

TENTATIVE MINUTES

BOARD OF EDUCATION OF BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND

Tuesday, March 25, 2003

The Board of Education of Baltimore County, Maryland, met in open session at 4:37 p.m. at Greenwood. President Donald L. Arnold and the following Board members were present: Ms. Sarah D. Bormel, Mr. Thomas G. Grzymiski, Mr. John A. Hayden, III, Dr. Warren C. Hayman, Ms. Jean M. H. Jung, Mr. Michael P. Kennedy, Ms. Janese Murray, Mr. James R. Sasiadek, and Mr. James E. Walker. In addition, Dr. Joe A. Hairston, Superintendent of Schools, and staff members were present.

Dr. Hairston announced that earlier this afternoon, the State Board of Education approved Baltimore County's waiver request for Easter Monday. Therefore, the last day of school for students and teachers will be Friday, June 20th, and no adjustments to Spring Break will be needed. It was reported that Baltimore County Public Schools was complimented for its good planning.

Mr. Arnold noted last night's ceremony in Annapolis recognizing two Baltimore County schools - Summit Park Elementary School and Timonium Elementary School - as Blue Ribbon Schools. A total of six schools throughout the state were selected to receive this honor.

Mr. Arnold informed Board members of a meeting between the County Executive, Dr. Hairston, and himself to discuss the County Executive's recent request for information.

At 4:47 p.m., Mr. Grzymiski moved that the Board go into closed session to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice pursuant to the Annotated Code of Maryland, State Government Article, §10-508(a)(7). The motion was seconded by Mr. Sasiadek and unanimously approved by the Board.

CLOSED SESSION MINUTES

Ms. Saffran-Brinks provided legal advice to the Board with regard to a matter involving certain employees that might have a budgetary impact.

In response to a question by Mr. Kennedy, Ms. Saffran-Brinks updated the Board with respect to a matter under review by the federal government.

At 5:10 p.m., Mr. Sasiadek moved the Board come out of closed session. The motion was seconded by Mr. Walker and approved by the Board.

OPEN SESSION MINUTES

Mr. Arnold reminded Board members of tonight's dinner with members of the Department of Recreation and Parks, dinner with CASE on March 27th, and the Principals' Academy in June. Ms. Bormel described

OPEN SESSION MINUTES (Cont.)

Carver's Literacy in the Arts program and invited Board members to attend a performance by third graders at Halstead Academy on Wednesday evening.

At 5:15 p.m., Ms. Jung moved to adjourn the open session for a brief dinner recess. The motion was seconded by Ms. Murray and approved by the Board.

The Board hosted members of the Department of Recreation and Parks for dinner.

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: Ms. Sarah D. Bormel, Mr. Thomas G. Grzynski, Mr. John A. Hayden, III, Dr. Warren C. Hayman, Ms. Jean M. H. Jung, Mr. Michael P. Kennedy, Ms. Janese Murray, Mr. James R. Sasaidek, 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 Mr. Josh Roth, a student at Owings Mills High School, and a period of silent meditation for those who have served education in the Baltimore County Public Schools. The audience was asked to remember Peggy Gordon, Principal of Woodbridge Elementary School, who lost both parents in the last two weeks.

MINUTES

Hearing no additions or corrections to the Report of the Special Board Meeting, February 20, 2003; the open and closed session minutes of February 26, 2003; and the Report of the Public Hearing, March 10, 2003; Mr. Arnold declared the minutes approved as presented on the web site.

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

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Hairston recognized Woodlawn and Parkville High Schools for their participation in the Robotics competition held at the Naval Academy last weekend.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT (Cont.)

Dr. Hairston noted a very productive meeting with the House delegation in Annapolis last Friday. He stated the delegation was very enthused and interested in what's happening in Baltimore County.

Dr. Hairston announced that the Maryland State Board of Education approved the school system's request for a waiver of Easter Monday. It was the only waiver approved by the State Board. Baltimore County Public Schools was complimented for its good planning.

With respect to the Robotics competition, Mr. Arnold shared his impressions of the students and the competition and urged everyone to attend next year.

Dr. Hairston also informed the Board and audience of the recent Challenge 24 mathematics competition. It was noted that there was standing room only in every competition area. The Superintendent commended Ms. Johns and all the Curriculum and Instruction staff, particularly those in the mathematics area.

Mr. Hayden noted the students' intensity during the competition. Allfirst Bank was recognized as a sponsor of the competition. Mr. Hayden shared his excitement with regard to the business and community support of this competition.

REPORTS

The Board received the following reports:

- A. On motion of Mr. Hayden, seconded by Mr. Sasiadek, the Board adopted a Resolution proclaiming March 2003 as National Social Work Month.
- B. On motion of Mr. Kennedy, seconded by Mr. Walker, the Board approved the Proposed Board Meeting Schedule for 2003-2004.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Walker stated the only concern expressed to him by a parent was that of the racial breakdown of students. Dr. Gehring responded the current minority population of Randallstown High School is 98%; Owings Mills High School is 55%. If Scenario A or B is approved, the minority enrollment at Randallstown will drop to approximately 94%. In Scenario A, the minority population at Owings Mills High School will drop to 40%; in Scenario B, the minority population will drop to 43%.

Several Board members commended the process and its involvement of a large segment of the community. Ms. Jung commended the staff, citizens, parents, and community that were a part of this process.

OLD BUSINESS (Cont.)

On motion of Mr. Kennedy, seconded by Ms. Jung, the Board approved Scenario B for the boundaries at New Town High School.

PERSONNEL MATTERS

Mr. Kennedy moved approval of the personnel matters. Mr. Walker seconded the motion. Ms. Jung reminded the audience that despite a swift motion to approve, the Board and staff have given considerable thought to the recommendations.

The Board approved the personnel matters as presented on Exhibits E, F, G, and H. (Copies of the exhibits are attached to the formal minutes.)

CONTRACT AWARDS

On motion of Mr. Kennedy, seconded by Mr. Sasiadek, the Board approved items 1-5. Mr. Arnold abstained from voting on item 2.

1. Contracted Services: Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound
2. General School and Office Furniture and Equipment
3. Soft Drink Vending
4. Supply Contract: Various Door Hardware
5. Supply Contract: Various HVAC Filters

BUILDING COMMITTEE

The Building Committee, represented by Mr. Kennedy, recommended approval of items 1-3. The Board approved these recommendations.

1. Exterior Door ADA Modifications – Bear Creek Elementary School
2. Physical Education Locker Replacement – Overlea High School
3. Exterior Door Replacements – Four Middle Schools

SCHOOL LEGISLATION

Dr. Poff updated the Board on bills being considered by the legislature. He referenced a *Washington Post* article about the Public School Charter Act and a comparison chart, included in the homework, of the two bills. Dr. Poff stated if the matter is resolved, it would be done by a Conference Committee.

Dr. Poff noted that HB 22 – Public Schools-Specialists-Stipends – received an unfavorable report in the Ways and Means Committee. He further stated that this afternoon SB 32 – Children in Out-of-County Living Arrangements-Informal Kinship Care – was well received by the House Ways and Means Committee, as was the group home legislation.

SB 395 – Commercialism in Schools Act of 2003 – received an unfavorable report in the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, and SB 620 – State Board of Education–Graduation Requirements-Student Service – was defeated.

Speaking about the state budget, Dr. Poff stated the House version of the budget was passed. It is a balanced budget with \$100 million in new revenue. The Senate version depends on lottery legislation which was passed by the Senate. In both versions, Thornton is funded. Next fiscal year is the year the triggering mechanism in Thornton needs to be evaluated.

At Mr. Kennedy's request, Dr. Poff explained the origin of legislation which would remove any references to high stakes testing in the area of education.

INFORMATION

The Board received the following as information:

Revised Rule 2352 – Accidents/Medical Emergencies.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Arnold made the following announcements:

- On Wednesday, April 2, 2003, the Northeast Area Educational Advisory Council will meet at Pine Grove Middle School at 6:30 p.m.
- On Thursday, March 27, at 6:00 p.m., the Board will host members of CASE for dinner.
- On Tuesday, April 8, 2003, the Southeast Area Educational Advisory Council will meet at Bear Creek Elementary School at 7:30 p.m.
- On Wednesday, April 9, 2003, the Southwest Area Educational Advisory Council will meet at Chadwick Elementary School at 7:30 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS (Cont.)

- Schools and offices will be closed for Spring Break from April 14-21, 2003. Schools and offices will reopen on Tuesday, April 22.
- The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Education of Baltimore County will be held on Tuesday, April 22, 2003, at Greenwood. The meeting will begin with an open session at 4:30 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 host the Baltimore City School Board Commissioners for dinner on April 22nd.

Mr. Arnold reminded speakers to refrain from discussing any matter that might come before the Board in the form of an appeal, as well as any personnel matters.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Amethyst Danesie, President of the Baltimore County Student Councils (BCSC), updated the Board on BCSC's activities over the last month, which include lobbying in Annapolis and introduction of the group's first Spring outreach project.

Ms. Kelli Nelson, Chair of the Advisory Committee for Special Education, thanked Ms. Johns for attending the last committee meeting. Concerns about the accommodations situation with regard to MSA testing were discussed, as was the upcoming Special Education Staffing Plan. Ms. Nelson noted that the input sessions for the staffing plan were very well attended. She expressed disappointment that the Special Education Office had not yet provided feedback on these sessions. The committee was invited to participate in a meeting with the County Executive with regard to the school system's proposed budget. Even though the advisory committee supports the budget, Ms. Nelson stated there continue to be concerns about Thornton funding, the increase in non-public placement, and staffing ratios. Ms. Nelson thanked the Superintendent for inviting the committee to participate in the development of the Master Plan.

Ms. Bormel left the room at 8:05 p.m.

Ms. Maggie Kennedy, Coordinator for the Area Educational Advisory Councils, noted that over 30 community leaders, as well as community association representatives and civic leaders, attended a recent meeting with County Executive James Smith. The County Executive has stated that education is his top priority. It is also the top priority among local and national voters. Through a collaborative effort, Baltimore County received an additional \$3.7 million in capital funding. Ms. Kennedy stated that during the meeting with the County Executive, the Coalition insisted the salary increases for employees be included in the budget. She continued by stating that

PUBLIC COMMENT (Cont.)

adequate funding of public education is the responsibility of elected officials and while increased taxes are not popular, it may be needed to fund education.

Mr. Stephen Crum, a representative of the Southeast Area Educational Advisory Council, spoke about the outstanding performance given by students of Kenwood High School, Middle River, Stemmers Run, Golden Ring, and Deep Creek Middle Schools at a recent school concert.

Ms. Meg O'Hare, Chair of the Northeast Area Educational Advisory Council, noted that the County Executive appears to be sincere in his support of public education. She expressed hope that Mr. Smith would show his support of the budget by approving it as adopted by the Board. During the meeting with the County Executive, the Coalition offered its assistance in answering questions posed by the County Executive about the school system. Ms. O'Hare also noted the assistance social workers provide children and families.

Mr. Rodger Janssen, Vice President of the PTA Council of Baltimore County, reminded Board members of the PTA Council's general meeting on March 27th. He also noted that over the last couple years, a recurring theme during discussions with the Board and Superintendent has been to be more active in informing the public of the good things happening in the school system. Since the hiring of the Chief Communications Officer last year, Mr. Janssen complained the good news is still not forthcoming.

Mr. Mark Beytin, President of the Teachers Association of Baltimore County, complimented Dr. Hairston and the Board on the handling of the calendar dilemma. He spoke of the severe budget crisis faced by the state and stated many of the proposed solutions include a built-in structural deficit that will place the state in the same predicament for years to come. MSTa and TABCO commissioned a study of registered voters throughout Maryland, with an oversampling of Baltimore County, to determine if voters are willing to pay increased taxes to support public education. Overwhelmingly, voters throughout the state and in Baltimore County opposed cutting public education funds as a way to solve budget problems facing county governments. There was also overwhelming support of raising taxes to deal with the budget crisis and fund public education.

Ms. Alison Wallick and Ms. Jessica Hirsh, the nurse and social studies teacher, respectively, from Meadowood Education Center described the school's Character Education Program and how it has evolved over the last three years.

There were no speakers to address the recommendations to Policy 2352 – Accidents/Medical Emergencies.

PUBLIC COMMENT (Cont.)

Mr. David Green, Ridgely Middle School and Riderwood Elementary School parent, shared his satisfaction with the school system's music program and asked for the Board's continued support. He shared his concern with the posting of "Drug Free School Zone" signs at schools stating how children might misinterpret the sign. Mr. Green asked that existing signs be removed and that the school system refrain from posting any more of the signs.

Ms. Kelli Nelson, a representative of the Northwest School Improvement Association, voiced her concern that the adopted boundaries for New Town High School will not address the overcrowding at Owings Mills High School. She questioned the status of the recommendations of the DeJong study with regard to the Northwest Area. Ms. Nelson asked that overcrowding in the Northwest Area be addressed before studying overcrowding throughout the county. She requested the Board present a formal plan to the community with respect to the DeJong recommendations.

Mr. Kennedy noted a recent visit by some Board and staff members to two automobile dealers and to Sollers Point Technical High School. He stated there is little difference between how our students are trained and the knowledge and technology currently being used in the automotive industry. He thanked the Career & Technology Education advisory group for sponsoring the trip.

At 8:38 p.m., Mr. Walker moved to adjourn the open session. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sasiadek and approved by the Board.

Respectfully submitted,

Joe A. Hairston
Secretary-Treasurer