. Jack Barnhart, Ms. Erica A. Cohn, Ms. Phyllis E. Ettinger, Mr. John A. Hayden, III, Dr. Warren C. Hayman, Ms. Jean M. H. Jung, Mr. Michael P. Kennedy, Ms. Carolyn Ross-Holmes, Mr. James R. Sasiadek, and Mr. James E. Walker. In addition, Dr. Joe A. Hairston, Superintendent of Schools; staff members; members of various civic, employee, and community organizations were present as was the media.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The open session commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, which was led by Thomas Raybon, newly elected President of the Baltimore County Student Councils, and a period of silent meditation for those who have served education in the Baltimore County Public Schools.

MINUTES

Mr. Arnold amended the minutes to reflect his comments prior to the Public Comment portion of the meeting in which he noted a number of speakers wishing to address personnel issues. He reminded the audience that specifics of any personnel matter may come before the

Board in the future as an appeal and that it was not appropriate for the Board to consider facts related to that issue at the meeting. Speakers were asked to limit comments on the issue to his or her personal impressions.

Hearing no further additions or corrections to the open and closed session minutes of May 15, 2001, Mr. Arnold declared the minutes approved as amended.

Mr. Arnold informed the audience of the various sessions in which Board members had participated earlier that afternoon.

RECOGNITION

Becky Reed of Perry Hall Middle School and Amanda Bory of Pine Grove Middle School were recognized as Meritorious Service Leadership Award winners. Becky's project involved working with Guiding Eyes for the Blind. In Amanda's project entitled "Fuzzy Hugs," volunteers from the Oak Crest Retirement Community were organized to donate blankets to the children at Kennedy Krieger. Both girls were presented certificates from the Board.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Hairston announced that the School Performance Recognition Program rewards elementary and middle schools that are making significant improvements in student performance and attendance. This year, 11 Baltimore County schools, out of 61 schools in Maryland, will share \$2.7 million from the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). Thirty-nine of our schools will receive Certificates of Recognition.

Baltimore County Public Schools has been awarded an additional Schools for Success Goals 2000 grant in the amount of \$200,000 from MSDE. The funding will provide a professional development program to improve student achievement in the area of reading in schools with large numbers of non-tenured teachers.

Dr. Hairston also noted that this morning two students from Dulaney and Pikesville High Schools were awarded full scholarships to University of Maryland Baltimore County and Towson University.

OLD BUSINESS

On motion of Mr. Hayden, seconded by Mr. Barnhart, the Board approved the proposed school calendar for 2002-2003, which includes a pre-Labor Day start for students.

Mr. Barnhart left the room at 7:48 p.m.

REPORTS

The Board received the following reports:

A. Report on the Selection of the New Reading Series—Ms. Bailey recognized members of the Reading Selection Committee. Ms. McMahon presented the rationale, the process followed, and recommendation to the Superintendent for the new systemwide reading series. The Open Court phonics program has been recommended for grades 1-3. Houghton Mifflin's *A Legacy of Literacy* has been recommended for grades 4 and 5 to address the comprehension, guided reading, and written language components of the literacy instruction framework. Ms. McMahon noted that assessment components have been built into both series. She also stated that grant-funding sources are being examined in order to begin a structured reading program at the kindergarten level.

Ms. Jung stated she was pleased to see the school system moving toward uniformity in math and reading. She noted parental involvement at the beginning of the process and that at least one parent recently commented on the Open Court program. Ms. Jung remarked that it appears this issue was studied intensely by the professional staff.

Ms. Ettinger, recognizing the funding constraint, expressed hope that we could look into expanding this program to the kindergarten level as quickly as possible. She inquired how the Open Court and Houghton Mifflin programs will meet the needs of a wide variety of students and what adjustments will be made to meet the needs of students who learn at varying paces. Ms. Ettinger voiced her hope that as we implement this program and assess its effectiveness we will look comparatively at our ability to identify early children who show a special need in reading. She also expressed hope that there will be some collaborative work with the IST program.

Noting the importance of the school leadership having a clear understanding of this program, Ms. McMahon stated training has been planned for principals and assistant principals, and other teacher leader groups.

Mr. Arnold inquired about what programs would be available in these two series to help special needs students who are not mainstreamed but in a special needs classroom. Ms. McMahon explained special educators were invited to discuss this issue. She stated coordination will take place with Special Education so we can provide training on the best way to make use of the materials. Ms. McMahon also explained that we will investigate other options for reading interventions for very special & unique cases so we can recommend a research-based program. It is the Department's desire that these materials be used in special education classes. Special education teachers will be included as one of the audiences of focus in using these materials. Mr. Kennedy asked staff to review the implications of the reading program for libraries and to review the selection process for library books.

Ms. Ettinger suggested the creation of materials to be broadcast on Channel 73 in anticipation of concerns of parents and teachers.

Mr. Walker asked if all elementary teachers would receive training on the new reading series. Ms. McMahon responded that all would be trained. There will also be opportunities in many schools for training during the summer. Board members will be invited to attend any of the training sessions.

Mr. Arnold instructed the superintendent to consider the recommendations of the committee and work with them accordingly.

B. Report on the Proposed Revisions to Policies 8360, 8362, 8363, 8364, and 8366—Mr. Hayden, Chair of the Ethics Policy Study Group, thanked Mr. Walker, Ms. Jung, and Judge J. Norris Byrnes for their time and effort in working on these revisions. He also thanked Ms. Bailey for her assistance. Mr. Hayden reviewed the changes to the above Ethics policies and the rationale behind them. Mr. Arnold noted that once the proposed revisions are reviewed and approved by the State Ethics Commission, they will be returned to the Board for its approval.

Mr. Hayden recommended one additional revision to Policy 8366, Item 4 – Advisory Opinions. The phrase “when appropriate in the judgment of one or more members of the Ethics Review Panel” would be added after the word “system.”

Mr. Arnold noted that the proposed revision to increase the limit of the monetary value of a gift to \$100 is consistent with the State limit and that of the County Council.

Mr. Arnold directed the committee to submit the proposed revisions to the State for their perusal and to report back to the Board with their recommendations.

PERSONNEL MATTERS

On motion of Mr. Sasiadek, seconded by Ms. Cohn, the Board approved the personnel matters as presented on Exhibits D, E, F, and G. (Copies of the exhibits are attached to the formal minutes.)

Ms. Cohn left the room at 9:40 p.m.

CONTRACT AWARDS

Ms. Ettinger pulled items 12 and 13; Mr. Kennedy pulled items 8, 9, and 11. On motion of Mr. Kennedy, seconded by Ms. Ettinger, the Board approved items 1-7, 10, and 14-19.

1. Antifreeze
2. Contracted Services: Intercommunication System
3. Equipment: Window Air Conditioners
4. Gymnasium Line Painting Services
5. Music: Instrumental Supplies and Equipment
6. Music: Vocal Supplies
7. Paper: Classroom
10. Psychological Reassessment
14. Supplies Contract: Housekeeping Equipment
15. Supplies Contract: Sport Floor Finishes
16. 3M Library Detection System
17. Microsoft License Agreement
18. Universal Virus Protection System for Baltimore County Public Schools
19. Upgrade of Enterprise Network Infrastructure

Items 8 and 9

Mr. Kennedy inquired about the feasibility of using the school system's print shop for this type of work. Mr. Nichols responded that this is being investigated. He also noted that the print shop is limited somewhat in the work it can do because of the equipment needed to do large jobs. Ms. Burnopp noted that sometimes it is more cost effective to get an outside vendor because of the volume of the job. Mr. Arnold also noted the many opportunities in the printing industry. He expressed the hope that we could possibly enhance the learning of our students with work programs in this area.

On motion of Mr. Kennedy, seconded by Dr. Hayman, the Board approved items 8 and 9.

8. Printing: School Calendars

9. Printing: Student Handbook

Item 11

Mr. Kennedy asked if rebound books are returned to schools before teachers return to school in August, to which Mr. Nichols responded affirmatively.

On motion of Mr. Kennedy, seconded by Ms. Ettinger, the Board approved item 11.

11.Rebinding:Textbooks and Library Books

Items 12 and 13

Ms. Ettinger expressed concern about appropriate oversight and control of the activities of outside contractors.Ms. Rofel assured Ms. Ettinger that, depending upon the program, outside vendors are monitored by either school or central office staff.She also noted that over the years, we have reduced our reliance on related services, and we continue to hire additional speech and occupational therapists.

On motion of Dr. Hayman, seconded by Ms. Ettinger, the Board approved items 12 and 13.

12.Special Education:Intensity "V" Program – Extension

13.Speech, Occupational, and Physical Therapies - Extension

Mr. Walker asked to revisit Item 10 – Psychological Reassessment.He asked who is responsible for monitoring this activity.Dr. Kidder stated there is a direct relationship between the contractor and the psychologist.The assessment is coordinated centrally and tracked very closely.The vendors are supervised on a case-by-case basis by the school psychologists.

BUILDING COMMITTEE

The Building Committee, represented by Mr. Kennedy, recommended approval of items 1-9, and 11-19. Item 10 was pulled for an explanation by Mr. Cassell, and Mr. Walker pulled item 7 for further discussion.The Board approved recommendations 1-6, 8, 9, and 11-16.

1.Reroofing Project – Edmondson Heights Elementary School

2.Foundation Repair – Lansdowne High School

3.Playground Equipment – New Town Elementary School

4.Auditorium Seating Replacement – Sparrows Point High School

5.Networking/Electrical Upgrades – Cockeysville, Golden Ring, Pikesville,
Old Court, and Ridgely Middle Schools

6.Asbestos Abatement for Major Maintenance Renovation Program – Seneca Elementary School

8.Fee Acceptance – Roofing Inspection Services – Edmondson Heights
Elementary School

9.Fee Acceptance – Design Services for Systemic Renovations – White

Oak School

11.Change Order – Major Maintenance Renovations – Randallstown

Elementary School

12.Change Order – Consultant Design Services for Major Maintenance

Renovation Program – Edmondson Heights Elementary School

13.Change Order – Consultant Design Services for Major Maintenance

Renovation Program – Featherbed Lane Elementary School

14.Change Order – Consultant Design Services for Major Maintenance

Renovation Program – Johnnycake Elementary School

15.Change Order – Consultant Design Services for Major Maintenance

Renovation Program – Owings Mills Elementary School

16.Change Order – Consultant Design Services for Major Maintenance

Renovation Program – Woodmoor Elementary School

Item 10

Mr. Kennedy asked Mr. Cassell to briefly explain the reason for this change order.Mr. Cassell noted that not all change orders have a bad connotation.In this particular change order, teacher storage cabinets, which were not part of the original modernization program, were found to be in disrepair because of water damage caused by floor cleaning over the years.This situation is being corrected by providing 22 new storage wardrobe units for the teachers.

Mr. Walker asked about the number of change orders for this project.Mr. Cassell reported that this change order would be number six for the Randallstown Elementary School modernization/renovation project.The six change orders total approximately \$77,000 and represent 1.4% of the construction cost.

On behalf of the Building Committee, Mr. Kennedy recommended approval item 10.The Board approved this recommendation.

10.Change Order – Additions and Renovations – Randallstown Elementary School

Item 7

Mr. Walker asked for clarification of the “Henry Hub.”Mr. Cassell explained this is the supply point for the recommended supplier.He also noted that the Facilities’ energy supervisor has done research that indicates natural gas prices have fallen since January of this year, and the school system would like to take advantage of this opportunity to secure natural gas at a reasonable price.

Mr. Kennedy asked about the status of the account for the current school year. Mr. Cassell will have Mr. Pipin respond.

As recommended by the Building Committee, the Board approved item 7.

7. Natural Gas Supply – Various Schools

INFORMATION

The Board received the following as information:

Minutes of the Southeast Area Educational Advisory Council meeting, April 3, 2001.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Arnold made the following announcements:

- The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Education of Baltimore County will be held on Tuesday, June 12, 2001, at Greenwood. The meeting will begin with an open session at 5:00 p.m. After the Board adjourns to meet in closed session, followed by a brief dinner recess, the open meeting will reconvene at approximately 7:30 p.m. The public is welcome at all open sessions.
- The Board will vote on the proposed revisions to Policy 5550 at the June 12th Board meeting. Tonight was an opportunity for the public to address the Board on the proposed revisions, but there were no speakers listed on the sign-up sheet.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Thomas Raybon, President of the Baltimore County Student Councils for 2001-02, introduced himself to the Board and Superintendent. He noted that he is the first student from Dundalk High School to serve as BCSC's president, and he is also the first African American student to serve in this capacity. Thomas informed the Board BCSC is going through the selection process for executive board members.

Mr. Mel Mossovitz, representing the Advisory Committee for Alternative Programs, spoke about the Maryland's Tomorrow program. He noted there are currently 450 9th-12th grade students enrolled, and 100 new students are being enrolled for next year.

Ms. Jasmine Shriver, Vice President of the Advisory Committee for Special Education, thanked Mr. Arnold for meeting with the committee last week. She shared her concern about how the new reading program will affect special education students.

Ms. Mary Pat Kahle, a representative of the Advisory Committee for Special Education and the committee's representative on the Reading Committee, voiced her encouragement that special education was being included at the ground level. She stated the new materials need to be readily available to all special education teachers at all levels. Ms. Kahle also noted that staff development for special education teachers should be at all levels.

Ms. Maggie Kennedy, Coordinator of the Area Educational Advisory Councils, thanked advisory council chairs and members for their hard work and dedication. Mr. Arnold, Ms. Ettinger, and the Board were recognized for their time and willingness to work more closely with advisory councils. Area superintendents were thanked for their assistance over the year. Finally, Dr. Hairston and Ms. Johns were recognized for their commitment to the councils and to Baltimore County Public Schools.

Ms. Meg O'Hare, Chair of the Northeast Area Educational Advisory Council, thanked Dr. Mohler for his assistance, and she thanked the members of the Northeast Council for their hard work and dedication. She voiced her concern about the disjointed approach by having one series for phonics and another for literature. Ms. O'Hare shared her disappointment that the recommendations were not shared with the committee prior to tonight's board meeting.

Ms. Laura Nossel, President of the PTA Council of Baltimore County, expressed her appreciation to Board members for their hard work this past year, and she extended best wishes to those who are leaving the system.

Ms. Joyce DiRenzi, a representative of the PTA Council, shared her disappointment that Reading Committee members were not invited to discuss the recommendations before being presented to the Board. She also expressed concern about how the committee was formed and that two days of teacher training is not adequate to train staff on two reading series.

Mr. Mark Beytin, President of the Teachers' Association of Baltimore County, shared many of the concerns of the previous speakers about the reading series. He also noted that secular and religious private schools are now competing with public schools for teachers, where salaries are generally higher. He referred to a commentary that appears in the current issue of *Education Week*. Mr. Beytin read excerpts from the article that begins by describing the 30-year old collective bargaining relationship as "hostile" and punctuated by "the institutionalized rancor (which) has impeded collaboration and reform." In recent years, the adversarial position to negotiations has been superseded in some school systems by interest-based bargaining, which focuses on issues, not personalities; using reason to make decisions, not power; and focusing on interests, not positions. The commentary states collective bargaining can be an effective tool for enhancing learning opportunities for students when there is trust between partners. It takes a history of accumulated successes, and Mr. Beytin noted that one of our shared successes is 11-month employment for teachers in low achieving schools. He asked the Board to continue to work with TABCO to break new ground on the educational front. He stated we need to use the collective bargaining process to build a more genuine profession for teachers and more effective schools for students.

Mr. Gerald Judd, President of the Woodbridge Elementary School PTA, asked the Board for its support of the construction of walls for Woodbridge Elementary School. He thanked Board member Jung for her visit to the school and extended an invitation to the other Board members to visit.

Ms. Jennifer Robinson noted the only group in Maryland charged with making any recommendations for reform of the MSPAP is the Visionary Panel of which Ms. Robinson has accepted a position on the Panel's subcommittee for assessments. She noted a letter sent to the State Board of Education by the PTA Council of Baltimore County detailing its concerns and suggesting the 3rd grade test be suspended for 2002. Ms. Robinson read Dr. Grasmick's response. Ms. Robinson encouraged the Board to take a position on MSPAP reform and make it public.

Mr. Rodger Janssen shared his disappointment that he was not called upon at the last meeting to share his views about the proposed 2002-03 school calendar after signing up. He also commented on the Superintendent's organization chart for the next school year. Referring to an earlier comment during the reading series report, Mr. Janssen noted that one of the non-professional parents on the Reading Committee holds a Master's degree in English Education.

At 10:48 p.m., Mr. Kennedy moved to end the open session. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sasiadek and approved by the Board.

Respectfully submitted,

Joe A. Hairston

Secretary-Treasurer

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