

BOARDROOM CHATTER

PUBLICATION PREPARED BY ACPS PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Mr. Robert Farrell
Dr. David Bohn
Mr. Jeff Blank, Interim
Superintendent
Mr. Omaer Naeem, SMOB

INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Recognize 2020 Maryland National History Day Competition Winner

The school board recognized Fort Hill High School student, Carl Eckard, as the 2020 Maryland National History Day Competition winner in the Senior Individual Exhibit category. Carl received the George Washington Leadership in History award and a cash prize of \$350 presented by the Washington Library of George Washington's Mount Vernon. This year's theme for National History Day was "Breaking Barriers." The title of Carl's exhibit was "Thomas Paine: Breaking Barriers with Pen and Paper." Thomas Paine's work publishing materials that could be understood by the common man helped to spark the American Revolution and as a result connects the ideas and events that defined George Washington's life.

Recognize 2020 Maryland State FBLA Leadership Conference and Competition Winners

The school board recognized the following students for their achievements at the 2020 Maryland State FBLA Leadership Conference and Competition. The top four students will now have the opportunity to participate in the 2020 Virtual National Leadership Conference later this month.

Allegany High School: 1st place Publication Design – Erica Metheny, Audrey Litman, Peyton McDonald; 2nd place Insurance and Risk Management – Jared Piser; 5th place Business Communications – Hannah Willetts; 8th place Introduction to Business – Brianna Palaski

Career Center: 1st place Computer Problem Solving – Ethan Blocher; 3rd place Network Design – John Blank, Devin Greco

Recognize ACPS Retirees

The school board recognized the following retirees for their years of service and in recognition of their dedication to the Allegany County Public School System: Christine Baker, 27 years; John Buckalew, Jr., 16 years; Marianna Bucy, 16 years; Jackie Burner, 15.5 years; Gregory Carolan, 30 years; Kecia Colbert, 30 years; Marilyn Cross, 25 years; Annette Flanigan, 29 years; Vicki Grove, 20 years; Thomas Hess, 12 years; Theresa Kirk, 30 years; Barbara Knight, 13 years; Deborah Kolb, 19 years; Teressa Monahan, 30 years; Vincent Montana, 34 years; Michael Muir, 11 years; Shella Navaleny, 18 years; Isabell Niland, 21 years; Debra Parks, 15 years; Bonnie Paul, 13 years; Debra Poland, 20 years; Robert Ringer, 23 years; Gail Ritchie, 41 years; John Wertz, 28 years; Stephanie Willetts, 18 years; Susan Williams, 14 years; Karen Youngbar, 1 year; Patricia Zimmerman, 32 years.

Recognize Mr. Omaer Naeem, Student Member of the Board of Education of Allegany County

The school board recognized Omaer Naeem and expressed its appreciation for his dedication and outstanding service to the students of ACPS as the student representative to the elected Board of Education for the 2019-2020 school year.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approve minutes for meeting held on May 12, May 19, and May 20, 2020.
2. Approve routine personnel actions for the period of May 1-31, 2020.
3. Receive school construction/maintenance report for the period of May 1-31, 2020.
4. Receive monthly information technology report for the period of May 2020.
5. Receive monthly financial report for May 2020.
6. Consider approval of 2020 Master Plan for School Facilities.

Food Service Update

Mr. Todd Lutton, ACPS Supervisor of Food and Nutrition Services, provided the school board with an update on school meals since mandatory closures. The food service department began serving lunch to students at all 21 school sites on March 16, 2020. After the first week of closures, ACPS subsequently began to serve three meals a day to students, which included breakfast, lunch, and a snack.

INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT CONT.

After 59 days, the food service department has been successful in providing meals to 107,000 students and has served 310,032 meals. In the beginning, they were averaging 1,757 meals a day. That number is now approximately 1,539 meals a day. Mr. Lutton noted that his department will also be providing meals during the summer at twelve school sites which were determined based on meal counts, location, FARMs, and staffing. Summer meals will be served beginning Monday, June 15, 2020, from 11 a.m. to noon Monday through Friday at the following sites: Beall, Bel Air, Braddock, Cash Valley, Flintstone, John Humbird, Mount Savage, South Penn, Washington, Westside, Westmar, and Westernport.

INSTRUCTIONAL UPDATES

Continuity of Learning and ACPS Recovery Plan

Dr. Kim Kalbaugh, ACPS Chief Academic Officer, provided the school board with an update on the Continuity of Learning and Recovery Plan. June 8th was the final week for student work to be turned in for both online learning and learning packets. Teachers had June 9-12 to calculate grades and upload fourth marking period, second semester, and final grades into Aspen. Report cards will be posted on June 25th. Parents and students may appeal a fourth marking period grade in writing to the school principal from June 26-July 6. Principals will review these requests to determine if a student will be granted an additional extension to complete work.

ACPS has a subcommittee with the health department to formulate a plan to replenish Personal Protective Equipment, health room and COVID protocols, supplies, and more. Additionally, ACPS teachers were surveyed on their thoughts regarding the need for a possible COL plan for the 20-21 school year and if they would be open to learning another online platform. 437 responses showed a 90.5% yes to that question.

Teacher and Principal Evaluations Update

ACPS and the Allegany County Education Association (ACEA) entered a mutual agreement for the 2019-2020 year due to the COVID-19 school closures that took place effective March 16, 2020, through the end of the school year. This agreement aligns with the MSDE Guidance on Teacher Evaluation dated May 6, 2020. SLOs are waived, if needed, for the 2019-2020 school year. Teachers are completing a survey report on the option they want used for their 2019-2020 evaluation. A carry-over score for principal evaluations will be used from the 2018-2019 school year. For a new principal, the professional practice will be completed.

Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committee Update

Mrs. Jennifer Miller, the chair of the Citizens' Advisory Committee, provided the school board with an update. It is the mission of the Allegany County Special Education Citizens'

Advisory Committee to provide information to develop knowledge, attitudes and skills needed by families, educators, other professionals and community members to enable individuals with disabilities to have the maximum opportunity to become fully participating members of their home, school, work and community. A complete copy of their bylaws is available online.

The vision of the Allegany County Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committee is to facilitate communication and collaboration between families, educators, administrators and community leaders to enhance services available for students with disabilities and advocate for positive changes in special education services within the Allegany County Public School system.

Members of this committee must live or work in Allegany County and can include:

- Parents or guardians of students with special needs and requirements.
- Persons with special knowledge or interest concerning special education.
- Students with special education needs and requirements.
- Local special education support or advocacy groups.
- Teachers, staff and administrators with an interest in special education.

The committee meets quarterly the second Monday of the month September, December, March, and June at Allegany College of Maryland. Meetings are typically luncheon meetings with lunch provided for attendees. Tentative dates for the 2020-2021 school year are September 14, 2020; December 14, 2020; March 8, 2021; and June 14, 2021.

NEW BUSINESS

Consider Approval of FY2021 Operating Budget

Mr. Larry McKenzie, ACPS Chief Finance Officer, updated the school board on the FY21 operating budget, including the budget priorities and highlights. The school board's budget priorities included preserving and enhancing student programs and associated needs as much as possible based on student interest and enrollment with an added focus on current and future CTE programs; maintaining and enhancing school safety as much as possible considering local law enforcement recommendations and the Maryland Center for School Safety policies and regulations; maintaining and enhancing licensed mental health service providers as much as possible; and making every effort to provide employees with negotiated benefits including salary and health insurance benefits such that their take home pay would not be less due to increased employee shared costs of health insurance and give raises if possible.

The FY21 balanced budget allows a placeholder for good faith negotiations with the district's four bargaining units; adds four teachers within middle school content areas as needed; continues to fund the four mental health professionals and four security employees hired during FY20; continues to provide school-based athletic trainers at the three comprehensive high schools; provides for key personnel to assist with curriculum writing leading up to the MSDE curriculum vetting process set to begin in 2022; provides additional days for the P-TECH program coordinator for the fourth year of the program and additional days for the technology infusion teacher; the purchase of a high school English textbook series for grades nine and ten; the purchase of a K-2 reading textbook series and a grades 3-5 math textbook series; provides funding to achieve a 1:1 ratio between devices and students; provides funding for five additional ALL classrooms; allows for the increase of tuition costs for dual enrollment and P-TECH; includes participation in the Maryland Apprenticeship Program; continues to provide school-based allocations at a constant level; provides an increase for athletic transportation allocations at each school; and allows for the appropriate funding for staff development opportunities.

The school board approved the FY2021 operating budget in the amount of \$117,369,085.

Consider Approval of Bid for OT/PT Contract for 2020-2021 School Year

Allegany County provides occupational therapy and physical therapy to students in accordance with IDEA, COMAR, the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504. Occupational therapy and physical therapy are provided in accordance with a student's IEP, IFSP or 504 plan. Seven qualified bids were received, and the school board, at the recommendation of a review committee, awarded the contract for occupational and physical therapy services for the 2020-2021 school year to School Therapy Services.

Consider Approval of FY2021 Special Education Staffing Plan

Mrs. Debbie Metheny, ACPS Supervisor of Special Education, updated the school board on the FY21 Special Education Staffing Plan. The plan was developed with the goals and objectives of the Allegany County Master Plan in mind, and the components have been publicly discussed as part of the budgetary process. Allegany County's local application for federal funds in the amount of \$2,439,837 was funded by MSDE for FY20. Infant and Toddler funds in the amount of \$227,140 was also funded in FY20.

Staffing decisions for the 2020-2021 school year were made through a series of meetings during which special education administrators, facilitators, and staff looked at student data and identified IEP needs. Assignment of staff was based on student needs. The Special Education Department will employ, using local and restricted funding, the following providers at the beginning of the school year:

- 88.1 teaching positions
- 92 full-time instructional assistants
- 32.5 part-time instructional assistants
- 26.4 professional positions (audiology, speech, vision, interpreter, mental health counselor, school psychologists)
- 23.5 professional positions (infant and toddlers coordinator, facilitators, behavior specialists, non-public, assistive technology/data management, instructional specialists, itinerant autism specialists)

Changes affecting caseload and staffing throughout the school year requires flexibility in regards to staffing. These changes are necessary to implement the IEPs of students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment to provide a free and appropriate public education. The staffing plan will be reviewed at monthly staffing meetings and quarterly Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committee Meetings.

NEW BUSINESS CONT.

The school board voted to approve the FY21 Special Education Staffing Plan.

Consider Approval of Contract for Interim Superintendent Position Effective July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2021

The school board approved the contract for Mr. Jeff Blank to continue to serve in the capacity of Interim Superintendent of Schools effective July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2021.

Review Ethics Policy and Consider Appointment of Ethics Panel Membership

The school board, recognizing that the system of representative government is dependent in part upon the people maintaining the highest trust in their public officials and employees finds and declares that the people have a right to be assured that the impartiality and independent judgment of public officials and employees will be maintained, which is the purpose of the Code of Ethics policy and Ethics Panel. The Ethics Panel must consist of five members who live in Allegany County, are not members of the school board, and employee of the school system, or a spouse of any school board member. The term for two current members of the Ethics Panel expire in the near future, so the school board has begun the process to fill these two upcoming vacancies.

End of Year Calendar Adjustment

Upon approval from MSDE, the school board voted to waive the five days from June 16-22, 2020, as required by contract for Unit I and Unit IV employees that work directly with students (i.e. teachers and instructional assistants). This in turn makes the last day for these 10-month employees Monday, June 15, 2020.

Vote to Meet in Executive Session July 14, 2020, as Necessary

The school board voted to meet in Executive Session on Tuesday, July 14, 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>. Community members may submit public comment via email to comments@acpsmd.org. Emails must be received no later than 5 p.m. on Monday, July 13, 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.

SMOB UPDATES & COMMENTS

Mr. Omaer Naeem, SMOB

Mr. Naeem took the opportunity to thank the school board members for the opportunity he had last school year to serve with them as the Student Member of the Board. He also noted that ACASC is currently in the process of selecting his successor as COVID-19 has caused some difficulties with the election of officers.

Additionally, Omaer took the opportunity to bring to light another pandemic present in Allegany County, which is racism. He stated, "As a person of color, and a student of ACPS, I'm disappointed. Allegany County has a rich history of disenfranchising its black residents and through my time with the NAACP, I became aware of as much. Unfortunately, that's the only place that I was taught that. Never in school was I offered the real picture of what institutionalized racism is or how the school to prison pipeline works, or that it even exists. We in Allegany County are ignorant. We as a nation are on the precipice of something great of enacting real, meaningful change." He continued, "ACPS needs to do its part. My black peers, educators, and staff have been actively discriminated against in

this county. I've witnessed and experienced the inequality on a daily basis. My final request to this board is to consider implementing stronger training on how to combat racism to its faculty and encourage students to embrace people of all backgrounds, starting in elementary school."

Omaer offered suggestions including adding articles, books, and documentaries centered on anti-racism to English and history curriculums; holding trainings for staff on equity, inclusion, and implicit bias; and hosting guest speakers to discuss the Black Lives Matter movement, white privilege, and racial injustice.

Mr. Naeem went on to say, "We need to make it apparent that racism has no place here. Our differences make us stronger. ACPS has a long way to go, but I know it has the potential to do so. I encourage all students, teachers, faculty and staff to use their rights to condemn hatred in a peaceful and productive manner. Black lives matter. They have always mattered, and they always will matter. It isn't controversial. It's the truth."

SCHOOL BOARD COMMENTS

Dr. David Bohn

Dr. Bohn took the opportunity to publicly thank this year's ACPS retirees for their many years of service and dedication to the students and the community. He noted that ACPS employees go above and beyond for their students and appreciates all that they do. Dr. Bohn also thanked and congratulated Mr. Blank for agreeing to continue in his interim superintendent capacity for one more year as the school board moves forward during COVID-19.

Mrs. Deb Frank

Mrs. Frank thanked Omaer Naeem for voicing his concerns about racism in Allegany County and applauded him for making such a difficult but heartfelt statement. She vowed to keep his comments in the forefront of her mind as she moves forward on the school board and agreed that things do need to change. Mrs. Frank also noted that plans for students returning in the fall are still unknown, but ACPS staff is working collaboratively to put plans in place with guidance from MSDE. As soon as more details are known they will be conveyed to parents and the community.

Mrs. Tammy Fraley

Mrs. Fraley reiterated Mrs. Frank's sentiments towards Omaer regarding his statement on racism in Allegany County. She too appreciated his comments and concerns and promised to do her part to help bring change in ACPS if she is re-elected to the school board in the fall. Mrs. Fraley noted that today's youth should not be ignored as they are the future.

Mrs. Fraley also noted that the Maryland PTA is hosting a tele-town hall with Senator Chris Van Hollen on June 19, 2020, at 10 a.m. so that parents and families have an opportunity to hear from their Senator regarding the federal response to COVID-19 as it relates to schools, the HEROES Act legislation, and other resources needed to support education. No registration is required. The dial-in number to listen to this event is 712-999-2090 and the access code is 680347#.