

Approved Minutes

REPORT OF THE WORK SESSION ON THE MASTER PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

Tuesday, April 27, 2004
Greenwood

The work session was called to order by President James R. Sasiadek at 7:30 p.m. In addition to President Sasiadek, the following Board members were present: Miss Francesca Cirincione, Ms. Phyllis E. Ettinger, Mr. Thomas Grzymiski, Mr. John A. Hayden, III, Dr. Warren C. Hayman, Ms. Jean M. H. Jung, Mr. Michael P. Kennedy, and Mr. James E. Walker. In addition, Dr. Joe A. Hairston, Superintendent of Schools, staff members, as well as media were present.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The work session commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, which was led by Miss Francesca Cirincione, Student Board member, followed by a period of silent meditation for those who have served education in the Baltimore County Public Schools.

Mr. Sasiadek reviewed the purpose of tonight's meeting and provided a brief summary of the progress to the Master Plan. Staff was thanked for its work in preparing the information being presented tonight.

Dr. Hairston welcomed the Board and public to the work session. He asked the Executive Directors of Schools to share with the Board and public progress to date on the Master Plan.

Dr. Scott Gehring, Executive Director of Schools for the Northwest Area provided a brief introduction noting that tonight's report is one of many opportunities to communicate progress that schools are making in meeting the needs of all students on the rigorous expectations outlined in the *Blueprint for Progress*, the Master Plan, and the *No Child Left Behind* legislation. Tonight's work session will highlight 14 activities that are directly related to results. Dr. Gehring noted that on several slides there would be asterisks indicating fewer than 5 students in a given subgroup participated and data would not be presented. Next, Dr. Gehring presented results and progress to date on the Master Plan within the Northwest Area of Baltimore County Public Schools.

Ms. Ettinger noted that additional data would be helpful in the following areas:

- . • The total population of each school
- . • Breakdown by grade
- . • Percentage of the population the data was referring to
- . • Percentage of how close the school(s) were to not achieving AYP by subgroup and category

With regards to Ms. Ettinger's question concerning Old Court Middle School, Dr. Gehring stated the number of students taking reading next year will increase. He noted that the majority of the Math Department staff would be returning next school year, which will have a positive impact at the school. Ms. Ettinger inquired of the needs of students at the elementary levels and adjusting those needs in the secondary level. Dr. Gehring responded one elementary school did not meet AYP on multiple levels. Ms. Jane Lichter, Coordinator for Language Arts-Elementary Programs, responded that a reading coach would be hired to assist in the professional development of teachers at Scotts Branch Elementary School. She also noted one school is targeted for the reading grant program. Ms. Linda Schoenbrodt, Coordinator of Math-Elementary Programs stated all teachers have attended quarterly training. Ms. Ettinger asked whether an alternative plan would be in place to fit the needs of specific populations. Ms. Kathleen McMahan, Executive Director of Elementary Programs, responded that student assessments would occur three times a year and that any inconsistency would be monitored closely.

Mr. Hayden commented on tracking of parent/teacher conferences and the additional work it could place on teachers.

Mr. Kennedy asked for additional information on 10-month employment and correlation between high test scores.

Mr. Walker inquired about the free and reduced meals subgroup. Dr. Gehring responded that it is duplication and an additional category is being explored by staff.

Mr. Sasiadek stated this data will help the system drill down to individual students. He expressed the importance of every child finding success in the system.

Dr. Hayman commented on the high turnover rate in students at Scotts Branch Elementary School. In regards to the report, he stated the data does not provide all the information needed to answer the questions. Dr. Hayman was also disturbed that 3 out of 5 elementary schools have fewer students enrolled in the gifted/talented (GT) program. He believes that every school should offer the GT program and have an increase in numbers. Dr. Hayman noted the report conveys what is happening, however, it does not provide recommendations to correct the situations. He asked about the correlation between professional development and the needs in various schools. Ms. McMahan noted that page 93 of the Curriculum and Instruction section provides a list of professional development activities that have occurred. Dr. Gwen Grant, Executive Director of Secondary Programs, stated that data is reviewed and professional development is adjusted based on the data. Dr. Hayman stated this data does not address the needs of individual schools. He reiterated that the progress report needs to focus on the issues, why the issues are occurring, and recommend solutions to tackle the issues.

Ms. Ettinger expressed concerns about potential fiscal implications in funding and staffing the reading program suggested by Ms. Lichter. In regards to staff development, Ms. Ettinger suggested refining or redefining the department chair models and the development of a

grade-level chair model at the elementary school level to help staff receive job-embedded development.

Mr. Lawrence responded to Dr. Hayman's question relating to Gifted/Talented information. He said the information is reported and shared with the GT office on a quarterly basis. Mr. Lawrence noted the participation rate in the presentation is incorrect and the correct information would be made available to the Board.

Ms. Ettinger reminded the Board that an end of school year report with GT achievement data would be available. Ms. Jeanne Paytner, Gifted Education/Magnet Program Coordinator, stated walk-throughs would be conducted in every middle school GT class. Once the walk-throughs are completed, the data would be compiled and become part of the final GT report.

Dr. Kim Whitehead, Executive Director of Schools, Central Area, presented results and progress to date on the Master Plan within the Central Area of Baltimore County Public Schools.

Ms. Ettinger raised concerns over the SAT data at Hereford High School for verbal and math. Dr. Whitehead stated there are 35 African-American students and seven are in the 12th grade. She mentioned that a discussion with the principal will occur to review the discrepancy. Ms. Ettinger commented that trend data needs to be reviewed and determined whether this is an apparition.

With regards to AP courses in the Central area, Ms. Murray asked about the enrollment disparity between African-American students and white students. Dr. Grant responded that the school system looked at the PSAT scores to make sure students are in high level courses. This year there was a new initiative by the College Board targeting minority students and teachers. She noted that several teachers in Baltimore County attended training sessions to help motivate African-American students to move into high level courses. Each high school received 500 AP booklets explaining the importance of taking AP exams. Ms. Murray reiterated the significant gap in the AP course enrollment and expressed concern over the monitoring of minority students and white students.

Regarding Hereford High School SAT scores, Dr. Hayman expressed concern over the 300-point total score difference in performance between African-American and white students. He inquired as to how the school system is preparing students for taking the SAT next year.

Responding to a question from Mr. Walker, Dr. Whitehead stated that Ridge Ruxton and White Oak Schools utilize the IMAP.

Mr. William Lawrence, Executive Director of Schools, Northeast Area, presented results and progress to date on the Master Plan within the Northeast Area of Baltimore County Public Schools.

Mr. Grzyski asked how teaching staff of schools not meeting AYP in special education compare to those schools achieving AYP. Mr. Lawrence responded that at the elementary school level, special education teachers are certified. He stated that under the *No Child Left Behind Act*,

the “highly qualified teacher” concern would be corrected. In terms of SAT scores, Mr. Grzymiski inquired about comparison of student data. Mr. Lawrence responded that the data is monitored. He also noted that over the last three years, BCPS has been able to increase SAT participation and scores.

Dr. Hayman expressed concern that students do not take the SAT early enough. Mr. Lawrence responded that over 80% of 10th grade students took the PSAT. Dr. Grant stated the 9, 10, and 11 grade levels would be able to participate in the PSAT.

Regarding attendance, Dr. Hayman stated that no discrepancy existed in attendance between African-American and white students.

Ms. Ettinger reiterated Dr. Hayman’s comments on students taking the SATs. With regards to reading, Ms. Ettinger asked if groups with specific learning disabilities receive accommodations on their IEP. Mr. Boone responded that accommodations are on the IEP. Ms. Ettinger commented that students need to have continual exposure to testing including those with specific disabilities.

Mr. Walker asked how will the issue of Northeast area schools not meeting AYP in special education will be addressed. Mr. Lawrence responded the Special Education Office along with the Northeast Area Office are working together to address the issue. Mr. Boone stated diploma-bound students should have the same curriculum and instruction as other students.

Mr. Robert Kemmery, Executive Director of Schools, Southeast Area, presented results and progress to date on the Master Plan within the Southeast Area of Baltimore County Public Schools.

Mr. Hayden raised concern with the AP program in Chesapeake and Sparrows Point High School. He proposed drawing parents into the process. Mr. Kemmery noted that the Maryland State Department of Education has a grant entitled “Great Expectations” which is working with Deep Creek Middle School and Chesapeake High School on a delivery system to get more students enrolled in the AP program. Mr. Hayden suggested adding another column to the report to see progress of implementation plans to address the issues.

Ms. Jung stated it is important to look at teacher qualifications at the low-performing schools. She remarked that attitude, expectation, and knowledge of teachers are extremely important.

With regards to the GT program in the Southeast area, Ms. Ettinger suggested working closely with community colleges to help provide planning needs and opportunities for the families and students. Mr. Kemmery stated the challenge is for all schools to increase their GT program participation.

Mr. Walker asked whether reading was a stand-alone subject taught at Chesapeake High School. Mr. Kemmery responded that 65% of the ninth graders at the school scored basic on reading; however, there are significant gaps needing to be addressed. He mentioned that 90% of the students at Chesapeake High School scored basic in geometry. Mr. Kemmery stated there is a need to get students to where they should be in reading and math.

Mr. Hayden raised the concern that no data was available on Sollers Point High School. He stated that having the information for the school would be a useful reference tool for students. Mr. Kemmery responded the Office of Information Technology is working on producing a report card for Sollers Point High School.

Dr. Richard Milbourne, Executive Director of Schools, Southwest Area, presented results and progress to date on the Master Plan within the Southwest Area of Baltimore County Public Schools.

Mr. Walker was pleased to see significant improvement at Catonsville High School. Dr. Milbourne stated expectations are high at the school. SAT performance is the responsibility of all, not just the reading and math teachers. Dr. Milbourne noted there is a need to ensure students are proficient in the primary grades and that interventions at the secondary level should be reviewed.

Responding to a question by Mr. Kennedy regarding Woodlawn Middle School, Dr. Milbourne noted several variables, which include concentrating on the issues identified at this work session.

With regards to GT data at the elementary and middle school levels, Ms. Ettinger noted the need to identify meaningful numbers of students in schools. It appears that numbers have changed significantly over a period of time. Dr. Milbourne stated GT is a priority with principals and the numbers must be accurate. Ms. Ettinger stated the school system must recognize the importance of reading and math instruction beyond the elementary level into the secondary level. Dr. Christine Johns, Deputy Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, requested revisiting this issue in the next report. Dr. Johns stated MSA data would be received at the beginning of July. Ms. Ettinger stated GT and AYP data should be reviewed before the next school year.

Dr. Hayden stated the necessity to address issues at the elementary level. He reemphasized looking at the root cause of each problem and putting corrective and preventive actions in place.

Dr. Hairston commented that the work session was to provide information so that an assessment of the next steps in decision-making process can be achieved. He noted that the report reinforces the *Blueprint for Progress*. Dr. Hairston stated that a refined, updated report would be provided to the Board. Dr. Hairston thanked the Board for their questions and recommendations.

ADJOURNMENT

At 10:22 p.m., Mr. Hayden moved to adjourn the open session. The motion was seconded by Mr. Grzyski and approved by the Board.

Respectfully submitted,

Joe A. Hairston Secretary-
Treasurer

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