

# BOARDROOM CHATTER

PUBLICATION PREPARED BY ACPS PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

## BOARD OF EDUCATION

Mrs. Tammy Fraley, President  
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Dr. Edward Root  
Mr. Robert Farrell  
Dr. David Bohn  
Mr. Jeff Blank, Interim Superintendent  
Mr. Omaer Naeem, SMOB

## INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

### *Math and Statistics Awareness Month and Recognition of ACPS Accomplishments in MathCounts*

The school board recognized Braddock and Mt. Savage Middle Schools for their accomplishments in the 2020 MathCounts district competition. Braddock Middle School's team placed 1<sup>st</sup> for the 8<sup>th</sup> consecutive year and their 29<sup>th</sup> championship in 37 years, and was also a State Qualifier. Mt. Savage Middle School's team placed 2<sup>nd</sup> and was a State Qualifier.

The following Braddock team members were recognized for their achievements: Colin Sheehe – 1<sup>st</sup> place overall for the 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive year; Emmanuel Kujenga – 3<sup>rd</sup> place overall; Sam Yu and Nathan Peterson.

Other Braddock team members that qualified to advance to the state competition were Nikola Litten (5<sup>th</sup> place overall), Anna Hilderbrand (6<sup>th</sup> place overall), Benjamin McGrew, and Bryce Bridges.

The following Mt. Savage team members were recognized for their achievements: Annabeth Hughes – 4<sup>th</sup> place overall; Ella Valentine, Owen Pratt, and Sophia Zhang.

April marks a time to increase the understanding and appreciation of math and statistics, because both subjects play a significant role in addressing many real-world problems including Internet security, sustainability, disease, climate change, the date deluge, and more. Research in these and other areas is ongoing, revealing new results and applications every day in fields such as medicine, manufacturing, energy, biotechnology, and business. Math and statistics are important drivers of innovation in our technological world, in which new systems and methodologies continue to become more complex.

### *Introduce Allegany County Teacher of the Year*

The school board recognized and introduced the 2020-2021 Allegany County Teacher of the Year, Stacey Bradley, a reading teacher at South Penn Elementary School. Stacey facilitates the Instructional Consultation Team, chairs the Reading Team, and serves as a representative on the Leadership Team at South Penn. She has also taken a huge part in school and community efforts to spread the message of drug awareness. In addition, Stacey serves as the Superintendent of the Sunday school at Barton Presbyterian Church.

### *Recognition of Student Volunteers of the Month and Service Star Recipients*

The school board recognized the following Student Volunteers of the Month for their noteworthy contributions to the community through serving others as they continue to make a difference in the lives of many every day:

- September 2019 – John Toothaker and Hana Chitsaz
- October 2019 – Leah Boggs and Lindsay Sites
- November 2019 - Malloy Boore and Omaer Naeem
- December 2019 – Mia Porter and Kelsey Darber

## CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approve minutes for meetings held on March 3, 2020, and March 24, 2020.
2. Approve routine personnel actions for the period of March 1-31, 2020.
3. Receive school construction/maintenance report for the period of March 1-31, 2020.
4. Receive monthly information technology report for the period of February 2020 and March 2020.
5. Receive monthly financial report for March 2020.
6. Approve bid award for the George's Creek Elementary School boiler replacement project.
7. Approve reclaiming Thursday, April 9, 2020, and Tuesday, April 28, 2020, as student days for instruction through the Continuity of Learning Plan.
8. Approve CARES Act contract with Daly Computers.

## INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT CONT.

- January 2020 – Hannah Greely and Caylin Salmon
- February 2020 – Cameron Bean and Cailin Robertson
- March 2020 – Hannah Custer and Bryce Snyder
- April 2020 – Reagan Marrale and Sydney Snyder

The school board also recognized four seniors as Service Stars who have gone above and beyond in serving their community. These students were nominated by their schools' service-learning coordinators for their compassion and commitment in serving others: Alex Looker, Fort Hill; Samantha Adams, Allegany; Alan Robey, Career Center; and Jacob Hunt, Mountain Ridge.

### ***Recognition of ACASC Executive Board Members and Advisors***

The school board recognized the Executive Board Members of the Allegany County Association of Student Councils. As part of this group, these students spend hours advocating and being the student voice for their fellow peers. They are as follows: Omaer Naeem, SMOB; Hana Chitsaz, President; Mia Porter, Parliamentarian; Caylin Salmon, Public Relations Officer; Lindsay Sites, Secretary; Kelsey Darber, Second Vice President; Hannah Greely, Fort Hill representative; Mally Boore, Career Center representative; Leah Boggs, Mountain Ridge representative; and John Toothaker, Allegany representative.

The school board also recognized the following student council advisors for their time, dedication, and expertise in leading student every day: Chase Crislip, Braddock; Beth Harper, Washington; John Shaw, Mt. Savage; Christon Wilson, Westmar; Nick Amick, Allegany; Megan Bittinger, Mountain Ridge; Brenda Blackburn, Career Center; and Alex Grieves, Fort Hill.

### ***Recognition of Interim Superintendent's Student Advisory Council Members***

The school board recognized the following students as members of the Interim Superintendent's Student Advisory Council: Hana Chitsaz, Omaer Naeem, Kelsey Darber, Caylin Salmon, Lindsay Sites, Toby Preaskorn, Mitchell Septoff, Malloy Boore, Jaylynn Robertson, Hannah Custer, and Cailin Robertson.

### ***Present Proclamation Recognizing April as Library Media Month***

The school board presented a proclamation recognizing April as Library Media Month. The library media program is to ensure that students and staff are effective users of ideas and information. The role of the library media specialist is to provide the leadership and expertise necessary to ensure that the program is an integral part of the instructional program of the school. Library media specialists teach the skills of locating and using information through traditional resources and new technologies, to provide literature appreciation activities, and to guide and encourage content and recreational reading to every student.

### ***Recognition of Carson Scholars***

The school board recognized several students who were named as 2020 Carson Scholars in recognition of their outstanding academic achievements with GPAs of at least 3.75 and their humanitarian qualities. Preston Crawford, fifth grader at Flintstone Elementary School, was honored as a first time scholar. Repeat recipients were as follows: Cameron Breighner, Mt. Savage 6<sup>th</sup> grade; Kelsey Darber, Washington 8<sup>th</sup> grade; Kinsey Hostetler, Braddock 8<sup>th</sup> grade; Robert Moffett, Allegany 10<sup>th</sup> grade; Brooklyne Noel, Fort Hill 10<sup>th</sup> grade; Dawson Ternent, Mountain Ridge 11<sup>th</sup> grade; and Benjamin Twigg, Washington 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

The Carson Scholars Fund awards \$1,000 college scholarships to students in grades 4-11 who excel academically and are dedicated to serving their communities. Previous winners of Carson Scholarships are eligible to reapply for Carson Scholar recognition. An interested student must be nominated by an educator at his or her school to be able to compete for a Carson Scholarship. Scholarships are awarded solely on the basis of academic achievement and humanitarian qualities.

# INSTRUCTIONAL UPDATES

## ***Continuity of Learning and Special Education Plan***

Dr. Kim Kalbaugh, ACPS Chief Academic Officer, updated the school board on the system's continuity of learning and special education plans. Continuity of learning is a process by which learning continues through the delivery of standards-based activities and assignments that can be completed with limited instruction. MSDE has provided guidance for content areas. ACPS is providing continuity of learning through online platforms including Class Dojo and Google Classroom and through learning packets, which are distributed every two weeks at each school. Statistics from the last two weeks show an increase in students utilizing online platforms (from 65% to 73%). Additionally, engagement increased from 95% to 99% in the district. Administrators will maintain updated statistics each week.

Every special education student was contacted to develop an individualized continuity of learning plan that addressed their current IEP goals and supports and how they would be delivered during this period of remote instruction. Individualized resources to support instruction are provided to students either through an online format or on paper. The special education teacher and/or related service provider provide support either by phone, online, or on paper, or in some combination as identified by the student's individualized continuity of learning plan. Special Education Facilitators (SEFs) lead virtual meetings to develop individualized continuity of learning plans (ICLP). Special education teachers and related service staff provide remote services per the ICLP, and they collaborate with parents on data collection. ICLPs are modified and adapted to meet student and family needs. Virtual professional development activities were conducted with SEFs and school psychologists on how to conduct meetings remotely and develop and ICLP. SEFs and school psychologists led over 1,300 virtual meetings with teachers, service staff and parents to develop ICLPs based on current IEPs. In addition to creating a framework for conducting remote meetings and developing an ICLP, the special education department has developed a system to facilitate the digital signing and submission of Medicaid forms and billing remotely. When ACPS resumes a normal schedule, SEFs will conduct meetings with families and educational teams to determine student progress and if there is a need for additional services as a result of building closures.

ACPS continues to provide links, resources and supplemental activities for students and parents during the COVID-19 pandemic. A crisis management website has been established as well as an IT Help Desk and Community Help Desk for staff and parents/students to address technical issues. School counseling, mental health, IEP services, pupil service teams, and principal and supervisors all continue to conduct weekly meetings to address important issues. Tutoring services, an academic help desk, and Chromebook and mobile hotspots are also currently being discussed and/or developed.

## ***Other Instructional Updates***

Dr. Kalbaugh also provided scheduling updates. Middle and high school schedule builds were completed for all schools. All middle schools will have social studies and science every day. Additionally, the Agricultural Science electives will be taught at all three comprehensive high schools in the fall of 2020. They include Intro to Agricultural and Natural Resources and Wildlife and Forest Management. Twenty-five 9<sup>th</sup> grade students are in the 2020-2021 P-TECH cohort with seven on a wait list. Melissa Kaye, P-TECH Coordinator, has conducted phone or videoconferences with all students and parents/guardians. Of these 25 students, three plan to complete the four-year pathway and 22 plan to complete the five-year pathway. In 2020-2021, ACPS will have four P-TECH cohorts, with the first one entering 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Two students are anticipated to graduate from high school and ACM in May of 2021. Overall, the P-TECH students have taken a combined total of 52 college courses this year. The students have an overall GPA of 3.3 while participating in a variety of sports, chorus/band, and various clubs. During this school closure, Ms. Kaye is closely monitoring P-TECH student progress. For the 2020-2021 school year, enrollment at the Career Center increased to 145 juniors and 124 seniors. The CTE will also be offering college speech, college English, college probability and statistics, with enrollment increases in trig/pre-calculus, AP Language, and Honors English III.

The State Superintendent of schools, pursuant to the jurisdiction of the State board, may waive up to five days of student attendance from Maryland public schools for the 2019-2020 school year, upon the request of the local superintendent of schools. Per the State BOE meeting, there will be waivers for seniors regarding state assessment requirements, Bridge, and service-learning hours. ACPS will request to use the minimum graduation requirements of 21 credits by the MSDE for seniors. In addition, ACPS received high school winter government scores, which will be available in Aspen in the near future. The field test for grade 8 U.S. History will be postponed until May of 2021.

## NEW BUSINESS

### *Consider Approval of Requesting a Waiver from the MSDE State Superintendent*

The school board approved a motion for Mr. Blank to send a letter to request to the Maryland State Superintendent of Schools to waive five student days from the 180-day required minimum number of school days.

### *Consider Approval of Temporarily Waiving ACBOE Policy to Comply with State Board Decisions*

The school board approved a motion to waive Allegany County BOE policies as deemed necessary to comply with MSDE decisions during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### *Vote to Meet in Executive Session May 12, 2020, as Necessary*

The school board voted to meet in Executive Session on Tuesday, May 12, 2020, pending any appeals or unfinished business. All meetings will continue to be held virtually until further notice. The public may watch the livestream of the meeting at <http://bit.ly/ACPSMedia>, which will begin at 3 p.m. Community members may submit public comment via email to [comments@acpsmd.org](mailto:comments@acpsmd.org). Emails must be received no later than 5 p.m. on Monday, May 11, 2020. During the public comment portion of the meeting, emails will be read in the order in which they were received. Personal information will not be withheld and anonymous submissions will not be considered. The Board President or her designee will read the constituent's name in addition to the public comment.

## SPECIAL REPORTS AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

### *Mrs. Tammy Fraley*

Mrs. Fraley has been a part of several virtual calls with Senators regarding the need for better broadband in Allegany County. They are aware of our concerns. She noted that while she understands that virtual learning has been difficult during this time, she appreciates the work that ACPS mental health groups are doing to provide helpful resources to students, staff and the community. She also appreciates the work that teachers have done to help keep their students connected with each other.

### *Dr. Edward Root*

Dr. Ed Root shared that he had a recent conversation with MSDE, Dr. Karen Salmon, to gather suggestions from local districts in the event that Maryland public schools re-open this school year. He mentioned that he suggested that one possible option could be to go back on a class by class basis and have half of the students in a classroom go to school one day and the other half of the class go on the next day. This option was for alternating full days of school, not half days. Dr. Salmon was accepting suggestions but it does not mean that those suggestions are now being considered. Dr. Root also stressed to Dr. Salmon that if schools do re-open this year, any parent who feels unsafe or uncomfortable sending their student back should not be penalized for choosing to keep them home and continuing with remote learning. He also noted that any decision to re-open schools will not be made at the local level. This decision will be made at the state level, when and if circumstances permit under conditions that are felt to be safe for all students and staff.

### *Mr. Robert Farrell*

Mr. Farrell has also participated in a virtual teleconference with Senators and the FCC regarding the need for better broadband in Allegany County.

### *Mr. Jeffrey Blank, Interim Superintendent*

Mr. Blank took a moment to recognize Mr. Vince Montana, ACPS Director of Facilities, who

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

### *Consider Second Reading of Computerized Data Management Systems Policy (File: EH)*

The school board approved the second reading of the above policy, whose purpose is “to identify responsibility for computerized data systems and record management, and set procedures which address the granting, changing, and termination of data access rights.”

### *Consider Second Reading of Student Discipline Policy (File: JK)*

The school board approved the second reading of the above policy, whose purpose is “to establish a framework of values, standards, and expectations to guide the administration of student discipline.”

recently retired from the school system after 34 years. Mr. Montana was a part of the construction of both Mountain Ridge and Allegany High Schools during his career.

### *Mr. Omaer Naeem, SMOB*

Omaer noted that students appreciate all of the work that ACPS staff is doing during this closure; however, many students are still concerned about grades, proms, graduations, and more. He hopes that the school board will take these things into account when making decisions about the end of the year and be transparent about the end results. In ACASC news, Omaer noted that the group is exploring new ways to vote for next year's officers. On a personal note, Omaer noted that he would attend Washington University in St. Louis in the fall in the school of Arts & Sciences as an undecided student. He also won one of their three signature full-tuition merit awards and has received the designation of an Ervin Scholar.