



BOARD OF EDUCATION
Mrs. Crystal Bender, President
Ms. Lori Lepley, Vice President
Dr. David Bohn
Mr. Max Green
Mrs. Linda Widmyer
Mr. Jeffrey Blank, Superintendent
Miss. Eowyn Hansrote, SMOB

BOARDROOM CHATTER

Prepared by Public Information Officer

March 11, 2025

The Board Office of Allegany County Public Schools

Superintendent's Report

Present Proclamation Recognizing March as Women's History Month

- Presented by Lori Lepley
- Presented to Dr. Sarah Welsh – Supervisor of Equity

"On behalf of all of the women in public education, I'm thankful to accept this recognition. We know that women have played a critical role in public education since its inception and continue to do so, so we appreciate this acknowledgement."

- Dr. Sarah Welsh, *Supervisor of Equity*



Present Proclamation Recognizing March as Youth Art Month

- Presented by Dr. David Bohn
- Presented to Mr. Jeff Avey – Assistant Supervisor of Fine Arts

"We've reserved some space in the Allegany Museum for a high school art show April 9 – 13. The elementary, middle, and high school art show will be at City Place in Frostburg, April 23-28. We're very excited about what's coming. We have some high school artists that are being recognized by the state and are headed for scholarships at major universities. It's been a great year to be an art supervisor."

- Mr. Jeff Avey, *Assistant Supervisor of Fine Arts*



Superintendent's Report cont.

Present Proclamation Recognizing March as Music in our School's Month

- Presented by Max Green
- Presented to Mr. Jeff Avey – Assistant Supervisor of Fine Arts

“Our All County Festivals came to a close with All County Orchestra. We are now transitioning to adjudicated festivals, which are public events. They will take place roughly from 9am to noon at Pealer Performing Arts Center at Frostburg State University. We're excited about all of our performances, and of course the individual schools are also getting ready for their spring musicals.”

- Mr. Jeff Avey, *Assistant Supervisor of Fine Arts*



Early Childhood Center Update

- Opening of the Early Childhood Center at Washington Middle School will be delayed until August 2027
 - Delay is due to the bidding process and coordinating with MSDE
 - This summer the parking lot and small prep projects will move forward, so when construction does begin, it will be easier and safer for staff and students
 - Construction will start next spring, weather permitting
 - Funding for the project is secure

Instructional Update

Habits for Success

- In the Fall of 2024, students in College English were concurrently enrolled in a Habits for Success Orientation Course
 - Course Objectives
 - To increase college and career readiness – Blueprint Pillar 3 priority
 - The course is designed to equip students with the skills and strategies for success in college that also form the foundation for success in careers
 - Topics include: notetaking, organizational skills, test preparation, stress management, guided journal writing, application of study techniques, and navigating the college's learning management system

Instructional Update cont.

Habits for Success

- 198 students enrolled in the course in the Fall of 2024
- Student reflections, students evaluated the course itself. Topics students found most beneficial:
 - Note taking strategies
 - Test taking strategies
 - Time management strategies
 - Stress management strategies
- For the 2025-2026 school year
 - Habits for Success will be required college orientation course for any ACPS student enrolled in College English through ACM
 - Students will take the course concurrently with College English
 - Students can earn a total of 4 credits
 - College English – 3 college credits / 1 high school credit
 - Habits for Success – 1 college elective credit
- Students are not permitted to take College English without taking the Habits for Success Course

2025-2026 Academic Calendar

- 1st day for teachers – August 20, 2025
- 1st day for students – August 27, 2025
- Last day for students – Friday, June 5, 2026 (excluding inclement weather days)
- Last day for teachers – Monday, June 8, 2026 (excluding inclement weather days)
- Thanksgiving Break – Wednesday, November 26 (3hr early dismissal) through Monday, December 1
- Christmas Break – Tuesday, December 23 (3hr early dismissal) through Friday, January 2
- Easter Break – Wednesday, April 1 through Monday, April 6
 - Training and Professional Development days that need added this year
 - PowerSchool Training
 - 8 MSDE Learning Forward Professional Development topics
 - 4 Maryland Leadership Training topics
 - ACPS and ACEA Career Ladder MOU – Extended workday with 30 minutes of collaboration for teams and interdisciplinary planning to fulfill Blueprint requirements on 16 designated Wednesdays
 - Inclement Weather
 - 3 inclement weather days built into the calendar
 - ACPS will be closed for the first 3 district-wide inclement weather closures
 - If ACPS exceed 3 district-wide inclement weather closures, virtual synchronous learning using Schoology will be used
 - ACPS will also use virtual synchronous learning through Schoology for regional closures

Hearing of Constituents

Public Comment

- Kim Sloane, President ACEA

New Business

Vote to approve the 25-26 Academic Calendar

- Approved

Reports of Special or Advisory Committees

Board Member Updates

- Crystal Bender
 - There is a community survey posted on the ACPS website regarding the Superintendent Search.
 - Opportunity to provide feedback on qualities the community would like to see in the next Superintendent
- Lori Lepley
 - The legislative session is still in progress and MABE is tracking 97 bills and as of February 15th, MSDE is tracking 322

April meeting has been moved up one week to April 1, 2025.